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ABSTRACTS

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vised the construction. Later the fort was strengthened by Malik Ambar, the Abyssinian regent of Ahmednagar kings (1610-1625AD/1019-1035AH). The fort has 19 rounded bastions, quarters for officers, mosque, a big fresh water tank. Janjira is one of the strongest marine forts of India, this reputation came from being the only fort along India's Western coast that was remained undefeated from Dutch, Maratha and English East India Company attacks. Later when Sambhaji (1657-1689 AD/1067-1100 AH) -the eldest son and successor Shivaji the founder of the Maratha Empire- failed to capture it, he built another island fort, known as Kansa or Padmadurg fort, just 9km north of Janjira. Despite the importance of this fort it still needs further studies about its architectural elements, and its impact on the forts of the west coast of India.



T01S003 - LONG-DISTANCE TRADE AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY BETWEEN BYZANTINE AND THE BALTIC IN THE VIKING AGE

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Long-distance trade and exchange of goods between the Byzantine empire and the Baltic Sea region played an important role in the Viking period (8th to 11th centuries AD). In recent studies, trade with Byzantium is regarded as having stimulated economic development and the emergence of political organisation of societies in the Northern and Eastern peripheries of Europe. With increasing archaeological data and new fieldwork at sites and in areas that were previously neglected, however, these ideas need to be re-evaluated. Finds of Byzantine jewellery, silver coins, seals, glass beads and vessels, amphorae and Christian metalwork between the Black Sea and Scandinavia seem to be less numerous than many other traded artefacts, such as Arabic and Western European coins, notwithstanding the special position in the trade system usually accorded to Constantinople. Attribution of a considerable number of artefacts to Byzantine workshops, or the spread of Eastern Mediterranean fashions and technologies to neighbouring regions, remain the matter of debate and require more thorough examination. Nevertheless, long-distance trade between Byzantine and the Baltic in the Viking period has to be regarded as a major influence on domestic economies in the northern peripheries of the Byzantine empire. The study of the impact of international trade on local economic centres in the peripheries, whose wealth was based on the extraction of natural resources from forest areas, is of particular interest.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Variangians and Greeks in Gnezdovo: Evidence from the Recent Field Investigations

Veronika Murasheva (State Historical Museum, Moscow)

(1) Gnezdovo archaeological complex (late 9th - early 11th century), one of the largest archaeological sites of the period of Russian State formation. The geographical location and the finds show that Gnezdovo was a major political centre controlling "the route from Varangians to the Greeks". (2) Investigation of burial complexes showed that the Gnezdovo population was poly-ethnic, besides Slavs it consisted of Scandinavian incomers. Analysis of grave goods clearly demonstrates also that Gnezdovo was a major centre of long-distance trade, including with the Byzantine Empire. The study of the settlement, however, significantly expands our notion of the nature of the Scandinavian and the Byzantine impact on the Gnezdovo history. (3) Besides the considerable quantity of northern artefacts, found during the excavations of occupation deposit, the Scandinavian influence is detected in the system of space organisation. Some discovered structures demonstrate the North European influence e at the formation of the East European town-building practice. (4) The Byzantine impact is detected only on artefact level. The archaeological evidence from the settlement occupation deposit gives us an insight into the nature and evolution of Russian-Byzantine relations, although an adequate reconstruction of their history would require analysing the whole gamut of historical sources.

Wiskiauten - A Central Place for Trading Amber from the Baltic to the South?

Timo Ibsen (Center for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology, Schleswig)

Situated in world's richest amber reservoir, the Sambian peninsula on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea (nowadays part of Russia's Kaliningrad Region) the Viking Age site of Mohovoe/Wiskiauten since it's discovery in the 19th century was regarded as a central place for Scandinavian merchants in the era of the Prussian tribes, although a settlement was never found. The reasons were 500 barrows, which contained many ornaments of Swedish and Gotlandic provenience. Furthermore the location of the site close to the mouth of river Neman/Memel offered a trading route towards the Kiew Rus and the Dnjepr as the main traffic axis to Byzantium and the Caliphates. In the last decade Wiskiauten was newly investigated in the frame of a Russian-German research project. Especially the excavations in the supposed settlement area led to a re-interpretation of the whole site. Amber surely played a role in the trading activities, but long distance trading contacts