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The state and perspectives of development of the domestic shipbuilding in the North in the first half of the 19th century through the eyes of provincial officials (data of the State Archive of the Arkhangelsk region) *

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Abstract. Based on the data from the State Archive of the Arkhangelsk Region, the article assesses the status of merchant and folk Pomor shipbuilding in the North in the 20th century. The key method of the research is the induction method, which is actively used in the historical school of economics, which set as its goal, including the analysis of specific economic situations in a state at a certain stage of its historical development. During the process of research, the analysis has been made of the certain cases and documents of the Arkhangelsk Society for the Study of the Russian North, as well as historical reviews of the Arkhangelsk Governorate Statistical Committee. The conclusion was made overall about the negative perception of regional authorities of the level of development of commodity turnover in the Empire, the absence of high-quality “logistics,” bureaucratic red tape, legal barriers to support shipbuilders, as well as technological advantages of foreign fishing vessels. A constructive reform of the regional authorities in the second half of the 19th century meant the plan for the development of road infrastructure between Arkhangelsk and the town of Povenets in the Olonets Province (Governorate), the development of skipper courses, the creation of a typical improved model of a karbas and a cargo schooner for training future shipbuilders, skippers.

Keywords: *the Russian Arctic, Far North, the Arkhangelsk Province, island spaces, historical geography, political geography, borderlands, shipbuilding.*

Introduction

Back in 2014, the President of Russia voiced the importance of a “shipbuilding cluster.” The development of shipbuilding is of importance: it gives impetus to many related industries, and “it

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is of fundamental importance that domestic shipyards should take the lead in the competition for the orders.”¹.

As it was noted by O.V. Lichutina and T.A. Shirokova, in 2013, shipbuilding was among the top five sectors of the economy, making the most significant contribution to the GRP of the Arkhangelsk Oblast [1, Lichutina O. V., Shirokova T.A.]. However, compared to the timber industry, its volumes, transport, logistics, trade, and construction, are inexcusably small: just over 4%.

The importance of supporting shipbuilding was expressed in mid-2018 by the Governor of the Arkhangelsk Oblast in historical context. It was the Solombala shipyard that was the first shipbuilding yard created by order of Emperor Peter I as far back as 1693, and “at the Krasnaya Kuznitsa yard — the heir to the first shipyard still preserves the wooden slips used to launch the first ships.”². It is also noteworthy that the shipyard was closed in 1862, precisely at the time when the activity of foreign fisheries was activated, including in dangerous proximity to the sovereign maritime spaces of the Empire.

Only by the end of the 19th century, domestic industrialists got a steam fleet purchased from abroad (e.g., the Arkhangelsk-Murmansk Shipping Company). Krasavtsev L. B. noted the cost of freight had reached enormous amounts: “[...] having embarked on the path of industrial development later than other European countries and the United States, Russia industrially lagged sharply behind them and did not have the material basis for an active maritime policy. By tonnage and the number of merchant ships in the early 20th century, Russia ranked 10th in the world. Merchant fleet for the transport of goods of foreign trade was not enough. Therefore, foreign vessels were chartered, for which the country paid 125 million rubles annually. The distribution of the merchant fleet across the country's sea basins was extremely uneven. The ships mostly concentrated on the Black, Baltic and Caspian seas” [2, Krasavtsev L.B.]. Krasavtsev L. B. wrote more details about it in his monograph on merchant shipping in the European North of Russia [3, Krasavtsev L.B.].

As it was noted in a large number of letters, circulars, telegrams and other historical documents on marine industries of the Arkhangelsk Society for the Study of the Russian North: in the late 19th — early 20th centuries, the Norwegians had extremely high activity in the coastal areas of Murman within six nautical miles and the fishing of our compatriots dropped significantly³.

¹ Putin podcherknul vazhnost' razvitiya otechestvennogo sudostroeniya [Putin stressed the importance of the domestic shipbuilding development], November 13, 2014, 07:32. Tass. URL: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/1568966> (Accessed: 16 March 2019). [In Russian]

² Ot karbasa k ledokolu [From a karbas to an icebreaker] June 28, 2018, 09:00. Rossijskaya gazeta. URL: <https://rg.ru/2018/06/28/reg-szfo/v-arhangelskoj-oblasti-vozrodili-mnogovekovoe-nasledie-pomorov.html> (Accessed: 16 March 2019). [In Russian]

³ Delo ob ehkspedicii V.F. Drzheveckogo k Murmanskim beregam. Spisok gubernskih arhivnyh komissij (2 yanv. 1910 g. – 30 iyunya 1910 g.). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 1. D. 20. (na 336 l.). L. 293. [The case of the V.F. Drzhevetsky's expedition to the Murmansk coast. The list of provincial archival commissions (January 2, 1910 — June 30, 1910). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 1. C. 20. (336 pages). P. 293]. [In Russian]

Sometimes this led to diplomatic misunderstandings, expressed in hostile rhetoric from the Norwegian media structures. E.g., in the *Aftenposten* newspaper, any strengthening of the Norwegian industrial activity in the Arctic waters of the Russian Empire was denied, and any unfriendly political statements addressed to the Kingdom by the fishermen or associates of the eastern neighbor were perceived as an attempt to get political points and funding from the central government.

Also, in the collection of the Arkhangelsk Society for the Study of the Russian North, we found a fragment of a translated article published in *Aftenposten* No. 563 September 30, 1909. The author tries to convince readers that the Norwegians had nothing to do with the fishing near Novaya Zemlya and Russian claims are groundless. The author called the findings of the Arkhangelsk Governor's expedition about the expansion of Norwegian industrialists a misunderstanding. Arguments used to prove that: 1) Norwegians were interested in the seal hunting mostly, and it was done in the Arctic Ocean far beyond the Novaya Zemlya archipelago; 2) the Russian patrol vessel "Bakan" did not provide any opportunities for "robbery." So, such statements of the Russian Governor were only an attempt to obtain funding for the development of Novaya Zemlya.⁴

Another noteworthy fact is the message that "northern winds and the lack of bait supply were interfering with fishing"⁵. So, it is not only an increase in the role of foreign fishermen but also the lack of a decent supply for domestic fishers, incl. a lack of technological assets [4, Zaikov K.S., Cherkasov A.A., Gao T., Loukacheva N.V.].

If we compare the level of political tension in the Arctic of the late 19th — early 20th century with the current situation, nothing has fundamentally changed. It is especially true if we are not considering the attempt of the international community to focus on environmental protection (UN CLOS, Art. 234) and a move of the Arctic states to a more moderate position on the development of marine biological and energy resources. Recently, Russia and Norway have settled a dispute over the "gray zone" of the Barents Sea. Still, a certain legal uncertainty is observed when considering the establishment of a "fishing zone" near Svalbard by the Norwegian side [5, Østhaugen A.]. The same situation we see in relation to the "Mountain Code" — an intrastate act on the archipelago [6, Grydehoj A.], the legal regime of which explicitly hints at the free access of all member states to resources while maintaining Norwegian sovereignty, despite all Norway's attempts to extend greater control above this space.

We should not forget about the US diplomatic position related to the legal status of the Northern Sea Route straits, namely the Straits of the Kara Sea, the Laptev and Sannikov Straits, i.e., the statement on the international status of these sea routes [7, Todorov A.A.]. Also, there are

⁴ Fragment gazetnoj stat'i "Norvezhskij razbojnichij promysel na Novoj Zemle" (1909 g.). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 2. D. 2. (na 1 l.). L. 1. [Fragment of the newspaper article "Norwegian robber fishery on Novaya Zemlya" (1909). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 2. C. 2. (1 page). P. 1.]. [In Russian]

⁵ Delo ob ekspedicii V.F. Drzhevetskogo k Murmanskim beregam. Spisok gubernskih arhivnyh komissij (2 yanv. 1910 g. — 30 iyunya 1910 g.). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 1. D. 20. (na 336 l.). L. 326. [The case of the V.F. Drzhevetsky's expedition to the Murmansk coast. The list of provincial archival commissions (January 2, 1910 — June 30, 1910). GAAO. F. 83. Op. 1. C. 20. (336 pages). P. 326]. [In Russian]

claims of Russia, Denmark, and Canada to the Lomonosov Ridge, the dispute over the island of Hans between Canada and Denmark [8, Rudnicki J.], and the long-drawn-out dispute between the USA and Canada over the Northwest Passage, the Dixon Entrance and Strait of Juan de Fuca, Beaufort Sea and Machias Seal Island [9, Lalonde S., Lasserre F.], etc.

In this regard, each management decision should be thoroughly ascertained, and the support of domestic industrialists should be based on the historical foundation and experience of previous generations. Developed merchant fleet and infrastructure are not only a locomotive for the economic development of the Russian Arctic but also a factor of geopolitical presence.

Shipbuilding evolution in the Arkhangelsk Province: from dawn to sunset

The second half of the 18th — early 19th centuries of Russian science have traditionally considered the golden age of Russian Arctic navigation. The enthusiasm of hunters and fishermen from the Pomor land, who went to sea fishing, is reflected in the numerous writings and archival documents. As a vivid example, one can cite “Historical description of the journey to Svalbard of four Mezen sailors: Alexei and Ivan Khimkovs, Stepan Sharapov and Fyodor Virugin, 1743—1749”:

“[...] and they were most surprised when the unfortunates began to speak Russian. The co-worker saw that they were natural Russians and learned from them that they had lived on a desert island for more than six years. The ship sailed from Arkhangelsk to West Spitsbergen to catch whales, but with a nasty wind, it was brought to the eastern Spitsbergen.

The shipbuilder agreed to bring three Robin zones with all their property to Russia for eight-ten rubles. Their “jewels” consisted of 2,000 pounds of deer oil, 200 deer horns, ten bear skins and various skins of white and blue foxes accounted for 80 rubles. He still pledged to support them during the whole trip at his expense.”⁶

As can be seen from the description, the profit that domestic animal and fish hunters had significantly strengthened their motivation in developing the sea and island spaces of the Empire, even despite the enormous risks and harsh climatic conditions. The “Russian Arctic” collection [10, Russian Arctic] provides more details on this story.

However, Arkhangelsk officials sometimes did not appreciate the contribution of the local population to the development of productive forces, and shipbuilding. A somewhat dismissive tone about the “Pomors” appears in the rhetoric of P. Bogoslovsky’s corresponding member of the Arkhangelsk Statistical Committee:

“In 1428, during the reign of Basil the Dark, some Pomors were also mentioned that they lived at the mouth of the river Niva and along the shores of the Kandalaksha Bay, engaged in animal husbandry and fishery. But all these legends are unsatisfactory, dark. Of course, the occupation of the maritime industry gives knowledge about the existence of ships, but it is unknown what

⁶ Istoricheskoe opisanie puteshestviya na SHpicbergen chetyrekh mezenskih matrosov: Alekseya i Ivana Himkovyh, Stepana SHarapova i Fedora Virugina, s 1743 po 1749 gg. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 1. (na 8 l.). L. 7, 8. [Historical description of the trip to Svalbard of four Mezen sailors: Alexey and Ivan Khimkovs, Stepan Sharapov and Fyodor Virugin, 1743-1749. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 1. (8 pages). P. 7, 8.]. [In Russian]

kind of ships they were, where and how they were built; and it would be in vain to look for something positive or real about this — a series of assumptions and arbitrary conjectures would not reveal the truth”⁷.

But not only enthusiasm but also economic protectionism (coupled with the absence of substantial bureaucratic costs at the initial stage) played its role in strengthening Russia's industrial and commercial presence in the Northwest. Moreover, some testimonies spoke directly about the unique character of the coast, which distinguishes it favorably from the inhabitants of central Russia:

“While residents of Russia's inner Gubernias, gifted with a less severe climate, sweat the land, hoping for a bountiful harvest of bread, the inhabitants of the Arkhangelsk Pomor land, deprived of this gift of nature, find the means of life in sea hunting, fishing and in work for imported bread. Of course, this field of the industry requires not only great methods for its cultivation but also courage and self-denial to extract its fruit; but this fruit is always enough for the existence of an enterprising Pomor. Since childhood, he has become akin to his life at sea and his troubles, accustomed to and loved her, he is satisfied, happy with his fate; and firmly tolerates the severity of the climate of its Pomor region. The sea is the source of its wealth — it replaces a healthy environment with fat soil, and our sea-coast lives not only more miserable but even more prosperous than the inhabitants of the grace-rich areas of Russia.”⁸

However, the eulogies end at a point that concerns the further progressive development of shipbuilding for the needs of the state, when the Pomors, by inertia and thanks to the method of building ships that have developed over the centuries, used outdated technologies and did not seek to expand fishing expansion significantly. The statesmen are not shy about the assessment of the “Pomorsky koch” and “shnyak,” designating it as “clumsy”:

“The White Sea Shipbuilding and Navigation are ancient. Their beginning coincides with the arrival of Novgorod residents, whose briskly adventurous and intelligent mind once guessed and grasped that the Normandy koch was the surest fairy horse with which to win the golden bottom of the northern Ponte. More than four hundred years have passed since then; but shipbuilding and navigation, one might say, did not move forward a single step: careless sea-coast still swims in the same clumsy Norman koch or Chudsky shnyak, and now the Grumant and Novaya Zemlya are closing up the ancient arena of Orthodox fixtures”⁹.

However, officials spoke rather sharply and critically about the motivation of the population, its abilities to develop. They were concluding that the Pomors had become “slaves of cus-

⁷ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii s 1813–1853 gg. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 3. (na 12 l.). L. 1. [Historical overview. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province from 1813-1853. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 3. (12 pages). L. 1.]. [In Russian]

⁸ Istoricheskij obzor o Belomorskom sudostroenii; o chisle lic, zanimayushchihsya moreplavaniem; o chisle mor-skih zverolovov i rybolovov, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 25. (na 3 l.). L. 1. [Historical review of the White Sea shipbuilding; about the number of persons engaged in navigation; on the number of sea hunters and fishermen, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 25. (3 pages). P. 1.]. [In Russian]

⁹ Ibid. P. 2.

tom,” believing that no benefits and government support would be an incentive for the development of shipbuilding:

“We believe, however, that in the encouragement of the Pomor industrial fleet alone, it is not yet possible and should not be seen as a direct and faithful road to the revival of the White sea merchant fleet — Pomors, speaking relatively, are still children in mind and poor, therefore, they are still weak and meaningful self-development is not suitable for them; no matter what benefits they get, they do not cherish them; and while a weak ray of enlightenment will not touch and will not break through their moral callousness, until they remain routines, slaves of custom, and they will not come out of their passive life.”¹⁰.

Researchers emphasize the deliberate “archaization” of the commercial activity of the Pomors [11, Troshina T.A., Avdonina N.S., Zadorin M.Yu.], which in many respects influenced the gradual extinction of this ethnic-local group of the Russian population.

Again, the conservatism in the construction of new ships inherent in the Pomors (e.g., varzuzhans) was due, at a minimum, to the lack of economic feasibility, when no large cargoes needed shipping and the received supplies fitted the needs of the family:

“Further, after my questions about the seafaring of ships, Varzuzhanin explained that they only built Pomor sailing and rowing vessels, but small amount; masters-builders are not local, but come from the Kem villages; that in the whole village they have no more than 5 vessels of this kind; and they don’t need to have more, because they don’t have large cargoes, but they are sent to Arkhangelsk or back — that is, salmon, fat, /:blubber:/ bread, then pay only 3 kopecks for pood; no need for more ships; to Arkhangelsk by sea, it is considered up to 300 versts; the passing is done with a good wind, on the average of two-three days; make two and three flights in the summer, depending on need; grain and other supplies brought from Arkhangelsk are sold in nearby places, or are consumed by themselves. It is far to sail to Murman for catching cod: wage workers cannot get there on time. However, they recognize it advantageous to go to Murman, on their ships, to buy fish there to resell it in Arkhangelsk, and for this purpose, some, more sufficiently, have intended to build ships already. Last summer (1860) at Murman, cod was bought locally for 15 kopecks pood and brought to Arkhangelsk, where it was sold for 70 kopecks. It also had happened in other years.”¹¹.

While complaining about the historically established strengthening of the role of the Baltic Sea — an important trade and transport hub, as well as military and political events at sea at the beginning of the 18th century, a regional official concludes that hereditary inertia of the Russian trade:

¹⁰ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 24. (na 9 l.). L. 7. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 24. (9 pages). P. 7.]. [In Russian]

¹¹ Istoricheskoe opisanie o domashnem byte i promyslah Varzuzhan, 1856 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 21. (na 5 l.). L. 3, 4. [Historical description of the domestic life and crafts of Varzuzhans, 1856 GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 21. (5 pages). P. 3, 4.]. [In Russian]

“In the second half of the 17th and the 18th century, in the time of privilege, reviving trade in the White Sea, as if for a moment the dawn of the revival of the Russian merchant fleet flashed. Dozens of Russian White Sea ships, built at domestic shipyards with domestic goods, appeared to be near the European ports. But the development and strengthening of the Russian trade on the Baltic Sea, the earnings at the Onega sawmills, and free harvesting pine resin, took the best sailors from the sea up to 17/t; finally, the sea wars of the eighties, which had responded to the White Sea by the British defeating the northern industries — all this finally decided the fate of the White Sea shipbuilding and navigation, having concluded them in that firm frame, in which the general inertia of the Russian trade of recent years still exist.”¹²

The golden year of the Arkhangelsk shipbuilding

As noted in archival sources, the first quarter of the 19th century was most favorable for the Arkhangelsk shipbuilding:

“The year 1810 was the most pleasing and flourishing for the Arkhangelsk trade, so the old-timers call it the American golden year. According to the curious information that has been preserved and reached us, it is clear that commercial ships were built in the Arkhangelsk province that year: at the Bykovskaya shipyard of merchant V. Popov and M. Kunitsyn, boats with a keel length of 100 feet 3 inches — three; 90 feet — one; 75 feet — one. Maimaksa Shipyard of S. Fanbrin built ships with 90 feet keel — two; in the villages: in Nizhneladinskaya village, peasant Dublennyi built ships with 90 feet keel — two; in Kecht, at a sawmill, merchant S. Fanbrin constructed a boats with 90 feet keel — two; in the Kholmogorsky district in the villages: Rovidina Gora, peasant Kochnev completed an 80 feet keel boat — one and 90 feet keel — one; in the village of Chukhcherem, merchant Kulakov got a 75 feet keel boat — one; in Pindysh, against Emetsky village, peasant V. Yermolin made a 90 feet keel ship — one, 100 feet — one, and 101 feet — one. In the city of Kem, peasant Yermolin got a 75 feet keel boat — one. in total, during 1810, in the Arkhangelsk Province, seaworthy merchant ships were built — 19.”¹³

After 1815, a gradual decline in shipbuilding occurred. In the first half of the 1830s Russia finally lost its position among the leaders of the sea development in the Arctic:

“The change of circumstances, when the participation of Russian merchants in foreign trade had been weakening little by little, and the business passed into the hands of sensible foreigners, shipbuilding, which had always been almost exclusively Russian, since 1815, also went to decline. In 1831, it almost stopped; only at Maimaksa shipyards, it was maintained until 1818 by its last Russian owner, merchant Popov. Merchant Metropolov had storage at the same place. He

¹² Istoricheskij obzor o Belomorskom sudostroenii; o chisle lic, zanimayushchihsya moreplavaniem; o chisle mor-skih zverolovov i rybolovov, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 25. (na 3 l.). L. 2. [Historical review of the White Sea shipbuilding; about the number of persons engaged in navigation; on the number of sea hunters and fishermen, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 25. (3 pages). P. 2.]. [In Russian]

¹³ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii s 1813 po 1853 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 3. (na 12 l.). L. 11. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1813–1853. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 3. (12 pages). P. 11.]. [In Russian]

built his vessels in the Vologda province, near the mouth of the Kochenga river, which flows into the river Sukhona. There, in Kochenskaya settlement, there was a shipyard, or an establishment, the traces of which are still visible today. At this shipyard, there was a water sawmill and other constructs. Later Maimaksa shipyard was sold to merchant Brant, who built 23 ships there. Brant died in 1832, and the existed shipbuilding disappeared. His heirs did not construct ships in Maimaksa, and only supported the old ones, correcting them by repair.”¹⁴

Statistics show the number of maritime merchant ships built in 24 years, starting in 1811: “70 seaworthy merchant ships built at the Arkhangelsk shipyards from 1811 to 1835.”¹⁵

Statistical data on the number of built ships, e.g., for the period from 1851 to 1859, demonstrate the presence of only small-sized ships that could hardly compete with their western counterparts: karabas, bots, osinovkas, chelnovkas, and scows¹⁶. Wealthier households had schooners and sailing and rowing vessels. They also had opportunities to overcome administrative-fiscal and documentary difficulties:

“Ships of the following type are built: schooners, kochmars, sailing and rowing vessels, shpyaks, karbases, and boats. Shipbuilders are usually the owners of these ships. Wood for the construction of ships is pine and spruce, used with a half duty against the rest of the province, or completely duty-free, due to the Forestry Code 1857 T. VIII. The cheapness construction of seagoing vessels here constitutes a glorious premium for shipowners, e.g., the construction of a schooner and a cargo boat with a load of 4,000 to 6,000 poods each and armaments costs 1.200 — 1.700 rubles; kochmars and sailing and rowing vessels with the load of 8.00 pood each and weapons costs 230 and 260 rubles; shnyaks with a capacity of 400–500 poods with armaments cost 140–150 rubles”¹⁷.

About the reasons for the decline of the merchant shipbuilding and maritime trade shipping in the Province

When analyzing documents, one gets a feeling about an inevitable confusion of the nineteenth-century provincial administration regarding the methods and means by which it would be possible to revive the “merchant fleet.” At the same time, an attempt is made to identify obstacles to the strategic goals, among which officials include the lack of road and maritime infrastructure, excessive patronage of foreign traders, and, of course, inert and excessive legal regulation that does not meet the needs of merchant entrepreneurs:

¹⁴ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii s 1813 po 1853 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 3. (na 12 l.). L. 12. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1813–1853. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 3. (12 pages). P. 12.]. [In Russian]

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 24. (na 9 l.). L. 9. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 24. (9 pages). P. 9.]. [In Russian]

¹⁷ Istoricheskij obzor o Belomorskom sudostroenii; o chisle lic, zanimayushchihsia moreplavaniem; o chisle mor-skih zverolovov i rybolovov, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 25. (na 3 l.). L. 3. [Historical review of the White Sea shipbuilding; about the number of persons engaged in navigation; on the number of sea hunters and fishermen, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 25. (3 pages). P. 3.]. [In Russian]

“The merchant fleet is a free, or it is a legal consequence of the flourishing industry and commerce, and not their cause, not a separate beginning in them. In fact, look at Europe: there, on arched and prepared soil, every commercial enterprise is taken quickly and develops briskly; there, capitals and private credit institutions are, of course, essential and significant, and represent the creative force from which, as if by magic, plants, and factories are created, great ways and communications are formed, merchant fleets are born and revive. But is the soil of Russian industry and commerce like that? Is it prepared so much so that she could fertilize the grains of commercial enterprises at the request of ours and give the harvest we want to demand from it? ... I repeat no; and with capital alone, without another, more important, and for the sake of means and benefits, we cannot create our merchant fleet. Let's set up, we will establish the Company for the maritime property and the promotion of navigation; let's set up ships and steamboats, what will they do? What will be fed by and live? Generally speaking, we still have neither a network of roads, a decent vastness and geographical position of the Empire, nor decent marinas and harbors with a situation that is decent for the needs and requirements of merchant fleets; and therefore these ships will not always find warehouses ready for demand, little of this, in our blood, Russian commercial head, in our foreign-Russian consular protectorate they will not find either clever and experienced leadership, nor means to develop the voyage line, nor sufficient support, nor beneficial and heartfelt patronage; and our ancient German Customs Regulations? And statutes on bankruptcies, guilds, and passports? And the very act of legal proceedings and consequences, where it is not uncommon for the samovar and the ship to be sequestered? All — these are not yet rounded banks in the sea of our administration and our institutions, between which you do not melt!”¹⁸

The bureaucratic inertia and the lack of right order for Pomors when obtaining benefits for woodcut to construct a vessel is also called one of the reasons for shipbuilding degradation. The timeframe for getting quotas is hugely formal. The quota does not account the annual cycle of fisheries and, in fact, acts only since receiving official permission, and not after the construction of the vessel is completed:

“Residents of the Primorsky counties of the Arkhangelsk Province, are legally granted tax-free privileges for shipbuilding; it would seem, it is better!? No, pathetic formalism becomes a hindrance to the cause, and, paralyzing the beneficial spirit of the law, takes away from the goal: to obtain, by this way, a permission for woodcutting; if not — Pomors do not dare to proceed with the construction of the ship; and these permissions, as it is known, are issued out of time; and time for the local operator is precious. Pomors must have time to build and launch the vessel immediately after the navigation start because its costs are the construction and equipment, as well as the means of his family life during the nearly eight-month winter. Pomors must hurry to pay

¹⁸ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 24. (na 9 l.). L. 1,2. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 24. (9 pages). P. 1, 2.]. [In Russian]

back and save by the largest possible number of voyages to a sea, which is barely three months open for career and earnings.”¹⁹

As for the merchants, here, that times, there were curious cases related to a complicated foreign policy situation, when due to false rumors about the sale of a military ship to an international customer, an entrepreneur could lose his freedom or his life:

“It is remarkable that in 1828, 66 guns were built by the merchant Amosov at the Bykovskaya shipyard. The ship “Kola” sold to the British and subsequently entered the Egyptian fleet of Pasha” [...] Note to quotation [29]: “This circumstance gave rise to a monstrous, but no less rather a considerable gossip: in St. Petersburg, they said that in Arkh. Admiralty a naval frigate was quietly built and sold to British. The conversation got off, finally, so loud, so believable that the Maritime Administration there found it necessary to send a detective instructed to investigate the case. The matter, of course, was soon explained, but the mountain gave birth to a mouse.”²⁰

Provincial officials negatively assessed the background of foreign and domestic trade in the Empire, when the lack of road and sea infrastructure made the construction of large commercial ships useless²¹.

About positive actions of the Province administration

Indeed, some positive steps at the level of the province administration were visible. It was the construction of a transport link to the Olonets territory (now — areas of the Republic of Karelia) and the creation of a typical improved model of a karbas and a cargo schooner for future shipbuilders:

“Recently, according to the surveys and considerations of G. Chief of the Arkhangelsk Province, His Excellency N.N. Arandarenko, two proposals were made that are important and lasting in the future destinations of the White Sea. It is the construction of a road from Pomor land to Povenets and Olonets territories, and the sale of state-owned free lands and water areas to privates. Also, the Arkhangelsk Shkiper Courses introduced German language course, necessary for the local sailors, due to their trade relations with Norway. To spread more reliable information on shipbuilding among Pomors, they are called every year to Arkhangelsk and taken to the Port for a visual examination of cases. In Arkhangelsk, the karbas of an improved design for the sea post road in Pomor land was completed and sent there as a model, according to which the future post keepers should build this kind of vessels. For the same purpose of visual study of shipbuilding, a collapsible, on a large scale, a model of a cargo schooner, adapted to the conditions of local wa-

¹⁹ Ibid. P. 6.

²⁰ Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii s 1813 po 1853 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. D. 3. (na 12 l.). L. 11-12. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1813–1853. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 17. C. 3. (12 pages). P. 11-12.]. [In Russian]

²¹ Istoricheskij obzor o Belomorskom sudostroenii; o chisle lic, zanimayushchihsya moreplavaniem; o chisle mor-skih zverolovov i rybolovov, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 25. (na 3 l.). L. 2-3. [Historical review of the White Sea shipbuilding; about the number of persons engaged in navigation; on the number of sea hunters and fishermen, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 25. (3 pages). P.2-3.]. [In Russian]

ters, is being prepared. It is supposed to be completed in Kem'. Finally, the sell abroad of all types and sizes of wood has been increased in an amount of up to 75/ton units."²²

However, the most advanced seems to be the proposal to endow all the privileges of the "entire trading estate of the Province," incl. unhindered access to the forest fund without any restrictions (except for larch species):

"Therefore, why not to extend the mentioned flattering benefits to the entire trading estate of the Arkhangelsk Province to get the successful achievement of the goal? In this class or category of people, of course, rather, there will be skills and money in order to take advantage of the business in a more decent and durable size — here they will not stop on a boat or schooner, but of course they will take it for a brig or a ship; and they are not satisfied with hereditary mountings in Finmark and back, and probably will float away. At the same time, those who want to build sailing ships for themselves, and not for sale, you can safely give up all the wood/except for larch/growing in the northern areas of the Arkhangelsk and Vologda provinces, bounded by the Sev. Dvina and Vychegda rivers; the pine there also does not grow to the size of an important ship tree, therefore the Government has nothing to value these forests, and it should not: it is a sin not to put a feasible gift piece of this material into the basis of the Russian Belomorsk merchant fleet, when we generously, almost for nothing, give it to foreigners. However, as far as we know, with prudent economic use of the local forests, regarding the determination of the place and size of the felling, they will be enough for that and the other."²³

Unfortunately, further initiatives and proposed changes did not receive a logical continuation in the form of legal regulation and advanced management decisions.

Conclusion

The archival data created the ground for several conclusions related to the gradual extinction of the Russian merchants and Pomor shipbuilding at the shipyards of the Arkhangelsk Province in the 19th century:

- lack of high-quality logistics and infrastructure for transportation of goods and services, which resulted in the uselessness of building large merchant ships, due to the enormous costs for their maintenance and the lack of modern port infrastructure;
- lack of a long term understanding of needs of local shipbuilders, as well as a bureaucratic red tape with obtaining permits for the quota for woodcutting;
- the openly dismissive attitude of officials to the local population, which seemed inert and, for some reason, was not seeking to establish at its own expense for the introduction of modern shipbuilding for the needs of the state;
- activation of foreign (primarily Norwegian) fishers in the North-West Arctic (not only in the Murman area, Varangerfjord, and Spitsbergen), but also on Novaya Zemlya, incl. at the expense of technological advantages;

²² Istoricheskij obzor. O sudostroenii v Arhangel'skoj gubernii, 1859 g. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. D. 24. (na 9 l.). L. 3-4. [Historical review. About shipbuilding in the Arkhangelsk province, 1859. GAAO. F. 6. Op. 7. C. 24. (9 pages). P. 3-4]. [In Russian]

²³ Ibid. P. 7.

- legal barriers due to many establishments that hinder the coherent and rapid provision of conditions for the formation of an initiative class of effective owners;
- to a certain extent, the archaization of the commercial activity of the Pomeranian population.

Constructive reforms of the local authorities in the second half of the 19th century for the authors are the plan for the development of the road from Arkhangelsk to the town of Povenets of the Olonets province (near Onega lake), the development of skipper courses, and the creation of an improved model of karbas and a cargo schooner for training future shipbuilders, skippers, etc.

The last decades of the 19th century are associated with the progressive development of merchant shipping through the active purchase of foreign steam vessels, dredging in the port of Arkhangelsk and the construction of the railway Moscow — Arkhangelsk.

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