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# Value Orientation and the Image of the Orbis Gentium in Medieval East European Societies

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Aleksandr Musin. Value Orientation and the Image of the Orbis Gentium in Medieval East European Societies. Wiszewski, Przemyslaw. Memories in Multi-Ethnic Societies: Cohesion in Multi-Ethnic Societies in Europe from c. 1000 to the Present, vol.1, 15, Brepols, pp.289-323, 2020, Early European Research, 10.1484/M.EER-EB.5.120067 . hal-03167380

**HAL Id: hal-03167380**

**<https://normandie-univ.hal.science/hal-03167380>**

Submitted on 12 Mar 2021

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## Aleksandr Musin

« Value Orientation and the Image of the Orbis Gentium in Medieval East European Societies », dans *Memories in Multi-Ethnic Societies: Cohesion in Multi-Ethnic Societies in Europe from c. 1000 to the Present*, P. Wiszewski (dir.), Turnhout, Brepols, 2020 (Early European Research ; 15), vol. 1, p. 289-323

In the past as well as in the present the relationship and attitude ‘friend or foe’ are reposed on the culture-based judgments that consist of a relatively stable set of collective values or values orientations that have changed during the centuries<sup>1</sup>. Like military identification system IFF to identify an object as friendly or not, communities and individuals used some positive or negative characteristics of neighbors that distinguished them from ‘otherness’ and ‘otherness’ from themselves. The values concerning the *orbis gentium* and peculiarities of its settlers, real or imagined, during Middle Ages, underlied the relations of medieval states and peoples with the other countries and ethnic groups, peaceful or not. The revealing and explanation of such medieval values as a part of mechanisms that ensuring or should ensure cohesion of multiethnic societies and organising their relations to neighboring countries, the study of the role of historical memory, places of memory and national or collective myths in the formation and evolution of values orientation from the Early to Late Middle Ages in Eastern European societies are the main objectives of the present study.

### 1. Introduction

Normally, national or ethnic values are regarded as absolute aims for a social life or for a specific period of it that are shared by the main part of the society and justify common actions and attitudes. The formation of the mentioned above set of characteristics/orientations inside a society is depended from different factors of spontaneous and/or artificial character. The first group of factors is issued from personal or group experience and based on the individual or collective estimation of nations according to their cultural behavior, everyday life material culture, and stereotypic mental reactions of ‘otherness’. The second group has been formed artificially due to the myths, and national narratives, especially ‘grand narrative’<sup>2</sup> circulating in society, its collective memory, public opinion, official propaganda, and education system that are linked very often to political and ideological concepts. The balance between two groups of

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<sup>1</sup> On such approach in ethnology see: Jaenen 1976.

<sup>2</sup> See on the concept and its development: Hobsbawm 1983, Carr 1986.

factors is regarded by local society as own values which determinate its axiology and design the specifics of the international, regional, and social history.

The present paper could be regarded as a 'symmetric research' with the chapter by Prof. Andrzej Pleszczyński (*The image of people and lands of Eastern Europe in Polish writings until the Union of Lublin (1569)*) which is published in the present volume. It provides a look from the 'other side of the border', i.e. an image of people and lands of Central Europe (not only, because this image in the East European mentality is inseparable from the estimation of other parts of *orbis gentium*) in Rus' (Kievan) /Russian (Muscovite) societies until the nearly same chronological mark, the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Of course, it could be said that the author of the first article is in a better position than the researcher of East European cultural history. He deals with the corpus of written sources of relatively homogeneous Latin tradition with perceptible nuances within different Polish chroniclers. It allows undertaking a classical study by gradually passing from one text to another in their chronological order and using the traditional method of historical research including critics of written sources, textology, genetic and contextual approach. A scholar who is going to study the similar problem based on Eastern European materials is limited until the Late Middle Ages usually until 15<sup>th</sup> century, by comparatively poor number of texts that depend on the basic proto-text, benefit of the information from one another, reproduce very often archetypical views and describe events and estimate them in stereotypic manner.

To overcome that situation it must look for non-traditional sources and propose a new reading of well-known writings in the way of anthropological approach. The investigation inevitably comprises the critical study of foreign sources including Latin ones and involves the analysis of the historiographical traditions and modern discussions as a hypothetically reconstructed historical reality which helps understand the past. In fact, the desirable picture of medieval values orientation in their dynamic change presents a complex result of different kind of investigations undertaken in parallel with final mutual verification of obtained conclusions. It explains why I prefer to speak on the image of *orbis gentium* in Eastern European societies and not in their writings.

However, and I would like to stress it, the present paper proposes a 'look from the other side' reflected the values of East European communities and not 'another look'. In several cases, the

estimations of the authors issued of the one research project are agreed, and two articles complement one another especially in the understanding of the building of the borderlines between Central and Eastern Europe in the past. In other words, the goal of the both articles is to present narrative landscape of the Eastern boundaries of Europe in the making between real and imagined multiethnicity.

## 2. Question of sources and methodological approaches

As it has been noted, the understanding of the functioning of the set of values in the multiethnic society of Eastern Europe, its role in the building of its cohesion, and in the making of boundaries with neighboring societies and communities is not an easy task. That kind of study is challenged by some difficulties within the stay of historical sources and the specificity of the local historiographical traditions.

### 2.1. Sources

First of all, the researcher of East European societies and communities for the early period of the 12<sup>th</sup>-the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century disposes of the only closed corpus of Slavonic chronicles based on the text of the *Primary Rus' Chronicle*. The chroniclers used for the long period the approaches and set of estimation that based on the biblical perception and established at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century during the compilation of the *Tale of Past Years* or *Nestorchronik*<sup>3</sup>. Because of that fact, the introduction to the chronicles leaves an impression that the axiological development of the local society and their attitude towards its neighbors had been nearly stopped.

The hagiography before the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century was presented mostly by translated works<sup>4</sup> and local texts based on them, for example, the *Patericon* of the Kiev Cave Monastery, gives little information on the topic<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, what can be used in our study from these texts will be used. The same observation should be made concerning the rare writing of the canon law of the Orthodox Church of that period<sup>6</sup>. The several information of Latin Chronicles mainly concerning

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<sup>3</sup> For the English translation which should be recognized as inexact and archaic see : Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930. Nevertheless, I am going to follow it in the citation of the Chronicle. See also English translation of the First Novgorod Chronicle: Michell, Forbes 1914. The nearly complete edition of Russian chronicles in the Slavonic language is presented in series: *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisey* (St Petersburg, Petrograd, Leningrad, Moscow, since 1841), vol. 1-41.

<sup>4</sup> Podskalsky 1982.

<sup>5</sup> Tschizewskij 1964.

<sup>6</sup> Pavlov 1880.

multiethnic relationship in the Baltic Sea area that reflects the values orientation of the participants can also be studied as sources of our research<sup>7</sup> as well as some Arabic sources (see below).

As it has been noted the relative poverty and the nearly complete anonymity of East European medieval writings obliges researchers to use retrospective analysis and even interpolation, anthropological reading of well-known texts and look for new types of sources that can shed light on the issue of the values orientation concerning multiethnicity. In that paper, I would like briefly use some archaeological materials from the Novgorod excavations first of all birch bark documents of the 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>8</sup> that seems to be spectacular enough for understanding the values orientation of the local society towards the different ethnos of *orbis gentium*.

In the framework of the present article is no place for detail analysis of archaeological material discovered in the occupation layers of Novgorod which give an interesting picture of the presence of the representatives of different ethnos or at least elements of their material culture in the urban community, and effacing effect of urban culture on the ethnic or regional differences during the process of acculturation<sup>9</sup>. Of course, it must be a subject of special investigation. However, we should take into consideration that some archaeological material especially well-dated chronologically could bring additional proves or nuances for the research conclusions.

The situation changes in the 15<sup>th</sup> century that is characterized by the growing interest towards history in Muscovite and Novgorod societies. However such interest and active re-writing of the history that followed it become hazardous for the right understanding of the past especially at the background of the Russian historiography. The new challenges are provided by late medieval reinterpretation of *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* and modern historiography tradition based on primordial's approach of the existing of the Russian nation since the time of the Prince Vladimir the Saint in the form of the 'Old Russian nationality'<sup>10</sup> which deeply influences the contemporary conscious and studies. Medieval annalistic and modern historiography both state the single trajectory of development of Eastern Europe from the Early Rus' of Kiev, through the Muscovite State towards the Russian Empire and modern 'Russian world', in other words 'from Vladimir to Vladimir'.

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<sup>7</sup> Adam von Bremen 1917; Widukind 1935; Thietmar 1935; Heinricus 1955.

<sup>8</sup> For the edition of the recent finds see: Yanin et al. 2015; See also: Picchio 1979-1980.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example: Pokrovskaya 2001; Pokrovskaya 2014.

<sup>10</sup> This concept was proposed in: Mavrodin 1946. For the critics see: Yusova 2006.

However, critical analysis of different types of sources of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, late Medieval Chronicles<sup>11</sup>, polemic and publicist writing (*Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli* [The Tale of the Ruin of the Russian Land]<sup>12</sup>, *Skazanie o velikikh knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh* [Tale of the Grand Princes of Vladimir]<sup>13</sup>, *Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche* [Tale of the battle of Kulikovo Field or Tale of the Rout of Mamai]<sup>14</sup>, *Kniga stepennaya tsarskogo rodosloviya* [Book of Degrees of the Royal, Genealogy or Book of Generations of the Tsar's family]<sup>15</sup>; *Istoriya o Kazanskom tsarstve* [History of the Kazan' Kingdom]<sup>16</sup>, *Kievan Synopsis*<sup>17</sup>), muscovite diplomatic correspondences with great dukes of Lithuania and Polish kings of the end of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>18</sup>, and their mutual verification allow giving a reliable picture of the East European multiethnic situation and values orientation in transition, its perception by the different political and social groups during Middle Ages and social and ideological instruments of organising and consolidating of multiethnic society adopted by the Muscovite Princes since the mid of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Among the historical sources, we will be interested especially two main type of information concerning medieval values: ethnic-geographical narrative and models of the political activity within its borderlines as well as the memory of the past including *origo gentis* as the organising mean of the social and political life. However, for the right understanding of the phenomena, the study must feel free from the historiographical charges and disburden from what is called in the modern historiography 'the tyranny of a concept' or 'the tyranny of a construct'<sup>19</sup>. For this I propose the comparative and contextual analysis of two medieval narratives of different period: *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* (beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Kiev) and *the Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' (Russian) Land* (in my opinion, the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Muscovy, probably, Pskov) can be especially productive

## 2.2. Values in collective and cultural memory: 'lieux de mémoires'

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<sup>11</sup> Among them I should cite first of all: Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis 1950; Moskovskiy letopisniy svod 1949; Sofiyskaya I letopis 1851; L'vovskaya letopis 1910; Letopis Avraamki 1889; Novgorodskaya IV letopis 1929; Voskresenskaya letopis 1856-1859; Nikonovskaya letopis 1863.

<sup>12</sup> Begunov 1965.

<sup>13</sup> Dmitrieva 1955.

<sup>14</sup> Shambinago 1907; Salmina et al. 1981. See also: Halperin 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Vasenko 1908/1913; Lenhoff, Kleimola 2011. See also: Sirenov 2010.

<sup>16</sup> Adrianova-Perets, Moiseeva 1954; Volkova 1985.

<sup>17</sup> Not-critical edition see: Sapozhnikov, Sapozhnikova 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Karpov 1882; Karpov 1892.

<sup>19</sup> Bowlus 2002. Another title for comparison: Brown 1974.

Within our study, it could be helpful to use values orientation approach that provides a way to understand core cultural differences related to basic human concerns or orientations that widely used in social anthropology and cross-cultural studies. The approach is organized around such topics as basic nature of people of different ethnos, relationship to nature, perception about time, human activity and social relations<sup>20</sup>. In the present study I am going to concentrate on such concerns as human nature, social relations and time sense, i.e., the question of necessity of social and political control of groups and individuals, learning role of history, and continuity of past traditions into the future. The responses to the main concerns form the notion of “values orientation” and reveal a historical set of values of any ethnic group, society or culture.

In the academic community, an ethnic group is usually regarded as a social category of people based on perceptions of shared social experience or ancestry and cultural traditions. The ethnic identities divide and unify people along a series of vertical axes which reflect an axiological hierarchy<sup>21</sup>. It could also be said that ethnicities exist thanks to its history, even imagined history<sup>22</sup>. As far as ethnic groups exist in the form of more or less organized societies, their values orientation is inseparable from multi-level and complex communication between different types of social memory.

Normally, researchers make today differences between collective memory<sup>23</sup> which share set of information held in the memories of several members of a social group that may be passed and used for certain individual or group purposes. The collective memory can be transformed in the official narrative and become cultural memory which had been distributed by government institutions and could be accepted or not by different social groups as an official vision of the past and/or project for the future. The phenomenon of communicative memory should be regarded as intermediate between collective and cultural memory that is used by members of society in their everyday practice at the private level and could be indifferent or even difficult relation with officially adopted historical policy.

The evident distance between collective and cultural memory existed in medieval society could allow us to follow up their possible influence on the process of formation of social, political, diplomatic and ethic norms and principles as values orientation phenomenon shared by members of early medieval Rus' (Kievan) and late medieval Russian (Muscovite) societies or by several

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<sup>20</sup> The key-work is: Kluckhohn; Strodtbeck 1961; Hills 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Peoples, Bailey 2010, pp. 367, 389.

<sup>22</sup> Anderson 2006.

<sup>23</sup> This well-elaborated concept see in: Halbwachs 1950; Halbwachs 1952. For the English translations see: Halbwachs 1980; Halbwachs 1992.

groups inside them. We cannot expect that all such norms and principles inevitably and directly had been reflected in the texts of the period under question, quite probably they had been expressed there in an indirect way according to examples, images, and estimations. However, the comparison of such examples, images, and estimations of different epochs can give us an idea of the transition of values orientation and the direction of their evolution.

In such investigating context, the special role may be playing by so-called ‘places of memory’. According to Pierre Nora a place of memory, *dans tous les sens du mot va de l'objet le plus matériel et concret, éventuellement géographiquement situé, à l'objet le plus abstrait et intellectuellement construit*<sup>24</sup>. Evidently, a place of memory can be not only a physical object but ideas, narrative, toponymic or topographical orientation, etc., identified by members of a group as important for their common identity and regarded as a container of constitutive values and incentive of emotions which could contribute to the cohesion of the group. I argue that *origo gentis* telling about the common origin of different social and/or ethnic groups at the background of territorial and/or geographical topics can be involved in the research as *lieux de mémoire*<sup>25</sup>. The use of the *origo gentis* myths inside and outside of medieval society, its transformation, re-interpretation, and re-mythologization from the early history to pre-Modern Times should be of special interest to the present study. The same function of place of memory can be adapted to the concept of ‘Land’, broadly used in *the Primary Rus’ Chronicle*, and to the ethnic name given, received and adopted by one group from another or others communities as an *exonym*, the situation which often repeated in Middle Ages.

So, in the present article based on the previous objections I will try to answer several main questions of the East European history: how the values orientation can be reflected in the medieval texts and narratives, how this set of norms and principles had been formed, what values and in which way formed borderlines of East European societies with Central Europe and how official narratives about past including *origo gentis* were used to establish middle grounds and perception of common past for a multiethnic society in the way of constructing its cultural memory.

### 2.3. Myth in history and historiography

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<sup>24</sup> See on the concept: Nora 1989. On the application of it to medieval studies see: Fried, Rader 2011.

<sup>25</sup> On the role of *origo gentis* in the medieval history and its place in modern researches see, for example: Wenskus 1961; Corradini et al. 2003; Plassmann 2006; Coumert 2007; Garipzanov 2008; Gazeau et al. 2008.



Where a researcher may put a borderline between historical myth and historical falsification in medieval writing? It is well known that in Eastern Europe the perception of the past in mystical (mythological?) way influenced the modern geopolitics deeper and efficacious than contemporary political interests or economic and profits. Marc Bloch had already prevented us that society might regard a faraway past as more perceptible than relatively recent events<sup>26</sup>. Such situation inevitably demands interventions into the study of more recent past that allows retrospectively estimating different moments of the medieval history.

The modern national myths take their origins in early Middle Ages as P. Geary has brilliantly shown<sup>27</sup>. A historical myth may be regarded as a set of subjective collective representations about a special historical phenomenon, nations or event which had been formed in a fictional and invented image seriously transforming and substituting historical reality. The process of identification of myths in medieval texts and visual art and their study open for modern historiography new possibilities.

However, the historical-mythological approach did not receive its final approbation until now in spite of the fact that the research concept of historical myth is used in historiographies both Polish<sup>28</sup> and Russian<sup>29</sup> since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is quite interesting to note that in modern Russian humanities this approach is applied, so to say, in one-way fashion, only for showing the using and functioning of the myths concerning the Russians and Russia in medieval European writings which, according several scholars, contribute to arise of corrupted picture of the nation and country in the eyes of its neighbors in the past as well in the present. This observation concerns especially the study of Polish medieval historiography which recently has been revisited by D. Karnoukhov. According to the researcher, his objectives are to identify the 'superfluity' of fictive representations of Polish medieval authors about Russia, which had been formed in the past under specific political conditions and became the cause of a significant distortion of the perception of historical reality in Polish society<sup>30</sup>. It allows stressing the mythological elements in the historical narrative to confront them to particular cultural archetypes and ideological clichés characteristic for a specific period of the local history. As a

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<sup>26</sup> Bloch 1952, p. 10: *C'est aussi oublier que, dès que les résonances sentimentales entrent en jeu, la limite entre l'actuel et l'inactuel est loin de se régler nécessairement sur la mesure mathématique d'un intervalle de temps. Avait-il si tort, mon brave proviseur qui, dans le lycée languedocien où je fis mes premières armes de professeur, m'avertissait de sa grosse voix de capitaine d'enseignement : >Ici, le dix-neuvième siècle, ce n'est pas bien dangereux. Mais quand vous toucherez aux guerres de religion, soyez très prudent<.*

<sup>27</sup> Geary 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Maternicki 1990; Topolski 2000.

<sup>29</sup> Shnarelman 2000; Repina 2008.

<sup>30</sup> Karnoukhov 2009; Karnoukhov 2011; Karnoukhov 2014; Karnoukhov 2014a.

result, the researcher is able to explain the causes of the distortion of history (supposed to be 'obvious' from the point of view of an 'objective observer') through the analysis of the preconditions for this phenomenon, determined by the priorities of historical memory.

In fact, such 'actualization' of humanistic historiographers screened by the idea of their relevance looks strange enough especially at the background of the refuse to identify similar myths in the Russian medieval texts. The Russian scholars who actively use the concept of the historical myth in the studies of historiographies of Central Europe, in the same time keep off the application of such method to their own national history and historiography. It must have only one explanation: national history is thought as free of the myths, it is truly authentic, the official presentation of the past in the Russian historiography adequately shows the historical processes and the image of nations and groups, appropriated to it, is absolutely true. Meanwhile, the medieval historiography could not be free of 'the distortion of history', and the topic linked to the importance and role of historical (historiographical) myths as an essential element of the Russian historical narrative at the different stage of its development is quite relevant.

#### 2.4. The question of the borderlines between East and Central Europe in the making re-visited within the topic of medieval values

Modern perception of East-Central (better, Central-East) Europe as a specific historic-cultural area ascends the ideas of Oskar Halecki on Old and New Europe<sup>31</sup>, further developed in the Jerzy Kłoczowski's concept of Younger Europe<sup>32</sup>. The question of geographical and cultural limits of that *continent* in the present and during Middle Ages has been many times raised by scholars<sup>33</sup> no without critical remarks<sup>34</sup>. Several years ago I made circulated together with my colleague Marcin Wołoszyn a new term for the same realm – Newly-Converted Europe and put forward the thesis that one of the important problems of the medieval Europe was searching (or artificial *constructing*) for continuity from the Antiquity. An important role in this process was played not only by *Romanisation* of Central-Eastern Europe but also by its *Rhômatisation* through the contacts to Byzantium<sup>35</sup>.

In what degree such distinction contributed to the making of European borders? Usually, scholars accept the concept of the Orthodox-Latin controversy in Europe as the main cause of the

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<sup>31</sup> Halecki 1950; Halecki 1952.

<sup>32</sup> Kłoczowski 1998.

<sup>33</sup> Szűcs 1985; Lübke 2004; Kłoczowski, Łaskiewicz 2009; Berend et al. 2014, pp. 1-39.

<sup>34</sup> Mühle 2013.

<sup>35</sup> Musin, Wołoszyn 2013.

clash of civilizations proposed by Samuel Huntington. However, his idea about regions of natural influence which is based on the misunderstanding of the nature of historical change is only a kind of ‘medievalization’ of the modern geopolitics, and it could not be accepted by historians and Central-Eastern European nations that refuse to be a part of the ‘Russian world’<sup>36</sup>. Such approach is linked at least partially to the idea of specificity of the East-Christian culture and mentality that had been materialized in the framework of the so-called Byzantine Commonwealth of Nations<sup>37</sup>. In the historiography, the reader can find a set of its characteristics which at the same time could explain the making of the cultural border in Central-Eastern Europe. The inhabitants of Byzantine realm were followers of the Eastern Orthodox Christianity and accepted the norms of Roman-Byzantine law. The local churches accepted the primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople while the rulers accepted (at least, in the name) the primacy of the Byzantine emperor and perceived Byzantium as a culture standard. These characteristics are regarded as appropriate first of all to Eastern Europe.

However, in that case, the set of Eastern-European values is estimated from the Western European perspective<sup>38</sup>, not from the Central-Eastern one. The Central-European realm that presented a complex mixture of different traditions seems to be more difficult in dividing by the sample cultural, religious and juridical values, imported from the bank of the Bosphorus. It is worthy to look for supplementary (or basic?) reasons in the division of the Central-European continent, which could be linked to the values orientation and image of *orbis gentium* issued from the local historical and cultural conditions deeper grounded in the Central-Eastern European relations.

Based on the ideas, terminology, and principles of investigation, mentioned above, I will try to line out the ‘image of peoples and lands’ in Eastern European societies and its changes in the 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, that led to the making of the eastern borderlines of Central Europe<sup>39</sup>.

### 3. Multiethnicity as a value? Early Rus’ between real and imagined multiethnicity

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<sup>36</sup> On the “existential fears” of small Eastern European states see: Bibó 1986.

<sup>37</sup> Obolensky 1971, pp. 2, 206-208.

<sup>38</sup> Wolff 1994, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> It is worth noting that during last 20 years new publications on the attitude of Early Rus’ towards Latin Europe nations and nomadic population appeared. However, they are usually based on the approaches traditional for the Russian humanities. Only in several cases the authors tried to adopt innovative cultural anthropological vision. As a result those new publications didn’t bring enough new knowledge in the field of research. See for example: Demin 1996; Laushkin 2003; Dobrovol’skiy 2012; Dobrovol’skiy 2013; Andreycheva 2017.

Since the time of Nikolai Karamzin and Karl Marx, the scholars tried to discover and explain the multiethnicity of Kievan Rus'. The first equaled the Rus' of the 10<sup>th</sup> century with Russia (*Rossiya*) of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as the Russes (*Rhôs*) with the Russians (*Rossiyane*) and supposed that Early Rus' State was a result of the integration of two ethnos – the Slaves and the Russes. The second called the early medieval state in Eastern Europe *the Empire of the Riuriks*<sup>40</sup> that inevitably comprised its invasive and multiethnic character. Such views fit well with the intention of the Soviet ideology to find in early Russian history the elements of 'fraternity of peoples' which is supposed to exist in the Soviet Union. However, as it seems, the values orientation of Kievan Rus' lied far from the idea of multiethnic cohesion. The main value as it had been reflected in written sources was a *Land* surrounded by different ethnic groups. First, it is referred to the Rus' Land in the Middle Dnieper area with the centre in Kiev.

### 3.1. Formation of a new values orientation: Rus' as multiethnic society?

During Soviet period with its natural 'anti-normanism', the concept of multiethnic population of Eastern Europe was sometimes used in the humanities as a euphemism for describing the Scandinavian presence among local elites. In fact, early medieval Slavonic state that is known among the scholars as Early Rus' had in general mono-ethnic (or 'quasi-mono-ethnic') character like other national early states in Central Europe<sup>41</sup>. The well-known existence of the Scandinavian élites in 10<sup>th</sup> century Kiev does not conflict with such views.

For the 10<sup>th</sup> century, we can not describe the Rus' as identical to the Scandinavians or Varangians. It should take into consideration that the Rus' was not a special ethnos 'Varangian Rus' like the chronicler of the Primary Rus' Chronicle tried to explain in his famous passage: *these particular Varangians were known as Rus, just as some are called Swedes, and others Normans, English, and Gotlanders, for they were thus named. (...) Three brothers, with their kinsfolk, who took with them all the Rus and migrated*<sup>42</sup>. Unfortunately, it had been taken in the historiography of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as true and continues to influence the historical thoughts.

In this case, we have no right to follow the medieval interpretation. The term "Varangians" was supposedly introduced in *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century as a mean to distinguish between different groups of the Scandinavians penetrated in Eastern Europe in the

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<sup>40</sup> *The Gothic period of Russia in particular forms but a chapter of the Norman conquests. As the empire of Charlemagne precedes the foundation of modern France, Germany, and Italy, so the empire of the Riuriks precedes the foundation of Poland, Lithuania, the Baltic Settlements, Turkey and Muscovy itself*, Marx 1987, pp. 75-76.

<sup>41</sup> See on the hypothesis: Korolyuk 1985.

<sup>42</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 59 (6370 [862]).

8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century known in Byzantium, Arabic countries and Western Europe under their exonym 'Rus'/Rhôs', from the one hand, and in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century, from the other hand, the Varangians *par excellence*<sup>43</sup>.

The scholars have already noted the so-called polyseme of the term 'Rus'/Rhôs' in the early medieval texts<sup>44</sup>. The Scandinavian names of the elite in *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* were accompanied in material culture by new elements unknown to Scandinavia and being broadly in use among Slavonic tribes in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. As far as we can imagine, the very active and fast enough process of acculturation, not assimilation of the Scandinavian settlers in Eastern Europe ended by the formation of a new ethnic-social group known from the medieval sources as 'Rus'/Rhôs'. That did not allow to be agreed to the statements that the Norman state in Russia rather resembled the great merchant enterprises of 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, such as the East India or Hudson's Bay companies, founded to make money and compelled by the absence of any administration in the area of their operations to assume quasi-governmental responsibilities, which had been proposed by R. Pipes<sup>45</sup> and then borrowed by A. Tolochko who even did refer to the 'father' of that idea<sup>46</sup>, or accept that until the 11<sup>th</sup> century the word Rus' still referred to Scandinavians and was then replaced by the word Varangians while the Scandinavian identity of the group had been kept<sup>47</sup>.

This historical process within the Scandinavian presence in Eastern Europe can be regarded as double acculturation<sup>48</sup>. I propose to understand in this way the information of *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* sub anno 882 that argues: *Oleg set himself up as prince in Kiev, and declared that it should be the mother [metropolis] of Russian [Rus'] cities. The Varangians, Slavs, and others who accompanied him were called Russes [Rus']*<sup>49</sup>. Firstly we can attest the Rus' as a result of the acculturation of the Scandinavians in the local Slavonic or Finno-Ugrian milieu, and secondly, the Rus' itself acculturated mainly with the eastern Polans, a Slavonic tribe around Kiev who accepted to be called with imposed name Rus'<sup>50</sup>. The difficult and various relations between the Rus' and the Slaves reported by Arabic writers (Ahmad Ibn Rustah, Al-Muqaddasi,

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<sup>43</sup> Melnikova, Petrukhin 1994.

<sup>44</sup> Melnikova, Petrukhin 1991.

<sup>45</sup> Pipes 1974, p. 30.

<sup>46</sup> Tolochko 2001, p. 131; Tolochko 2015 and Musin 2016a .

<sup>47</sup> Androshchuk 2008, p. 533.

<sup>48</sup> Musin 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 61.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem, p. 62 (6406 [898]): *the Polyanians, the last of whom are now called Russes.*

Abu Sa'id Gardezi)<sup>51</sup> and became a commonplace of Arabic sources should be regarded as one of the first episodes of such interaction and acculturation or concerned with the relation of the Polans to other Slaves.

Most probably the form of exonym 'Rus'-Rhôs' derived from ancient Northern German *rōts-/drōts* (oarsman). The term firstly could be a self-designation of groups of the Scandinavians that penetrated to the North of Eastern Europe and then borrowed by the local Finish tribes under the form *ruotsi*; later it had been transmitted to the Slaves who adopted it under the form 'Rous'<sup>52</sup>. In the same 'exonymic' way Liutprand of Cremona, in the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, used the name *Nordmannos* for designing the Russes (*Rusios, quos alio nos nomine Nordmannos apellamus*), with simple reference to the region from where they came to the Mediterranean (*a positione loci*): *lingua quippe Teutonum >nôrd< aquilo, >man< autem dicitur homo, unde est Nordmannos >aquilonares hominess< dicere possumus*<sup>53</sup>.

Evidently, from the very beginning the word 'Rus'' had had a meaning of the consolidation of the local community and that of exonym that served to unify and consolidated the society, and as we will see it kept such function during all its history. In the present context, it should be noted here that this 'tool' had been used in the early medieval period only for internal social proposes within the relatively closed community. One of main ideas of *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* was that the Slavonic tribes which became known as 'Rus'' were still speaking the Slavonic language<sup>54</sup>. It should be stressed that in the legal code of Kievan Rus' of the 11<sup>th</sup> century *Pravda Ruskaya* (*Ruthenian Justice* or *Rus' Truth [Law]*) the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph opposed the Russes (*Rusin*) and the Slaves (*Slovianin*) as two different social groups<sup>55</sup>. It is worth noting here that the term 'rusin/ruthen' broadly used in Eastern Europe in Late Middle Ages was a kind of *socionym* with clear defined meaning linked to the jurisdiction and protection of the princely power.

The leading position of the "Slavonic-shaped" Northmans in the 10<sup>th</sup> century in the Middle Dnieper region opposed the local Slaves – Polans and different Slavonic tribes of Eastern

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<sup>51</sup> See the following editions: Ibn Rustah 1892; Al-Muqaddasi 1994; Garkavi 1870, pp. 267, 283; Bartold 1973, p. 60.

<sup>52</sup> Thomsen 1877.

<sup>53</sup> Liutprand 1998, pp. 10 [1.11], 131 [5.15]).

<sup>54</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 63 (6406 [898]). See the Slavonic text: *Словѣнескъ азыкѣ и Рускыи одинъ. от Варягъ бо прозваиася Русью а първъге бѣиша Словѣне . аще и Полане захуся. но Словѣнская рѣчь бѣ Полами же прозваиася занеже в полгъ стѣдху азыкѣ Словѣнскыи бѣ имѣ един, Ipat'evskaya letopis 1908, col. 28-29.*

<sup>55</sup> *If a man kills a man: then a brother avenges a brother, or a son avenges a father, or a cousin, or a nephew; if no one takes revenge, then 80 >grivnas< for the murdered; if he is a knyaz's man or knyaz's official, if he is a >rusin<, or a grid', or a merchant, or a boyar's official, or a mechnik (swordsman), or an exile, or a >slovenin<, then 40 grivnas for the murdered, Kaiser 1992, pp. 20-34.*

Europe: the Drevlyans, Radimichs, Drehovians, Severians, and Volhynians, known from *the Primary Rus' Chronicles*. The opposition of Kiev as 'Rus' Land' (*Rus'kaya Zemlya*) and other territories led to the one important consequence for Eastern Europe. I would like to stress that according to the existed sources, especially chronicles the population of other Lands of Eastern Europe than Kiev region - Volhynia, Novgorod and even Vladimir-Suzdal Land, the future Muscovy, did not regard and call themselves as the Rus' until the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century and showed other identities<sup>56</sup>. Initially, the value of the concept of owns 'land' was the mental domination of the regional identity. However, as we will see, later the concept of the 'Rus' Land' dominated in *the Chronicle* replaced step by step local identities of Eastern European regions and values orientation appropriated to them.

In fact, the name 'the Rus'' and 'the Russes' (the Russines) during medieval period were very unstable and ambiguous terms with polysemic meaning. As it has been stressed it served as a mean of acculturation, an instrument of the social consolidation and construction of the past within the idea of common origin. In this process the term Rus' with its original ethnic-social meaning was replaced in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the other one – 'Russia/Russian' (Rossiya/Rossiyane) with the sense of specific nation and national state. This process had its history. Sometimes the contemporary scholars use the terms 'the Russia' and 'the Russians' for describing the entire of population of medieval Eastern Europe and the polity existed here during Middle Ages. Such terminology can not be regarded as academically correct. This term- 'umbrella' creates a wrong historical perspective, confused different linguistic, ethnic and cultural traditions, intensifies modern political troubles and reinforces the corrupted perception of history in the mass consciousness. As historical sources show, these terms could be applied only to the political organization of the Muscovite State and its population since the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>57</sup>.

In the same time the early medieval East European polities of the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century that is difficult to classify as 'politically organized states' existed in the dynamic multiethnic surrounding and were penetrated by various forms of transcontinental interaction. Such complicated landscape needed to be organized in the perception of the local population. We

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<sup>56</sup> See for example: *The same year the whole Russian Land [Ruskaya zemlya] went against Galich, they devastated much of their province, but took not one town, and returned, and they went also from Novgorod with Voyevoda Nerevin to help the people of Kiev; Nifont, Vladyka [Bishop] of Novgorod, went into Russia [Rus'], summoned by Izyaslav and Klim the Metropolitan*, Michell, Forbes 1914, pp.18 (6653 [1145]), 20 (6657[1149]). See also: Paszkiewicz 1954; Paszkiewicz 1963; Paszkiewicz 1996, pp. 10-14, 367-369.

<sup>57</sup> For the use of such terms see for example: Kloss 2012, with exhaustive bibliography. Critical remarks in the review of Grishchenko 2013; See also: Grishchenko 2014.

should concentrate on the narrative and other means of such spatial organizing, their changes in the history and their impact on the self-identity and self-conscious, especially in medieval Russia.

### 3.2. Ethno-geographic narrative in *the Primary Rus' Chronicle*

Nicolai Karamzin was not the one who refuses to make any differences between the Rus' and Russia, the Russes and the Russians. In a modern publications in English on the medieval history of Eastern Europe, the term 'Russia' has been applied to the different parts of the continent without any hesitation in order to indicate the first common state of the Eastern Slavs, created around Kiev in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In turn, the 'Eastern Slavs' serves to indicate the inhabitants of 'Russia', the so called common ancestors of modern-day Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians<sup>58</sup> according to the concept born in the Soviet historiography of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but fitted well to the late medieval muscovite perception of the past. The modern researchers should find and discuss other terms to describe the early medieval realities of Eastern European realm. It explains why I prefer to use in the text the term 'Primary Rus' Chronicle' for the first annalistic experience of Early Rus' instead of the traditional 'the Primary Russian Chronicle'.

At the beginning of the Russian ethnic narrative, we find the ethnic-geographical account of the Primary Rus' Chronicle modeled according to biblical example at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It can be characterized as a general introduction in the *orbis gentium* situation which reveals neutral enough attitude of the chronicler (and society?) towards different ethnos and tribes lived at the periphery of Eastern Europe. Such account includes short descriptions of their history where the Slavonic tribes have been presented as migrants when other ethnos were supposed to be an autochthonic population.

In fact, it is not a description of the borderline realm, this account, divided into several parts, sometimes with repetition makes an impression of an open space penetrated by different types of contacts: political, commercial, tributary, etc.<sup>59</sup> We can read in *the Chronicle* the following, and I prefer to cite here these passages completely:

*In the share of Japheth lies Rus', Chud', and all the gentiles: Merya, Muroma, Ves', Mordva, Chud' beyond the portages, Perm', Pechera, Yam', Ugra, Litva, Zimegola, Kors', Letgola, and Liv'. The Lyakhs, the Prussians, and Chud' border on the Varangian Sea. The Varangians dwell*

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<sup>58</sup> See, for example, the study published in French, Mund 2003. Of course, it is not the unique example which gives corrupted perception of the early East European history.

<sup>59</sup> See on te subject: Melnikova 2013.



on the shores of that same sea and extend to the eastward as far as the portion of Shem. They likewise live to the west beside this sea as far as the land of the English and the French. For the following nations also are a part of the race of Japheth: the Varangians, the Swedes, the Normans, the Gotlanders, the Russes, the English, the Spaniards, the Italians, the Romans, the Germans, the French, the Venetians, the Genoese, and so on. Their homes are situated in the northwest, and adjoin the Hamitic tribes.... Among these same Slavs are included the White Croats, the Serbs, and the Carinthians. For when the Vlakhs attacked the Danubian Slavs, settled among them, and did them violence, the latter came and made their homes by the Vistula, and were then called Lyakhs. Of these same Lyakhs, some were called Polyanians, some Lutichians, some Mazovians, and still others Pomorians.... At Beloozero are situated the Ves', and on the lake of Rostov, the Merya, and on Lake Kleshchino the Merya also. Along the river Oka (which flows into the Volga), the Muroma, the Cheremisians, and the Mordva preserve their native languages (...). The following are other tribes which pay tribute to Rus': Chud', Merya, Ves', Muroma, Cheremis', Mordva, Perm', Pechera, Yam', Litva, Zimegola, Kors', Narva, and Liv'. These tribes have their languages and belong to the race of Japheth, which inhabits the lands of the north<sup>60</sup>.

Such nearly indifferent enumeration did not allow understanding at once the real attitude of the Kievan chronicler and its values orientation towards non-East Slavonic ethnos(es). At first glance this enumeration is similar to the list of East Slavonic tribes which settled in Eastern Europe and had a difficult relationship to the Rus'. It is quite probable that *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* used the term 'Rus'' as *pars pro toto* for describing the general relationship between the Slaves and other ethnos. As the chronicle states, this relationship in several cases was tributary that involved no element of administrative control.

### 3.3. Multiethnicity and Christianity: 'peaceful coexistence' versus *amicitia*

It is interesting to compare this observation to the statement by Henry of Livonia in his *Cronicon Livoniae* of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the description of the events of 1212 A.D., especially the negotiating of the Prince of Polotsk Vladimir with Albert, the Bishop of Riga, he reproaches the Russes that they were more interested in taxes and fees from the Livonians as an expression of political subjection than the conversion of the local pagan population into Christianity<sup>61</sup>. Of

<sup>60</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 52, 53, 55 [sine anno].

<sup>61</sup> *Rex interim de Plosceke mittens vocavit episcopum, diem prefigens et locum, ut ad presenciam ipsius apud Gercide de Lyvonibus quondam sibi tributaries responsurus veniat (...). Est enim consuetudo regum Ruthenorum, ut*

course, it is possible to regard such statement as a usual preaching topic of the medieval Latin literature; for example, according to Adam of Bremen, the King of Dannemark made the same reproach to the Saxons who did not care about the conversion of the pagan Western Slaves<sup>62</sup>. The similar ideas can be found in the letter of 769 A.D. by Alcuin of York<sup>63</sup>.

However, in that case, we can regard such information of Henry of Livonia that shows the completely indifferent attitude towards the pagan tribes as reliable. In the Primary Rus' Chronicle were no signs of the concept of *amicitia* that was a real medieval value in Latin Europe. Such idea of the cohesion and coexistence is well known, for example, from *Res Gestae Saxonicarum* by Widukind of Corvey (circa 925-after 973) where he argued that the Saxons, former allies and friends of the Franks, became brothers with them and as if one gens as a result of Christianity (*fratres et quasi una gens ex Christiana fide*). This process had been accomplished by the Franks with all possible means partly by delicate persuasion partly by military forces<sup>64</sup> and ended in *amicitia*<sup>65</sup>. As scholars think such *modus vivendi* obliged different social and ethnic communities for mutual aid and formed politically integrated groups<sup>66</sup>. In fact, the attitude of the Rus' community towards their neighbors did not comprise any active communication that should lead to changes in political status and religious culture. We can suggest that there were two separated worlds with parallel existence penetrated by economic, commercial and tributary interests which formed a special values orientation based on the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. In other words, *amicitia* did not enter in the values orientation of the East Christian society that should be put in parallel with the quasi-absence of organised missionary activity and special missions from Constantinople in the middle-Byzantine period: the Rhomaïos did not regard the barbarians as equal and skeptically

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*quamcunque gentem expugnaverint, non fidei c Christiane subicere, sed ad solvendum sibi tributum et pecuniam subiugare*, Heinricus 1955, pp. 102-104 (III.16:2 [A.D. 1212]). See also: Enrico di Lettonia 2005, pp. 192-194.

<sup>62</sup> *Audivi etiam, cum veracissimus rex Danorum [Sweyn II Estridsson] sermocinando eadem replicaret, populos Sclavorum iam dudum procul dubio facile converti posse ad christianitatem, nisi obstitisset avaricia Saxonum: >Quibus<, inquit, >mens pronior est ad pensionem vectigalium, quam ad conversionem gentilium<. Nec attendunt miseri, quam magnum periculum suae cupiditatis luant, qui christianitatem in Sclavania inprimo per avariciam turbabant, deinde per crudelitatem subiectos ad rebellandum coegerunt, et nunc salutem eorum qui vellent credere, pecuniam solam exigendo, contempnunt*, Adam von Bremen 1917, p. 166 (III. 23 [22]). I thank here Dr Robert Spirgis, colleague from Riga, Latvia, who attired my attention to this passage.

<sup>63</sup> *Si tanta instantia leve Christi iugum et onus suave durissimo Saxonum populo praedicaretur, quanta decimarum reddito vel legalis proparvissimis quibuslibet culpae edicti necessitas exigebatur, forte baptismatis sacramenta non abhorrent. Sint tandem aliquando doctores fidei apostolicis eruditi exemplis; sint praedicatores, non praedatores*, Alcuini Epistolae 1895, 164, No 113. *Alcuinus Megenfridum arcarium regium hortatur, admoneat Carolum regem, ut mites abstinentesque sacerdotes paganis ad Christi fidem convertendis mittem. Nam Saxones propter decimas et legume rigorem cristianitatem aversari. Monet etiam, ne ecclesiis praeficiantur sacerdotes vicariis utentes*, ibidem, p. 161, No 111.

<sup>64</sup> *(Saxones) ob id qui olim socii et amici erat Francorum iam fratres et quasi una gens ex Christiana fide, veluti modo videmus, facta est (...) nunc blanda suasioni, nunc bellorum impetus*. Widukind 1935, p. 24 (I.15). See also for the subject: Harris 2003.

<sup>65</sup> *Socii quoque Francorum et amici appellati*, Widukind 1935, p. 22 (I. 1).

<sup>66</sup> Pleszczyński 2011, pp. 51, 56 ff.

accepted an idea of their conversion in ‘Greek faith’<sup>67</sup>. The Russes, in their turn, could regard themselves as ‘new Rhomaîos, and until the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century did not make any efforts to convert their pagan neighbors into ‘Russian faith’ through organized missions which were regarded sometimes as ‘impossible’.

### 3.4. Novgorod: evidence of everyday life culture on the multiethnic relations

The comparable picture can be observed in the information of the other kind of sources that reflected not a narrative but the realities of everyday life - the birch bark document of the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> – first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century first of all from Novgorod<sup>68</sup>:

| Name of ethnos or land                                       | Name in Cyrillic              | No of document       | Chronology  |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Bulgarians   | Булгар, болгарский            | 288                  | the first half of the 14 <sup>th</sup> century  |
| Varangians   | Варяг, варяжский              | 851, 1065            | mid of the 12 <sup>th</sup> century, first half of the 13 <sup>th</sup> century                         |
| Livonians  | Лив, либь                     | 776, 1035            | mid-second half of the 12 <sup>th</sup> century   |
| Lithuanians  | Литва, литвин                 | 283, 590             | the second half of the 11 <sup>th</sup> century, the second half of the 14 <sup>th</sup> century        |
| <i>Nemtsy</i> (Germans or foreigners <i>par excellence</i> ) | Немец, немецкий               | 3, 25, 44, 248, 282, | the second half of the 14 <sup>th</sup> century, turn of the 14 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> century |
| Poles (Lyakh)  | Лях                           | 1033                 | the second half of the 12 <sup>th</sup> century   |
| Carelians  | Корела, корелянин, корельский | 248, 590             | turn of the 14 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> century  |
| Kolbiags   | Колбяг                        | 222                  | turn of the 12 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> century  |
| Sami   | Лопь                          | 248, 249             | turn of the 14 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> century  |
| Obdora (Khanty)  | Обдора                        | 365                  | the second half of the 14 <sup>th</sup> century   |
| Rus’   | Русь                          | 105                  | the beginning of the 12 <sup>th</sup> century   |

<sup>67</sup> Ivanov 2008. For the discussion see: Salamon 2012.

<sup>68</sup> Zaliznyak 2004.

As it has been shown in the table above, these texts nearly neglected the multi-ethnic surrounding of the Land of Novgorod despite the intensive commercial and political contacts known from the chronicles and other documents. Even the name of Rus' as a Dnieper region had been mentioned there only one time at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. From 34 ethnos known in *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* birch bark documents report only seven ethnonyms, another four could be found together in letters and the late *Novgorodian Chronicle* of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. In paradox manner, the documents which mention different ethnos (Nos 288, 248, 249 283, 282) have been yielded from the excavation of the one and same urban parcel and have been discovered in the same archaeological context of the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> – turn of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. Such situation shows that the medieval society in Novgorod as a whole did not seem interested in its multi-ethnic surrounding and did not involve actively in the inter-ethnic relationship. The main contacts were headed by the limited community of Novgorodian merchants.

However, the relations of different ethnos had been reflected in the material culture and everyday life contacts that was the ground where the mutual acculturation as a mean of cohesion had a place. I can mention here the examples of birch bark documents written in Carelian and Latin<sup>69</sup>. We know enough about the presence of European especially German community in Novgorod - Peterhof, however, material examples of cultural transfer could be seen only through the archaeological evidences<sup>70</sup>, which do not make a subject of the present article.

### 3.5. Diplomatic practices or biblical examples? Foreign relations in *the Primary Rus' Chronicle*

The information mentioned above is related to the inter-ethnic relationship in everyday life. In *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* such 'peaceful coexistence' was added to the image of the political wisdom of the Rus' Princes. According to the text, Prince Vladimir the Saint *lived at peace with the neighboring Princes, Boleslav, Stephen, and Udalrich, and there where amity and friendship among them*<sup>71</sup>. Evidently, the chronicler meant here Boleslaw the Brave (Chrobry) of Poland (992-1025); St. Stephen I of Hungary (997-1038); and Udalrich of Bohemia (1012-1034) and regards the peace as an important part of values orientation.

Of course, the representation of Vladimir through the biblical example of King Salomon is one of the elements of medieval narrative. In that case the history of the 'peaceful coexistence' had

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<sup>69</sup> Musin, Berthelot 2011, p. 38.

<sup>70</sup> See on the subject: Rybina 1992; Rybina 2001.

<sup>71</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 122 (6504 [996]).

been written after biblical books: 1 Kings, 4: 24-25 (*For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, (...) over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him and Judah, and Israel dwelt safely*) and 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles, 22: 9 (*for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days*).

It is interesting to note that the idea of peaceful coexistence of the Prince Vladimir the Saint and neighboring countries is challenged by two contemporary pieces of evidence of the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century: *Epistola Brunonis ad Henricum regem* and *Chronicon Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi*. Bruno of Querfurt informs us about the peace between Rus', and the Pechenegs established thanks to his efforts:

*We made peace which, as they [the Pechenegs] said, no one could have accomplished except us: >This peace<, they said, >happened to you; if it remains firm, as you teach, we shall all freely be Christians; but if that lord of the Rus' wavers in his faith, we must think only of war, not of Christianity<. With this arrangement, I came to the lord of the Rus', who, giving satisfaction for God's sake, offered his son as a hostage<sup>72</sup>.*

In this story, the real peacemaker was Bruno of Querfurt, not Prince Vladimir himself. Thietmar, in his turn, states that the name of Vladimir had been wrongly interpreted to mean *power of peace* (*potestas pacis*; VII: 73):

*Indeed that which the impious hold among themselves or the occupants of this world possess is no true peace it constantly changes. True peace is attained only by one who lays aside the soul's every passion and seeks the Kingdom of God with the aid of patience which conquers every obstacle<sup>73</sup>.*

As I had proposed some years ago, Thietmar could use an oral information on Kievan Rus' from his *conscolasticus* Bruno who visited prince Vladimir in 1008/1009 A.D. as one of the sources for his writing<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>72</sup> *Circiter triginta animas christianitate facta, in digito Dei fecimus pacem, quam, ut illi dixerunt, nemo preter nos facere posset. >Hec pax, inquit, per te facta est. Si firma erit, sicut doces, omnes libenter erimus christiani. Si ille senior Ruzorum in fide titubaverit, debemus tantum intendere bello, non de christianitate<. Hac ratione perveni ad seniore[m] Ruzorum, qui satisfaciens propter Dominum dedit obsidem filium, Epistola Brunonis 1973, p. #.*

<sup>73</sup> *Prefati vero regis nomen potestas pacis iniuste interpretatur; quia non illa, quam aut impii invicem tenent vel habitatores huius mundi possident, quia [semper] nutat, pax vera dicitur, sed ille solus ea specialiter utitur, qui omnem animi suimet motum componens, regnum Dei paciencie vincentis angustia solacio promeretur, Thietmar 1935, p. 489 (VII: 73). The English translation see: Warner 2001.*

<sup>74</sup> Musin (in print); Musin 2016.

Even if the 'peaceful' model of *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* follows the biblical example, such narrative should be regarded as very motivating and could influence the attitude and values orientation of the medieval population of the Rus' towards neighboring countries. Additionally, I would like to draw the attention of readers to the principle differences between biblical narrative and the passage of the Chronicle. In the first case the ancient author stresses the idea of the domination of King Salomon over surrounding countries: he *had dominion over all the region and overall the kings* that is strange to Early Rus' attitude. Such observation will be important in the study later when I deal with the shift in values orientation from the Kievan period to Muscovite time for estimating the ideological sources of new values orientation.

Additionally, in the hagiography and canon law text of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, we can find another aspect of ethnic perception in Eastern Europe. The ethnic terms began to describe confessional and religious boundaries with the Latin civilization. For example, a priest of Latin Church in Novgorod was indicated as *Varangian pope*<sup>75</sup>, and the evil spirit described in the form of a *Lyakh*, i.e., a Pole recognized because of his special robe<sup>76</sup>. So, the social functions of ethnic terms started to change, and they could absorb new meaning including confessional that shows us the beginning the shift in values orientation.

Such moving of the terms from their native area of application to another can be indicated in East European attitude towards the Poles. *The Novgorodian Chronicle* applied for them a stereotypic image that earlier and in other cultural situation was applied only to one ethnos. So, in the description of the events of the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, *the Primary Rus' Chronicles* stated that the Greeks made a proposition for the Prince Svyatoslav Igorevich *to deceive the Russes, for the Greeks are crafty even to the present day*. Two hundred years later Novgorodian chronicler wrote about the relationship between Poland and Galich-Volhynia Land: *The King of Cracow with a large force seized the country of Volynia (Zemlya Volynskaya) by deceit* (i.e. because they were crafty – A.M.)<sup>77</sup>. Such artificial migration of a term can be spectacular for the change in the ethnic dictionary of the period. I believe that the accusation of the Greek in deceit or craft could be linked to the concept of *fallacia grecorum* accepted from the Latin culture. However, it is interesting to see how this concept initially predestinated to describe an eastern people change its cultural and geographical orientation.

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<sup>75</sup> Voprosy 1880, p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, p. 160 [6582 (1074)]. See also: Nodzyńska 1993, p. 206; Sielicki 2005. Such kind of the 'westernisation' of evil can be observed in the Polish medieval texts where the demon was presented as a German. I thank Prof. A. Pleszczyński who makes me paying attention to the subject.

<sup>77</sup> Novgorodskaya pervaya letopis 1950, p. 316; Michell, Forbes 1914, p. 143 (1349 [6857]).

In general, such indications are not very numerous, that allow us to pass immediately to the main medieval concept of Eastern Europe – its ‘lands’.

#### 4. The Rus’ Land as *omphalos mundi* and ‘lieu de memoires’: its place in the medieval values orientation and their changes

In general for the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century Rus’ we can attest a special idea in chronicles that organizes the values orientation of Eastern European population especially that of Rus’ Land in the Middle Dnieper area concerning its multiethnic borderlands: peaceful and parallel coexistence. In fact, the chronicler who settled in Kiev as in *omphalos mundi* described different ‘overlapping circles’<sup>78</sup> of ethnic character far around from Rus’ Land.

##### 4.1. Rus’ Land in the Early Middle Ages and the modern historiography

As it has been noted the Rus’ Land initially included only the core possessions of the Rurikids princes in the Middle Dnieper region – Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereiaslav territories. I have already stressed this Rus’ Land had a different relationship to the different territories of Eastern Europe settled by the Slaves and only through them - to the other ethnos existed *ad marginem*. As the chronicle states, this relationship was tributary that involved no element of administrative control.

In the same time, in their international relations, different principalities of Eastern Europe used the term ‘the Rus’ and ‘the Ruses/ Rus(s)ins’ as a special juridical term, accepted in Rus’ Pravda for describing their subjects in the medieval international law (see above). As we know, the international treaties of Smolensk with Riga and Gotland of the first quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> century protected every person from Eastern Europe under the jurisdiction of the Rurikids as ‘the Russines’<sup>79</sup> in spite of the fact that Smolensk did not belong to the Rus’ Land *sensu stricto*. In similar way, a native of Western Europe who became a member of an East European urban community could be officially named as Ruthen/Rusin (for example, Bertram Ruthenus, the member of *universitas civitatis ladimiriensis*, Volhynia, in 1324 A.D.)<sup>80</sup>. In other words, different parts of Eastern Europe under the Rurikids control and their settlers presented themselves as the Ruses and had been regarded as the Ruses in the international contacts. In the

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<sup>78</sup> See on the conception: Winston Churchill’s Fulton (or ‘Iron Curtain’) Speech (1946) and Shepard 2006.

<sup>79</sup> Sumnikova 1963, pp. 10-13.

<sup>80</sup> Kupchinskiy 2004, pp. 165-166, No 7.

same period of the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century the population of the Galician-Volhynian Land also increasingly began to figure in different texts not as Galicians, Volodymyrians or Peremyshlians but as men of Rus', especially when they were mentioned along with actual 'foreigners', the Poles and Hungarians who from their part started permanently to call them 'Rutheni/Rusiny/Rus''<sup>81</sup>.

#### 4.2. The terms Rus' and Ruthenia as exonyms for the borderline realm between Eastern and Central Europe

Such kind of identification was also known in Hungarian and Polish tradition for the borderline population of Eastern Europe. Even if the Hungarian kings Bella in 1189 and Andre in 1205 called themselves respectively *Galaciae Rex* or *Galitiae Lodomeriaeque Rex*, they undertook *expeditionem in Russiam* (1188), *in Ruthenia* (1264) or *exercitu contra Ruthenos* (1205-1245)<sup>82</sup>, when they picked a fight with Galician-Volhynian Land. I can propose only one explanation: the territory of Galicia and Volhynia that were not Rus' *sensu stricto* had been ruled by the Rurikids dynasty which was associated in the mental map<sup>83</sup> within Rus' Land and Kiev. In fact for the local population the term Rutheni/Rusiny was a typical exonym, which was accepted as self-designation only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and later. It can be compared to the historical situation when many immigrants from different provinces of the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union to the Europe and United States in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century have thus been officially enumerated as 'Russians' or are popularly considered as Russians by the general populace despite their correct ethnic origins.

#### 4.3. *Translatio imperii Russiae?*

Why and when the situation in the borderline realm changes or as Serhey Plokhy asked in his book: What happened to the Rus' Land?<sup>84</sup> Now, I must give a short introduction to the historiography of the concept Rus' Land. The investigators of *the Primary Rus' Chronicle* thought long ago that its author referred to the Rus' Land in 'narrow' and 'broad' senses. As it has been noted earlier the first included the Middle Dnieper region. The Rus' Land in the 'broad' sense extended to the farthest regions under the Rurikids control, in other words, all Eastern Europe. The historians are divided on which came first, the 'narrow' or the 'broad' concept of

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<sup>81</sup> Plokhy 2006, p. 61.

<sup>82</sup> See on the use of the terms: Khoroshkevich 1976; Font 1997; Gardi 2005.

<sup>83</sup> See on the concept: Downs, Stea 1977.

<sup>84</sup> Plokhy 2006, p. 59.



the Rus' Land. So, A. Nasonov supposed that in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup>-beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the 'broad' idea of the Rus' Land already existed, and Eastern Europe presented in that time the unified state territory of the Rurikids with universally exercised public power and tax collection<sup>85</sup>. Today it is obvious that the term was originally used firstly about the Southern part of Eastern Europe and only later extended to other territories especially Galicia and Volhynia and Vladimir and Suzdal Land and Muscovy, which led to the creation of the medieval concept of Rus' Land in 'broad' sense<sup>86</sup>.

In fact, we have a kind of *translatio imperii* as a mean of the appropriation and dividing of Kievan heritage between Galich-Volhynia and Vladimir-Suzdal. I partially agree with S. Plokhy in his polemic to Ch. Halperin who stated that the Galician-Volhynian elites and their neighbors to the west begin to think of this land as a part of Rus' only after the Kievan state had succumbed to the Mongol invasion, and process of its identification with Rus' was fully completed during the post-Kievan Rus' period.

However, he supposes that the Galician-Volhynian princes extended the concept of Rus' to their entire realm including the initial patrimony only when they took possession of parts of the traditional Rus' Land around Kiev in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. He also argues that in this historical competition can be attested that Galicia and Volhynia adopted this name earlier than Vladimir and Muscovy that is reflected in the text of Galich-Volynia Chronicle compiled at the end of 1240s-1260s. As for transfer the Rus' name to the Vladimir-Suzdal principality, according to him and C. Halperin, it happened not before the Galician-Volhynian princes had appropriated Kievan 'brand'<sup>87</sup>.

Let's regard the idea of Ch. Halperin. According to him, the name of the Rus' Land was adopted in Northeastern Lands of Eastern Europe sometime between 1293 and 1328, with the process fully complete by 1340<sup>88</sup>. However, S. Plokhy thinks that the end of *translatio* should be shifted by a hundred years, to the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. The process could not be finished before the Kulikovo battle cycle of texts had been formed around 1440-1450, and Ch. Halperin, in his

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<sup>85</sup> Nasonov 1951, pp. 6, 26-27.

<sup>86</sup> See for the discussion: Soloviev 1966; Kuchkin 1995; Vedyushkina 1995. The modern Russian historiography continues to insist on the primordality of the 'broad' sense of the Rus' Land with strict ethnic or ethno-religious connotations mainly for traditional and/or political reasons. This position usually must justify the Russian 'privatization' of Eastern Europe.

<sup>87</sup> Plokhy 2006, pp. 67-68.

<sup>88</sup> See for the discussion: Halperin 1975; Halperin 1976; Halperin 1981; Pritsak 1986. The author used the term 'translatio', however, he did not speak about 'translatio imperii' which was a special point of medieval political mentality.

mind, wrongly used the late predominantly 15<sup>th</sup>-century Muscovite point of view on the events of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Vladimir-Suzdal Land<sup>89</sup>.

S. Ploky is partially right that the political and intellectual ancestor of Muscovy was not 11<sup>th</sup> century Kiev, but 12<sup>th</sup> century Suzdal, and the Suzdal Land was its immediate forerunner of the notion of the Rus' Land<sup>90</sup>. However, he thinks, that the author of the so-called *Laurentian Codex* (1371) was much slower than their Galician-Volhynian counterparts to apply the term 'Rus' Land' to their realm. In fact, such observations ignore several aspects how the Vladimir-Suzdal Land i. e. North-East part of Eastern Europe became Rus' Land. For example, elements of such 'translatio' when Rostov Land was named in the chronicle the Rus' Land can be observed already in the 1180s<sup>91</sup>.

In fact, and both researchers have reasons, it was a long and complicated process. However, around 1340 the Muscovite princes finally adopt the role of the sovereigns who ruled the new Rus' Land. As we can judge according to existing sources at this moment, such concept did not yet comprise any claims for the territory of Kiev submitted to the Lithuanian princes since 1320s. Nevertheless, in the study of the process of the transformation of the Muscovy and its society in new Rus' Land a distinction must be made between the official government position as an expression of the cultural memory, from the one hand, and social mentality and public opinion as collective memory, from the other hand. The later, as we will see, had formed only in the mid-second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century not without the influence of the cultural memory shaped by the muscovite Rurikids. In my opinion, the faster process of adaptation of the 'translatio' in the Galich-Volhynia Land should be explained by the long history of the external use of the exonym 'Rutheni' and 'Ruthenia' that had been applied to this territory and population by their western neighbors.

After this brief survey, in my turn, I should try to answer the question how the Moscow-ruled 'new Rus' Land' replaced the notion of the Kiev-based one, and how its new geographical limits and the central status of that notion within the hierarchy of Muscovite loyalties<sup>92</sup> had been grown.

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<sup>89</sup> Ploky 2006, p. 70.

<sup>90</sup> Ibidem, p. 75.

<sup>91</sup> Lavrent'evskaya letopis 1962, col. 391 [6693 (1185)].

<sup>92</sup> The questions have been asked in: Ploky 2006, pp. 72, 73.

## 5. Shift in values orientation concerning Rus' Land and surrounding ethnos in the Muscovite society

In the discussion on the historical evidences about the 'translatio' of the concept of the Rus' Land from the Dnieper to the Moscow River the researchers generally follows the stable selection of sources, which excludes the data provided by the *Slovo o pogibeli Russkoi zemli*, which it seems to be compiled, according to several scholars, out of the Vladimir-Suzdal Land. However, nobody expresses any doubts on the chronology of the text which is usually regarded as written in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. In my opinion, the destiny of the concept of Rus' Land in the Muscovy and its consequences for axiological basic of international relationship in the Eastern and Central Europe can be understood through the analysis of the *Slovo o pogibeli Russkoi zemli* which serves as an introduction to the *Life of Alexander Nevsky* († 1263) and has been preserved only in two copies of the end 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century, and evidently composed in the region of Pskov<sup>93</sup> not earlier than the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

In both separate copies of the introduction to the *Life of Alexander Nevsky* this text appears with its title – the *Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land*, and stylistically it is very close to the text of the *Vita*<sup>94</sup>. This introduction has been considered by some scholars without sufficient grounds, as the beginning of the lost monument *The Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' (Russian) Land* or *The Lay of the Destruction the Russian Land*<sup>95</sup> and regarded as *perhaps the highest achievement of Russian literature of the early Mongols period*<sup>96</sup>.

I must stress that this text does not exist separately from the *Vita*, and there is no any serious study of the date of the compiling of the text. In fact, the *Tale* is a kind of 'sacred cow' of the Russian cultural memory like the *Tale of Igor's Campaign (Slovo o polku Igoreve)*, and nobody dares to suggest any critical remarks about this 'lieu de mémoire'. In fact, such attitude towards the medieval text had been formed only in the late 1940s when the second manuscript was published<sup>97</sup>. Alexander Nevsky was regarded as a military symbol of Stalin's era, and the introduction to his *Vita* had been transformed into a separate masterpiece and became a part of

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<sup>93</sup> One manuscript came from the collection of the Pskov-Caves Monastery in Pechory (Pskov Oblast, Russia), known since 1891, now in the State Archive of the Pskov region, Pskov (collection 449, act 60, 15<sup>th</sup> century), second, known since 1933 –from the manuscripts collection of Old Believers Grebenstchikov House of Prayer in Riga, Latvia (now in the Institute of the Russian Literature, St Petersburg, razryad IV, collection 24, act 26, 16<sup>th</sup> century). The discussion see: Loparev 1892; Mansikka 1913, pp. 7, 9-11; Serebryanskiy 1910; Serebryanskiy 1915.

<sup>94</sup> Ciževskij 1960, p. 138

<sup>95</sup> See for the discussion: Gorlin 1947; Soloviev 1953; Werner 1957.

<sup>96</sup> Vernadsky 1969, p. 189. See the last Russian publication with nearly exhaustive bibliography which discuss different subjects within the *Tale* except its real chronology : Gorskiy 1990.

<sup>97</sup> Malyshev 1947.

new Soviet pride aside the myth of the Great Patriotic War. The triumphal aggressive rhetoric of the text fitted well to the official vocabulary of the epoch. It provoked a huge interest towards the text, politically motivated: the main studies concerning the *Tale* have been published in 1940s-1960s<sup>98</sup>.

Let's make an introduction to the text. Its initial part begins with a portrayal of the 'Russian land' which has been described as a happy garden state or even *locus amoenus*<sup>99</sup>. This part mainly attracted attention of the scholars:

*O, most brilliant and beautifully adorned Russian Land! You provoke astonishment with your many beauties: with numberless lakes, rivers and springs in hallowed places, with steep mountains, high hills, groves, pure fields, with marvelous variety of animals, innumerable birds, large cities, beautiful villages, gardens, monasteries, and churches, with terrible princes respected boyars, many magnates; you are full of everything, o Russian land, o Orthodox Christian faith.*

The second part of the *Tale* very often escaped from the historical analysis. Usually, scholars noted that it comprises the dry enumerations of neighboring nations, bordering on the *Russian Land*. Then the author passed to memories of historical (lost) pride of the Rus', particular of Vladimir Monomakh's times (1113-1125) which he did not know well enough to avoid anachronisms. After the rule of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich (1191-1246), father of Alexander Nevsky, the author sees only decadence.

The text might be translated in the following way:

*From here [i.e. the Rus' Land] to the Hungarians, [from there] to the Poles, and to the Czechs, from the Czechs to the Yatvingians, from the Yatvingians to the Lithuanians, and to the Germans (Nemtsy), from the Germans to the Carelians, from the Carelians to the Ustyug region, where the pagan Toymichi [?] settle, and behind the Breathing Sea [Arctic Ocean], from the Sea to the Bulgarians, from the Bulgarians to the Burtases, from Burtases to the Cheremisses, from the*

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<sup>98</sup> Among the most important article should be mentioned: Tikhmirov 1951; Gudziy 1956; Soloviev 1958; Meshcherskiy 1963.

<sup>99</sup> Baehr 1991, pp. 68-69. I propose to compare the translation proposed by the author with the version quoted above: *O, brightly bright and beautifully adorned Russian Land. You are wondrous with your many beauties: with you many lakes, you are wondrous with your rivers and you locally renowned springs, with steep mountains, high hills, you many leafy groves, your wondrous fields, you diverse animals, innumerable birds, great cities, wondrous town, you monastery gardens, your Church and awe-inspiring princes, you honest boyars, and many lords; you are filled of everything, o Russian land, o, Orthodox Christian faith....*

*Cheremisses to the Mordovians – all nations and pagan lands had been subjugated by the will of God to the Christian [Russian] people, filthy, to Grand Prince Vsevolod, to his father, Yuri, Prince of Kiev [Yaroslav the Wise], to his grandfather Vladimir Monomakh, and the women of Polovtsi [Cumans] frightened their children of him in the cradle. And the Lithuanians did not dare to show themselves in the light of day from their wetlands, and the Hungarians fortified stone walls of their cities by iron gates in order to Vladimir Monomakh the Great does not conquer them, and the Germans were happy that they are far away - over the Sea. The Burtasy, the Cheremis, the Vyadas [?], Mordvinians kept wild bees [bortnichali] for Grand Prince Vladimir. And Emperor Manuel [Comnenos] was afraid of Grand Prince Vladimir that he had not conquered Constantinople and rich gifts sent to him. And in those days – from great Yaroslav, and to Vladimir [Monomakh], up to Yaroslav of that day [nyneshnego Yaroslava] and his brother Yuri, Prince of Vladimir [happened] the grief for the Christians...*

As the reader can see, the text provided new vision of the *orbis gentium* and based on the new axiological principles of the organization of the multiethnic surrounding. The principles are linked to the idea of political domination and military aggression which must be regarded as strange to the attitude of the *Primary Rus' Chronicle* and the values orientation of the Kiev period of the East European history

## 5.2. Discussion about the chronology and the meaning of the *Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land*

In 1965 Yuriy Begunov published the critical edition of the *Tale*, however, his comments have strongly apologetic character. His text leaves an impression that he had a 'hidden polemic' to a supposedly existed opinion that the *Tale* had been compiled only in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by one of the medieval Russian intellectuals for the special Pskov edition of the *Life of Alexander Nevsky*<sup>100</sup>. In fact, the 'hieratical' idea that the *Tale* contains many anachronistic details that reveal its late medieval origin very seldom was expressed in the Russian historiography<sup>101</sup>.

For the first glance, the enumeration of ethnos in the *Tale* follows the example of the *Primary Rus' Chronicle*. However, the attitude of the early medieval chronicler towards other nations is neutral enough. It differs it from the late medieval text. In fact, the *Tale* transforms the idea of the *Chronicle* on the tributary relationship between the Rus' and other tribes into their political submission based on the military force. The narrative develops the topic of 'powerful princes'

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<sup>100</sup> Begunov 1965, p. 74.

<sup>101</sup> See the comments to the Russian translation of the book by John Fennell "The Crisis of Medieval Russia": Lifshits et al. 1989.

who had conquered 'pagan countries', and before whom all neighboring peoples and tribes trembled because of their hard political and military might. The text has openly threatening character, and several characteristics of the nations could be regarded as humiliating.

Such transformation has been explained by the scholars through the situation of the Mongol invasion of the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century when the *Tale* was a kind of the lamentation on the lost majesty of Rus'. Meanwhile, the differences between the *Chronicle* and the *Tale* and the anachronisms of its text show that text of the introduction of the *Life of Alexander Nevsky* could not be written in the 13<sup>th</sup> century for several reasons. One of the chronological arguments is the mention of *nyneshnij Yaroslav* in the text - prince Yaroslav Vsevolodovich, father of Alexander Nevsky, who died in 1246. However, the word *nyneshnij* should be translated not as *Yaroslav of our days* but *of those days*, the days when the Mongol invasion happened. It is quite possible to regard it as rhetoric topic known in different Slavonic medieval texts and not as a chronological indication.

### 5.3. The text of the *Tale* as reflection of political, cultural and ethnic-geographical realities of 15<sup>th</sup> century

The several ethnonyms mentioned in the *Tale*, first of all, *Toymichi* and *Burtases (Burtas)* were not in use in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as we can judge according to the written sources<sup>102</sup>. The pair of nation mentioned aside, *Burtases* (modern Chuvash/Čăvašla?) and *Cheremisses*, is quite characteristic of the Russian literature of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, for example, *Kniga stepennaya tsarskogo rodosloviya*<sup>103</sup> where they have always mentioned aside. One of the sources of those writings evidently was an excerpt from the entry in *Sofiyskaya* or *Novgorodaskya* 4<sup>th</sup> Chronicles under 1380 A.D. (6888 MC) which narrates for the first time about the battle of Kulikovo Field and had been compiled only between 1431-1453 A.D.<sup>104</sup> The similar conclusion was also gained by D. Ostrowski, who argued that those works could not have been written before the 1440s<sup>105</sup>.

This fact shows an approximated chronology of the emergence of elements that form the *Tale*. Additionally, the statement that *the Hungarians fortified stone walls of their cities by iron gates in order to Vladimir Monomakh the Great does not conquer them* is also very anachronistic. It is

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<sup>102</sup> *Burtas* were mentioned by early Arabic writer, for example, by Ahmad Ibn Rustah. However, it had never any impact on the early Rus' ethnic vocabulary. Their ethnic history is unclear. On the sources and comments see: Zakhoder 1962, pp. 25-28, 72, 232-252. The discussion see: Afanasiev 1985.

<sup>103</sup> Sirenov 2010, vol.1, pp. 4, 254; vol. 2, p. 396.

<sup>104</sup> Salmina et al. 1981, pp. 112-113; Mingalev 1966; Orlov 1935.

<sup>105</sup> Ostrowski 1998, p. 155-163.

well known that stone fortresses building in Hungary began not earlier than the end of the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>106</sup>.

Several elements also have parallels only in late texts of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For example, the *Tale* argues that some Finno-Ugrian tribes kept wild bees (*bortnichali*, inf. – *bortnichat'*) for the Rus' princes. The idea of a forest bee-keeper as a lowest social class was openly expressed only in the fake genealogy of the Lithuanian princes kept in the manuscript of the 15<sup>th</sup> century from the Chudov monastery, Moscow. The text tells that Vytenis, Grand Duke of Lithuania (1295-1216) and brother of Gediminas (1316-1341) was an equerry or even servant of the prince of Smolensk Rostislav Mstislavovich († after 1239) (in the later edition of the 16<sup>th</sup> century – relative of the prince<sup>107</sup>). He escaped from his owner and settled down in Žemaitija in a house of a forest wild-hive bee-keeper<sup>108</sup> that should express his social humiliation. Nearly the same time such genealogy made part of the *Tale of the Grand Princes of Vladimir (Skazanie o velikikh knyaz'yakh Vladimirskikh)*<sup>109</sup>, end of the 15<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, where the main actor was Prince Vladimir Monomakh like in the *Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land*. It is well known that this legend made a basis of the official Muscovite cultural memory.

I should also mention another important fact. The introduction to the *Life of Alexander* describes not the borders of the Rus' Land which existed until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but the Rus' Land in 'broad' sense invited by the Muscovite chroniclers in the 15<sup>th</sup> century as imagined borders of the procession of the whole Rurikids dynasty on the territory of Eastern Europe. In this text, the territory of the Muscovite principality had been presented as a new Rus' Land.

It is obviously that the *Tale* had been created there where it had been found - at the North-Western border of Muscovy, in Pskov which always stressed its loyalty to the Muscovite princes and was under the muscovite influence. The text had been created as a general introduction to the Russian history: in the same manuscripts, for example, we can find a chronicle compilation entitled *The Tale on the beginning of the Rus' Land*. It should also be taken into consideration, that it was precisely in Pskov that the famous theory on Moscow as the Third Rome had been

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<sup>106</sup> Rusu 2007. I wish to thank the participant of the project Dr Cosmin Popa-Gorjanu for this precious reference.

<sup>107</sup> Florya 1978. This change can be explained by new prestigious positions of the prince families of Glinskies and Bel'skies, issued from the Gediminovichi, that they could gain at the Muscovite court at that time. The Prince of Moscow Ivan IV Vasilyevich (the Terrible) as a descendent from the Rurikids and the family of Gediminas via his mother Elena Glinskaya, refused this fake genealogy. See: Likhachev, Lurie 1951, p. 260.

<sup>108</sup> Bychkova 2012.

<sup>109</sup> Dmitrieva 1955.

compiled<sup>110</sup>. In the same time, this text could be also a political answer to the complicated relationship of Pskov with the Great Duchy of Lithuania and the Teutonic military Order in the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 5.4. The *Tale* and new values orientation in the western policy of Muscovy

Evidently, it was a political program of the new unification of Eastern Europe<sup>111</sup>. Such tendency reflected the new collective memory textualised in the provincial intellectual milieu of Pskov, fitted well with the main political idea of the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, which was a part of the cultural memory, existed in Moscow and expressed by the Dmitri Volodimerov, the treasurer and ambassador of the Grand Prince Ivan III Vasilyevich during the meeting with Stanisław Hlebow, representative of the Grand Duke Alexander Jagiellon, the March 5, 1504. Here he argued that all Rus' Land in 'broad' sense including its western borders belonging at that time to the Lithuanian State from the very beginning was his patrimony:

*The Rus' Land from our ancestors is our patrimony (...) not only cities and districts that are now under our power but all Rus' Land, Kiev, Smolensk and other towns that [Grand Duke Alexander Jagiellon] has under his power in the Lithuanian Land are our patrimony from the past and our ancestors with help and will of God (...)*<sup>112</sup>.

It starts the political claims of Muscovy on Kiev as a place of memory within the transformation of the notion of the Rus' Land from the common possession of the Kievan Rurikids to the exclusive patrimony of the princes of Moscow<sup>113</sup>.

The dynastic interests based on the re-interpretation and mythologization of the past was transformed into geographical expansion to the West. They also presented the local population of the claimed territories as the Rus' and the subjects of the Rus'-Muscovite princes. However such ideas served not only to the foreign policy. In my opinion, one of the goals of the *translatio* of

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<sup>110</sup> On the medieval concept of Third Rome in Russia see: Malinin 1901; Sinitsyna 1998; Lettenbauer 1961; Poe 2001.

<sup>111</sup> It was noted in: Perevezentsev 2006. Of course, the author dates this program back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>112</sup> Karpov 1882, p. 460. This demarche in the Soviet historiography had been evaluated as following: Moscow princes for the first time in the international arena publicly stated, that *the main objective of its policy in Eastern Europe is to unite under the authority of the Moscow princes throughout the national territory of Old Russian nationality*. There was for the first time when artificial historiographic concept of 'old Russian nationality' invented in the Soviet Union after the Second World War for authorising of the national pressure in the country to make a 'new Soviet people' and external acquisitions has been used to justify foreign expansion of Muscovy in the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, see Florya 1982, p. 172.

<sup>113</sup> The similar ideas in: Pelenski 1998.



the ethnonyms and their transformation was not an external expansion but internal mobilization. It is interesting to note that in this point the interests of the Muscovite princes and Russian intellectuals or political group who wrote the *Tale* perfectly coincided.

The already mentioned *Tale of the Grand Princes of Vladimir* includes an episode which can prove it. It is well known that the text is based on a legend that the Rurikids dynasty had originated from the Roman Emperor Augustus, who dispatched his relative Prus to rule the region of *Prussia Regalis*. Prus was the supposed ancestor of Rurik who according to the *Primary Rus' Chronicle*, had been invited they in 862 by the Slavs and Finno-Ugrians to reign in Eastern Europe<sup>114</sup>. Traditionally, *The Tale of the Grand Princes of Vladimir* is regarded as voiced the ambition of the Muscovite princes for Roman political heritage and as a mean of intervention in Polish-Prussian relationship. However, this myth had been not used in a foreign policy of Muscovy until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>115</sup>. So, I have to explain the inventing of the myth of Prus for the internal purposes of the new political body consolidated by Muscovy.

#### 5.5. The impact of the cultural memory on the communicative memory and *vice versa*

My investigation lets me argue that the myth of Prussian origin of the Rurikids dynasty had been created in Novgorod in 1470s during the political struggle and in the situation of the Muscovy oppression to the Novgorodian independence<sup>116</sup>. In the city existed the Prussian street where an aristocratic community lived which seemed to be loyal towards the Muscovite princes. Of course, the origins of the family and the street's name had nothing to the Prussians<sup>117</sup>; the name of the street just indicated its direction to the West, to the direction of Prusia. However, the local intellectuals could invent such *origo* that transformed the Varangians into the Prussians and used this deantroponymic name for stressing the common origin of the part of local boyars and the ruling dynasty. Later, the legend which had the Novgorodian origin, a good example of the communicative memory, was accepted by the cultural memory of the Muscovite State in the form of the official dynastic history.

In this story, the ethnic names played the role of typical exonyms/xenonyms not only as a mean of social consolidation but also that of organizing of the ethnocultural landscape of East-

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<sup>114</sup> Lavrent'evskaya letopis 1962, col.19-20.

<sup>115</sup> Erusalimski 2009.

<sup>116</sup> Musin 2012.

<sup>117</sup> See for the discussion: Ślaski 1963; Antoniewicz 1965.

European borders on the base of new values orientation<sup>118</sup>. In the same way, the term ‘Russians’ started to be applied to the new ethnic and social groups newly included in the Muscovite political body. Consequently, the official cultural memory began to influence regional identity and new muscovite policy of the ‘*rus*’ification’ of the new subjects. T. S. Noonan rightly noted that the success of the Muscovite grand princes in creating a ‘national Muscovite’ identity and then imposing this new identity on the conquered peoples of other Rus’ lands. Those who came under Muscovite control were not just subjects who had obligations to their Muscovite overlords. They were gradually assimilated into an emergent imperial, Muscovite society and forced to assume a new identity. According to him, residents of Novgorod, Tver’, and Riazan slowly but surely became Muscovites<sup>119</sup>, i.e., the Russians. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Rus’ decisively became a politonym linked to the formation of a new ethno-religious (confessional) identity on the territory of Muscovy and inversed in the historical past. This allowed to Muscovite princes conducting expansionist policies and ideology and justified it. I would say the concept of the Rus’ was used by the Muscovite Rurikids for ‘ethnic cleansing’ of the landscape of borderlands firstly in a narrative manner and then in the imperial policy of the Modern Times. The new values orientation presented a possible tool of ‘multiethnic cohesion in the making’ and was an attempt at the unification of regional-cultural conscious of pre-modern nations. As a basis of new axiology the re-interpretation of *origo gentis* had been chosen. It affirmed the common origin of different groups of the population of Eastern Europe and became the reliable mean of the making of the internal Central-East European border.

#### 5.6. The cultural memory of Muscovie: between re-interpretation and falsification of the past

It should be noted that the active mythologization and re-interpretation of the ethnic past predestinated to resolve contemporary political and social problem had been inevitably followed by the massive rewriting of the *Russian Chronicles* in Muscovy and even their falsification, especially in the field of the history of the relationship between Novgorod and the Rurikids. The ancient privileges of Novgorod which regard the princes as seigniors of the town and not as its sovereigns in the writings of the muscovite intellectuals had been transformed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century into permanent treasons against the Rurikids and apostasies from the Orthodoxy<sup>120</sup>. Such ideological campaign ended in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century by the *Istoriya o Kazanskom tsarstve*

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<sup>118</sup> On the methodology of researches see: Downs, Stea 1977.

<sup>119</sup> Noonan 1997, p. 496.

<sup>120</sup> See, for example: Moskovskiy letopisniy svod 1949, pp. 81-82 (6678 [1171]); L’vovskaya letopis 1910, p. 282 (6979 [1471]). For the brief analysis see: Musin 2016b, pp. 181-185; see also: Musin 2012, pp. 11–23.

(History of the Kazan' Kingdom)<sup>121</sup> which absurdly stated that the Rurikids were from the very beginning the princes of Novgorod, Vladimir and Moscow while the community of Novgorod betrayed its native princes and invited a new dynasty from the Varangians (sic!).

The Muscovite tradition to rewrite the history based on historical parallels and false coincidences of names concerned to the international policy too. It reveals superficial and careless treatment of the new muscovite intellectuals with texts of previous chronicles. For example, in 1564 the princely order to the Muscovite boyar Vasiliy Zakhar'in-Yur'ev during the political negotiation to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth expanded territorial claims of Ivan IV the Terrible which in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century included 91 towns of Eastern Europe such as Brest, Lvov, Galich, as well as Podolian and Volhynian Lands until the Polish border<sup>122</sup>. Additionally, it provided references on the Primary Rus' Chronicle sub anno 1097 and 1101 for proving the Muscovite right on Brest which had been ruled at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the Prince Yaroslav Yaropolchich († 1103), the great-grandson of the prince Yaroslav the Wise. In fact the text of chronicle<sup>123</sup> shows the accidental and arbitrary use of the information, chosen causally: prince Yaroslav the Younger was evidently not the most important figure in the Brest ruling Rurikids branch. Nearly ten years later, during the negotiations to the Polish embassy of Stanislaw Kryski, 1578, the Russian participants stated that the Prince *Svyatoslav reined in Pereyalsavets-on-Danube [in 967-970<sup>124</sup>] that is now Vednajben* (i.e., Vienna, the name evidently came from latin *Vindobona*)<sup>125</sup>. Even earlier, in 1552 in order to justify the annexation of the Astrakhan Khanate, the muscovite princely power identified Astrakhan in the delta of the Volga River and Tmutarakan<sup>126</sup>, a medieval city on the Kerch peninsula, where several representatives of the Rurikids dynasty in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century periodically exercised function of military leaders and controlled its suburbs. So, the new territorial claims of new Rus' Land started to be automatically followed by newly making historical myth.

### 5.7. Formation of imperial values and national *ressentiment*

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<sup>121</sup> Kazanskaya istoriya 1954, pp. 54-55, 179. On the history of the text see: Kuntsevich 1905; Keenan 1964-1968.

<sup>122</sup> Karpov 1892, p. 260.

<sup>123</sup> Lavrent'evskaya letopis 1962, col. 272 (6605 [1097]), 275 (6609 [1101]). See also: Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, pp. 196-197, 199.

<sup>124</sup> Cross, Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1930, pp. 84-85.

<sup>125</sup> See the documents in: National Library of Russia (St Petersburg), Department of manuscripts, Q.IV.33, fol. 32v-33; Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (Moscow), fond 79, inventory no.1, fol. 381, 384; Filjushkin 2006, p. 146; Filjushkin 2008, pp. 1ff., 267.

<sup>126</sup> Vasenko 1908/1913, vol. 2, pp. 653-654; Schmidt 1963; Pelenski 1974, p. 122; Amelkin 2002.

It is quite clear that the main ideas of the *Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land* had been formulated under the impact of the will of historical vengeance and reflected the concept of political and national *ressentiment*. It is worthy comparing such observation with the statement by G. Hosking who noted that the Russian collective consciousness took shape gradually over the centuries and *stepped in >ressentiment<*<sup>127</sup>. The scholar thought, first of all, about the deep impact of 'raskol' of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century on the Russian national identity, linked to the imperial idea. Usually, scholars suppose the imperial features of the Russian state and Russian conscious emerged in 1552, after the annexation of Khanates on the Volga River<sup>128</sup>. However, as I have tried to show similar ideology which took shape, firstly, of the cultural memory and then that of collective memory emerged in half-century earlier, in the second half - end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a means of the historical pseudo-*reconquista* in its political and mental forms. In this movement, the intentions of the Muscovite authority and Muscovite society were perfectly agreed and consolidated by *ressentiment* as a starting point of the process. It could be said, that the meaning of the Muscovite expansionism had been oriented not the future, but to the past.

In his time, S. Plokhly stated that *the Kyivan-era project involving the construction of a single identity had a profound impact on the subsequent identities of all the ethnic groups that constituted the Kyivan state*<sup>129</sup>. I would express some doubts in that statement<sup>130</sup>. As I tried to show there was not any 'Kyivan-era project', first of all, because of absence an unified state with unitary system of law, taxation and culture. The close ties and interaction between different regions of Eastern Europe had been assured not by the common ethnic identity and joint historical memory but through the chairing of common values laying in princely power, the absence of land propriety, common religion and Church organization, freedom of moving of individual, objects and ideas.

In this connection, I would say that it was post-Kievan-era (Muscovite-era) project involving the construction of a single Rus' legacy that had such profound impact. The parameters of the project had been defined in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century Moscow, developed in the North-Western part of Russia, in Novgorod and Pskov, and then gratefully, with appreciation returned to the muscovite owner...

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<sup>127</sup> See Hosking 1997.

<sup>128</sup> See, for example: Kappeler 1992; Kappeler 1995; Hosking 1997a; Hosking 2001; Bogatyrev 2007.

<sup>129</sup> Plokhly 2006, p. 2. The attempt of Kievan chronicler to present the army of Prince Vsevolodas *nostris* and a part of the military forces of Rus' Land; cf. Ipat'evskaya letopis 1908, col. 625 (6790 [1183]) does not change the general situation

<sup>130</sup> The rare intentions of Kievan chronicler to present the army of the Prince Vsevolod Yurievich the Big Nest of Vladimir as *nostris* and a part of the military forces of the Rus' Land do not change the general situation; cf. Ipat'evskaya letopis 1908, col. 625 (6790 [1183]).

Within this, it is interesting to revisit the causes of the Russian imperialism what have to be seen by different scholars in the urge to Sea<sup>131</sup>, lack of natural geographical realm<sup>132</sup> or messianism of Byzantine-biblical character<sup>133</sup>. As far as the key-work of the *ressentiment* tendency, the Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land, had been compiled there, where another specific muscovite idea that of Moscow as the Third Rome had been textualised nearly the same period<sup>134</sup>, it would be logical to suppose, that we really deal with a kind of messianism. However, in spite of the concept of the *translatio*, appropriated to both texts, I can not see in the Tale any specific religious ideas that could prove a messianic tendency of the Russian political and cultural development. Even the Old Testament tendency, visible in the concept of the domination over all neighboring regions and kings (see 3.5)<sup>135</sup> supposedly expressed in the Tale does not make this hypothesis surer.

As we can judge, the concept of the 'Third Rome' was not a 'pivotal moment' for the Russian cultural development and the making borders in Central-East Europe. Such processes were unveiled not by a Byzantine legacy, but by the political ambitions of Muscovite Rurikids and *ressentiment* feeling of Muscovite society based on the re-visited past. It has been already noted that East Slavic identity and ethnic affinity played a marginal role in the development of the sense of Rus'/Russian unity<sup>136</sup>. However, the same can be side on the role of the religious factor in the consolidation of Eastern Europe under the Muscovite Rurikids rule in its opposition to Central Europe. The concept of the Rus' evidently was not a *polythonim* for designing a new real ethno-religious entity which allowed to Muscovy to pursued expansionist policy<sup>137</sup>. The marginal role of the religious factors in the consolidation during the end of the 15<sup>th</sup>-beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in my opinion, could be explained by the schism in 1448-1560/1589 between the Muscovite Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople<sup>138</sup> which had its own Orthodox Metropolitan on the territory of the Central-Eastern Europe with the episcopal see in Kiev.

I can add here, that the Russian imperialism can be described as assimilative expansion or assimilating expansionism (expansion of assimilative type). Its special feature consists of growing in parallel of the national state based on the dynastic ambitions and national mentality.

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<sup>131</sup> Kerner 1942.

<sup>132</sup> Halecki 1952a.

<sup>133</sup> Huttenbach 1974. See also: Parker 1988.

<sup>134</sup> See the footnote 110.

<sup>135</sup> On the Old Testament connotations in the Byzantine imperial ideology see: Dagron 1996.

<sup>136</sup> See, for example: Riasanovsky 2005.

<sup>137</sup> Filjushkin 2006, p. 152.

<sup>138</sup> See on the subject : Pitsakis 1989; Lourié 2010; Lourié 2013. See also: Steindorff 2010.

Both elements formed in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>139</sup>. Finally, the dynastic idea of the Russian nationalism was replaced by statist or imperial one as Paul Bushkovitch noted<sup>140</sup>. However, he proposed attested this change during the new rule of the Romanov dynasty and especially during the reign of Peter the Great while historically it was special 'know-how' of the Muscovite Rurikids.

For many years the scholars discuss the meaning of Russian nationalism, its lack as a crucial factor in Russian history and its supposed contradiction with the imperialistic character of the Russian state<sup>141</sup>. However, those among them are right who argued the lack of the principle differences the Empire, national state, and nation in Russian history. The building of Empire should be regarded as a mean of the national consolidation which comprises the separate implication of the 'russification' in the imperial and national sense, or better to say, between the 'russification' and 'rus'ification'<sup>142</sup>.

Today, instead of the putting the beginning of the idea of Russian 'nationalistic' imperialism in the mid-16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century we can establish the reliable chronology of its rise based on the authentic medieval written sources. The result of research allows stating the principal coincidence of interests of the state and society in Russia since the mid-second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. Conclusions

The present investigation reveals that the concept of Rus' and Rus' Land can be regarded as a key-point of early medieval values orientation, so-called it's 'lieux de mémoire' and as a mean of the historical acculturation and social unification. The terms 'Rus' / Russian / Ruthenians' which from the beginning were an exonym, became a 'migrant terminology' with strong memorial connotations. They had been applied to different historical situations for territorial and political claiming and making border inside of Central-Eastern Europe with the artificially created narrative landscape. The legend about the 'invitation of the Varangians' as a kind of *origo gentis*<sup>143</sup> also was a significant part of the medieval values orientation. During the Muscovite-Polish-Lithuanian rivalry it was transformed in the legend of the 'Prussian' origin of the Rurikids. The legend became a tool for the consolidation of Muscovite society and means of the

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<sup>139</sup> See for example undeservedly forgotten study: Presnyakov 1918.

<sup>140</sup> Bushkovitch 1986; Bushkovitch 2003. See the discussion in: Rowley 2000.

<sup>141</sup> For the discussion see: Kaiser 1994; Brubaker 1998; Rowley 2000.

<sup>142</sup> For such concept see: Tolz 2001; Miller 2004.

<sup>143</sup> Stefanovich 2012.

assimilation of the aristocracy of Novgorod with Muscovy political elites. The ethnic term included in the re-interpretation and mythologization of the regional history could serve for local mobilization and consolidation as well as for incorporation of newly acquired or conquered territories with societies.

In the same time, the *translatio* of the terms in the condition of *ressentiment* led to the formation of an idea of princely power that Muscovy had a direct continuity with the Rus' Land on the Dnieper River and became its immediate successor, in other words, new Rus' Land. The *Tale of the Ruin of the Rus' Land* written in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century openly expressed the new values orientation concerning the multiethnic surrounding of the Muscovite political body. In that case, the narrative of cultural and collective memory perfectly coincided. It had been organised around the political idea of the subjecting of Eastern Europe to the Muscovite Rurikids that based on the transformed and mythologised historical memory. This idea finally crystallised internal Central-East European borderlines.

In the new values orientation, Kiev began a place of memory, as well as the whole territory of Eastern Europe, ruled in the past by different branches of the Rurikids family and identified now as Rus' Land – *Rus'kaya zemlya*. The spread of the Muscovite influence by the mean of the specific historical memory served to efface the regional values presented in local cultures and ethnic mentalities, in other words, to the 'rus'ification', effectuated in parallel by the state and nation in the field of the collective memory and in the sphere of the political, economic and social life. In fact, the multi-ethnic cohesion in the East European borderline since the 15<sup>th</sup> century had been established not only by the powerful military domination. As a result, the imperial claims of the Russia should be dated not 1552, but in half-century earlier. In the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of dynastic domination of the Rurikids in Eastern Europe had been added to the concept of the close ethnic unity of the population of the continent. The imperialism of Muscovy and that of its successors had mono-ethnic character inevitably. It transformed the new gained and controlled population not simply into political subjects on new State, but into the real 'Russians' according to the strict ethno-cultural sense of the term. Consequently it should be classified as assimilative expansion. As a result, the 'grand narratives' of the Russian history had been established not in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century but two hundred years earlier, and Kievan Synopsis, which openly formulated such ideas for the first time<sup>144</sup> rather influenced the modern historiography than late medieval values orientation. However, the basic concept put in the ground of the cultural and collective memories of Muscovite and Russian State and society-

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<sup>144</sup> For the *Kievan Synopsis* see: Peshtich 1958; Sapozhnikov, Sapozhnikova 2006; Kohut 2003.

the concept of the Rus' Land - was characterised by strict and potentially unresolved contradiction between regional character of values orientation and inter-regional and international character of political organization that inevitably leads to the fail of the East European imperial idea in different historical periods.

## 7. After-conclusions

In his numerous writings, Russian scholars Alexei Miller who studies according to his definition *national outskirts of the Russian Empire* wonders why an imperial project of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century to create an all-Russian or big-Russian nation on the base of the Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians failed<sup>145</sup>. Among the causes, he counts the I<sup>st</sup> World War and the Russian revolution. However, the main cause, according to him, was a lack in the Russian Empire of effective political machinery to accomplish such uneasy task. He also argued that the Russian imperial policy followed the normal practices of big European countries concerning the consolidation of dominant nations. The failure of this policy has been provoked mainly by accidental and arbitrary causes.

Both statements are incorrect. The specific of Russian imperial policy of multi-ethnic cohesion based on wrong historical values orientation and incorrect perception of the past issued of the mythologisation and even falsification of early-medieval history in Russian cultural and collective memory of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century. This fact explains the collapse and subsequent metamorphosis of the Russian Empire.

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<sup>145</sup> See for example: Miller 2008; Miller 2012, pp. 120, 150.



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