

THE MAKING OF THE SLAVS
History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region,
c 500 — 700

FLORIN CURTA

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAC</i>	<i>Acta Archaeologica Carpathica</i> (Cracow, 1958—).
<i>AAnt</i>	<i>American Antiquity</i> (Menasha, 1935—).
<i>AAnth</i>	<i>American Anthropologist</i> (Washington, 1888—).
<i>AClass</i>	<i>Acta Classica</i> (Kaapstad, 1958—).
<i>AClassDebrecen</i>	<i>Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis</i> (Debrecen, 1965-).
<i>ActaAntHung</i>	<i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i> (Budapest, 1951—).
<i>ActaArchHung</i>	<i>Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i> (Budapest, 1951—).
<i>Actes IX</i>	<i>Actes du IX-e Congres international d'etudes sur ks frontieres romaines, Mamaia 6—13 septembre 11)72</i> . Ed. Dionisie M. Pippidi. Bucharest and Cologne: Editura Academiei RSR and Bohlau, 1974.
<i>Actes X</i>	<i>Actes du X-e Congres international d'archeologie chritienne. Ttessalonique, 28 septembre — 4 octobre 1980</i> . 2 vols. Vatican and Thessaloniki: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana and Hetaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1984.
<i>Actes XI</i>	<i>Actes du XI-e Congres international d'archeologie chretienne. Lyon, Vienne, Grenoble, Geneve et Aoste (21—28 septembre 1986)</i> . Ed. Noel Duval. 3 vols. Rome: Ecole Fran [^] aise de Rome, 1989.
<i>Actes Xlh</i>	<i>Actes du XII-e Congres international d'etudes byzantines (Ochrìde, 10—16 septembre 1961)</i> . 2 vols. Belgrade: Coniite Yougoslave des Etudes Byzantines, 1963.
<i>Actes Xlh</i>	<i>Actes du XII-c Congres international des sciences prehistoriqcs et protohistoriques, Bratislava, 1—7 septembre 1991</i> . Ed. Juraj Pavuj. 4 vols. Bratislava: VHDA, 1993.

byzantifia) Bummt, f-12 septembre 1971. Ed. Mihai Berza and Eugen Stanescu. 3 vols. Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1974—6.

- AE* *American Ethnologist* (Washington, 1974—).
- AEMA* *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* (Wiesbaden, 1975—).
- AJA* *American Journal of Archaeology* (New York, 1885—).
- Akten 11* *Limes. Akten des 11. internationalen Limeskongresses Szikesfehervar 30.8-6.9. 1976*. Ed. Jenő Fitz. Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1977.
- Akten 13* *Studien zu den Militargrenzen Roms III. 13. internationaler Limeskongress Aalen 1983. Vorträge*. Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss, 1986.
- Akten 14* *Akten des 14. internationalen Limeskongresses 1986 in Carnuntum*. Ed. Hermann Vetters and Manfred Kandler. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990.
- AM* *Arheologia Moldovei* (Bucharest, 1961—).
- AMN* *Ada Musei Napocensis* (Cluj, 1964—).
- AMT* *Archaeological Method and Theory* (Tucson, 1989—93).
- Anthropology* *The Anthropology of Ethnicity, Beyond "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries."* Ed. Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers. The Hague: Het Spinhuis, 1994.
- Approaches* *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*. Ed. Stephen Shennan. London, Boston, and Sydney: Unwin Hyman, 1989.
- ARA* *Annual Review of Anthropology* (Palo Alto, 1972—).
- ArchBulg* *Archaeologia Bulgarica* (Sofia, 1997—).
- ArchErt* *Archaeologiai Ertesito* (Budapest, 1881—).
- Arching* *Archaeologia Iugoslavica* (Belgrade, 1954—).
- ArchMed* *Archeologie Medievale* (Paris, 1971—).
- ArchPol* *Archaeologia Polona* (Wrocław, 1958—).
- ArchRoz* *Archeologicke Rozhledy* (Prague, 1949—).
- Argenterie* *Argenterie romaine et byzantine. Actes de la table ronde, Paris 11—13 octobre 1983*. Ed. Noël Duval, François Baratte, and Ernest Will. Paris: De Boccard, 1988.
- ASGE* *Arkheologicheskii Sbornik Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha* (Leningrad, 1959—).
- ASSAH* *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* (Oxford, 1979TM).
- AT* *Antiquite Tardive* (Paris, 1993—).
- AV* *Arheoloski Vestnik* (Ljubljana, 1950—).

- Avari* *Gli Avari. Un popolo d'Europa.* Ed. Gian Carlo Menis. Udine: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1995.
- Aumrenforschungen* *Aumretiforschungen.* Ed. Falko Daim. 2 vols. Vienna: Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte der Universität Wien, 1992.
- Balcanica* *Balcanica Posnaniensia* (Poznan, 1984—).
- Baltic* *From the Baltic to the Black Sea. Studies in Medieval Archaeology.* Ed. David Austin and Leslie Alcock. London: Unwin Hyman, 1990.
- Barbaren* *Das Reich und die Barbaren.* Ed. Evangelos Chrysos and Andreas Schwarcz. Vienna and Cologne: Bohlau, 1989.
- BCH* *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique* (Athens and Paris, 1877—).
- BE* *Balkansko ezikoznanie* (Sofia, 1959—).
- Berichte* *Berichte über den II. internationalen Kongress für slawische Archäologie. Berlin, 24.-28. August 1970.* Ed. Joachim Herrmann and Karl-Heinz Otto. 2 vols. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1973.
- BHR* *Bulgarian Historical Review* (Sofia, 1973—).
- BJ* *Bonner Jahrbucher des Rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande* (Bonn, 1842-).
- BMGS* *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (Oxford, 1975-).
- BMIM* *București. Materiale de istorie și muzeografie* (Bucharest, 1964—).
- BS* *Balkan Studies* (Thessaloniki, 1960—).
- BSAF* *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (Paris, 1871—).
- BSNR* *Buletinul Societății Numismatice Române* (Bucharest, 1904-).
- București* *București de odinioară în lumina săpăturilor arheologice.* Ed. I. Ionasxu. Bucharest: Editura științifică, 1959.
- Bulgaria* *Ancient Bulgaria. Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Ancient History and Archaeology of Bulgaria, University of Nottingham, 1981.* Ed. Andrew G. Poulter. Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1983.
- BV* *Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter* (Munich, 1921— ■).
- ByzF* *Byzantinische Forschungen* (Amsterdam, 1966-).
- ByzZ* *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (Munich, 1892—).

List of abbreviations

- CAB* *Cercetari Arheologice in București* (Bucharest, 1963—).
- CAH* *Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae* (Budapest, 1981-).
- CAnth* *Current Anthropology* (Chicago, 1960—).
- CCARB* *Corso di Cultura sulVArte Ravennate e Bizantina* (Ravenna, 1955—).
- Christentum* *Das Christentum in Bulgarien und aufder ubrigen Balkan halbins el in der Spatantike und imfruhem Mittelalter*. Ed. Vasil Giuzelev and Renate Pillinger. Vienna: Verein "Freunde des Hauses Wittgenstein," 1987.
- CIG* *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*
- CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
- City* *City, Towns, and Countryside in the Early Byzantine Era*. Ed. Robert L. Hohlfelder. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.
- Conference 18* *Ethnicity and Culture. Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Conference of the Archaeological Association of the University of Calgary*. Ed. Reginald Auger et al. Calgary: University of Calgary Archaeological Association, 1987.
- Congress 8* *Roman Frontier Studies 1969. Eighth International Congress of Limesforschung*. Ed. Eric Birley, Brian Dobson, and Michael Jarrett. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1974.
- Constantinople* *Constantinople and its Hinterland. Papers from the Twenty-Seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993*. Ed. Cyril Mango and Gilbert Dagron. Aldershot: Variorum, 1995.
- Corinthia* *The Corinthia in the Roman Period Including the Papers Given at a Symposium Held at the Ohio State University on 7-9 March, 1991*. Ed. Timothy E. Gregory. Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series, 1993.
- CPh* *Classical Philology* (Chicago, 1906—).
- CRAI* *Comptes Rendus de VAcademie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (Paris, 1857—).
- CSSH* *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (London and New York, 1958—).
- Development* *Development and Decline. The Evolution of Sociopolitical Organization*. Ed. Henri J. M. Claessen, Pieter van de Velde, and M. Estellie Smith. South

- Hadley: Bergin and Garvey, 1985-
- Dnestr* *Slaviane na Dnestre i Dunae. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov.* Ed. V. D. Baran, R. V. Terpilovskii, and A. T. Smilenko. Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1983.
- Dokladi* *Vtori mezhdunaroden kongres po balgaristika, Sofia, 23 mai—3 iuni 1986 g. Dokladi 6: Balgarskite zemi v drevnostta. Balgariia prez srednovekovieto.* Ed. Khristo Khristov et al. Sofia: BAN, 1987.
- Donau* *Die Volker an der mittleren und unteren Donau im funften und sechstenjahrhundert.* Ed. Herwig Wolfram and Falko Daim. Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980.
- DOP* *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (Washington, 1941—).
- Drevnosti* *Rannesrednevekovye vostochnoslavianskie drevnosti. Sbornik statei.* Ed. P. N. Tret'iakov. Leningrad: Nauka, 1974.
- DS* *Derdapske Sveske* (Belgrade, 1980-).
- EAZ* *Ethnographisch-archaologische Zeitschrift* (Berlin, 1960—).
- EB* *Etudes Balkaniques* (Sofia, 1964—).
- EH* *Etudes Historiques* (Sofia, 1960—).
- Eirene* *From Late Antiquity to Early Byzantium. Proceedings of the Byzantinological Symposium in the 16th International Eirene Conference.* Ed. Vladimir Vavrinek. Prague: Academia, 1985.
- EME* *Early Medieval Europe* (Harlow, 1992-).
- ERS* *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (London and New York, 1978-).
- FA* *Folia Archaeologica* (Budapest, 1939-).
- Familie* *Familie, Staat und Gesellschaftsformation. Grundprobleme vorkapitalistischer Epochen einhundert Jahren nach Friedrich Engels' Werk, "Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates".* Ed. Joachim Herrmann and Jens Kohn. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1988.
- Festschrift* *Studien zur vor- und fruhgeschichtlichen Archdologie. Festschrift fur Joachim Werner zum 63. Geburtstag.* Ed. Georg Kossack and Guinter Ulbert. 2 vols. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1974.
- FO* *Folia orientalia* (Cracow, 1959—).
- FS* *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* (Berlin, 1967--).

List of abbreviations

- Germanen* *Germanen, Hunnen und Awaren. Schätze der Völkerwanderungszeit.* Ed. Gerhard Bott and Walter Meier-Arendt. Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 1987.
- GMSB* *Godishnik na muzeite ot Severna Balgariia* (Varna, **1975-).**
- Gosudarstva* *Rannefeodal^fnye gosudarstva i narodnosti (iuzhnye i zapadnye slaviane VI—XII PP.).* Ed. G. G. Litavrin Moscow: **Nauka, 1991.**
- G O T R* *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* (Brookline, 1954—).
- G Z M B H* *Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine u Sarajevu* (**Sarajevo, 1967—).**
- His tort ographie* *Historiographie imfruchen Mittelalter.* Ed. Anton Scharer and Georg Scheibelreiter. Vienna and Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1994.
- Homines* *Hommes et richesses dans VEmpire byzantin.* Ed. Gilbert Dagron et al. 2 vols. Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1989—91.
- Iatrus* *Iatrus-Krivina. Spdtantike Befestigung und fruhmittelalterliche Siedlung an der unteren Donau.* 5 vols. Berlin: Akadeniie Verlag, 1979—95.
- IBAI* *Izvestiia na Bdlgarskiia Arkheologicheskiia Institut* (after 1950: *Izvestiia na Arkheologicheskiia Institut*) (Sofia, **1921-).**
- IBID* *Izvestiia na Balgarskoto Istorichesko Druzhestvo* (Sofia, **1905-).**
- Identity* *Cultural Identity and Archaeology, The Construction of European Communities.* Ed. Paul Graves-Brown et al. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.
- IIAK* *Izvestiia Imperatorskoi Arkheologicheskoi Kommissii* (St. Petersburg, 1901-14).
- IIBI* *Izvestiia na Instituta za Balgarska Istoriia* (after 1957: *Izvestiia na Instituta za Istoriia*)(Sofia, 1951—).
- INMV* *Izvestiia na Narodniia Muzei Varna* (Varna, 1965—).
- Interaktionen* *Interaktionen der mitteleuropdischen Slawen und anderen Ethnika itn 6.—io.Jahrhundert. Symposium Nové Vozokany, 3.—7. Oktoher 1983.* Ed. Bohuslav Chropovsky. Nitra: Archaologisches Institut der Slowakischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984.
- Issledovaniia* *Arkheologicheskie issledovaniia srednevekopykh pamiatnikov v Dnestropsko-Prutskom mezhdurech^fe.* Ed. P. P. Byrnia. Kishinew: Shtiinca, 1985.

- Istoriia* *Problemi na prabalgarska istoriia i kultura*. Ed. Rasha Rashev. Sofia: BAN, 1989.
- IZ* *Istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow, 1931—45).
- JAA* *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* (New York, 1982-)/
- JGO* *Jahrbucherfur Geschichte Osteuropas* (Breslau and Wiesbaden, 1936—).
- JIES* *Journal of Indo-European Studies* (Washington, 1973[^]).
- JMV* *Jahresschrift fur mitteldeutsche Vorgeschichte* (Berlin, 1902—).
- JOB* *Jahrbuch der Osterreichischen Byzantinistik* (Vienna, 1969-).
- JRA* *Journal of Roman Archaeology* (Ann Arbor, 1988—).
- JRGZ* *Jahrbuch des Romisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums* (Mainz, 1954—).
- Karta* *Etnokul'turnaia karta territorii Ukrainskoi SSR v I tys. n. e.*. Ed. V. D. Baran, R. V. Terpilovskii, and E. V. Maksimov. Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1985.
- KJVF* *KolnerJahrbuch fur Vor- und Fruhgeschichte* (Berlin, 1955-).
- KSIA* *Kratkie Soobshcheniia Instituta Arkheologii AN SSSR* (Moscow, 1952—).
- Kul'turn* *Slavianskie drevnosti. Etnogenez. Materialnaia kultura drevnei Rust. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov*. Ed. V. D. Koroliuk. Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1980.
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- MAA* *Macedoniae Acta Archaeologica* (Prilep, 1975—).
- MAIET* *Materialy po Arkheologii, Istorii i Etnografii Tavrii* (Simferopol, 1990-).
- MAIUAW* *Mitteilungen des Archdologischen Instituts der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Budapest, 1972-).
- Mathematics* *Mathematics and Information Science in Archaeology: /I Flexible Framework*. Ed. Albertus Voorrips. Bonn: Holos, 1990.
- MCA* *Materiale și Cercetari de Arheologie* (Bucharest, 1955-).

- MEFRA* *Melanges d'Archeologie et d'Histoire de VEcole Francaise de Rome* (Paris, 1881-).
- Melange* *Zbornik posveten na Bosko Babic. Melange Bosko Babic ig24—ig84.* ed, Mihailo Apostolski. Prilep: Institut des recherches scientifiques de la culture des anciens Slaves, 1986.
- MemAnt* *Memona Antiquitatis* (Piatra Neamf, 1969—).
- MGH: AA* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Auctores Antiquissimi*
- MGH: Epistolae* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Epistolae*
- MGH: SRM* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum*
- MGH: SS* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum Rerum Germanicarum in Usus Scholarum Separatim Editi*
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- NZ* *Novopazarski Zbornik* (Novi Pazar, 1971—).
- Obrazovaniia* *Slaviane nakanune obrazovaniia Kievskoi Rusi.* Ed. Boris A. Rybakov. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii NaukSSSR, 1963.
- P&P* *Past and Present* (Oxford, 1952—).
- PA* *Pamatky Archeologicke* (Prague, 1914—).
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- PG* *Patrologiae curs us completus. Series Graeca*
- Pliska* *Pliska-Preslav. Prouchvaniia i materialii.* Ed. Zhivka Vazharova. 3 vols. Sofia: BAN, 1979—81.
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- Problemy* *Problemy etnogeneza slavian. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov.* Ed. V. D. Baran. Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1978.
- RA* *Rossiiskaia Arkheologiia* (Moscow, 1992—).
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- RBPH* *Revue Beige de Philologie et d'Histoire* (Brussels, 1922—).
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- RESEE* *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes* (Bucharest, 1963-).
- RM* *Revista Muzeelor* (after 1974: *Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor*) (Bucharest, 1964—).
- RP* *Razkopki i Prouchvaniia* (Sofia, 1948—).
- RRH* *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* (Bucharest, 1962—).
- Rus'* *Drevniaia Rus' i slaviane.* Ed. T. V. Nikolaeva. Moscow: Nauka, 1978.
- RVM* *Rad Vojvodanskih Muzeja* (Novi Sad, 1952-93).
- SA* *Sovetskaia Arkheologiia* (Moscow, 1933—).
- Sbornik* *Sbornik v chest na akad. Dimitar Angelov.* Ed. Velizar Velkov et al. Sofia: BAN, 1994.
- . SBS* *Studies in Byzantine SigiHography* (Washington, 1987-).
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- SCIV* *Studii și Cercetari de Istorie Veche* (after 1974: *Studii și Cercetari de Istorie Veche și Arheologie*) (Bucharest, 1950-).
- SCN* *Studii și Cercetari de Numismatică* (Bucharest, 1957—).
- SF* *Südost-Forschungen* (Leipzig, 1936—).

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- Uses* *The Uses of Style in Archaeology*. Ed. Margaret W. Conkey and Christine A. Hastorf. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- VAHD* *Vjesnik za Arheologiju i Historiju Dalmatinsku* (Split, **1878-**).
- VAMZ* *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu* (Zagreb, **1958-**).
- VDI* *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii* (Moscow, 1937[^]).
- Verhdlnisse* *Ethnische und kulturelle Verhdlnisse an der mittleren Donau vom 6. bis zum 11. Jahrhundert*. Ed. Darina Bialekova and **jozef Zabožnik**. Bratislava: VEDA, 1996.
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- Voprosy* *Voprosy etnogeneza i etnicheskoi istorii slavian i vostochnykh romancev*. Ed. V. D. Koroliuk. Moscow: Nauka, 1976.
- VPS* *Vznik a Pomtky Slovanu* (Prague, 1956-72).
- *VV* *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* (Moscow, 1947-).
- WA* *World Archaeology* (London, 1908—).
- WMBHL* *Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen des bosnisch-herzegowinischen Landesmuseum* (Sarajevo, 1971-).
- WZRostock* *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universitdt Rostock* (Rostock, 1950-75).
- Zbirnyk* *Starozhytnosti Rusi-Ukrainy Zbirnyk naukovykh prac'*. Ed. P. P. Tolochko et al. Kiev: Kiivs'ka Akademyia Evrobyznesu, 1994.
- ZC** *Zgodopinski Casopis* (Ljubljana, 1947—).
- ZfA* *Zeitschrift fur Archaologie* (Berlin, 1967-).
- ZfS* *Zeitschrift. fur Slaxmstik* (Berlin, 1956-).
- ZNM* *Zbornik Narodnog Muzeja* (Belgrade, 1964-).
- ZRVI* *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloikog Institute* (Belgrade, **1961-**).

INTRODUCTION

Mein Freund, das ist Asien! Es sollte mich wimdern, es sollte niicli hochlichst wundern, wenn da nicht Wendisch-Slawisch-Sarmatisches im Spiele gewesen ware.

(Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg*)

To many, Eastern Europe is nearly synonymous with *Slavic* Europe. The equation is certainly not new. To Hegel, the "East of Europe" was the house of the "great Sclavonic nation," a body of peoples which "has not appeared as an independent element in the series of phases that Reason has assumed in the World".¹ If necessary, Europe may be divided into western and eastern zones along a number of lines, according to numerous criteria. Historians, however, often work with more than one set of criteria. The debate about the nature of Eastern Europe sprang up in Western historiography in the days of the Cold War, but despite Oskar Halecki's efforts explicitly to address the question of a specific chronology and history of Eastern Europe, many preferred to write the history of Slavic Europe, rather than that of Eastern Europe.² Today, scholarly interest in Eastern Europe focuses especially on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the period of nationalism. The medieval history of the area is given comparatively less attention, which often amounts to slightly more than total neglect. For most students in medieval studies, Eastern Europe is marginal and East European topics simply *exotica*. One reason for this historiographical reticence may be the uneasiness to treat the medieval history of the Slavs as (Western) European history. Like Settembrini, the Italian humanist of Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, many still point to the ambiguity of those Slavs, whom the eighteenth-century *philosophes* already viewed as "Oriental" barbarians.³ When Slavs

¹ Hegel 1902:363.

² Halecki 1950. Slavic Europe: Dvoriik 1949 and 1956. Eastern Europe as historiographical construct: Okey 1992. ³ Wolff 1994.

come up in works on the medieval history of Europe, they are usually the marginalized, the victims, or the stubborn pagans. In a recent and brilliant book on the "making of Europe," the Slavs, like the Irish, appear only as the object of conquest and colonization, which shaped medieval Europe. Like many others in more recent times, the episodic role of the Slavs in the history of Europe is restricted to that of victims of the "occidentation," the shift towards the ways and norms of Romano-Germanic civilization.⁴ The conceptual division of Europe leaves the Slavs out of the main "core" of European history, though not too far from its advancing frontiers of "progress" and "civilization."

Who were those enigmatic Slavs? What made them so difficult to represent by the traditional means of Western historiography? If Europe itself was "made" by its conquerors and settlers, who made the Slavs? What were the historical conditions in which this ethnic name was first used and for what purpose? How was a Slavic ethnicity formed and under what circumstances did the Slavs come into being? Above all, this book aims to answer some of these questions. What binds together its many individual arguments is an attempt to explore the nature and construction of the Slavic ethnic identity in the light of the current anthropological research on ethnicity. Two kinds of sources are considered for this approach: written and archaeological. This book is in fact a combined product of archaeological experience, mostly gained during field work in Romania, Moldova, Hungary, and Germany, and work with written sources, particularly with those in Greek. I have conducted exhaustive research on most of the topics surveyed in those chapters which deal with the archaeological evidence. Field work in Sighișoara (1985—91) and Targșor (1986—8) greatly contributed to the stance taken in this book. A study on the Romanian archaeological literature on the subject and two studies of "Slavic" bow fibulae were published separately.⁵ A third line of research grew out of a project developed for the American Numismatic Society Summer Seminar in New York (1995).⁶ With this variety of sources, I was able to observe the history of the area during the sixth and seventh centuries from a diversity of viewpoints. Defining this area proved, however, more difficult. Instead of the traditional approach, that of opposing the barbarian Slavs to the civilization of the early Byzantine Empire, I preferred to look at the Danube *limes* as a complex interface. Understanding transformation on the Danube frontier required understanding of almost everything happening both north and south of that frontier. Geographically, the scope of inquiry is limited to the area comprised between the Carpathian basin, to the west, and the Middle

⁴ Bartlett 1993:295. ⁵ Curta 1994a and 1994b; Curta and Dupoi 1994-5. ⁶ Curta 1996.

Dnieper region, to the east. To the south, the entire Balkan peninsula is taken into consideration in the discussion of the sixth-century Danube *limes* and of the Slavic migration. The northern limit was the most difficult to establish, because of both the lack of written sources and a very complicated network of dissemination of "Slavic" brooch patterns, which required familiarity with the archaeological material of sixthTM and seventh-century cemeteries in Mazuria. The lens of my research, however, was set both south and east of the Carpathian mountains, in the Lower Danube region, an area now divided between Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine.

My intention with this book is to fashion a plausible synthesis out of quite heterogeneous materials. Its conclusion is in sharp contradiction with most other works on this topic and may appear therefore as argumentative, if not outright revisionist. Instead of a great flood of Slavs coming out of the Pripet marshes, I envisage a form of group identity, which could arguably be called ethnicity and emerged in response to Justinian's implementation of a building project on the Danube frontier and in the Balkans. The Slavs, in other words, did not come from the north, but became Slavs only in contact with the Roman frontier. Contemporary sources mentioning Sclavenes and Antes, probably in an attempt to make sense of the process of group identification taking place north of the Danube *limes*, stressed the role of "kings" and chiefs, which may have played an important role in this process.

The first chapter presents the *Forschungsstand*. The historiography of the subject is vast and its survey shows why and how a particular approach to the history of the early Slavs was favored by linguistically minded historians and archaeologists. This chapter also explores the impact on the historical research of the "politics of culture," in particular of those used for the construction of nations as "imagined communities." The historiography of the early Slavs is also the story of how the academic discourse used- the past to shape the national present. The chapter is also intended to familiarize the reader with the anthropological model of ethnicity. The relation between material culture and ethnicity is examined, with a particular emphasis on the notion of style.

Chapters 2 and 3 deal with written sources. Chapter 2 examines issues of chronology and origin of the data transmitted by these sources, while Chapter 3 focuses on the chronology of Slavic raids. Chapter 4 considers the archaeological evidence pertaining to the sixth-century Danube *limes* as well as to its Balkan hinterland. Special attention is paid to the implementation of Justinian's building program and to its role in the subsequent history of the Balkans, particularly the withdrawal of the Roman armies in the seventh century. A separate section of this chapter deals

with the evidence of sixth- and seventh-century hoards of Byzantine coins in Eastern Europe, which were often used to map the migration of the Slavs. A new interpretation is advanced, which is based on the examination of the age-structure of hoards. Chapter 5 presents the archaeological evidence pertaining to the presence of Gepids, Lombards, Avars, and Cutrigurs in the region north of the Danube river. Special emphasis is laid on the role of specific artifacts, such as bow fibulae, in the construction of group identity and the signification of social differentiation. The archaeological evidence examined in Chapter 6 refers, by contrast, to assemblages found in the region where sixth- and seventh-century sources locate the Sclavenes and the Antes. Issues of dating and use of material culture for marking ethnic boundaries are stressed in this chapter. The forms of political power present in the contemporary Slavic society and described by contemporary sources are discussed in Chapter 7. Various strands of evidence emphasized in individual chapters are then brought into a final conclusion in the last chapter.

As apparent from this brief presentation of the contents, there is more than one meaning associated with the word 'Slav.' Most often, it denotes two, arguably separate, groups mentioned in sixth-century sources, the Sclavenes and the Antes. At the origin of the English ethnic name 'Slav' is an abbreviated form of 'Sclavene,' Latin *Sclavus*. When Slavs appear instead of Sclavenes and Antes, it is usually, but not always, in reference to the traditional historiographical interpretation, which tended to lump these two groups under one single denomination, on the often implicit assumption that the Slavs were the initial root from which sprung all Slavic-speaking nations of later times. Single quotation marks are employed to set off a specific, technical, or, sometimes, specious use of ethnic names (e.g., Slavs, Sclavenes, or Antes) or of their derivatives, either by medieval authors or by modern scholars. Where necessary, the particular use of these names is followed by the original Greek or Latin. With the exception of cases in which the common English spelling was preferred, the transliteration of personal and place names follows a modified version of the Library of Congress system. The geographical terminology, particularly in the case of archaeological sites, closely follows the language in use today in a given area. Again, commonly accepted English equivalents are excepted from this rule. For example, "Chernivtsi" and "Chişinau" are always favored over "Cernauⁱ" or "Kishinew," but "Kiev" and "Bucharest" are preferred to "Kyiv" and "Bucureşti." Since most dates are from the medieval period, "AD" is not used unless necessary in context. In cases where assigned dates are imprecise, as with the numismatic evidence examined in Chapter 4, they are given in the form 545/6 to indicate either one year or the other.

The statistical analyses presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 were produced using three different softwares. For the simple "descriptive" statistics used in Chapter 4, I employed graphed tables written in Borland Paradox, version 7 for Windows 3.1. More complex analyses, such as cluster, correspondence analysis, or seriation, were tested on a multivariate analysis package called MV-NUTSHELL, which was developed by Richard Wright, Emeritus Professor at the University of Sydney (Australia). The actual scattergrams and histograms in this book were, however, produced using the Bonn Archaeological Statistics package (BASP), version 5.2 for Windows, written in Borland Object Pascal 7 for Windows by Irwin Scollar from the Unkelbach Valley Software Works in Remagen (Germany). Although the final results were eventually not included in the book for various technical reasons, the study of pottery shape described in Chapter 6 enormously benefited from estimations of vessel volume from profile illustrations using the Senior-Birnie Pot Volume Program developed by Louise M. Senior and Dunbar P. Birnie from the University of Arizona, Tucson.⁷

⁷ Senior and **Birnie** 1995.

Chapter 1

SLAVIC ETHNICITY AND THE *ETHNIE* OF THE SLAVS: CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES

Our present knowledge of the origin of the Slavs is, to a large extent, a legacy of the nineteenth century. A scholarly endeavor inextricably linked with forging national identities, the study of the early Slavs remains a major, if not the most important, topic in East European historiography. Today, the history of the Slavs is written mainly by historians and archaeologists, but fifty or sixty years ago the authoritative discourse was that of scholars trained in comparative linguistics. The interaction between approaches originating in those different disciplines made the concept of (Slavic) ethnicity a very powerful tool for the "politics of culture." That there exists a relationship between nationalism, on one hand, and historiography and archaeology, on the other, is not a novel idea.¹ What remains unclear, however, is the meaning given to (Slavic) ethnicity (although the word itself was rarely, if ever, used) by scholars engaged in the "politics of culture." The overview of the recent literature on ethnicity and the role of material culture shows how far the historiographical discourse on the early Slavs was from contemporary research in anthropology and, in some cases, even archaeology.

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SLAVIC ETHNICITY

Slavic studies began as an almost exclusively linguistic and philological enterprise. As early as 1833, Slavic languages were recognized as Indo-European.² Herder's concept of national character (*Volksgeist*), unalterably set in language during its early "root" period, made language the perfect instrument for exploring the history of the Slavs.³ Pavel Josef

¹ See, more recently, Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Diaz-Andreu and Champion 1996.

² Bopp 1833. See also Niederle 1923:4; Sedov 1976:69.

³ Herder 1994:58. Herder first described the Slavs as victims of German warriors since the times of Charlemagne. He prophesied that the wheel of history would inexorably turn and some day, the industrious, peaceful, and happy Slavs would awaken from their submission and torpor to reinvigorate the great area from the Adriatic to the Carpathians and from the Don to the Moldau rivers (Herder 1994:277—80). For Herder's view of the Slavs, see Wolff 1994:310—15; Meyer 1996:31.

Safarik (1795—1861) derived from Herder the inspiration and orientation that would influence subsequent generations of scholars. To Safarik, the "Slavic tribe" was part of the Indo-European family. As a consequence, the antiquity of the Slavs went beyond the time of their first mention by historical sources, for "all modern nations must have had ancestors in the ancient world."⁴ The key element of his theory was the work of Jordanes, *Getica*. Jordanes had equated the Sclavenes and the Antes to the Venethi (or Venedi) also known from much earlier sources, such as Pliny the Elder, Tacitus, and Ptolemy. On the basis of this equivalence, Safarik claimed the Venedi for the Slavic history. He incriminated Tacitus for having wrongly listed them among groups inhabiting Germania. The Venedi, Safarik argued, spoke Slavic, a language which Tacitus most obviously could not understand.⁵ The early Slavs were agriculturists and their migration was not a violent conquest by warriors, but a peaceful colonization by peasants. The Slavs succeeded in expanding all over Europe, because of their democratic way of life described by Procopius.⁶

Safarik bequeathed to posterity not only his vision of a Slavic history, but also a powerful methodology for exploring its Dark Ages: language. It demanded that, in the absence of written sources, historians use linguistic data to reconstruct the earliest stages of Slavic history. Since language, according to Herder and his followers, was the defining factor in the formation of a particular culture type and world view, reconstructing Common Slavic (not attested in written documents before the mid-ninth century) on the basis of modern Slavic languages meant reconstructing the social and cultural life of the early Slavs, before the earliest documents written in their language. A Polish scholar, Tadeusz Wojciechowski (1839—1919), first used place names to write Slavic "history."⁷ Using river names, A. L. Pogodin attempted to identify the *Urheimat* of the Slavs and put forward the influential suggestion that the appropriate homeland for the Slavs was Podolia and Volhynia, the two

⁴ Schafarik 1844:1, 40. Safarik, who opened the All-Slavic Congress in Prague in June 1848, shared such views with his friend, Frantisek Palacky. See Palacky 1868:74—89. For the Manifesto to European nations from Palacky's pen, which was adopted by the Slavic Congress, see Pech 1969:133. For Palacky's image of the early Slavs, see Zacek 1970:84—5.

⁵ Schafarik 1844:1, 75 and 78. There is still no comprehensive study on the influence of Safarik's ideas on modern linguistic theories of Common Slavic. These ideas were not completely original. Before Safarik, the Polish historian Wawrzyniec Surowiecki (1769—1827) used Pliny's *Natural History*, Tacitus' *Germania*, and Ptolemy's *Geography* as sources for Slavic history. See Surowiecki 1964 (first published in 1824). On Surowiecki's life and work, see Szafran-Szadkowska 1983:74—7. Surowiecki's ideas were shared by his celebrated contemporary» Adam Mickiewicz (1798—1855), and his theory of the Slavic Venethi inspired at least one important work of Polish Romantic literature, namely Julius Stowacki's famous tragedy, *Lilla Wetieda* (1840).

⁶ Schafarik 1844:1, 42 (see also 11, 17). These ideas were not new. The "dove-like Slavs," in sharp contrast with the rude Germans, was a common stereotype in early nineteenth-century Bohemia. See Sklenaf 1983:95. ⁷ Wojciechowski 1873. See Szafran-Szadkowska 1983:115.

The making of the Slavs

regions with the oldest river names of Slavic origin.⁸ A Polish botanist, J. Rostafmski, pushed the linguistic evidence even further. He argued that the homeland of the Slavs was a region devoid of beech, larch, and yew, because in all Slavic languages the words for those trees were of foreign (i.e., Germanic) origin. By contrast, all had an old Slavic word for hornbeam, which suggested that the *Urheimat* was within that tree's zone. On the basis of the modern distribution of those trees, Rostafmski located the *Urheimat* in the marshes along the Pripet river, in Polesie.⁹ Jan Peisker (1851—1933) took Rostafmski's theory to its extreme. To him, "the Slav was the son and the product of the marsh."¹⁰

Despite heavy criticism, such theories were very popular and can still be found in recent accounts of the early history of the Slavs.¹¹ The rise of the national archaeological schools shortly before and, to a greater extent, after World War II, added an enormous amount of information, but did not alter the main directions set for the discipline of Slavic studies by its nineteenth-century founders. Lubor Niederle (1865—1944), who first introduced archaeological data into the scholarly discourse about the early Slavs, endorsed Rostafmski's theory. His multi-volume work is significantly entitled *The Antiquities of the Slavs*, like that of Safarik.¹² Niederle believed that climate and soil shape civilization. Since the natural conditions in the Slavic *Urheimat* in Polesie were unfavorable, the Slavs developed forms of social organization based on cooperation between large families (of a type known as *zadruga*), social equality, and

⁸ Pogodin 1901:85—111. For Pogodin's theories, see Sedov 1976:70. A recent variant of these theories is Jiirgen Udolph's attempt to locate the Slavic *Urheimat* on the basis of river-, lake-, and moor-names. According to Udolph, Galicia was the area in which the Indo-Europeans first became proto-Slavs. See Udolph 1979:619—20.

⁹ Rostafmski 1908. For Rostafmski's "beech argument," see Kostrzewski 1969:11; Sedov 1976:71; Szafran-Szadkowska 1983:105; Golab 1992:273—80. Pogodin's and Rostafmski's arguments were couched in the theory of Indo-European studies. A growing field in the early 1900s, this theory attempted to reconstruct the original language (*Ursprache*) of the original people (*Urvolk*) in their homeland (*Urheimat*), using the method of the "linguistic paleontology" founded by Adalbert Kuhn. See Mallory 1973; Anthony 1995:90.

¹⁰ Peisker 1926:426; see Peisker 1905. For Peisker's life and work, see Simak 1933. Peisker's ideas are still recognizable in the work of Omeljan Pritsak, who recently argued that the Sclavenes were not an ethnic group, but amphibious units for guerilla warfare both on water and on land. See Pritsak 1983:411.

¹¹ Many scholars took Rostafmski's argument at its face value. See Dvornik 1956:59; Gimbutas 1971:23; see also Baran 1991; Dolukhanov 1996. For good surveys of the most recent developments in Slavic linguistics, in which the "Indo-European argument" refuses to die, see Birnbaum 1986 and 1993.

¹² Niederle 1911:37-47, 1923:21, and 1925:111. A student of Jaroslav Goll, the founder of the Czech positivist school, Niederle was a professor of history at the Charles University in Prague. His interest in archaeology derived from the idea that ethnography was a historical discipline, capable of producing evidence for historical constructions based on the retrogressive method. For Niederle's life and work, see Eisner 1948; Zasterova 1967; Tomas 1984:39; Gojda 1991:4. For Niederle's use of the linguistic evidence, see Dostal 1966:7—31 and 1967:147—53.

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the democracy described by Procopius, which curtailed any attempts at centralization of economic or political power.¹³ This hostile environment forced the early Slavs to migrate, a historical phenomenon Niederle dated to the second and third century AD. The harsh climate of the Pripet marshes also forced the Slavs, whom Niederle viewed as *enfants de la nature*, into a poor level of civilization. Only the contact with the more advanced Roman civilization made it possible for the Slavs to give up their original culture entirely based on wood and to start producing their own pottery.¹⁴

Others took the archaeological evidence much further. Vykentyi V. Khvoika (1850-1914), a Ukrainian archaeologist of Czech origin, who had just "discovered" the Slavs behind the Neolithic Tripolye culture, was encouraged by Niederle's theory to ascribe to them finds of the fourth-century cemetery at Chernyakhov (Ukraine), an idea of considerable influence on Slavic archaeology after World War II.¹⁵ A Russian archaeologist, A. A. Spicyn (1858-1931), assigned to the Antes mentioned by Jordanes the finds of silver and bronze in central and southern Ukraine.¹⁶ More than any other artifact category, however, pottery became the focus of all archaeological studies of the early Slavic culture. During the inter-war years, Czech archaeologists postulated the existence of an intermediary stage between medieval and Roman pottery, a ceramic category Ivan Borkovsky (1897-1976) first called the "Prague type" on the basis of finds from several residential areas of the Czechoslovak capital. According to Borkovsky, the "Prague type" was a national, exclusively Slavic, pottery.¹⁷ After World War II, despite Borkovsky's political agenda (or, perhaps, because of it), the idea that the "Prague type" signaled the presence of the Slavs was rapidly embraced by many archaeologists in Czechoslovakia, as well as elsewhere.¹⁸

¹³ Niederle 1923:26 and 1926:173.

¹⁴ Niederle 1923:49, 1925:513, and 1926:1-2 and 5. For Niederle's concept of Slavic homeland, see Zasterova 1966:33-41.

¹⁵ Baran, Gorokhovskii, and Magomedov 1990:33; Dolukhanov 1996:4. On Khvoika's life and work, see Bakhmat 1964; Lebedev 1992:260-2.

¹⁶ Spicyn 1928:492-5. See also Prikhodniuk 1989:65. On Spicyn, see Lebedev 1992:247-52.

¹⁷ Borkovsky 1940:25 and 34-5. Emanuel Simek (1923) first called this pottery the "Veleslavin type." Niederle's successor at the Charles University in Prague, Josef Schranil, suggested that this type derived from the Okie pottery, an idea further developed by Ivan Borkovsky. Borkovsky argued that when migrating to Bohemia and Moravia, the Slavs found remnants of the Celtic population still living in the area and borrowed their techniques of pottery production. For the history of the "Prague type," see Preidel 1954:56; Zeman 1966:170.

¹⁸ Borkovsky's book was published shortly after the anti-German demonstrations in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia under Nazi rule (October 1939). The idea, that the earliest Slavic pottery derived from a local variant of the Celtic, not Germanic, pottery was quickly interpreted as an attempt to claim that the Czechs (and not the Germans) were natives to Bohemia and Moravia. Borkovsky's work was thus viewed as a reaction to Nazi claims that the Slavs were racially

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Following Stalin's policies of fostering a Soviet identity with a Russian cultural makeup, the Slavic ethnogenesis became the major, if not the only, research topic of Soviet archaeology and historiography, gradually turning into a symbol of national identity.¹⁹ As the Red Army was launching its massive offensive to the heart of the Third Reich, Soviet historians and archaeologists imagined an enormous Slavic homeland stretching from the Oka and the Volga rivers, to the east, to the Elbe and the Saale rivers to the west, and from the Aegean and Black Seas to the south to the Baltic Sea to the north.²⁰ A professor of history at the University of Moscow, Boris Rybakov, first suggested that both Spicyn's "Antian antiquities" and the remains excavated by Khvoika at Chernyakhov should be attributed to the Slavs, an idea enthusiastically embraced after the war by both Russian and Ukrainian archaeologists.²¹ The 1950s witnessed massive state investments in archaeology and many large-scale horizontal excavations of settlements and cemeteries were carried out by a younger generation of archaeologists. They shifted the emphasis from the Chernyakhov culture to the remains of sixth- and seventh-century settlements in Ukraine, particularly to pottery. Initially just a local variant of Borkovsky's Prague type, this pottery became the ceramic archetype of all Slavic cultures. The origins of the early Slavs thus moved from Czechoslovakia to Ukraine.²² The interpretation favored by Soviet scholars became the norm in all countries in Eastern Europe with Communist-dominated governments under Moscow's

Footnote 18 (*cont.*)

and culturally inferior. As a consequence, the book was immediately withdrawn from bookstores and Borkovsky became a sort of local hero of the Czech archaeology. Nevertheless, the concept of Prague-type pottery was quickly picked up and used even by German archaeologists working under the Nazi regime. See Brachmann 1983:23. For the circumstances of Borkovsky's book publication, see Preidel 1954:57; Sklenaf 1983:162-3. For the "politics of archaeology" in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia under Nazi rule, see Mastny 1971:130—1.

¹⁹ For the political and cultural circumstances in which the academic discourse in the Soviet Union adopted the Slavic ethnogenesis as its primary subject matter, see Velychenko 1992; Aksenova and Vasil'ev 1993; Shnirel'man 1993 and 1995.

²⁰ E.g., Derzhavin 1944:46; Mavrodin 1945:15.

²¹ Rybakov 1939 and 1943. For the influence of Rybakov's theories, see Liapushkin 1965:121; Shchukin 1980:399; Baran, Gorokhovskii, and Magomedov 1990:35—6. Despite heavy criticism in recent years, these theories remain popular. See Sedov 1972:116—30; Dolukhanov 1996:158 ("indisputable archaeological evidence proving that the peoples who made up the bulk of the agricultural population of the east Gothic 'state' were Slavs"). For Rybakov's political activity after the war, see Novosel'cev 1993; Hosier 1995:25—6.

²² For excavations in Polesie in the 1950s, see Rusanova 1976:12—13; Baran 1985:76 and 1990:59—60; Baran, Maksimov, and Magomedov 1990:202. During the 1960s and 1970s, the center of archaeological activities shifted from Polesie to the basins of the Dniester and Prut rivers, not far from the Ukrainian—Romanian border. See Baran 1968. For the "Zhitomir type," a local variant of the Prague type, and its further development into the archetype of all Slavic cultures, see Kukharenko 1955-36-8 and 1960:112; Rusanova 1958:33-46; Petrov 1963a:38; Rusanova 1970:93.

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protection.²³ The "Prague-Korchak type," as this pottery came to be known, became a sort of symbol, the main and only indicator of Slavic ethnicity in material culture terms. Soviet archaeologists now delineated on distribution maps two separate, though related, cultures. The "Prague zone" was an archaeological equivalent of Jordanes' Sclavieii, while the "Pen'kovka zone" was ascribed to the Antes, fall-out curves neatly coinciding with the borders of the Soviet republics.²⁴

The new archaeological discourse did not supersede the old search for the prehistoric roots of Slavic ethnicity. In the late 1970s, Valentin V. Sedov revived Safarik's old theories, when suggesting that the ethnic and linguistic community of the first century BC to the first century AD in the Vistula basin was that of Tacitus' Venedi. According to him, the Venedi began to move into the Upper Dniester region during the first two centuries AD. By the fourth century, as the Chernyakhov culture emerged in western and central Ukraine, the Venedi formed the majority of the population in the area. As bearers of the Przeworsk culture, they assimilated all neighboring cultures, such as Zarubinec and Kiev. By 300 AD, the Antes separated themselves from the Przeworsk block, followed, some two centuries later, by the Sclavieii. The new ethnic groups were bearers of the Pen'kovka and Prague-Korchak cultures, respectively. Sedov's theory was used by others to push the Slavic ethnogenesis back in time, to the "Proto-Slavo-Balts" of the early Iron Age, thus "adjusting" the results of linguistic research to archaeological theories. The impression one gets from recent accounts of the Slavic ethnogenesis is that one remote generation that spoke Indo-European produced children who spoke Slavic.²⁵

²³ For Czechoslovakia, see Poulik 1948:15-9; Klanica 1986:11. In the 1960s, Borkovsky's idea that the Slavs were native to the territory of Czechoslovakia surfaced again. See Budinsky-Kricka 1963; Bialekova 1968; Chropovsky and Ruttkay 19*4:19. For a different approach, see Zeman 1968 and 1979; Jelinkova 1990. For Poland, see Lehr-Spawinski 1946; Hensel 1988. In the late 1960s, Jozef Kostrzewski, the founder of the Polish ideological school, was still speaking of the Slavic character of the Bronze-Age Lusatian culture; see Kostrzewski 1969» Kostrzewski's ideas die hard; see Sulimirski 1973; Hensel 1994. For the final blow to traditional views that the Slavs were native to the Polish territory, see more recently Parczewski 1991 and 1993. For a survey of the Romanian literature on the early Slavs, see Curta 1994a. For Yugoslavia, see Karaman 1956; Korosec 1958a; Corovic-Ljubinkovic 1972; Kalic 1985. For Bulgaria, see Vazharova 1964; Milchev 1970; Vasilev 1979.

²⁴ Fedorov 1960:190; Rafalovich 1972a; Prikhodniuk 1983:60-1. For an attempt to identify the Slavic tribes mentioned in the *Russian Primary Chronicle* with sixth- and seventh-century archaeological cultures, see Smilenko 1980.

²⁵ Lunt 1992:468. For Sedov's theory, see Sedov 1979, 1994, and 1996. For the Zarubinec, Kiev, and other related cultures of the first to fourth centuries AD, see Baran, Maksimov, and Magomedov 1990:10-97; Terpilovskii 1992 and 1994. For the association between the respective results of the linguistic and archaeological research, see Lebedev 1989. Russian linguists still speak of Slavs as "the sons and products of the marsh." See Mokienko 1996.

More often than not, archaeology was merely used to illustrate conclusions already drawn from the analysis of the linguistic material. The exceptional vigor of the linguistic approach originated in the fact that, after Herder, language was viewed as the quintessential aspect of ethnicity. As depository of human experiences, languages could thus be used to identify various "historical layers" in "fossilized" sounds, words, or phrases. In this ahistorical approach, human life and society was viewed as a palimpsest, the proper task for historians being that of ascribing various "fossils" to their respective age. It was an approach remarkably compatible with that of the culture-historical archaeologists, described further in this chapter. This may also explain why so many archaeologists working in the field of Slavic studies were eager to adopt the views of the linguists, and rarely challenged them. The current discourse about the Slavic homeland has its roots in this attitude. Though the issue at stake seems to be a historical one, historians were often left the task of combing the existing evidence drawn from historical sources, so that it would fit the linguistic-archaeological model. Some recently pointed out the danger of neglecting the historical dimension, but the response to this criticism illustrates how powerful the Herderian equation between language and *Volk* still is.²⁶ Ironically, historians became beset by doubts about their ability to give answers, because of the considerable time dimension attributed to linguistic and archaeological artifacts. With no Tacitus at hand, archaeologists proved able to explore the origins of the Slavs far beyond the horizon of the first written sources.

Together with language, the search for a respectable antiquity for the history of the Slavs showed two principal thrusts: one relied on the interpretation of the historical sources as closely as possible to the linguistic-archaeological argument; the other located the Slavic homeland in the epicenter of the modern distribution of Slavic languages. The former began with the affirmation of trustworthiness for Jordanes' account of the Slavic Venethi, an approach which ultimately led to the claim of Tacitus', Pliny's, and Ptolemy's Venedi for the history of the Slavs. The cornerstone of this theory is Safarik's reading of Jordanes as an accurate description of a contemporary ethnic configuration. Safarik's interpretation is still widely accepted, despite considerable revision, in the last few decades, of traditional views of Jordanes and his *Getica*. The explanation

²⁶ Ivanov 1991 c and 1993. For the vehement response to Ivanov's claim that the ethnic history of the Slavs begins only in the 500s, see Vasil'ev 1992; Cheshko 1993. Though both Ivanov and his critics made extensive use of archaeological arguments, no archaeologist responded to Ivanov's challenge in the pages of *Slavianovedenie*. Before Ivanov, however, a Czech archaeologist advocated the idea that "as a cultural and ethnic unit, in the form known from the sixth century AD on, [the Slavs] did not exist in antiquity." See Vana 1983:25.

of this extraordinary continuity is neither ignorance, nor language barriers. Jordanes' Venethi have become the key argument in all constructions of the Slavic past primarily based on linguistic arguments. Like Safarik, many would show condescension for Tacitus' "mistake" of listing Venethi among groups living in Germania, but would never doubt that Jordanes' account is genuine. Archaeological research has already provided an enormous amount of evidence in support of the idea that the Venethi were Slavs. To accept this, however, involves more than a new interpretation of *Getica*. Jordanes built his image of the Slavs on the basis of earlier accounts and maps, without any concern for accurate description. It also means to give up evolutionary models created for explaining how the early Slavic culture derived from earlier archaeological cultures identified in the area in which Tacitus, Pliny, and Ptolemy apparently set their Venedi. A considerable amount of intellectual energy was invested in this direction between the two world wars and after 1945, and to question the theoretical premises of this approach is often perceived as denying its utility or, worse, as a bluntly revisionist coup. It is not without interest that claims that the Slavic ethnicity is a sixth-century phenomenon were met with the reaffirmation of Sedov's theory of Slavic culture originating from the Przeworsk culture, which is often identified with the Venethi.

The more radical the reaffirmation of Slavic antiquity becomes, the more writing about the history of the Slavs takes on the character of a mere description of the history of humans living since time immemorial in territories later inhabited by the Slavs. Pavel Dolukhanov opens his recent book on the early Slavs by observing that "the succeeding generations of people who lived in the vast spaces of the Russian Plain" without being noticed and recorded in any written documents cannot be ascribed to any ethnic group. "They had no common name, whether it was 'Slavs' or anything else." Yet, like the Soviet historians of the 1940s, Dolukhanov believes that "the origins and early development of peoples known as Slavs could be rightly understood only if viewed from a wide temporal perspective." This, in his description of Slavic history, means that the proper beginning is the Palaeolithic.²⁷

But the diagnosis comes easier than the remedy. Historians and archaeologists dealing with the progress of the migration of the Slavs outside their established *Urheimat* have, at times, correctly perceived the contradictions and biases ingrained in the current discourse about the origins of the Slavs. But they still work within a framework defined by the concept of migration. The discrepancy between the efforts of Romanian

²⁷ Dolukhanov 1996:ix-x; see Derzhavin 1944:3-4; Mavrodin 1945:15.

archaeologists, who argue that the Slavs reached the Danube by the end of the sixth century and did not wait too long for crossing it *en masse*, and those of Bulgarian and Yugoslav archaeologists, who strive to demonstrate an early sixth-century presence of the Slavs in the Balkans, has prompted some to voice reservations and objections to both the dominance and the perceived accuracy of the archaeological view of Slavic history. Yet focusing on numismatic, rather than archaeological, data did not banish the concept of migration outright. Just as with pots, the invasions of the Slavs could nevertheless be traced by plotting finds of coins and coin hoards on the map.²⁸

Modifying the linguistic-archaeological view of Slavic history seems a better alternative than negating it. Even in America, where this view was most seriously challenged, scholars speak of the Slavs at the Roman frontiers as "the first row of countless and contiguous rows of Slavic, Venedic, and Antic peoples who spread from the Danube to the Dnieper and to the Elbe" and of Proto-Slavs as forerunners of the Zhitomir or Prague cultures. Indeed, in their work of historiographical revision, historians still acknowledge the link between ethnicity and language. Either as "cumulative mutual Slavicity" or as Slavene military units organized and controlled by steppe nomads, the idea that the Slavs became Slavs by speaking Slavic is pervasive.²⁹

WHAT IS ETHNICITY?

No other term in the whole field of social studies is more ambiguous, yet more potent, than ethnicity. In English, the term "ethnic" has long been used in its New Testament sense, as a synonym for "gentile," "pagan," or "non-Christian," a meaning prevailing until the nineteenth century. The current usage of "ethnicity" goes back to 1953, as the word was first used to refer to ethnic character or peculiarity. We now speak of ethnicity as a mode of action and of representation. Some twenty years ago, however, no definition seemed acceptable. Ethnicity was "neither culture, nor society, but a specific mixture, in a more or less stable equilibrium, of both culture and society." As a consequence, attempts to define ethnicity were remarkably few.³⁰

Today, ethnicity is used to refer to a decision people make to depict

²⁸ Romanian archaeologists: Nestor 1973:30; Teodor 1972:34; Diaconu 1979:167. Bulgarian and Yugoslav archaeologists: Milchev 1975:388; Angelova 1980:4; Cremosnik 1970:58-9 and 61; Ljubinkovic 1973:182. See also Barisic 1969:25-6. Numismatic evidence for the invasions of the Slavs: Kovacevic 1969; Popovic 1980:246.

²⁹ Bacic 1983:201; Milich 1995:49 and 204; see Pritsak 1983:423-4.

³⁰ The term "ethnicity": Fortier 1994. Ethnicity as both culture and society: Nicolas 1973:107. Definitions of ethnicity: Isajiw 1974:111; Parsons 1975:53.

themselves or others symbolically as bearers of a certain cultural identity. It has become the politicization of culture. Ethnicity is not innate, but individuals are born with it; it is not biologically reproduced, but individuals are linked to it through cultural constructions of biology; it is not simply cultural difference, but ethnicity cannot be sustained without reference to an inventory of cultural traits. One anthropologist defined ethnicity as the "collective enaction of socially differentiating signs." Others argue that ethnicity is a relatively recent phenomenon, resulting from dramatic historical experiences, notably escape from or resistance to slavery. According to such views, ethnic groups grow out of "bits and pieces, human and cultural, that nestle in the interstices" between established societies. Diasporas of exiles in borderlands coalesce around charismatic entrepreneurs, who gather adherents by using familiar amalgamative metaphors (kinship, clientelism, etc.), and also spiritual symbolism, such as ancestral aboriginality or other legitimizing events.³¹

Ethnicity may therefore be seen as an essential orientation to the past, to collective origin, a "social construction of primordiality." Some scholars believe that ethnicity is just a modern construct, not a contemporary category, and that examinations of "ethnic identity" risk anachronism when the origins of contemporary concerns and antagonisms are sought in the past. Although ethnic groups constantly change in membership, ethnic names used in early medieval sources, such as *Gothi* or *Romani*, cannot usefully be described as ethnic groups, because the chief forces of group cohesion were not ethnicity, but region and profession. Others claim that ethnicity is only the analytical tool academics devise and utilize in order to make sense of or explain the actions and feelings of the people studied.³² But ethnicity is just as likely to have been embedded in sociopolitical relations in the past as in the present. What have changed are the historical conditions and the idiomatic concepts in which ethnicity is embedded.

In Eastern Europe, particularly in the Soviet Union, the study of ethnicity (especially of Slavic ethnicity) was dominated until recently by the views of the Soviet ethnographer Julian Bromley. According to him, ethnicity was based on a stable core, called *ethnos* or *ethnikos*, which persisted through all social formations, despite being affected by the prevailing economic and political conditions. Soviet scholars laid a strong emphasis

³¹ Cohen 1993:197; see also Verdery 1994:42, Ethnicity and the inventory of "cultural traits": Williams 1992. Ethnicity and collective enaction: Eriksen 1991:141. Ethnicities as recent phenomena: Chappell 1993:272.

³² Ethnicity and primordiality: Alverson 1979:15. The orientation to the past, however, may also be associated with other forms of group identity, such as class; see Ganzer 1990. Ethnicity as a modern construct: Geary 1983:16; Amory 1994:5 and 1997:317. Ethnicity as a scholarly construct: Banks 1996:186.

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on language. As the "precondition for the rise of many kinds of social organisms, including ethnic communities," the language "received and developed in early childhood, is capable of expressing the finest shades of the inner life of people," while enabling them to communicate.³³ The association between language and ethnicity, so tightly bound in the Soviet concept of ethnicity, is no accident. For a long period, the literature concerning ethnic phenomena was completely dominated by Stalin's definition of nation and by N. Ia. Marr's ideas. Marr (1864—1934) was a well-trained Orientalist who had made valuable contributions to Armenian and Georgian philology, and became interested in comparative linguistics and prehistory. He adopted the view that language was part of the ideological superstructure depending upon the socioeconomic basis and therefore developing in stages like Marx's socioeconomic formations. Marr treated ethnicity as something of a non-permanent nature, as ephemeral, and discounted "homelands" and "proto-languages." Instead, he argued that cultural and linguistic changes were brought by socioeconomic shifts. Marr's theories were a reaction to the nineteenth-century approach of the culture-historical school based on Herderian ideas that specific ways of thought were implanted in people as a result of being descended from an ancestral stock, the *Volksgeist*?⁴

Despite its revolutionary character, Marrism was gradually abandoned, as Stalin adopted policies to force assimilation of non-Russians into a supranational, Soviet nation. He called for a "national history" that would minimize, obfuscate, and even omit reference to conflict, differences, oppression, and rebellion in relations between Russians and non-Russians. Instead, historians were urged to combat actively the fascist falsifications of history, to unmask predatory politics toward the Slavs, and to demonstrate the "real" nature of Germans and their culture. By 1950, Soviet anthropologists completely abandoned the stadial theory, as Stalin

³³ Bromley and Kozlov 1989:431-2; Kozlov 1974:79. To be sure, all ethnic identity is often associated with the use of a particular language. But language itself is only one of the elements by which access to an ethnic identity is legitimized in a culturally specific way. It is by means of an "associated language" that language and ethnicity are related to each other; see Eastman and Reese 1981:115. It is also true that much of what constitutes identity, including its ethnic dimension, takes form during the individual's early years of life. Recent studies insist that the family contributes in a fundamental way to the formation of ethnic identity and recommend that family-based studies become the methodological strategy of future research on ethnic identity. See Keefe 1992:43.

³⁴ Bruche-Schulz 1993:460; Slezkine 1996. According to Marr's ideas, meaning was attached to thought processes which were characteristic for a given social formation. The lesser or lower production stages produced lower or "primitive" forms of thought and language. Bruche-Schulz 1993:462. While denying the permanency of ethnicity, Marr viewed class as a structure inherent to human nature, an idea well attuned to the Bolshevik ideology of the 1920s and to the policies of the Comintern. See Szykiewicz 1990:3; Taylor 1993:725; Shnirel'man 1995:122.

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himself was now inflicting the final blow when denouncing Marrism as "vulgar Marxism."³⁵

In the late 1960s, a "small revolution" (as Ernest Gellner called it) was taking place in Soviet anthropology. The tendency was now to treat ethnic identity as a self-evident aspect of ethnicity, though, like all other forms of consciousness, ethnic identity was still viewed as a derivative of objective factors. Soviet anthropologists now endeavored to find a place for ethnicity among specifically *cultural* phenomena, as opposed to social structure. To them, ethnic specificity was the objective justification for a subjective awareness of affiliation to a given *ethnos*. Despite considerable divergence as to what exactly constituted the "objective factors" of ethnicity (for some, language and culture; for others, territory or common origin), Soviet anthropologists viewed ethnicity as neither eternal, nor genetic, but as socially real and not a mystified expression of something else.³⁶

To many Soviet scholars of the 1960s and 1970s, ethnicity appeared as a culturally self-reproducing set of behavioral patterns linked to collective self-identity, which continued through different modes of production. Issues of continuity and discontinuity among ethnic entities and of their transformation were thus given theoretical and empirical attention as ethnic-related patterns of collective behavior. Ethnohistory became a major field of study and ethnogenesis, the process of formation of ethnic identity, replaced social formation as the main focus. This new concept of ethnicity was closely tied in to the ideology of ethno-nationalism, a politics in which ethnic groups legitimized their borders and status by forming administrative units or republics. The classification of "ethnic types" (tribe, *narodnost* ', and nation) involving Bromley's conceptual categorizations justified the administrative statehood granted to "titular nationalities," those which gave titles to republics.³⁷ Paradoxically, the Soviet approach to ethnicity could be best defined as primordialistic, despite its admixture of Marxist-Leninist theory. By claiming that ethnicities, once formed through ethnogeneses, remained essentially unchanged through history, Soviet anthropologists suggested that ethnic groups were formulated in a social and political vacuum. According to them.,, ethnicity was thus a given, requiring description, not explanation. To contemporary eyes, the academic discourse of ethno-nationalism in Eastern Europe in general and in the former Soviet Union, in particular,

³⁵ Stalin's concept of national history: Velychenko 1993:20; Shnirel'man 1995:130. Abandonment of Marrist theories: Klejn 1977:13; Dolukhanov 1996:5; Slezkine 1996:852-3.

³⁶ Gellner 1988:135; Bromley and Kozlov 1989:427; Dragadze 1980:164.

³⁷ Shanin 1989:413; Klejn 1981:13; Sellnow 1990; Tishkov 1994:444.

appears as strikingly tied to political rather than intellectual considerations. This may well be a consequence of the romanticization and mystification of ethnic identity, which is viewed as rooted in the ineffable coerciveness of primordial attachments.³⁸

The *communis opinio* is that the emergence of an instrumentalist approach to ethnicity is largely due to Fredrik Barth's influential book,³⁹ which ironically coincides in time with Bromley's "small revolution" in the Soviet Union. Ethnicity, however, emerged as a key problem with Edmund Leach's idea that social units are produced by subjective processes of categorical ascription that have no necessary relationship to observers' perceptions of cultural discontinuities. Before Barth, Western anthropologists had limited their investigation to processes taking place within groups, rather than between groups. All anthropological reasoning has been based on the premise that cultural variation is discontinuous and that there were aggregates of people who essentially shared a common culture, and interconnected differences that distinguish each such discrete culture from all others. Barth shed a new light on subjective criteria (ethnic boundaries) around which the feeling of ethnic identity of the member of a group is framed. Barth emphasized the *transactional* nature of ethnicity, for in the practical accomplishment of identity, two mutually interdependent social processes were at work, that of internal and that of external definition (categorization). By focusing on inter-ethnic, rather than intragroup social relations, Barth laid a stronger emphasis on social and psychological, rather than cultural-ideological and material factors. His approach embraced a predominantly social interactionist perspective, derived from the work of the social psychologist Erving Goffman. Objective cultural difference was now viewed as epiphenomenal, subordinate to, and largely to be explained with reference to, social interaction. Barth's followers thus built on concepts of the self and social role behavior typified by a dyadic transactional (the "we vs. them" perspective) or social exchange theory.⁴⁰

Because it was a variant of the general social psychological theory of self and social interaction, Barth's approach led to a high degree of predictability and extensibility to new contexts and situations, which, no doubt, was a primary determinant of its popularity. To be sure, the subjective approach to ethnicity, which is so often and almost exclusively attributed to Barth, long precedes him. Both Weber and Leach were aware of its significance. Another important, but notably ignored, scholar is the German historian Reinhard Wenskus. Eight years prior to the

³⁸ Banks 1996:186; Jones 1994:48. ³⁹ Barth 1969.

⁴⁰ Barth 1994:12. For the process of categorization, see also Jenkins 1994:198—9. For the relation between Barth's and Goffman's works, Buchignani 1987:16.

publication of Barth's book, Wenskus published a study of ethnic identity in the early Middle Ages, which would become the crucial breakthrough for studies of ethnicities in historiography. Wenskus' approach was based on the ideas of the Austrian anthropologist Wilhelm Muhlmann, himself inspired by the Russian ethnographer S. M. Shirogorov, the first to have used the concept of "subjective ethnicity." In a Weberian stance, Wenskus claimed that early medieval *Stamme* were not based on a biologically common origin, but on a strong *belief* in a biologically common origin. His approach, much like Barth's, focused on the subjective side of ethnic belonging and he specifically attacked the concept of ethnogenesis (as understood at that time by Soviet anthropologists) and the model of the family-tree in ethnohistory. He pointed out that "kernels of tradition" were much more important factors in making early medieval ethnic groups, for tradition also played an important political role, as suggested by the conceptual pair *lex* and *origo genus*, so dear to medieval chroniclers.⁴¹ Wenskus' approach is congenial with the more recent studies of the British sociologist Anthony Smith and was followed by some major contemporary medievalists.⁴² Though never clearly delineating its theoretical positions in regards to anthropology (though Wenskus himself has been more open to contemporary debates in the field), this current trend in medieval history quickly incorporated concepts readily available in sociological and anthropological literature. Patrick Geary, for instance, used the concept of "situational ethnicity" coined by Jonathan Okamura. He might have found it extremely useful that the structural dimension of situational ethnicity pointed to the essentially *variable* significance of ethnicity as an organizing principle of social relations. More recently, Walter Pohl cited Smith's concept of *mythomoteur* as equivalent to Wenskus' "kernel of tradition."⁴³

Both Barth and Wenskus tried to show that ethnic groups were socially constructed. According to both, it was not so much the group which

⁴¹ Wenskus 1961:14—18, etc. See also Jarnut 1985; Pohl 1994:11.

⁴² Smith 1984; 1986; 1995. See also Wolfram 1988; Pohl 1988; Heather 1996.

⁴³ Okamura 1981; Geary 1983; Pohl 1991:41. For the *mythomoteur* as the constitutive myth of the ethnic polity, see Smith 1986:15. Smith typically views ethnicity as "a matter of myths, symbols, memories, and values. They are 'carried' by forms and genres of artifacts and activities which change very slowly. Therefore, an *ethnic*, once formed, tends to be exceptionally durable under 'normal' vicissitudes" (1986:16 and 28). Smith also argues that "without a *mythomoteur* a group cannot define itself to itself or to others, and cannot inspire or guide effective action" (1986:25). There is, however, no attempt to explain the association between a particular "myth-symbol" complex and an *ethnie*, for Smith characteristically lists among the latter's components, "a distinctive shared culture" (1986:32). He thus seems to reproduce the general fallacy of identifying ethnic groups with discrete cultural units. More important, though recognizing that artifacts could provide a rich evidence of cultural identity, Smith argues that they "cannot tell anything [about] how far a community felt itself to be unique and cohesive" (1986:46).

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endured as the *idea* of group. They both argued that ethnic groups existed not in isolation, but in contrast to other groups. Unlike Wenskus, however, Barth does not seem to have paid too much attention to self-consciousness and the symbolic expression of ethnic identity. Enthusiasm for a transactional model of social life and for viewing ethnicity as process was accompanied in both cases by an interpretation of social relations as rooted in reciprocation, exchange and relatively equitable negotiation. In most cases, activation of ethnic identity was used to explain contextual ethnic phenomena, but this very ethnic identity, since it was not directly observable, had to be derived from the actor's "ethnic behavior." Barth's model of social interaction is so general that there is virtually nothing theoretically unique about ethnic phenomena explained through reference to it, for the model could be as well applied to other forms of social identity, such as gender. Despite its strong emphasis on ethnic boundary processes, Barth's approach does not, in fact, address issues concerning objective cultural difference (subsistence patterns, language, political structure, or kinship).

The instrumentalist approach received its new impetus from Abner Cohen, one of the important figures of the Manchester School, who published his *Custom- and Politics in Urban Africa* in 1969 (the same year in which Barth's book was published). Cohen's approach was more pragmatic. His main point was that political ethnicity (such as defined by Wenskus' students) was goal-directed ethnicity, formed by internal organization and stimulated by external pressures, and held not for its own sake but to defend an economic or political interest. To him, such ethnicity needed to be built upon some preexisting form of cultural identity rather than be conjured up out of thin air. Cohen's approach thus came very close to Wenskus' idea of ethnicity as constructed on the basis of a "kernel of tradition," or to Smith's concept of *mythomoteur*. Unlike them, however, Cohen concentrated on changes in corporate identification (not individual identification) and on the politicization of cultural differences in the context of social action. He paid attention to ethnicity as a social liability and thus opened the path for modern studies of ethnicity as a function of power relations.⁴⁴ Many students of ethnicity now concentrate on ethnicity as an "artifact," created by individuals or groups to bring together a group of people for some common purpose. They are increasingly concerned with the implications of ethnic boundary construction and the meaning of boundary permeability for when, how, and, especially, why groups selectively fashion "distinctive trait inventories,"

⁴⁴ Cohen 1969. For the study of ethnicity as a function of power relations, see McGuire 1982:171 and 173; Roosens 1989:158; Eriksen 1991:129.

symbolize group unity and mobilize members to act for economic or political gain, and "invent" traditions. Scholars now struggle with the counterfactual qualities of cultural logics that have made *ethnic* the label of self- and other-ascription in modern nation-states.⁴⁵

The emphasis of the post-Barthian anthropology of ethnicity has tended to fall on processes of group identification rather than social categorization.⁴⁶ Ethnicity as ascription of basic group identity on the basis of cognitive categories of cultural differentiation, is, however, very difficult to separate from other forms of group identity, such as gender or class. Moreover, both primordialist and instrumentalist perspectives tend to be based on conflicting notions of human agency manifested in an unproductive opposition between rationality and irrationality, between economic and symbolic dimensions of social practice. It has been noted that cultural traits by which an ethnic group defines itself never comprise the totality of the observable culture but are only *a combination* of some characteristics that the actors ascribe to themselves and consider relevant. People identifying themselves as an ethnic group may in fact identify their group in a primarily prototypic manner. Recognizable members may thus share *some* but not all traits, and those traits may not be equally weighted in people's minds.⁴⁷ How is this specific configuration constructed and what mechanisms are responsible for its reproduction?

A relatively recent attempt to answer this question resurrected the idea that ethnic groups are bounded social entities internally generated with reference to commonality rather than difference.⁴⁸ Bentley dismisses instrumentality by arguing that people live out an unconscious pattern of life, not acting in a rational, goal-oriented fashion. His approach draws heavily from Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus. Habitus is produced by the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment. It is a system of durable, transposable dispositions, "structured structures pre-disposed to function as structuring structures."⁴⁹ Those durable dispositions are inculcated into an individual's sense of self at an early age and can be transposed from one context to another. Habitus involves a form of socialization whereby the dominant modes of behavior and representation are internalized, resulting in certain dispositions which operate largely at a pre-conscious level. Ethnicity is constituted at the intersection of habitual dispositions of the agents concerned and the social conditions existing in a particular historical context. The content of ethnic

⁴⁵ Banks 1996:39; Williams 1992:609. ⁴⁶ Horowitz 1975:114.

⁴⁷ Jones 1994:42 and 61; Roosens 1989:12; Mahmood and Armstrong 1992:8.

⁴⁸ Bentley 1987. For a critique of Bentley's approach, see Yelvington 1991. For an earlier suggestion that ethnic identity may be the result of a learning process, see also Horowitz 1975:119.

⁴⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, cited by Bentley 1987:28.

identity is therefore as important as the boundary around it. An important issue, resulting from this approach, is that of the reproduction of identity on the level of interaction. The praxis of ethnicity results in multiple transient realizations of ethnic difference in particular contexts. These realizations of ethnicity are both structured and structuring, involving, in many instances, the repeated production and consumption of distinctive styles of material culture. The very process of ethnic formation is coextensive with and shaped by the manipulation of material culture. Bentley suggested that the vector uniting culture and ethnicity ran through daily social practice. He emphasized the cultural character of the process of ethnic identity creation, which provided a key reason for the emotional power associated with it. On this basis, the creation of ethnic identities should have repercussions in terms of the self-conscious use of specific cultural features as diacritical markers, a process which might well be recorded in material culture. Bentley's thrust coincides in time with an independent line of research inspired by Edmund Husserl and stressing ethnicity as a phenomenon of everyday life (*Alltagsleben*). Routine action, rather than dramatic historical experiences, foodways, rather than political action, are now under scrutiny. As the idea of ethnicity turns into a mode of action in the modern world, it becomes more relevant to study the very process by which the ethnic boundary is created in a specific social and political configuration.⁵⁰

WHAT IS *E THN IE*?

"Ethnicity" derives from the Greek word *ἔθνος*, which survives as a fairly common intellectual word in French, as *ethnie*, with its correlate adjective *ethnique*. The possible noun expressing what it is you have to have in order to be *ethnique* is not common in modern French. In English, the adjective exists as "ethnic" with a suffix recently added to give "ethnicity." But the concrete noun from which "ethnicity" is apparently derived does not exist. There is no equivalent to the *ἔθνος*, to the Latin *gens*, or to the French *ethnie*. Until recently, such a term was not needed, for it was replaced in the intellectual discourse by "race," a concept which did not distinguish very clearly, as we do today, between social, cultural, linguistic, and biological classifications of people, and tended to make a unity of all these.⁵¹ "Ethnicity," therefore, is an abstract noun, derived by non-vernacular morphological processes from a substantive

⁵⁰ Creation of ethnic identities: Jones 1996:72; Sherman 1989:16—7. Ethnicity and everyday life: Greverus 1978:97-8; Rasanen 1994:17-18; Tebbetts 1984:83 and 87; Tvengsberg 1991:17; Keefe 1992.

⁵¹ Chapman, McDonald, and Tonkm 1989:12; Jones 1997:40- 51. See also Johnson 1995:12.

that does not exist. It makes sense only in a context of relativities, of *processes* of identification, though it also aspires, in modern studies, to concrete and positive status, as an attribute and an analytical concept. Ethnicity is conceptualized as something that inheres in every group that is self-identifying as "ethnic," but there is no specific word for the end product of the process of identification. When it comes to designate the human group created on the basis of ethnicity, "ethnic group" is the only phrase at hand.

More recently, in an attempt to find the origins of modern nations, Anthony Smith introduced into the scholarly discourse the French term *ethnie*, in order to provide an equivalent to "nation" for a period of history in which nations, arguably, did not yet exist. Smith argues that ethnicity, being a matter of myths and symbols, memories and values, is carried by "forms and genres of artifacts and activities."⁵² The end product is what he calls an *ethnie*. The *ethnie* is a human group, a concrete reality generated by the meaning conferred by the members of that group over some generations, on certain cultural, spatial, and temporal properties of their interaction and shared experiences. Smith identifies six components of any *ethnie*: a collective name; a common myth of descent; a shared history; a distinctive shared culture; an association with a specific territory; and a sense of solidarity. He argues that in some cases, the sense of ethnic solidarity is shared only by the elite of a given *ethnie*, which he therefore calls a "lateral" or aristocratic *ethnie*. In other cases, the communal sense may be more widely diffused in the membership, such an *ethnie* being "vertical" or demotic. One can hardly fail to notice that to Smith, the *ethnie* is just the "traditional" form of the modern nation. His list of traits to be checked against the evidence is also an indication that, just as with Bromley's "ethnosocial organism," there is a tendency to reify ethnic groups and to treat ethnicity as an "it," a "thing" out there to be objectively measured and studied, albeit by means of ancestry myths rather than by language.⁵³

No scholar followed Smith's attempt to find a concrete noun to be associated with the more abstract "ethnicity." Terminology, however, does matter; it shapes our perceptions, especially of controversial issues. The use of Smith's *ethnie* in this book is simply a way to avoid confusion between the ethnic group and the phenomenon it supposedly instantiates (ethnicity). More important, if viewed as a result of a process of differentiation and identity formation, the use of *ethnie* suggests that ethnic groups are not "born," but made.

⁵² Smith 1986:16.

⁵³ Smith 1986:22, 32, 76-7, and 28, and 1984:29. For ethnic groups as "fiduciary associations," see Parsons 1975:61-2.

ETHNICITY, MATERIAL CULTURE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

It has become common knowledge that the foundations of the culture-historical school of archaeology were laid by the German archaeologist Gustaf Kossinna. Today, both archaeologists and historians attack Kossinna's tenets and, whenever possible, emphasize his association with Nazism and the political use of archaeology. No book on nationalism, politics, and the practice of archaeology could avoid talking about Kossinna as the archetypal incarnation of all vices associated with the culture-historical school. Kossinna's own work is rarely cited, except for his famous statement: "Sharply defined archaeological culture areas correspond unquestionably with the areas of particular peoples or tribes."⁵⁴ Kossinna linked this guiding principle to the retrospective method, by which he aimed at using the (ethnic) conditions of the present (or the historically documented past) to infer the situation in prehistory. The two together make up what he called the "settlement archaeological method" (*Siedlungsarchaologie*). It has only recently been noted that in doing so, Kossinna was simply using Oskar Montelius' typological method, which enabled him to establish time horizons for the chronological ordering of the material remains of the past.⁵⁵ Kossinna also stressed the use of maps for distinguishing between distribution patterns, which he typically viewed as highly homogeneous and sharply bounded cultural provinces. This method, however, was nothing new. Before Kossinna, the Russian archaeologist A. A. Spicyn had used the map to plot different types of earrings found in early medieval burial mounds in order to identify tribes mentioned in the *Russian Primary Chronicle*. Like Spicyn, Kossinna simply equated culture provinces with ethnic groups and further equated those groups with historically documented peoples or tribes. Attempts to identify ethnic groups in material culture date back to Romanticism, and represent correlates of linguistic concerns with finding *Ursprachen* and associating them to known ethnic groups. Many German archaeologists before Kossinna used the concept of culture province. Though not the first to attempt identifying archaeological cultures with ethnic groups, Kossinna was nevertheless the first to focus exclusively on this idea, which

⁵⁴ "Streng umrissene, scharf sich herausheben.de, geschlossene archaologische Kulturprovinzen fallen unbedingt mit bestimmten Volker- und Stammesgebiete" (Kossinna 1911:3 and 1936:15). For the association between Gustaf Kossinna and the culture-historical approach in "Germanophone" archaeology, see Amory 1997:334 with n. 10. Amory deplores the influence of "Continental archaeologists" working in the ethnic ascription tradition. See Amory 1997:335—6.

⁵⁵ Klejn 1974:16; Veit 1989:39. To Kossinna, the concept of closed-find (introduced into the archaeological discourse by the Danish archaeologist Christian Jiirgensen Thomsen and of crucial importance to Oskar Montelius) and the stratigraphic principle were less important than mere typology. See Trigger 1989:76, 78, and 157.

became his *Glaubenssatz*. He was directly inspired by the Romantic idea of culture as reflecting the national soul (*Volksgeist*) in every one of its elements.⁵⁶

The Berlin school of archaeology established by Kossinna emerged in an intellectual climate dominated by the Austrian *Kultkreis* school. The roots of biologizing human culture lie indeed not in Kossinna's original thought, but in the theory of migration developed by Fr. Ratzel and F. Graebner. According to Graebner, there are four means for determining whether migration (*Volkerwanderung*) caused the spread of cultural elements. First, one should look for somatic similarities possibly coinciding with cultural parallels. Second, one should check whether cultural and linguistic relationships coincide. Third, one should examine whether certain cultural elements are *schwerentlehnbar*, i.e., whether there are any obstacles to their transfer, in accord to Vierkandt's idea of readiness and need. If positive, the result may indicate that those cultural elements were carried by migrating groups. And finally, one should investigate whether two cultures occur entire (not fragmented or simplified) at two widely separated locations. This last argument gains strength with distance and also to the extent that the set of culture elements occurs in closed form. Wilhelm Schmidt, the founder of the journal *Antropos*, tended to speak of a *Kultkreis* even when only one element was present, for this was to him a clue of the earlier presence of other elements.⁵⁷

The concept of a philosophically derived nationalism, acquired in an intellectual context molded by Herders and Fichte's ideas applies therefore to Graebner, as well as to Kossinna. It is, however, a mistake to speak of Kossinna's blatant nationalism as causing his *Herkunft der Germanen*, for the first signs of his nationalistic views postdate his famous work. Though often viewed as Kossinna's main opponent, Carl Schuchhardt shared many of his ideas, including that of identifying ethnic groups by means of archaeological cultures. Wenskus was certainly right in pointing out that Kossinna's., mistake was not so much that he aimed at an ethnic interpretation of culture, than that he used a dubious concept of ethnicity, rooted in Romantic views of the *Volk*.⁵⁸ It is not the overhasty equation between archaeological cultures and ethnic groups that explains the extraordinary popularity the culture-historical paradigm enjoyed even among Marxist historians. Of much greater importance is the concept of *Volk* and its political potential. It is therefore no accident that after World

⁵⁶ For Spicyn, see Formozov 1993:71. For Romanticism, *Ursprachen*, and ethnic ascription, see Brachmann 1979:102. For the use of the concept of culture province before Kossinna, see Klejn 1974:13. For Kossinna's *Glaubenssatz*, see Eggers 1950:49.

⁵⁷ For the *Kulturkrds* school, see Lucas 1978:35—6.

⁵⁸ Wenskus 1961:137. Kossinna's political views: Smolla 1979—80:5.

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War II, despite the grotesque abuses of Kossinna's theories under the Nazi regime, this concept remained untouched. It was Otto Menghin, one of the main representatives of the prehistoric branch of the *Kulturkreislehre*, who began replacing the term *Volk* by the presumably more neutral and less dubious term "culture." Kossinna's post-war followers passed over in silence the fundamental issue of equating *Volker* and cultures.

Like Kossinna, Vere Gordon Childe used the concept of culture to refer to an essence, something intrinsically natural that preceded the very existence of the group, provoked its creation, and defined its character. But he began using the phrase "archaeological culture" as a quasi-ideology-free substitute for "ethnic group," and the very problem of ethnic interpretation was removed from explicit discussion. The standard demand now was a strict division between the arguments used by various disciplines studying the past, in order to avoid "mixed arguments." This latter error derived, however, from considering culture as mirroring the national soul. Since all cultural elements were imbued with *Volksgeist*, this organicist concept of culture allowed one to use information about one cultural element to cover gaps in the knowledge of another. "March separately, strike together" became the slogan of this attempt at "purifying" science and keeping apart the disciplines studying ethnicity.⁵⁹ In order to understand why and how Kossinna's ideas continued to be extremely popular in post-war Europe, we need to examine briefly the situation in a completely different intellectual environment, that of Soviet Russia.

We have seen that a culture-historical approach was used by Spicyn some ten years before Kossinna. Much like in Germany, Spicyn and his colleagues' endeavors to unearth the national past had a great impact on pre-1917 Russian historiography.⁶⁰ Some of Spicyn's students became major figures of the Soviet school of archaeology. Marr's theories and the cultural revolution, however, drastically altered this intellectual configuration. In the early 1930s, such concepts as "migration" and "archaeological cultures" were literally banned, being replaced by a bizarre concept of ethnic history, in which stages of development were equated to certain historically attested ethnic groups. Marxism in its Stalinist version was brutally introduced in archaeology and the culture-historical paradigm

³⁹ For Vere Gordon Childe's concept of "archaeological culture," see Diaz-Andreu 1996:48. For the separation of disciplines, see Klejn 1981:20; Veit 1989:43. ⁶⁰ Some of Kliuchevskii's students (Iu. V. Got'e, S. K. Bogoiavlevskii, N. P. Miliukov) participated in excavations of burial mounds. Kliuchevskii's successor at the chair of Russian history at the University of Moscow opened his course not with Kievan Rus', but with the Palaeolithic (Formozov 1993:71). This approach is remarkably similar to Dolukhanov's recent book on the early Slavs (1990:ix—x).

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was replaced with internationalism that required scholars to study only global universal regularities that confirmed the inevitability of socialist revolutions outside Russia. Closely following Marr, Soviet archaeologists now stressed the association between migrationist concepts and racism, imperialism, and territorial expansionism. But following the introduction of Stalinist nationalist policies of the late 1930s, this new paradigm quickly faded away. As Stalin had set historians the task to combat actively the fascist falsifications of history, the main focus of archaeological research now shifted to the prehistory of the Slavs. Archaeologists involved in tackling this problem have, however, been educated in the years of the cultural revolution and were still working within a Marrist paradigm. Mikhail I. Artamonov first attempted to combine Marrism and Kossinnism, thus recognizing the ethnic appearance of some archaeological assemblages, which rehabilitated the concept of "archaeological culture." The attitude toward migration and diffusion also changed from prejudice to gradual acceptance, though the general philosophical principles on which Soviet archaeology was based remained the same. As a consequence of this strange alliance, Soviet archaeologists tended to focus on two main issues: isolating archaeological cultures and interpreting them in ethnic terms; explaining the qualitative transformations in culture.⁶¹

The culture-ethnic concept was thus rehabilitated. A. Ia. Briusov believed that archaeological cultures reflected groups of related tribes in their specific historic development, while Iu. M. Zakharuk equated archaeological cultures not simply with ethnic groups, but also with linguistic entities. Finally, M. Iu. Braichevskii claimed that no assemblage could be identified as culture, if it did not correspond to a definite ethnic identity. After 1950, Soviet archaeologists completely abandoned Marrist concepts and Soviet archaeology became of a kind that would have been easily recognizable to Kossinna and which would have been amenable to the kind of culture-historical *Siedlungsarchdologie* he developed. Mikhail I. Artamonov, the main artisan of this change, claimed that ethnicity remained unchanged through historical change, which could not alter its specific qualities. Russians living under Peter the Great's rule were just those of Kievan Rus' in a different historical environment. One can hardly miss the striking parallel to Bromley's idea of *ethnikos*. Indeed, Bromley's theories made a great impression on Soviet archaeologists. On the basis of this alliance with the theory of *ethnos*, archaeology now became the "science about ethnogenesis." Indeed,

⁶¹ Shnirel'man 1995:124; Ganzha 1987:142; Klejn 1977:14.

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continuity of material culture patterning was now systematically interpreted as ethnic continuity.⁶²

The culture-historical approach made extensive use of the concept of culture. This concept carried many assumptions which were central to nineteenth-century classifications of human groups, in particular an overriding concern with holism, homogeneity, and boundedness. Traditionally, the archaeological culture was defined in monothetic terms on the basis of the presence or absence of a list of traits or types, which had either been derived from the assemblages or a type site, or were intuitively considered to be most appropriate attributes in the definition of the culture. In practice, no group of cultural assemblages from a single culture ever contains all of the cultural artifacts, a problem first acknowledged by Vere Gordon Childe. Childe's response was to discard the untidy information by demoting types with discontinuous frequency from the rank of diagnostic types, thus preserving the ideal of an univariate cultural block. Culture-historical archaeologists regarded archaeological cultures as actors on the historical stage, playing the role for prehistory that known individuals or groups have in documentary history. Archaeological cultures were thus easily equated to ethnic groups, for they were viewed as legitimizing claims of modern groups to territory and influence. The first criticism against the equivalence of archaeological cultures and ethnic groups came from within the framework of culture-history, but critiques usually consisted of cautionary tales and attributed difficulties to the complexity and incompleteness of the artifactual record, without calling into question the assumption of an intrinsic link between artifacts and groups. The general response in the face of such problems was therefore a retreat into the study of chronology and typology as ends in themselves, and the emergence of debates concerning the meaning of archaeological types, in particular whether such types represent ethnic categories imposed by the archaeologist or ethnic categories of their producers.⁶³

The processualist approach associated with the American-based school of thought known as the New Archaeology never seriously tackled this

⁶² Briusov 1956; Artamonov 1971. See also Shennan 1989: 29; Klein 1993:43. To Wenskus (1961:113 with n. 1), these new trends in Soviet archaeology appeared in 1961 as "curiously" similar to Kossinna's approach. Bromley's theories are cited by Irina P. Rusanova in the introduction to a recent collection of studies dedicated to Proto-Slavic cultures. Rusanova (1993:5) believes that, since there are no two ethnic groups (*twroda*) with the same culture, it is worth trying to identify the Slavs by archaeological means.

⁶³ Klejn 1974:225 and 1981:18; Jones 1994:29 and 82; Hides 1996:26. For the earlier criticism of the idea that archaeological cultures were equivalent to ethnic groups, see Wahle 1941. For Childe's views, see Childe 1956:33 and 124. For similar views in the Soviet archaeology of the early 1960s, see Ganzha 1987:147-8.

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problem.⁶⁴ Instead of answering the normative question "What do cultures relate to?", American archaeologists of the 1960s and the early 1970s simply took away the emphasis from such questions, as they now concentrated on the adaptive role of the components of cultural systems. According to the New Archaeology, culture is not shared; it is participated in. However, though criticizing the idea that all material culture distributions represent variation in the ideational norms of different ethnic groups, processualist archaeologists continued to accept the idea that some bounded archaeological distributions (if only in the domain of stylistic variation) correlate with past ethnic groups. Nor did Barth's ideas change this perspective too much, for the social interaction model rests on the assumption that stylistic characteristics will diffuse or be shared among social entities to an extent directly proportional to the frequency of interactions between these entities, such as intermarriage, trade, or other forms of face-to-face communication.⁶⁵

In order to verify this assumption, the British archaeologist Ian Hodder chose East Africa as a suitable place for an ethnoarchaeological study of how spatial patterning of artifacts relates to ethnic boundaries. In his study of ethnic boundaries in the Baringo district of Kenya, Hodder found that, despite interaction across tribal boundaries, clear material culture distinctions were maintained in a wide range of artifact categories. He argued that distinct material culture boundaries were foci of interaction, not barriers. Hodder showed that material culture distinctions were in part maintained in order to justify between-group competition and negative reciprocity, and that such patterning increased in time of economic stress. However, not all cultural traits were involved in such differentiation, since, typically, interaction continued between competing groups. Boundaries did not restrict movement of all traits and the between-group interaction and the diffusion of cultural styles was sometimes used to disrupt the ethnic distinctions. Hodder thus suggested that the use of material culture in distinguishing between self-conscious ethnic groups would lead to discontinuities in material culture distributions which may enable the archaeologist to identify such groups. The form of intergroup relations is usually related to the internal organization of social relationships within the group. In the case of the Baringo, between-group differentiation and hostility was linked to the internal

⁶⁴ For the history and basic tenets of the New Archaeology school, see Trigger 1989:289-328; Flannery 1982. For the processualist approach to ethnicity, see Hodder 1982:5; Hegnion 1992:528; Jones 1994:83.

⁶⁵ -jj^ assumption that propinquity produces stylistic (cultural) homogeneity forms the basis of the •so-called "Deetz-Longacre hypothesis." See Braun and Flog 1982:509; Roe 1995:51—2.

sets and the domination of women and young men by old men.⁶⁶

Hodder provided another example of the way in which individuals may manipulate ethnic identity for their own goals. The Maasai sometimes "became" Dorobo in order to escape drought, raiding, or government persecution. But, though the Dorobo had a real separate existence in the conscious thoughts of those who called themselves by this name, there was no symbolic expression of any differences between Dorobo and Maasai. Different groups may manipulate material culture boundaries in different ways depending upon the social context, the economic strategies chosen, the particular history of the socioeconomic relations, and the particular history of the cultural traits which are actively articulated within the changing system.⁶⁷

Hodder's study suggests that the symbolic status and cultural meaning of material items determine the morphology and distribution of those items within and beyond a single society. Though ethnicity may involve certain aspects of culture, the choice of distinctive cultural styles is not arbitrary, for the signification of self-conscious identity is linked to the generative structures which infuse all aspects of cultural practice and social relations characterizing a particular way of life. Hodder observed, for instance, that though there were no zooarchaeological indications of ethnicity *per se*, meat-eating, the division of the carcass, or the dispersal of bones always had a symbolic content behind which there was a conceptual order. This seems to come very close to Bentley's point that the cultural practices and representations which become objectified as symbols of ethnicity are derived from, and resonate with, the habitual practices and experiences of the agents involved, as well as reflect the instrumental contingencies of a particular situation. Thus, the ethnic differences are constituted in the mundane as well as in the decorative, for the "tribal" distinctions and negative reciprocity become acceptable and are "naturalized" by their continual repetition in both public and private.⁶⁸

There is a problematic circularity in Hodder's definition of culture, as

⁶⁶ Hodder 1982:27, 31, 35, 85, 187, and 205; Jones 1994:90-1; Watson 1995:91. Roy Larick's more recent ethnoarchaeological research in Kenya corroborates Hodder's conclusions. In Loikop communities studied by Larick, spears, which play an important role in the construction of ethnicity, are constantly appropriated in the signification of age differentiation among the male population. See Larick 1986 and 1991. ⁶⁷ Hodder 1982:104. See also Lyons 1987:108. Hodder 1982:56 and

⁶⁸ 161; Jones 1994:98 and 104. For faunal remains and ethnicity, see Crabtree 1990:181; Hesse 1990:198. Recently, it has been argued that the roomsize pattern may be related to the proxemic values of the ethnic group that produced the space. On an individual level, this proxemic system is shaped to a great extent during enculturation as a child. Conformity to external social constraints brings in the role of the dwelling as a symbol. See Baldwin 1987:163 and 169; Kobylinski 1989:309.

artifacts actively manipulated in the negotiation of identities based on age, gender, or ethnicity. The meaning of the artifact is derived from its context, and its context is defined by those associated artifacts which give it meaning. Moreover, material culture is not primarily semiotic in character. Its structure is not essentially syntactical, but rather consists of "constellations" of knowledge, which inhere in the immanent relation between actor and material. The "meaning" of artifacts is not primarily semantic, in that artifacts do not communicate about anything. Their "meaning" inheres in and through their use and their design for use. Material objects instantiate cognition in that they embody practices. They record a now-extinct relationship between an actor and the material world. Material culture is therefore fundamentally social: an artifact embodies a transaction, its manufacture represents the transfer of action from its maker to its users or, in the case of the exchange of artifacts, the transfer of use between actors. Artifacts are thus rendered "appropriate" for use *only* in social context. Decisions about the use of artifacts are, however, embodied in artifacts themselves in terms of the conventions of culture. Artifacts are not properties of a society, but part of the life of that society. They cannot and should not be treated as "phenotypic" expressions of a preformed identity. Ethnic identity, therefore, represents a kind of polythesis. What should concern archaeologists is not so much what people do, what kind of pots they make, what shape of houses they build, but the "way they go about it."⁶⁹

ETHNICITY AND STYLE

The common notion that style is primarily expressive assumes that the primary use of material culture is to reinforce ethnic boundaries. Style may indeed be used to express ethnic identity, but convention is effectively the vocabulary from which expressive style is drawn. This is why most archaeologists expect material correlates of ethnically specific behaviors to be better and more frequently represented in the archaeological record than the material symbols of ethnic identification.⁷⁰

The basic point of contention in recent debates about style is the question whether style symbolizes ethnicity, because it is intended by artisans to do just that or because it just happens to do so for other, perhaps less purposeful, reasons. Another controversial issue is whether style resides

⁶⁹ Graves-Brown 1996:90—1; Graves 1995:165.

⁷⁰ McGuire 1982:163; Giardino 1985:17 and 22. It is therefore wrong to take *a priori* individual pottery types or decoration, ceramic design elements, design layout, surface treatment, etc., as ethnic indicators. See Kleppe 1977:39; Esse 1992:102-3; Kobylinski 1989:306-7; Cordell and Yannie 1991:98—9.

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in particular sorts of artifacts which have a social rather than a practical function or in all sorts of artifacts, from ceramics to tools, along with other qualities such as function.

The traditional approach borrowed from art history held that each group had its own style, which it had preserved through history, for it was assumed that cultures were extremely conservative. In their criticism of this culture-historical approach, processualist archaeologists argued that style is a "residue," properties of material culture not accounted for in *primitiva facie* functional terms. They also argued that material mediation is primarily practical and only secondarily expressive. As a consequence, style must be treated as a form of social status communication, which reduces style to a particular form of practical mediation, since no matter what meaning style may have "said" or had for its producers, its "real" cause is founded on the adaptive advantage it granted to its users. Moreover, this function of style is realized over a long period of time, beyond the life experience of any particular generation. Thus, its consequences are outside the awareness of the actors and always work "behind their backs."⁷¹

But style and function are not distinct, self-contained, mutually exclusive realms of form in themselves, but instead complementary dimensions or aspects of variation that coexist within the same form. If both style and function are simultaneously present in the artifactual form, then the question is how can we tell when, and to what extent, the observed makeup of an assemblage reflects ethnicity and when, and to what extent, it reflects activity? James Sackett attempted to make a radical break with the residual view of style by invoking isochrestic variation, which he defined as the practical or utilitarian variation in objective properties of material culture things that makes no functional mediation difference. As a consequence, isochrestic variation grounds style and style is an intrinsic, rather than an added-on, or adjunct, function. In Sackett's view, style is thus a "built-in." Isochrestic variation permeates all aspects of social and cultural life and provides the means by which members of a group express their mutual identity, coordinate their actions, and bind themselves together. It could thus be viewed as idiomatic or diagnostic of ethnicity. Such views seem to be rooted in those assumptions of holism, homogeneity, and boundedness, which, as shown above, characterize the nineteenth-century concept of culture.⁷²

In contrast, Polly Wiessner argued that style is a form of non-verbal communication through doing something in a certain way that

⁷¹ Franklin 1989:278; Pasztory 1989:17; Byers 1991:3; David, Sterner, and Gavua 1988:365 and 378—9. ⁷² Sackett 1985, 1986, and 1990. See also Byers 1991:10; Hegeron 1994:172.

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communicates about relative identity. Her approach is inspired by the information-exchange theory, which emphasizes that differences in stylistic behavior result more from social constraints on the choosing of alternative decorative options during the act of decoration than from the social context in which a person learned his/her decorative repertoire. Max Wobst first proposed the idea that style operates as an avenue of communication. Wobst was working within a functionalist, system-theory paradigm and he argued that since style is a relatively expensive form of communication, stylistic information exchange will only be used in certain contexts so as to maximize efficiency. Wiessner attacked this position by rightly pointing out that in identity displays efficiency of message is not a major concern. On the contrary, identity displays are often extravagant, the resources and effort expended being an index of ability and worth. Moreover, stylistic messages need not be clear or uniform, and in fact a certain amount of ambiguity may help achieve the desired effect.⁷³

Wobst has raised another important problem. By stressing the communicative role of style he implied that not *all* material culture variation should be viewed as style. Rather style is only that part of material culture variation which conveys information about relative identity. Style is an *intentional*, structured system of selecting certain dimensions of form, process or principle, function, significance, and affect from among known, alternate, possibilities to create variability within a behavioral-artifactual corpus. Polly Wiessner even argued that one could differentiate between "emblemic style," which has a distinct referent and transmits a clear message to a defined target population about conscious affiliation or identity, and "assertive style," which is personally based and carries information supporting individual identity. Because emblemic style carries a distinct message, it should undergo strong selection for uniformity and clarity, and because it marks and maintains boundaries, it should be distinguished archaeologically by uniformity within its realm of function.⁷⁴

Style may be viewed as the pattern we make around a particular event, recalling and creating similarities and differences. It only exists in these repetitions and contrasts. But variation expressed in material items is multireferential, as Wiessner suggested, which implies that style is likely to be heavily invested with multiple levels of symbolic coding. When used as a tool in social strategies, style provides the potential for the control of the meaning and thus for power. Recent studies demonstrate

⁷³ Wiessner 1983:257, 1985:161, and 1990:107. For style as a form of communication, see Wobst 1977. See also Braun and Plog 1982:510; Hegmon 1992:521, ⁷⁴ Wiessner 1983:257-8.

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that emblematic style appears at critical junctures in the regional political *SWMIMYi Yfh?*ⁿ changing; social relations would impel displays of group identity. It has been argued, on the other hand, that with the initial evolution of social stratification and the rise of chiefdoms, considerable stylistic variability may exist between communities in clothing and display items. At the regional level, however, iconography and elite status become important to legitimize and "naturalize" the inherent inequality in these systems. Extensive interchiefdom trade and shared political ideology serve to deliver rare and foreign objects linked symbolically to universal forces.⁷⁵

CONCLUSION

Understanding ethnicity in the past presents a particular challenge. The sweeping survey of the most relevant literature on ethnicity and material culture reveals that both topics have undergone considerable re-evaluation in recent years, with many older assumptions being questioned. The increased interest in ethnicity, in general, and in the use of material culture for its construction, in particular, means that the old questions can be now looked at in new ways. Early medieval ethnicities are one of the most lively areas of current research.⁷⁶ The large volume of new material generated analytical advances of the first importance. Clearly it is misleading, if not impossible, to generalize over so wide an area and so eventful a chronological span. But modern historiography abounds in confident value-judgments about early medieval *ethnies*, many of which still rest on unacknowledged assumptions about what ethnicity is and how it works. As a conclusion to this chapter, therefore, it might be helpful to state clearly the assumptions on which this study is based. Its premise is that early medieval ethnicity was embedded in sociopolitical relations just as modern ethnicity is. Ethnicity was socially and culturally constructed, a form of social mobilization used in order to reach certain political goals. Then, just as now, an *ethnie* was built upon some preexisting cultural identity, in a prototypic manner. But ethnicity is also a matter of daily social practice and, as such, it involves manipulation of material culture. Since material culture embodies practices, "emblematic style" is a way of communicating by non-verbal means about relative identity. Because it carries a distinct message, it is theoretically possible that it was used to mark and maintain boundaries, including ethnic ones. But ethnicity is also a function of power relations. Both "emblematic style" and "tradition"

⁷⁵ Hodder 1990:45—6; Macdonald 1990:53; McLaughlin 1987; Earle 1990:74—5. See also Byers 1991:12; Pasztor 1989:36. ⁷⁶ Pohl 1988; Wood 1995; Heather 1996; Amory 1993 and 1997.

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become relevant particularly in contexts of changing power relations, which impel displays of group identity. In most cases, both symbols and "tradition" will entail a discussion, *of* the power configuration in the Slavic society, with an emphasis on the political forces which may **have** been responsible for the definition of symbols, their organization and hierarchization. In asking what developments in material culture accompanied the making of a Slavic *ethnie*, I will therefore alternate the focus between power and style.

Chapter 2

SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY SLAVS (c. 500-700)

Much of what we know about sixth- and seventh-century Slavs comes from works of contemporary authors writing in Greek and, to a lesser extent, in Latin or Syriac. The majority did not pay special attention to the Slavs, but simply mentioned them and a few other things about them in connection to events relevant to the history of the Empire. Some were accounts of eyewitnesses, but most were written long after the event or at a considerable distance. Their coverage is patchy, and the basic narrative has to be reconstructed from a wide variety of standpoints and perspectives. This chapter will examine some of the issues concerning authorship, trustworthiness, and dating, which might be relevant for the image of the Slavs resulting from early medieval sources. The following chapter will take into consideration the image which is often derived from these accounts.

PROCOPIUS AND JORDANES

Procopius was often viewed as the voice of the senatorial opposition to Justinian's regime. He is believed to have addressed an audience still fond of Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides. His description of the Slavic god as the "maker of lightning" (xov TTJS aaTpaTrrfjs Snpioupyov) is indeed reminiscent of Sophocles. The episode of the "phoney Chilbudius" betrays the influence of the neo-Attic comedy and, possibly, of Plautus. There is also a weak echo of Thucydides where Procopius claims that he had written about buildings which he had seen himself, or heard described by others who had seen them.¹

¹ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.23 and vn 14.11-16; *Buildings* VI 7.18. See Sophocles, *Aias* 1035: E x K £,icpos . . . Ai8rj\$ 8r)iJtQupyd\$ aypto\$. See also Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:221 and 231-2. Procopius, the senatorial opposition, and classical models: Irmscher 1969:470; Benedicty 1965:52-3; Irmscher 1971:340. See also Cesa 1982:203. For Procopius' concept of God and gods, see Veh 1951:21 and 23; Elferink 1967.

Sources

Despite his credentials as an eyewitness reporter, however, his account could hardly be checked, for he usually does not mention his sources. But doubts are rarely, if ever, raised about the authenticity of his account. It is nevertheless very likely that, except the regions in the immediate vicinity of the Capital, Procopius hardly knew the Balkan area other than from maps.² He probably had contact with the Slavs in Italy, where he was at Belisarius' side as his legal advisor and secretary.³ In 542, Procopius was back in Constantinople, where he certainly was an eyewitness to the plague. The writing of the *Wars* may have already started in the 540s, but Books 1—VII containing material relevant to the Slavs were only completed in 550 or 551, probably at the same time as the *Secret History*.⁴ As for the *Buildings*, with its controversial date, Procopius seems to have left it unfinished. Some have argued that parts of the *Buildings*, if not the entire work, must have been written in 559/60. There is, however, a reference to the recent strengthening of the fortifications of Topeiros, after the city has been sacked by Slavene marauders in 550, as narrated in the *Wars*. There are several other indications that Procopius had formed the plan of writing the *Buildings* while he was still at work on the very different *Secret History*. If the two works were contemporary, we can date them with some exactitude before May 7, 558, the date of the collapse of the dome of Hagia Sophia (an event not mentioned in Procopius' *Buildings*). It is thus possible that the first books of the *Buildings* (including the reference to the Slavenes in book iv) were written before 558 and remained unrevised, probably because of their authors untimely death.⁵

Procopius' view of the Slavs is a function of his general concept of *oikumene*. An analysis of his diplomatic terminology reveals his idea of an empire surrounded by "allies" (EVOTTOVSOI), such as the Saracens, the

² Procopius' description of the road between Strongylum and Rhegium, on the *via Egnatia*, leaves the impression that he has seen the coarse paving stones with his own eyes (*Buildings* iv 8). But the lack of coherence in the direction of the author's account of Illyricum and Thrace may reflect the lack of personal experience of the area. Other details, such as the use of Mysia for Moesia (Inferior), may be attributed to the influence of Homer, (*Buildings* iv 6; *Iliad* xm 5). See Veh 1951:35 with n. 18; Cesa 1982:203; Cameron 1985:13 and 220 with n. 96; Litavrin 1986:25; Adshead 1990:108.

³ After the first siege of Ronie, Procopius was sent to Naples, in charge of supplies for the army, and then to Auximum, in 539/40, where Slavene mercenaries were used by Belisarius to capture some Ostrogoths from the besieged city (*Wars* vi 26.16—22). See Evans 1970:219; Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:171; Anfert'ev 1991:132.

⁴ Veh 1951:9; Evans 1972:37; Cameron 1985:8; Greatrex 1994:102, For a different, but unconvincing, dating of the *Secret History*, see Scott 1987:217.

⁵ Evans 1969:30. For Topeiros, see *Buildings* iv 11.14—17; *Wars* VII 38.9—19. In his *Buildings*, Procopius places the capture of the city 01) TFQAACJ eu.Trpo.00ev. He also lists the Goths among the Empire's neighbors on the Danube frontier, which could only refer to the pre-555 situation (iv 1). See Veh 1951:9; Whitby 1985:145; Scott 1987:220; Greatrex 1994:113 and 1995. See also Beshevliev 1967b: 276.

Lombards, the Gepids, the Goths, the Cutrigurs, and the Antes. The Sclavenes do not belong to this group, most probably because Procopius viewed them as "new." Indeed, among all forty-one references to Sclavenes or Antes in Procopius' work, there is no use of the adverbs $\tau\rho\alpha\alpha\iota\omicron\nu\upsilon$, $\tau\rho\alpha\alpha\iota$, $\alpha\epsilon\iota$, $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon$, or $\kappa\upsilon\epsilon\kappa\chi\omicron\epsilon\upsilon\upsilon$, while all verbs used in reference to settlement ($\omicron\kappa\epsilon\kappa\omicron$, $\iota\beta\rho\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\alpha\iota$, $\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\alpha\iota$) appear in the present tense or in the medium voice. Procopius constantly referred to Sclavenes in relation to Antes and Huns or to other nomads. When talking about Slavic dwellings, he employed $\kappa\alpha\chi\upsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, a phrase he only used for military tents and for Moorish compounds. Both this phrase and the claim that the Slavs set up their dwellings far from one another betray the influence of military terminology.⁶

The Slavic ethnographic *excursus* is nevertheless the longest in all of his work. It includes a rich list of topics: political organization, religion, dwellings, warfare, language, physical appearance, ethnic name, and territory. It is thus the richest of all *excursus*, an indication of the special interest of both Procopius and his audience for things Slavic. Moreover, the Slavic *excursus* shows that, despite claims to the contrary, Procopius' attitude toward Sclavenes is altogether not hostile, for to him they are neither $\delta\rho\iota\pi\iota\kappa\beta\delta\rho\iota\varsigma$, nor $\alpha\upsilon\pi\iota\delta\rho\rho\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\varsigma$, as most other barbarians are described (e.g., the Herules).⁷ Most of this *excursus* was probably written on the basis of the information Procopius obtained through interviews with Slavene and Antian mercenaries in Italy. His knowledge of the Slavs in the period following his return to Constantinople seems, however, to have been primarily based on archival material and oral sources.⁸ In the main narrative of the *Wars*, the accounts of Slavene raids are often introduced by temporal clauses, as if Procopius is striving to synchronize events in the Balkans with those in Italy or on the eastern frontier. He even suggests that a certain Slavene raid may have not been an accident, but a deliberate attempt by Totila to keep Roman armies occupied in the Balkans.⁹

⁶ Sclavenes, Antes, and Huns: *Wars* v 27.2; vn 14.2; *Secret History* 18.20; Slavic dwellings: *Wars* vn 14.24. See Gindin 1988:180-1. See also Ivanov 1987:31; Gindin 1987:24-5; Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:224.

⁷ Cesa 1982:207 and 212. For a cautious approach to Procopius' digressions and "origins"-passages, see Cameron 1985:213.

⁸ Veh 1951:11; Litavrin 1986:27. Procopius' Constantinopolitan perspective is betrayed by his account of the Slavene invasion of 549 (*Wars* vn 38.21—3). Procopius tells us that after crossing the Danube river, the 3,000 Slavene warriors split into two groups, operating independently. One group attacked the cities in Thrace, the other invaded Illyricum. But Procopius' account focuses only on those Sclavenes who approached the walls of Constantinople and completely ignores those raiding Illyricum. It is likely that Procopius used an oral source for the obviously exaggerated figure of 15,000 prisoners taken by the Sclavenes after capturing Topeiros, as well as for the report of their torture and execution (*Wars* vn 38.23). The latter is an accurate description of the torture known in Late Antiquity as $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\upsilon\iota\alpha\pi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ and specifically associated with Christian martyrdom; see Vergote 1972:118-19, 125, and 139-40. ⁹ *Wars* vn 29.1, vn 38.1, vn 40. 31. See Cesa 1982:199.

If Procopius imagined the Slavs as newcomers and nomads, Jordanes viewed them totally different. In writing the *Getica*, Jordanes may have engaged in a polemic with Procopius over the issue of the Empire's attitude toward barbarians, particularly Goths. Their respective treatment of Sclavenes and Antes suggests that Jordanes' polemic with his contemporary may have been broader than that. In an attempt to establish a quasi-legendary origin for the Slavs, Jordanes points to Venethi, Procopius to Spori. Procopius classifies Sclavenes and Antes as nomads, Jordanes gives them swamps and forests for cities. Procopius locates the Sclavenes close to the Danube frontier of the Empire, while Jordanes moves them northward as far as the Vistula river. Procopius maintains that the Sclavenes and the Antes "are not ruled by one man, but they have lived from of old under a democracy"; Jordanes gives the Antes a king, Boz. The number of examples could easily be multiplied. The evidence is too compelling to rule out the possibility that Jordanes was responding to Procopius' account. The coincidence in time of their works also supports this idea.¹⁰

Jordanes ended his *Getica* shortly before the *Romana*, in 550 or 551. According to him, the Antes were the strongest among all Venethi, a possible allusion to their treaty with Justinian, in 545. Despite serving as *notarius* to a certain general of the Empire named Gunthigis or Baza, Jordanes wrote *Getica* in Constantinople. From his work he appears to have been familiar with the horizons and viewpoint of the military or court circles in the Capital.¹¹ The preface to *Getica* contains a long paragraph borrowed from the preface of Rixifmus to his translation of Origen's commentary on *Romans*. This suggests that Jordanes was not only a devout Christian, but also familiar with serious theology at a time when Origen was a controversial author. Jordanes apparently wrote in a sort of semi-retirement after his *conversio*, as a devout elderly layman deeply mindful of the transience of earthly life but nonetheless possessed of strong views on the state of the Roman world, and the immediate directions that imperial policy should take.¹²

What was Jordanes' source of information about Sclavenes and Antes? The issue of Jordanes' sources for his *Getica* is one of the most controversial. Nineteenth-century scholars claimed that Jordanes did no

¹⁰ Jordanes, *Getica* 35; Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.22. For the polemic between Jordanes and Procopius, see Goffart 1988:93—5 and 101.

¹¹ The Antes as the strongest of all Venethi: *Getica* 35; Jordanes as *notarius*: *Getica* 266. Date of *Getica*: Varady 1976:487; Crake 1987:126; Anfert'ev 1991:99. Walter Goffart (1988:106-7) proposed the *Getica* was written before 552, but his ideas were met with criticism: Heather 1991:44 and 47-9; Anton 1994:280 and 283. For *Getica* as written in Constantinople, see Wagner 1967:27; Croke 1987:119-20; Goffart 1988:106—7; Anfert'ev 1991:98.

¹² Croke 1987:134; see also O'Donnell 1982:227 and 240. Justinian's advisor in matters regarding adherents and opponents of the council at Chalcedon was Bishop Theodore Ascidas of Caesarea, an enthusiastic supporter of Origen's doctrines. It is on Theodore's advice that Justinian issued the famous edict of the Three Chapters in 543/4. See Moorhead 1994:130.

more than copy, with slight alterations, the now-lost *Gothic History* of Cassiodorus. Others tend to give him credit for originality. In fact, there is little evidence to claim that Jordanes did more than use a cursory abridgement of Cassiodorus' work as the basis for a work of his own.¹³ Could the information about the Slavs have come from Cassiodorus? For his digression on Scythia, Jordanes cites the "written records" of the Goths, which was often interpreted as an indication that Jordanes used Cassiodorus as a source. In fact, the passage looks more like an insertion by Jordanes. Jordanes calls one and the same river Viscla when referring to Sclavenes, and Vistula, when speaking of Venethi. This was interpreted as an indication of two different sources. In the case of the Venethi, the source may have been an ancient work similar to Ptolemy's geography. It is equally possible, however, that Jordanes was inspired here by Tacitus, for, like him, he constantly associates Venethi with Aesti. Some argued that the name Viscla indicates a Gothic oral source. However, the river is named Vistla three times by Pliny the Elder. Moreover, one of these references is associated with the Venedi. A citation from Pliny's work by Julius Solinus is rendered by some manuscripts as Vistla, by others as Viscla. That Jordanes used Solinus has long been demonstrated by Mommsen. It is therefore very likely that Jordanes borrowed Viscla not from an oral source, but from a manuscript of the third-century *Collection of Remarkable Facts*.¹⁴ Jordanes' sources seem to have been written, rather than oral. This is also true for the passage referring to the conquest of Venethi by Ermenaric. The king of the Ostrogoths had subdued many tribes, which Jordanes calls *thiudos*. It is possible that both this term and the list of tribal names were derived from a Gothic source, but there is no indication that this was an oral one. Jordanes' source for the subjugation of the Herules is Ablabius. Is it possible that his account of Ermenaric's victory over the Venethi originated in either the "Gothic source" or Ablabius? In my opinion, the answer must be negative for a variety of reasons. First, unlike the Herules, whom Jordanes describes as living near Lake Maeotis, the only thing he has to say about Venethi is that they were "a multitude of cowards of no avail." Second, the reference to God in this passage looks more like a commentary by Jordanes, with his idea of Divine Providence as the main force behind all events. Third, the passage contains a cross-reference, by which Jordanes, as if not willing to repeat himself, sends us back to the "catalogue of nations" for further information on Venethi.

¹³ Bradley 1966:79; Croke 1987:121; see also Baldwin 1981:145. For the relation between Cassiodorus and Jordanes, see Anton 1994:275—6.

¹⁴ The "written records" of the Goths: *Getica* 38; see Croke 1987:123; Barnish 1984:339. Viscla/Vistula: *Getica* 34—5; Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* iv 81, 97, and 100; Julius Solinus, *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium* 20.2. See also Mommsen 1882:xxxix and 189s:xxvi; Anfert'ev 1991:131. For Venethi and Aesti, see *Getica* 35—6 and 119—20; Tacitus, *Germania* 46. See also Anfert'ev 1986:10.

The reference is not exactly accurate. In the "catalogue of nations" (chapter 35), we were told that the Venethi were "chiefly called Sclaveni and Antes," which could only mean that Venethi were (later) subdivided into two subcategories, the Sclavenes and the Antes. By contrast, in chapter 119, Jordanes claims that Venethi is just one of the three current names (*tria nunc nomina edidertmt*). They are a subcategory, not the archetype. The word *nunc* appears again when Jordanes claims that they, the Venethi, are raging in war far and wide. His concern is more to evoke the sixth-century setting of his argument than to impress upon readers the very distant antiquity of King Ermenaric's victory over the peoples of Scythia. Jordanes wants his audience to believe that Venethi was a name still in use during his own lifetime. Procopius, Jordanes' contemporary, only knows of Sclavenes and Antes. In his *Romana*, Jordanes himself only speaks of Bulgars, Sclavenes, and Antes. In fact, his audience must have been familiar with attacks by Sclavenes and Antes, but might have never heard of Venethi. Jordanes' mention of the Venethi linked the narrative of the Gothic history to events taking place during his lifetime. This narrative strategy, however, was not very well thought out, for he clumsily superposed a vague geographical concept of contemporary invasions on the ethnic configuration described in his "catalogue of nations."¹⁵

When compared to Procopius, Jordanes' account of the Slavs is poorly informed. Besides locating them in Scythia, the only thing Jordanes knows about Sclavenes is that they have swamps and woods for cities, a passage that has a distant parallel in Tacitus' description of the wooded and mountainous country raided by Venedi. The only "hard" piece of evidence about Antes is the episode of Vinitharius' victory over King Boz. Could this episode have originated in the oral Gothic tradition? In order to substantiate this idea, some pointed to the narrative pattern of the story. As in *Romana*, Jordanes employs here an unusual spelling, *Anti* instead of *Antes*, which suggests his source was Greek, not Latin. The episode of Vinitharius did not originate in Cassiodorus, because there is no indication that Cassiodorus read Greek. Just as in the case of Ermenaric's episode, Jordanes filled the imaginary map of much earlier accounts with sixth-century ethnic names.¹⁶

Getica 116—17 and 119; *Romana* 52. For *thiudos* as an indication of a Gothic (oral) source, see Wolfram 1988:87-8; Anfert'ev 1991:149—50; Kazanski 1991.1:36. *Contra*: Heather 1996:55. There is additional evidence that the reference to Venethi in the account of Ermenaric's military deeds originated in the "catalogue of nations." Following his victory over the Venethi, Ermenaric subdued the Aesti, "who dwell on the farthest shore of the German Ocean" (*Getica* 120). Again, the Tacitean association between Venethi and Aesti betrays Jordanes' sources. *Getica* 247; *Romana* 1652; see Tacitus, *Germania* 46. See also Pritsak 1983:381; Wolfram 1988:251-2; Anfert'ev 1991:159. For the spelling of Antes in both Greek and Latin, see Werner 1980:577, For Cassiodorus and Greek, see Croke 1987:121; O'Donnell 1982:229 and 235.

It has long been recognized that one of Jordanes' sources for his *Getica* was a map. His account of the Venethi, however, suggests that there was more than one. Though Jordanes usually conceptualizes the Vistula river with a south—north direction, the "abode of the Sclaveni extends . . . northward as far as the Vistula." This indicates a west—east direction for the river, which contradicts not only all other references to Vistula, but also the entire geographical system on which Jordanes' description of Scythia is based. In addition, the river named here is *Viscla*, not Vistula. Jordanes' source may have been Pliny, who set his Venedi, along with Sciri and Cimbri, between the river Vistla and Sarmatia, thus acknowledging a south—north direction for this river. No other source describes the Sclavenes as being bounded to the north by any river. The only exception is the Peutinger map. The twelfth- or early thirteenth-century copy of this road map, Codex Vindobonensis 324, reproduces an early fifth-century map, itself based on a third-century prototype. The Peutinger map shows the Venedi placed between the Danube and another river, named *Agalingus*, which is perhaps a corrupted form of Ptolemy's Axiaces river. In addition, the Venedi appear across the Danube, immediately beside a staging post named *Nouiodum. XLI*. This is, no doubt, the city of Noviodunum (present-day Isaccea), with the distance in Roman miles to the next staging post, Salsovia (present-day Mahmudia). Jordanes' *ciuitas Nouitunensis* is an equivalent of *Nouiodum* on the Peutinger map. His description is based on a map showing a route along the Danube, not on an oral source.¹⁷

Historians imagined Jordanes as a thorough observer of the ethnographic situation on the northern frontier of the Empire in the mid-500s. The purpose of his work, however, was not accurate description. *Getica* was probably meant to be a reply to Procopius in the current debate on the attitude towards barbarians. To support his arguments, Jordanes made extensive use of various, ancient sources. The description of Scythia is based on these sources for both the geographical framework and the tribal names used to fill the map.

Jordanes used at least three sources for his description of the Venethi. Tacitus may have served as the basis for the ethnographic material, but Jordanes used maps for his geographical orientation. One of them, based on a conical or coniclike projection, had the river Vistula with a south—north direction and was probably close to, if not inspired by,

¹⁷ *Getica* 35; Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historiae* iv 97; *Tabula Peutingeriana* Segment vii.4; see also Ptolemy, *Geographia* in 5.18. For Jordanes' use of maps, see Mommsen i882:xxxii; Curta 1999. The traditional interpretation of *ciuitas Nouitunensis* was that it referred to Neviiodunum in Pannonia. This was further interpreted as indicating that in the mid-sixth century, the Slavs inhabited a vast area along the eastern slopes of the Carpathian mountains, from the Vistula river to the Middle Danube. See Skrzhinskaia 1957:6—10.

Ptolemy. The other, however, had the same river with a west-east direction, so typical for Roman road maps with no real geographical projection, such as the Peutinger map. Jordanes seems to have been unable to solve the apparent contradictions between these sources, for he was not interested in matters geographical. The issue of history concerned him to a much higher degree. Jordanes interpreted his sources as evidence for contemporary concerns. The attacks of the Sclavenes and the Antes were an experience too familiar to his audience to be neglected, even in a history of the Goths. Through his research in ancient sources about the geography of Eastern Europe, Jordanes became convinced that the ethnic groups mentioned by second- or third-century authors were the same as those rampaging everywhere during his lifetime. Although in the mid-sixth century "their names were dispersed amid various clans and places," the Venethi were still recognizable to Jordanes' eyes. And although they were now known as Sclavenes and Antes, it was the same *natio* that both Ermenaric and Vinitharius had subdued to the Goths.

Jordanes' perspective thus proves to be the exact opposite of Procopius' standpoint. Instead of representing the Slavs as "new" and nomads, Jordanes calls them Venethi and thus makes them look ancient. This, however, is not a consequence of Jordanes' inability to cope with chronology, but derives from the specific purpose of his work. Like all Christian historians of the 500s and 600s, Jordanes had a high respect for the authority of the sources he used. He was aware that not to match account and source or to distort a document would damage the truthfulness of a writer. He fully embraced therefore the historical and geographical viewpoint of his predecessors, because he needed their authority as sources. This conclusion is in sharp contrast to traditional views, which held Jordanes for a better and more accurate source for the history of the early Slavs than Procopius, because of his alleged use of Gothic oral sources.¹⁸

THE SLAVS, "THE THEORY OF CLIMATES, AND CONSTANTINOPLE

Revision is also needed for the old idea that the earliest reference to Sclavenes is that of the author of *Erotapokriseis*, known as Pseudo-Caesarius. He must have been a Monophysite monk, most probably from the Constantinopolitan monastery Akimiton. His work is a collection of 220 queries and answers on a variety of topics (hence its Greek title, usually translated into English as *Dialogues*). Paradoxically, the style of the work reminds one more of a rhetorician than of a theologian. Pseudo-Caesarius seems to have been familiar with court life and he had certainly

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Getica 35. For the historiography of Jordanes' Venethi, see Curta 1999:1-5. For Jordanes as accurate source for the history of the early Slavs, see Sedov 1978; Ecckaute, Garde, and Kazanski 1992.

visited Cappadocia, Palestine, and the region of the Danube frontier. This is suggested not so much by his use of a biblical name for the Danube (Physon), as by the phrase 'Pmiavoi he uses in reference to the inhabitants of the Danube region. The term is a derivative of the Latin word *ripa* and most probably refers to inhabitants of the province Dacia Ripensis, located alongside the Danube frontier. A *terminus a quo* for the dating of Pseudo-Caesarius' work is the reference to Lombards as living beyond the Danube, which indicates a date after *c.* 530. Moreover, in a passage referring to the same region, Pseudo-Caesarius uses the example of the frozen Danube to illustrate an argument based on a biblical citation (Gen. 1.6). He argues that 10,000 horsemen were thus able to invade Illyricum and Thrace, a clear allusion to the invasion of the Cutrigurs in the winter of 558/9. *Eratopokriseis* was therefore composed less than ten years after Procopius' and Jordanes' accounts. Pseudo-Caesarius, nevertheless, shares the former's attitude toward Slavs. He claims that the Sclavenes are savage, living by their own law and without the rule of anyone (avrryeuoveuToi). This may be an echo of Procopius' report that they "are not ruled by one man, but they have lived from of old under a democracy."¹⁹

Pseudo-Caesarius' point of view is, however, radically different from that of Procopius. His purpose was to refute the so-called theory of climates (*Milieutheorie*), which claimed that the character of a given ethnic group was a direct consequence of the influence exerted by the geographical and climatic region in which that group lived. Pseudo-Caesarius made his point by showing that completely different peoples could in fact live within the same climatic zone. He chose, among other examples, the savage Sclavenes, on one hand, and the peaceful and mild inhabitants of the Danube region (the "Physonites"), on the other. Pseudo-Caesarius' most evident bias against Sclavenes has led some to believe that his appalling portrait of the Slavs is in its entirety a cliché, while others are more inclined to give him credit of veracity.²⁰

¹⁹ The Greek text of the passage cited after Riedinger 1969:302 and 305-6; for its English translation, see Bacic 1983:152. See also Procopius, *Wars* vi 14.22. In his narration of the invasion of 558/9, Agathias of Myrina refers to a multitude of horsemen, crossing the frozen river "as if it were land (KaOcrrep x£P°o°)" (v.11.6). This is very much like Pseudo-Caesarius' description: XeTuovog Tmyvuuivou KouE15 AiOobBn, dvTiTUTriav Me8iGTanevri\$ Tfjs uaAaxfis TOU 'pei'8pou qpuoecos. See Bakalov 1974:48. For the literary cliché of barbarians crossing the frozen Danube, see Hornstein 1957:155—8. Pseudo-Caesarius and the earliest reference to Sclavenes: Gorianov i939b:3io; Skrzhinskaia 1957:13 and 35; Kopstein 1979:67. Pseudo-Caesarius' life: Ivanov 1991d:25i—7. Date of *Eratopokriseis*: Duichev 1953:205.

²⁰ Duichev 1953:207—8; Malingoudis 1990. For the theory of the seven climates and its astrological underpinnings, see Honignian 1929:4—7, 9, and 92-4. Pseudo-Caesarius' attack on the theory of climates suggests that he endorsed the measures adopted by the fifth ecumenical council (553) against astrology; see Ivanov 1991^:253.

A date slightly later than, if not closer to, that of Pseudo-Caesarius' *Eratopokriseis* could also be assigned to Agathias of Myrina's *History*. He provides little information relevant to the history of the Slavs, except the names of an Antian officer and a Slavene soldier in the Roman army operating in the Caucasus region. The importance of this source is rather that, together with John Malalas, Agathias is the first author to mention the Slavenes under a new, shorter name (ΖΚΑ&ΠΟΙ, instead of ΖΚΑοϋΒνϋοι or ΖΚΧαυνϋοι). Since he obtained most of his information about Roman campaigns in Italy and Caucasus from written sources (military reports and campaign diaries), rather than from personal experience, the question is whether this change in ethnic naming should be attributed to Agathias himself or to his sources. Though born in Myrina, in Asia Minor, Agathias lived most of his life in Constantinople. He was one of the most prominent lawyers in the city and he died there in *c.* 582. He certainly was in Constantinople in 558/9, as Zabergan's Cutrigurs attacked the Long Walls, for the abundance of detailed information (names of participants, place names, consequences of the invasion) betrays an eyewitness.²¹

The same event is narrated by John Malalas on the basis of a now lost source, a Constantinopolitan city chronicle, later used by Theophanes for a version of the same invasion clearly not inspired by Malalas. Unlike Agathias, Malalas specifically refers to Slavenes as participants in this invasion. It is difficult to explain why Agathias failed to notice this detail, but it is important to note that, like him, Malalas (or his source, the Constantinopolitan chronicle) employs the shorter ethnic name (ΖΚΑ&(3ΟΙ). Historians, perhaps influenced by the tendency to view Malalas as Justinian's mouthpiece to the masses, tend to give credit to Malalas and believe that Slavenes may have indeed taken part in Zabergan's raid. There are, however, insurmountable difficulties in assuming that Malalas' audience were *breite Volksmassen* or monastic circles. Malalas provides a summary of world history from a sixth-century point of view organized around a central chronographical framework and informed by an overriding chronographical argument. Whoever was responsible for the last part of Book xviii, whether an aged Malalas living in Constantinople or someone else, appears to have been affected by the gloom of the later part of Justinian's reign and so to have produced a desultory list of unconnected events of a sort to be associated with a putative city chronicle. Malalas did not witness the attack of 558/9 and, like Theophanes, relied exclusively on the Constantinopolitan chronicle. If

²¹ Agathias in 3.6.9, in 3.7.2, in 21.6, iv 18.1-3, iv 20.4. For Agathias' life and work, see Veh 1951:18; Cameron 1970:3; Bakalov 1974:207; Levinskaia and Tokhtas'ev 1991:292.

The making of the Slaps

Sclavene warriors participated in Zabergan's invasion, they probably had a subordinate role, for they were invisible to the otherwise trustworthy testimony of Agathias.²²

An equally Constantinopolitan origin must be attributed to the reference to *Sclavus* in Bishop Martin of Braga's poem dedicated to St Martin of Tours, most likely written in the late 570s. Martin, who was born in Pannonia in the 510s, visited the Holy Land in 550 or 552, travelling via Constantinople. The short ethnic name given to the Slavs suggests a Constantinopolitan source. In writing his epitaph, Bishop Martin was inspired by two poems of Sidonius Apollinaris, in which, like Martin, he listed randomly selected ethnic, barbarian names, in order to create a purely rhetorical effect. Besides *Sclavus*, there are two other ethnic names not mentioned by Sidonius, but listed by Martin: *Nam* and *Datus*. The former is interpreted as referring to inhabitants of the former province of Noricum, the latter as designating Danes. In spite of the obvious lack of accuracy of these geographical indications, some have attempted to locate the Sclavenes on a sixth-century ethnic map of Europe. It is very unlikely, however, that the mention of *Sclavus* in Bishop Martin's poem is anything more than a rhetorical device in order to emphasize the rapid spread of Christianity among *inmanes variasque gentes* through the spiritual powers of St Martin. Besides simply mentioning the Slavs, among other, more or less contemporary, ethnic groups, Bishop Martin's poem has no historical value for the Slavs.²³

No contemporary source refers to Sclavenes during the reigns of Justin II and Tiberius II. The next information about them comes from Menander the Guardsman's now lost *History*. Menander wrote, under Maurice, a work continuing that of Agathias. It survived in fragments incorporated into *De Legationibus* and *De Sententiis*, two collections compiled under Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the mid-tenth century.²⁴ Menander's *History* may have been commissioned by Emperor Maurice

²² John Malalas xvm 129. See Litavrin 19913:269 and 272. The use of a Constantinopolitan city chronicle for Book xvm of Malalas' chronicle is betrayed by his dating by indiction, which is rare before the middle of Book xvi and becomes frequent only from the beginning of xvm. At this point, entries in Malalas' chronicle are brief and almost entirely focused on Constantinople. For Malalas' sources and style, see Jeffreys 19903:166 and 1990^214; Croke 1990:27 and 37; Scott 1990b:84. Malalas as Justinian's mouthpiece to the masses: Irmischer 1969:471 and 1971:342. That both Agathias and Malalas used]EKACIP>GI instead of IEKAaPrnvoi shows that, despite recent claims to the contrary, the shorter name originated in Constantinople, not from an allegedly Thracian or Illyrian intermediary. See Schramm 1995:197.

²³ Barlow 1950:282. For Martin's life, see Ivanov 19910:357 and 359—60. See Sidonius, *Poems* 5.474—7- and 7.323, ed. W. B. Anderson (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 102 and 146. For Martin's poem as a source for the ethnic map of sixth-century Europe, see Zeman 1966:165—6; Pohl 1988:97; Tfestik 1996:258.

²⁴ Another fragment has been identified in a fourteenth-century manuscript at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. See Halkin 1973.

or by a powerful minister, for it seems that he enjoyed ready access to imperial archives. The work probably had ten books covering the period from the end of Agathias⁵ *History* (558/9) to the loss of Sirmium in 582. The core of the work was built around the careers of the two men who are in the center of the narration, Tiberius and Maurice. The outlook is Constantinopolitan and the city's concerns are paramount. Menander relied heavily, if not exclusively, on written sources, especially on material from the archives (minutes of proceedings, supporting documents and correspondence, reports from, envoys of embassies and meetings). His views were traditional and his main interest was in Roman relations with foreign peoples, in particular Persians and Avars. The Slavs thus appear only in the context of relations with the Avars. Menander reworked the material he presumably found in his written sources. When talking about the devastation of the territory of the Antes by Avars, who "ravaged and plundered (their land) (ΤΙΤΕ^ΟΜΕΒΟΙ 8'ΟΟΥV xaTs TQV TroAeuiGOV ETTiBponals)," he strove to imitate Agathias' style. When Dauritas/Daurentius boastfully replies to the Avar envoy that "others do not conquer our land, we conquer theirs [; a]nd so it shall always be for us (TQUTQ r]ulv EV (Se(3a(cp), as long as there are wars and weapons (emphasis added)," this is also a phrase Menander frequently employed, particularly in rendering speeches of Roman or Persian envoys.

Despite Menander's considerable contribution to the speeches, which served both to characterize the speakers and to explore the issues, it is likely that they were fairly close to the available records. It is not difficult to visualize the possible source for Daurentius' speech. The whole episode may have been based on a report by John, "who at this time was governor of the isles and in charge of the cities of Illyricum," for when referring to the Slavene chiefs, Menander employs the phrase xous 0001 EV TEAEI TOU E9VOU\$. This is a phrase commonly used in Byzantine administration in reference to imperial officials. As such, it indicates that Menander's source for this particular episode must have been an official document. The same might be true for the episode of Mezamer. Detailed knowledge of Mezamer's noble lineage or of the relations between "that Kutrigur who was a friend of the Avars" and the cjagan suggests a written source, arguably a report of an envoy. Menander may have only added his very traditional view of barbarians: greedy, cunning, arrogant, lacking self-control, and untrustworthy. To him, the Slavenes murdered the Avar emissaries specifically because they lost control.²⁵

⁵ Menander the Guardsman, frs. 3 and 21; see Agathias 1 1.1. For Menander's sources and style, see Blockley 1985:1, 5, 11, 14, and 20; Baldwin 1978:118; Levinskaia and Tokhtas'ev 1991:328 and 349—50. For the use of 0001 EV TEXEI TOU ISvous in reference to imperial officials, see Benedicty 1965:53-

The making of the Slavs

Unlike Menander, John of Ephesus personally witnessed the panic caused by Avar and Slav attacks during Tiberius' and Maurice's reigns. His *Ecclesiastical History*, now lost, contained three parts, the last of which had six books. Book vi was compiled at Constantinople over a period of years, as indicated by chronological references in the text. The last event recorded is the acquittal of Gregory of Antioch in 588. John first came to Constantinople in the 530s, where he enjoyed Emperor Justinian's favors. He was absent from the Capital between 542 and 571, as he was first nominated missionary bishop in Asia Minor and then elected bishop of Ephesus. He was back in Constantinople when Justin II launched his persecution of the Monophysites. Beginning in 571, John spent eight years in prison. Most of Book vi, if not the entire third part of the *History*, was written during this period of confinement. John must have died soon after the last event recorded in his work, for the surviving fragments leave the impression of a draft, which he may not have had the time to revamp. The concluding chapters of Book vi are lost, but significant parts could be reconstructed on the basis of later works, such as the eighth-century chronicle attributed to Dionysius of Tell Mahre, that of Elias Bar Shinaya (tenth to eleventh century), the twelfth-century chronicle of Michael the Syrian, the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, and the thirteenth-century chronicle of Gregory Barhebraeus.²⁶

John was no doubt influenced by the pessimistic atmosphere at Constantinople in the 580s to overstate the intensity of Slavic ravaging. His views of the Slavs, however, have a different source. John was a supporter of that *Milieutheorie* attacked by Pseudo-Caesarius. To him, the Slavs were *lytʹ* (accursed, savage), for they were part of the seventh climate, in which the sun rarely shone over their heads. Hence, their blonde hair, their brutish character, and their rude ways of life. On the other hand, God was on their side, for in John's eyes, they were God's instrument for punishing the persecutors of the Monophysites. This may also explain why John insists that, beginning with 581 (just ten years after Justin II started persecuting the Monophysites), the Slavs began occupying Roman territory, "until now, that is up to the year 895 [i.e., 584] . . . [and] became rich and possessed gold and silver, herds of

²⁶ For John's life and work, see D'iakonov 1946:20 and 25; Allen 1979:254; Serikov 1991:276, 281, and 283; Ginkel 1995. For John writing in prison, see in 3.1 and in 2.50. Despite Michael the Syrian's claims to the contrary, he borrowed much of his chapter x 21 from John's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. He might have used John through an intermediary, possibly the chronicle attributed to Dionysius of Tell Mahre, who might have misled him over the precise conclusion of John's work. Certainly borrowed from John is the account of widespread Slav ravaging, including the sack of churches at Corinth, and the payments made by Maurice to the Antes for attacking the Sclavenes.

horses and a lot of weapons, and learned to make war better than the Romans."²⁷

SLAVS OR AVARS?

The echo of the panic caused by Slavic raids in the Balkans also reached Spain, where John of Biclar recorded their ravaging of Thrace and Illyricum.²⁸ Between 576/7 and 586/7, John was in Barcelona, where he may have received news from Constantinople, via Cartagena. The last part of his chronicle, written in 589/90, recorded only major events. For the year 575, there are thirteen entries concerning the East and ten referring to events in the West. The last entries, covering the period between 576 and 589/90, include only three events from the East, but twenty-two from the West. Two, if not all three, of the Eastern events mentioned are in relation to Slavic raids. Though John's chronology of Byzantine regnal years is unreliable, the raids were correctly dated to 576 and 581, respectively, because beginning with year 569, entries in the chronicle were also dated by King Leuvigild's and his son's regnal years. John of Biclar may thus have recorded events that, at the same time, in Constantinople, John of Ephesus interpreted as God's punishment for sinners.²⁹

In a passage most probably borrowed from a now lost part of John of Ephesus' *History*, Michael the Syrian speaks of Slavs plundering churches, but calls their leader, who carried away the *ciborium* of the cathedral in Corinth, a qagan. John of Biclar also speaks of Avars occupying *partes Graeciae* in 579. Evagrius visited Constantinople in 588 to assist his employer, Gregory, patriarch of Antioch, to defend himself against accusations of incest. On this occasion, he recorded information about the capture, enslavement, and destruction by Avars of Singidunum, Anchialos, the whole of Greece, and other cities and forts, which could not be prevented because of the Empire's Eastern commitments. Both

²⁷ John of Ephesus in 6.25. This passage is one of the key arguments for the chronology of the Slavic *Landnahme* in the Balkans. See Nestor 1963:50-1; Popovic 1975:450; Weithmann 1978:86; Ferjancic 1984:95; Pohl 1988:82. To John, "wars, battles, destruction, and carnage" proclaimed the return of Christ (in 6.1). The end of his *History* seems to have been specifically added as a warning that the end of the world was close. For the intensifying eschatological apprehension, which is evident in a number of contemporary texts, such as John Malalas and Romanos the Melodist's hymn *On the Ten Virgins*, see Magdalino 1993:5 and 7. For John's image of the Slavs, see also Whitby 1988:110. The seventh climate was the northernmost and traditionally placed at the mouth of the Borysthenes (Bug) river. See Honignian 1929:9.

²⁸ John of Biclar, *Chronicle*, ed. Th. Mommsen, *MGH: AA 1* 1:214 and 216. John also knew of Avar attacks in Thrace, Greece, and Pannonia (11:215). See Weithmann 1978:88; Yannopoulos 1980:333; Pohl 1988:76 with 11. 40.

²⁹ It is possible that the first raid was 111i.s.d.ated by two years (57X instead of 576); see Waldmiiller 1976:106. For Slavs in John's chronicle, see also Cherniak 1991:395.

John of Ephesus and Evagrius must have learned about these events in the Capital and there are good reasons to believe that John of Biclar's ultimate source of information was also in Constantinople. It has been rightly pointed that Evagrius was undoubtedly referring to invasions by Avars, not Slavs, and that it is unfair to accuse him of muddling Avars and Slavs. If this is true, however, we should apply the same treatment to both John of Biclar and John of Ephesus. Unlike Evagrius, they both refer elsewhere to Slavs, in the context of otherwise well datable events. We may safely assume, therefore, that in the 580s, in Constantinople, devastations in Greece were attributed to Avars, not Slavs. The ethnic terminology of later sources, such as the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* or *Vita S. Pancratii*, may be a dim recollection of this interpretation of events.³⁰

That the Slavs were considered the most important danger, however, is suggested by the analysis of a military treatise known as the *Strategikon*. Its author was an experienced officer, who had undoubtedly participated in Maurice's campaigns against Avars and Sclavenes, some ten years after the events narrated by John of Ephesus, John of Biclar, and Evagrius. He was accustomed to the life of military camps and knew a lot about different forms of warfare from his own experience of fighting on at least two different fronts. Unlike other military treatises, the author of *Strategikon* devotes a whole chapter to what might be called "exercise deception," describing a series of mock drills to be practiced so that enemy spies will not find out which one will be applied by Roman troops. He is also an enthusiastic proponent of misleading the enemy with "disinformation" and has a sophisticated appreciation of how to make defectors and deserters work against, instead of for, enemy interests. All this is strikingly similar to Theophylact Simocatta's later description of Priscus' and Peter's tactics during their campaigns against the Sclavenes and the Avars.

That the chapter in the *Strategikon* dedicated to Sclavenes and Antes is entirely based on the author's experience is shown by his own declaration at the end of Book xi: "Now then, we have reflected on these topics to the best of our ability, drawing on our own experience (IK TE Tfjs

³⁰ Michael the Syrian x 21; John of Biclar p. 215; Evagrius, *Historia Ecdesiastica*, vi 10. See Whitby 1988:110. That this selective memory ostensibly operated only in connection with *certain* Constantinopolitan sources is indirectly suggested by the letters of Pope Gregory the Great. Before being elected pope, he had spent some time between 579 and 585/6 in Constantinople as papal *apocrisarii-ts*, Gregory, however, was unaware of the importance of Avars in contemporary events relevant to the Balkans, Throughout his considerable correspondence (over 850 letters), there is no mention of the Avars. Two letters (ix 154 of May 599 and x 15 of July 600) specifically refer to Slavene raids into Istria. See Ronin 1995a:35i—2. Paul the Deacon, arguably relying on independent sources, would later claim that besides Slavs, both Lombards *and* Avars had invaded Istria (*Historia Langobardorum* iv 24). In the tradition established by Constantinopolitan sources that have inspired both Agathias and Malalas, Gregory speaks of *Sclavi*, instead of *Sclaveni* (ix 154: *de Sclavis victorias nutitiastis*; x 15: *Sciavorum gens*).

Treipag auTfjs) and on the authorities of the past, and we have written down these reflections for the benefit of whoever may read them."³¹ Despite his reliance on the "authorities of the past," there can be no doubt that, when describing Slavic settlements, warfare, or society, the author of the *Strategikon* speaks of things he saw with his own eyes. By contrast, the chapters dedicated to the "blonde races" (Franks and Lombards) and to "Scythians" (Avars) are more conventional. Moreover, the chapter dedicated to Sclavenes and Antes, twice labelled eOvrj (xi 4.1 and 4), is almost as long as all chapters on Franks, Lombards, and Avars taken together.³²

In sharp contrast to all treatises written before him, the author of the *Strategikon* boldly introduced ethnographic data into a genre traditionally restricted to purely military topics. It is true, however, that ethnographic details appear only when relevant to the treatise's subject matter, namely to warfare. Indeed, like John of Ephesus, the author of the *Strategikon* was inspired by the theory of climates. He believed that the geographical location of a given ethnic group determined not only its lifestyle and laws, but also its type of warfare.³³ If the *Strategikon* pays attention to such things as to how Slavic settlements branch out in many directions or how Slavic women commit suicide at their husbands' death, it is because its author strongly believed that such details might be relevant to Slavic warfare.

Who was the author of the *Strategikon* and when was this work written? Both questions are obviously of great importance for the history of the early Slavs. The issue of authorship is still a controversial one. The oldest manuscript, Codex Mediceo-Laurentianus 55.4 from Florence, dated to *c.* 950, attributes the treatise to a certain Urbicius. Three other manuscripts dated to the first half of the eleventh century attribute the work to a certain Maurice, whom Richard Footer first identified with one of Emperor Maurice's contemporary namesakes. The most recent manuscript, Codex Ambrosianus gr. 139, reproducing the oldest version, explicitly attributes the treatise to Maupudou . . . xou ETTI TOU PQOIAEGOS MaupiKiou yeyovoTos. It is very likely that Emperor

³¹ *Strategikon* xi 4.46. See Mihaescu 1974:20—1; Kuchma 1978:12; Dennis and Gamillscheg 1981:13; Petersen 1992:75.

³² The importance attributed to Sclavenes also results from the reference to "Sclavene spears" (XoyxiBia JEKAa(3ivioKia; xn B5), which apparently were in use by Byzantine infantrymen. Their equipment also included "Gothic shoes," "Herulian swords," and "Buigar cloaks" (xn B 1 and xn 8.4). See Dennis 1981. Some even claimed that the chapter on the Slavs was the only original part of the work: Cankova-Petkova 1987:73. It is interesting to note, however, that the *Strategikon* lists Antes among enemies of the Empire, despite their being its allies since 545. See Kuchma 1991:381. For army discipline, see Giuffrida 1985:846,

³³ For the theory that each climate was governed by a star or a planet that determined its "laws," see Honignian 1929:92—3.

Maurice had commissioned this treatise to an experienced high officer or general of the army. This seems to be supported by a few chronological markers in the text. There is a reference to the siege of Akbas in 583, as well as to stratagems applied by the qagan of the Avars during a battle near Heraclea, in 592. Some have argued, therefore, that the *Strategikon* may have been written during Maurice's last years (after 592) or during Phocas' first years. A long list of military commands in Latin used throughout the text also suggests a dating to the first three decades of the seventh century, at the latest, for it is known that after that date, Greek definitely replaced Latin in the administration, as well as in the army³⁴ But it is difficult to believe that the recommendation of winter campaigning against the Slavs could have been given, without qualification or comment, after the mutiny of 602, for which this strategy was a central issue. The *Strategikon* should therefore be dated within Maurice's regnal years, most probably between 592 and 602. In any case, at the time the *Strategikon* was written, the Sclavenes were still north of the river Danube. Its author recommended that provisions taken from Slavene villages by Roman troops should be transported south of the Danube frontier, using the river's northern tributaries.³⁵

THE SAINT AND THE BARBARIANS

The next relevant information about Slavs is to be found in Book 1 of a collection known as the *Miracles of St Demetrius*, written in Thessalonica. The collection, which was offered as a hymn of thanksgiving to God for His gift to the city, is a didactic work, written by Archbishop John of Thessalonica in the first decade of Heraclius' reign. A clear indication of this date is a passage of the tenth miracle, in which John refers to events happening during Phocas' reign but avoids using his name, an indication of the *damnatio memoriae* imposed on Phocas during Heraclius' first regnal years.³⁶

Book 1 contains fifteen miracles which the saint performed for the benefit of his city and its inhabitants. Most of them occurred during the

³⁴ Forster 1877. See Dennis and Gamillscheg 1981:18; Kuchma 1982:48-9.}. Wiita believed that the author of the *Strategikon* was Philippikos, Maurice's brother-in-law and general. According to Wiita, the treatise was calculated to facilitate Philippikos' return to power after Phocas' coup. See Wiita 1977:47—8. For Latin military commands, see Mihaescu 1974:203; Petersmann 1992:225—8.

³⁵ *Strategikon* xi 4.19 and 32; see Whitby 1988:131.

³⁶ *Miracles of St Demetrius* 1 10.82. For the date of Book 1, see Lemerle 1981:44 and 80; Whitby 1988:116; Macrides 1990:189. Paul Speck (.1993:275, 512, and 528) has argued against the idea that Archbishop John was the author of Book 1, which he believed was of a much later date. I find Speck's arguments totally unconvincing, for a variety of reasons. Most important, he claimed that John, who is mentioned in Book n as responsible for the collection in Book 1, was an abbot, not a bishop. John, however, is specifically mentioned as Traxrjp KCU eiTioKOTros (11 2.201).

episcopate of Eusebius, otherwise known from letters addressed to him by Pope Gregory the Great between 597 and 603. The purpose of this collection was to demonstrate to the Thessalonians that Demetrius was their fellow citizen, their own saint, always present with them, watching over the city. The saint is therefore shown as working for the city as a whole, interceding on behalf of all its citizens in plague, famine, civil war, and war with external enemies. The fact that sometimes Archbishop John addresses an audience (oi QKOUOVTEC), which he calls upon as witness to the events narrated, suggests that the accounts of these miracles were meant for delivery as sermons.³⁷

'Moreover, each miracle ends with a formulaic doxology. John also notes a certain rationale which he follows in the presentation of miracles. His aim is to recount St Demetrius' "compassion and untiring and unyielding protection" for the city of Thessalonica, but the structure of his narrative is not chronological. The episode of the repaired silver *ciborium* (1 6) is narrated *before* that of the fire which destroyed it (1 12). Following a strictly chronological principle, the plague (1 3), the one-week siege of the city by the qagan's army (1 13—15), and the subsequent famine (1 8) should have belonged to the same sequence of events. Archbishop John, however, wrote five self-contained episodes, each ending with a prayer and each possibly serving as a separate homily to be delivered on the saint's feast day. This warns us against taking the first book of the *Miracles of St Demetrius* too seriously. The detailed description of the progress of the two sieges should not be treated as completely trustworthy, but just as what it was meant to be, namely a collection of a few sensational incidents which could have enhanced St Demetrius' glory. John depicted himself on the city's wall, rubbing shoulders with the other defenders of Thessalonica during the attack of the 5,000 Slavene warriors.³⁸ Should we believe him? Perhaps.³⁹ It may not be a mere coincidence, however, that, though never depicted as a warrior

³⁷ John's audience: *Miracles of St Demetrius* I 12.101. In the prologue, John addresses the entire brotherhood (Traoav rfv aSeAcpOTriTa) and the pious assembly (cb <ptA60Eos eKxArioia). He will not speak from his "hand" or "pen," but with his tongue (yAc£>TTa, Stoc nias YAGOTTIS), and will employ a simple and accessible language (Prologue 6-7). See also Lemerle 1953:353 and 1981:36; Ivanova 1995:182; Skedros 1996:141. St Demetrius as intercessor for Thessalonica: Macrides 1990:189—90. The fifteenth miracle even shows him disobeying God, who is explicitly compared to the emperor, by refusing to abandon the city to the enemy (1 15.166—75).

³⁸ Prologue 6; 1 12.107. John begins with miracles of bodily healing (1 1—3), moves on to a miracle of healing of the soul (1 4), then presents three miracles in which the saint appears to individuals (1 5—7) and ends his collection with miracles that directly affect Thessalonica and its citizens (1 8-15).³⁹ The author of Book 11 explicitly states that Archbishop John led the resistance of the

Thessalonians during the thirty-three-day siege of the city by the qagan (*Miracles of St Demetrius* 11 2.204).

saint, St Demetrius also appears on the city's walls ev OTTAITOU during the siege of Thessalonica by the armies of the qagan. Moreover, John would like us to believe that he had witnessed the attack of the 5,000 Sclavenes, which occurred on the same night that the *ciborium* of the basilica was destroyed by fire. He had that story, however, from his predecessor, Bishop Eusebius. On the other hand, John was well informed about the circumstances of the one-week siege. He knew that, at that time, the inhabitants of the city were harvesting outside the city walls, the city's eparch, together with the city's troops, were in Greece, and the notables of Thessalonica were in Constantinople, to carry a complaint against that same eparch. He also knew that the Sclavene warriors fighting under the qagan's command were his subjects, unlike those who attacked Thessalonica by night, whom John described as "the flower of the Sclavene nation" and as infantrymen.⁴⁰ My impression is that John may have been an eyewitness to the night attack, but he certainly exaggerated the importance of the one-week siege. Despite the qagan's impressive army of no less than 100,000 warriors and the numerous handicaps of the city's inhabitants, the enemy was repelled after only one week with apparently no significant losses for the besieged. To blame Archbishop John's contemporary, Theophylact Simocatta, for having failed to record any of the sieges of Thessalonica, is therefore to simply take the *Miracles of St Demetrius* at their face value and to overestimate the events narrated therein. That the sieges of Thessalonica were not recorded by any other source might well be an indication of their local, small-scale significance. As for Archbishop John, who was using history to educate his fellow citizens and glorify the city's most revered saint, he may have been well motivated when exaggerating the magnitude of the danger.⁴¹

THE SIEGE OF CONSTANTINOPLE, THE CAMPAIGN DIARY, AND THE WENDS

There are few Western sources that mention the Slavs after John of Biclar and Gregory the Great. By the end of his chronicle, Isidore of Seville refers to the occupation of Greece by Slavs, sometime during Heraclius'

⁴⁰ St Demetrius on the walls of Thessalonica: I 13.120; the episode of the *ciborium* related by Eusebius: I 6.55; circumstances of the one-week siege: I 13.127—9; Sclavene warriors in the army of the qagan: I 13.117; Sclavene warriors during the night attack: I 12.108 and no, John never calls the Slavs *XK\d(3oi*, only *5!KAa(3ivoi* or *^KXaPnvoi*. Paul Lemerle (1981:41) suggested that St Demetrius became a military saint only after the attacks of the Avars and the Sclavenes. In Book 11, St Demetrius already introduces himself as *oTpaTicbTns* to Bishop Kyprianos (II 6.309).

⁴¹ The army of the qagan: I 13.118 and 126. See Tapkova-Zaimova 1964:113-14. For the lack of information about Thessalonica, see Proudfoot 1974:382; Olajos 1981:422; Whitby 1988:49.

early regnal years. It is difficult to visualize Isidore's source for this brief notice, but his association of the Slavic occupation of Greece with the loss of Syria and Egypt to the Persians indicates that he was informed about the situation in the entire Mediterranean basin.⁴²

Isidore's *Chronica Maiora* ends in 624 or 626 and there is no mention in it of the siege of Constantinople by Avars, Slavs, and Persians. We have good, though brief, descriptions of the role played by Slavs in the works of three eyewitnesses. George of Pisidia refers to them, in both his *Bellum Avaricum*, written in 626, and his *Heradias*, written in 629.⁴³ The author of the *Chronicon Paschale*, a work probably completed in 630 and certainly extending to 629, was also an eyewitness to the siege, despite his use of written sources, such as the city chronicle of Constantinople.⁴⁴ As for Theodore Syncellus, he is specifically mentioned by the author of the *Chronicon Paschale* as having been one of the envoys sent from the city to the qagan on August 2, 626. His name is derived from the office he held under Patriarch Sergius, the great figure behind the city's heroic resistance. Theodore Syncellus' mention of the Slavs is therefore important, particularly because he is the first author to refer to cremation as the burial rite favored by Slavs.⁴⁵ What all these three authors have in common is the awareness that there were at least two categories of Slavene warriors. First, there were those fighting as allies of the Avars, the "Slavic wolves," as George of Pisidia calls them. On the other hand, those attacking Blachernae on canoes were the subjects of the Avars, as clearly indicated by the *Chronicon Paschale*.⁴⁶ We have seen that Archbishop John also recorded that Thessalonica was attacked at one time by the qagan's army, including his Slavene subjects, at another by 5,000 warriors, "the flower of the Slavene nation," with no interference from the Avars.

Was Theophylact Simocatta also a witness to the siege of 626? He certainly outlived the great victory, for the last events explicitly mentioned in his *History* are Heraclius' victory over Rhazates in 627, the death of Khusro II, and the conclusion of peace with Persia in the following year. It has also been argued that since the introductory *Dialogue* of his *History* alludes to the patriarch of Constantinople, Sergius, as the man who had encouraged the composition of the work, Theophylact must have pursued his legal career in the employment of the patriarch. It is therefore possible that he was in Constantinople in 626, but there is no evidence for

⁴² Isidore of Seville, *History*, ed. Th. Mommsen, *MGH: AA* 1:1:479. See Szadeczky-Kardoss 1986b:52—3; Ivanova 1995[^]356—7. The use of an official, perhaps Constantinopolitan, report is also betrayed by the use of *ScLwi* instead of *SctaiHni*. The same event is recorded by *Continuatio Hispana*, written in 754 (*Sclavi Grecian! occupant*). Its author derived this information not from Isidore, but from another, unknown source, which has been presumably used by Isidore himself (Szadeczky-Kardoss 1986[^]54; Ivanova 1995[^]-355)-⁴³ Ivanov 19950:66—7.

⁴⁴ Scott 19903:38; Ivanov 1995d:y5. ⁴⁵ Ivanov 1995d:80. ⁴⁶ Ivanov 1995d:82.

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that in his work. Theophylact has often been compared to George of Pisidia or the author of the *Chronicon Paschak*, for having composed substantial parts of his narrative in the optimistic mood of the late 620s, after Heraclius' triumph, or to Theodore Syncellus, for his style. His *History* only focuses on the Balkans and the eastern front, in other words only on Roman dealings with Avars (and Slavs) and Persians, the major enemies of 626. It is possible that Theophylact's *History* was an attempt to explain current events in the light of Maurice's policies in the Balkans and the East. If so, this could also explain Theophylact's choice of sources for Maurice's campaigns across the Danube, against Avars and Slavs.⁴⁷

It has long been noted that, beginning with Book vi, Theophylact's narrative changes drastically. Although his chronology is most erratic, he suddenly pays attention to such minor details as succession of days and length of particular marches. The number and the length of speeches diminishes drastically, as well as the number of Theophylact's most typical stylistical marks. The reason for this change is Theophylact's use of an official report or bulletin, to which he could have had access either directly or through an intermediary source. Haussig rightfully called this official report a *Feldzugsjournal*, a campaign diary, which was completed after Phocas' accession of 602. Indeed, there is a consistency of bias throughout this part of Theophylact's *History*, for he obviously favors the general Priscus at the expense of Comentiolus and Peter. Peter's victories are extolled and his failures minimized, while his rivals appear lazy and incompetent. Any success they achieve is attributed to their subordinates, either Alexander, in 594, or Godwin, in 602, both winning victories against the Slavs for Peter. But Priscus was Phocas' son-in-law and it may be no accident that Theophylact (or, more probably, his source) laid emphasis on the army's dissatisfaction against Maurice on the question of winter campaigning against the Slavs, for this was at the very root of the 602 revolt. It has even been argued that for the chapters vm 5.5 to VIII 7.7 narrating the events of 601 and 602, particularly Phocas' revolt of November 602, Theophylact may have used reports of surviving participants, such as Godwin himself, who is in the middle of all actions.⁴⁸

The campaigns in the *Feldzugsjournal* were narrated in correct sequence, but without precise intervals between important events. The

⁴⁷ Last events mentioned: Theophylact Simocatta, *History* vm 12.12-13. See Olajos 1981—2:41 and 1988:11; Whitby and Whitby 1986:xiv; Whitby 1988:39-40.

⁴⁸ Succession of days and length of marches: vi 4.3, vi 4.7, vi 4.12, vi 6.2-vi 11.21, etc. See Olajos 1982:158 and 1988:132 and 136; Whitby 1988:49-50, 93, and 96. For the *Feldzugsjournal*, see Haussig 1953:296. The complimentary reference to Bonosus, Phocas'hated henchman (VIII 5.10), is also an indication that the *Feldzugsjournal* was produced in the milieu of Phocas' court. For the extolling of Peter's victories, see Whitby and Whitby 1986:xxiii, Olajos 1988:131; Whitby 1988:99.

account tends therefore to disintegrate into a patchwork of detailed reports of individual incidents, deprived of an overall historical context. This caused Theophylact considerable trouble, leading **him** to overlook gaps of months or even years. **He must** have been aware of the fact **that** his source recorded annual **campaigns** (usually **from spring to fall**), **without** any **information** about intervals between **them**. He therefore filled in the gaps with information taken from other sources, in particular **from** the **Constantinopolitan** chronicle, without noticing his dating errors. The Constantinopolitan chronicle also provided Theophylact with information about **some major** military events in the vicinity of the Capital, such as Comentiolus' victories over the Slavs, in which there is no **hint** of the **anti-Comentiolus** bias of the *Feldzugsjournal*.⁴⁹

But Theophylact's inability to cope with contrasting sources led him and **modern** historians into confusion. Theophylact places the beginning of the emperor's **campaign** against Avars and Slavs **immediately** after the peace **with** Persia, in 592. On the other hand he tells us that in that **same** year a Frankish **embassy** arrived in Constantinople, but the king allegedly sending it came to power only in 596. Without any **military** and geographical knowledge, Theophylact was unable to understand the events described in his sources and his narrative is therefore sometimes obscure and confusing. This is also a result of **Theophylact's** bombastic style. In Books **vi—VIII**, he uses the affected "**parasang**" instead of "mile," an element which could hardly be ascribed to his source. He describes the **problem of Romans** drinking from a stream, under Slavic attack as a "choice between two alternatives. . . , either to **refuse** the water and relinquish life through thirst, or to draw up death too along with the river." Again, it is very hard to believe that these were the words of the *Feldzugsjournal*. It is true that Books **vi—VIII** contain no **Homeric** citations, but the stylistic variation introduced in order to attenuate the flat **monotony of the military** source amounts to nothing else but grandiloquent **rhetoric**. More often than not, the end result is a very confusing text.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Duket 1980:72; Olajos 1988:133-4. Theophylact's inability to understand his source may have also been responsible for some obscure passages, such as vn 4.8, where the river crossed by Peter's army against Peiragastus cannot be the Danube, because TTQTQPGS only occurs singly when preceded by *'lerrpo\$. Theophylact may have omitted that paragraph from his source which dealt with the crossing of the Danube and only focused on the actual confrontation with Peiragastus' warriors. For the use of the Constantinopolitan chronicle for Comentiolus' victory over the Slavs, see 1 7.1—6; Whitby and Whitby 1986:xxv. The Constantinopolitan chronicle, however, did not provide Theophylact with sufficient information to help him resolve the chronological uncertainties of his military source.

⁵⁰ In his account of the victory of the Romans against Musocius (vi 9.14), Theophylact tells us that "the Romans inclined toward high living" (irpds Tpucprjv KaTEKAivovTo), "were sewed up in liquor" (TTJ ui0rj ouppr|TTTOvTai), and disregarded sentry-duty (*rfs* Sto^povposs KaTr|MeAr)aav).

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In addition, Theophylact's view of history, as expressed in the introductory *Dialogue* between Philosophy and History, is that of a sequence of events that were fully intelligible to God alone. History is far superior to the individual historian whose role is to function as History's lyre, or even as her plectrum. Theophylact believed in the "extensive experience of history" as being "education for the souls," for the "common history of all mankind [is] a teacher." As a consequence, his heroes are not complex human beings, but repositories of moral principles.⁵¹

Far from being an eyewitness account of Roman campaigns against the Slavs, replete with personal observations, Theophylact's narrative is thus no more than a literary reworking of information from his military source. Like Diodorus' *Bibliotheca*, his work remains important for having preserved historical evidence from sources that are completely or partially lost. This is, in fact, what makes Theophylact's *History* an inestimable source for the history of the early Slavs. Despite his evident biases, Theophylact was unable to entirely absorb the *Feldzugsjournal* into his narrative and his intervention is relatively well visible. The episode of the three Sclavenes captured by Maurice's bodyguards at Heraclea, who wore no iron or military equipment, but only lyres, is certainly a cliché, for the same is said by Tacitus about the Aestii. This is in sharp contrast to the factual tone of Theophylact's account of Priscus' campaign against Ardagastus and Musocius or Peter's expedition against Peiragastus. Books vi and vn have little direct speech and flowery periphrases are comparatively fewer than in preceding books.⁵²

Theophylact preserved not only the day-by-day chronology recorded in the campaign diary, but numerous other details, such as the names and the status of three Slavic leaders. Moreover, there are several instances in

Footnote 50 (cont.)

Although all three actions took place at the same definite time in the past, Theophylact's use of tenses is most inconsistent, for, in a bizarre combination, he employs imperfect, present, and aorist, respectively. For Theophylact's bombastic style, see Olajos 1982:160. For Homeric citations in Theophylact's *History*, see Leanza 1972:586. The Frankish embassy: vi 3.6—7; Romans drinking from a stream: vn 5.9. Theophylact was aware that a parasang was not the equivalent of a mile. The distance between Constantinople and Hebdomon is at one time given in parasangs (v 16.4), at another in miles (vm 10.1), and Theophylact also uses miles separately (e.g., vn 4.3).

^{D1} Krivushin 1991:54 and 1994:10. For Theophylact's concept of God's role in history, see Leanza 1971:560 and 565. For his concept of history, see *Dialogue* 15; *History* Proem 6 and 13.

^{o2} Olajos 1982:158. For Theophylact and Diodorus, see Whitby 1988:312 and 350. For Theophylact and Tacitus, see vi 2.10; *Germania* 46; see also Ivanov 1995^48. A literary influence may also explain Theophylact's use of *FETIKOV* (E0VO\$) for the Slavs, a phrase more often applied to the Goths. It is interesting to note that he also called the Persians "Babylonians" and the Avars "Scythians." Despite claims to the contrary, the fact that the last part of the *History* is less stylish and organized does not support the idea that Theophylact's historical interest in Books VI—vm was only limited and that he must have died before re-editing this part of his work. See Olajos 1988:135; Whitby 1988:49—50.

Sources

which the actions of Priscus or Peter seem to follow strictly the recommendations of the *Strategikon*.⁵³ It is possible, though not demonstrated, that the author of the *Feldzugsjournal* was a participant in those same campaigns in which the author of the *Strategikon* gained his rich field experience. If true, this would only make Theophylact's account more trustworthy, despite his literary reworking of the original source. We may well smile condescendingly when Theophylact tells us that the three Sclavenes encountered by Emperor Maurice did not carry any weapons, "because their country was ignorant of iron and thereby provided them with a peaceful and troublefree life."⁵⁴ But there is no reason to be suspicious about his account of Priscus' campaign in Slavic territory. He may have clothed the plain narrative of the *Feldzugsjournal* with rhetorical figures; but he neither altered the sequence of events, nor was he interested in modifying details.

Theophylact's approach is slightly different from that of his contemporary in Frankish Gaul, the seventh-century author known as Fredegar. Until recently, the prevailing view was that the *Chronicle of Fredegar* was the product of three different authors, the last of whom was responsible for the Wendish account, but new research rejuvenated Marcel Baudot's theory of single authorship. Judging from, internal evidence, Fredegar's Book iv together with its Wendish account must have been written around 660. A partisan of the Austrasian aristocracy, in particular of the Pippinid family, Fredegar may have been close to or even involved in the activity of the chancery. The purpose of his chronicle seems to have been to entertain his audience, as suggested by the epic style of his stories about Aetius, Theodoric, Justinian, or Belisarius.⁵⁵

Where did Fredegar find his information about Samo, the Wendish king? Some proposed that he had obtained it all from the mouth of Sicharius, Dagobert's envoy to Samo. Others believe that the entire episode is just a tale. Fredegar's criticism of Dagobert's envoy and his

³³ Ardagastus is attacked by surprise, in the middle of the night (vi 7. r; cf. *Strategikon* ix 2.7). The author of the *Strategikon* knows that provisions may be found in abundance in Sclavene territory a fact confirmed by the booty taken by Priscus that caused disorder among his soldiers (vi 7.6; cf. *Strategikon* xi 4.32). As if following counsels in the *Strategikon*, Priscus ordered some of his men to move ahead on reconnaissance (vr 8.9 and vi 9.12; cf. *Strategikon* xi 4,41). Finally, Maurice's orders for his army to pass winter season 111 Sclavene territory (vi 10.1, vm 6.2) resonate with strategic thoughts expressed in the *Strategikon* (xi 4.19). ⁵⁴ Theophylact Simocatta vi 2.15.

⁵⁵ Fredegar 11 53, 57—9, and 62; see Kusternig 1982:7; Goffart 1988:427-8. His anti-Merovingian attitude and declared hostility toward Brunhild and her attempts at centralization of power also show Fredegar as a partisan of the Austrasian aristocracy. For the problem of authorship, see Krusch 1882; Baudot 1928; Kusternig 1982:12; Wood 1994:359; Goffart 1963. For the date of Book IV, see Labuda 1949:90—2; Goffart 1963:239; Kusternig 1982:5 and 12. Fredegar's erratic chronology in Book iv has long been noted. See Gardiner 1978:40 and 44. For chronological aspects relevant to the Wendish account, see Curta 1997:144-55.

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detailed knowledge of juridical and administrative formulaic language suggests a different solution.⁵⁶ According to Fredegar, the Slavs have long been subject to the Avars, "who used them as *Befulci*." The word is cognate with *fulcree*, a term occurring in the Edict of the Lombard king Rothari. Both derive from the Old *Geimsinfelhan^falh^fulgum* (hence the Middle German *bevelhen*), meaning "to entrust to, to give someone in guard." To Fredegar, therefore, Wends was a name for special military units of the Avar army. The term *befulci* and its usage further suggest, however, that Fredegar reinterpreted a "native," presumably Wendish, account. His purpose was to show how that Wendish *gens* emerged, which would later play an instrumental role in the decline of Dagobert's power.⁵⁷

Fredegar had two apparently equivalent terms for the same *ethnie*: *Sclauos* *coinomento* *Winedos*. There are variants for both terms, such as *Sclavini* or *Venedi*. The 'Wends' appear only in political contexts: the Wends, not the Slavs, were *befulci* of the Avars; the Wends, and not the Slavs, made Samo their king. There is a Wendish *gens*, but not a Slavic one. After those chapters in which he explained how a Wendish polity had emerged, Fredegar refers exclusively to Wends. It is, therefore, possible that 'Wends' and 'Sclavenes' are meant to denote a specific social and political configuration, in which such concepts as state or ethnicity are relevant, while 'Slavs' is a more general term, used in a territorial rather than an ethnic sense.⁵⁸

'Wends' and 'Slavs' were already in use when Fredegar wrote Book iv. They first appear in Jonas of Bobbio's *Life of St Columbanus*, written sometime between 639 and 643. According to Jonas, Columbanus had once thought of preaching to the Wends, who were also called Slavs (*Venetiorum qui et Sclavi dicuntur*). He gave up this mission of evangelization, because the eyes of the Slavs were not yet open for the light of the Scriptures. That Fredegar knew Jonas' work is indicated by a long passage cited from *Vita Columbani*. It has been argued that Jonas of Bobbio's source on Columbanus' missionary activity was his disciple, Eustasius, abbot of Luxeuil. Fredegar's Wendish account may have been inspired by

⁵⁶ Fredegar iv 68. See Baudot 1928:161; Goffart 1963:237-8.

⁵⁷ Fredegar iv 48. See Schiitz 1991:410—11; Fritze 1980:498—505; Pritsak 1983:397 and 411. A dim recollection of the same story is preserved in the *Russian Primary Chronicle* and may have originated in the West. See Zasterova 1964; Swoboda 1970:76; Curta 1997:150. According to Fredegar, the Wendish *geiis* was the outgrowth of a military conflict, but the *befulci* turned into a fully fledged *gens* only through the long-suffering *uxores Sdavorum et filias*. This suggests that the Wendish account operates as a counterpart to other equivalent stories, such as that of the Trojan origin of the Franks or that of chapter 65 of Book in, significantly entitled *De Langobardomm gente et eorum origine et nomine*. For the historiographic genre of *origo gentis*, see Wolfram 1981:311 and 1990; Anton 1994. ^{5K} Fredegar iv 48, 68, 72, 74, 75, and 77. See Curta 1997:152-3.

missionary reports. He may have used the perspective, if not the accounts, of the missionaries for explaining the extraordinary success of Samo against Dagobert and his Austrasian army. In Fredegar's eyes, the Wends were a *gens* primarily in the political sense of the term. To him, they were agents of secular history, though more of political dissolution, as indicated by their alliance with Radulf, whose victories "turned his head" to the extent that he rated himself King of Thuringia and denied Sigebert's overlordship. The use of missionary reports may also explain why Fredegar's image of the Slavs does not include any of the stereotypes encountered in older or contemporary Byzantine sources. No *Milieutheorie* and no blond Slavs emerge from his account. Despite Fredegar's contempt for Samo's haughtiness, he did not see Wends primarily as heathens. Samo's "kingdom" may have not been the first Slavic state, but Fredegar was certainly the first political historian of the Slavs.⁵⁹

THE SAINT AND THE BARBARIANS AGAIN

In contrast to Fredegar's attitude, to the unknown author of Book n of the *Miracles of St Demetrius* the Slavs were nothing else but savage, brutish, and, more important, heathen barbarians. Despite his ability to speak Greek and to dress like Constantinopolitan aristocrats, King Perbundos dreams only of slaughtering Christians. At any possible moment, the Slavs are to be impressed by St Demetrius' miracles. When an earthquake devastates the city, they are stopped from plundering the victims' destroyed houses by a miraculous vision. After yet another failure to conquer Thessalonica, the barbarians acknowledge God's intervention in favor of the city and St Demetrius' miraculous participation in battle. St Demetrius slaps in the face a dexterous Slavene craftsman 'who builds a siege tower, driving him out of his mind and thus causing the failure of a dangerous attack on the city walls.⁶⁰

On the other hand, however, one gets the impression that the Slavs were a familiar presence. They are repeatedly called "our Slavic neighbors." They lived so close to the city that, after the imperial troops chased them from the coastal region, the inhabitants of Thessalonica — men, women, and children — walked to their abandoned villages and carried home all provisions left behind. Moreover, while some were attacking the city, others were on good terms with its inhabitants, supplying them with grain. Still others were under the orders of the emperor in

⁵⁹ Fredegar i 27, iv 36, iv 77; *Vita Colombani* 1 27. For the date of Jonas' work, see Wood 1994b:248—9; Ronin 1995b. For Fredegar's Wends as agents of secular history, see Fritze 1994:281. For Samo's 'kingdom' as the first Slavic state, see Labuda 1949.

⁶⁰ *Miracles of St Demetrius* n 4.241, 11 3.219, 11 2.214, 11 4.274.

Constantinople, who required them to supply with food the refugees from the Avar qaganate under Kuver's commands. In contrast to Archbishop John's account, Book n also provides a more detailed image of the Slavs. Its author knew, for instance, that the army of the Sclavenes besieging Thessalonica comprised units of archers, warriors armed with slings, lancers, soldiers carrying shields, and warriors with swords. Unlike John who invariably called them either ΖΚΑα(3ivoi or 2ΚΑα(3nvoi, the author of Book n at times prefers ^KA&POI. He also provided the names of no less than seven Slavic tribes living in the vicinity of Thessalonica.⁶¹

He also seems to have used oral sources, especially those of refugees from Balkan cities abandoned in the early 600s, such as Naissus or Serdica. It has been argued that he may have used written sources as well, probably the city's annals or chronicle. He specifically referred to some iconographic evidence (EV ypacrj) in order to support a point that he made. Book II has fewer miracles and miraculous deeds than Book I and seems to have relied more heavily on documentary material.⁶²

Unlike Archbishop John, who was using history to glorify St Demetrius and to educate his fellow citizens, the author of Book n, despite his obvious desire to imitate John's style, took a different approach. He wrote some seventy years later, shortly after the events narrated. His account is visibly better informed, his narration approaches the historiographic genre. Paradoxically, this is what would make Book n less popular than Book i, despite the growing influence of St Demetrius' cult in the course of the following centuries. There are numerous manuscripts containing miracles of Book i, but only one rendering Book n. In the late ninth century, Anastasius Bibliothecarius translated into Latin ten miracles from Book i, but only one from Book n. Unlike Archbishop John, the author of Book n was more concerned with facts supporting his arguments and often referred to contemporary events, known from other sources. His mention of "July 25 of the fifth indiction" and of the emperor's war with the Saracens makes it possible to date the siege of Thessalonica precisely to July 25, 677. Book n must have been written, therefore, at some point during the last two decades of the seventh⁶³ century.

⁶¹ *Miracles of St Demetrius* n 3.219, 3.222, 4.231, 4.279-80, 4.254, 5.289, 11 4.262. For a list of five tribes, see 11 1.179; for other tribes, see 11 4.232.

⁶² *Miracles of St Demetrius* n 2.200, n 1.194; see Lemerle 1979:174 with n. 19. For the use of city annals or chronicles, see Lemerle 1981:84. For the use of administrative sources, see Beshevliev 19703:287—8. For the attitude toward the central government, see Margetic 1988:760; Ditten 1991.

⁶³ *Miracles of St Demetrius* n 4.255. See Lemerle 1979:34 and 1981:172; Ivanova i995a:203. Ivanova (i995a:200) argued that since its author refers to a numerous Slavic population living near Bizye, at a short distance from Constantinople (11 4. 238), Book 11 must have been written after Emperor Justinian II's campaign of 688 against the *Skkwittia*,

LATER SOURCES

With Book 11 of the *Miracles of St Demetrius* we come to the end of a long series of contemporary accounts on the early Slavs. None of the subsequent sources is based on autopsy and all could be referred to as "histories," relying entirely on written, older sources. First in this group is Patriarch Nicephorus. His *Breviarium* may have been designed as a continuation of Theophylact Simocatta, but Nicephorus did not have personal knowledge of any of the events described and it is very unlikely that he had recourse to living witnesses. The source of the first part of the *Breviarium*, covering the reigns of Phocas and Heraclius, was most probably the Constantinopolitan chronicle. In tone with such sources as George of Pisidia or the *Chronicon Paschale*, Nicephorus spoke of Slavs besieging the capital in 626 as the allies of the Avars, not as their subjects. When referring to Slavic canoes attacking Blachernae, Nicephorus spoke of $\nu\omicron\nu\omicron^{\wedge}\alpha\omicron\iota\ \kappa\omicron\omicron\tau\iota\omicron\iota$, which suggests that at the time he wrote his *Breviarium*, a Slavic fleet of canoes was something exotic enough to require explanation. For their respective accounts of the settlement of the Bulgars, both Nicephorus and his contemporary, Theophanes Confessor, used a common source, probably written in the first quarter of the eighth century in Constantinople.⁶⁴

But unlike Nicephorus, Theophanes' accounts of Maurice's campaigns are a combination of the Constantinopolitan chronicle and Theophylact Simocatta. At several places, Theophanes misunderstood Theophylact's text and confused his narrative. The most significant alterations of Theophylact's text result from Theophanes' efforts to adapt Theophylact's loose chronology, based on seasons of the year, to one that employed indictions and the world years of the Alexandrine chronological system. This makes the controversy over Theophanes' reliability a cul-de-sac, for any chronological accuracy that is present in Theophanes is merely accidental.

Theophanes spread some of Theophylact's campaigns over more than one year, and at one point he repeated some information which he had

⁶⁴ *Breviarium* 13; see Mango 1990:7. In 769, the terminal date of his *Breviarium*, Nicephorus was about eleven years old (he was born in or about 758, in the reign of Constantine V). The *Breviarium* was finished in or shortly after 828. See Litavrin 1995d:22i—2. For the Constantinopolitan source used by both Nicephorus and Theophanes, see Mango 1990:16. It has been argued that the source was the Great Chronographer. None of the surviving fragments, however, refers to the settlement of the Bulgars. See Bozhilov 1975:29. On the other hand, for much of the seventh and eighth centuries, Theophanes was also dependent on a Syriac chronicle, not available to Nicephorus (Scott 1990:41). It is possible that this source provided Theophanes with a description of the Black Sea northern coast and an *excursus* on the history of the Bulgars, which cannot be found in Nicephorus. See Chichurov 1980:107. For relations between the Great Chronographer and Theophanes, see also Whitby 1982a; Mango 1997:xc:i.

already used. He paraphrased the much longer and more grandiloquent account of Theophylact. Though Theophylact had no date for the Slavic raid ending with Comentiolus' victory over Ardagastus' hordes, Theophanes attached the year AM 6076 (583/4) to this event, on the basis of his own interpretation of Theophylact's text. He dated Priscus' campaign against the Sclavenes to AM 6085 (592/3), abbreviated Theophylact's account, and changed parasangs into miles. The end result is that Theophylact's originally confusing narrative becomes even more ambiguous. It is only by considering Theophanes' summary of Theophylact that we begin to appreciate the latter's account, based as it is on the *Feldzugsjournal*. If Theophylact's history had been lost, Theophanes' version of it would have been entirely misleading, if not altogether detrimental, to any attempts to reconstruct the chronology of Maurice's wars against Avars and Sclavenes. Since he had also incorporated bits of information from other sources, now lost, this caveat should warn us against taking Theophanes' text at its face value.⁶⁵

Theophanes, together with Nicephorus, is the first to use the word *^KXauivia* to refer to a loosely defined Slavene polity, arguably a chiefdom. There is no basis, however, for interpreting his use of the term in both singular and plural forms, as indicating the fragmentation of an originally unified union of tribes into smaller formations. Composed as it was in *c.* 812, the *Chronographia* of Theophanes is not the work of a historian in the modern sense of the word. He was certainly capable of skillful amalgamation of various sources, but his coverage of the seventh century is poor and it is very unlikely that his labor went beyond mere copying of now extinct sources.⁶⁶

Modern approaches to the history of the Balkans during the first half of the seventh century have been considerably influenced by one particular text: *De Administrando Imperio*, a work associated with the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. There is not too much material relevant to the history of the early Slavs in this tenth-century compilation, but chapters 29 to 36 represent a key source for the controversial issue of the migration of Croats and Serbs. It has long been recognized that all

(^ Theophylact *Simocatta* i 7.5; Mango 1997:376 and 394. Theophanes misunderstood Theophylact's reference to the city of Asemus (vn 3.1), and transformed it into the emarmoi (leading soldiers) of Novae (p. 399 with n. 3). There are also instances of innovative modification, as in the case of the episode of Peter's military confrontation with 1,000 Bulgar warriors (vn 4.1—7), which Theophanes enriched with a short reply of Peter to Bulgar offers of peace (p. 399), a detail absent from Theophylact's account. See Whitby 1982a:9 and 1983:333; Chichurov 1980:90; Litavrin 1995a:299. For Theophanes' chronological system, see also Duket 1980:85; Mango 1997:lxiv—lxvii. For Theophanes' narrative, see Liubarskii 1995.

⁶⁶ Mango 1997:484, 507—8, 595, and 667. For *Sklaviniai*, see Litavrin 1984:198. For the use of the word (*Sclctvinia*) in contemporary Carolingian sources, see Bertels 1987:160—1. For the date of the *Chroiwgraphia*, see Whitby 1982:9; for a slightly later date (815), see Mango 1997:lxii.

these chapters were written in 948 or 949, with the exception of chapter 30, which must be regarded as a much later interpolation, composed by another author, after 950, arguably after Constantine's death in 959. In any case, the book seems never to have received its final editing, for there are striking differences, as well as some repetition, between chapters 29, 31, and 32, on one hand, and 30, on the other. The problem of reliability and truth raised by this source derives primarily from the fact that it contains two significantly different accounts of the same event, the migration of the Croats. The one given in chapter 30 is a legendary account, which may well represent a "native" version of the Croat *origo gentis*, arguably collected in Dalnatiia, in one of the Latin cities. The same is true about the story of the migration of the Serbs, which most probably originated in a Serbian account. By contrast, the narrative in chapter 31 betrays a Byzantine source, for Constantine rejects any Frankish claims of suzerainty over Croatia. He mentions a minor Bulgarian—Croatian skirmish almost a century earlier, but has no word for the major confrontation between King Symeon of Bulgaria and Prince Tomislav of Croatia, which happened in his own lifetime (926). This further suggests that the account in chapter 31 is biased against both Frankish claims and Croatian independent tendencies, in order to emphasize Byzantine rights to the lands of the Croats. As a consequence, some believe that chapter 30 is the only trustworthy source for early Croat history, for it reflects Croat native traditions. These scholars also reject the version given by chapter 31 as Constantine's figment.⁶⁷

Indeed, the presumed Croat version in chapter 30 has no room for Emperor Heraclius helping Croats in settling in Dalnatiia or ordering their conversion to Christianity. By contrast, the constant reference to Heraclius and the claim that Croatia was always under Byzantine overlordship were clearly aimed at furthering Byzantine claims of suzerainty. But the "Croat version" is not without problems. The motif of the five brothers, which also occurs in the account of the Bulgar migration to be found in Theophanes and Nicephorus, is a mythological projection of a ritual division of space which is most typical for nomadic societies. Moreover, in both chapter 30 and 31, the homeland of the Balkan Croats is located somewhere in Central Europe, near Bavaria, beyond Hungary, and next to the Frankish Empire. In both cases, Constantine makes it clear that Croats, "also called 'white'," are still living in that region. "White" Croatia is also mentioned by other, independent, sources, such as King Alfred the Great's translation of Orosius' *History of the World*, tenth-

⁶⁷ For chapter 30 as a later interpolation, see Bury 1906. For the migration of the Serbs, see Maksimovic 1982; Lilie 1985:31-2. For the migration of the Croats, see Grafenauer 1952; Fine 1983:52.

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century Arab geographers (Gaihani, Ibn-Rusta, and Mas'udi), the *Rpissian Primary Chronicle*, and the Emperor Henry IV's foundation charter for the bishopric of Prague. None of these sources could be dated earlier than the mid-ninth century and no source refers to Croats, in either Central Europe or the Balkans, before that date. Traditional historiographical views, however, maintain that the Serbs and the Croats referred to by Constantine were a second wave of migration, to be placed during Heraclius' reign.⁶⁸ There are other anachronisms and blatant errors that warn us against taking Emperor Constantine's account at its face value.⁶⁹ That *De Administrando Imperio* contains the first record of a "native" version of the past cannot be denied. There is, however, no reason to project this version on events occurring some two hundred years earlier.

The same is true about other late sources. Emperor Leo VI's treatise entitled *Tactica* borrows heavily from the *Strategikon*. But unlike the author of the *Strategikon*, Leo had few original things to say about the Slavs, in general, and those of the sixth and seventh centuries, in particular. To him, the Slavs were not a major threat, because they had already been converted to Christianity, though not fully subjugated. Leo placed the narrative taken from the *Strategikon* in the past and claimed that the purpose of Byzantine campaigns against the Sclavenes had been to force them to cross the Danube and "bend their necks under the yoke of Roman authority." Another late source, the eleventh-century chronicle of Cedrenus, contains a reference to Heraclius' reconstruction, in his fourteenth year, of the Heraios leper hospital at Galata, which had been burnt by Slavs. According to the *Vita Zotici*, written under Emperor Michael IV (1034—41), the hospital was, however, restored by Maurice, after being burnt by Avars. It is possible therefore that Cedrenus' reference to the Slavs at Galata is the product of some confusion.⁷⁰

Highly controversial is the testimony of the so-called *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, the source on which Fallmerayer based his theories concern-

⁶⁸ Constantine found it necessary to explain why Croats lived in two different places so far from each other. His explanation, however, is an impossible and meaningless etymology: "'Croats' in the Slav tongue means 'those who occupy much territory'" (chapter 31). For earlier approaches, see Dummler 1856:57—8; Jirecek 1911:108; Mai 1939. Despite clear evidence that Constantine's account of early Croat history is an amalgamation of various sources freely interpreted in accordance to Byzantine political claims, the idea of migration is too powerful to be abandoned by modern historians. See Margetic 1977; Klaic 1984 and 1985; Fine 1983:53 and 59. For the Serbs, see also Schuster-Sewc 1985.

⁶⁹ The Serbs sent a request to Emperor Heraclius through the military governor of Belgrade (BeXeypaCov, instead of HiiyiSdbv, as in chapter 25). They were first given land in the province (ev Top 8E|KXTI) of Thessalonica, but no such theme existed during Heraclius' reign. Emperor Constantine's explanation of the ethnic name of the Serbs as derived from *servi* is plainly wrong.

⁷⁰ Leo the Wise, *Tactica* 78 and 98; Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, ed. I. Bekker, 1 (Bonn, 1838), 698-9; Aubineau 1975:82. See Whitby 1988:124.

ing the extent of the Slav penetration into Greece. The chronicle survives in three late manuscripts. Only one of them, which is preserved at the Iberon monastery at Mount Athos and dates to the sixteenth century, deals exclusively with Avar invasions into Peloponnesus, the settlement of the Slavs, and Nicephorus I's campaigns against them. The *communis opinio* is that this manuscript should therefore be treated as the earliest version of the text. It also gives the impression of a more elaborate treatment which has led to a more "scholarly" style. But "recent studies have shown that the Iberon manuscript uses the Byzantine system of dating, whereas the other two manuscripts use the older Alexandrine system. As a consequence, the Iberon cannot be the earliest of all three, for the Byzantine system of dating was introduced only after the Alexandrine one. The *Chronicle of Monemvasia* is not a chronicle properly speaking, but a compilation of sources concerning Avars and Slavs and referring to the foundation of the metropolitan see of Patras. Patras, and not Monemvasia, is at the center of the narrative. It has been argued therefore that this text may have been written in order to be used in negotiations with the metropolitan of Corinth over the status of the metropolitan of Patras.⁷¹ Since the emperor Nicephorus I is referred to by the unknown author of the text as "the Old, who had Staurakios as son," it is often believed that he must have written after the reign of Nicephorus II Phocas (963-9). It has been noted, on the other hand, that the text explicitly refers to the death of Tarasius, the patriarch of Constantinople (784—806), which gives the first *terminus a quo*. Moreover, the author calls Sirmium *Σχρμαβιος* and locates the city in Bulgaria, an indication that the chronicle was written before the conquest of that city by Basil II, in 1018. Its composition must have taken place in the second half of the tenth century or in the early eleventh century.⁷² The author of the chronicle drew his information from Menander the Guardsman, Evagrius, Theophylact Simocatta, and Theophanes. Descriptions of the attacks of the Avars in the *Chronicle* are modeled after the description of Hunnic attacks by Procopius. But the author of the *Chronicle* was completely ignorant of Balkan geography outside Peloponnesus. More important, his account of invasions into Peloponnesus refers exclusively

⁷¹ Fallmerayer 1845:367-458. See Charanis 1950:142-3; Setton 1950:516; Kalligas 1990:13; Turk) 1997:410. For the style of the chronicle, see Koder 1976:76. For the ecclesiastical division in Peloponnesus, see Yannopoulos 1993. For the *Chronicle of Motienwasia* as a forgery of ecclesiastical origin, perpetrated by or on behalf of the metropolitan of Patras, see Setton 1950:5 17. For the *Chronicle* as an "expose," an elaborate report on the circumstances leading to the establishment of the metropolis of Patras, see Turlej 1998:455 with n. 23.

⁷² For the date of the chronicle, see Kougeas 1912:477-8; Barisic 1965; Duichev 1976:xliii and 1980. For less convincing attempts to attribute the *Chronicle* to Arethas of Caesarea and to date it to c. 900, see Koder 1976:77; Poll! 1988:99; Avramea 1997:69.

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and explicitly to Avars, not Slavs. The Slavs only appear in the second part of the Iberon version of the text, which describes how Emperor Nicephorus I (802—11) conquered Peloponnesus and established the metropolis of Patras.⁷³

This account comes very close to a scholium written by Arethas of Caesarea on the margin of a manuscript of Nicephorus' *Historia Syntornos* written in 932. The note is a comment made by Arethas, while reading Nicephorus' work and thus must be viewed as a text of private, not public nature. In some instances, the one repeats the other verbatim. Arethas, nevertheless, speaks only of Slavs. Though the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* was clearly composed much later, it is very unlikely that its author derived his information from Arethas. It has been argued, therefore, that both drew their information from an unknown source, but it is also possible that there was more than one hand at work in the earliest known version of the *Chronicle*. Others have argued that since Arethas only speaks of Slavs, the Avars are a later addition to the *Chronicle*. Still others attempted to solve the quagmire by pointing to a now-lost privilege of Emperor Nicephorus I for Patras as the possible source for the story of the Avar rule in the Peloponnesus. This, it has been argued, was a propaganda response to Charlemagne's claims to both the imperial title and victories over the Avars. But the evidence of the eighth-century *Life of St Pancratius*, as well as of sixth-century sources, such as Evagrius, John of Ephesus, or John of Biclar, contradicts this view. If the source for the *Chronicle's* account of heavy destruction in Greece during Maurice's reign were oral traditions of Greek refugees in southern Italy and Sicily, then we must also admit that they remembered being expelled by Avars, not by Slavs. Arethas, who had been born at Patras in or around 850 to a rich family, may have well applied this tradition to a contemporary situation and therefore changed Avars into Slavs.⁷⁴ Family memories or stories may well have been the source for Arethas' knowledge about such things as

⁷³ The author of the chronicle confounds Anchialos with Messina in Macedonia; see *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, pp. 8 and 16. See also Charanis 1950:145; Duichev 1976:xlii; Kalligas 1990:25; Litavrin 1995:338; Pohl 1988:100—1.

⁷⁴ For the scholium of Arethas, see Westerink 1972. The date and authenticity of the scholium have been disputed, mainly because it refers to both Thessalia prima and Thessalia secunda, an administrative division that took place in the eleventh century. See Karayannopoulos 1971:456—7. For a common source for Arethas and the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, see Charanis 1950:152—3. For the Avars as a later addition, see Chrysanthopoulos 1957. For the privilege of Nicephorus and the story of Avar rule, see Turlej 1998:467. For oral traditions of Greek refugees as a source for the chronicle, see Setton 1950:517; Pohl 1988:101. For the *Life of St Pancmtius*, see Vasil'ev 1898:416; Capaldo 1983:5-6 and 13; Olajos 1994:107-9. Arethas' knowledge of and interest in South Italy derives from the Greek refugees returning to Patras. See Falkenhausen 1995. For Arethas' life, see Litavrin 1995:345.

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the exact period (218 years) between the attacks of the Slavs and the settlement of Greeks in Peloponnesus by Emperor **Nicephorus I**, or the exact whereabouts in Italy of the population transferred to Greece by that emperor. But it is much more **difficult** to visualize how the emperor himself could have known that the successors of those expelled from Patras by the Slavs, more than two hundred years earlier, were still living in Reggio Calabria.⁷⁵ This warns us against pushing too **far** any kind of argument based on either the *Chronicle* or Arethas.

After 700, Slavs also appear in Western sources. Around 630, Bishop **Amandus**, one of St **Columbanus'** disciples, led the **first** known mission to the Slavs. His *Life*, written a century later, describes his journey across the Danube, to the *Sclavi*, who "sunk in great error, were caught in the devil's snares." Amandus' mission had no success but the association of the Slavs **with** the river Danube proved to be a lasting one. The Danube appears again in the **Frankish** *Cosmography*, written after 650, as providing grazing fields to the *Sclavi* and bringing *Winidi* together.⁷⁶

Much of what we know about the early history of the Slavs in the West derives, however, from Paul the Deacon's *History of the Lombards*. The entries concerning the Slavs fall into two groups: those referring to conflicts between Slavs and Bavarians and those in which Slavs appear in a more or less direct relation to Lombards. These references are characteristically dated, sometimes even by month, a practice quite uncommon for the rest of Paul's *History*. This has been interpreted as **an** indication that, as this point, Paul closely followed the now-lost history of **Secundus** of Trento.⁷⁷

The Slavs are described as allies or paying tribute to the dukes of Forum Julii, "up to the time of Duke **Ratchis**." Some of Paul's heroes are well accustomed to their presence. According to Paul, when **Raduald**, the duke of **Beneventum**, attempted to revenge the death of **Aio** by the hands of the invading Slavs, he "talked familiarly with these Slavs in their own language, and when in this way he had lulled them into greater

⁷⁵ In contrast to the richness of detail in the preceding paragraph, Arethas' text is very vague at this point. We are only told that the emperor "has been informed" ((3aaiAeu<; yap 6 eiprjiagvos avanaOcbv) where the "ancient inhabitants" (TOTs apxfjSev oiKT|Topaiv) of Patras lived at that time. See the *Chronicle of Monemmsia*, p. 19.

⁷⁶ *Vita Amandi*, ed. Krusch, *MGH: SRM* 5:440; *Frankish Cosmography*, w. 22-4, ed. G. H. Pertz (Berlin, 1847). Some sixty years after Bishop Amandus, St Marinus was burnt at the stake by *Uuandali* on the Bavarian frontier (*Vita Sancti Marini*, p. 170). By contrast, the bishop of Salzburg, St Hrodbert, successfully converted a *rex Carantanorum* in the late 600s, and also preached to the *Watidali* (*Vita Hrodberti*, p. 159). For 'Vandals' as Wends, see Steinberger 1920.

⁷⁷ *Historia Langobardomm* iv 7, 10, 28, and 40. For Secundus of Trento, see iv 10. See also Kos 1931:207; Gardiner 1983:147; Polil 1988:9. For a detailed discussion of Paul's image of the Slavs, see Curta 1997:15 5—61.

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indolence for war," he fell upon them and killed almost all of them. Friulan Lombards were annoyed by *latrunculi Sclavorum*, who "fell upon the flocks and upon the shepherd of the sheep that pastured in their neighborhoods and drove away the booty taken from them." The Slavs were a familiar neighbor: in times of trouble, both Arnefrit, Lupus' son, and Duke Pemmo fled to the Slavs. Knowing that his audience was familiar with the Slavs, Paul projects this familiarity into the past. He argues that, sometime after 663, when the invading Slavs saw Duke Wechtari coming from Forum Julii against them with only twenty-five men, "they laughed, saying that the patriarch was advancing against them with his clergy." This is pure anachronism, since according to Paul's own testimony, Calixtus, the patriarch of Aquileia, moved to Forum Julii only in 737 or shortly before that. Moreover, Wechtari raising his helmet and thus provoking panic among Slavs, is a stereotypical gesture, pointing to the style and ethos of an oral heroic model, and may be easily paralleled by a series of similar accounts.⁷⁸

Paul's Slavs, particularly those from later references in Book v and vi, are lively beings, have "faces" and feelings, and are always active, not passive, elements. An old Slavic woman helped Paul's great-grandfather to escape from the Avars, gave him food and told him what direction he ought to go. One can speak with the Slavs in their own language or use their corruptly constructed place names. They can laugh, recognize a hero from his bald head, be alarmed or terrified, cry, or even fight manfully. However, although Paul's Slavs are *2. gens* and even have *zpatria*, they lack any political organization that would make them comparable to other *gentes*. Unlike Fredegar's Wends, they have no *rex* and no *regnum*, despite the fact that by the time Paul wrote his *History*, the *Carantani* were already organized as a polity under their *dux* Boruth and his successors. No Slavic leader whatsoever appears in Paul's account. He occasionally focused on individuals such as the old Slavic woman. If looking for more narrowly defined social groups, we are left only with the *latrunculi Sclavorum*. Despite its animation, Paul's picture is thus a stereotypical one, probably rooted in ethnic stereotypes developed along the Friulan border by successive generations of Lombards.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ *Historia Langobardorum* iv 28, iv 38, iv 44, vi 24, v 22, vi 45, v 23, and vi 51. Aio's death is also mentioned in the *Chronica Sancti Benedicti Casinensis*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH: Scriptores Remm Langobardomm* (Berlin, 1878), p. 202; see also Borodin 1983:56. For the hero raising his helmet, see Pizarro 1989:153 with n. 51.

⁷⁹ *Historia Langobardorum* vi 24. See Curta 1997:160-1. Boruth ruled between *c.* 740 and *c.* 750, followed by his son Cacatius (*c.* 750 to 752) and his nephew Cheitmar (752 to *c.* 769), then by Waltunc (*c.* 772 to *c.* 788), and Priwizlauga (*c.* 788 to *c.* 799). See *Conversio Bagoariorum et Camntanorum c.* 4-5.

Sources

Table i *Sources of sources: origin of accounts*

Eyewitness	Possible contact	Second-hand information
<i>Strategikon</i>	Procopius	Jordanes
George of Pisidia <i>Chronicon Paschale</i>	Pseudo-Caesarius <i>Miracles of St Demetrius</i>	Agathias John Malalas
Theodore Syncellus		Menander the Guardsman
Theophylact Simocatta <i>(Feldzugsjo u mat)</i>		John of Ephesus John of Biclar Gregory the Great Isidore of Seville Fredegar

CONCLUSION

There are at least three important conclusions to be drawn from this survey of sources concerning the history of the early Slavs between c. 500 and 700. First, many contemporary accounts are based on second-hand information (Table i). Some authors, like Jordanes, Agathias, or Menander the Guardsman, only used written sources of various origins. There are, however, a number of sources that most certainly originated in eyewitness accounts, such as the *Strategikon* or Theophylact Simocatta's narrative of Maurice's campaigns against Avars and Sclavenes. The analysis of other accounts reveals a possible contact of some sort with the Slavs, as in the case of Procopius' *Wars*, arguably based on interviews with Slavene and Antian mercenaries in Italy. Second, there is a substantial overlap in the time-spans covered by these accounts (see Table 2), despite their divergent perspectives and aims. This has encouraged historians to look for parallels, but also to fill in the gaps of one source with material derived from another. It is clear, however, that only a few, relatively short, periods witnessed an increasing interest with Slavs and things Slavic (Table 3). No source specifically talks about Slavs before the reign of Justinian (527—65), despite Jordanes' efforts to fabricate a venerable ancestry for them by linking Sclavenes and Antes to Venethi.⁸⁰ It was the first half of Justinian's reign that witnessed the rise of a "Slavic problem." During the last half of Justinian's reign and during the reigns of his successors, Justin II (565—718) and

⁸⁰ Marcellinus Comes, whose chronicle covered the period between 379 and 518, to which he later added a sequel down to 534 (a supplement to 548 being added by another author), had no knowledge of Sclavenes.

Table 2 Time-spans covered by sixth- and seventh-century sources

Years	500	525	550	575	600	625	650
Source							
Jordanes	-----						
Procopius	-----						
Agathias			---				
John Malalas	-----						
Menander the Guardsman				-----			
John of Ephesus	-----						
John of Biclar				-----			
Evagrius	-----						
Theophylact Simocatta					-----		
<i>Miracles I</i>						-----	
Isidore of Seville	-----						
<i>Chronicon Paschale</i>	-----						
Fredegar					-----		
<i>Miracles II</i>							-----

Tiberius II (578—82), informations about Slavs were scarce. The "Slavic problem" resurfaced under Emperor Maurice (582—602). This is the period in which some of the most important sources were written, such as Menander the Guardsman's *History*, the *Strategikon*, and the campaign diary later used by Theophylact Simocatta for his *History*. Finally, the last period witnessing a considerable interest in Slavs is that of Heraclius' reign, most probably because of their participation in the siege of Constantinople in 626. The Slavs now appear in the works of those who had witnessed the combined attacks of Avars, Slavs, and Persians on the capital city (George of Pisidia, Theodore Syncellus, and the author of the *Chronicon Paschale*). Archbishop John of Thessalonica viewed them as a major threat to his city requiring the miraculous intervention of St Demetrius. Theophylact Simocatta incorporated the *Feldzugsjournal* written in the last few years of the sixth century into his narrative of Maurice's reign. The same period witnessed the first attempts to convert the Slavs to Christianity, which most likely stimulated Fredegar to write the first independent account in the West. After Heraclius' reign, there are no other sources referring to Slavs, except Book 11 of the *Miracles of St Demetrius*. Justinian (the mid-sixth century), Maurice (the late sixth century), and Heraclius (the second third of the seventh century) are thus the major chronological markers of the historiography of the early Slavs.

Table 3 *Chronology of sources*

Date	Source	Emperor
		Justinian
550/1	Jordanes, <i>Qctica</i> Jordanes, <i>Roinana</i> Procopius, <i>Wars</i> 1—VII Procopius, <i>Secret History</i>	
c- 554	Procopius, <i>Wars</i> vm Procopius, <i>Buildings</i> iv	
c. 560	Pseudo-Caesarius	
		Justin II
c. 560—80	Agathias	
c. 565-74	John Malalas	
c. 570-9	Martin of Braga	
		Tiberius II Maurice
582-602	Menander the Guardsman	
c. 590	John of Ephesus John of Biclar	
c. 592-602	<i>Strategikon</i>	
f- 593	Evagrius	
599/600	Gregory the Great	
		Phocas Heraclius
-20	<i>Miracles of St Demetrius</i> 1	
	George of Pisidia, <i>Belhun Avaricum</i>	
9	George of Pisidia, <i>Heraclias</i>	
0	<i>Chronicon Paschale</i>	
c. 630	Isidore of Seville, <i>Chronica Maiora</i>	
630	Theophylact Simocatta	
626—41	Theodore Syncellus	
		Constans II
639-42	■ Jonas of Bobbio, <i>Lije of St Columbanus</i>	
c. 660	Fredegar	
		Constantine IV Justinian II
f. 690	<i>Miracles of St Demetrius</i> 11	

Chapter 3

THE SLAVS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL SOURCES (c. 500-700)

A major, still unresolved, problem of the modern historiography of the early Middle Ages remains that of defining the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans. On the assumption that the Slavs originated in an *Urheimat* located far from the Danube river, nineteenth-century historians used the concept of migration (*Einwanderung, Auswanderung*). They were followed by modern historians under the influence of the concept and the historiography of the *Volkerwanderung*. More recently, a linguist searching for the original homeland of the Slavs even spoke of *reconquista*.¹ Palacky and Safarik also insisted, a few years before the Slavic Congress in Prague (1848), that the migration of the Slavs was a peaceful one, quite unlike the brutal Germanic invasions. As a consequence, some modern historians and archaeologists prefer to write of colonization or of *Landnahme* and imagine the early Slavs as a people of farmers, travelling on foot, "entire families or even whole tribes," to the promised land.² Noting, however, that such a *Landnahme* was completely invisible to early medieval sources, Lucien Musset called it an *obscure progression*, a tag quickly adopted by others. After World War II, particularly in Communist countries, the acceptable terms were "infiltration" and "penetration" and the favorite metaphor, the wave. Others, more willing to use the perspective of contemporary sources, observed that more often than not, after successful raids, the Slavs returned to their homes north of the Danube. Current usage has therefore replaced "migration" and "infiltration" with "invasion" and "raid."³

¹ Trubachev 1985:204 and 1991:11. For the Slavic migration, see Schafarik 1844:111 and 42; Bogdan 1894:15. See also Lemerle 1980; Guillou 1973; Ditten 1978; Ivanova and Litavrin 1985; Fohl 1988:95. For *Voikerwanderung*, see Goffart 1989.

² Gimbutas 1971:14. Peaceful migration of the Slavs: Schafarik 1844:1, 42; Palacky 1868:74—89. Slavic *Landnahme*, see Evert-Kapessowa 1963; Zasterova 1976; Weithmann 1978:18; Braichevskii 1983:220. For the historiography of the *Landnahme*, see Schneider 1993.

³ *Obscure progression*; Musset 1965:75, 81, and 85, and 1983:999. See also Pohl 1988:95. Infiltration: Comşa 1960:733; Cankova-Petkova 1968:44; Tapkova-Zaimova 1974:201 and 205; Popovic 1980:246; Velkov 1987. See also Cross 1948:7 and 28. Slavic "wave": Skrzhinskaia 1957:9; Vana

It is often assumed that Jordanes' source for his account of the Slavs was Cassiodorus, who wrote in the late 520s or early 530s. Some argued therefore that the *Getica* is a genuine report of the earliest stages of the Slavic infiltration in Eastern Europe. In the eyes of Procopius, Jordanes' contemporary, the Slavs were, however, a quite recent problem, which he specifically linked to the beginnings of Justinian's reign. Since no other source referred to either Sclavenes or Antes before Justinian, some have rightly concluded that these two *ethnies* were purely (early) medieval phenomena.⁴

In this chapter, I intend to examine the historical sources regarding the Sclavenes and the Antes in the light of a strictly chronological concern. My purpose is not a full narrative of events, for which there are better and more informative guides at hand.⁵ This chapter has a different scope. I devote particular attention to the broader picture in which Slavic raiding activity took place, partly in order to point up its relative impact in comparison to other problems of the Danube frontier. Discussion of interaction between Slavs, on one hand, Gepids, Cutrigurs, Avars, and Bulgars, on the other, occupies a large amount of space for similar reasons. The chapter's emphasis is on the Slavs rather than the Empire, and so it points to the territories north of the Danube, where transformations may have occurred that are reflected in our sources. Those transformations may provide a key to the problem of defining the Slavic settlement and to understand the mechanisms of Slavic raiding activities, two aspects discussed in detail in the following chapters.

SLAVIC RAIDING DURING JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

Procopius is the first author to speak of Slavic raiding across the Danube. According to his evidence, the first attack of the Antes, "who dwell close to the Sclaveni," may be dated to 518. The raid was intercepted by Germanus, *magister militum per Thraciam*, and the Antes were defeated. There is no record of any other Antian raid until Justinian's rise to power. It is possible therefore that this attack, like that of the *Getae equites* of 517, was related to Vitalianus' revolt.⁶

1983:39. The wave metaphor is still in use: Avramea 1997:79—80. For Slavic "invasions" and "raids," see Ensslin 1929; Fine 1983:29; Feijancic 1984; Whitby 1988:85-6 and 175; Pohl 1988:68; Fiedler 1992:6; Stavridou-Zafraka 1992.

⁴ Procopius, *Secret History* 18.20—1. For *Getica* as genuine report, see Waldmiiller 1976:19; Sedov 1978:9; Anfert'ev 1991:134—5. For Sclavenes and Antes as medieval *ethnics*, see Baeie 1983:21; Godiowski 1983:257; Vana 1983:16.

⁵ See Ensslin 1929; Stein 1968; Waldmiiller 1976; Ditten 1978. ⁶ Procopius, *Wars* vi 40.5—6. *Getae equites*: Marcellinus Comes, trans. B. Croke (Sydney, 1995), pp.

39-and 120. See also Nestor 1965:148; Cornea 1973:197 and 1974:301; Ditten 1978:86; Irmischer 1980:158. For Vitalianus' revolt, see Waldmiiller 1976:34; Weithmann 1978:64; Velkov 1987:157; Soustal 1991:697. For Vitalianus' barbarian allies, see Schwarcz 1992.

The Sclavenes first appear in the context of Justinian's new, aggressive policies on the Danube frontier. In the early 530s, Chilbudius, a member of the imperial household, replaced Germanus as *magister militum per Thraciam*.⁷ He gave up defending the Balkan provinces behind the Danube line and boldly attacked barbarians on the left bank of the river.⁸ This was the first time the Romans had launched campaigns north of the Danube frontier since Valens' Gothic wars of 367—9. Chilbudius' campaigns also indicate that the Sclavenes were not far from the frontier. Three years after his nomination, he was killed in one of his expeditions north of the river. Indirectly criticizing Justinian's subsequent policies in the Balkans, Procopius argues that thereafter, "the river became free for the barbarians to cross all times just as they wished." Elsewhere, he describes the territories between the Black Sea and the Danube as "impossible for the Romans to traverse," because of incessant raids.⁹

At the end of the episode of Chilbudius, Procopius claims that "the entire Roman empire found itself utterly incapable of matching the valor of one single man." This may well have been intended as a reproach for Justinian.¹⁰ It is true, however, that the death of Chilbudius, which coincides in time with the beginning of Justinian's wars in the West, was followed by a radical change of policy in the Balkans. Besides the measures taken to fortify both the frontier and the provinces in the interior, to be discussed in the next chapter, Justinian now remodeled the administrative structure of the Balkans. In 536, he created the *quaestura exercitus*. The new administrative unit combined territories at a considerable distance from each other, such as Moesia Inferior, Scythia Minor, some islands in the Aegean Sea, Caria, and Cyprus, all of which were ruled from Odessos (present-day Varna) by the "prefect of Scythia." The prefect of the *quaestura* was given a special *orwvi* for a court of justice and an entire staff, both of them being "generated from the prefecture [of the East]." The only links between all these provinces were the sea and the navigable Danube. Since Cyprus, the Aegean islands, and Caria represented the most

⁷ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14. i-6. For Procopius' confusion between Justinian and Justin, see Ensslin 1929:698; Rubin 1954:227; Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:240-1. Misled by Procopius' story of Chilbudius' Antian namesake, many historians believe the *magister militum per Thraciam* was of Slavic origin. See Ditten 1978:78; Ferjancic 1984:88; Litavrin 1986; Whitby 1988:82; Soustal 1991:70; Moorhead 1994:150. See also Duichev 1960:34. For the origin of the name, see Strumins'kyj 1979—80:790.

⁸ The terms used by Procopius to indicate that Chilbudius prevented barbarians from crossing the Danube (6 iroTapos Biapdxog, TTJV Sidpcxaiv TTQAA&KIS, Siaj3fjvai), but allowed Romans to cross over the opposite side (is fJTreipov rr\v avTrrrepas . . . iovres EKTEIV&V TE), show that, at least in his eyes, the Lower Danube was still an efficient barrier. See Chrysos 1987:27—8. For the date of Chilbudius' death, see Waldmiiller 1976:36.

⁹ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.4—6, 111 1.10. See Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:217. Chilbudius' campaign north of the Danube may have taken advantage of the transfer of troops from the East following the 532 peace with Persia. See Duichev 1942.

¹⁰ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.5; Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:217 and 232.

important naval bases of the Empire, but were also among the richest provinces, the rationale behind Justinian's measure may have been to secure both militarily and financially the efficient defense of the Danube frontier.¹¹ Important changes were also introduced at the other end of the Danube frontier. The novel u of 535, which created an archbishopric of Justiniana Prima, also intended to move the see of the Illyrian prefecture from Thessalonica to the northern provinces. The bishop of Aquis, a city in Dacia Ripensis, on the right bank of the Danube, was also given authority over the city and the neighboring forts, an indication that, instead of aggressive generals, Justinian's policies were now based on the new military responsibilities of bishops.¹²

But this adjustment of policy in the Balkans did not prevent Justinian from boasting about Chilbudius' victories. In November 533, a law was issued with a new intitulation, in which Justinian was described as *Anticus*, along with titles such as *Vandalicus* and *Africanus* relating to Belisarius' success against the Vandals. The title *Anticus* occurs in Justinian's intitulation until 542, then again between 552 and 565. It also appears in inscriptions. Despite Justinian's new defensive approach on the Danube frontier, Roman troops were still holding the left bank of the river. This is indicated by a law issued by Justinian in 538, which dealt with the collection of taxes in Egypt. Officers refusing to assist *augustales* in collecting taxes were facing the punishment of being transferred, together with their entire unit, to the region north of the river Danube, "in order to watch at the frontier of that place."¹³

But Justinian also adopted another way of dealing with the problems on the Danube frontier. In accordance with traditional Roman tactics, he sought to divide and rule. Shortly after the reconquest of Sirmium from the Ostrogoths (535/6), the Gepids took over the city and rapidly conquered "almost all of Dacia."¹⁴ The capture of Sirmium by his old allies, the Gepids, and their subsequent hostile acts were hard for Justinian

¹ Novel 41 of May 18, 536 (*Corpus Iuris Cii'ilis* 111: 262); John Lydus, *On Powers* n 28. According to John, Justinian set aside for the prefect of Scythia "three provinces, which were almost the most prosperous of all" (11 29). For the *quaestura exercitus*, see also Stein 1968:474—5; Lemerle 1980:286; Hendy 1985:404; Szadeczky-Kardoss 1985; Whitby 1988:70. The *quaestor Iustiniamts exercitus* was directly responsible for the *annotui* of the army and also exercised supreme judiciary power. See Torbatov 1997.

² *Corpus Iuris Civilis ill*: 94. It is unlikely that the see was ever transferred to Justiniana Prima. See Granic 1925:128; Maksimovic 1984:149.

³ *Codex Iustinianus*, edict 13 (*Corpus Iuris Cii'ilis* 1: 785). See Whitby 1988:166 with n. 34. For the epithet *Anticus*, see the introduction to *Itstitutiones* (*Corpus Iuris Cifilis u*: xxiii) and novel 17 (*Corpus Iuris Guilts* in: 117). For inscriptions, see *CIG* iv 8636; *CIL* in 13673. See also Velkov 1987:159; Irscher 1980:161; Ivanov 19913:261; Giinther 1992. Justinian's successors imitated his intitulation. The last emperor to do so was Heraclius (novel 22 of May 1, 612).

⁴ Procopius, *Wars* v 3.15, v 11.5, and vn 33.8; *Secret History* 18.18. The first Gepid occupation of Sirmium dates back to 473. See Sasel 1979:750; Pohl 1980:299; Christou 1991:64-5. See also Wozniak 1979:144-7.

to take. In response to this, he settled the Herales in the neighboring region of Singidunum (present-day Belgrade). The same principle was applied to the situation on the Lower Danube frontier. Procopius tells us that, sometime between 533/4 and 545, probably before the devastating invasion of the Huns in 539/40, the Antes and the Sclavenes "became hostile to one another and engaged in battle," which ended with a victory of the Sclavenes over the Antes.¹⁵ It is possible, though not demonstrable, that the conflict had been fueled by Justinian. In any case, as Antes and Sclavenes fought against each other, Procopius recruited soldiers from both ethnic groups. In 537, 1,600 horsemen, most of whom were Sclavenes and Antes, "who were settled above the Ister river not far from its banks," were shipped to Italy, in order to rescue Belisarius, who was blocked in Rome by the Ostrogoths.¹⁶

But none of Justinian's attempts to solve the problems in the Danube area proved to be successful. In December 539, a numerous "Hunnic army" crossed the frozen Danube and fell as a scourge upon the eastern Balkan provinces. This, Procopius argued, "had happened many times before, but . . . never brought such a multitude of woes nor such dreadful ones to the people of that land."¹⁷ According to Procopius, the Hunnic raid covered the entire Balkan peninsula from the Adriatic coast to the environs of Constantinople, and resulted in 32 forts taken in Illyricum and no less than 120,000 Roman prisoners. Since Procopius is our only source for this raid, there is no way of assessing the accuracy of his testimony. It is possible, however, that he had the same raid in mind when claiming that the Huns, the Sclavenes, and the Antes, in their daily inroads, wrought frightful havoc among the inhabitants of the Roman provinces.¹⁸ As in the *Wars*, he argues that more than twenty myriads of

¹⁵ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.7—10; see Waldmiiller 1976:36. On this occasion, according to Procopius, a young man of the Antes, named Chilbudius, was taken captive by a Sclavene. The namesake of the former *magister militum per Thraciam* proved to be a vigorous warrior, thus distinguishing himself by his deeds of valor, "through which he succeeded in winning great renown" (*Wars* vn 14.8—9). Procopius prepares his audience for the story of how the Antes would obtain *zfoedus* from Justinian, a story in which the *quiproquo* created by "phoney Chilbudius" would play a major role. For Herales in Singidunum, see *Wars* vi 15.30—40, vn 33.13. Around 539, the Gepids formed an alliance with the Franks and the Lombards (Agathias 1 4); see Pohl 1980:299. For Justinian's policy on the northern frontier, see Wozniak 1979:156; Patoura 1997.

¹⁶ Procopius, *Wars* v 27.1: 6\ innrep TTQTCHJQV 'Icrrpov ou uatcpav Tfj\$ eravrj 6x8n\$ ISpuvTai. See also Teall 1965:302; Comşa 1973:197; Waldmiiller 1976:60; Velkov 1987:154. The troop of 537 is remarkably numerous, especially when compared to Belisarius' entire army amounting to no more than 5,000 men. More important, this is a rare case of Procopius mentioning the place of origin for foreign mercenaries. Among thirteen ethnic groups in the Roman army, there are only two other cases (*Wars* I 15.1, vn 14.7).

¹⁷ Procopius, *Wars* II 4.1 and 4—7. The date of the raid was established on the basis of the reference to a comet, "at first long as a tall man, but later much larger." See Rubin 1954:108. It is often assumed, perhaps wrongly, that the Huns of 539/40 were Bulgars. See Beshevliev 1981:84.

¹⁸ Procopius, *Secret History* 23.6: oxeBov TI ava irav KaTaSeovTes ETGS; 18.20—I: TTJV XKUBGOV epnutav auiaet xauxris iravTaxoae Tfj\$ i;uuJ3aivEiv. For the date of Procopius' reference, see

these inhabitants were killed or enslaved, so that a veritable "Scythian wilderness" came to exist everywhere in the Balkan provinces. In the same vein, Jordanes refers to regular invasions of Bulgars, Antes, and Sclavenes. A sixth-century Midrashic honiilist also complains about havoc brought to Jewish communities by Berbers and Antes.¹⁹ Mistakenly applying John Malalas' account of Zabergan's invasion of 559 to the events of 540, some argued that the Sclavenes may have also participated in the Hunnic invasion of 540. Taking into account that Procopius describes in his *Wars* similar invasions of the Sclavenes, with a similar development, and clearly refers to Sclavenes, along with Huns and Antes, in his *Secret History*, it is a likely possibility.²⁰ However, since Procopius is our only source for the raid of 540, there is no way to prove the point and the wisest solution is to accept that Procopius' reference to Sclavenes in his *Secret History* cannot be dated with any precision. He might have referred in general to the situation in the Balkans during the 530s. On the other hand, Procopius certainly had in mind a new raid when claiming that during their conflict with the Sclavenes between 533 and 545, the Antes invaded Thrace and plundered and enslaved many of the Roman inhabitants, leading the captives with them, as they returned to their "native abode."²¹

At this point in his narrative, Procopius introduces a young Antian prisoner of war, named Chilbudius, like the former *magister militum per Thraciam*. The story is clearly influenced by plots most typical of neo-Attic comedy or of Plautus. Since Antes and Sclavenes were now on peaceful terms, "phoney Chilbudius" was redeemed from the Sclavenes by one of his fellow tribesmen, who also had a Roman prisoner with a Machiavellian mind. The latter persuaded his master that the man he had just purchased from the Sclavenes was Chilbudius, the Roman general, and that he would be richly recompensated by Justinian if he would bring

Ferjancic 1984:92. For the "Scythian wilderness" cliché, see Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:247.

¹⁹ Jordanes, *Romana* 388: *instantia cottidiana*; *Midrash Tehiilim* 25.14, ed. S. Buber (Trier, 1892): *‘Anatiim*. The reference to Berbers points to the Moorish revolts of 534 to 548, as Africa was raided by Berber tribes. See Sperber 1982:1:79—82; for Jordanes, see Pritsak 1983:367; Soustal 1991:70.

²⁰ John Malalas XVIII 129. See Angelov 1981:8; Bonev 1983:113; Pritsak 1983:367; Velkov 1987:154; *contra*: Nestor 1963:58. See also Weithmann 1978:66.

²¹ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.11: διΤρεπ ειρctyoiiievot aTreKoptaQnoav d\$ TO Traxpia jpn. In this passage, "Thrace" is the diocese, not the province known by the same name. In his *Secret History* (23.6), Procopius speaks of Huns, Sclavenes, and Antes plundering "the whole of Europe, "levelling cities to the ground, and stripping others of their wealth "in very thorough fashion through levied contributions." He also claims the invaders enslaved the population "with all their property, making each region destitute of inhabitants by their daily inroads (xals KaS'ripepav eiriBpopals)." Procopius associates these events to Medes and Saracens plundering "the greater part of the land of Asia. "This may refer to the reopening of hostilities on the eastern front in 540, but the text is too vague to permit any conclusion.

Chilbudius back to "the land of the Romans."²² But as soon as he was brought back to his fellow tribesmen, "phoney Chilbudius" frankly revealed his true identity, for he now expected to join again his tribe as a freeman. The whole story was made public when "the report was carried about and reached the entire nation [of the Antes]." Under their pressure, "phoney Chilbudius" then agreed to claim that he really was the Roman general and the Antes sent him immediately to Constantinople. At about the same time, as if knowing what was going on, Justinian sent an embassy to the Antes, asking them all to move into "an ancient city, Turrus by name, situated to the north of the river Ister." The city had been built by Trajan, but was left deserted, after it had been plundered by the barbarians of that region. Justinian promised to give them the city and the region around it, and to pay them great sums of money, on condition that they should become his allies (IVGTTOVBOI) and constantly block the way against the Huns, "when these wished to overrun the Roman domain."²³ The Antes accepted all conditions, provided that Chilbudius, the *magister militum per Thraciam*, would be restored to his office of general of the Roman army and would assist them in settling in Turrus.²⁴ The rationale behind their request, Procopius argues, was that they wanted and stoutly maintained that the man there among them was Chilbudius, the Roman general. In the end, the whole plot was unmasked by Narses, who captured "phoney Chilbudius" on his way to Constantinople.²⁵

It is difficult to visualize the source of this story. Some have argued that Procopius may have had access to the official forms of the cross-examination of "phoney Chilbudius" by Narses, others that he might

²² Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.11-16. See Bonev 1983:109-12. For comic influences, see Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:231-2.

²³ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.21 and 32-3. It would make sense to locate Turrus, the city transferred by Justinian to the Antes, in the region that could have blocked the access of steppe nomads to the Danube frontier. Procopius' description (τῆς Τροτανδῆς ἰσθμῶς) is very vague and he does not seem to have had a clear idea of the geography of the region. Since he uses neither ἐν Τῆς Ἀντιόχειας ἢ τῆς Τροτανδῆς, however, there is no reason to believe that Turrus was located next to the Danube river. On the other hand, any land offered for settlement through *the foedus* had to be less populated, have no major cities, and be strategically isolated and controllable. See Chrysos 1989:17. For Turrus, see also Bolşacov-Ghimpu 1969; Madgearu 1992.

²⁴ Dewing's unfortunate translation ("to give them all the assistance within his power while they were establishing themselves") stands for ΚΚΚΙ οἰνοὶ ἄνθοικετὺν οὐβουαεὶ τῆς τῆς ὀρῆς. But ΟΥΘΟΙΚΕΘΟ literally means "to settle," as in *Wars* 11 14.1: "Now Chosroes built a city in Assyria . . . and settled (ἐβουαετὸν) there all the captives from Antioch." Note that the use of the prefix ἐβουαε- implies that Justinian intended to bring together at least two different groups. See Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:229.

²⁵ Procopius *Wars* vn 14.32—5; see also vn 13.24—6. "Phoney Chilbudius" fluently spoke Latin (which greatly contributed to his successful impersonation of the Roman general). This is remarkable, given that Gilacius, an Armenian who had become a military commander in the Roman army, "did not know how to speak either Greek or Latin or Gothic or any other language except Armenian" (*Wars* vn 26.24).

have taken the whole story from the Antian envoys in Constantinople. Whatever its origin, Procopius surely re-worked the account and arranged it according to comic narrative patterns. He may have intended to stress a few important points. First, there is the ambition of the Antes, as a group, to be given a Roman official who would guide them into some more sophisticated organization. They all agreed to become Justinian's *EVOTTOVBOI* and would remain allies of the Empire until 602.²⁶ The fact that Justinian transferred to his new allies a Roman fort on the left bank of the Danube river shows that the Romans were still claiming rights to territories north of the frontier. Procopius' story is thus designed to adjust such claims to the actual situation. He also needed "phoney Chilbudius" in order to explain how Justinian could conceivably have allied himself with barbarians who "are not ruled by one man, but . . . lived from old under a democracy" and by whom "everything which involves their welfare, whether for good or for ill, is referred to the people." Barbarians ignorant of the benefits of monarchy may have understood "Chilbudius" not as a certain person, but as a military and political title of an official able to bolster their request. Narses unmasking the plot of the Antes did not, therefore, cause the invalidation of the *foedus*, for in the following years, Antes would constantly appear in historical sources as allies of the Romans.²⁷ Just two years after the treaty of 545, 300 Antes were fighting in Lucania (Italy) against the Ostrogoths. In the 580s, the Romans bribed the Antes to attack the settlements of the Sclavenes. In 602, the qagan dispatched Apsich, his general, to destroy the "nation of the Antes, which was in fact allied to the Romans."²⁸

From a Roman perspective, the treaty of 545 was meant to eliminate the problem of Hunnic raids, against which one of its stipulations was

²⁶ Ensslin 1929:698-9; Ditten 1978:82; *contra*: Stein 1968:522. For the source of Procopius' account, see Rubin 1954:198; Litavrin 1986:27. For *IVOTTOVBOI zsfoederati* and *ounpaxoi* as barbarian troops under their own commanders, see Christen 1991:32-5, Romans, too, could become *IvoirovSot*, for example in relation to Persia (*Wars* vm 11.24; *Secret History* 11.12). Unlike *0uu.Max^{ol}* *IVOTTOV-Sot* were not only military allies, but also political partners. Other examples of *evoTrov8oi*: Lombards (*Wars* vn 33.12), Gepids (*Wars* vn 34.10), Saginae (*Wars* vm 2.18), Goths (*Wars* vm 5.13), Sabiri (*Wars* vm 11.24), and Cutrigurs (*Wars* vm 19.5). The majority were on the northern frontier of the Empire.

²⁷ Procopius, *Wars* vn 14.22: *EV SnuoKpaTig EK iraAaiou* (*3IOTEUOUOL*). For the concept of "democracy" derisively applied to Slavic society, as the opposite of Byzantine monarchy, see Benedicty 1963:46-7; Havlik 1985:174. Patrick Amory (1997:287-8) sees this episode as an illustration of how uncertain (ethnic) identity was, since "the Slavs were unable to tell the difference" between Chilbudius, the Roman general, and his Antian namesake. This is a naive interpretation, for it takes Procopius' account at its face value.

²⁸ Theophylact Simocatta vm 5,13. For the 300 Antes in Italy, see Procopius, *Wars* vn 22.3-6; for Antes attacking the Sclavenes, see John of Ephesus vi 45. Dabragezas, a Roman officer of Antian origin, led the Roman fleet during the siege of Phasis, in Crimea, and took part in the campaigns of 555 and 556 against Persia, in Lazike. See Agathias m 6.9 (*Aappaye^as*, "Avxns avri.p, xa^idpxos), in 7.2, in 21.6.

clearly phrased. The rationale behind Justinian's offer may have been the devastating invasion of 540. But the respite was relatively short, for a still more destructive attack would follow in 558.

In response to the threat posed by the Frankish king Theudebert, who, according to Agathias, was preparing a large coalition of barbarians against the Empire, Justinian offered in 546 an alliance to the Lombard king Auduin. Like the Antes, the Lombards were settled on formerly Roman territory (Pannonia), and were paid great sums of money. Like Turris, Pannonia was only nominally under the control of the Romans. The Lombards were now very close to the Gepids and a conflict soon arose between the two groups. Since both recognized the Empire's nominal claims of suzerainty over their respective territories, embassies from both arrived in Constantinople. Justinian decided for the Lombards, because the Gepids were still controlling Sirmium. However, despite his victory over the Herules, who had meanwhile turned into the allies of the Gepids, and despite his permanent efforts to fuel the rivalry between Lombards and Gepids, both groups eventually agreed to a truce in 549.²⁹ At this moment, a candidate to the Lombard throne, Hildigis, fled to the Sclavenes, who presumably lived somewhere near the Gepids and the Lombards. As Justinian offered *the foedus* to Auduin, Hildigis went to the Gepids, followed by a retinue of Lombards and Sclavenes. He later returned to the Sclavenes, together with his followers, but then moved to Italy, where he joined the army of King Totila, "having with him an army of not less than six thousand men." After brief skirmishes with Roman troops, Hildigis recrossed the Danube river and, once again, went to the Sclavenes. Meanwhile, in 549, the kings of the Lombards and the Gepids had agreed to a truce. But the attitude of the Gepids toward the Empire remained hostile, for they would later invite the Cutrigurs to a joint raid across the Danube.³⁰

By 550, Justinian seems to have contained the threat on the Danube frontier by means of large payments. He allied himself with Lombards and Antes against Gepids and Huns, respectively. The Sclavenes were obviously not part of this system of alliances. It is no surprise, therefore, to see them starting their own, independent raids. In 545, a great throng of Sclavenes crossed the river Danube, plundered the adjoining country,

²⁹ Agathias i 4.1-3; Procopius, *Wars* vn 33.10-12, vul 34.1-10, and vn 35.12-22; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardomm* 1 21—2 and 11 27. See Christou 1991:78—9, 82, and 91. For the date of the truce, see Pohl 1996:31- 2.

³⁰ Procopius, *Wars* VII 35.16, 19, and 21—2, vin 18.16—18). The use of the word "army" (oTpdTeuua) indicates horsemen. The *communis opitio* is that the Sclavenes to whom Hildigis fled lived in present-day Slovakia or Moravia, See Zeman 1966:164; Goettowski 1979:434; Szydlowski 1980:234; Pohl 1988:96—7; Trestik 1996. For Hildigis' route, see Margetic 1992:169. Hildigis resurfaced in Constantinople in 552 (*Wars* vm 27).

and enslaved a great number of Romans. The Herulian mercenaries under Narses' command intercepted and defeated them and released the prisoners. According to Procopius, this is the moment when Narses discovered "a certain man who was pretending to bear the name of Chilbudius."³¹ It would be difficult to believe that the recently appointed leader of the Antes, who wished so much to enter the Roman alliance, could have joined the plundering raid of the Sclavenes. Procopius has told us that "phoney Chilbudius" had spent some time with the Sclavenes, as a prisoner of war, and, according to the chronology of his narrative, the raid of the Sclavenes may have followed the assembly of the Antes, in which they had proclaimed their fellow tribesman as "Chilbudius."³² It is very unlikely that the Antian envoys to Constantinople arrived there as Narses' prisoners. Did Procopius intend to minimize the importance of the *foedus* of 545 by implying that it had been agreed upon by an emperor dealing with a barbarian liar who had entered Roman territory as an enemy? In view of his criticism of Justinian, who "kept bringing all the barbarians into collision with one another," it may be a plausible hypothesis.³³ It is also possible that the entire story of "phoney Chilbudius" was made up by Procopius, as a narrative strategy in order to emphasize Justinian's weakness. The use of comic patterns may support this idea.

In any case, Procopius provides clear evidence that no attempts were made to approach the Sclavenes with similar offers of alliance. They always appear on the side of the Empire's enemies, as in the episode of Hildigis. To Procopius, the Sclavenes were unpredictable and disorderly barbarians. His attitude thus comes very close to that of the author of the *Strategikon* who, some decades later, describes the Sclavenes as completely faithless and having "no regard for treaties, which they agree to more out of fear than by gifts."³⁴ Here and there, individual Sclavenes may indeed appear as fighting for the Romans, as in the case of Souarounas, a Sclavene soldier in the Roman army operating in the Caucasus region.³⁵

³¹ Procopius, *Wars* VII 13.26. See also Waldmuller 1976: 39 and 56; Irmscher 198(3:162; Velkov 1987:155. The word "throng" (*opiXos*) appears seventy times in Procopius' *Wars*, always in reference to a group of warriors without either discipline or order. For Justinian's successful attempts to set one barbarian group against another, see Pa toil ra 1997.

³² Procopius, *Wars* vu 14.19-20. ³³ *Secret History* 11.5-9.

³⁴ *Strategikon* xi 4.4. Unpredictable Sclavenes: Adshead 1990:104.

³⁵ Agathias iv 20.4. Agathias also mentions Dabragezas, the Antian officer who commanded the Roman fleet in Crimea (in 6.9, in 7.2, in 21.6). See Werner 1980:590; Strumins'kyj 1979-80:792. In the same context (in 21.6), he mentions another officer, Leontios, whom many believed to be Dabragezas's son. This is further viewed as a case of a successful assimilation of the Slavs. See Dkten 1978:80; Waldmuller 1976:64. However, Aeovnos 6 AafJpayeCpu refers to Dabragezas' *buccllar-ius*, not son, for the phrase is obviously a counterpart to ZuTrep 6 MapKeXXivou Sopuf opos in the first part of the sentence.

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Another Sclavene mercenary proved himself useful to Belisarius during the siege of Auximum in 540. But unlike Antes, these soldiers seem to have been hired on an individual basis, due to their special skills.³⁶

In 548, another army of Sclavenes crossed the Danube, probably via the Iron Gates fords. They raided deep into Roman territory, reaching Dyrrachium in Epirus Nova. Procopius even claims that they succeeded in capturing numerous strongholds, "which previously had been reputed to be strong places."³⁷ The military commanders of Illyricum followed them at a distance with an army of 15,000 men, without getting too close or engaging in any battle. The following year (549), another 3,000 Sclavene warriors crossed the Danube and immediately advanced to the Hebrus (present-day Maritsa) river, which they also crossed with no difficulty. They split into two groups, one with 1,800, the other with 1,200 men. The two sections separated from each other. One of them attacked the cities in Thrace, while the other invaded Illyricum. Both routed Roman armies sent against them, and both captured many fortresses, although, as Procopius argues, "they neither had any previous experience in attacking city walls, nor had they dared to come down to the open plain."³⁸ But Procopius' narrative focuses more on those Sclavenes who came closer to the capital city. He tells us that the commander of the cavalry cohorts stationed at Tzurullum (present-day Qorlu) was defeated, captured, and savagely executed. Procopius claims that the Sclavenes of 549 "had never in all time crossed the Ister river with an army before."³⁹ It is hardly conceivable that Procopius forgot what he had reported about the invasions following Chilbudius' death, particularly about that of 545. Could he have implied that the Sclavenes of 549 were not those of 545?⁴⁰

^{j6} Procopius, *Wars* vi 26.16-22. At Auximum, Belisarius is told that the Sclavenes "are accustomed to conceal themselves behind a rock or any bush which may happen to be near and pounce upon an enemy" and that "they are constantly practicing this in their native haunts along the river Ister, both on the Romans and on the [other] barbarians as well." This reminds one of what the *Strategikon* has to say about Sclavenes: "They make effective use of ambushes, sudden attacks, and raids, devising many different methods by night and by day" (xi 4.9).

^{j7} Procopius, *Wars* vn 29.2. The Sclavenes of 548 were most probably horsemen, for Procopius calls them an "army" (crtpdTeuva), a word he commonly uses for cavalry troops (e.g., *Wars* I 12.6, 1 21.15, n 4.4, in 18.13; see also Ivanov, Gmdm and Cymburskii 1991:234). This is also indicated by the tact that they raided deep into Roman territory, moving rapidly. Iron Gates fords: Maksimovic 1980:33-4. Date: Ensslin 1929:221; Waldmuller 1976:39; Irmscher 1980:162; Bonev 1983:114; Velkov 1987:155.

■^h Procopius, *Wars* vn 38.7. For the commanders of Illyricum, see *Wars* vn 29.3. Sclavenes of 549 as horsemen: Ivanov, Gindin, and Cymburskii 1991:236.

^{j9} *Wars* VII 38.10. See also Braichevskii 1953:24. Only Berthold Rubin (1954:226) seems to have noticed this difficulty. According to Rubin, Procopius' narrative of events taking place after Chilbudius' death is often contradictory.

⁴⁰ Procopius, *Wars* vn 13.24-6. Note also the difference in terms applied by Procopius to these two groups. The Sclavenes of 545 were a "throng" (outAos), those of 549, an "army" (crpdp-TEUU.Q).

Slavs in early medieval sources

Theoretically, it is not impossible that the marauders of 549 were just a different group from those of 545. However, there are two reasons for not favoring this interpretation. First, Procopius' source for this raid seems to have been a combination of archival material (as suggested by such indications as the number of Sclavenes, the direction of their attacks, or the mention of Asbadus, Justinian's bodyguard, who commanded the cavalry troops stationed at Tzurullum) and oral reports (as indicated by the obviously exaggerated number of prisoners taken after the capture of Topeiros and by the description of their torture and execution). Second, what Procopius has to say about these "newcomers" ("they [never] dared to come down to the open plain") is strikingly similar to what John of Ephesus would write about the Sclavenes of the 580s: they "had never dared to leave the woods and the inaccessible areas."⁴¹ The details of the account of the 549 raid look suspiciously like stereotypes. Procopius was certainly not an alert observer of the Sclavenes and it is unlikely that he was able to distinguish between the two raids in minute details. He might, however, have had access to more material on the raid of 549 than on those of 545 or 548, which allowed him to make comments on the margins. He reports that, for the first time, the Sclavenes succeeded in conquering a city (Topeiros, near Abdera, in Rhodope). In a long passage, he also describes in detail how the Sclavenes captured the city and what happened to the Roman captives. Procopius' description of the atrocities committed by Sclavenes after conquering Topeiros matches not only contemporary historiographical clichés about barbarians, but also the appalling portrait of the Sclavenes by Pseudo-Caesarius.⁴² But Procopius' argument is consistent: the Slavs were indeed an unpredictable enemy. Until conquering Topeiros, they "had spared no age . . . , so that the whole land inhabited by the Illyrians and Thracians came to be everywhere filled with unburied corpses."⁴³ After the bloodshed at Topeiros, as if they "were drunk with the great quantity of blood they had shed,"⁴⁴ the Sclavenes suddenly decided to spare some prisoners, whom they took with them when departing on their homeward way. Again, Procopius seems to have forgotten what he himself told us,

⁴¹ John of Ephesus vi 25. For the execution of the Roman prisoners by ΚCITGOPIOUOS, see Vergote 1972:139-40.

⁴² Procopius, *Wars* vn 38.11-23. For Pseudo-Caesarius, see Riedinger 1969:302. Topeiros captured by Sclavenes is also mentioned in the *Buildings* (iv 11). For the location, see Soustal 1991:71 and 480-1; Kasapides 1991-2. According to Procopius, the Sclavenes of 549 imprisoned their victims in their huts (ev TGT\$ SconaTtois) together with their cattle and sheep, and then "set fire to the huts without mercy." This is remarkably similar to the episode of the *Getae equites* of 517, who burnt their prisoners alive, locked in their own houses (*inclusi suis cum domunculis captivi Romani incensi sunt*; Marcellinus Comes, pp. 39 and 120). For a comparable treatment of prisoners by Vidini and Gelones, see Ammianus Marcellinus 31.2.13-16. ⁴³ *Wars* vn 38.19.

⁴⁴ *Wars* vii 38.23.

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namely that in 545, the Sclavenes had also taken a great number of prisoners, later to be released by the Herulian mercenaries of Narses.

In the summer of the year 550, as Roman troops were gathering in Serdica under the command of Germanus in order to be sent to Italy against Totila, a great throng of Sclavenes, "such as never before was known," crossed the Danube and easily came close to Naissus (present-day Nis).⁴⁵ The attack of the Sclavenes occurred at a time when Narses, who was also preparing to embark on a campaign to Italy, was forced to postpone his departure by Cutrigur attacks on Philippopolis (present-day Plovdiv).⁴⁶ According to Procopius, the Sclavenes were bent on capturing Thessalonica and the surrounding cities. The threat must have been truly serious, for Justinian ordered Germanus to defer his expedition to Italy and to defend Thessalonica and the other cities. This measure proved to be efficient, for the Sclavenes gave up their plans to capture Thessalonica. Instead, they crossed the mountain ranges to the west and entered Dalmatia, at that time still disputed between Ostrogoths and Romans. Germanus did not follow them, both because of his other commitments and because once in Dalmatia, the Sclavenes did not represent any major threat to southern Macedonia. He would soon die, before being able to advance on Italy. As for the Sclavenes, the Romans did nothing to make them leave Dalmatia. Despite their great number, therefore, the Sclavenes of 550 did not pose any major problem to the Roman defense. But the raid is significant for a different reason. Procopius tells us that the Sclavenes spent the winter of 550 and most of the following year in Dalmatia, "as if in their own land."⁴⁷ They had no fear of any possible Roman attack, an indication of the confused situation in Dalmatia on the eve of Narses' campaign of 552, which put an end to the Ostrogothic war and kingdom. This is the first case of a two-year Slavene raid, but there is no reason to believe that the Slavene marauders intended to settle. They seem to have recrossed the mountains to the east in the spring of 551 and joined another group of Slavene warriors

⁴⁵ *Wars* VII 40.4-5 and 7-8. It is possible that the Sclavenes of 550, like those of 549, crossed the river by the Iron Gates fords. See Popovic 1978:608; Maksimovic 1980:35; Jankovic 1981:197. For the date of this raid, see Teall 1965:311.

⁴⁶ Procopius, *Wars* vii 21.20-1. Some interpreted this coincidence as an indication that the Slavene attack had been instigated by Totila. See Ensslin 1929:699; Weithmann 1978:68; Ditten 1978:87; Irmscher 1980:162. According to Procopius, however, Justinian ordered his military commanders in Thrace and Illyricum to avoid any confrontation with the invading Huns, for they were his allies against the Ostrogoths (*Secret History* 21.26).

⁴⁷ Procopius, *Wars* VII 40.31—2: *coorrep ev X"P<? olmia Siaxeiodfovtēs*. For the Ostrogothic—Byzantine war in Dalmatia, see Easier 1993:17. Indulf led a raid on the Dalmatian coast in 548, but Totila was unable to regain Dalmatia. On the other hand, by 535, only parts of the former province of Dalmatia had been reoccupied by Roman troops. Parts of northern Bosnia may have been already controlled by the Lombards.

who had just crossed the Danube. Just as in 549, they all divided themselves into three groups operating separately. Procopius' narrative, however, focuses only on the group approaching Constantinople.⁴⁸

Annoyed by their devastations, the emperor now sent an army commanded by several generals, but headed by an imperial eunuch, Scholastikos. At only five days' journey from Constantinople, near Adrianople, the Roman army came upon one of the three groups mentioned by Procopius. The Sclavenes were carrying with them a great deal of booty. In the ensuing battle, most of the Roman army was destroyed, and, according to Procopius, "the generals came within a little of falling into the hands of the enemy, succeeding only with difficulty in making their escape with the remnant of the army." The Sclavenes savagely plundered the region in the vicinity of the capital, up to the Long Walls. With some of the troops saved from the debacle at Adrianople, the Romans intercepted the Slavene marauders, rescued a vast number of Roman captives, and recovered a standard, which has been captured during the battle of Adrianople. The rest of the Sclavenes, however, "departed on the homeward way with the other booty."⁴⁹

The year 551 was not yet over, when a great throng of Sclavenes (ἡ ἑξῆς τῶν ὀυῖανος) descended upon Illyricum and "inflicted sufferings there not easily described." The army sent by Justinian under the command of Germanus' sons cautiously followed the raiders, without engaging into any confrontation. The raid continued and the Sclavenes were able to return home with all their plunder. The Romans did nothing to stop them at the crossing of the Danube river, for the Gepids took the Sclavenes "under their protection and ferried them across," receiving one solidus per head as payment for their labor.⁵⁰

In response, Justinian started negotiations with the Gepids, but at the same time supported the Lombards against them. An army sent by Justinian under the command of Amalafidas, King Alboin's brother-in-law, sided with the Lombards, defeated the Gepids, and killed their king Turismod. The "eternal peace" agreed upon by King Alboin and Turisind, the new king of the Gepids, would last another ten years.⁵¹

But the key to Justinian's new policy in the Balkans was not playing off Lombards and Gepids against each other. Shortly before 558, most likely

⁴⁸ See Procopius, *Wars* vn 40.31: "But the Slavs reappeared, both those who had previously come into the emperor's land, as I have recounted above, and others who had crossed the Ister not long afterwards and joined the first, and they began to overrun the Roman domain with complete freedom." First two-year raid: Nestor 1963:47—8; Cankova-Petkova 1970:221; Waldmiiller 1976:44; Velkov 1987:161. The Slavs of 550/1 as settlers: Ditten 1978:87.

⁴⁹ Procopius, *Wars* vn 40.31-45. See also Ensslin 1929:699. ⁵⁰ Procopius, *Wars* vm 25.1-6.

⁵¹ Jordanes, *Romana* 386-7; Procopius, *Wars* vm 25,1-10 and 13—15, vm 27.1-5 and 7-29; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* 1 23—4.

in 554, as Procopius was finishing Book iv of his *Buildings*, the building program on the Danube frontier was completed. According to Procopius, Justinian built or renewed more than 600 forts in the Balkans, eight times more than in the entire Asian part of the Empire. There is a tendency among scholars to downplay the significance of this major building program or to treat Procopius' evidence with extreme suspicion. The archaeological evidence will be examined in detail in the following chapter. It is worth mentioning for the moment that, just because the *Buildings* is a panegyric, it does not mean that we should expect a heightening of the evidence. It is not true that Procopius, in accordance with the convention of the time, credited Justinian with achievements which were not his. Two recently discovered, inscriptions from Albania corroborate Book iv. One of them clearly attests that the forts in Moesia, Scythia Minor, Illyricum, and Thrace were built for Justinian by his architect, Viktorinos. We have all reasons to believe that Justinian's strategy described in Book iv *was* realized in practice and that Procopius' description of it is, in its essentials, sound. The ending phase of this building program may have been sped up by the devastating Sclavene raids of 549—51, for the Sclavenes are the only barbarians to whom Procopius specifically refers in relation to Justinian's building program. He tells us that the fort at Ulmetum (present-day Pantelimonu de Sus, in Dobrudja) had come to be wholly deserted and "nothing of it was left except the name," for the Sclavenes had been making their ambushes there for a great length of time and had been tarrying there very long (8iaTpi(3r)v TE auToOi em uocKpoxaTov EGXTIKOTGOV). The fort was built all up from the foundations.⁵² Justinian also built a new fort named Adina, because the "barbarian Sclaveni were constantly laying concealed ambushes there against travellers, thus making the whole district impassable."⁵³

The evidence of the *Buildings* gives one the impression that Procopius perceived the challenge of the Sclavenes as the great military problem of his day and, at the same time, saw himself challenged to describe it. Procopius explains that the entire strategy underlying the building program in the Balkans was centered upon the Danube frontier and that the forts built by Justinian responded to a particular kind of warfare, being designed to resist sudden attacks from the north.⁵⁴ The defense system was also designed to protect the countryside rather than the urban

⁵² Procopius, *Buildings* iv 7. See Nestor 1961:429 and 1963:45; Shuvalov 1991:40. Albanian inscription: Feissel 1988. ^ Procopius, *Buildings* iv 7.

⁵⁴ Procopius, *Buildings* iv 1: "Indeed it was the custom of these peoples [barbarians, in general] to rise and make war upon their enemies [the Romans] for no particular cause, and open hostilities without sending an embassy, and they did not bring their struggle to an end through any treaty, or cease operations for any specified period, but they made their attacks without provocation and reached a decision by the sword alone." See Adshead 1990:107.

centers, for, according to Procopius, the first target of the barbarian raids was fields, not cities. According to Procopius, Justinian's strategy was therefore not to close the frontier, but to build three successive lines, one along the Danube, the other along the Stara Planina range, and a third one along the Istranca Daglar range, in the vicinity of Constantinople. All three were expected to slow down, if not stop, any barbarian raids. Book iv has therefore been viewed as a "codified" map of barbarian invasions into the Balkans, of their direction and impact. In any case, despite claims to the contrary, Procopius' *Buildings* provides solid evidence that in the mid-soos, the Danube frontier together with the provinces in the interior received a level of fortification the Balkans had never witnessed before.⁵⁵

Justinian's concept of defense proved its efficiency, for no Slavene raid is known for a long period between 552 and 577. With the exception of Zabergan's invasion of 558/9 and the Cutrigur raid into Dalmatia in 568, there is no mention of raiding activity of any kind in the Balkans until the last quarter of the sixth century.⁵⁶ It has been argued that this may be an indirect result of Justinian's decisive victory against the Goths in Italy. However, Zabergan's devastating invasion of 558/9 does not support this argument. According to Agathias of Myrina, Zabergan crossed the frozen river "as if it were land," with a great number of horsemen. Victor of Tunnunna, writing in 565 in Constantinople, reported that the Huns captured and killed a *magister militum* named Sergios, the son of a certain priest named Bacchus. The same details appear in John Malalas, who also claimed that the invaders found parts of the Long Walls collapsed, as they indeed were after the earthquake of 557. Theophanes gave a slightly different account of the same attack. Slavenes among Zabergan's hordes appear in both John Malalas' and Theophanes' accounts, but are not mentioned by either Agathias or Victor of Tunnunna. If groups of Slavene warriors participated in Zabergan's invasion, they certainly played a subordinate role. No independent raid of the Slavenes is known for the entire period until 578, despite the fact that the period is covered by more than one source.⁵⁷

■⁵⁵ Procopius, *Buildings* iv i. See also Velkov 1987:155. "Codified" map of barbarian invasions: Ivanov 1984. For the defense system in the Balkans, see Ovcharov 1977:468 and 1982:19.

⁵⁶ Whitby 1988:88; Soustal 1991:71. For the Cutrigur raid of 562, see Menander the Guardsman 12.5. See also Blockley 1985:268 with 11, 160.

⁵⁷ Agathias v 11.6; Victor of Tunnunna, *Chn mica*, ed. Mommsen, *MGH: AA* 11:205; John Malalas XVIII 129; Mango 1997:341. Justinian's victory over the Goths: Shuvalov 1989. Cutrigur invasion: Bakalov 1974:206; Waldmiüller 1976:48 and 50; Irmscher 1980:163; Pohl 1988:19; Fiedler 1992:8. I am not persuaded by Vladislav Popovics' attempt to reconstruct a Slavene raid not recorded by historical sources on the basis of the numismatic evidence. See Popovic 1978:617 and 1981.

THE AVARS AND THE SLAVS: RAIDING ACTIVITY IN THE 580S

As a consequence of the calamitous invasion of Zabergan's Cutrigurs, the Avars became Justinian's new allies. The newcomers were remarkably successful in establishing their suzerainty in the steppes north of the Black Sea. One by one, all nomadic tribes were forced to acknowledge their supremacy. Among them were also the Antes, for the Avars, in about 560, "ravaged and plundered the[ir] land". Mezamer, the envoy sent by the Antes to ransom some of their tribesmen taken prisoner by the Avars, was killed at the orders of the qagan. Menander the Guardsman claims that the qagan's decision was taken under the influence of "that Kutrigur who was a friend of the Avars and had very hostile designs against the Antae." It is very likely that, in order to subdue the world of the steppe, the Avars took advantage of dissensions between various nomadic groups. In this case, Menander's reference to the leaders of the Antes, who "had failed miserably and had been thwarted in their hopes," may imply that, before the arrival of the Avars, the Antes had experienced some serious defeat at the hands of their Cutrigur neighbors.⁵⁸ Following the defeat of the Antes, the Avars became the masters of the steppe, with no other rivals except the Gok Turk Empire to the east.⁵⁹ They felt indeed strong enough to send an embassy to Justinian asking for land south of the Danube, in Scythia Minor. Their request was rejected, although a later source, the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, claims that Justinian granted the Avars the city of Durostorum.⁶⁰ A few years, later, however, the Avars, in alliance with the Lombards, destroyed the Gepids in Pannonia and soon remained the only masters of the Hungarian plain.

The direct consequences of this conquest were immediately visible. The Avars attacked Sirmium, and negotiations with the Romans failed

⁵⁸ Menander the Guardsman, fr. 3. Avars as Justinian's allies: Szadeczky-Kardoss 19863:267-8; Soustal 1991:71. Location of the Antian polity; Ditten 1978:89 and 93. Date of the Avar attack: Litavrin 1991b:8; Levinskaia and Tokhtas'ev 1991:327-8. For Mezamer's name, see Wiita 1977:262; Werner 1980:590; Strumins'kyj 1979-80:792—3.

⁵⁹ The confederation of tribes known as the Gok Turk Empire had formed in 552 when the Ashina clan had seized power from their Juan-Juan overlords in Mongolia. The Empire was divided into a senior eastern and a junior western qaganate. Envoys of the western qaganate came to Constantinople in 562 or 563 to complain about Justinian's alliance with the Avars. See Mango 1997:35i; Pohl 1988:40-1; Whittow 1996:220-2. The Byzantine response was to send an embassy to Qagan Sizabul, in 569 (Menander the Guardsman, fr. 10,2). By 565, Justin II was already using the Gok Turk as a threat against the Avars (Pohl 1988:49). In 576/7, Turxanthos, the qagan of the western division, conquered Bosphorus (Panticapaeum). Chersonesus fell in 579. See Menander the Guardsman, fr. 19,2 and 25,2; see also Gajdukevic 1971:518; Szadeczky-Kardoss 1986¹:269-70; Pohl 1988:67. The Avars took Gok Turk threats very seriously. They immediately withdrew from the Balkans, when learning that Gok Turk troops were advancing from the east. See Michael the Syrian x 21; Pohl 1988:40; Szadeczky-Kardoss 1986a:267~8.

⁶⁰ *Chronicle of Monemvasia*, p. 9; see Pohl 1988:47.

to provide a peaceful solution to the conflict. The indirect consequences were, however, more important. Most likely encouraged by the success of the Avars, the Sclavenes resumed their raids. In 578, according to Menander the Guardsman, 100,000 Slavene warriors "devastated Thrace and many other areas."⁶¹ The number of the invading Slavene warriors mentioned by Menander the Guardsman is certainly exaggerated. But his account is corroborated by others. John of Biclar probably referred to this same invasion when reporting Slavene destruction in Thrace and Avar naval attacks on the Black Sea coast. Since Avars were never at ease on sea, in sharp contrast to Sclavenes, whose sailing abilities are often mentioned, by various other sources, John may have muddled Avars with Sclavenes. The scale of the raid seems to have been considerable, for according to Menander the Guardsman, the Sclavenes were still plundering in Greece (EAAag), when Qagan Bayan organized an expedition against their territories north of the Danube.⁶²

Despite the omnipresence of the Avars, there is no reason to doubt that the raid of 578 was an independent one. The qagan himself seems to have taken very seriously the independent attitude of the Slavene leaders. Indeed, Menander the Guardsman cites, for the first time, the name of a Slavene chieftain, Daurentius (or Dauritas), to whom the qagan sent an embassy asking the Sclavenes to accept Avar suzerainty and to pay him tribute. The rationale behind the qagan's claims was that the land of the Sclavenes was "full of gold, since the Roman Empire had long been plundered by the Slavs, whose own land had never been raided by any other people at all." This could only mean that the arrival of the Avars to the Lower Danube, and their wars for the domination of the steppe north of the Danube Delta and the Black Sea, had no effect on the neighboring Sclavenes. The answer given by the independently minded Dauritas and his fellow chiefs to the Avar envoys may have been pure boasting designed to illustrate Menander's idea of barbarians "with haughty and stubborn spirits." It is nevertheless a plausible answer. In an episode apparently constructed as the opposite of that of Mezamer and Bayan, Menander tells us that the Sclavenes eventually slew the envoys of the qagan. Bayan now had a good reason for his long-awaited expedition. In addition, Emperor

⁶¹ Menander the Guardsman, fr. 20,2. See Metcalf 1962b: 135; Popovic 1975:450; Whitby 1988:87. For the fall of Sirmium, see Menander the Guardsman, fr. 27,2.

⁶² John of Biclar, p. 214: "Avares litora mans captiose obsident et navibus litora Thraciae navigantibus satis infesti sunt"; Menander the Guardsman, fr. 21. See also Waldmiiller 1976:106; Weithmann 1978:78; Popovic 1980:231; Yannopoulos 1980:332; Pohl 1988:68; Whitby 1988:87; Levinskaia and Tokhtas'ev 1991[^]:343; Cherniak 1991:398; Chiriac 1993:193- The exact meaning of "EAAocs is a controversial issue. Despite its vague territorial content, it is clear that Menander refers here to the southern regions of the Balkans, as an indicator for the magnitude of the Slavic raid.

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Tiberius II also needed him to force the Sclavenes raiding the Balkans to return home. Tiberius ordered the *quaestor exercitus* John, who was at the same time *magister militum* (or *praefectus praetorio*) *per Illyricum* and apparently commanded the Danube fleet, to transport 60,000 Avar horsemen on ships along the Danube, from Pannonia to Scythia Minor. Since the Avar horsemen landed in Scythia Minor, the Slavene villages to which Bayan set fire must have been located on the left bank, not far from the river, in eastern Walachia or southern Moldavia. Bayan laid waste the fields, which may indicate that the expedition took place in the late summer or early fall of 578. No Sclavenes "dared to face" the qagan, and many took refuge into the nearby woods.⁶³

Nevertheless, Qagan Bayan's expedition against the Sclavenes did not fulfill Tiberius II's expectations. That the situation in the northern Balkans remained confused is shown by the fact that, in 579, the Avar envoy himself, together with his small Roman escort, were ambushed by Slavene marauders on their way back from Constantinople through Illyricum.⁶⁴ According to John of Ephesus, two years later, "the accursed people of the Slavs" set out and plundered all of Greece, the regions surrounding Thessalonica (the Syrian word is *tslumyq'*), and Thrace, taking many towns and castles, laying waste, burning, pillaging, and seizing the whole country. On the double assumption that the first Slavene attack on Thessalonica occurred in 586 and that John died shortly after 585, Theresa Olajos proposed an emendation of the text, replacing Thessalonica with Thessaly.⁶⁵ To my knowledge, her point of view remains unchallenged. A closer examination of her assumptions, however, may lead to a different conclusion. First, John could not have died in about 585, for the last event recorded by his *Ecclesiastical History* is the acquittal of Gregory of Antioch in 588. As a consequence, he could well have had knowledge of a Slavene raid reaching the environs of Thessalonica. Archbishop John of Thessalonica mentions an attack on the city by 5,000 Slavene warriors attacking the city, but the currently

⁶³ Menander the Guardsman, fr. 21. Date of the Avar embassy: Litavrin 1991:113. For Dauritas' speech, see Baldwin 1978:118. For the *quaestor exercitus* John, see Jones 1964:307; Hendy 1985:653; Szadeczky-Kardoss 1985:64; Pohl 1988:68; Levinskaia and Tokhtas'ev 1991:346; Torbatov 1997:84—5. The use of XEyxai suggests the number of Avar horsemen may be exaggerated. For ships transporting the Avar army, see Bounegru 1983:276—7. For the probable location of the Danube fords the Avar horsemen used to cross over into Walachia, see Nestor 1965:148; Chiriac 1980:255 and 1993:198-9; Pohl 1988:68-9. For Sclavenes fleeing to the woods, see also Theophylact Simocatta vi 7.10 and *Strategikoi* xi 4.38.

⁶⁴ Menander the Guardsman, fr. 25,2. For a later date, see Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou 1986:348. For Bayan and the expectations of Emperor Tiberius, see Waldmiiller 1976:165; Rusu 1978:123; Ferjancic 1984:94.

*^o John of Ephesus vi 6.25; Olajos 1985:514-5. See also Gregoire 1944-5:109. Date of the invasion: Waldmuller 1976:110. John's notion of "Hellas": Weithmann 1978:88.

accepted date for this event (604) is based on Paul Lemerle's dubious interpretation of the text and his questionable chronology of the events narrated in chapters 12 through 15 of Book I.⁶⁶ According to Lemerle, the attack of the 5,000 warriors narrated in miracle 12 must have taken place *after the* siege of Thessalonica narrated in miracles 13 to 15, which he dated to 586. He pointed to a passage of miracle 13, in which Archbishop John claimed that it was for the first time that the citizens of Thessalonica, particularly those who had not served in the army, were seeing a barbarian army so close to them that they could examine it in great detail. By contrast, as the 5,000 Slavene warriors attacked the city by surprise, the citizens of Thessalonica could hear from a distance "certain signs of that barbarian cry to which ears were accustomed." This, Lemerle argued, was an indication that the attack of the 5,000 Slavene warriors occurred some time after the siege of 586, for the inhabitants of the city could by now recognize the Slavene battle cry⁶⁷

The evidence cited by Lemerle should be treated with great caution. First, an accurate translation of the passage referring to the Slavene battle cry suggests a different interpretation. The ears accustomed to the barbarian cry are not necessarily those of the inhabitants of the city attacked by the 5,000 warriors. John may have referred to members of his audience, some of whom had indeed witnessed this event, as well as other, subsequent attacks. Moreover, what John says is not that the citizens of Thessalonica were able to recognize the battle cry because they had already heard it many times before, but simply that they were able to distinguish the cry from the general noise of the battle. Second, what John says about the citizens of Thessalonica seeing for the first time a barbarian army refers to the whole army of 586, including Slavenes under the orders of the qagan, as well as other barbarians, all organized in companies of soldiers and in order of battle. What is new to the eyes of the inhabitants of the city is not the Slavenes, but the spectacle of the Avar army.⁶⁸

I therefore suggest that the attack of the 5,000 Slavene warriors may as well be dated before the siege of 586. Indeed, despite claims to the

(⁶⁶) *Miracles of St Demetrius I* 12.107-13; Lemerle 1981:40, 69, and 72.

⁶⁷ *Miracles of St Demetrius I* 12.112: κϰΧ(xiva τ% (3ap(JapiKfis Kpauy% arinela 81a τ% E0Q5QS aKofls ETreyivcoaKGV. For the citizens of Thessalonica and the barbarian army, see *Miracles of St Demetrius I* 13.124. On the assumption that it took place at a later date than the siege of 586, Lemerle dated the raid of the 5,000 Slavene warriors to 604, on the sole basis of his translation of x fj SEirrepa fiuepg Tfjs eopxfjs acpvoo UEOTIS VUKTGS as "le lundi jour de la fete, au milieu de la unit" (I 12,102; Lemerle 1981:72). This is plainly and simply wrong. All that Archbishop John says is that the Slavenes attacked on the night of the second day of the festival. See Whitby 1988:119-20; Speck 1993:423; Ivanova 1995:182.

⁶⁸ The army of 586: *Miracles of St Demetrius I* 13.117. See also Ivanova 1995a: 188. For subsequent attacks on Thessalonica, see *Miracles of St Demetrius I* 12.101.

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contrary, Archbishop John's narrative leaves the impression of a raid organized by "professional" warriors coming from afar, not by marauders living in the vicinity. The reaction of the inhabitants of Thessalonica is also instructive. There is no mention of any army within the city's walls. However, when an official of the prefecture gave the alarm, nobody panicked. Instead, everybody rushed home to bring his weapons and then took his assigned position on the walls. To judge from Archbishop John's evidence, the inhabitants of Thessalonica were already prepared for the attack, which they seem to have expected at any moment. I suspect this to be an indication of a serious and continuous threat on the city, of a kind which may be associated with the invasion referred to by John of Ephesus. The attack of the 5,000 Slavene warriors occurred at a time of intense raiding, when the citizens of Thessalonica had become accustomed to barbarian onslaughts. Indeed, John of Ephesus, to whom the "accursed Slavs" were just the instrument of God for punishing the persecutors of the Monophysites, claims that they were still occupying Roman territory in 584, "as if it belonged to them." The Slavs had "become rich and possessed gold and silver, herds of horses and a lot of weapons, and learned to make war better than the Romans." I think, therefore, that Franjo Barisic was right when relating the attack of the 5,000 Slavene warriors on Thessalonica to the events referred to by John of Ephesus.⁶⁹

However, questions still remain. Both Archbishop John and John of Ephesus seem to describe an independent raid of the Slavenes reaching Thessalonica and also, according to John of Ephesus, Greece. In distant Spain, John of Biclar knew that in 581, Greece had been occupied by Avars. It is known, on the other hand, that at that time the major Avar forces were concentrated at Sirmium, which actually fell in 582. Is it possible that John muddled Avars with Slavs? Taking into consideration the considerable distance at which he wrote, it is not altogether impossible. But there is additional evidence to prove the contrary. Writing at the end

⁶⁹ *Miracles of St Demetrius* I 12.108: 5ia TO TTOCVTOS TOU TQV IKACI(3IVGOV e0vous TO aTTiXeKTov dv0os; see Lemerle 1981:71. Citizens on the walls: *Miracles of St Demetrius* 1 12.107. Date of the siege: Barisic 1953:49~55; Ivanova 19953:182. The only chronological indication is the association of this episode with that of the destroyed *ciborium* of St Demetrius' church, which John attributes to the time of Bishop Eusebius (1 6.55). Eusebius is known from letters written by Pope Gregory the Great between 597 and 603 (Lemerle 1981:27-8). The date of his appointment is not known. It must have been a long episcopate, for he is mentioned as bishop in 586, as the army of the qagan besieged Thessalonica (1 14.131). For the "accursed Slavs," see John of Ephesus vi 6.25. John of Ephesus' evidence is viewed by many as indicating the beginning of Slavic settlement in the Balkans. See Nestor 1963:50-1; Ferjancic 1984:95; Pohl 1988:82; Soustal 1991:72; *contra*: Popovic 1975:450. All that John says, however, is that after four years of raiding the Slavenes were still on Roman territory. It is not clear whether they had established themselves temporarily or on a longer term.

of the sixth century, Evagrius recorded some information on Balkan events of the 580s, which he may have obtained in Constantinople, during his visit of 588. He reports that Avars conquered and plundered cities and strongholds in Greece. The date of this raid is not given, but there is no reason to accuse Evagrius of muddling Avars and Slavs. °

In addition, Michael the Syrian, in a passage most likely taken from John of Ephesus, records an attack of the Sclavenes (*sqwlyn*) on Corinth, but refers to their leader as qagan. He then attributes the attack on Anchialos not to Avars, but to Sclavenes. The reference to Anchialos could be used for dating the attack on Corinth in or shortly before 584.⁷¹ But it is very difficult to disentangle Michael's narrative and decide who exactly was raiding Greece in about 584. Michael the Syrian is a later source. He might have used John not directly, but through an intermediary (possibly the eighth-century chronicle attributed to Dionysius of Tell Mahre). As a consequence, he might have muddled Avars and Slavs. But neither the evidence of John of Biclar, nor that of Evagrius, can be dismissed so easily on such grounds. There is good reason to suspect, therefore, that in the early 580s, Greece was raided by both Avars *and* Slavs. It is possible that some of the Slavs were under the orders of the Avars, while others, such as the 5,000 warriors storming Thessalonica, may have operated on their own.

That some Slavene groups were under the command of the Avar qagan is also suggested by Theophylact Simocatta's report of another raid across Thrace, which reached the Long Walls. In 584, "the Avars let loose the nation of the Sclavenes." The threat seems to have been so great that Emperor Maurice was forced to use circus factions in order to garrison the Long Walls. The imperial bodyguards were led out from the city, under the command of Comentiolus, and they soon intercepted a group of Sclavenes.⁷² One year later (585), Comentiolus encountered a larger group under the command of a certain Ardagastus, roaming in the vicinity of Adrianople. After crushing Ardagastus' warriors, Comentiolus

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John of Biclar, p. 216; Evagrius vi 10. Avars 111 Greece: Weithmann 1978:88; Yannopoulos 1980:333; Avramea 1997:68-9. The date of the attack is indicated by John of Biclar's mention of both Tiberius II's third regnal year and King Leuvigild's eleventh year. According to Walter Pohl (1988:76 with n. 40), John of Biclar may have indeed referred to Avar forces when mentioning Pannonia along with Greece. The raid mentioned by Evagrius may be that of 584, when Singidunum fell and the hinterland of Anchialos was ravaged; see Theophylact Simocatta 1 4.1-4; Pohl 1988:77-8 and 107; Whitby 1988:110. Unlike John of Biclar, Evagrius also reports that cities and strongholds had been conquered by Avars "fighting on the parapets" (ε^ETroXioPKrjoav).

⁷¹ Michael the Syrian x 21. See Yannopoulos 1980:366. The association between Anchialos and Greece also appears in Evagrius vi 10. There is no serious reason for accepting Zakythinos' emendation of Corinth into Perinthus. See Zakythinos 1945:37; Kiriyannopoulos 1990.

⁷² Theophylact Simocatta 1 7.3-6; see Mango 1997:376. The threat is also indicated by the hasty appointment of Comentiolus as *magister niiliuni pnientalis* (Theophylact Simocatta 1 7.4).

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began clearing the entire region of Astike. Could Ardagastus have been under the orders of the qagan? In 584 and 585, the Avars were busy capturing cities and forts along the Danube frontier. Moreover, a few years later, as Priscus' troops chased him across his territory north of the Danube river, Ardagastus appeared as an independent leader. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that the group of Sclavenes intercepted by Comentiolus in 584 is the same as the one of 585, which was under Ardagastus' command. The raid of 584, which was directed to Thrace, might have been part of, if not the same as, the invasion of 581 to 584, which is reported by John of Ephesus as having reached Greece, the region of Thessalonica, *and* Thrace.⁷³

The situation in the years following Bayan's expedition against Dauritas seems to have been as follows, to judge from the existing evidence. The campaign itself did not have immediate results, for only one year later the Avar envoy to Constantinople was attacked by Slavene marauders somewhere in Illyricum. But as soon as the Avars began the siege of Sirmium in 579, they may have encouraged, if not ordered, massive Slavic raids to prevent the rapid access of Roman troops to the besieged city on the northern frontier. If we are to believe John of Ephesus, this diversion kept Roman troops in check for four years, even after Sirmium was conquered by the Avars. The evidence of John of Biclar, Evagrius, and Michael the Syrian suggests, on the other hand, that, at the same time, the Avars too raided some of those regions. The peace between Tiberius II and Bayan following the fall of Sirmium in 582, by which the emperor agreed to pay an annual stipend of 80,000 solidi to the Avars, did not prevent Slavene raids. John of Ephesus claimed that the Sclavenes were still on Roman territory in 584. The 5,000 warriors storming Thessalonica at an unknown date before 586 were certainly not obeying Avar orders. On the other hand, the Avar polity seems to have experienced social and political turmoil during this period, as a new qagan was elected in 583. Bayan's son followed his father's aggressive policy and in 584, as Emperor Maurice denied his request of increased subsidies, he attacked and conquered Singidunum, Viminacium, Augusta, and plundered the region of Anchialos, on the Black Sea coast. At the same time, according to Theophylact Simocatta, the new qagan of the Avars ordered the Sclavenes to plunder Thrace, as far as the Long Walls. The next year (585), Maurice agreed to pay increased subsidies to the Avars, which now amounted to 100,000 solidi. The affair of the Avar shaman Bookolabra troubled again Roman—Avar relations, and the qagan's troops plundered all major cities and forts along

⁷³ Date: Waldmiiller 1976:128; Whitby and Whitby 1986:29 with n. 37. Avars in 584/5: Pohl 1988:77—8 and 85. Priscus' attack against Ardagastus: Theophylact Siniocatta vi 7.1—5.

the Danube frontier, from Aquis to Marcianopolis. At the same time, Comentiolus was kept busy fighting Ardagastus' Sclavenes near Adrianople.⁷⁴

That in the eyes of the Roman emperor, the Sclavenes and the Avars were two different problems, also results from the different policies Maurice chose to tackle them. The Avars were paid considerable amounts of money, when Roman troops "were lacking or were unable to resist. There is nothing comparable in the case of the Slavs. Instead, Maurice preferred to use Justinian's old policies of inciting barbarian groups against each other. According to Michael the Syrian, the Romans paid the Antes for attacking and plundering the "land of the Sclavenes," which the Antes did with great success.⁷⁵ Maurice's policy might indeed have produced visible results in the case of the Sclavenes operating on their own.

But the war with the Avars continued in Thrace in 586, with indecisive victories on both sides. At the same time, an army of 100,000 Sclavenes and other barbarians obeying the orders of the qagan appeared under the walls of Thessalonica. The number of soldiers in the army besieging Thessalonica is evidently exaggerated. The attack, however, may well have been associated with the war in Thrace. Its precise date could be established on the basis of Archbishop John's reference to a Sunday, September 22, when the alarm was first given in Thessalonica. We are also told that the attack occurred at the time of the emperor Maurice. September 22 in the reign of Maurice could have fallen on a Sunday in either 586 or 597. A strong argument in favor of the latter date is the fact that Eusebius, the bishop of Thessalonica at the time of the attack, is mentioned by Pope Gregory the Great in three letters, the earliest of which is from 597. This is no indication, however, that Eusebius was appointed bishop in the 590s. He could have been bishop of Thessalonica since the 580s. Speros Vryonis has also argued that 597 should be preferred, because the poliorcetic technology and the siege machines employed during the one-week attack on Thessalonica could not have been acquired before 587. In that year, the qagan's army besieged and conquered Appiaria in Moesia Inferior, after being instructed by a certain Roman soldier named Busas as to how to build a siege engine. Theophylact Simocatta's story, however, is no more than a cliché, designed to emphasize that barbarians could have had access to high-tech siegecraft only through traitors. More important, the story clearly refers

⁷⁴ Avar envoy attacked by Slavs: Menander the Guardsman, fr. 25,2, Annual stipends for the Avars: Pohl 1988:75 and 82. New qagan: Pohl 1988:77-8 and 177. For the Bookolabra affair, see Theophylact Simocatta 1 8.2—11. ⁷⁵ Michael the Syrian x 21. For the probable location of the "land of the Sclavenes," see Nestor

1963:53-4; Pigulevskaia 1970:214; Waldmiiller 1976:123; Szydtowski 1980:234; Serikov 1991:279—80 and 289,