

TRADE IN VELIKY NOVGOROD IN X -XIV CENTURIES

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Ancient Novgorod, known since the end of the IX century (the first mention in Chronicles dates back to 859), was not only a military Outpost, "the Northern guard of Russia", but also the largest center of crafts and trade.

Foreign trade was great importance for Novgorod. He controlled the Northern part of the route "from the Varangians to the Greeks", that is, from Scandinavia and the Baltic lands to Byzantium (Dnieper direction through Kiev) and the Caspian sea and Central Asia (Volga direction through Bulgaria).

From the North carried silver (Germany, England, etc.), iron, non-ferrous metals (raw materials and products from them, such as copper, tin and lead from Sweden, England, Spain, Hungary, Czech Republic, etc.), amber (Baltic, although it was found on the Dnieper near Kiev), fabrics (for example, cloth from England, Flanders, Germany, Spain), glass products (beads, rings, dishes, window glasses), weapons and so on.

From the South and East received gold, silver, luxury goods, glassware, wine, silk and other valuable fabrics, bread and other products, spices and sweets, etc. Russian land supplied primarily furs ("soft junk"), honey, wax, valuable varieties of white and red fish, iron products, weapons, etc.

The center of Novgorod trade was the Auction, located in the area of Yaroslavovo Dvoriche (Yaroslav's Yard, Court) on the Torgovay Storona (Commercial Side) of the city. It was not only a market square, but also trading rows with shops, workshops and warehouses. For the latter, the lower floors of the churches built by the merchants associations were also used. They also housed their offices, for example, the Church of Gen-Mironosich (Myrrhbearers) had four floors (two lower-warehouse).

Novgorod merchants were grouped into trade associations or corporation (sometimes called "hundreds"), the largest of which was considered to be the Ivan ("Ivan hundred"), which operated under the Church of Ivan-Na-Opokah. The merchants who were a part of it, were engaged in trade in wax and paid a huge membership fee 50 hryvnias of silver (about 10 kg). Of great importance were also "gosts" (Merchant), that is, merchants who conducted foreign (overseas) trade. Warehousing was widely developed, that is, joint trade.

In trade except silver and gold skins of fur animals ("beli", "kooni", etc.) which were considered small exchange means were used.

The main trading partners of Novgorod were in the X-XII centuries. merchant enterprises from the island of Gotland (Denmark), and from the XIV century – the Hanseatic League.

Western merchants owned in Novgorod two trading yards – Gothic with the Church of St. Olaf and German with the Church of St. Peter, founded in the XI-XII centuries.

Trade with Gotland and Hansa was conducted though intensively, but, in General, unevenly, which was due not only to economic difficulties or mutual claims of merchants, but also complications in the foreign policy situation, for example, conflicts with the leadership of the Livonian order. Sometimes there were mutual arrests of goods and merchants, there were cases when the yards could be closed for several years, although illegal trade could be conducted in addition to it. In a broad sense, the Russian government tried to limit the privileges of the Hanseatic League and to create favourable conditions for its merchants in Livonia, which will move from Novgorod center of foreign trade.

Affected trade and the condition of merchants of Novgorod and its accession to Moscow in 1478, and oprichnics pogrom of Ivan The Terrible in 1570, and the Swedish occupation during the time of Troubles.

Shrinking or pausing for a while, however, the commercial life of Novgorod very quickly revived, there are moving merchants from other lands, including from Moscow. Ivan personally supervised the Novgorod trade. Torgovay Storona after the "pogrom" (multiple meanings) as the most profitable were taken into the "oprichnina", and taxes went into the Tsar's court. Competed with Novgorod in terms of volume and range of foreign goods only Arkhangelsk (founded in 1584), associated more with English trade. Novgorod will lose the value of the "window to Europe" only after the Foundation of St. Petersburg.

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