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Die Beiträge der Festschrift sind nach Ansatz, Umfang und Qualität sehr unterschiedlich. Aber auch dort, wo manche zunächst nichts Neues zu bieten scheinen, machen sie Forschungslücken deutlich oder rufen Fragen hervor; aber anregend sind sie alle. Mit der Vielfalt der behandelten Themen wird zudem Frank Sysyn als ein Historiker geehrt, dessen Studien zur Geschichte der Ukraine sich durch vielfachen Perspektivenwechsel und neue Fragestellungen auszeichnen, die allein der Komplexität und Un- eindeutigkeit von Identitäten und ethnisch-nationa-

len Verhältnissen in einer europäischen Region Rechnung tragen können, die man bis heute als Brücke zwischen Ost und West sehen und verstehen kann. Dazu eröffnet die Festschrift interessante Zugänge. Insofern kann sie auch als Lehrbuch für Studierende dienen. Das Buch ist mit einigen wenigen Abbildungen und Faksimiles illustriert. Auf ein Namens- und Ortsregister haben die Herausgeber aber leider verzichtet.

Rudolf A. Mark, Lüneburg

VALENTIN L. JANIN: Očerki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda. [Grundzüge der Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Novgorod.] Moskva: Jazyki slavjanskich kul'tur, 2008. 397 S., Abb., Graph., Ktn. ISBN: 978-5-9551-0256-6.

This book attempts to summarize the results of the life-long research of a well-known Russian scholar, whose work is nowadays regarded as seminal in the field. As head of the archaeological expedition in Novgorod from 1962 Ianin gave birth to a school which has dominated research into Medieval Novgorod for the last five decades. The book is even more significant as it attempts to summarise the research of the Novgorod archaeological centre.

The book is organized as a series of essays on different topics and concludes with a short overview of the history of Novgorod.

Ianin's research is well-known for its boyar-centred approach to the history of Novgorod. Indeed this approach is not just a mere coincidence, rather it is due to a shift in views on the history of Novgorod which occurred in the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century the image of Medieval Novgorod played the same role within Russian culture as the *aurea saecula* (Golden Age) in European culture. Novgorod's *veche* system was understood as a symbol of the people's original freedom and equality. Soviet scholars were more interested in the development of feudalism, the study of land ownership and the formation of the large boyars' estates in Novgorod. Consequently, in Ianin's work Novgorod ceased to be regarded as a republic ruled by people, but a boyar republic.

Ianin develops his approach from the presumption that Novgorod originated from three settlements of different ethnic origin. Ianin believes that the rivalry between the aristocracy of these settlements and their fighting for representation in the government was the driving force for all the political events, as well as the main factor that determined the

relationships between the people of Novgorod and the princes. Ianin also believes that the princes were invited to Novgorod by the boyars. This was, according to his concept, because the boyars' clans wanted to use the support of the princes to get hold of the leading positions within the city. Ianin assumes that understanding of the boyars' policy is a clue to unlocking the whole history of Novgorod. This is why he suggested that it was crucial to restore the genealogy of the boyar clans and to affirm their belonging to different residential areas, presumably traced back to the separated settlements within Novgorod and thus explaining the political preferences of the different boyars' clans. Ianin regards the changes on the Novgorod throne as a result of the coming to power of particular boyar clans in Novgorod.

Although the concept of three ethnic settlements was very soon refuted by other scholars, our understanding of the internal fights between and within the boyar clans as determining the relationships between Novgorod and the princes remained popular for years. Moreover, Ianin's research has set a terminological framework for the next fifty years. Ianin's proposed terms include: "boyars' internal fights", "boyars' antiprincely struggle", "boyars' consolidation", "compromise between the boyars' clans", "people's antiboyars rebellion", "strengthening of the republican's organs of power", "the achievements of the anti-princely struggle"; they were reproduced by many scholars of the time.

Looking into reasons for the privileges of Novgorod in comparison to the other Russian cities Ianin accounts for the Novgorod privileges by way of the fact that the prince ruled in Novgorod as a consequence of being invited by the boyars. Ianin seems to stick to the eighteenth century myth that the first Russian prince, Rurik, was initially invited to Russia by the people of Novgorod to rule there by contract. Thus the prince was not free to exercise his power in Novgorod as fully as in other cities because

his actions were limited by contract. Ianin even believes that in Novgorod the boyars stayed immune to the princely court. At the same time the prince was free to exercise his power in the other Russian cities, where he ruled not as a hireling but as a conqueror. This was, according to Ianin, the reason why Rurik's successor preferred to move his residence from Novgorod to Kiev.

However, the reason why the people of Novgorod were able to keep their political freedoms for the next five hundred years remains obscure in Ianin's writing. Even if we assume a special freedom-loving character of the people of Novgorod, it remains unclear why it became a hindrance for the grand princes to conquer Novgorod later on, taking into account the vital importance for the grand princes to control this northern key point of the main Russian trade river route.

Discussing the political relationships between the grand princes and Novgorod Ianin looks on the events exclusively from a boyar perspective ignoring the more general context of the princes' fighting for supreme power in Russia. He pays little attention to the presence of another pretender to the supreme power in Russia in Novgorod during the political conflicts of Novgorod with the grand princes in 1169–1170, 1210, 1221, 1252, 1270 etc. He also appears to prefer not to notice that it was occupying Novgorod that secured the supreme power in Russia to the pretenders in their internal fights with other princes.

Of course, this ignorance was not completely coincidental. To uncover that the most important condition for the formation of the "democratic" institutions in Novgorod was the opposition to the great prince from the pretenders from different dynasties would not have been acceptable in the Soviet era. It would not have supported the concept of Moscow

in a positive role as a collector of Russian land and would have destroyed the idea of positivity with the concentration of power in one hand.

The work of Ianin is characterised by masterly use of the sources. However, he cannot escape, though typical for his time, his ignorance of the church history. This has led to a sometimes uncritical reading of the Novgorod chronicle produced by the Novgorod archbishop and has consequently caused some misinterpretations of political events. For example, the interference of the prince in the election of the archbishop of Novgorod (1156) is confused by Ianin with the manifestation of the Novgorod republican freedoms and the election of the archbishop by the people's assembly.

The fall of the Novgorod republic is explained in the book by class struggle. Ianin does not regard the conquest of Novgorod by Moscow as a suppression of Novgorod's democratic political structure by the Moscow princes. He maintains the view that the fall of Novgorod is to be seen as the result of the social discontent of the people of Novgorod, suppressed by the rich and greedy boyars. In the scheme proposed by Ianin, the relationship *People–Boyars–prince* it is not difficult to recognise as a concealed proletariat–bourgeoisie–monarchy scheme, characteristic for his time.

All in all this book is a must-read for all specialists and those interested in the history of Novgorod. The work of Ianin has made a massive contribution to scholarship and his account still represents a dominant view on the history of Novgorod. The reason for his popularity could be his exceptional analytical scrutiny of research, and his masterly use of auxiliary historical disciplines. His deep insights into the different aspects of the history of Novgorod entice us into further investigating this fascinating area.

Olga Sevastyanova, Aberdeen

PRZEMYSŁAW WISZEWSKI: *Domus Boleslai. Values and Social Identity in Dynastic Traditions of Medieval Poland (c. 966–1138)*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010, 592 S. = *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450*, 9. ISBN 978-90-04-18142-7.

Schon seit geraumer Zeit werden in der internationalen kulturwissenschaftlich orientierten Forschung Probleme des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, der symbolischen Kommunikation sowie die verschiedenen Formen und Praktiken der Memoria und ihre jeweiligen Funktionen insbesondere für Gesellschaften der Vormoderne lebhaft und mit Gewinn diskutiert. An

diese Debatten möchte der Breslauer Mediävist Przemysław Wiszewski mit seiner Habilitationsschrift über Wertvorstellungen und kollektive Identitäten in dynastischen Traditionen der Piasten anschließen, die 2008 in polnischer Fassung erschienen ist und nun in englischer Übersetzung vorliegt.

Für Wiszewski sind im Kontext seiner Arbeit vor allem sinntragende Ordnungen von Interesse, deren genauere Untersuchung Antworten auf Fragen rund um die Entstehung von Gruppenidentitäten im frühen und hohen Mittelalter versprechen. „Tradition“ dient dem Verfasser dabei als Schlüsselkonzept: Er definiert Tradition über ihre Funktion, die er in Anlehnung an Ideen Paul Ricœurs in erster Linie als