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В № 20 «Записок ИИМК РАН» публикуются научные исследования, представленные на российско-финляндском симпозиуме «Торговля, обмен и взаимовлияния в доисторическое время и средневековье/историческое время». В разделах «Новейшие открытия и разработки ИИМК РАН» и «Из истории науки» представлены статьи Н. Ф. Соловьёвой и А. В. Полякова, посвященные полевым открытиям на Йылгынлы-депе в Южном Туркменистане и анализу данных радиоуглеродного датирования фёдоровской культуры на Енисее, а также работа С. О. Ремизова, обобщающая информацию об изучении памятников каменного века Волгоградской обл.

Издание адресовано археологам, культурологам, историкам, музейоведам, студентам исторических факультетов вузов.

The 20th issue of the “Transactions of IHMC RAS” contains the Proceedings of the Russian-Finnish Symposium “Trade, Exchange and Contacts in Prehistory and in the Medieval/post-Medieval Times”. The sections “Newest discoveries and developments” and “From the history of science” present the papers by N. F. Solovyova and A. V. Polyakov devoted to field discoveries at Ilgynly-depe in South Turkmenistan and to the analysis of radiocarbon dates obtained for the Fyodorovo culture on the Yenisei river, respectively, as well as the work by S. O. Remizov who summarizes the information about the Stone Age sites of the Volgograd oblast.

The volume is intended for archaeologists, culturologists, historians, museum workers, and students of historical faculties.

СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

СТАТЬИ

Торговля, обмен и взаимовлияния в доисторическое время и средневековье/историческое время

<i>В. А. Лапшин.</i> Российско-финляндский симпозиум по вопросам археологии и истории (8–11 ноября 2017 г., Великий Новгород)	9
<i>К. Нордквист.</i> Контакты и археология неолита Северо-Восточной Европы	11
<i>P. Onkamo, K. Majander, S. Peltola, E. Salmela, K. Nordqvist.</i> Ancient human genes of North-Eastern Europe	25
<i>M. Lavento.</i> Early Metal Age bronze axes in Finland: an overview	35
<i>H.-L. Puolakka.</i> Cremation burials in inhumation cemeteries in Late Iron Age Finland and the Karelian Isthmus	53
<i>C. Cerpelan.</i> “Fruit” knives in Saami households	64
<i>Е. С. Ткач.</i> Каменные сверленные топоры Северо-Запада России и Финляндии в контексте шнуровых культур Центральной и Восточной Европы	74
<i>А. И. Мурашкин, А. А. Малютина, А. М. Киселёва.</i> Костяной и роговой инвентарь неолита — раннего железного века Северной Фенноскандии: типология, технология, трасология	85
<i>Д. Н. Фёдорова.</i> Применение современных технологий для изучения петроглифов Русского Севера	104
<i>В. А. Лапшин.</i> Ладога до Ладоги	112
<i>Е. Н. Носов, Н. В. Хвоцинская.</i> Хлебные печи Рюрикова городища	121
<i>E. V. Toropova, S. E. Toropov, K. G. Samoylov.</i> Staraya Russa and the southern coast of Lake Ilmen in the context of contacts with Northern Europe in the 10 th –12 th centuries AD	132
<i>М. И. Петров.</i> Новые данные о контактах с северо-западом Новгородской земли в XIV в. (по материалам раскопа Нутный-IV в Великом Новгороде)	142

Новейшие открытия и разработки ИИМК РАН

<i>Н. Ф. Соловьёва.</i> Обжигательные печи Йылгынлы-депе периода раннего энеолита	147
<i>А. В. Поляков.</i> Радиоуглеродные даты памятников андоновской (фёдоровской) культуры на Среднем Енисее	163

ИЗ ИСТОРИИ НАУКИ

С. О. Ремизов. Исследования памятников палеолита и мезолита в бассейне Волги на территории Волгоградской области	174
Ю. А. Виноградов. В. А. Горончаровскому 65 лет!	192

ХРОНИКА

А. А. Бессуднов, К. В. Горлов, Е. С. Ткач. Конференция молодых ученых «Актуальная археология 4: комплексные исследования в археологии» (Санкт-Петербург, 2–5 апреля 2018 г.).....	195
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AD MEMORIA

С. А. Васильев. Памяти Галины Васильевны Григорьевой (1934–2019)	200
Список сокращений	202

STARAYA RUSSA AND THE SOUTHERN COAST OF LAKE ILMEN IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTACTS WITH NORTHERN EUROPE IN THE 10TH — 12TH CENTURIES AD¹

E. V. TOROPOVA, S. E. TOROPOV, K. G. SAMOYLOV²

Keywords: *medieval archeology, Novgorod Land, Staraya Russa, emergence of medieval towns, contacts with Northern Europe.*

The article is devoted to the problem of the emergence of Staraya Russa (or Rusa until the 16th century) — a town in Northwestern Russia, situated 60 km south of Novgorod the Great. During the Middle Ages, it was the second largest town in the Novgorod Republic and the centre of salt production. The first mention of Rusa in the Russian chronicles dates back to 1167/1168, but archaeological records suggest that the urban settlement was founded on this place much earlier. An analysis of the early topography of the town confirms that needs of salt production were the dominant element and an essential factor in the growth of the town. It is suggested that the occupation of the site began at the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries. The paper discusses the evidence of contacts between the inhabitants of Rusa and its environs with Northern Europe in the 10th–12th centuries. Unlike many other towns of Early Rus, which emerged during the preceding period as centres on waterways, Rusa appeared as a result of the intensification of the internal economy of the Novgorod land.

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Staraya Russa (until the 16th century Rusa) is today a small town of the Novgorod Region but in the Middle Ages it was the second largest centre of the Novgorod Republic. The town is situated 60 km south of Novgorod the Great and 20 km from the southern shore of Il'men' Lake, near the confluence of the Rivers Polist' and Porus'ya. Until the 18th century, the prosperity of Staraya Russa was based on salt production by the evaporation of water from local salty springs.

According to present-day linguists, the name of the town has no association with the ethnonym or the name of the Rus' state. The most probable hypothesis derives it from

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the hydronym “Rusa River” (nowadays Porus’ya), which in turn, has roots in the Baltic languages and means “Red River” (Агеева и др. 2002).

The first mention of Rusa in the Russian chronicles dates back to 1167/1168, when Prince Svyatoslav of Smolensk came there with troops from Suzdal, Smolensk and Polotsk during his military campaign against Novgorod (Новгородская первая летопись... 2000: 32). However, Rusa was mentioned a century earlier on the birch bark document № 526, found in Novgorod and dated to the second third of the 11th century (Зализняк 2004: 241).

Medieval written sources about Rusa are relatively few and do not give any information about the time of its emergence. For this reason, the only way to study the early history of Rusa is the analysis of archaeological data. An important feature of Staraya Russa as an archaeological site is the anaerobic conditions of cultural deposits that contribute to the preservation of organic remains and artefacts made of wood, leather, bone, textiles, etc. To date, 49 birch bark documents dating from the 11th to the 15th centuries have been found in Staraya Russa. The material culture of medieval Rusa is very similar to the one known from Novgorod, although it has also its own features related to the salt production.

From the very beginning of archaeological studies in Staraya Russa, the location and date of the centre of the original town were among the main issues. The first archaeological investigations in Staraya Russa were carried out in 1939 by Alexander Stokov (1907–1987). Trial excavations № 1–3 were made on a triangular promontory at the confluence of the Rivers Polist’, Porus’ya and the old riverbed of Malashka (Fig. 1). In the only publication about the excavations, Stokov stated that he had revealed “the oldest settlement in Staraya Russa”, which he dated to the 9th — 10th centuries based on “a few fragments of handmade pottery” (Строков 1940: 29–30). After a careful re-examination of published artefacts (finds and records were lost during World War II), we are forced to disagree with his conclusions: most likely, this area was not occupied until the 14th century.

The next phase of archaeological investigations in Staraya Russa is associated with the name of Alexander Medvedev (1916–1984). In 1966, his expedition began systematic archaeological research in the town. By 1978, fifteen areas covering some 1,600 square metres were excavated (Fig. 1). A characteristic feature of Medvedev’s methods was, on the one hand, the excavation of small areas, and on the other — a wide coverage throughout the locality. He managed to locate the centre of the medieval settlement. This area, approximately 60,000 square meters in size, is located between the modern mineral water health resort and the St. Nicholas Church, and is bounded from the west and south by a saline stream (Fig. 1). Medvedev suggested that the oldest layers could be dated to the beginning of the 11th century and at the same time rejected their dating to the end or middle of the 10th century (Медведев 1968: 19).

Some finds, from the excavation sites of Medvedev, demonstrate contacts with Northern Europe in the 11th — 12th centuries. In 1967–1969, Medvedev began excavations in the western part of the medieval town centre, near a saline stream (excavation sites VII and IX) (Fig. 1). Starting the work here, the researcher acknowledged that since the area was located on a hillside, finding the remains of fortifications was likely. However, the excavations revealed that the hill was formed as a result of the accumulation of cultural deposits. Medvedev dated the oldest strata to the first half of the 11th century, “perhaps, to the end of the 10th century” (Медведев 1976: 40). A fragment of a small round pendant with interlaced ornamentation should be noted among the earliest finds (Fig. 2, 1). The closest



Fig. 1. Map showing the depth of cultural layers and the location of excavation sites in the central part of Staraya Russa: *a-e* — depth of cultural layers (*a* — over 5.5 m, *б* — from 4.5 to 5.5 m, *в* — from 3.5 to 4.5 m, *г* — from 2.5 to 3.5 m, *д* — from 1.5 to 2.5 m, *е* — from 0.5 to 1.5 m); *ж* — buried rivers and streams; *з* — present-day streets; *и* — presumed borders of the settlement that existed in the XI c.; *к* — present-day churches (1 — Cathedral of the Holy Resurrection; 2 — Church of St. George and Annunciation; 3 — St. Nicholas Church); *л* — lost churches (4 — Church of Sts. Boris and Gleb; 5 — Churches of St. Prophet Elijah and St. Michael the Archangel; 6 — St. Paraskeva Church; 7 — Church of Sts. Peter and Paul; 8 — Church of St. Anastasia; 9 — Church of St. John the Baptist); *м-н* — excavation sites; *н* — excavation sites with the 10th — 11th century deposits (P-1-3 — excavation sites No. 1-3, 1939; P-I — excavation site I, 1966-1967; P-II-V — excavation sites II-V, 1967; P-VII — excavation site VII, 1967-1968; P-VIII — excavation site VIII, 1968; P-IX — excavation site IX, 1969; P-X — excavation site X, 1969-1970; P-XI — excavation site XI, 1970-1971; P-XII — excavation site XII, 1971-1974; P-XIII — excavation site XIII, 1972; P-XIV — excavation site XIV, 1976-1977; P-XV — excavation site XV, 1978-1987; P-XVII — excavation site XVII, 1990; БГР — Borisoglebsky (XVI) excavation site, 1988-2001; ПТР-I — Pyatnitsky-I excavation site, 2002-2012; ГР-I — Georgievsky-I excavation site, 2002; ГР-II — Georgievsky-II excavation site, 2006; ППР — Petropavlovsky excavation site, 2007; ГР-III — Georgievsky-III excavation site, 2011; ПТР-II — Pyatnitsky-II excavation site, since 2013

Рис. 1. План-схема мощности культурных напластований и расположения раскопов в центральной части Старой Руссы: *a-e* — глубина культурных слоев (*a* — более чем 5,5 м, *б* — от 4,5 до 5,5 м, *в* — от 3,5 до 4,5 м, *г* — от 2,5 до 3,5 м, *д* — от 1,5 до 2,5 м, *е* — от 0,5 до 1,5 м); *ж* — погребенные реки и ручьи; *з* — современные улицы; *и* — предполагаемые границы поселения XI в.; *к* — существующие храмы (1 — Воскресенский собор; 2 — церкви св. Георгия и Благовещения; 3 — церковь св. Николая); *л* — утраченные храмы (4 — собор св. Бориса и Глеба; 5 — церкви Ильи Пророка и Архангела Михаила; 6 — церковь св. Параскевы Пятницы; 7 — церковь св. Петра и Павла; 8 — церковь св. Анастасии; 9 — церковь св. Иоанна Предтечи); *м-н* — археологические раскопы; *н* — раскопы с отложениями X-XI вв. (P-1-3 — 1939 г.; P-I — 1966-1967 гг.; P-II-V — 1967 г.; P-VII — 1967-1968 гг.; P-VIII — 1968 г.; P-IX — 1969 г.; P-X — 1969-1970 гг.; P-XI — 1970-1971 гг.; P-XII — 1971-1974 гг.; P-XIII — 1972 г.; P-XIV — 1976-1977 гг.; P-XV — 1978-1987 гг.; P-XVII — 1990 г.; БГР — Борисоглебский (XVI) раскоп, 1988-2001 гг.; ПТР-I — Пятницкий I раскоп 2002-2012 гг.; ГР-I — Георгиевский I раскоп 2002 г.; ГР-II — Георгиевский II раскоп 2006 г.; ППР — Петропавловский раскоп 2007 г.; ГР-III — Георгиевский III раскоп 2011 г.; ПТР-II — Пятницкий II раскоп, начат в 2013 г.)

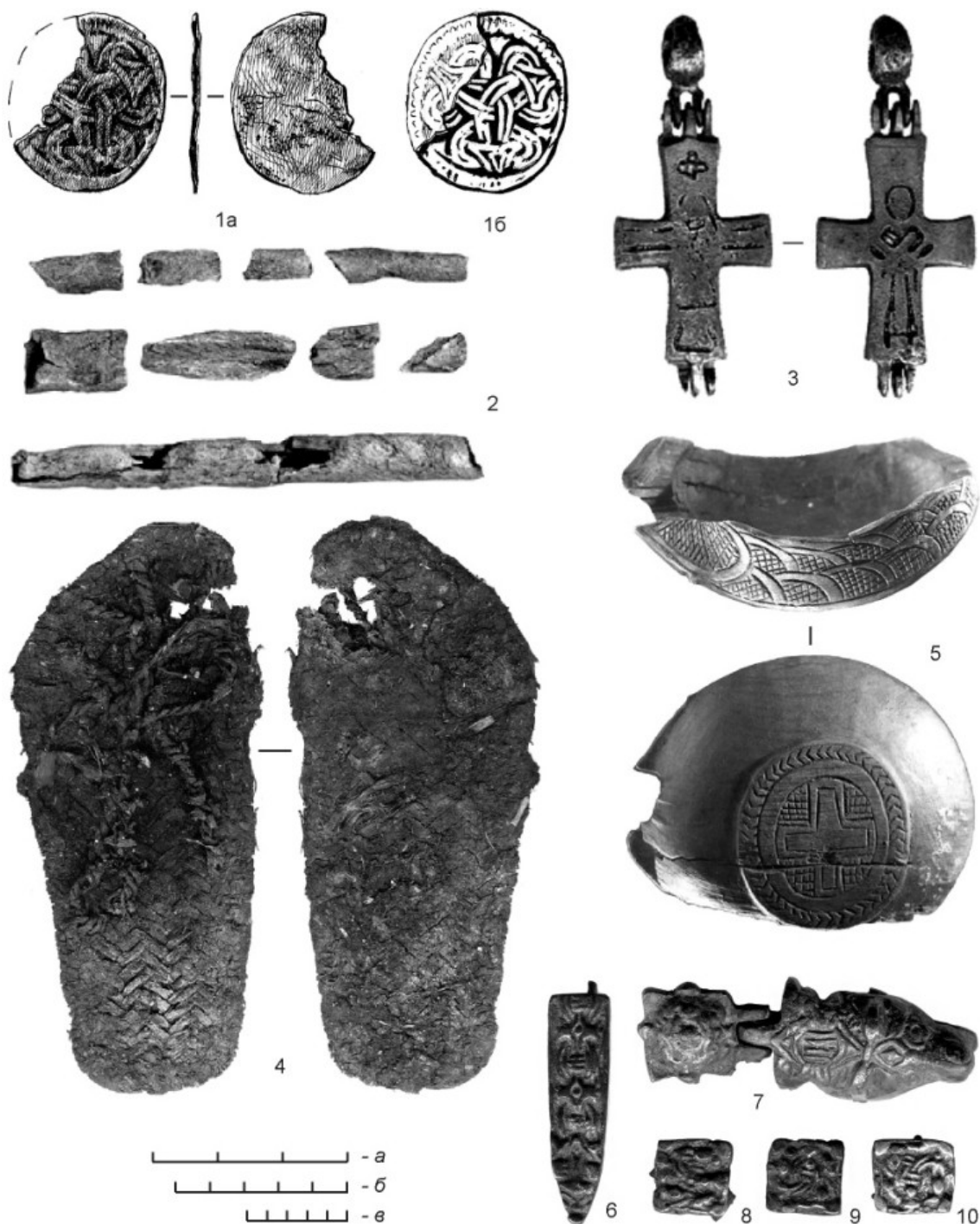


Fig. 2. Staraya Russa: 1 — small round pendant, excavation site VII (1968). 2–5 — candles, reliquary cross, woven footwear, vessel, Borisoglebsky (XVI) excavation site (2001); 6–10 — the Ustreka cemetery, set of harness fittings decorated in the Borre style. 1, 3, 6–10 — non-ferrous metal; 2 — wax; 4 — plant fibre; 5 — wood. Scale: *a* — for Nos. 1a–16, 6–10; *b* — for Nos. 2–3, 5; *c* — for No. 4

Рис. 2. Старая Русса: 1 — подвеска, раскоп VII, 1968 г.; 2–5 — свечи, крест-энколпион, плетеная обувь, сосуд, Борисоглебский (XVI) раскоп (2001 г.); 6–10 — курганный могильник у д. Устрека, комплекс упряжной гарнитуры в стиле Борре. 1, 3, 6–10 — цветной металл; 2 — воск; 4 — растительное волокно; 5 — дерево. Масштабы: *a* — для № 1a–16, 6–10; *b* — для № 2–3, 5; *c* — для № 4

parallel to this artefact is a small round brooch from grave Bj431 in Birka, Sweden (type IIID according to Ingmar Jansson, dating from the 10th century) (Jansson 1984: 61, 63).

Another area where 11th-century deposits were found is situated in the southern part of the town centre (excavation sites XI, XIII and XIV) (Fig. 1). Here the oldest horizon of a wooden street pavement was dated to the mid-11th century. Medvedev's expedition excavated the remains of a rich urban property, passed down from generation to generation since the first half of the 11th century. The owner of the property in the first half of the 12th century was a man named Demian, a large landowner and usurer (ownership was identified by the name of the recipient mentioned on birch bark letters) (Медведев 1978). A unique bronze vessel was discovered in layers dating from that time. After the restoration, an engraved ornamental image was revealed on the inner surface of the bowl — standing lions, separated by symbolic trees (Торопова 2014: 260–262). At the bottom of the bowl, a four-pointed cross was engraved. On the territory of medieval Russia, only about a dozen such vessels are found, but they are well-known among the antiquities of the Baltic region, and for example, widely present on Gotland. The majority of researchers consider the valleys of the Rhine and Meuse Rivers to be the most likely area of production for these bronze vessels. How this particular vessel got to Staraya Russa remains an open question. According to Elena Rybina, the 12th century is characterized by close contacts between Novgorod and the countries of Northern Europe (Denmark, Sweden) and especially the Island of Gotland (Рыбина 2001: 100). It is possible that the vessel was transported to Staraya Russa via Gotland.

Since 1999, archaeological research has been conducted in Staraya Russa by an expedition of the Novgorod State University under the direction of Elena Toropova. Two decades of active research has included systematic excavations in the most promising parts of the medieval city, as well as rescue excavations and archaeological surveys in areas threatened by modern construction projects. To date, the total area excavated in Staraya Russa is about 12,000 square meters. Two of the new excavation sites are located in the centre of the medieval town, in the area of the deepest archaeological deposits.

In 1999–2001, our expedition completed research at the XVI (Borisoglebsky) excavation site, started by Valentina Mironova (Fig. 1; 3). The depth of cultural deposits, dating to the 11th century, was about 1 m, and the total depth of the deposits 5.5 m. As a result of targeted sampling of construction wood, a highly representative series of dendrochronological dates was obtained for the oldest deposits of Rusa. Dendrochronological dates of the oldest building are 1023 and 1033 (Торопова и др. 2015: 44). Deposits older than these dates have a depth of about 30 cm, but due to the lack of suitable wood for analysis, they are not dated. However, a few fragments of handmade pottery have been found in the buried soil horizon and sub-soil pits. Similar handmade pottery disappears completely from the cultural deposits of Novgorod during the last quarter of the 10th century. This allows us to cautiously date the occupation of this area to the turn of the 10th — 11th centuries.

The materials of the Borisoglebsky excavation site make it possible to reconstruct a picture from the life of the first settlers. An unpaved road in the north-south direction was found in the central part of the excavated area. In the eastern part, medieval plough-marks were found in the sub-soil. The first buildings at the site appeared in the 1020s–1030s. In the 1040s–1050s a new phase begins — the first wooden street pavement was built following the line of the unpaved road, new buildings were erected, and the boundaries of urban properties became stable.

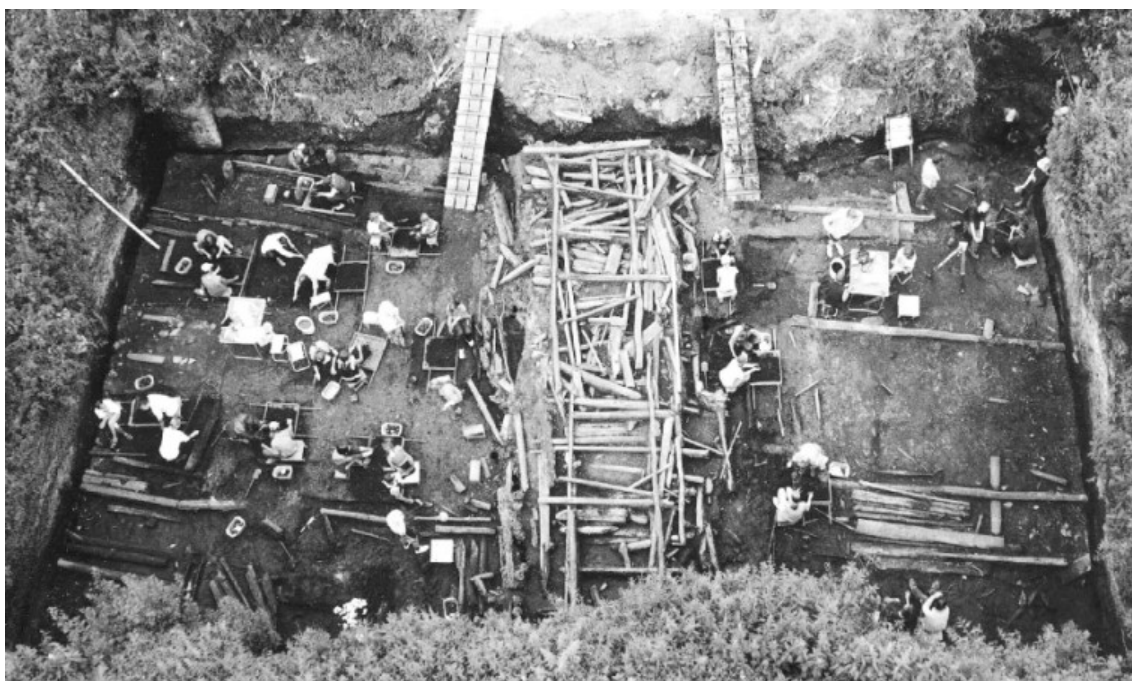


Fig. 3. Staraya Russa, view of the Borisoglebsky (XVI) excavation site from the south (2000)

Рис. 3. Старая Русса, панорама Борисоглебского (XVI) раскопа (2000 г.), вид с юга

The oldest deposits of the Borisoglebsky excavation site were full of fragments of so-called *tsrens*, i.e. iron pans for salt evaporation. A significant number of birch bark and bast containers, presumably used for storing and measuring salt, was found. In the earliest deposits of Borisoglebsky excavation site (an area of about 200 square metres), 211 tally sticks — small wooden sticks with notches used for various kinds of calculations — were retrieved. Such a large number of ‘accounting documents’ of the first half of the 11th century, certainly, indicates intensive economic activities (Колосницын 2013).

Two pieces of footwear, woven from plant fibres and resembling sandals, are not specific of medieval Russian towns. Special attention should be paid to the fact that these finds are stratigraphically related with an assemblage of Christian antiquities (a wooden vessel with a cross carved on the base and a fish-scale pattern around the rim, thin wax candles and pieces of wax, etc.) and a reliquary cross of bronze (Fig. 2, 2–5). All these finds indicate the presence of the Christian community in Rusa already during the earliest period.

The earliest artefacts include numerous wooden objects, in particular, broken or complete specimens of turned vessels as well as parts of stringed and wind musical instruments. An ornamented antler case for a one-sided comb has also been discovered (combs of this type were used until the mid-11th century).

From 2002 to the present, research has been conducted at the Pyatnitsky excavation site, covering parts of two medieval urban properties (Fig. 1). Anaerobic deposits of about 6 meters in depth provide us with a unique opportunity to study the historical dynamics of these properties from the earliest period to the mid-15th century. The oldest horizon of constructions is dated to the beginning of the second third of the 11th century. The active craft is recorded here already at an early stage (Торопова и др. 2015: 49–51). The remains of a jewelry workshop complex were revealed among the oldest buildings. Salt

making played a major role in the lives of the first settlers — about 80 % of all finds of the oldest horizon are fragments and rivets of *tsrens*, which number more than 1,400 pieces. Evidence of the first inhabitants' bone carving craft includes one-sided composite antler combs (group II according to O. Davidan). In addition to the finished products, sawn fragments of antler and antler shavings were found³.

According to the characteristics of the buried soil, the excavated area has been a meadow with a light fence construction before the erection of the first buildings. The finds from the buried soil horizon can be given several early dates by analogy with other assemblages. A point-shaped antler amulet with a zoomorphic head and decorated with carved ornamentation is an early and rare find. Such point-shaped amulets, dated to the 9th–11th centuries, are found in male burials of the Viking Age in Central Sweden, Norway, and England, and are also recorded in the elite cemeteries of Kiev, Gnezdovo, Shestovitsy, Timirevo, etc. (Торопова и др. 2015: 52–53).

An important find was made in the deposits of the second third of the 11th century — a round pendant of lead-tin alloy depicting a bird of prey in a heraldic posture. Similar pendants are usually dated from the 10th until the first half of the 11th century. The find in question is an imitation of silver pendants (fashionable among the elite), just made of cheaper materials (Ениосова, Зозуля 2012). In addition, attention must be drawn to a cross pendant with a crude depiction of the Crucifix, one of the earliest types for Early Rus', found in the layers from the second half of the 11th century. Among other finds indicating contacts with Northern Europe, we can mention a bracelet fragment with a dragon's head, made in the late Urnes style and found in the layers of the last third of the 12th century.

Thus, even a preliminary overview of the finds from the oldest deposits of the Pyatnitsky-I excavation site allows attributing them to the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries, or to the very beginning of the 11th century. The clear trade-and-craft nature of the settlement can be mentioned, illustrated by the presence of a number of finds related to an elite subculture reflecting the fashion common in Northern Europe and Scandinavia.

What was the background for the emergence of medieval Rusa? Was it connected with the medieval transcontinental trade routes on water, as is typical of the earlier towns? Did Rusa appear as the centre of a rural neighbourhood, or was it originally founded as a trade-and-craft settlement? Answers to these questions are important not only for studying the early history of Rusa, but also for the problem of the emergence of Early Russian towns in general.

The settlement, which later became the town, emerged in the lower reaches of the River Porus'ya, near its confluence with the River Polist' and far from the main transcontinental trade routes of the Early Middle Ages, which followed the Rivers Lovat' and Pola 15–20 km to the east (these routes are marked by archaeological sites). No hoards of Arabian silver coins, which are an important marker of the trade routes of the Viking Age, are known in the vicinity of Rusa. The only hoard in the area, dated to the end of the 10th century, was discovered in the village Podborovka, located 19 km north of Staraya Russa and not far from the mouth of the River Lovat' (Янин 2009: 91, 147).

³ Information of all finds from Staraya Russa (excavated during 2002–2018) is available through the project: 'The Antiquities of Novgorod Land: digital database of archaeological finds' (<http://www.novsu.ru/archeology/>).

The only sites on the southern shore of Lake Il'men' that could be directly associated with the native settlement of Northern Europe, are the settlement and barrow cemetery sites near the village of Ustreka, on the mouth of the Psizha River 23 km north-west of Staraya Rusa. The external features of the barrow cemetery, as well as the material culture and elements of the funeral rite, are not typical for this region. The cemetery at Ustreka, today nearly destroyed by agricultural activity, could have been of considerable importance in the 11th century and included burials of the elite. In 1969, small-scale excavations of the medieval barrows were undertaken by Boleslav Ershevsky (Ершевский, Конечский 1985). The most distinctive grave goods were recovered in a male burial in the barrow № 4: a composite belt and a balance scale with a set of weights, dated to the second half or the end of the 11th century.

In 2009, during unauthorised excavations, a unique set of horse harnesses decorated in the Borre style was found here, probably in what was already a disturbed grave (Fig. 2, 6–10). The parallels are known in Borre (Norway), Adelsö (Sweden), and in one cremation burial from Gotland (Toropov 2014: 274–277). This set of bridles is also very similar to the one found in Gnezdovo (Новиков 2009).

The important nature of the southern Il'men' area in commercial life and the presence of craftsmen during the 10th–11th centuries are further emphasised by the discoveries of three bunches of silver rods and a fragment of a similar twisted rod. These can be interpreted as a raw material for jewelry craft or hacksilver. All the finds allegedly originate in the vicinity of the old road that ran along the southern bank of Lake Il'men', not far from Ustreka (Toropov 2014: 275, 277).

The necessity to maintain the trade route through Lake Il'men' was probably a major factor contributing to the foundation of the Ustreka settlement at the mouth of the River Psizha. The estuary was the only place where boats could approach the shore and find shelter from strong winds. Even today, this location is used as an anchorage of fishing vessels. Furthermore, the inhabitants of this settlement may have taken an active part in the development of Rusa as an urban centre in the first half of the 11th century.

However, all of the above happened far from the place of the future Rusa. In contrast to Novgorod, in the neighbourhood of Rusa there is no accumulation of preceding archaeological sites. The largest cluster of sites of the 10th century — the so-called *sopka* burial mounds and settlements synchronous to them — are situated on the watersheds of the Lovat' and Pola Rivers, at a distance from Rusa. The sites closest to Staraya Rusa are upstream from the town, on the banks of the Polist' and Porus'ya Rivers. The formation of the early medieval settlement system along these rivers is obviously connected with "classical" agricultural colonization and can be dated to the 10th century by analogy with the neighbouring territories. Rusa was not the centre of this system, but occupied a peripheral position. In our opinion, the emergence of this medieval town cannot be considered the result of a rural centre formation.

Thus, the town of Rusa was founded away from the major medieval trade routes, on the periphery of the preceding system of rural settlements. The dominant element and an essential factor in its growth was the presence of saline springs that supply brine for the production of salt — the most important medieval trading commodity. The heart of the original settlement was not located in the most convenient place to create a town (this is, at the confluence of the Polist' and Porus'ya Rivers), but as close as possible to the mineral springs. Evidence of intensive salt production is found in the earliest strata. Material culture

at the site indicates that the main occupation of the first inhabitants of Rusa consisted of various crafts and trade, and agriculture was only of secondary importance. As the traces of the previous rural settlement were not found, the foundation of Rusa as a centre for salt production can be viewed as a single-step action, probably a government initiative.

In the middle of the 11th century, at the end of the reign of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, there was a sharp leap in the development of the settlement. Apparently, from that moment on we can speak about Rusa as a town, both in a social and administrative sense. Various finds from archaeological deposits confirm the contacts of the town with the Baltic region.

The rise of Rusa is associated with special conditions related to the urbanization of the Novgorod territories, including the scarcity of large urban centres and state control over the economy (i.a. salt production). Unlike many other towns of Early Rus', which emerged during the preceding period as centres on waterways, Rusa appeared as a result of the intensification of the internal economy of the Novgorod land.

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СТАРАЯ РУССА И ЮЖНОЕ ПОБЕРЕЖЬЕ ОЗ. ИЛЬМЕНЬ НА ФОНЕ КОНТАКТОВ С СЕВЕРНОЙ ЕВРОПОЙ В X–XII ВВ.

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Ключевые слова: *средневековая археология, Новгородская земля, Старая Русса, возникновение средневековых городов, контакты с Северной Европой.*

Статья посвящена проблеме возникновения Старой Руссы (до XVI в. — Руса), которая в эпоху средневековья была вторым по величине, экономическому и политическому значению городом Новгородской республики, центром солеваренного производства. Первое упоминание Русы в летописи относится к 1167/68 г., однако археологические данные свидетельствуют о возникновении городского поселения в гораздо более ранний период. Анализ городской топографии позволяет утверждать, что именно солеварение являлось основным градообразующим фактором. По всей видимости, городское поселение возникает на рубеже X–XI вв. В статье рассматриваются свидетельства контактов жителей Русы и ее окрестностей с Северной Европой. Судя по всему, Руса возникает изначально как торгово-ремесленное поселение. В отличие от многих других городов Древней Руси, в предшествовавший период возникавших как центры на трансконтинентальных торговых путях, Руса образуется в результате интенсификации внутренней экономики Новгородской земли.