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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OF HANSEATIC MERCHANTS IN VELIKY NOVGOROD

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Abstract

The article highlights one of the aspects of Russian-Hanseatic trade cooperation regarding the preparation of a Hanseatic merchant for trade in Veliky Novgorod in the 14th - first half of the 16th centuries, which can be considered one of the earliest historical models of vocational education. The circumstances conducive to this preparation are considered: the responsibility of merchants for the implementation of interstate trade agreements, the difference between Hanseatic and Russian historical and cultural traditions and the need to adapt a foreign merchant to Russian realities. Based on the analysis of archival materials, a program for the education and training of a Hanseatic merchant is presented (learning the Russian language and Russian customs, “immersing in the environment” through students living in Novgorodians’ houses, mastering the skills of working with Russian export goods, acquiring independent trading skills for certain small wholesale goods, etc.). The author considers such phenomena of vocational education as mentoring and patronage, status of teachers and the content of education, reveals the features of the implementation of the vocational education program, analyzes individual situations that arose in the preparation process. The materials of the article allow us to determine the historical significance of this educational practice for the development of Russian-Hanseatic relations in general.

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Keywords: Vocational training model, Hansa, historical and cultural traditions, Hanseatic entrepreneurship in Novgorod, training and education program for merchants.



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1. Introduction

The order of education of the Hanseatic merchant in the XIV - first half of the XVI century. represents one of the earliest historical examples of systematic and targeted training of future participants in international trade, carried out outside the family, but within the framework of public and international relations, which once again demonstrates the phenomenality of the institutions created by the Hansa (Jahnke, 2017). In the field of diverse Hanseatic topics currently being actively studied (Kypta, 2016), this problem currently arises situationally and, most often, in the context of Russian-Hanseatic language contacts (Reitemeier, 2002; Squires, 2009). The emphasis made by researchers on the language training of the Hanseatic merchant in Novgorod is explained, first of all, by the concept of “language pupils” (sprakleren, spraklerlinge, sprachschuler) of significance for the Hanseatic connected with the Novgorod market, mastering the Russian language (Gąssowska, 2019), and the policy of prohibitions on the study of it by non-Hanseans, through which the Hanseatic leadership sought to protect itself from external competition in the Russian market (Reitemeier, 2002). At the same time, the program of staying in Novgorod teenagers from the merchant environment was not limited to studying the Russian language, and its target orientation was much wider. Of interest are also the circumstances accompanying the education of “language students” or simply “students” (lerekinder), their status and role as subjects of public relations in the German Compound and beyond.

2. Problem Statement

The main task of studying the education system of Hanseatic merchants involves a departure from the historiographic tradition, focused on the study of its exclusively linguistic aspect, and aims to identify a wide range of problems, the centre of which is the figure of a Hanseatic student in the Novgorod German Courtyard.

3. Research Questions

In connection with the stated task, we come to a wide range of questions of a theoretical and concrete historical nature. First of all, the focus of the study is on the prerequisites for the formation of a special training and education program for the Hanseatic merchant, who was to trade in one of the four Hanseatic offices, namely, the Novgorod German Courtyard. The identification of prerequisites should help determine the goals and objectives of this peculiar model of professional training of the XIV - the first half of the XVI centuries, as well as the main elements of the educational program, which was not limited to the study of the Russian language. From the foreshortened perspective, it also makes sense to pay attention to the definitions of the status of a “language student” as a subject of law and property, as well as to the inherent interpersonal forms of communication within the German Courtyard and among Novgorodians. And in the end, the historical significance of this educational practice for the development of Russian-Hanseatic relations in general should be determined.

4. Purpose of the Study

The study within the framework of these tasks is aimed at the reconstruction of one of the early models of vocational training, which can be an impulse for the formation of ideas about historical experience in this area, which can be useful in modern educational practice. In addition to achieving this main goal, the author intends to show the influence of this aspect of Hanseatic trading practice on the state of the entire Russian-Hanseatic communicative field.

5. Research Methods

The achievements of modern historiography are supplemented and corrected by the testimony of Hanseatic sources, mainly the statutes of the German Courtyard (Novgorod Shra) and business correspondence of Hanseatic merchants who lived at the courtyard in the XIV - first half of the XVI centuries. In methodological terms, the development of the topic is complicated by the fact that the students were not considered full-fledged inhabitants of the farmstead, were completely subordinate to his administration and therefore are rarely mentioned in the documentation. Questions relating to them were not taken to the Hanseatic level and were very little reflected in the correspondence of the inhabitants of the German Courtyard with Hanseatic cities, in the recesses (protocols) of Livonian Landtags and Hanseatic representative assemblies (Hanzetags). The scarcity of data can give rise to a false idea of a “language student” as a colorless and passive figure. To avoid this, a search field should be formed by combining disparate information from the Shra, Hanseatic correspondence and protocols to determine the research direction and nature of the problem, and then analyze the compiled material and give an opinion.

6. Findings

The Russian-Hanseatic trade cooperation of the Middle Ages and early Modern times presupposed the existence of professional training for the Hanseatic merchant for trading in Veliky Novgorod, which can be considered one of the earliest historical models of vocational education. The name "language pupils" does not mean the limitedness of their educational program in teaching the Russian language, since it was more multifaceted and corresponded to a wide range of needs of merchant practice. For the first time, students are mentioned in the 3rd edition of the Novgorod Shra of 1268 (Schlüter, 1911, III, § 8), but in business documentation, mentions of them appear a century later. The need for a systematic and focused education of the Hanseatic merchant was predetermined by the emergence of new technologies for international exchange of goods as a consequence of the “commercial revolution” of the 14th century, in particular, non-monetary (bill) exchange with mandatory written fixation of the transaction and the widespread distribution of trade cooperation, in which the activities of sales representatives were of great importance (factors, gesellin) from among the younger companions of the owners of fixed merchant capital (Denzel, 2016). The privileges of the Hanseatic people of the German Courtyard did not go back to the sovereign awards, but to the bilateral agreements of the merchants, and the guarantee of compliance was the adequacy of the behavior of the merchants in relation to trading customs, which implied the formation of their corresponding experience and skills. The difference between Hanseatic and Russian historical and cultural traditions, including legal and domestic (Bessudnova, 2016), without fail required adaptation of

the foreign merchant to Russian realities, the basic part of which was the study of the Russian language. By the beginning of the XVI century learning the Russian language could also be carried out in individual Hanseatic cities, where it was organized privately or through the efforts of municipalities, but the Hanseatic League did not welcome this, since non-Hanseans could be in the groups of students and the Hanseatic monopoly on teaching Russian was thereby violated (Squires, 2009). The Hanseatic custom required training for the Russian market precisely in Novgorod, while the Russian side was supposed to provide the “clean path” for students who were eager to get there (HR 3, 5, 1894, No. 542). The number of “language students” there varied; at the time of the close of the German Compound in 1494, on the orders of the Grand Duke of Moscow Ivan III, along with its 49 adult inhabitants, 11 teenagers from the cities of Livonia and Northern Germany were arrested (LECUB 2, 2, 1905, No. 116 etc.). Chronist Raimar Kock from Lübeck in this connection remarked: “High-ranking people from Lübeck and other cities tend to send their children to Novgorod (grothe ludetho Lubeck und eynden an deren steedenore kinder plegentho Nowgarden thoszenden).” Indeed, among the arrested students were named members of the influential merchant families Grave, Kastorpov, von Tunenov, Bromsø, Kerkings, Pleskovyh and Warendorpov (HR 3, 3, 1888, No. 502). Language training was carried out by the “immersion method”, and therefore adolescents who relied on their own premises on the territory of the German Compound (Schlüter, 1911, I, II, III, § 4) were allowed to live in the houses of Novgorodians, most likely, business partners of their fathers or other older relatives. After the closure of the German Courtyard in 1494, the Livonian Landtag turned to the Hanseatic cities with a proposal to ask the Grand Duke to extradite students placed with the adults in the log of the Vladychny Dvor, “on the bail of their [home] masters in the city” (LECUB 2, 1, 1900, No. 170), which in itself testifies to the favorable disposition of the Novgorod merchants to their Hanseatic partners and to the trust of the Hanseatic people in them. Living in the homes of Novgorodians allowed Hanseatic students, among other things, to get acquainted with Russian customs and make friends with their peers, which, as they grew older, could degenerate into a strong business partnership. Adult Hanseatic people, we note, in order to avoid complications, living in the city was allowed only in certain cases. Along with the acquisition of practical skills individually, the “language students” took a collective training course in the courtyard. . In 1521, at the Lübeckganganzetag, where the question of the advisability of preserving the Novgorod office of the Hansa, i.e. the German courtyard, in her defense sounded: “There was a school in the Novgorod office where children were taught grammar, which was not in any of the other [Hanseatic] offices, and it would be a pity if the courtyard was closed” (HR 3, 7, 1905, No. 413, § 210). It can be assumed that the priest of the Catholic Church of St. Peter, located in the courtyard, who received a salary from Dorpat (Bessudnova, 2017); there is no mention of a special teacher position in the German Courtyard in Hanseatic sources. Future merchants were taught not only to speak Russian, but also to read and write: “He knows how to write and read Russian equally” - this is how the knowledge of one Tallinn burgher was described at the beginning of the 16th century. (LECUB 2, 3, 1910 No. 775, § 10). Learning Russian writing, one must think, took place at the school in the courtyard. In any case, foreigners who spoke Russian tried not to advertise their ability to read Russian texts. At the end of the XV century. one young merchant from non-Hanseatic Narva, when he was in Novgorod, was cunning and asked to show him in an official document images of Russian letters that he had allegedly never seen, while he himself read perfectly in Russian, which allowed him to find out the contents of the letter (LECUB 2, 1, 1900, No. 144). During the language training

of Hanseatic merchants, the emphasis was on colloquial speech, while their reading and writing skills were hardly substantiated: when a Hanseatic needed to draw up an official document in Russian, he always turned to a professional interpreter to avoid mistakes (Gařowska, 2019). In the Hanseatic documentation there is not much space for other areas of Lerling training, but it can be said that, along with the language, they also mastered the basics of merchant crafts. In the same recess of the Landtag of 1521, which refers to the existence of a school on the German farmstead, the following instruction is also given: "Young people (gesellen) study furs (pelterie) here, and then they are sent from there [from Novgorod] to Bruges and to England and others come in their place "(HR 3, 7, 1905, No. 413, § 215). Furs represented the most expensive part of Russian export products. To work with them, the Hanseatic merchant needed the ability to determine their types, sort by quality, pack, identify substandard or "fake" products. If you believe the citation, the Novgorod German compound in this area was akin to the university, as it supplied high-class expert furriers to two other Hanseatic offices located in Bruges and London. For the most part, residents of the German Courtyard were forbidden to leave Novgorod, even for returning home they needed special permission from the Novgorod authorities, but, however, there are indications of sources for students to stay outside. In 1423, some of their number visited the Izhora Pyatina (HR 1, 7, 1893, No. 568, § 7), and in 1465, by the decision of Livonian cities, students were forbidden to appear in the Pskov okrug (HR 2, 3, 1881, No. 216, § 16), which means they have been there. It was unlikely that these were independent trips; it is more appropriate to assume that the students were far from Novgorod along with their Novgorod householders, who went on business affairs and took their wards with them to bring them to business practice. The profession was taught by connecting students to the sale of goods. IV edition of Novgorod shra reads: "... students have the right to sell in cages: gloves in pairs, blue threads in pounds, and no less; fabrics, linen, vatmal (coarse fabric) - everything that is measured by half-rope (a measure of length) - and no less; sulfur - hryvnia, like other goods of this kind; needles for woolen fabrics - in thousands, Lübeck needles - in hundreds, rosary - in small dozens; red tanning leather - kunami (measure of area), parchment - fifty; if anyone violates these requirements, he pays a fine of 1 mark: if he suffers a loss also from the Russians due to trade, then this is his own fault, and how much penalty he will pay to the Russians, he must also pay St. Peter [Novgorod Courtyard]" (Schlüter, 1911, IV, § 33). The students had the right to trade in some inexpensive goods that they sold to the Novgorodians in small batches without access to the Market, but "in the crates", the premises of the courtyard. At the same time, they had to take responsibility for the transaction in accordance with the Hanseatic principle that "everyone bears his own loss." In case of bringing the case to trial by the Russian side and imposing a fine, the student was subjected to a recovery of a monetary payment in favor of the compound for creating an unpleasant precedent. The formal legal responsibility of the student, as well as the availability of goods and money, is accompanied by recognition of his use of the "merchant's right" (Schlüter, 1911, IV, § 92), i.e. a set of legal rules governing the business, social and everyday life of the farmstead. The disciples were instructed to choose their headman, as adult merchants did, and to have their own special premises on the courtyard (Schlüter, 1911, I, II, III, § 4, 6), which accustomed them to the order of residence on its territory. They were probably involved in chores at the farmstead, since Novgorod shra did not contain indications of the release of any of its inhabitants from them. However, the position of the student was somewhat different from the position of an adult merchant. In particular, it should be assumed that there are pupils of trade benefits, which forced them to extend their

apprenticeship. In 1346, the decision was made “so that pupils (lerekindere) over 20 years old, if they want to use the merchant's right, should not be allowed to study in Novgorod, for the [Hanseatic] merchants have big trouble and difficulties because of high-age pupils” (Bessudnova, 2017). Adult students who are able to independently conduct trade and at the same time enjoy student privileges were perceived as serious competitors for Hanseatic "guests" who lived on the courtyard. Mentoring of Hanseatic students in Novgorod implied accustoming them to the real conditions of entrepreneurship, which, however, did not exclude manifestations of patronage and patronage - for example, there are reports that some students arrived in Novgorod with their fathers (HR 2.Bd. 7. No. 478, § 3), and the guardianship of students by their Novgorodian householders (byerenherentorstede) has already been mentioned above. Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod, like Russian "guests" in Livonian cities, sometimes became hostages of a crisis situation and were subjected to "detention" (arrest), which, according to Hanseatic standards, should not apply to students. Their arrest, along with the adult Hanseatic people in 1494, was perceived in the cities of the Hansa as “an unheard of business” (LECUB 2, 2, 1905, No. 116 etc.). Despite the approximate living conditions of adult merchants and students in Novgorod, the latter, due to their age, did not participate in the approval of the Russian-Hanseatic agreements and therefore were not responsible for their implementation, which to some extent served as a guarantee of the safety of their residence in Novgorod. An indicator of the effectiveness of the training system of Hanseatic merchants that took place in the Novgorod German Courtyard, and its relevance in the framework of Russian-Hanseatic entrepreneurship, can serve as Hanseatic instructions for the resumption of trips of "language students" to Novgorod, which preceded the signing of Russian-Hanseatic agreements (“and language students must arrive in antiquity”) (LECUB 2, 2, 1905, No. 619 etc.), as well as the preservation of this practice outside the Middle Ages, up to the 17th century (Bruchhäuser, 1989).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we note that the need for professional training of a Hanseatic merchant for trade in Novgorod was determined, first of all, by the complication of the entire system of international commodity exchange as a result of the “commercial revolution” of the XIV century, the increased responsibility of merchants for the implementation of interstate trade agreements, and the difference between Hanseatic and Russian historical cultural traditions and the need to adapt a foreign merchant to Russian realities. The main elements of the Hanseatic merchant's education and training program were studying the Russian language and Russian customs using the "immersion in the environment" method, mastering the skills of working with Russian export goods, acquiring independent trading skills in small wholesale, accustomed to living in the German Courtyard and formal legal responsibility for their actions. The training was carried out in the conditions of real trading practice, organized, on the basis of Hanseatic law (“merchants' rights”), under the supervision of the administration of the German Courtyard and with the assistance of representatives of the Novgorod merchant circles. At the same time, students enjoyed a number of privileges and privileges, in particular, they were usually not subject to “detention”. The education system of the Hanseatic merchant, due to its profile and compliance with the real state of entrepreneurship in Novgorod, had a positive impact on the nature of Russian-Hanseatic relations in Novgorod and was an integrating source of stability.

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