

KOZMODEMYANSK FOREST FAIR IN THE SECOND HALF OF XIX- EARLY XX CENTURY

Alexey Ivanov¹, Ananiy Ivanov², Alexander Filonov^{3*}, Alina Filonova⁴

¹Mari State University, Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, anani@marsu.ru

²Mari State University, Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, anani@marsu.ru

³Mari State University, Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, fil88meat@rambler.ru

⁴Mari State University, Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, alina.filonova.92@mail.ru

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The article demonstrates various aspects of the formation and functioning of the Kozmodemyansk forest fair in the Kazan province since its foundation. Quite a significant range of archival and published historical sources, first introduced into scientific circulation, is involved. There five subjects of fundamental importance for the study of the problem are singled out: the role of natural and geographical factors in the fair formation, the determination of the fair time holding, the volume and the size of fair trade dynamics, the forms of timber marketing, quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the participants, the role of the fair in the development of Kozmodemyansk city.

Keywords: Kozmodemyansk forest fair, economy, trade, all-Russian transit, the main factors and problems of development

1 INTRODUCTION

Kozmodemyansk forest fair has not yet been the subject of special historical investigation. Meanwhile, it was of all – Russian importance and had a significant impact on the development of the middle Volga region and the city of Kozmodemyansk in the second half of XIX-early XX centuries. The article being of an impressive character is intended to identify various aspects of the problem investigation, including some stories on the history of the city in the context of the fair functioning. It is also significant to introduce into scientific circulation an unknown range of factual material, first being extracted by the authors from various archival funds. In general, the available range of scientific literature [Ivanov, 2009, Pp.134-136; Ivanov, Sanukov, 2015, 300 p.; Filonov, 2014, 296 p.], published [Kozmodemyansk, 2008, 616 p.; Chimaev, 2013, p. 196-201] and archival documents [SA RME, vol. 16, 49, 226], makes it possible to raise and work out the following important issues.

2 MATERIALS AND RESULTS

Foremost, it is necessary to determine the role of natural and geographical factor due to which the place of this largest forest fair holding was Kozmodemyansk and its surroundings. Appropriate geographical position was the crucial factor that determined the choice of location for the annual holding of Kozmodemyansk forest fair. A dense network of large and small tributaries of the Volga river, especially of the Vetluga, the Unzha, the Rutka and the Sura, allowed organizing delivery of timber here by water, mainly in rafts. It is also necessary to take into account the nearness of the above-mentioned rivers and their tributaries to rich forests. According 80-90s of the XIX century logging for timber rafting by means of rafts was made in the forest dachas of Nikolsky uyezd of the Vologda province, Vetluzhsky and Varnavinsky uyezds of Kostroma province, Makarievsky uyezd of Nizhny Novgorod province. With the beginning of spring floods in these harvested areas the timber was floated in rafts down the Vetluga to the Volga for sale at Kozmodemyansk forest fair. It also received the part of the cut wood from the forests of the left Bank of the Kozmodemyansk uyezd of the Kazan province on the Rutka river, and in the right bank on the Sura river from the Alatyr uyezd of the Simbirsk province. At a subsequent stage, the water expanse of the Volga allowed to deliver from Kozmodemyansk timber rafts and various timber to Samara, Saratov, Tsaritsyn, Astrakhan and other lower Volga cities and places. Natural and climatic conditions of the middle zone were generally favorable for the functioning of the timber rafting along the Volga river and its tributaries. However, unfavorable weather conditions (slight snow cover in winter, low level of spring flood in the timber rafting rivers and their tributaries, forest fires, droughts, crop failures, etc.) sometimes made their own allowances and led to timber volume decrease.

The location of the Kozmodemyansk forest fair itself was at the intersection of the Volga-Vetluga waterway. At first, touching the land for the Vetluga rafts with timber and fuelwood needed small areas of coastal areas. Over time, the territory of the fair expanded significantly not only due to new coastal areas, but also using the Volga water surface. During several decades, the territory of the fair has significantly expanded and by the early XX century making up the largest area. With the beginning of the first World War it began to decline. The transfer of the part of trade transactions being carried out by lowlands timber producers directly on forest allotments of Poveluzhye played quite a significant role here.

The second, no less important point is determination of the fair functioning time and its annual holding dates. Our sources let us to proclaim that its occurrence was preceded by timber trade having been widely spread in Kozmodemyansk uyezd and in the Volga-Vetluga region on the whole in XVII – first half of the XIX century. According to S.M. Mikhailov's observations made in 1852-1853, timber was floated down the river to Kazan, Samara, Saratov, Astrakhan from the left Bank of Kozmodemyansk uyezd. Within this uyezd, timber items and other products for rafting were loaded at Kozmodemyanskaya, Korotninskaya, Rootkinskaya, Pokrovskaya, Ilyinskaya, Susunichinskaya, Velikovskaya, Sheshkarskaya and Kinarskaya ghauts as well as at Rutka ghaut. Among them Kozmodemyansk ghaut in terms of trade turnover was in the first place. Wood cutting and timber rafting was the main trade item of Kozmodemyansk according to data of 1860.

At the same time, specialized large-scale trade of Vetluga rafts in the vicinity of Kozmodemyansk did not start until 1861. According to the Kozmodemyansk city Council, "until 1860, forest trade in the city of Kozmodemyansk was not very intensive; and since that time, intensive logging and timber rafting began, increasing from year to year progressively." Especially brisk timber trade began in 1863. In the early 60s of the XIX century there already existed a forest ghaut for rafts mooring being located on the right bank of the Volga river between the mouth of the Malaya Junga river and Kozmodemyansk. According to the information about the fair state, located in the town of Kozmodemyansk in 1867, the timber from the forest ghaut "floated down the lowlands cities in rafts and barges". According to the information reported to the III regular Kozmodemyansk uyezd meeting, "forest trade taking place at the city of Kozmodemyansk on the Volga river is marked by the forest ghaut". On August 13, 1877 the Kazan Governor reports that forest trade of rafts in the vicinity of Kozmodemyansk is to be called "fair". However, for a long time this largest forest fair of the European part of Russia remained officially not legally recognized. Only thanks to numerous petitions of the city authorities and Uyezd Zemstvo, as well as to the petition of the Kazan provincial Zemsky Assembly, on September 15, 1893 the Kazan Governor in coordination with the Ministers of internal Affairs and Finance, allowed the official opening of Kozmodemyansk forest fair. The end of the XIX-beginning of the XX centuries became the peak of its functioning. With the beginning of the First World War the fair began to decline, and in 1917 it "experienced a complete crisis".

Nevertheless, in 1917-1921, despite the severe consequences of the First World War, the dramatic events of the two revolutions and the civil war, terrible forest fires and mass famine in the Volga region, the fair continued to function after a short break. Moreover, in Soviet times, in 1921-1929, the years of new

economic policy, Kozmodemyansk forest fair found a new lease of life and became to recover lost ground with great force. In this regard, it was no accident that in June 1924 the Presidium of the Mari regional Executive Committee decided to officially reopen the "forest fair" in Kozmodemyansk taking into account the fact that the economic value of the Kozmodemyansk fair goes far beyond the Mari region and "it will revive the turnover of forest products obtained in the upper Volga basin (Vetluga city) and improve the conditions of supply the Lower Volga region, the Don and the Caucasus with wood".

The above given materials let us to assert that Kozmodemyansk forest fair existed for at least seven decades in the period from 1861 to 1930.

At the same time, the dates and duration of the forest fair did not remain unchanged. Every year it started its work in spring, with the navigation, and the first rafts landed. The auction lasted 1, 5 – 2 months. According to the Kozmodemyansk city Council in 1892, "the trade started on May 15 and ended on 1 July, "which was officially enshrined by the Kazan Governor on September 15, 1893. Since 1909 the fair lasted for 2 months from May, 25 to July, 25. Obviously these changes were caused by the increased turnover of the Kozmodemyansk forest fair. In Soviet times, it worked annually from June 1 and lasted until the end of July.

Kozmodemyansk forest fair by right was considered the largest, being of all-Russian significance. Since its existence, it has been rapidly gathering pace. So, in 1884-1886 its trade accounted for nearly half turnovers of all 73 existed in Kazan provinces fairs. Especially the volume of timber sales and timber materials increased in the late XIX-early XX centuries. At the end of the first decade of the XX century Kozmodemyansk forest fair was ranked the first among the Volga forest fairs, far better than Makaryev, Yurievets, Puchezh, Kostroma, Rybinsk, Mologa and other forest fairs.

In this regard, it is legitimate to consider the third storyline about the dynamics of the trade volume (in rubles) and the size of timber trade (single row rafts, etc.).

Available data on the turnover, with all their incompleteness, to a certain extent give us an opportunity to trace the dynamics of Kozmodemyansk forest fair in the second half of XIX – early XX centuries. Published documents, descriptions, and archival information about Kozmodemyansk city Council and the city Council show that the trade volume of Kozmodemyansk ghaut in the 60s of the XIX century reached 100 thousand rubles. At the same time the trade volume of Kozmodemyansk forest fair in the 70s of the XIX century was up to 500 thousand rubles, in the 80s of the XIX century –1 million rubles, in the late XIX – early XX centuries – 2 million rubles. It should be emphasized that we are talking about the trade of single row rafts being floated down the Vetluga to the fair.

Due to various reasons the total number of single row rafts coming to Kozmodemyansk forest fair, annually ranged from 1,5 to 3 thousand items. In total, there were from 500 thousand to 1 million trees of different species (pine, spruce, aspen, etc.) in these rafts. It is typical that throughout its functioning Kozmodemyansk forest fair retained its importance as the main distribution market of the Vetluga forest rafting. In 1910, the density of timber movement at the Vetluga mouth reached 56, 6 million pounds. On the basis of appointment Vetluga timber served mainly the needs of the Lower Volga region. Partly the Vetluga timber was floated to the lower lands of the Volga as well as to the cities of the Middle Volga region. Its largest consumer Kazan was among them. In 1905 it got 217 thousand pounds of timber, while in 1913 – 1,853 thousand pounds.

The growth of annual turnovers of forest trade in Kozmodemyansk forest fair in the late XIX-early XX centuries was caused not only by the intensity of the Vetluga region, but also by the increase in the flow of the forest rafting from the river basins of the Rutka and the Sura. The expansion of the forest product range, where single-row and cargo rafts were supplemented with sawn wood, handicraft items, resin, tar and other forest products should also be taken into account. Substantial increase in the Kozmodemyansk forest fair turnover in the early twentieth century was also caused by the fact that at this time small sawmills began to appear in the Vetluga forest area and at the same time the number of small buyers of state forest increased.

The fourth point requiring close attention can be considered the issues concerning the forms of trade organization, quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the Kozmodemyansk forest fair participants.

Trade deals at this fair timber manufacturers and timber traders preferred to make "privately – at the apartments of the timber industrialists". In addition, on the eve of the First World War, large timber buyers coming from the Lower Volga region began to enter into trade deals directly on the wood cutting sites. Forest trade exchange in Kozmodemyansk failed to open. Apparently, there was no special need for the establishment of such an exchange, since it was successfully replaced by forest trading agencies. It was noted in the copy of the journal of meetings of Kozmodemyansk city Council of October 19, 1892, that "for the purpose of sale and purchase of timber in the city of Kozmodemyansk unofficially several timber

commercial offices are established where the sale and purchase of timber, as well as contract for the rafting of the working people are organized".

The number of Kozmodemyansk forest fair participants had a tendency to grow, and typically ranged from 10 to 30 thousand people a year. Thus, in 1863 the number of workers having arrived at the fair was estimated at 2 thousand people, and in 1877 there were up to 10 thousand "people at the fair", in 1889 and 1893 – up to 20 thousand people, and in 1913 – up to 30 thousand people, and sometimes in the early twentieth century there were up to 50 thousand people.

The number of forest traders and timber industrialists, in contrast with the many thousands of workers, hardly exceeded two hundred people. Some of them were directly involved in the fair transactions, while others preferred to act through their trusted clerks and sales agents. The timber harvested in the state, the landlords and the specific demesne land dachas of Povetluzhye was either sold by the owners of the forest dachas, or sold to local or foreign buyers.

Coming from "lower towns" forest fair timber industrialists stayed in hotels, and over time, some of them began to buy houses for forest trade agencies in Kozmodemyansk. Therefore, in 1898, the Trustee of the largest timber industrialist of Astrakhan trading house "Gubiny Brothers" in Kozmodemyansk purchased a beautiful carved wooden house to be their trading agency, now being a Museum of merchant life.

The final, the fifth point is associated with the impact of the forest fair on the development of Kozmodemyansk.

Undoubtedly, the forest fair has played a crucial role in the life of the city for more than half a century and had a decisive impact on the development of urban economy, culture and life of citizens. Economic prosperity in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries the city is obliged to it. With its implementation, trade and industrial activities of citizens of all social groups became more active, trade turnover and range of imported and sold goods increased, trade and economic ties with other cities and fairs expanded and the volume of investment from outside (non-resident merchants, lower middle class people, raznochinets, uyezd peasants and people of other social layers) in the city economy was increasing.

Trade of goods can be characterized as permanent stationary store (in the shops and other places), as well as a weekly Bazaar and peddling-distribution. Especially it is necessary to tell about the market trade which became especially populous during the period of forest fair. The market square was a concentration of trade and economic life. Here you could sell and buy a variety of goods and products. According to the data from 1875, at the Market square they sold flour, cereals, peas, malt, potatoes, baked bread, vegetables at carts, mobile shops, stalls and shelves, stalls, other commercial premises. Here also cakes, fruit, grocery goods, different kinds of meat, butter, lard, raw and crafted leather, gloves, simple saddlery goods, shoe goods, hemp equipment; fresh, live and salted fish, caviar, honey; manufacture, needle and haberdashery items; books, paintings, icons, caps, hats, warm felted shoes, glass, porcelain utensils, braids, sickles, furniture; horses, cows, root salted dry fish, tobacco, soap, matches and other similar items; iron products, linen and wool, wooden and clay utensils, various wooden products and other edible supplies and goods were sold.

One way of getting income was to possess hotels, restaurants, pubs, wine cellars, beer and wine shops, inns and lodging houses. Their owners were wealthy citizens. As a rule, hotels, restaurants and the white eating places served as local centers of entertainment; they were attended exclusively by males. There they could drink, eat, play billiards, listen to music. Newcoming timber industrialists preferred to stay in hotels during the forest fair.

Almost all city dwellers were engaged in temporary housing due to huge influx of people to the forest fair. It took a month and a half or two during the fair for the owners to help out the full annual fee for the apartment. As noted by Kozmodemyansk city Duma at its meeting on October 19, 1892, "due to great density of people they are housed not only at apartments, but some cool buildings – barns and haylofts are also overcrowded". The poor sometimes huddled in baths, closets, sheds. They needed money to repair their house as temporary roomers often "turned the occupied premises into barns". The part of seasonal workers lived in specially built board dwellings. And yet people needed housing. A large part of the Vetluga rafters spent their summer nights right on the rafts.

Certain demand during forest fair enjoyed various crafts by Kozmodemyansk craftsmen (blacksmiths, tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, and others), as well as grain merchants', bakers' and kalachniks' fresh pastries. Especially popular the work of local anchormen was. According to the chief of Kozmodemyansk navigable distance, only in the time period from May 23 to June 7, 1912, there 440 anchor boats were registered,

"working on the sleeves of single row rafts being the last one coming from the mouth of the Vetluga to the Batygin'sky backwater inclusive".

Kozmodemyansk forest fair had a positive impact on the socio-economic development of the city and the material well-being of its inhabitants. Directly or indirectly, it influenced the opening of the Kozmodemyansk Telegraph station (1872), notary office (1879), bacteriological station, theater, cinema, zemsky hospital, fire station (fire observation tower), the growth of the city public Bank turnover, the increase in the number of residential and commercial buildings, landscaping and other aspects of the city life. Indeed, during the forest fair Kozmodemyansk looked lively.

However, the fair holiday had its own downside, which became a "headache" of the city and Zemstvo authorities. This is the problem of accommodation of thousands of newcomers, the number of those exceeded the number of permanent population of Kozmodemyansk by several times (the population of the city in 1897 was 5,184 people, in 1913 there were 5,778 people of both sexes) several times. Besides, these were also the issues of forest fair regulation, providing law and order, organization of effective measures to prevent fires and localization of mass diseases (cholera, etc.), improvement and sanitary condition of the city, the formation of the city budget and other urgent matters.

3 CONCLUSION

Thus, fairs have always been of great importance in the system of the all-Russian market. Despite the gradual decline in the share of fair trade in the total trading mass in the country in the second half of XIX – early XX century, the role of major fairs of regional and national importance, specializing in trade in various agricultural raw materials, furs, forest materials and other goods at this time increased. The main fair in timber trade in the Volga region at this time became the largest in Russia Kozmodemyansk forest fair of the Kazan province. Its further study within the framework of the issues raised in the article still remains relevant.

REFERENCES LIST

- Akhutina, T.V., Pylaeva, N.M. and Hotyleva. T. Y. (2011), Neuropsychological approach in inclusive State Archive of the Republic of Mari El (SA RME), vol. 16, 49, 226.
- Ivanov A.G. (2009). Dynamics of Kozmodemyansk forest fair development in the second half of the XIX-early XX century. Rus', Russia: middle ages and modern times. Readings in memory of academician L.V. Milov. Conference materials
- Ivanov A.G., Sanukov K.N. (2015) History of Mari El. Yoshkar-Ola
- Kozmodemyansk in the late XVI-early XX centuries. Documents and materials on the history of the city (2008). Yoshkar-Ola
- Filonov A.A. (2014). Essays on the history of forestry Mari region of the second half of XIX-early XX centuries. Yoshkar-Ola
- Chimaev A.N. (2013). Documentary materials about Kozmodemyansk forest fair of the late XIX-early XX centuries. Mari archaeological Bulletin, issue 13.