The Evidence of Cultural Exchange between Novgorod and the Hanseatic League during the Late Middle Ages

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Under the supervision of

Roman Zaoral, PhDr.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that no portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application of another degree, or qualification thereof, or for any other university or institute of learning.

I declare that this thesis is my own independent work. All the used material and literature has been duly referenced and quoted.

In Prague, 26th June 2017

signature: ____________________

Sergey Lutsenko
Abstract

During the twelfth century German merchants monopolized the trade in the Baltic region, and profoundly influenced the commercial, diplomatic and cultural relationships of Novgorod with Northern Europe. With formation of the Hanseatic League by the year 1370, the exchange of commodities, people and ideas between Novgorod and the Hanse had reached its peak. The trade was a moving engine of this exchange. In this work I will address the various dimensions of cultural transfers that occurred between Novgorod and the Hanseatic League during the Late Middle Ages. On top of material aspects such as exchange of commodities and distribution of ceramics, non-material aspects such as language and exchange of commercial practices will be discussed. The history of social contact between merchants will be emphasized. The main goal is to provide various evidence of cultural transfer between Novgorodian and Hanseatic merchants during the Late Middle Ages.
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I. THEORETICAL PART

1.1 Introduction

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, great Russian historian Aleksandr Ivanovich Nikitsky made a comment in one of his works on the economic structure of Novgorod: “The problem of cultural influence of Western European trade as well as German merchant community in ancient Russia 1, despite being of utmost interest for historian, is seriously under researched in current available scholarship 2.” He stated that most of his contemporaries, who researched on the topic of Russo-Hanseatic relationships, emphasized the economical or political aspects, while almost entirely dismissing cultural elements.

More than a century has passed, historical research was enriched by countless scholarships, new theories and approaches; and the development of anthropological thought had a substantial impact on how we view and interpret cultures. Many books were written on the history of Novgorod-Hanseatic relationships since then, but the issue still stands: the study of cultural dimension of these relationships remains somewhat under-researched.

However, this is not surprising. When a historian analyses Novgorod and Hanseatic League connections in the Middle Ages, the commercial relations are naturally in the centre of attention; business and trade were the motivation, reason and moving engine behind contacts between two very different worlds.

The scarcity of sources tackling the problem directly is thus one of the main reasons for certain complexities and delimitations in this work. Moreover, the approach that I’m using to trace the evidence for cultural contacts and exchange between Novgorodian 3 and Hanseatic merchants in Late Middle Ages I believe is altogether a novelty. Such an approach thus I consider being rather valuable and significant for the current case study 4 and beyond.

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1 From Russian: Drevniya Rus’
2 A. I. Nikitskiy, Istoriya Ekonomicheskogo Byta Velikago Novgoroda (Universitetskaya tipografiya: Strastnoi Bulvar, Moscow, 1893) p. XIII
3 Local population or merchants of Novgorod
4 “Case study” in my work is meant as synonym to “topic” or “theme” and is not related to ethnography
The main goal of this work is, relying on indicators from historical and archaeological sources and literature, as well as applying the theory of cultural transfers ⁵, to provide comprehensible evidence of material and non-material elements of cultural exchange ⁶ between Hanseatic and Russian population in Novgorod during Late Middle Ages.

Decision to limit the territorial scope mostly to Novgorod urban area was made in order to contribute to the comprehensibility of my work. Thus, I will mainly trace the evidence for cultural transfers in the Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod, with exception of these parts of my work where I provide a comparison with Bruges, and briefly with Pskov.

The choice of Late Middle Ages is primarily connected to the period being relatively well-researched; with valuable literature available in connection with the thesis; as well as motivated by decision to analyse IV edition of Scra as a primary source.

The administrative and political structure of Novgorod, as well as of Hanseatic cities I have largely left out in favour of emphasizing commercial and cultural relationships and inter-relation between them. The history of Novgorod- Hanseatic relations as well as historical origins and structure of the Hanseatic League are included as directly relevant to emergence and organization of Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod, as well as cultural exchange. In regard to archaeological sources I used only evidence in direct relation to the case study, selectively.

My work is interdisciplinary. I acknowledge the fact that I use and combine elements from numerous disciplines such as economic history and cultural studies. Nevertheless, I consider this thesis most and foremost a historical work.

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⁵ Refer to the methodology
⁶ Definitions also in methodology
1.2 Research questions:

I divide my research questions into two categories: primary research questions and secondary research questions. The latter form the integral part of the former. Thus, I have two primary questions, and several secondary research questions.

1. **What is the material evidence of cultural transfer between Novgorod and Hanseatic League in Late Middle Ages?**
   - On example of imported foreign cloth distribution and influence in Novgorod
   - On example of foreign ceramics distribution and influence in Novgorod

2. **What is the non-material evidence of cultural transfer between Novgorod and Hanseatic League in Late Middle Ages?**
   - On example of language
   - On example of religious ceremony participation
   - On example of adoption of commercial practices
   - On examples from IV edition of Scra

1.3 Methodology

The methodological essence of my work is the use of historical method in regards to search, critical evaluation and interpretation of sources. By this is meant:

- **The use of Heuristic approach** as identification of primary sources that are most relevant for the case study.
- **A critical evaluation** of primary sources based on criteria of relevance to the case study as well as examining the authenticity of primary sources
- **Interpretation** of above mentioned elements, as shown in Critical Evaluation of Sources and Literature and Analysis of IV edition of Scra ⁷

1.3.1 Interpretation of sources

⁷ Refer to the table of contents for orientation
The possibility of existence of the objective historical narratives has been continuously and successfully challenged by postmodernist thought. Such critical attitudes eventually led a number of historians to deny that there exists any difference between history and fiction and that historians should outspokenly recognize that historical narratives are constructs, inevitably distorted by the subjective. It has been argued that objectivity is unachievable in history and that greatest a historian can achieve is the approximate, or plausibility. Such a position does not however imply that history has lost its meaning, neither that a historian work is a work of fiction.

Historian relies on archival research, and even though the nature and content of his sources are not unquestionable, there is still certain criterion of authenticity involved. The best work a historian could and should do is to approach the sources as accurately as possible, with an attitude of a professional, understanding the role of his own judgement in the process, being aware of the role of the subjective opinion.\(^8\)

I acknowledge and agree to this position, and declare that none of the results of my work should be viewed as objective truths; they are only an approximate estimation of what could have happened. All the sources I use, primary and secondary, are subjects of mine, or somebody else’s interpretation. They are therefore just indicators that serve as means to attain approximate, plausible results, and are open to discussion.

The application of concept above concerns primarily the interpretation of historical and archaeological sources; in regards to methodology of cultural transfers, I apply the concept described in a following subchapter.

1.3.2 Cultural transfers

For a few decades, historical research on cultural transfers has been established as a standard, working paradigm in the humanities as well as social sciences. Several recent historiographical developments such as entagled history ⁹, transcultural history ¹⁰ or historie croisee ¹¹ as well as others can be distinguished by their principal concern with cultural exchange. Above mentioned scholarship can be unified on one ground: the inclusion of cultural interrelations as one of the core principles of historical research. In such research, it is often stated that it is not possible to fully comprehend history without taking cultural contacts into consideration. Cultural transfers are at the epicentre of current historical study, however, my point here is not to provide a detailed insight into the theoretical core of this research. The raison d'etre of this subchapter is to introduce the working definition of cultural transfer, outline its certain aspects and to apply the concept to my case study.

It is quite natural that the discussion regarding cultural transfers cannot be initiated without first defining what is meant by “culture” in my understanding. First of all, as I shall further illustrate, the notion of “cultural exchange” presupposes the fluidity of cultures: their mutual inter-dependence and mutual influences. Therefore, the definition that I have chosen I present as relative; meaning that I do not assume any degree of homogeneity or any boundaries, nor I take any account for the work of the author of this definition. I firmly agree to the position of Christoph Brumann, who states that amongst the number of widely used definitions of culture ¹², be so classic or modern one, there is no explicit claim in neither about culture having any degree of homogeneity, having boundaries, nor being delimited. ¹³

I have chosen the following definition as long as I think it is clear enough for this research: “Culture is the socially transmitted knowledge and behaviour, shared by some group of people.” ¹⁴

How can cultural transfer be defined? Jorg Feucher from the Humboldt University in Berlin describes it as „building block of cultural development, which does take place in almost all

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⁹ J. Feuchter, F. Hoffmann, B. Yun, Cultural Transfers in Dispute (Campus Verlag: Frankfurt/ New York, 2011) p.16
¹² Meant those definitions presented in Brumann article
¹³ C. Brumann, Writing for Culture, Why a Successful Concept Should not be Discarded (The University of Chicago Press, 1999), S3
¹⁴ Ibid., citation p. S2
human societies almost all the time.\textsuperscript{15} According to Feuchter, nearly every process in history can be understood as cultural transfer and any historical situation as a product of it. I’m briefly using his description to point out that there are many definitions, which can significantly vary in accordance to an approach or a particular historical situation an author analyses. Nevertheless the scope of the notion can be very broad, in order to achieve comprehensive results in terms of application of the concept to my case study I choose to partially use a more precise and less wide-ranging description as presented by Dana Štefanova in her article on cultural exchange.

Cultural transfers can be understood as a correlation between socio-cultural practices and geographical spaces\textsuperscript{16}. Naturally, as in any discussion on cultural comparison or exchange, there comes a question regarding cultural identities, degree of their homogeneity and independence. Cultural entities are not entirely independent dimensions with their identities partially being the outcome of cultural interactions. Therefore, the own and the other are not solely opposing, or contrasting units; they are also inter-related. The own is formed under the influence of the other, meaning that one culture would inevitably include some elements of surrounding cultures or cultures it is in continuous contact with\textsuperscript{17}. It is particularly noticeable in terms of art and architecture; an example from my case study can be applied: German merchants used to travel and do business in Novgorod in Late Middle Ages. There, they would observe the customs and behaviour of local population, especially in direct connection with commercial activities. Later, they would reproduce their impressions in artwork\textsuperscript{18}. That particular example can serve as proof of adaptation of foreign cultural material as well as one of the few examples of cultural exchange.

Importantly, cultural transfers are not constrained to social strata; they also include the movements of material objects, ideas and individual people; in other words, material culture plays an important role in the processes of cultural exchange. An exceptionally important role belonged to the category of social agents. This category includes those individuals who frequently travelled between regions thus contributing significantly to cultural exchange. Such groups included scholars, artists, merchants, bankers and more. A movement of books and ideas also constituted an important element of cultural transfer.

\textsuperscript{15} J. Feuchter, F. Hoffmann, B. Yun, Cultural Transfers in Dispute (Campus Verlag: Frankfurt/ New York, 2011) Citation p. 20
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 14
\textsuperscript{18} See ref. 3 in Tables and Figures
To sum up, by cultural transfer I mean: The movement of material goods and objects¹⁹, individuals and ideas²⁰ between two relatively different, relatively distinguishable cultures which results in interaction and possible mutual influences. This definition, as explained above, is going to be entailed in discussion further in my work under both “cultural transfer” and “cultural exchange” notions. Importantly, there were multiple cases when local population appeared to resist foreign cultural influences. I describe such cases as “resistance to cultural transfers”, following an example by Wolfgang Schmale.²¹

It is important to mention that some scholars did differentiate between “cultural transfer” and “cultural exchange”, however, the difference remains subtle and the two can be used interchangeably.²²

An essential feature of cultural transfer research is to abstain from using terms such as “country” or “nation”. Whenever I refer to Russo- German transfers in Late Middle Ages as exchanges between Russian and German cultures, I assume that these did not exist in a homogenous form. As mentioned above, I keep the position that cultures are inter-related, and embark on the task to identify elements of this inter-relation and connection.

1.3.3 Comparative analysis

I apply comparative analysis in relation to two outposts of the Hanseatic League. In terms of method, I use an approach to comparative analysis as described by Miroslav Hroch.²³

According to Hroch, the application of comparative method must follow four basic requirements. First, the objects of comparison must be defined clearly and belong to the same category. Second, the aim or comparison must be determined. Third, the comparative process must be placed onto chronological axis; synchronically or diachronically. Fourth, certain criteria of comparison should be established, such as the qualities of the objects in comparsion.

Following up on the structure described above; the objects I compare are two cities-Novgorod and Bruges, with the aim to identify similarities and differences in regard to certain criteria; location, regulation of trade and particular trade practices. I analyze synchronically, meaning that I compare particular historical processes that occurred in different places, during the same time –

¹⁹ Material cultural exchange
²⁰ Non-material cultural exchange
²² Ibid., pp. 1-14
Late Middle Ages. The ultimate purpose of comparison in my work, however, is to identify the aspects of cultural transfer.

1.4 Critical evaluation of sources and literature

When it comes to research on the subject of Novgorod-Hanseatic trade and cultural connections, the sources available are multiple and appropriate interpretation of these sources is the key element to the profound understanding of underlying processes.

Most of the literature I use in my work comes from Russian historiography; 19th century pre-revolution scholarship as well as later Soviet era research materials. Both of these research traditions have their disadvantages alongside, as I shall further illustrate, advantages. The Russian literature from post-Soviet period generally relies on solid research executed during above mentioned epochs, as well as there are some post-Soviet materials that I use which are compilations and reviews of work done previously, such as books by Elena Aleksandrovna Rybina. The indeed significant body of research on my chosen subject belongs to, essentially, German authors. Unfortunately, my level of German language would not allow for a thorough enough interpretation of the texts, however, thanks to brilliant skills of my tutor, as well as help I received from several other excellent advisors, I am able to refer to some chosen materials written in German. The literature in English constitutes a minor part of my work, despite the language of my work being English. Nevertheless, some of the sources proved to be particularly useful, and I will overview them towards the end of this chapter.

Additionally, before I start discussing any scholarship that was produced within Soviet Union, it is necessary to point out the heavy influence of Soviet censorship on nearly all research done in Humanities and Social Sciences. The resulting impact of this censorship can be a topic of an academic paper or perhaps a thesis on its own; therefore I will not attempt to describe it in full. However, the leading Marxist notion of Historical Materialism and Class Struggle did indeed exercise major influence on scholarship produced within the Eastern Bloc, especially the Soviet Union itself.

It is arguable, however, regarding Soviet historiography; which elements and to what degree were particularly distorted to the point of becoming manipulated or propagandist. Nevertheless, considering the fact that much Soviet scholarship I rely on are authoritative sources which authority had been recognized in the European and US academia.
1.4.1 Primary sources

Written sources on which most research scholarship is based regarding Medieval Novgorod can be divided into several categories, and working examples could be: narrative sources, clerical books and charter documents.

Narrative sources would be, for instance, manuscripts or chronicles of either Russian or German origin. Analysis of narrative sources such as letters and personal Journals, if available, can greatly help in understanding social relationships between Russian and German traders. Clerical books would include books on customs, trade; cargo lists regarding certain port location or particular transportation ships. Charter documents generally include international treaties, Hanseatic council orders or documents on trade organization rules. Clerical materials draw a picture of foreign trade in connection with history of foreign politics events; other materials mentioned coupled with archaeological evidence would help characterize the level of social and economic development of Novgorod land as well as provide information about foreign import and export goods.

Amongst documents, which illustrate the history of Hanseatic settlement of Novgorod the most valuable are those of German origin, preserved in the archives of Danzig, Riga, Tallinn, Lubeck and others. In these archives are included the wide correspondence between various German merchants, who did business in Novgorod and multiple city councils in mostly Lubeck, Riga, Reval and Tartu; which were in charge of Hanseatic kontor in Novgorod during Late Middle Ages.

As I have shown, the primary source materials on the subject are plentiful. However, the language remains the main obstacle. Most sources mentioned above were written in Middle Low German, and very few translations into Russian language exist. Most of them are translated, essentially, into German, the language I do not have sufficient control of. Linguistic barrier is one if the reasons why I choose to analyse IV edition of Scra as a primary document, but it’s not the main one. My manuscript of choice is highly relevant for the case study, and I will prove so subsequently.

Scra, or the book of laws of Hanseatic yards in Novgorod, is the source of utmost value in regarding to life of Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod; it is known in 7 editions. The Scra was

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24 Kontor- Hanseatic outpost, or yard.
created to condition and regulate commercial and social life within the borders of Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod. This source covers the life in German settlement, routine of merchants, regulations of trade in fairly comprehensive way. The manuscript was produced solely for legal regulation of affairs in Hanseatic yards, and was not meant as historical document at the time it was written. The intended audience was German merchant strata in Novgorod. The author is unknown. Taking these facts into consideration it can be said that the document is fairly reliable and that the only critical issue in this case can be the inaccuracy of translation from Middle Low German to Russian. I provide analysis of IV edition of Scra in the IV chapter of this work.

Additionally, I use two various artworks from the fifteenth century; the Orthodox icon “Deisusniy chin I molyashiesja Novgorodci” dated 1467 as well as carved and painted wooden panel from the church of St. Nicholas in Stralsund, dated approximately 1400. I do not, however, provide iconographical analysis of these artworks; I use them solely to provide additional evidence and support my argument.

1.4.2 Literature

One of the first important events that pushed the research on Novgorod-Hanseatic trade relationships forward both in Germany and in Russia was the publication of “Geshichte das hanseatischen Bundes” (Freiherr., 1801-1808) by Georg Friedrich Sartorius. This work was in essence a compilation of various Hanseatic documents, equipped with side notes and comments by the author. Many documents, published in both editions of this publication included analysis of Novgorod-Hanseatic relations as well as historical details regarding the German yard, or Peterhof.

The invaluable information provided in this scholarship ignited a profound historian’s interest and served as a basis for much of research that followed afterwards. The significant drawbacks in Sartorius work, however, were pointed out already in 19th century by great Russian historian Nikolai Michailovich Karamzin.

He stated that Sartorius disregarded the independent historical development of Russian lands to the degree that he considered Novgorod and Pskov gradually developing according to patterns provided by German societies. This position has been criticized and further on disproved by new research.

Another scholar mentioning who I deem necessary for the sake of my effort is Ivan Efimovich Andreevskiy.

For both artworks, see tables and figures

M. N. Berezhkov, O torgovle Rusi s Ganzoi do konca XV veka (v tipografii V. Bezobrazova, 1879) p. I

Ibid., p. I
His numerous works, published around the middle of 19\textsuperscript{th} century in a number of languages were widely referred to by his contemporaries, as well as later researchers and his work is even today rather suitable for citing.

One of his most valuable contributions to the subject was “O dogovore Novagoroda s Nemeckimi Gorodami i Gotlandom, zaklyuchennom v 1270 godu” (1855) \textsuperscript{29}. A treaty, which is the subject of above stated research was a milestone in the history of Novgorod-Hanseatic relationships, therefore it was invaluable for historians of Andreevskiy’ lifetime and is still referred to by specialists today.

Above-mentioned scholarship prominently influenced the historical research on the subject and provided ground for future generations of historians to base their work on.

Provided with solid base, historians in second half of 19\textsuperscript{th} century consistently revealed and published new documentation, which inspired more interest and more analyses. During that period appeared few of the most fundamentally important works, which provided solid ground for my own research inclusively.

These include most of all Michael Nikolaevich Berezhkov, who I frequently refer to, as well as Aleksandr Ivanovich Nikitsky.

Berezhkov’ work “O torgovle Rusi s Ganzoi do konca XV v.” (1879) \textsuperscript{30} is the most detailed and resourceful study on the subject done at that time.

Using an impressively systematic approach, Berezhkov proceeds with analysis of Novgorod-Hanseatic trade connections since their inception, eventually forming a solid, comprehensive and well-documented account of foreign trade yards in Novgorod. Berezhkov’ analysis encompasses a wide range of issues, including research on both pre-Hanseatic and Hanseatic period.

Such a wide angle approach can be useful in terms of observing the whole picture, but at the same time it can be an obstacle for more specialized research such as characteristics of trade or activity or merchants in particular time period.

As a consequence of sufficient focus on particular issues such as listed above lacking in Berezhkov’s work, he retained a notion that presumed no trade activity limits existed – although they did exist; for Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod; a concept out-dated even for his time.

Nikitsky’ bibliography include an impressive amount of titles on history of Novgorod, but it is his work called “Istoriya Ekonomicheskogo Byta Velikogo Novgoroda” (1893) \textsuperscript{31}, published posthumously; that is important both for my work as well as for the history of Novgorod-

\textsuperscript{29} I.E. Andreevskiy, O Dogovore Novagoroda c Nemeckimi Gorodami I Gotlandom, zaklyuchennom v 1270 godu (Juridicheckij fakultet imperatorskago S. Peterburgskago Universiteta v tipografii Jakoba Treya, 1855)

\textsuperscript{30} M. N. Berezhkov, O torgovle Rusi s Ganzoi do konca XV veka (v tipografii V. Bezobrazova, 1879)

\textsuperscript{31} A. I. Nikitskiy, Istoriya Ekonomicheskogo Byta Velikago Novgoroda ( Universitetskaya tipografiya: Strastnoi Bulvar, Moscow, 1893)
Hanseatic relationships in general. This book served as reference to numerous prominent researchers on the subject in concern, as long as a compilation of documents and information the author extracted from them in his analysis was an effort that led to more complete and systematic understanding of the issue, especially in terms of trade exchange. Legitimizing his own criticism of Berezhkov’ work, Nikitsky does indeed focus on particular aspects and trade relationships. He was the first to point out the limitations that Novgorodians introduced toward Hanseatic merchants and their activities in Novgorod, prohibition that was enforced upon Hanseatic traders regarding trade with non-Hanseatic merchants.

Amongst drawbacks of Nikitsky’ work a lack of connection between economical and political structure of Novgorod can be named.

Nikitsky’ work was a last specialized one on the subject in the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire, after that we only see new Russian scholarship focused on Novgorod-Hanseatic trade and cultural aspects appear during the second half of 20th century, in Soviet Union.

Most importantly, Soviet historians are credited with revealing, publishing and providing analysis for historical documents of utmost value such as ancient Novgorod manuscripts, republication and re-editing of first Novgorod Chronicle, discovery of Birchbark documents and of course, archaeological efforts.

This work would have been practically impossible to complete without great scholarly efforts of Elena Aleksandrovna Rybina. As a member of Novgorod archaeological expedition, she is indeed a leading specialist on the topic of Novgorod connection with the Hanseatic League. I generally refer to the following of her works: “Novgorod I Ganza” and “Inozemnye Dvory v Novgorode” 32 33. The latter book summarizes her research on foreign trade yards or stations in Novgorod. The period encompassed in the book stretches from twelfth to seventeenth centuries inclusively. A very detailed scholastic research provided in this book contains the very origins of foreign yard trade stations, starting with Gotenhof in early twelfth century and continuously following the progress of the yards as well as development of commercial and social Novgorod-Hanseatic relations way beyond 1478 34. Principally well informed, this work relies on foundational scholarship from Russian, as well as from foreign sources including multiplicity of German literature.

In the former book Rybina goes deeper into socio-cultural aspects of trade relations based essentially on primary sources. An outstanding effort included in both volumes is the publication

32 E. A. Rybina: Novgorod I Ganza (Rukopisyne pamiatniki drevnej Rusi, 2009)
34 In 1478 Novgorod lost its independence to tsar Ivan III.
of primary source documents such as Scra in Middle Low German with thorough translation to Russian language.

It is indeed challenging to find drawbacks in the work of professor Rybina, with her scholarship completed in ultimately precise manner in almost all possible aspects. However, her being an archaeologist first, as well as of Soviet background; reading some of the chapters a reader might retain a feeling that author presents Russian history in a somewhat exaggeratedly patriotic manner, with words like “homeland” and “our” being used quite frequently. Additionally, some of the progressive professional opinions are heatedly dismissed by Rybina personally as being “overly ambitious”, especially in regards to progressive historical concepts such as cultural transfers or cultural exchange. My personal position here is that when doing historical research an open mind is a must, in regards to one’s own feelings, possible alternative interpretation of same material, as well as new emerging historical hypotheses.

Further on, I include the work of Anna Leonidovna Choroshkevich, close associate of E.A. Rybina. I mostly refer to her work “Torgovlya Velikogo Novgoroda s Pribaltikoi I Zapadnoi Evropoi v XIV-XV vekah” 35. This scholarship, published in 1963, is a precise account of particular import and export elements regarding Novgorod-Hanseatic trade. It is concerned more with economic history than with social or political aspects of contacts, however, as long as all these elements constitute a part of one whole, some chosen materials from this book I considered necessary to include in my research. The disadvantage of this work was unavoidable during the time it was published: the scarcity of sources. According to Choroshkevich herself, during the time her book was written- which dates back to 1950’s and early 1960’s, availability of Russian materials on the topic were extremely scarce, and foreign sources were largely unavailable. However, fortunately for the author, the archives of Baltic states, back then Soviet Union territories; provided rich material to base her scholarship on.

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the sources in English language constitute the minor part of my thesis. Nevertheless, I deem it necessary to include the literature I found the most helpful. Firstly, a number of articles by David Gaimster, for instance “A Parallel History: The Archaeology of Hanseatic Urban Culture in the Baltic c. 1200-1600” 36 included intriguing features such as using archaeological evidence to prove territorially disparate communities, such as Novgorod and Hanseatic ports, becoming culturally and technologically homologous through the need to maintain constant commercial contact.

35 A.L. Khoroshkevich, Torgovlya Velikogo Novgoroda v XIV-XV vekah (Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963)
Secondly the book by Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz and Stuart Jenks called *The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* 37 greatly helped in structuring the historical overview of the case study, with particular emphasis on formation of the Hanseatic League. This book also helped shape the subchapter on comparison between Novgorod and Bruges. Finally, I used “*The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016-1471*” 38, which is essentially the translation of First Novgorod Chronicle manuscript executed by several authors. The book was mainly used for general purposes with some particular details extracted as being useful, however there exist considerable weaknesses in this work such as the abrupt culmination of the chronicle in 1471.

The most useful resource in German that I managed to translate and interpret is a book by Norbert Angermann and Klaus Friedland named *Novgorod: Markt und Kontor der Hanse* 39. In this book I found relevant information on historical origins of Hanseatic League as well as Novgorod- Hanseatic relationships.

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37 J. Wubs-Mrozewicz/ Stuart Jenks: The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brill, 2013)
39 N. Angermann/ K. Friedland, Novgorod: Markt und Kontor der Hanse (Bohlau, 2002)
II. EMPIRICAL PART

2.1 Novgorod-Hanseatic relations

On the onset of fifteenth century, a Hanseatic vicar working in Novgorod described the journey as “terribly long expedition” 40. The distance between Lubeck and Novgorod is more than 1900 kilometers; with medieval North-German mode of transportation being mostly seaborne, it does not come as surprising why the vicar was complaining. It took great effort, risk and endurance in order to complete such a long distance voyage during Middle Ages. The merchants who embarked on such a quest risked everything, not only during the trip, but also well after they reached their destination. Their efforts, however, were very well motivated. During the twelfth century German merchants monopolized the trade in the Baltic region, and profoundly influenced the commercial, diplomatic and cultural relationships of Novgorod with Northern Europe. Since the inception of thirteenth century, the western European oriented trade of Novgorod is directly linked with German merchants, who throughout that time period organized and systematized regional, mainly port city unions in order to protect traders out in the sea and land, deliver certain privileges to them and increase the effectiveness of trade by all means necessary. The organization of such regional trade unions eventually led to the emergence of the great defensive and commercial confederation of German cities, which came to be known by the name of the Hanse, or the Hanseatic League. Completely formed by the year 1370, the Hanse united tens of cities from various parts of German lands and beyond, with leading authority and capital in Lubeck. Throughout the peak of its strength and influence in fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, the Hanseatic League controlled most of Western European trade, being a major intermediary in trade deals between parts of Northern, Central and Eastern Europe. At all times, the city of Novgorod sustained its role as a key commercial partner of the Hanseatic League. It was there Europeans purchased the valuable, mostly raw goods such as wax, fur pelts, honey and more. In exchange, Europeans imported high quality products such as cloth. In Lubeck and other large Hanseatic cities there existed merchant guilds which specialized specifically on trade with Novgorod; as long as multiple commercial, cultural and social differences demanded a very specific approach in regard to the most Eastern outpost of the Hanse.

As long as trade contacts remained constant, there naturally occurred a need to arrange commercial settlements for foreign as well as Russian guest merchants on the territory of Novgorod. The first of such settlements within the borders of the city was Gotland yard, or Gotenhof, with church of saint Olaf in its centre, founded by Gotland merchants as early as twelfth century. By the end of twelfth century the German yard, or Peterhof, was built, with the church of saint Peter in its centre.

After the first Hanseatic diet was held in 1356 and the formation of the League marked the landmark of European trade, Peterhof became the main hub of Hanseatic trade in Novgorod and one of the biggest kontors, or Hanseatic foreign trading outposts in Europe. The Gotenhof, while remaining the property of Gotland, was leased to Hanseatic merchants. Since the inception of the kontor in Novgorod until thirteenth century, its inner organization was autonomous, without dependence on outside political powers. Neither Lubeck, nor other Hanseatic cities, nor even Russian leaders had complete control over the organization and administration of the kontor. By the end of thirteenth century the cities of Hanseatic League began to exercise influence over the kontor business and by the second half of the fourteenth century the League had de facto control of the kontor. After the first Hanseatic diet, the League also claimed control de jure.

Each of two enclaves had churches, were equipped with storage facilities as well as residence buildings with territory protected by powerful stockades made of large wooden logs. Evidently, Peterhof was equipped with a brewery, kitchen, hospital, mill and Gotenhof included storages for salt. A small cemetery rested on the grounds of St. Peters church.

As long as merchants of Hanse residing in Novgorod had to cope with alien, quite often hostile environment, much effort was invested into security measures in order to prevent any possible treat or damage to the yards or churches.

The right to trade and reside in yards was reserved exclusively for merchants of the Hanseatic League, which included several dozens of towns from Livonian, Prussian and German lands. The maximum possible length of stay was limited to a year total, with usual change of shifts in either summer or winter. The overall population, residing in either Gotenhof or Peterhof at the same time reached as much as 200 people at the peak of Hanseatic trade. All social and material arrangements in yards, commercial and business rules as well as relationships with Novgorodians were strictly regulated by specific chapter, or constitution, named Scra; basically

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41 Merchant guests from other Russian cities
meaning “the book of laws”. The original Scra was created approximately around 1270. There were 7 editions of Skra, drafted between thirteenth and seventeenth century.\footnote{A. Fink: Under what conditions may social contracts arise? Evidence from the Hanseatic League (Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, 2010) p. 178}

Main legislative organ of the whole kontor was an assembly of all present Hanseatic merchants, under the leadership of the chosen chiefs. The assembly had a leading authority in commercial and legal procedures.

The area where the trade took place was either Gotenhof or Peterhof; there Novgorodian traders would come to arrange a deal or to pick up the foreign goods previously purchased.

One of the general and most important regulations between Novgorod and Hanse was the following: in case if any particular individual violates the recognized regulations \footnote{Regulated by a treaty, such as a treaty between Novgorod and German cities, made in 1270}, the lawsuit and arrest should only be implemented to that particular individual. Nevertheless, this rule was often ignored and in practice in case if one individual violated the regulations, all German traders were arrested in Novgorod, and, in parallel, all Novgorodian merchants arrested if a similar case occurred in one of the Hanseatic towns. \footnote{E. A. Rybina: Novgorod I Ganza (Rukopisnye pamjatniki drevnej Rusi, 2009) p. 74}

Above mentioned factor, on top of multiple other issues and sometimes irreconcilable differences led to, as historical research indicates, an abundance of trade conflicts, embargoes and often clashes between foreign merchants and local population. Military and political conflicts between Novgorod and its rivals, especially the Livonian Order, were quite often the catalyst of the multiplicity of trade struggles. Nonetheless the rights of merchants were protected via trade agreements including the provision of free movement in case of conflict; these aspects were often overlooked and trade blockades were instigated. In times of particularly severe encounters, Hanseatic traders shut down the yard and churches, collected all of their property including valuables, archival materials, treasury contents and left Novgorod as soon as means possible, leaving the yard keys to the most reliable individuals. \footnote{M. Berezhkov, O torgovle Rusi s Ganzi do konca XV veka (v tipografii V. Bezobrazova, 1879) 140}

The role of Livonian order in military struggles and trade disputes which former led to is rather apparent: the second part of thirteenth century marked the active expansionist politics of the order, especially towards the north-eastern direction. \footnote{E.A. Rybina in V.L. Janin, Ocherki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda (Jazyki slavyanskikh kultur, 2008) p. 366} However, the focus of my work is directed towards analysing the time of peace rather than a time of war; with particular emphasis on how commercial potential and the need to keep the business running eventually led to cooperation and cultural exchange.
2.2 The Hanseatic League

There exists plentiful amount of scholarship written on the history of the Hanseatic League, including a variety of hypotheses, sometimes controversial. Eventually, many of these works pose a question about actual origins and formation of the Hanse; the question to find an answer to which is not as easy at it might seem even in the light of all available information. It might be difficult to understand the processes of formation and functions of the League, especially if one relies heavily on comparison with medieval economical and political structures such as merchant guilds or urban leagues. Due to its multidirectional activities, the purpose and structure of the Hanse is often a cause for heated debates. For the purpose of clarification as well as in regard of the direct connection with my case study, I deem it important to provide some insight into origins, definitions and inner organization of the Hanseatic League, with the help of provided scholarship.

The history of the Baltic Sea region is abundant with complex relationships between various cultural units, and that’s what makes the region unique. The area of the Baltic that was under the influence of the Hanseatic League can be described as well-integrated economically, with ample flows of commodities exchange and substantial migrant flow persisting throughout the period of Late Middle Ages and beyond. With majority of the Hanseatic cities being sea ports, the area was well interconnected with sea-lanes well travelled, making the transportation of goods and people a cheap and fairly swift journey. The city-ports that emerged on the Baltic coast, entailed into the structure of German Hanse, shared many cultural practices and economic customs. Amongst those; language, art and common economic culture can be named.

There has been research done that proposes to unify the Baltic region in the Middle Ages as based upon the notion of common economic culture. Particularly, it is argued that there was a common or at least highly similar economic culture shared within the region.

The roots of such a unifying influence can at least partially be traced in the expansion of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic Sea region and the integration of particular territories by it throughout Middle Ages.

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50 H. Brand/ L. Muller, The Dynamics of Economic Culture in the North Sea- and Baltic Region in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period (Uitgeverij Verloren, Hilversum 2007) p.7
51 Shared cultural and economic practices within the region under Hanseatic influence
52 H. Brand/ L. Muller, The Dynamics of Economic Culture in the North Sea- and Baltic Region in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period (Uitgeverij Verloren, Hilversum 2007) p.7
2.2.1 Origins and structure of the Hanse

With German crusades moving eastwards during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is unsurprising that the commercial activity followed closely. With Northern Europe just emerging from the Viking Age, it seems natural that German traders formed an alliance for protecting their business interests.

The first such commercial association emerged in Visby, on the island of Gotland in 1161, under a name “United Gotland Travellers of the Holy Roman Empire”. Throughout a century that followed the confederation of German merchant cities grown into the primary vehicle of commercialism and cultural exchange in Northern Europe and the Baltic. The involvement of the cities in Hanseatic business was directly and solely through merchants, who sometimes served as emissaries of their cities of origin. The motivation behind participation of merchants in Hanseatic trade was based exclusively on financial profits, therefore the business was running only when there was a potential to achieve significant commercial gains. When it was no longer potentially profitable or in any other way desirable to conduct business with the Hanseatic partners, traders would simply give up their participation as well as membership in common structures of the Hanse.\(^\text{53}\)

Thus, shared commercial interest was the common mechanism behind most underlying processes within the Hanseatic League, and it is important to understand that the reasons for most arrangements, made and executed by the members of the League, were largely motivated by the will to produce sustained financial profits.

The other reasons behind formation of Hanseatic League organization were the necessity to expand the economic influence of the League and secure the trading rights in foreign outposts, as well as ensure security\(^\text{54}\). The cooperation between city-members of the Hanse was discussed at the regular meetings, called the Hanseatic Diets, most often held in the capital of the League – Lubeck.

Generally speaking, the main economic function of the League was mass exchange of finished, mostly high quality products from regions such as Mediterranean or Flanders for bulk amounts of raw materials from mostly Eastern and Northern regions of Europe.\(^\text{55}\) Therefore, one commercial trade organization connected various culturally and economically diverse regions of

\(^{53}\) J. Wubs-Mrozewicz/ Stuart Jenks: The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brill, 2013) p. 5
\(^{54}\) R. Hammel-Kiesow, Novgorod und Lubeck in N. Angermann/ K. Friedland, Novgorod: Markt und Kontor der Hanse (Bohlau, 2002) p. 27
European continent. The League had no full authority over its members; it was mostly the union of common interests rather than a hierarchical arrangement. All potential resolutions on issues regarding the trade, invention or re-adjustment of trade policies were discussed at Hanseatic Diets and had to be processed and validated in each city-member in order to achieve a binding status and exercise effect on individual merchant.

One of the reasons why such a structure served as basis of the League was the large area of operation, by the standards of the time period; By the year 1400, Hanse was stretching widely in North Sea and the Baltic, including vicinities. A non-hierarchical system based on equal trading rights allowed for merchants from more distant city-members or outposts to be accepted into the association and enjoy profitable advantages in the periphery as much as in the centre of the League.

The uniqueness of the Hanseatic League formation can be highlighted through the contrast with similar medieval commercial organizations such as urban leagues. The essential elements of urban leagues, namely; common seal, foundation act and executive power of treasury were absent within the Hanseatic League structure. Nevertheless, there existed a possibility for cities to belong to both the Hanse and the urban leagues at the same time; that factor exercised significant influence on individual members, and on the League as a whole. The all-time priorities of Hanseatic League were economic; however, military and diplomatic means were used to achieve and sustain a flawless current of trade.

Additionally, the fact that members were not bound to each other in terms of being responsible for each other’s actions increased the freedom of operation and attracted even more interest from the merchants around the region that the Hanse covered.

Merchant guilds were another typical medieval commercial formations understanding the function of which is important for the purpose of comprehending the Hanseatic League organization. Similarly to the Hanse, merchant guilds were non-hierarchical establishments with focus on various aspects of commerce and trade. The term itself, however, can indicate a variety of medieval organizations that existed under different names. In this context it is important to understand that the word “Hansa” means “troop”, “band of men” or “crowd”. It must be stated that there existed many organizations that fell under the “Hanse” category throughout Middle Ages.

56 See Ref. 1 in Tables and Figures
57 J. Wubs-Mrozewicz/ S. Jenks: The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brill, 2013) p.6
58 Ibid., p. 7
59 https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/hanse
Amongst those were the Hansas (sometimes refereed to as “merchant guilds”), which consisted of merchants trading abroad; these played an important role in early stages of formation of the Hanseatic League itself.

Features that these merchant establishments shared in common included voluntary membership, strongly grounded in equality amongst all associates as well as a binding oath. Participation in guild did not only affect the professional and commercial ties of the members, it also profoundly influenced the cultural and religious dimensions of life.

Apart from having self-governing internal administration and independent jurisdiction, guild associates were often bound to a specific location and shared a fundamental obligation to assist and protect each other in case of war or another conflict would occur.

Local merchant guilds were common in Hanseatic cities, and in many aspects the League depended on these as long as merchants who were operating on a particular market abroad were united under the wing of the guilds; a good example would be Lubeck – the capital if the Hanse. Furthermore, relying on the definition presented above; the kontors, or foreign settlements of the Hanse including those in Novgorod -could be categorized as merchant guilds as well. However, Hanseatic League itself cannot be viewed as a merchant guild; the reasons for this statement being the following: most importantly, as briefly mentioned above in the chapter; there was no common seal, internal administration nor treasury. Secondly, there was no oath sworn by all members of the Hanse, the only exception was an oath sworn by an associate who joined a Hanseatic kontor abroad. Moreover, there were no enforced policies towards members by Lubeck, and finally; the contact between members remained infrequent due to irregular meetings usually involving only a relatively small number of merchant participants.

Taking into account the geographical range of the Hanse the above stated arguments logically fall into place; the League was neither a merchant guild nor an urban league, but included several features of both and relied heavily on administrations of the guilds in order to sustain a profitable long-term trade with minimum restrictions and maximum freedom of operation.

Despite lacking an executive internal administration, cooperation within Hanse was based on principles essential for a member to follow in case he wanted to build a sustainable partner relationship. Shared information played a key role that inspired mutual interests from merchants all over the organization.  

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60 J.Wubs-Mrozewicz/ Stuart Jenks: The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brill, 2013) p. 8
2.2.2 Partners of the Hanse

The Hanseatic League functioned as influential network that relied greatly on the choice of commercial partners as well as extended family ties. A crucial aspect of these relationships was mutual trust; business was based on mutual support and shared commercial connections. Being a part of this network allowed one to enjoy numerous advantages and benefit greatly from the information flow that was available to the members of the Hanseatic League; it was provided during the Hanseatic meetings either within the League, in kontors abroad, or through mutual correspondence. Important to mention here is that Middle Low German remained a lingua franca in the Hanse, both in writing and speech; during the discussed period and beyond 61.

Last but not least, on top of being a mercantile and information network, the League made business with several factions, which could be regarded as rivals. Being a part of these groups was less voluntary, and sometimes traders had to travel long distances in order to perform extremely high-profitable business within a hostile environment.

A chief example could be one of the biggest Kontors of the League – Novgorod. Merchants had to travel there and establish connections with local traders as well as local population and administration, which was not a part of the Hanse network system of kinship ties; neither would necessarily welcome Hansards 62 or treat them in a friendly manner. The Hanseatic traders within Novgorod and sometimes other kontors as well had develop and follow strict rules which would allow for peaceful cooperation, ensure safety, prevent conflict and endure commercial ties within the foreign environment 63.

61 Ibid., p. 10
62 Hanseatic merchants
2.3 Material evidence of cultural exchange

2.3.1 Imported cloth as evidence of cultural exchange

According to rich archaeological material, accumulated in Novgorod after almost a century of thorough excavations, we have quite an addition to available written sources when it comes to researching on medieval trade. I deem it necessary to point out that by no means I aim to provide a complete and detailed analysis of trade between Novgorod and Hanseatic towns for the scope of my work would not make it possible to do so. My intention here is to overview imported cloth distribution in connection with occurrence and significance of cultural exchange. There are numerous scholarships done on the matter of trade, to which I gratefully refer.

For the purpose of the case study, the most important category of import to look at is cloth, which is considered to be the major Western import element in Novgorod. The findings of cloth and details about their origin are confirmed by written sources regarding the trade. According to analysis of specific imported wool cloth objects, it is evident that starting in thirteenth century it was mostly Flemish cloth, which eventually replaced English cloth products dominant in the Novgorod region previously. Flemish cloth production dominated the Novgorod market in the Late Middle Ages. Cloth products reached Novgorod market and were sold in bundles, sealed with plumbic seals decorated with heraldic symbols of the cities where the cloth was produced. These seals not only determined the producer of the product and its origin, but as well served as a confirmation of quality standard, as well as indicated an amount of product inside the bundle.

On top of the information available from written sources such as trade records, customs registry books, personal trade journals of merchants as well as, to some degree, Russian birch bark materials there is, as previously described, a significant amount of archaeological evidence to support the analysis of particular trade elements. When it comes to cloth with its by-products, the archaeological evidence is present mostly as remains of looms as well as fragments of various cloth wares. Multiple parts of looms found provide a ground for more or less accurate insight into the technical level of weaving and its development throughout Novgorod.

Major source of foreign cloth findings are residences of nobility, meaning that possibly only wealthy strata of the local population could afford such a luxury.

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64 E.A. Rybina in V.L. Janin, Ocherki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda (Jazyki slavyanskih kultur, 2008) p.371
65 Ibid., p.372
67 Letters and manuscripts written on birch bark, common in medieval Russia
68 Ibid., 162
The import of foreign cloth was necessary due to relatively low level of weaving technology in Russian lands at that period; a demand existed for more high quality cloth materials from abroad. Locally, peasant clothing was generally made of materials such as scrim or linen while fur coats were done using inexpensive sheep, sometimes bear fur. Linen was also often used to weave cloth for higher-class citizens. For elements of their wardrobe the linen of foreign origin was often used as well. The indeed remarkable resource allowing us to grasp how Novgorodians used to dress in middle of fifteenth century is the Orthodox icon called “Praying Novgorodians”.  

On Novgorod markets a diverse range of foreign cloth was sold. Foreign cloth wares did not only arrive to Novgorod as trade objects, quite often cloth was received as a present from Hansards to wealthy Russian kings or members of nobility. This fact might indicate that foreign fashion and dress used to penetrate Russian nobility circles. Important here would be to remind the mediatory role of the Hanse; cloth, same as nearly all other foreign production of West European origin arrived into Novgorod markets through the mediatory action of the Hanseatic League and their outposts.  

Throughout fourteenth to fifteenth centuries the leading position in trade with Novgorod was firmly in the hands of Livonian Hanseatic cities; Riga, Reval, Pernau and Dorpat. Nearly all import went through the customs of these cities, according to existing arrangements with the Hanse. Due to somewhat poor bookkeeping technology in Russian lands in comparison to the West as well as much of archival evidence destroyed in numerous circumstances throughout history, these days we are poorly informed when it comes to calculating the exact volume of import into Novgorodian lands. General information about import in discussed period is scarce even though there are records of individual transactions between Novgorodian and Hanseatic merchants as well as Livonian books. 

According to customs records and trade books, the cloth trade between Novgorod and Livonian cities was flourishing through fourteenth to fifteenth century, especially with Riga and Pernau.  

By the last decades of fifteenth century the turnover of cloth in Riga and Reval was twice as more compared to all other Northern European cities, with which Lubeck had established trade connection. It does not necessarily mean that the Novgorod occupied a deciding position in the East Baltic cloth trade but can suggest certain goods circulation dynamics in the region. The fact that import of cloth into Novgorod was steadily growing in that period is most certainly a valid statement.  

69 See ref. 2 in Tables and Figures  
71 Ibid., p.169  
72 Ibid., p.173
Livonian books. Interestingly, there is evidence that Novgorodians were highly dependent on the import of foreign clothing. The growth of cloth trade in fourteenth-fifteenth centuries is a solid indicator of Novgorod’s economical collaboration with numerous European cities as well as improvement of positive trade relations with various Russian lands. During the period in discussion Novgorod served as a transit point through which European goods were flowing further into Russian territories. As a concluding remark, it can be said that according to material provided above, it can be deducted that the foreign imported cloth can serve as an evidence for cultural exchange. The cloth often received by wealthy members of Russian nobility from Hansards as presents did quite possibly influence the way nobility used to dress. Additionally, indications of extremely high dependency on foreign cloth reinforce evidence of foreign cultural influences in this dimension. Carved and painted wooden panel from the church of st. Nicholas in Stralsund can further reinforce such a claim. On this panel we can see Russian merchants arriving at the gates of Hasneatic enclave to trade with Germans. Certain similarities in dress can be observed.

2.3.2 Resistance to cultural transfers on example of Hanseatic ceramics

Active commercial exchange led to lively travelling of people from various backgrounds to and from Novgorod. Apart from merchants, these were churchmen, craftsmen, administrators, occasionally members of nobility and others. In contrast with other Hanseatic outposts such as Bruges, where the environment and local population as well as authorities welcomed Hanseatic merchants and adopted Hanseatic culture in many aspects; in case of Novgorod the Hanseatic culture was concentrated in the settlements. According to archaeological evidence, imported western ceramics influenced both social and utilitarian elements of life amid mercantile groups throughout the Baltic region. Such import and its archaeological distribution formed a Hanseatic cultural signature and influenced heavily the lifestyle and cultural practices of numerous Hanseatic cities and kontors in the Baltic. However, in case of Novgorod the pattern was different. There, the distribution of western ceramics varied atypically. Archeological findings seem to indicate the wide presence of ceramics only in foreign outposts within the city, or the residences where German trades resided temporarily. The findings of foreign ceramics in other parts of the city are scarce.


74 See 3 in Tables and Figures

75 D. Gaimster, A Parallel History: The Archaeology of Hanseatic Urban Culture in the Baltic c. 1200-1600 in World Archaeology, Vol 37, No. 3, Historical Archaeology (Taylor & Francis, Ltd, 2005) p. 418
2.3.3 The case of Pskov

The polarized pattern of ceramic allocation with concentration either on the market side or in Hanseatic enclaves is characteristic for Novgorod, and contrasts sharply with concentration and spread of ceramics unearthed by archaeologists in Pskov.

The city of Pskov, with it's location 200 kilometers west of the Livonian border, sits in the river Velikaja which connects it to lakes Peipus and Pskov, which served as important arteries linking both Novgorod and Pskov with Hanseatic cities of Riga, Reval and Dorpat. For years, Pskov was ruled by Novgorod as a part of Novgorod Republic, but in 1348 was established an independent state of Pskov Republic, which served as transitional buffer zone between Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Teutonic order.

With its strategic geographical position, it is explainable why Pskov attracted lively commercial activity. The sequence of imported pottery recovered from medieval period in Pskov starts around 1300, and is dominated by stoneware from Siegburg, Lower Saxon, Saxon and Rhenish regions, which is typical for north-east part of the Baltic.

Nevertheless the numbers of imported ceramics are significantly lower than in Novgorod, the distribution pattern varies greatly in Pskov. There, the pottery was distributed across the city much more widely, with much less polarization, with noticeable concentrations appearing only around the market area, located close to Pskov Kremlin.

Such contrasting distributions of pottery in Novgorod and Pskov potentially indicate that the commercial and political organization regarding the trade with the West were quite different in two cities.

Partial explanation might be that with the absence of enclave, similar to Gotenhof or Peterhof in Pskov, Hanseatic merchants traded goods is various parts of the city, and possibly mingled with the native population. However, findings of Western ceramics still remained relatively low in comparison to Western outposts of the Hanse.

2.3.4 Rejection of foreign cultural practices

Western ceramics such as stoneware were largely rejected by the local population of Novgorod. The traditional culture emphasizing woodenwares remained strong and dominant. Russians used pottery, mostly earthenware, predominantly for food preparation and cooking as long as wood was considered to be more suitable for consumption of food. The woodenwares were also vessels actively used for traditional decoration and woodcarving. This fact coupled with tendency to reject offered technologically superior vessels in favor of traditional ones indicates not only a practical dimension of the preference, but as well a cultural one. Such a conclusion provides a notion that the majority of local population did resist foreign cultural practices 77.

2.4 Non-material evidence of cultural exchange

2.4.1 Social life in Hanseatic outposts

In the time of the Middle Ages and beyond, cities throughout Europe had made significant efforts in regard to providing allocation and regulation for foreign traders and their wares. The reasons for such efforts were to attract traders who would bring material goods and eventually contribute to the success and prosperity of the markets, to collect taxes on trade, and to exercise control of these merchants on the territory of the city in order to ensure the maximization of profits and protection of local markets. As for foreign merchants, they saw such arrangements and limitations as a fair deal, provided that in exchange they were granted access to markets otherwise hard or even impossible to penetrate, as well as provided with protection in lands foreign and quite often hostile to them. Additionally, merchants were seeking certain privileges in trade. Amongst those often were the rights to maintain certain degree of independence in affairs amongst themselves as well as, often, ensure they right for monopoly. Arrangements like these were typically made with traders actively involved in the cross-cultural, long distance trade, and the more the division between cultures of host and home societies, the more restrictions on such arrangements were usually imposed. Foreign merchants had to reside on the territories far from their homeland for prolonged periods of time, moreover; they had to adopt a lifestyle distinctive from fellows back home, but neither quite similar to the host societies. Within host cities, settlements under unique arrangement were

77 D. Gaimster, A Parallel History: The Archaeology of Hanseatic Urban Culture in the Baltic c. 1200-1600 in World Archaeology, Vol 37, No. 3, Historical Archaeology (Taylor & Francis, Ltd, 2005) p.419
formed, enclaves within cities, semi-independent communes, the lives in which were often under constant threat from local population; thus had to be strictly regulated by senior representatives. These seniors, or chiefs as they were often called in Peterhof 78, played a crucially important role in the life of such mercantile communities, sustaining the continuity of successful trade partnerships and fulfilling a role of diplomats by negotiating with local authorities. Despite their lengthy residence abroad, they maintained their reputation as strangers and avoided complete integration in the host societies in order to continue to serve the interests from their home organization. 79

This brings us to the case study. According to arrangements made between Hanseatic cities and Novgorod access to Novgorod markets was available exclusively to Hanseatic merchants; latter always aimed for monopoly in trade with Russians. It was strictly prohibited by regulations to initiate trade with establishments outside Hansa itself, or bring outsider’s goods to the Novgorod land. On the brink of fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, there appeared in German cities numerous merchant unions, which specialised in trade with foreign markets. In Lubeck alone, there were as much as 10 such unions, including a union specialising in trade with Novgorod.

The incoming foreign merchants belonged to two different groups, distinguished by their arrival time to Novgorod. First one arrived to Novgorod in late autumn, either during the last navigation, before the water froze or after the snowfall, with the use of sledges; and left the city in spring. The second group arrived to substitute the first, in the summer 80.

As previously stated, the maximum length of stay was one year total.

Aside from being residents from various Hanseatic cities, mainly from the regions of Livonia, Westphalia and Wendia; foreign merchants also varied according to their social status. Most of them were independent traders, who owned certain amount of goods and capital. Every merchant arriving to the kontor had the right to bring two servants, who were not servants in literal understanding of the term; they helped the merchant arrange his operations. In some cases, servants were young people, apprentices; who came together with the merchant to learn business, study language and additionally help the merchant maintain his affairs 81.

During the time before the fifteenth century 82, when the commercial exchange between Novgorod and Hansa was relatively stable, enormous profit possibilities attracted hundreds of foreign merchants to Novgorod, sometimes in a single year. Therefore, occasionally, the

81 Ibid., p.109
82 Numerous wars and conflicts happened between Novgorod and Hanseatic cities during the fifteenth century
territories of the Gotenhof and Peterhof were full and not able to host all those merchants who arrived, and, as far as regulations did not strictly forbid, merchants were able to stay at the property of Novgorod residents. This fact, apart from being mentioned in Scra is confirmed by archaeological evidence, in the property excavated next to the location of Peterhof. In this property, there was found a substantial concentration of Western European material goods, such as ceramics. Such findings firmly indicate that German merchants used to house in Russian properties, amongst other possible guests.  

German merchant population in Novgorod was relatively homogenous in regard to social norms and customs that were familiar to them. First of all, the commercial practices and norms among German traders in Novgorod gradually developed as a part of customs common in the Baltic Sea area from times before the key date of Lubeck foundation in 1159. Furthermore, aside from sharing commercial practices, German merchants quite likely had common understanding of a moral code and shared behavioural patterns. Most importantly, they spoke the same language, which was Middle Low German, an international lingua franca of the Hanseatic League. That was a dividing line between Germans and local population of Novgorod, who spoke Russian. The knowledge of the same language undoubtedly unified and promoted coordination between German population, contributing highly to the effectiveness of communication and overall functionality of the business activities. However, there is significant research done in the field of historical linguistics, which supports the fact that Germans learnt Russian language; and that there existed certain language borrowings from Russian to German and the other way around.  

Another unifying factor was religion. Originating largely from the territories of Holy Roman Empire, German merchants in Novgorod during Late Middle Ages practiced Roman Catholicism. That factor further separated the merchants from local population, with Russians traditionally practicing the ways of the Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, as I will further illustrate, even profound religious differences were not an obstacle around which a way could not be found.

83 Ibid., 110
84 E.R Skvairs: Jazykovoi aspekt torgovo-diplomaticheskih otnosheniy Novgoroda s Ganzoi in E. A. Rybina: Novgorod I Ganza (Rukopisnye pamjatniki drevnej Rusi), 2009
2.4.2 Language and cultural exchange

During the Late Middle Ages, Novgorod and Hanseatic League, despite numerous continuous and sometimes destructive conflicts, managed to reach reconciliation and sustain commercial contacts and business. Such efforts eventually gave many invaluable results, but did not come easy for neither side. Undeniably, the language difference constituted a strong barrier on the way of prosperous and profitable commercial relationships. Means on how this barrier was overcome will be discussed in this chapter. Most research done in this field belongs to the discipline of Historical Linguistics, and the amount of material is immense. My goal here is not to present exhaustive linguistic analysis of historical contacts between Hanse and Novgorod; I will, however, offer those elements of the research, which can be most competently presented as evidence of cultural exchange.

2.4.3 Literacy in Novgorod

First of all it is important to highlight that due to unique in the region Republican form of government, close commercial ties to markets in all direction of the compass as well as cultural connections, Novgorod was a city with a high level of cultural development. With the discovery of medieval texts written on birch bark during the twentieth century, the widespread notion of illiteracy of the general part of population of medieval Russia was disproved. Currently, over 961 birch bark materials were found, evidently written by various strata of the population of medieval Novgorod. Amongst those were boyars, peasants, craftsmen and merchants. A significant number of birch bark were written by women – a fact confirming the high level of culture. ⁸⁶

Aside from being culturally developed city with high level of literacy, Novgorod was also crucially important centre for manuscript writing. It was also known as a centre for book writing, serving the needs of many monasteries and churches. Such relics as Primary Chronicle and Novgorod First Chronicle are directly connected with the history of the city. ⁸⁷

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⁸⁶ V. Janin: Ocherki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda (Jazyki slavyanskih kultur, 2008) p. 343
⁸⁷ Ibid., p.345
2.4.4 Languages of Novgorod and the Hanse

Doing business, including trade; as well as in daily lives -the people of Novgorod used exclusively Old East Slavic language\(^{88}\). It served both as official language of business correspondence as well as language of oral communication and daily commercial activities. The evidence in face of multiple instances of such communication was preserved to these days in birch bark writings. Existence and active use of Novgorodian dialect is also evident from birch bark.\(^{90}\)

In cities of Hanseatic League the common language of oral communication and business was Middle- Low German, typical for mediaeval Northern Germany. The official written language, as in other parts of Western Europe, was Latin. Such arrangements made it easy for Hanseatic Germans to communicate with most other parts of Europe where they did business; they could always use Latin for interaction.

In case of Novgorod, however, Latin language did not come in useful. Term “latynskij jazyk”\(^{91}\), was used in Novgorodian written texts not only to indicate the foreign nature of the German, but also to highlight his belonging to Catholic, Latin Church confession. The confessional difference was essentially a much bigger obstacle in communication, than language barrier.\(^{92}\)

Therefore, as we can see, an only way the communication between Hansards and Russians could be done was for one of the sides to learn the language of the partner.

2.4.5 Language interpreters

The knowledge of Russian language amongst Hansards was considered to be particularly important and valuable skill, however; its study was understood to be a long and difficult process which was not to interfere with business activities of the merchant; latter being of uttermost importance for Hanseatic traders.

The task of learning Russian language was mostly entrusted to sons of Hanseatic merchants. German youth, coming from wealthy merchant dynasties of Livonian and sometimes West German regions were dynamically learning Russian and for this purpose were often put into the homes of Novgorodians.\(^{93}\)

\(^{88}\) Древнерусский язык (drevnerusskiy jazyk) also know as simply Old Russian
\(^{89}\) Not to confuse with Old Church Slavonic, which was used in manuscripts, holy scriptures and liturgy
\(^{90}\) E.R Skvairs: Jazykovoi aspekt torgovo- diplomacheskich otnosheniy Novgoroda s Ganzoi in E. A. Rybina: Novgorod I Ganza (Rukopisnye pamjatniki drevnej Rusi, 2009) p. 214
\(^{91}\) Translates as “Latin language”
\(^{92}\) Ibid., p.215
\(^{93}\) Ibid., p.227
Young people, who were successful enough to complete the task and learn Russian, were able to perform the job of interpreters, but the main purpose for learning such complicated foreign language was to be able to communicate with Russian merchants in regard to commercial deals. For purpose of professional diplomatic correspondence there existed also professional, specialized interpreters, who studied Russian in Livonian cities.\footnote{Ibid., p.229}

### 2.4.6 Krestocelovanie ceremony

On top of mastering Russian language, it was also necessary for Hansards to apprehend certain diplomatic and cultural ceremonies, in order to reach full understanding with Novgorodians on equal terms. One of such ceremonies was “krestocelovanie”, translated literally as “kissing of the cross”. This ceremony included linguistic, religious and legal aspects – in all three Hansards and Novgorodians had principle differences seemingly irreconcilable.

This traditional ceremony, used to legally bind the sides of agreement, was common in medieval Russia and typically required representatives of both sides to kiss the cross while swearing an oath. It was a primary way to complete an arrangement and make it valid, however, it was necessary to go through an Orthodox Christian ritual in order for the ceremony to be complete. Despite the division and conflicting relationship between Catholic and Orthodox branches of Christianity during the Late Middle Ages, Hanseatic merchants not only agreed to repeatedly go through an Orthodox ritual practice, they also included the formulae for the ritual into their legal texts, in Middle Low German language.\footnote{Ibid., p.245}

The example of such tolerance in the Middle Ages is truly rare, as Orthodox and Catholic churches were deeply divided, considering each other’s traditions heretical.

Such an instance provides another piece of solid evidence for cultural exchange between German and local population in Novgorod during Late Middle Ages.

### 2.4.7 Bruges and Novgorod: A comparative perspective

The difference between Bruges in the west and Novgorod in the northeast of Hanseatic League was substantial, both in terms of economic as well as cultural practices and customs. Providing a comparison between those two kontors can shine a light on how culturally and economically diverse was the Hanseatic League as well as contribute to comprehensive understanding of the processes of cultural exchange.

\footnotesize 94 Ibid., p.229  
95 Ibid., p.245

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To start with, by the turn of fourteenth century, the cities of Novgorod and Bruges, where the merchants of the Hanse established the kontor, as well as shared lucrative commercial privileges—were relatively equal in regard to their location, size and viable function. Importantly, neither of the cities were full-members of the league, but hosted trade outposts where Hanseatic merchants traded 96.

Both were vital regional trade centres, connected to seafaring long-distance trade systems via rivers. The population of Bruges exceeded the population of Novgorod by approximately 10,000 by the end of fourteenth century; however such a difference cannot be used as justification of the vast differences between the cities altogether.

Much more useful comparative elements would be the following: geographical location, organisational structure of the kontor and local trading customs and practices 97.

In terms of location: if we talk about Novgorod in relation to the territories of the Novgorod Republic 98 - the distances between settlements during the Middle Ages were immense; most of the territory of the medieval Republic was wild hinterland, with cities of Novgorod and Pskov being the only centres for lively commercial exchange with the west.

Significant commercial exchange was concentrated predominantly and perhaps solely within these cities.

Bruges, on the other hand—was a part of the densely built-up, highly populated region of Flanders, which included, by the time of Late Middle Ages, a very close network of cities and towns. The hinterland of Novgorod Republic, on the other hand, despite including vast territories, was sparsely populated, and large parts of the land remained unexplored.

In Flanders, commercial practices were changing and developing swiftly during Middle Ages; since the late thirteenth century, Hanseatic traders established offices in their home towns, and, with the help of commercial networks, shipping agencies, friends and family—operated the trade from there. Since this practice was developed and spread in other regions of Europe likewise, for instance Italy; the merchants no longer had to accompany their goods to destination personally.

Nevertheless the close contact, the dynamics of innovation and economic development were different in Novgorod; advanced commercial practices were not recognized, and the more old-fashioned caravan trade system forcing traders to sail the Baltic Sea, accompanying their goods, still remained an only gateway for Hanseatic merchants to reach the wealthy markets of Novgorod 99.

96 The difference between the full member of the Hanseatic League and the outpost (kontor) was considerable. See E.A. Rybina, Inozemnye dvory v Novgorode, XII-XVII vv. (Izdanie Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1986) pp. 15-84
97 U.C. Ewert & S. Selzer, Bridging the gap: the hansatic merchants’ variable strategies in heterogeneous mercantile environments (IEHC, 2006) p.5
98 See ref. 4 in Tables and Figures
99 Ibid., p.6
Important to mention are the strict regulations, which were imposed upon Hanseatic merchants in Novgorod. As already been mentioned in previous chapters of my work, Hanseatic merchants were only allowed to stay in Novgorod for the period of one year total, arriving in winter or summer. The permanent residence was strictly forbidden; only a few individuals were allowed to reside on the territory of the kontor permanently in order to sustain connections with the local government and maintain the territory in working condition\textsuperscript{100}. Such restrictions led to inability for German merchants to integrate well into local society.

In contrast, the life of Hanseatic merchants in Bruges was rather dissimilar. Most importantly, the environment for Hanseatic merchants there was significantly more welcoming, familiar and friendly than in Novgorod; the presence and business of traders was not strictly bound to one restricted location within the city, quite the contrary, there was no fixed location- residence was allowed throughout the city without much limitation. Hanseatic as well as traders from other parts of Europe were as well allowed to stay all year through, in contrast with just a year in Novgorod \textsuperscript{101}.

Last but not least, the financial institutions can serve a clear example of sharp contrast between the commercial practices of two outposts of the Hanse. By the time of fifteenth century, the financial institutions in Flanders were developed on the highest level, according to the standards common in many commercial centres of Western Europe. In Bruges, Hanseatic merchants were ordinarily able to trade on credit for both sales and purchases. Cashless transactions were thus an accomplished standard of the time. Furthermore, the services of bankers, brokers and exchange agents were widely available to the merchants of the Hanse, and most financial operations could be normally executed through using the services of such commercial mediators. Besides having such business arrangements in Bruges, Hanseatic merchants had adopted similar techniques for their businesses beyond Flanders, which allowed them to perform transactions between various commercial centres such as Lubeck or Cologne \textsuperscript{102}.

In Novgorod, however, the financial institutions existed on a way different level way into the fifteenth century. As banks were unknown, commercial exchange between Hansards and Russian merchants had to be done either by paying cash, which merchants had to bring with them to Novgorod, or by barter trade \textsuperscript{103}.

\textsuperscript{100} E.A. Rybina, Inozemnye dvory v Novgorode, XII-XVII vv. (Izdatel'\stvo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1986) pp.5-15
\textsuperscript{101} U. C. Ewert & S. Selzer, Bridging the gap: the hanseatic merchants’ variable strategies in heterogeneous mercantile environments (IEHC, 2006) p.6
\textsuperscript{102} J. M. Murray, Bruges as Hansestedt in J. Wubs-Mrozewicz/ S. Jenks: The Hanse in Medieval and Early Modern Europe (Brill, 2013) p.186
\textsuperscript{103} U. C. Ewert & S. Selzer, Bridging the gap: the hanseatic merchants’ variable strategies in heterogeneous mercantile environments (IEHC, 2006) p.7
The absence of access to services of bankers, brokers and exchange agents indicates that financial institutions of Novgorod were significantly underdeveloped, despite constant contact with representatives from Hanseatic cities, where advanced practices were widely spread and common. Such a situation might indicate that Russian merchant milieu voluntarily did not accept certain trade practices in favor of more conservative commercial customs.

2.5 Analysis of primary source: IV edition of Scra

2.5.1 Overview

The historical document I’m going to discuss and analyse in this chapter played a crucially important role in the regulation of various aspects of life in the foreign outposts in Novgorod, both Gotenhof and Peterhof. First of all, it is vital to trace the historical origins of the document and identify its purpose.

The word scra, the writing of which, depending on the sources and circumstances, varies (Scra, Schra, Schrage). It translates from Middle Low German as “thin stripe of parchment” as well as “scroll”. There is evidence that the word itself might have origins in Scandinavian languages. Scra was a legal manuscript, created for the purpose of regulation of economical, social and administrative aspects of life in the Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod, as well as relationships with Russian merchants. With business operations growing, and new challenges appearing throughout time, certain changes had to be implemented, and new editions of the document appeared, partially mirroring the historical circumstances.

There exist 7 editions of the document. The oldest one preserved was created in the second half of the XIII century, around year 1260. There exists research indicating that the early versions of Scra came into legislation by the power of treaty between Hansa and Novgorod, which included articles regarding the functioning of foreign outposts in Novgorod; treaty is dated 1270. The second edition was created between 1290 and 1300, and the third one in 1325. Other editions are largely irrelevant here.

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104 P. Tal', Tretiya Novgorodskaya Scra (ok. 1325 g.), (Izdanie Imperatorskogo Obshestva Istorii I Drevnostei Rossii pri Moskovskom Universitete. p. 3 (III)

105 I. E. Andreewskiy, O Dogovore Novagoroda c Nemeckimi Gorodami I Gotlandom, zaklychennom v 1270 godu (Juridicheskij fakultet imperatorskago S. Peterburgskago Universiteta. v tipografii Jakoba Treya, 1855) p.7

106 P. Tal', Tretiya Novgorodskaya Scra (ok. 1325 g.), (Izdanie Imperatorskogo Obshestva Istorii I Drevnostei Rossii pri Moskovskom Universitete) p.5 (V)

107 E. A. Rybina: Inozemnye dvory v Novgorode, XII-XVII vv., p. 43
The edition that is discussed in this chapter is the fourth, dated 1354. I have chosen this particular edition for a number of reasons.

First, it includes articles on certain regulations between German and Russian merchants, which I see as useful for the case study, and which were not discussed in prior editions.

Second, previous editions, namely first to third, were firmly based on the legal tradition of Lubeck, and repeated many basic regulations from one text to another; while the IV edition was almost entirely modified, and mimics the historical circumstances of the time more accurately. Third, there is a problem of translation. My language skills limit me to works written in either Russian or English. The original text of Scra was written in Middle Low German. While no text of Schra was translated to English; in Russian there exist translation of I to IV editions. The case with Russian translation of I-III editions is, however, that these, done in 19th and early 20th century- were not accurate enough and that in order to make use of them, one must carefully follow an original text. This leaves IV edition of Scra as the best option for analysis.

2.5.2 Analysis

The IV Scra consists of 119 paragraphs. As already mentioned, this particular edition of the document substantially differs from prior editions, however- it retained some basic elements; like the introductory statements -which can be found in earlier editions. These statements include that one should read the document as often as necessary in order to memorize its content. Additionally it is stated in the above mentioned paragraphs, that all who can hear or read the information provided in the document must know that the senior legislation of the outposts have decided upon the laws contained in the document legally, through the decision agreed on during the general meeting.

The facts that are most useful for the case study concern the relationships of foreign population of the outpost with the local population of Novgorod. Most of the paragraphs are simple regulations of the commercial and legal aspects of life on the territory of the outpost, however particular parts indicate useful material for interpretation. It is of utmost importance to state that the laws written in all editions of Scra applied only on Hanseatic merchants within the outpost.

108 Ibid., p.45
109 Ibid., p.48
110 Ibid., p.11
111 I am using the translation of IV Schra from Middle Low German to Russian, provided in the book: E. A. Rybina: Inozemnye dvory v Novgorode, XII-XVII vv., pp. 140-168.
112 IV; 1-2
with their legal power ending at the borders of the outpost. The question if Russian merchants, being on the territory of the outpost, were subjects to the laws of the Scra is the matter of debate, however there are particular chapters; in IV, as well as in other editions of Scra which indicate that Russians were treated exclusively.\(^{114}\)

An interesting fact, confirming the relativity of religion being an uttermost cultural barrier, is confirmed by an article, which instructs that in case all merchants leave the outpost, the both\(^{115}\) keys must be sealed and after given; one to archbishop of Novgorod, the other one to igumen\(^{116}\) of St. Yuri monastery. From this article it seems that Hansards put a high degree of trust into representatives of the Orthodox Church in Novgorod, despite the religious differences.\(^{117}\) The keys were not trusted to higher administration, or ruling class of Novgorod, likely for the lack of trust towards political elite. The Orthodox clergy, on the other hand, were seen as honourable and trustworthy enough to entrust both outposts to. This is another example of religious differences cast aside.

In another article it is stated that Hansards must ask those Russians, who came to trade with them in the house on the territory of kontor, to leave the outpost before the guard dogs get released for the night time. In case if Russian merchants stays beyond that time, German merchants had to pay a fee. It is important to keep in mind; this is the IV edition of the Scra, and, as mentioned above, the changes were usually made in order to update the document and make it more effective in the environment that somehow changed. Many of the articles are fairly simple in their content- such is the one just mentioned; one can deduce that these were made simply because a certain situation occurred and created a problem and unwanted consequences. I suppose that such basic trial and error was the basis of many ancient laws.

Thus, one can further deduce that if article in Scra was made, stating that Russians should not stay at the houses of German merchants until late – that would mean that such situations were of common occurrence, and needed official regulation. The fact that Russian merchants often stayed at the houses of German merchants in the kontor until late constitutes another aspect of cultural contacts, perhaps even indicates the formation of friendly relationships between Russian and German population of Novgorod.\(^{118}\)

Another article in Scra prohibits Germans to gamble\(^{119}\) in Russian residences, without the presence of other German. What’s interesting; violation of this article was punished by the

\(^{114}\) IV; 54, 55, 61
\(^{115}\) Both keys; to Gotenhof and Peterhof
\(^{116}\) The Abbott of Orthodox monastery
\(^{117}\) IV; 22
\(^{118}\) IV; 54
\(^{119}\) To play game of dice
highest possible penalty; deprivation of the right to trade in the Hanseatic outpost. Quite a substantial penalty for such a seemingly petty crime, considered that gambling wasn’t altogether illegal. Gambling sessions, however, might get violent, and one does not have to be a historian to reckon such a fact. The point I want to make lies elsewhere; following up on the same logic I used to analyse the prior article- if the situation when Germans used to go and gamble alone with Russians in Russian residences were of common occurrence, that indicates that gambling can be described as a vessel of cultural contact, perhaps even without the language as the basis of such contact. The rules of dice and high stakes could substitute verbal communication. Learning of Russian language by Hansards is the phenomena that we discover in Scra. In the passage, which touches upon the issue, it is prohibited for any individual who is over 20 years old to study Russian, under the threat of high penalty. Most probably, such an age restriction was set, because learning Russian was an extremely difficult task; without specialized study materials available for foreigners. Additionally, the age of 20 was considered to be a solid age in Middle Ages, as long as life expectancy was relatively low.

A particularly interesting part of the document concerns the quality of wax sold by Russians to Germans. The content of wax was supposed to be pure, but evidently Russians started selling impure wax, of a lower quality. This situation was fairly common on medieval markets and is not of upmost interest. What is genuinely interesting is the other detail included in the article. It is mentioned that a considerable amount of “gifts” were given to the Russian nobility and their servants, and by receiving wax as such gift, Russian nobility discovered the lower quality of wax. Apparently, the wax was given as a gift to members of nobility, and being of a lower quality, damaged reputation of both German and Russian merchants.

The fact of gift giving between Russians and Hansards is known of, but to what degree these gifts were personal is unclear. Most probably, such gifts were meant as bribes, in order to attain particular commercial goal, or settle a conflict. Other possibility is that the gifts were given in order to attract the attention of nobility to the problem of production of low quality wax.

As a concluding remark; the IV edition of Scra is largely a routine document, done for the purpose of effective regulation of the kontor’ affairs. However, in some articles, the reasons why laws had to be implemented are explained. These reasons, which almost certainly were not meant to be of crucial importance, are of a paramount interest when it comes to tracing elements of cultural exchange. I have shown that particular articles can be interpreted to indicate possible

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120 That same article puts a limit on the amount one can bet in the game
121 IV, 77
122 IV, 93, 95
cultural exchange, suggest the presence of religious tolerance as well as clarify the blurry picture of life in the Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod during the Late Middle Ages.

III. CONCLUSION

3.1 Research questions and answers

What is the material evidence of cultural transfer between Novgorod and the Hanseatic League during the Late Middle Ages:

Foreign cloth distribution:

- As shown on example of archaeological findings as well as iconographical sources; the fascination of Russian nobility with high quality foreign cloth products brought by Hanseatic merchants as well as that cloth’ enormous popularity could indicate an interest in and adoption of Western fashion which in itself is the adoption of foreign cultural material and thus is the evidence of cultural transfer. The reasons for that might be, as indicated in the chapter on cloth: either the low level of weaving technology in Novgorod during Late Middle Ages or superior quality of foreign cloth materials imported to Novgorod.

Foreign ceramics distribution:

- As observed on example of ceramic distribution in Novgorod- resistance amongst local population towards cultural transfer might have been a case. The reasons for that can vary, however the sources do not provide enough information to form a definitive answer. One factor, partially explaining the situation would be that Novgorod, with it’s location beyond the Catholic-Orthodox border in Northern Europe, was home to people with cultural practices in many aspects diametrically opposed to those in the West, therefore leading to skeptical and sometimes hostile treatment of all things alien. The material culture including the dining domain was actively used to express and reinforce ethnic identities for both foreign German
and local Russian population. The failure or resistance to adopt foreign cultural material can be seen as evidence of failed cultural transfer.

**What is the non-material evidence of cultural transfer between Novgorod and the Hanseatic League during the Late Middle Ages?**

**Language:**

- As shown in the chapter on Language, there is evidence of German youth settling in Russian residences in Novgorod in order to learn Russian language. The fact of German youth living in such foreign environment is itself a strong evidence of cultural transfer occurrence, and the fact that German individuals were actively learning Russian language further reinforces such evidence.

**Religious ceremony participation**

- The fascinating case of the Orthodox ceremony of Krestocelovanie is an astonishing example of religious tolerance; for medieval people to put religious differences aside in favour of serving commercial purposes is a case you don’t see often in recorded history, especially regarding conflicting relationships between Catholic and Orthodox churches. The continuous participation of Catholic Hansards in Russian Orthodox ceremony of Krestocelovanie is an undisputable evidence for occurrence of non-material cultural transfer.

**Adoption of commercial practices**

- The absence of access to services of bankers, brokers, exchange agents and other mediators indicates that financial institutions of Novgorod were significantly underdeveloped, despite constant contact with representatives from Hanseatic cities, where such practices were widely spread and common. Such a situation might indicate that Russian merchant milieu voluntarily did not accept certain trade practices in favor of more conservative commercial customs. Such a case

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can be viewed as evidence of failed cultural transfer. The same reasons as described in foreign ceramics distribution apply here.

IV edition of Scra

- The analysis of the primary document – the IV edition of Scra, has further contributed to understanding the Russo-German relationships within the Hanseatic outposts in Novgorod. We have seen that Russian merchants stayed at German kontor until late night, which might indicate the creation of personal connections. Regulations regarding gambling point out the communication in the sphere of leisure; such factors can be seen as evidence for cultural transfer.
- The fact that German traders made effort in educating the youth with Russian language skills to better the contact with Russian merchants is also present in Scra.

3.2 Reflections

Even though we will never know how certain historical events exactly occurred, will never be able to fully reconstruct the lives of our predecessors, the effort can still be directed into reaching possible proximity; with the help of sources we can try to paint a most comprehensible picture possible. The research into cultural transfers contributes prominently to such comprehensibility. It allows us to see elements of mutual interconnection and get closer to understanding how our ancestors used to think, act and behave- in contact with each other. It does so by emphasizing the inter-relation and fluidity of cultural settings, by rejecting to see cultures as homogenous or limited, by allowing an insight into possibility of cultural exchange.

As I have shown, successful aspirations of Hanseatic League to arrange, expand and monopolize the trade with Novgorod eventually led to lively interchange of commodities, customs and knowledge within the borders of the city and beyond. Threatened with hostility, German merchants showed extraordinary firmness in adapting to often-hostile surroundings and sustaining commercial contacts with Russian merchants.
Hostile treatment of foreigners, as we have seen, was not always the case. Evidence points out that Germans used to fairly often settle in Russian homes, learn Russian language and perhaps make personal relationships with local population in Novgorod.

Cultural diversity within the territories where Hanseatic League exercised commerce-related influence was noticeably rich. Being foremost a commercial organization, with its loyalties not entwined to anything but profits, the members of the Hanse often overlooked cultural differences in favour of establishing profitable and long-lasting, functional trade networks.

As I showed on the example of Novgorod, the desire to sustain commercial gains can lead to extraordinary tolerance, reconciliation of conflicts, and reciprocal cultural exchange.

### 3.3 Delimitations and recommendations for future research

The analysis I have provided tackles numerous aspects of relationships and cultural exchange between Novgorod and the Hanseatic League during the Late Middle Ages. Nevertheless, the scope of my work is quite limited. I have restricted my research only to certain elements of material and non-material cultural transfer, with several categories left out of the focus. Such categories could include, amongst others; massive penetration of Russian-produced furs into the Western markets or influences of foreign architects in Novgorod and Russian architects, for example, in Livonian cities. The case study I discussed is immensely broad, and materials are plentiful. However, as I have indicated, the approach with which a historian analyses this topic can vary greatly. As far as Russian materials constituted the major part of my work, I have discovered that several Russian specialists on history and culture of medieval Novgorod approach their discipline in very conservative manner, refusing to accept new historical concepts such as cultural transfers in favour of more conventional methodology. Hence, my personal recommendation to all fellow researchers; be so within Russia or beyond- keep an open mind and accept new theoretical material with enthusiasm; applying scepticism, but never blindly rejecting.
Tables and Figures

Reference 1. The territories of Hanseatic League by the year 1400

Reference 2. The Orthodox icon “Deisusnij chin I molyashiesja Novgorodci” (1467). To English can be translated as “Praying Novgorodians”. From the State Museum of Novgorod. Here, in the lower part of the icon we can observe how wealthy strata of Novgorod population used to dress around the year 1467.

Reference 3. Carved and painted wooden panel (around 1400) from the church of St. Nicholas in Stralsund, Germany

Here we can see Russian merchants arriving at the fortified gates of the Hanseatic outpost in Novgorod to trade. Certain common elements can be observed in the dress of German merchant (fourth from the left), and single Russian merchant (second from the left) such as red pants with pointed-nose shoes.
Reference 4. Vast vicinities of Novgorod Republic around the year 1400.

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