Title:	Archaeological Data in Recent Reconstructions of Proto-Slavic and a Linguistic Approach
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This paper will question the use of archaeological data in the recent reconstruction of Proto-Slavic dialects by the Slavic historical linguist S. L. Nikolaev (Dybo et. al. 1990) in view of theories of reconstruction based in contrast primarily on linguistic data. Nikolaev uses an approach to the reconstruction of Proto-Slavic dialects that depends on assuming a correlation of linguistic, ethnic and archaeological data.

The author tries to give evidence for the reconstruction of his Proto-Slavic dialects by connecting linguistic accentological data to ethnic Slavic "tribal" and archaeological data. Some Slavic linguists doubt that any such connection can be made. As archaic dialects these pre-migration, Proto-Slavic dialects, i.e. from before 500 A.D., could only be directly connected to the Slavic tribes by supporting evidence, no matter what their accentological development. It is open to question whether such evidence can be found. Historical linguists cannot actually know how to attribute dialect characteristics to prehistoric tribes or to just their names. They can only make hypotheses that might later be substantiated. Nikolaev claims to have found pre-migration accentological differences and assumes that they have to belong to different tribes based on archaeological data. He has made a leap of logic, but he does not present the evidence that is needed to support it.

In analyzing this lack of evidence it is possible to turn to the work of Krys'ko who, based in part on the work of Trubetzkoy, argues with Nikolaev's identification of his reconstructions as Proto-Slavic "tribal" dialects, saying that Nikolaev's use of archaeological material, based on Sedov's work, contains no evidence from any archaeological find that would connect any reconstructed linguistic feature to any tribe (1998: 76-78). He indicates that the archaeological finds contain no writing of any kind, while it is precisely evidence in the form of writing that would be required to make any connection between tribe and language (78). The author of this paper agrees with Krys'ko, as it is clear that written texts from archaeological finds are the only sure source of an indication of any connections between those finds and any people or their language, as for example in the uncovering of written Latin, Greek, Mycenaean and Near Eastern written texts from antiquity, that have given direct evidence of connections to the peoples that wrote them and to their languages and dialects.

Kočergina says that N. S. Trubetzkoy considered it unacceptable to tie archaeological data to linguistic data in the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European, also a pre-historic language (1998: 32). She says that he believed, following the ideas of F. F. Fortunatov, that it was necessary to reconstruct a language on the basis of only linguistic data, while using only linguistic methods. It is indicated that he considered only a linguistic argumentation to be valid (32). He thought that it was possible accordingly to determine the area within which Indo-European appeared by using linguistic data (32). The author of this paper agrees with Trubetzkoy that it is unacceptable to tie archaeological data to linguistic data in such reconstruction. Expanding on this idea, as Krys'ko did, it is possible to say that it is only the discovery of archaeological artifacts along with written material that can prove a connection to any single people or their language. For example the excavations of artifacts in Mesopotamia at the site of the ancient city of Ur yielded many tablets with writing in cuneiform that when deciphered led to the discovery of the

previously unknown ancient Sumerian people and of their language, Sumerian, which was distinguished from the ancient Akkadian language of the people to their north. The Sumerian people, their artifacts and their language, both spoken and written, were dated to have existed from before 2000 to 3000 B.C., the time period contemporary to that of early Proto-Slavic and Proto-Indo-European. The archaeological and linguistic interpretations of Sumerian data are considered to be authoritative.

Doluxanov says that scholars often try to determine where and when proto-languages existed by using archaeological data as evidence, but that they do not consider "the controversial nature of archaeological records" (1994: 24). He asks how or when archaeological data may be used to reconstruct ethnic and linguistic entities from the past (25). He indicates that it is difficult to make any such reconstruction because archaeological data does not "adequately reflect the social, economic, cultural and other processes which have occurred in the past" (25).

Without any written material to depend on Nikolaev uses what seem to be boundaries delineated by groups of cultural artifacts in the archaeological data of Sedov to support his reconstructions, but the artifacts within these boundaries could just as readily be from the period of Common East Slavic as from that of Proto-Slavic.

Nikolaev has attempted to modify the traditional comparative method of reconstruction to "project back" to the Proto-Slavic period to make his reconstructions, but in the process he has depended on the archaeological work of Sedov, who mostly elaborates on the nineteenth-century work of Šaxmatov, which could not be considered reliable because of its dependence on the *Primary Chronicle* as its main source of data for organization. Moreover, Nikolaev has also depended on the primordialist theory of ethnogenesis that was developed in the Soviet intellectual milieu originally as a reaction to the use of ethnogenesis by German scholars early in the twentieth century to make a connection between language, ethnic group and archaeological data to establish an ethnic and linguistic homeland. This use of the theory of ethnogenesis cannot be proven to be valid because it does not allow for the use of any evidence to prove any connection between language, ethnic group and archaeological data.

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