

Chapter 4

THE NOVGORODIAN LAND

THE MEDIEVAL CITY of Novgorod, best known as Lord Novgorod the Great, continues to occupy the interest of specialists in the early history of the East Slavs. Indeed, Knud Rasmussen wrote that “No other medieval Russian city has drawn as much attention from scholars, as Novgorod the Great.” Rasmussen attributed this unflagging attention to the quantity and quality of the surviving source material, which both raised innumerable questions and failed to provide definitive answers.¹ The gaps in the extant sources derive in part from the disappearance of Novgorod’s state archive, although Igor’ Shaskol’skii has absolved Muscovite Grand Prince Ivan III, who annexed Novgorod in 1471 and incorporated it into Muscovy in 1478, from responsibility for its destruction.² Mythology and politics have long infused research about Novgorod. Eve Levin concluded that “Most Western scholars still subscribe to the nineteenth-century romantic depiction of Novgorod as Russia’s democratic alternative to Muscovite oriental despotism,” even though “The historical framework espoused by most Western historians of Russia was abandoned by serious students of the Novgorodian past several decades ago.”³ The idealization of Novgorodian freedom began in the eighteenth century and had already peaked by the time of Alexander Radishchev and the Decembrists.⁴

1 Knud Rasmussen, “300 zolotykh poiasov drevnego Novgoroda,” *Scando-Slavica* 25 (1979): 93–103 at 93. For example, A. L. Khoroshkevich concluded that it was impossible even to tell if *tamozhennye knigi* (customs books) existed in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Novgorod. See A. L. Khoroshkevich, *Torgovlia Velikogo Novgoroda s Pribaltikoi i Zapadnoi Evropy v XIV-XV vekakh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1963), 17n38.

2 I. P. Shaskol’skii, “Sud’ba gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Velikogo Novgoroda,” *Vspomogatel’nye istoricheskie distsipliny* 4 (1972): 213–28. V. L. Yanin, “The Archaeological Study of Novgorod: An Historical Perspective,” in V. L. Yanin, E. N. Nosov, A. S. Khoroshev, A. N. Sorokin, E. A. Rybina, V. I. Povetkin, and P. G. Gaidukov, *The Archaeology of Novgorod, Russia: Recent Studies from the Town and Its Hinterland*, ed. Mark A. Brisbane, trans. Katherine Judelson (Lincoln: Society for Medieval Archeology, 1992), 67–106 at 89 blames its destruction on Ivan IV’s sack of the city in 1570.

3 Eve Levin, “Novgorod Birchbark Documents: The Evidence for Literacy in Medieval Russia,” in *Medieval Archaeology. Papers of the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies*, ed. Charles L. Redman (Binghamton: State University of New York, 1989), 127–37 at 128, 129.

4 Christian Lübke, *Novgorod in der russischen Literatur (bis zu den Dekabristen)* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1984); O. V. Martyshin, *Vol’nyi Novgorod. Obshchestvenno-politicheskii stroi i pravo feodal’noi respublikii* (Moscow: Rossiiskoe pravo, 1992), 6–26. On the often political nature of discussions of Novgorod even the greatest experts agree. See V. L. Yanin, “Foreword,” in Henrik Birnbaum, *Novgorod in Focus. Selected Essays* (Columbus, OH: Slavica, 1996), 9–10. Thomas C. Owen, “Novgorod and Moscow as Models of Russian Economic Development,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 19 (1995): 497–512, especially 498–501, 507, provides evidence of the perseverance of the reified contrast noted by Levin.

Contemporary scholarly research owes much of its energy and excitement to the discovery of the Novgorodian birchbark documents by Soviet archeologists led by Artemii Artsikhovskii, and the stimulating and prolific publications of Valentin Ianin.⁵ On many significant issues of Novgorodian history consensus is still lacking not only between Western and Russian scholars, but even among Russian specialists.

Little research has focused on Novgorod's political ideology. Usually, ideological significance has been found in Novgorod's sponsorship of its own chronicle-writing tradition, church architecture, *vitaes*, coins, seals, and icons.⁶ There have been noteworthy studies of Novgorodian saints, icons, and cults.⁷ In narrative sources of Novgorod provenance the Novgorodians fought for "God and St. Sophia," thus identifying their polity with its cathedral church and visible symbol, the Holy Wisdom. In its treaties with northeastern princes and Western powers Novgorod defended its rights and privileges in terms of custom or tradition (*poshlina* or *starina*) sometimes embodied in "old charters" (*starye gramoty*). Relationships in treaty or narrative were defined according to the "will" (*vole/volia*) of Novgorod. Such a conception of ancient rights, even or espe-

5 On the birchbark correspondence see Levin, "Novgorod," 127–37, with citations to relevant literature. Surveys of Ianin's contributions to and the historiography of Novgorod include: Khoroshkevich, *Torgovlia*, 5–16; Lawrence N. Langer, "V. L. Ianin and the history of Novgorod," *Slavic Review* 33, no. 1 (March 1974): 114–19; A. S. Khoroshev, "The Origins of Novgorod in Russian historiography," *Soviet Studies in History* 23, no. 4 (1985): 22–45, translated from "Proiskhozhdenie Novgoroda v otechestvennoi istoriografii," *Vestnik Moskovskogo Universiteta*, 6 (1983): 40–53; A. N. Tsamutali, "Istoriia Velikogo Novgoroda v osveshchennii russkoi istoriografii XIX–nachala XX vv.," *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 1, no. 11 (1982): 96–112; L. A. Kocha, "S. M. Soloviev o novgorodskoi istorii," *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 1, no. 11 (1982): 113–18; V. F. Andreev, "Problemy sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii Novgoroda XII–XV vv. v sovetskoi istoriografii," *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 1, no. 11 (1982): 119–45; N. A. Kazakova, "Vneshniaia politika Novgoroda v russkoi i sovetskoi istoriografii," *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 1, no. 11 (1982): 146–64; E. A. Rybina, "Torgovlia srednevekovogo Novgoroda v istoricheskoi literature," *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 1, no. 11 (1982): 165–88; Martyshev, *Vol'nyi Novgorod*, 31–49; and especially Levin, "Novgorod," 128–29. I. Ia. Froianov expounded his views of Novgorodian history in his *Miatezhnyi Novgorod. Ocherki istorii gosudarstvennoi, sotsial'noi i politicheskoi bor'by kontsa IX–nachala XIII stoletii* (St. Petersburg: Sankt-Peterburgskii Universitet, 1992). Cf. V. L. Ianin, *Ia poslal tebe berestu ...*, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Moskovskii universitet 1975), 105–6 for a contrast between the "old" and "new" images of Novgorod.

6 For example Joel Raba, "Novgorod in the Fifteenth Century: A Re-examination," *Canadian Slavic Studies* 1, no. 3 (Fall 1967): 348–694 at 351–53.

7 For example Paul Bushkovitch, "Urban Ideology in Medieval Novgorod: An Iconographic Approach," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 16, no. 1 (January–March 1975): 19–26; A. S. Khoroshev, *Tserkov' v sotsial'no-politicheskoi sisteme Novgorodskoi feodal'noi respubliki* (Moscow: Moskovskii Universitet, 1980), on which see Richard O. Bosley, "The Saints of Novgorod: à propos of A. S. Chorošev's Book on the Church in Medieval Novgorod," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 32, no. 1 (1984): 1–15; V. A. Plugin, "The Boyar Vasilii Danilovich Mashkov and Feofan Grek," *Soviet Studies in History* 23, no. 4 (1985): 47–70 translated from "Boiarin Vasilii Danilovich Mashkov i Feofan Grek," in *Drevnyi Novgorod* (Moscow: Iamshchikov, 1983), 248–70; Michael S. Flier, "The Semiotics of Faith in Fifteenth-Century Novgorod: An Analysis of the Quadripartite Icon," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 25, no. 1–4 (1991): 121–58; and Vladimir Vodoff, "Le culte de Znamenie à Novgorod: Tradition et réalité historique," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* 28 (1995): 1–19.

cially when used to justify innovations, was as typical of the medieval world as invocations of God and divine protection.

Novgorod projected its identity through its self-designation. In the last quarter of the fourteenth century Novgorod became *Velikii Novgorod*, Great Novgorod or Novgorod the Great, as Ekkegard Klug has cogently argued, to distinguish itself from Nizhnyi (literally: lower) Novgorod on the lower Volga River, which called itself just “Novgorod.” Novgorod-on-the-Volkhov did *not* call itself *Verkhnyi* (“Upper”) Novgorod, nor was it so called by the inhabitants of the northeast. Such a purely geographic appellation would surely have offended Novgorodian sensibilities.⁸ Novgorod’s increasing political pretensions generated the more exalted *gospodin Velikii Novgorod* (Lord Novgorod the Great) well-known in scholarship, and even *gosudar’ gospodin Velikii Novgorod* (Sovereign Lord Novgorod the Great).

Governmental actions emanated from these urban denotations. The Novgorod Judicial Charter from the 1470s was issued on behalf of Great Novgorod.⁹ When Novgorod began issuing its own coinage in 1420 the inscription was always “Great Novgorod” (*Velikii Novgorod*).¹⁰ Novgorodian lead seals were mostly *ex officio*, containing the name of the officeholder and the name of his office, but Ianin identified a series of seals as representing the Council of Lords (*soviet gospod*) [which some more recent scholarship concludes did not exist], an executive body of officials first attested in the last decade of the thirteenth century. The Council of Lords subsequently dominated the town assembly (*veche*). These seals carried the inscription *Pechat’ Novgorodskaia* (Novgorodian Seal), *Pechat’ Velikogo Novgoroda* (Seal of Great Novgorod), or *Pechat’ vsego Novgoroda* (Seal of All Novgorod).¹¹ Novgorod’s treaties also contained these self-identifications.

And yet these mutually consistent aspects of Novgorodian ideology do not tell the whole story. Something is missing, something, unfortunately, which the vagaries of scholarly prose have obscured. What these sources do not contain is any ideological invocation of the “Novgorodian Land” (*Novgorodskaia zemlia*).

⁸ Ekkegard Klug, “Novgorod: Groß Novgorod und Nižnij Novgorod: Zum Terminologie altrussischer Urkunden und Chroniken des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 33, no. 1 (1985): 92–102, despite V. V. Nizov, “Iz istorii titulirovaniia Novgoroda ‘Velikim,’” in *Shvedy i russkii sever: istoriko-kul’turnye sviazi* (Kirov: Kirovskiy gos. ob’edinennyi istoriko-arkhitekturnyy i literaturnyy muzej, 1997), 60–72.

⁹ *PRP*, 2: *Pamiatniki prava feodal’no-razdrobленноi Rusi* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia literatura: 1953), 212–18. Ironically, both the Beloozero Judicial Charter of 1488 and the 1497 Beloozero Customs Charter, both written after Muscovite annexation of Novgorod, do mention the “Novgorodian Land”; see *PRP*, 3: *Pamiatniki prava perioda obrazovaniia russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva XIV–XV v.* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia literatura, 1955), 170–74, 175–78. In several instances parallel phrasing might have inspired such usage.

¹⁰ Count Iv. Iv. Tolstoi, *Russkaia dopetrovskaia numismatika*, vol. 1: *Monety Velikogo Novgoroda* (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia akademiia nauk, 1884). See the comments of V. L. Ianin, *Novgorodskie posadniki* (Moscow: Moskovskii universitet, 1962), 272–73.

¹¹ V. L. Ianin, *Aktovye pechati drevnei Rusi X–XV vv.*, vol. 2: *Novgorodskie pechati XIII–XV vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970), 125–33, 220–28.

The ubiquity of this system of “land” nomenclature lies at the foundation of the habitual use of the term the “Novgorodian Land” in scholarship. It found its way into the names of Viktor Bernadskii’s seminal monograph and Andrei Kuza’s article on historical geography.¹² Simply put, writers in Russian, and some writers in other languages, commonly use the phrase. At least they did not invent it. The phrase the “Novgorodian Land” did occur in narrative and documentary sources from eleventh- to fifteenth-century Novgorod, and it does merit attention, not only for what it may have meant, but also as a reflection of some fundamental principles of the Novgorodian political and social order. However, the Novgorodians did not invest the phrase with any ideological baggage. They did not fight for it or make treaties in its name. Indeed they seem not to have projected any specific definition onto it at all, which explains the confusion and contradictions in its geographic content and the arbitrariness and infrequency of its appearance in Novgorodian sources. The absence of a concept or myth (as opposed to merely a phrase) of the Novgorodian Land requires explanation.

To understand existing geographic definitions of the Novgorodian Land it is useful to recapitulate briefly Novgorod’s political structure and administrative infrastructure.¹³ The city of Novgorod was eventually divided into five *kontsy* (boroughs; literally: ends), each with its own town assembly (*veche*), beneath which functioned streets (*ulitsy*).¹⁴ In addition, a decimal administrative structure organized people into ten hundreds (*sotni*), supervised by the chiliarch (*tytsiatskii*). There were also social-economic organizations of merchants dealing with specific foreign trading partners and/or patronizing a specific church, the most famous the “Hundred” (*Sto*) of the Church of St. John the Baptist. (Whether such fraternities constituted guilds similar to those of western Europe is a separate matter.) Outside the city itself Novgorod’s territorial empire included subordinate or satellite cities (*prigorody*); districts (*volosti*) perhaps later converted under Muscovite rule to fifths (*piatiny*),¹⁵ and very outlying tribute-paying zones only irregularly visited

12 V. N. Bernadskii, *Novgorod i novgorodskaia zemlia v XV veke* (Moscow: Nauka, 1961), 9; Andrei Kuza, “Novgorodskaia zemlia,” in *Drevnerusskie kniazhestva, X–XIII vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), 144–201. It also appeared, less prominently, in the title of L. V. Danilova’s *Ocherki po istorii zemlevladieniia i khoziaistva v Novgorodskoi zemle v XIV–XV vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1955), and in more article titles than can be counted.

13 All standard works on Novgorod agree on the nature of this structure. See Bernadskii, *Novgorod*; Ianin, *Novgorodskie posadniki*, Jörg Leuschner, *Novgorod. Untersuchungen zu einigen Fragen seiner Verfassungs- und Bevölkerungsstruktur* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1980); Henrik Birnbaum, *Lord Novgorod the Great. Essays on the History and Culture of a Medieval City-State*, vol. 1: *The Historical Background* (Columbus, OH: Slavica, 1981); and Birnbaum, *Novgorod in Focus*.

14 See, for instance, I. E. Kleinenberg and A. A. Sevast’ianova, “Ulichane na strazhe svoei territorii (po materialiam ganzeiskoi perepiski XV v.),” *Novgorodskii istoricheskii sbornik* 2, no: 12 (1984), 157–64.

15 Martyshin, *Vol’nyi Novgorod*, 243, explicitly relegated the term *piatiny* to post-independence times, but his assertion that the districts were converted into fifths may be accepted only in general terms. The territory covered by the term “districts” may have been reorganized as fifths, but there was no one-to-one relationship between old districts and new fifths. V. L. Ianin, *Novgorodskie akty XII–XV vv. Khronologicheskii kommentarii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1991), 7, also dates the fifths to after Moscow’s conquest of Novgorod.

by Novgorodian expeditions having at most temporarily occupied outposts (*pogosty*). These systems were not static. Over the course of Novgorod's expansion to the north and northeast and the political and social development of Novgorod-city and its dependencies, such as Pskov, these overlapping organizational forms changed. Gradually full sovereignty came to reside in the Novgorod-city's town assembly, which at times included representatives from other cities and districts. The Novgorod-city's town assembly chose Novgorod's prince, elected the three nominees from whom its archbishop was chosen by lot, elected the archimandrite who supervised Novgorod's monasteries; elected the mayors (*posadniki*) and chiliarch, and decided all major political issues such as war and peace. Novgorod's urban assembly governed an empire stretching from the Baltic to the Arctic Seas, from Lake Peipus to the Urals and Siberia, and south and southeast to the borders of the Vladimirian–Suzdalian (later Tverian and Muscovite) principalities. Novgorod conducted foreign relations with Scandinavia, the Hanseatic League, and later Livonia, and Poland–Lithuania among its “western” neighbours.

To how much of this territory did the term the Novgorodian Land apply? Only to Novgorod-city proper? to the entire landmass incorporated under Novgorodian control? to a subset of subordinate cities and districts? Most scholars have merely assumed the broadest application of the term, and then utilized circumlocutions in a multiplicity of not always consistent ways to rationalize anomalies. A few examples will suffice. Henryk Birnbaum summarized the Muscovite annexation of 1471 as follows: “The city on the Volkhov was formally annexed by the Muscovite state together with its widespread possessions—the so-called Novgorod Land.”¹⁶ Why “so-called”? “Called” the Novgorodian Land by whom? Liudmila Danilova included the subordinate cities and fifths in the Novgorodian Land but also referred to the core or primary territory of the Novgorodian Land into which areas like the Dvina and Obonezh'e regions were incorporated after colonization and assimilation of the native non-Russian population.¹⁷ Andrei Kuza defined the Novgorodian Land within maximal limits but also referred to the core (*iadro*) or the central region (*oblast'*) of the Novgorodian Land as well as the Novgorodian Land “itself” (*sama*), defined the districts as provinces (*provintsi*) [an obviously anachronistic term], and mentioned the core Novgorodian Lands [*nota bene* the plural form].¹⁸ Ianin tried to separate the districts where princes could not own lands from the Novgorodian Land where they could. Although he defined the Novgorodian Land as including the subordinate cities and the lands eventually organized as fifths, he also contrived the expression the “Novgorodian Land properly speaking” (*sobstvennaia Novgorodskaia zemlia*).¹⁹ Later he included the fifths in the Novgorodian Land,²⁰ and still later defined the Novgorodian

16 Birnbaum, *Lord Novgorod the Great*, 40. [In quotations from English I retain the original usage without converting “Novgorod Land” to “Novgorodian Land.” Russian quotations of course used the adjectival form.]

17 Danilova, *Ocherki po istorii zemlevladieniia*, 4, 20, 34, 290, 297.

18 Kuza, “Novgorodskaia zemlia.” My comments in brackets.

19 Ianin, *Novgorodskie posadniki*, 111–12, 157, 371.

20 V. L. Ianin, *Novgorodskaia feodal'naia votchina (Istoriko-genealogicheskoe issledovanie)*

Land as Novgorod and its adjacent lands, including the Dvina Land.²¹ Aleksandr Khoroshev also both referred to the Novgorodian Land and to Novgorodian Lands.²² Finally, Jörg Leuschner defined the Novgorodian Land as “all Novgorodian territory” but then assigned the fifths to the core lands in contradistinction to the subordinate cities.²³ In these interpretations the Novgorodian Land both circumscribed some core territory surrounding the city proper and constituted the totality of territories subsumed under the Novgorodian Empire, for which there was no separate term.²⁴ Indeed, the difficulty of defining the Novgorodian Land lies in the obvious but overlooked fact that it did not have a specific geographic meaning. It was used in both the narrower and broader senses historians have postulated, exactly as the term Great Novgorod could apply to city, city-state, or empire.²⁵ Confusion in the use of the phrase the Novgorodian Land results from a combination of the linguistic habit of scholars of early Rus’ history of invoking “Land” nomenclature and the disposition of the term in the sources.

The Novgorodian chronicles did utilize the phrase. Only a single entry in the Old Recension of the *Novgorod First Chronicle*²⁶ referred to the Novgorodian Land:²⁷ in 1137 Prince Sviatoslav Ol’govich gathered the “entire Novgorodian Land” (*vsiu zemliu novgorod’skiu*) to make war on his brother Gleb.²⁸ There was a single ambiguous new

(Moscow: Nauka 1981), 253. Cf. V. L. Ianin, *Ocherki kompleksnogo istochnikovedeniia. Srednevekovyi Novgorod* (Moscow: Vysshiaia shkola, 1977), 78–79, 86–87.

21 Ianin, *Novgorodskie akty*, 7, 130–31.

22 Khoroshev, *Tserkov*, 49, 70, 72, 107, 141 vs. 134, 141 (both singular and plural on the same page), 143, 154, 159. Khoroshev identified the districts as “Lands.” (This enumeration of page references is not exhaustive.)

23 Leuschner, *Novgorod*, 57–58.

24 The phrase “the Novgorodian state” (*gosudarstvo*) is of course not contemporary; for example, L. V. Cherepnin, *Novgorodskie berestiane gramoty kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Moscow: Nauka, 1969), 225, 319 implicitly equated the Novgorodian Land and the Novgorodian state.

25 Eduard Mühle, *Die städtischen Handelzentren der nordwestlichen Rus’. Anfänge und frühe Entwicklung altrussischer Städte (bis gegen Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts)* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1991), 303 observed that terms for the people of a city entailed also the people of the state = Land. Thus “Novgorodians” (*novgorodtsy*) referred to all inhabitants of the Novgorodian Land. This scenario is complicated by his citation of the term “Ladogans” (*ladozhane*), because Ladoga was a Novgorodian satellite city.

26 There is solid consensus on the dating of the *Novgorod First Chronicle*: Vladimir Vodoff, “Quelques remarques sur la première chronique de Novgorod,” in *Studia slavica mediaevalia et humanistica Riccardo Picchio dicata*, ed. Michele Coluci, Guiseppi Dell’Agata, and Harvey Goldblatt, 2 vols. (Rome: Ateneo, 1986), 2:741–53 and B. M. Kloss, “Letopis’ Novgorodskaia perviaia,” in *Slovar’ knizhnikov i knizhnosti drevnei Rusi*, vol. 1: *XI–pervaia polovina XIV v.*, ed. D. S. Likhachev (Leningrad: Bulanin, 1987), 245–47.

27 The Novgorodian chronicles utilized both the March and Ultra-March calendars, so converting their dates to Western equivalents requires careful study. However, since this chapter does not attempt to create a chronological sequence, it is not necessary to examine each entry’s dating. I have therefore relied upon N. G. Berezhev, *Khronologiia russkogo letopisaniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1963), 212–306 to identify which years employed which calendrical style.

28 *NPL*, 6645 (1137–1138), 25. Obviously in this citation the phrase the Novgorodian Land

invocation of the Novgorodian Land in the Younger Recension: in 1441–1442 Grand Prince Vasilii II of Moscow made war on “many Novgorodians lands” (*mnogo zemle Novgorodchkoii*).²⁹ Given the frequency of scholarly references to the Novgorodian Land, the paucity of such invocations in these chronicles is surprising.

This phenomenon was not the product of ignorance of “Land” nomenclature. The Old Recension of the *Novgorod First Chronicle* utilized the following phrases: the Suzdalian Land,³⁰ Riazanian Land,³¹ Danish Land,³² Volhynian Land (in the southwest),³³ German Land,³⁴ Chud’ Land,³⁵ and Em’ Land.³⁶ Naturally the *Novgorod First Chronicle* employed the term Rus’ Land to apply to the Dnieper River valley triangle of Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereiaslav’, but other entries implicitly raise the issue of Novgorodian inclusion within the aegis of that term: in 1263 Grand Prince Aleksandr Nevskii laboured for “Novgorod and the whole Rus’ Land”³⁷ and in 1270 the metropolitan asserted his jurisdiction over the Rus’ Land.³⁸ Some sort of *translatio* to the northeast, Vladimirian–Suzdalian Rus’, might or might not be implied by the entry in 1327 that the Tatar general Shevkal had taken Tver’, Kashin, and Torzhok (Novyi Torg, a Novgorodian possession), and “simply stated, laid waste the entire Rus’ Land. God and St. Sophia protected only Novgorod” (*prosto reshchi vsiu zemliu russkuiu polozhisha pustu, tol’ko Novgorod ubliude Bog i Sviataia Sofiia*).³⁹ Novgorod’s chroniclers were perfectly conversant with the names of “Lands.”

One might argue that these allusions to ‘Lands’ derived from non-Novgorodian perceptions and were only borrowed by Novgorodian chroniclers. However, the appearance of a novel term in Novgorodian chronicles, one which could only have originated from a

denoted a collective of people, probably military, which is common in early Rus’ terminology; see *Slovar’ russkogo iazyka XI–XVII vv.*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), s.v. *zemlia*, definition 9, 376 right column–377 left column. Alternative terms in Novgorodian sources also carried both geographic and (in the literal sense of the word) popular meanings. In this chapter my focus is simply on identifying the presence of such terms, not with exploring their alternative geographic or social definitions.

29 *NPL*, 6949, 421. The use of the plural “lands” in and of itself suggests an accidental phrase, not a political concept. This entry was the only significant use of the phrase I found in the *Chronicle of Avraamka*, which also reflects fifteenth-century Novgorodian chronicle-writing. See *PSRL*, 16 (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaiia kommissiia, 1889), s.a. 6949, 182.

30 *NPL*, 6812 (1304–1305), 92. See chapter 5 below.

31 *NPL*, 6746 (1237–1238), 74.

32 *NPL*, 6810 (1302–1303), 91.

33 *NPL*, 6838 (1330–1331), 99.

34 *NPL*, 6776 (1267–1268), 86 (the “entire German Land” = people); 6819 (1311–1312), 93.

35 *NPL*, 6684 (1176–1177), 35; 6722 (1214–1215), 52; 6731 (1223–1224) 61 (*vsuiu Chudskuiu zemliu* here is geographic, the entire Chud’ Land); 6745 (1236–1237), 74; 6750 (1242–1243), 78.

36 *NPL*, 6764 (1256–1257), 81.

37 *NPL*, 6771 (1263–1264), 84.

38 *NPL*, 6778 (1270–1271), 89.

39 *NPL*, 6835 (1327–1328), 98.

Novgorodian perspective, clinches the argument that the virtual omission of references to the Novgorodian Land in the Novgorod chronicle was deliberate. The *Novgorod First Chronicle* designed Vladimirian–Suzdalian Rus’ as the Lower Land (*Nizovskaia zemlia*),⁴⁰ a term derived from referring to the people of the confluence of the Volga and Oka Rivers as the *Niz’* (those who dwell down-river). As far as I can tell all appearances of this term, also modeled grammatically on the Rus’ Land,⁴¹ were of Novgorodian provenance. In short, the Novgorodian book-men were familiar enough with the system of land-terminology to invent their own substitute for what would otherwise be called the Suzdalian Land.

At the same time the compilers of the *Novgorod First Chronicle* used other terms for what scholars call the Novgorodian Land, similarly in a non-ideological fashion. First, mention should be made of the term the Novgorodian region (*Novgorodskaia oblast’*),⁴² often with the qualifier “all” or “the entire.” Secondly, the *Novgorod First Chronicle* employed the term Novgorodian district, singular (*novgorodskaia volost’*) or Novgorodian districts, plural (*novgorodskie volosti*), also sometimes with “all” or “the entire,” and sometimes identifying specific locations as districts.⁴³ From these citations it appears that the three terms (land, region, district) cannot be entirely separated chronologically or thematically. Sometimes they were used as synonyms but at other times they possessed different meanings according to context.⁴⁴

Translations of the *Novgorod First Chronicle* do not clarify these terms. In the English translation⁴⁵ *Novgorodskaia zemlia* became “the Novgorod Land,” *Novgorodskaia oblast’*

40 *NPL*, 6761 (1253–1254), 80; 6767 (1259–1260), 82; 6777 (1269–1270), 88; 6823 (1315–1316), 94; 6824 (1316–1317), 95; 6826 (1317–1318), 95; 6830 (1322–1323), 96; 6833 (1325–1326), 97. Note that both “land” and locational terms could be applied to a social group: both “the entire *Niz’*” and “the entire *Nizovskaia zemlia*” could be used to designate an invading army from Vladimiria–Suzdalia.

41 Geographic viewpoint also substantiates the interpretation of the *Zallesskaia zemlia* (Land beyond the Forest) to denote Vladimiria–Suzdalia as southern in origin, either Kievan or perhaps steppe. See Halperin, “The Russian Land and the Russian Tsar,” 18–19.

42 *NPL*, 6642 (1134–1135), 23; 6650 (1142–1143), 26; 6655 (1147–1148), 27 (*so vsiu oblastiu Novgorodskoiu*—with the entire Novgorod region, people); 6706 (1198–1199), 44; 6748 (1240–1241), 77 (*vsiu oblast’ Novgorodskuiu*—the entire Novgorodian region, geographic).

43 *NPL*, 6692 (1184–1185), 37; 6742 (1216–1217), 56 Voloč; 6748 (1240–1241), 78; 6761 (1253–1254), 80; 6778 (1270–1271), 89 the “entire” (*vsia*) *volost’ Novgorodskaia*, the Pskovites, Ladogans, Korelians, Izhera, and Vozhan = people. Cf. the new entries in the Younger Recension: 6781 (1272–1273), 322: the *volost’ Novgorodskuiu* consists of Voloč, Bezhitsi, and Vologda; 6856 (1347–1348), 360; 6953 (1445–1446), 425, fifty Novgorodian *volosti*. As a matter of principle, I have avoided citing Pskovian material as evidence of Novgorodian views, but it is legitimate to point out their compatibility. For example, Pskov I Chronicle, *Pskovskie letopisi*, 2 vols. [hereafter *PL*, 1 and *PL*, 2], ed. A. N. Nasonov (Moscow: Nauka, 1941–1955), 1:21 – 6851 (1343) records that Algirdas attacked the “Novgorodian *volost’*.”

44 Apparently Nasonov thought the terms had the same meaning, as they are gathered under a single entry in the geographic index (*NPL*, 610).

45 *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, trans. Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes; intro. C.

“the Novgorod province,” and *Novgorodskaiia volost’* “the Novgorod district.”⁴⁶ The lower case initial letter of the second word in each case testifies that they were not considered technical terms. Indeed, the translators were inconsistent in rendering *zemlia* as “land.” *Volynskaia zemlia* was translated as “Volhynia” and “the country of Volhynia”⁴⁷ and other “land” phrases became “the country of.”⁴⁸ The “land”-system of nomenclature got lost in the translation. Nor is the more scholarly German translation superior in this regard.⁴⁹ *Novgorodskaiia zemlia* was translated as “Novgoroder Land”⁵⁰ but *Novgorodskaiia oblast’* as “Novgoroder Land,” “Novgoroder Herrschaftsbereich” (realm) and “Novgoroder Gebiet” (district),⁵¹ and *Novgorodskaiia volost’* as both “Novgoroder Herrschaftsbereich” and “Novgoroder Gebiet.”⁵² Such examples could be multiplied but self-evidently to the translator these were not technical terms but expressions to be translated according to context.⁵³ Once again the system of “Land” nomenclature was disregarded.⁵⁴

Material about Novgorod or of Novgorodian provenance found its way into novel entries in non-Novgorodian chronicles. An initial search uncovered very few unambiguous invocations of the Novgorodian Land. Two chronicles will suffice as examples. In a verbatim excerpt from the *Trinity Chronicle* transcribed by Karamzin s.a. 955 the Kievan Grand Prince Oleg collected tribute “from the whole Rus’ and Novgorodian Lands”⁵⁵ and in the *Simeonov Chronicle* in 1264 Prince Iaroslav Iaroslavovich became grand prince “of the Vladimirian and Novgorodian Lands.”⁵⁶ Parallel grammatical constructions mar the purity of these references to the Novgorodian Land. Similarly the mid-fifteenth century *Novgorod Fourth Chronicle* attributed to Prince Mstislav Rostislavovich “the brave” (*Khrabryi*) in 1179 the wish to free the Novgorodian Land from the “pagans,” here the

Raymond Beazley, Camden Series 25 (1914; repr., New York: AMS, 1970). To 1333 the translators relied on the Synodal manuscript; after that, on the Commission and other manuscripts.

46 *NPL*, 6645 (1137), 15; 6642 (1134), 13; 6692 (1194), 32.

47 *NPL*, 6838 (1330), 126; 6857 (1349), 143

48 *NPL*, for example, “Low Country” for *Nizovskaia zemlia* (6742/1234, 79n2); “country beyond the Volok / Dvina Land” for *Zavolochkaia/Dvinskaia zemlia* (6894/1386, 161n1).

49 *Die erste Novgoroder Chronik nach ihrer ältesten Redaktion (Synodalhandschrift) 1016–1333/1352*, trans. and ed. Joachim Dietze (Munich: Sagner, 1971), contains an edition of the original text, a German translation, and a photo-facsimile of the manuscript.

50 *NPL*, 6645 (1137), 59.

51 *NPL*, 6642 (1135), 58; 6706 (1198), 77; 6650 (1142), 61.

52 *NPL*, 6692 (1192), 71; 6748 (1240), 110.

53 See *NPL*, 589n60 (to 62) and 62 (to 67) for explicit commentary on the terms. Even Leonard A. Jones, who translated the German introduction into English (7–28; the German is on the top half of the page, and English on the bottom half; synchronicity is soon lost), mixed German and English equivalents: German “Land” became English “territory”; “Herrschaftsbereich” became “realm” or “area,” and so forth (e.g., 8, 18/19, 23/24, etc.).

54 *NPL*, 6838 (1330), 139 “*iz Vylenskoj zemli*” = “aus Volhynian.”

55 *Priselkov, Troitskaia letopis’*, s.a. 6455, 81–82 “*po vsej zemli Rus’tei i Novgorod’stei*.” This passage appears in large type, meaning it was quoted verbatim by Karamzin.

56 *PSRL*, 18, s.a. 6772, 72 “*byst’ kniaz’ velikii Volodimerskoi i Novgorodtskoi zemli*.”

Chud'.⁵⁷ This kind of unambiguous invocation was rare enough, but even more rare is a eulogy in the Hypatian Chronicle to that same prince declaring that the “entire Novgorodian Land cried” at his death in which the Novgorodian Land carries a social connotation, the entire population of the Novgorodian city-region, a rare case of the personification of the Novgorod Land.⁵⁸ Once again compound phrases obscure the landscape.⁵⁹ Comprehensive investigation of the geographic indices of all later chronicles would probably not significantly alter this pattern.⁶⁰

Aside from the chronicles, non-chronicle Novgorodian literature, to judge from standard anthologies, did not refer to the Novgorodian Land with any frequency. It did not occur in the *Tale of the Trip of Ivan of Novgorod to Jerusalem on a Devil*,⁶¹ the *Tale of the Novgorodian Mayor (posadnik) Shchil*,⁶² the *Tale of the White Cowl*,⁶³ or the *Narration of the Battle of the Novgorodians with the Suzdalians*.⁶⁴ The “Novgorodian Land” did not occur in *The Vita of Mikhail Klopskii* until the second redaction, probably composed after Novgorod’s annexation by Muscovy.⁶⁵ The absence of references to the Novgorodian Land in these works does not bespeak an active political concept.

Taken as a whole, the narrative sources by or about Novgorod suggest that any usage of the phrase the Novgorodian Land was conspicuous by its rarity. It was not a central or prolific concept of Novgorodian identity. This pattern contrasts sharply with Novgorodian familiarity with “Land” nomenclature and imaginative derivation of the term the Lower Land to describe Vladimiria-Suzdalia. It is difficult to escape the inference that

57 *PSRL*, 4, s.a. 6687, 15.

58 *PSRL*, 2 (St. Petersburg: Academy of Sciences, 1543), 120–21. Mari Isoaho, *The Image of Aleksandr Nevskiy in Medieval Russia: Warrior and Saint* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 126 called my attention to this passage, but she translates *Novgorodskaia zemlia* as “the land of Novgorod,” and uses the same translation for a subsequent reference to the Novgorodian *oblast'*. In another sentence not quoted by Isoaho, Mstislav declares his wish to protect the Novgorodian *volost'*. The author of this narrative hardly practised consistency in his references to the Novgorodian region.

59 For example, *PSRL*, 2, s.a. 6742 (1216), 22–23.

60 Again, from Pskovian material, the *Pskov III Chronicle* described Muscovite Grand Prince Vasiliï II as having made peace with Novgorod in 6994/1456 “in Iazol'tsakh in the Novgorodian Land,” after having “stood” (campaigned) in the Novgorodian Land for four weeks (*PL*, 2:142 [Stroev Manuscript]), but the *PL*, 2 (Synodal Manuscript) contained this entry for 6930/1422: “In the entire Rus' Land there was a great famine for three years, previously in Novgorod and all its districts, and in Moscow and in the entire (*vsei*) Muscovite and the entire (*vsei*) Tverian [Lands?]” (*PL*, 2:38). This curious phrasing, which grammatically implied invocations of the Muscovite and Tverian Lands, did not utilize the phrase the Novgorodian Land.

61 N. K. Gudziï, comp., *Khrestomatiia po drevnei russkoi literatury XI–XVII vekov*, 5th ed. (Moscow: Uchpedizd, 1952), 210–12; *Pamiatniki literatury drevnei Rusi XIV–seredina XV veka* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1981), 454–63.

62 Gudziï, *Khrestomatiia*, 213–15.

63 Gudziï, *Khrestomatiia*, 244–53; this text lauds the Rus' Land.

64 *Pamiatniki literatury*, 448–53.

65 *Povesti o zhitii Mikhaila Klopskogo*, ed. L. A. Dmitriev (Moscow: Nauka, 1958), 120: “there was a famine in the entire Novgorodian Land.”

the Novgorodian book-men deliberately refrained from developing a concept of the Novgorodian Land.

The Novgorodian Land and Novgorodian districts (but not the Novgorodian region) figured prominently in Novgorod's treaties with Rus' princes. It is unexpected that in treaties on behalf of Great Novgorod, the phrase the Novgorod Land should be found more frequently than in the chronicles. Unlike the different annals in a chronicle, which might have been written by different chroniclers at different times, the articles in a treaty were a chronological whole, composed and ratified together. For that reason, the treaties must be considered not thematically, by term, but chronologically. Newer treaties repeated clauses from older treaties, but there is enough variety to reject the proposal that documentary inertia explains all such phrases. However, the fluidity in linguistic usage highlights the arbitrariness, and hence inconsequence, of usages of the Novgorodian Land.

The earliest extant princely treaty was concluded in 1264 with Grand Prince Iaroslav Iaroslavovich of Tver'.⁶⁶ It meticulously restricted the grand prince's rights in the Novgorodian districts, which it defined as Bezliche, Gorodets, Melechia, Shipino, Egna, Vologda, Zavoloch'e (Beyond the Volok, but including Volok itself?), Koloperem', Tre, Perem' (Perm'), Iuigra, and Pechera.⁶⁷ It forbade the prince to own villages (*sela*) in these Novgorodian districts. It forbade him to export dependents from the "entire Novgorodian district" (*A vyvod' ti, kniazhe, po vsei volosti Novgorod'skoi ne nadobe*). And it defined the prince's own realm as the Suzdalian Land.⁶⁸ The 1266 treaty with the same prince repeated the listing of Novgorodian districts with a few minor variations, adding Torzhok, the districts attached to Volok,⁶⁹ and redefining Gorodets as Gorodets Palits' (which it remained in later documents). The prohibition on the deportation of people was rephrased for Bezhitsy but the blanket proscription was not repeated. The Suzdalian Land still occurred.⁷⁰ The 1270 treaty with the same Tverian prince made no fundamental changes to the list of districts, referred for the first time to the *Niz'* (here meaning territory, not people),⁷¹ and restored the blanket deportation clause in a new form: "And you, prince, will not export people between the Suzdalian Land and Novgorod" (*A*

66 All texts from *Gramoty Velikogo Novgoroda i Pskova* [hereafter *GVNP*], ed. S. N. Valk (Moscow: Nauka, 1949). Again, because I am not constructing a narrative, there is no need to argue the dating of each treaty, and therefore only the datings in *GVNP* will be given. For a discussion of the accuracy of those datings see Ianin, *Novgorodskie akty*.

67 As we have seen, the *Novgorod First Chronicle* mentioned at least Volok, Bezhitsy, and Vologda as districts, so there is some compatibility between the narrative and documentary material.

68 *GVNP*, no. 1: 9–10.

69 This is intriguing. The Novgorodian administrative apparatus seems to have been hierarchical, so how could a district contain districts? This was not a slip of the quill; similar language reoccurred in later treaties.

70 *GVNP*, no. 2: 10–11.

71 I will not trace the further usage of this term; it is sufficient to note that it did find its way from the chronicles into the more "official" Novgorodian treaties.

vyvoda, ti, knizhe, mezhi Suzdal'skoiu zemleiu i Nov'mgorodom ne chiniti), which missed an opportunity to utilize Novgorodian Land for grammatical parallelism.⁷²

In Novgorod's treaty with Grand Prince Mikhail Iaroslavovich of Tver' in 1304–1305 the list of Novgorodian districts remained unchanged. The Suzdalian Land was referenced in a new clause guaranteeing by the authority of the Mongol khan the safe passage of Novgorodian merchants across the Suzdalian Land. More intriguing was a change in the deportation prohibition clause, which now read “between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian” (*mezhiu Suzdal'skoiu zemleiu i Novgorod'skoiu*).⁷³ The first, albeit implicit, appearance of the Novgorodian Land in the treaties obviously resulted from a scribe's conscious or unconscious use of grammatical parallelism, correcting the stylistic awkwardness of the previous phrasing.

Another treaty with the same prince from the same years contained yet further emendations. The list of Novgorodian districts remained substantially the same, although there was an allusion to “all Volok districts.” A new clause forbade the prince, his princesses (I presume wife and daughters, although that implies that he had no sons who would also be princes) or nobles, to own villages in the Novgorodian Land. In restoring and amplifying the 1264 clause the clerk altered “Novgorodian district” to read “Novgorodian Land.” But lest one jump to the conclusion that the Novgorodian Land was becoming more widely disseminated in the treaties it must be noted that the population movement clause was rewritten to refer only to the Novgorodian district (*A vyvod" ti, knizhe, v" vsei Novgorod'skoi volosti ne nadobe*), the movements of people fleeing Torzhok on the Novyi Torzhok Land (*Novot"rzk'koi zemli*) were discussed, and there was a reference to runaway slaves entering the Tverian district (*Tferskiu volost'*), neither the Tverian Land nor the Suzdalian Land.⁷⁴

The 1307–1308 Novgorod treaty with Mikhail Iaroslavovich again retained the list of Novgorodian districts; reiterated the prohibition of princely landowning in the Novgorodian Land; affirmed the traditional boundary between the “Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian” (*mezhiu Suzhda'skoiu zemleiu i Novgorod'skoiu*), a new clause with another grammatical parallelism behind its usage; and restored the prior formulation of the population movement clause “between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian,” so that this phrase appeared twice in the same treaty.⁷⁵ These innovations were faithfully preserved in the Tverian version of the same treaty.⁷⁶ However, these slightly heightened invocations notwithstanding, usage of the Novgorodian Land in the treaties was not evolving in a linear direction.

The 1318–1319 treaty with the same prince was badly mutilated but definitely contained a new prohibition against Tverian officials crossing into the Novgorodian district.⁷⁷

72 *GVNP*, no. 3: 11–13.

73 *GVNP*, no. 6: 15–16.

74 *GVNP*, no. 7: 16–18.

75 *GVNP*, no. 9: 19–20.

76 *GVNP*, no. 10: 21–22.

77 *GVNP*, no. 13: 25–26.

The 1326–1327 treaty with Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich of Tver', while again retaining the list of Novgorodian districts, reverted to the Bezhitsy formula concerning deportations, thus losing the reference to the Novgorodian Land, and reformulated the definition of the border as between "your patrimony and the entire Novgorodian district," again omitting any reference to the Novgorodian Land. The Suzdalian Land still appeared.⁷⁸ But the 1371 Novgorod treaty with Prince Mikhail Aleksandrovich of Tver', without modifying the definition of Novgorodian districts, restored the border definition to "between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian" and the population movement prohibition to "between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian."⁷⁹ A 1375 Novgorodian treaty with the same prince, with different subject matter, also alluded to the Tverian district.⁸⁰

The 1435 Novgorod treaty with Muscovite Grand Prince Vasiliï II preserved the list of Novgorodian districts, the reference to the Suzdalian Land, the prohibition on sending officials into the "entire Novgorodian district," and the depopulation clause "between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian." However, it also rephrased the landowning restriction to forbid the prince to establish districts on the Novgorodian Land (*A na Novgorodskoi zemli volostei ne staviti*).⁸¹

The 1446–1447 Novgorod treaty with Grand Prince Boris Aleksandrovich of Tver' included the prohibition on Tverian ownership of villages in the Novgorodian Land, referred to the boundary with the Novgorodian patrimony, and forbade Tverian court-members and officials (*dvoriane i pritsavy*) from entering the Novgorodian or Novyi-Torg districts. It contained no references to the Suzdalian Land and no list of Novgorodian districts.⁸²

The 1456 Novgorod treaty with Grand Prince Vasiliï II of Moscow, under the new political environment created by the Novgorodian defeat at the battle of Iazhelbitsy, did not alter the definition of Novgorodian districts, prohibited the establishment of princely villages in the Novgorodian Land (*na Nougorodskoi zemle sel' ne staviti*) (a purer sentence than in the preceding treaty), and continued the export of people clause "between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian." (The boundary definition clause was not repeated).⁸³

Finally, the 1471 Novgorod Treaty with Grand Prince Ivan III of Moscow, after the final defeat of the Novgorodians on the Shelon' River, nevertheless still repeated the list of Novgorodian districts (although omitting Volok and Vologda, no longer under Novgorodian control),⁸⁴ prohibited princely ownership in villages in the Novgorodian

78 *GVNP*, no. 14: 26–28.

79 *GVNP*, no. 15: 28–30

80 *GVNP*, no. 18: 33–34

81 *GVNP*, no. 19: 34–36.

82 *GVNP*, no. 20: 36–38

83 *GVNP*, no. 22: 39–41. But see below, chapter 8, for the Muscovite version of this treaty.

84 Ianin, *Novgorodskie akty*, 190 notes this omission, which I had not appreciated

Land, still used the phrase the Suzdalian Land for customs control, and referred to the export of people “between the Suzdalian Land and the Novgorodian.”⁸⁵

Little need be said of the texts of Novgorod’s treaties with her “western” neighbours. The German-language treaties referred to Novgorod, and only rarely to the Novgorodian Land.⁸⁶ The 1323 treaty with Sweden referred to the German Land, the Swedish Land (several times), and even the Korelian Land, but never to the Novgorodian Land: “And peace to Novgorod, and all its subordinate cities and to all Novgorodian districts, and to the entire Swedish Land.”⁸⁷ An agreement dated between 1440 and 1447 with Casimir, Grand Duke of Lithuania, referred to Novgorodians from “the entire Novgorod district,” and frequently used that phrase, but the Novgorodian Land did not appear.⁸⁸ Finally, the treaty from 1470–1471 with Casimir IV, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania⁸⁹ was largely repetitious in its use of the phrases discussed here. It mentioned the Polish (*liatskuiiu*) and German Lands. It itemized the “Rzhev, and Velikii Luk, and Kholmovskii outposts [later the city of Kholm] as Novgorodian Lands (*a te zemli Novgorodskie*). It reworked the traditional clause about population deportation as follows: “And you, honourable king, will not deport people from the Novgorodian patrimony” (*iz nogorodtskoi otchiny*), although it continued using the phrase Novgorodian districts, which it listed for the last time (although restoring Volok and Vologda, perhaps a bit of Novgorodian irredentism). The king was forbidden villages in the Novgorodian Land, and envoys and merchants were guaranteed a clear path through “the Lithuanian Land and the Novgorodian,” one parting syntactic parallel. Down to the end, Novgorod treaty-writers persisted in their eclectic use of political-administrative terminology.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this rich material. First, the phrase the Novgorodian Land and derivatives most often developed as a result of linguistic parallelism, a result of the use of other “Land” nomenclature, but not always. In other words,

85 *GVNP*, no. 26: 45–48. The Muscovite version (*GVNP*, no. 27: 48–51) mentioned Novgorod nobles who had bought “Rostovian and Beloozerian lands,” and rights of safe passage across the Novgorodian Land and the Pskovian Land. A unique provision of the Muscovite version mentions the need for Novgorodians to kiss the cross (take a loyalty oath) to the “single grand prince in the Rus’ Land” (upon the accession of a new Grand Prince in Moscow?).

86 The exceptions appear in the 1371 Lübeck treaty draft (*GVNP*, no. 42: 74–76), “der Nowerder lande” (twice), “der Nowerder lante” (once), and the 1420 treaty with the Livonian Order and the bishop of Dorpat, modern Tartu (*GVNP*, no. 59: 96–98) “der Nogaradesche land” (once). Rybina observed that the German sources transliterated Novgorodian terms rather than translating them; thus the word “Neustadt” (New City) did not occur in reference to Novgorod: E. A. Rybina, *Inozemnye dvory v Novgorode XII–XVII vv.* (Moscow: Moskovskii Universitet, 1986): 28. Nevertheless, even Teutonic literalism sometimes got lost in the translation. Paragraph 92 of the Fourth Redaction of the Hanseatic Schra (*skra*), the statutes of the Hanseatic Hof (Court) in Novgorod, forbade anyone older than twenty to study Russian “in dem Nougorodeschen righte noch to Nougarden,” which Kleinenberg translated as “in the Novgorodian Land nor in Novgorod itself” (*GVNP*, 157). I read “righte” as “realm.” The Schra also recapitulated a reference to the *Niz*’ (Nisowern) (Paragraph 97, *GVNP*, 159).

87 *GVNP*, no. 38: 76–68.

88 *GVNP*, no. 70: 115–16.

89 *GVNP*, no. 77: 129–32.

treaty-drafts were less successful than chroniclers in resisting the temptation posed by the system of “land”-terminology to reference a Novgorodian Land. Second, the pattern of usage, in which the Novgorodian Land appeared and disappeared from one treaty to the next, does not suggest that it possessed a rigorous substantive referent. Finally, the peculiar pattern of chronicle usage of the phrase the Novgorodian district in both singular and plural forms was, if anything, exacerbated by the inclusion in the treaties of what appears to be a technical list of local and strictly defined Novgorodian districts. Apparently, the term “district” served equally well in finite and amorphous contexts.⁹⁰ Further confirmation that the term had no ideological content comes from Muscovite usage of the Novgorodian Land in diplomatic correspondence⁹¹ and in the Muscovite cadastres from 1563.⁹²

The cumulative evidence of the Novgorodian chronicles, treaties, law codes, coinage, and seals undermines any attempt to specify which territories the Novgorodian Land encompassed and which levels of Novgorodian political and administrative organization were subsumed under it. The expression appeared most in Novgorod’s treaties with northeastern princes, where it seems to have meant any territory under Novgorodian jurisdiction. It was not used in any ideologically pregnant sense.

The absence of a concept of the Novgorodian Land can be explained both positively and negatively. Positively, Novgorodian spokesmen put their faith in the identification of the city-state with its divine protectress, Hagia Sophia.⁹³ In view of the role of the archbishop of Novgorod, prelate of the St. Sophia Cathedral, in the life of the city, this equation elicits no surprise. The archbishop of Novgorod served as its head of state. The archiepiscopate was the largest landowner in Novgorod.⁹⁴ The state treasury was stored in the St. Sophia Cathedral. The archbishop often administered border territories directly,⁹⁵ his lieutenants and regiment led the Novgorodian army, he headed diplomatic embassies on behalf of the city, he chaired the Council of Lords (if it existed) and his representative chaired the Novgorod-city urban assembly, his intervention often calmed the city’s heated political disputes, foreign merchants were judged in his court,⁹⁶ and other courts met on his property. The church was the guardian of the legal weights

90 Leuschner, *Novgorod*, 57–58, assigned one subordinate city (Beistadt) to each district, listing Volok Lamskii, Torzhok, Rzhev, Velikaia Luka, and Bezhitsy.

91 Bernadskii, *Novgorod*, 349.

92 Danilova, *Ocherki po istorii zemlevladieniia*, 291n1.

93 See conveniently Joel Raba, “Evmimij II., Erzbischof von Groß-Novgorod und Pskov. Ein Kirchenfürst als Leiter einer weltlichen Republik,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 25, no. 1 (1977): 151–73; Raba, “Church and Foreign Policy in the Fifteenth-Century Novgorodian State,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 13, no. 1–2 (1979): 52–58.

94 Cf. Danilova, *Ocherki po istorii zemlevladieniia*, 146–61 (on St. Sophia), to 99–145 (lands of Bogdan Esipov), 145–46 (summary of Shurichina’s work on the lands of Marfa Boretskaia), 161–80 (Iur’ev and Arkazhskii Monastery lands).

95 Leuschner, *Novgorod*, 124–28; Martyshin, *Vol’nyi Novgorod*, 210–22.

96 Whenever the German *Hof* was shut down, its keys were placed in the hands of the archbishop for safekeeping (Rybina, *Inozemnye dvory*, 70).

and measures, a critical function in a commercial city.⁹⁷ In sum the archbishop guaranteed the domestic tranquillity and prosperity of the city. The equation of St. Sophia and Novgorod resonated with the prominent institutional role of the archbishop and his cathedral apparatus.

The Orthodox Christian faith of the Novgorodians was conducive to this identification of church and polity. Novgorodian coins showed St. Sophia handing over or receiving a sign of sovereignty from a man (prince? mayor?); Novgorodian seals included the *Vsederzhitel'* (Almighty, usually translated as the Pantocrator⁹⁸) as well as other, more secular symbols. The hard-headed, practical Novgorodian boyars⁹⁹ and merchants surrounded the city with churches and monasteries, decorating them with icons and frescoes of lasting beauty. Boyars sometimes took the cowl and retired to a monastery. The seals of Novgorodian officials carried icons of their patrons' saints. It is no surprise that Novgorodians thought themselves favoured by the Divine Wisdom and fought in her name.¹⁰⁰ Historians have not explored the potential consequences of this identification, redolent not only of St. Sophia of Kiev but also of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, for Novgorodian self-perception as a Chosen People.

But Novgorod's political theology need not have entailed the absence of a concept of the Novgorodian Land, parallel to that of other Rus' polities.¹⁰¹ The Muscovite army in

97 Khoroshkevich, *Torgovlia*, 141 reproduces the official seal for wax parcels, but neither transcribes nor explains it. The seal carried the slogan "*tovar*" *bozhii*" (literally: God's goods), either because various seals for weights and measures were kept in churches, or because of the use of wax for church candles and other sacred functions, or because the wax might have come from a monastery. (My thanks to Eve Levin for her ideas on this seal.) For security reasons all churches were utilized as storage facilities for goods: Cherepnin, *Novgorodskie berestianye gramoty*, 305, 313, 315–16.

98 My thanks again to Eve Levin for suggesting the more precise definition.

99 Khoroshev, *Tserkov'*, 42–43 identified one archbishop as of boyar origin, Dobrynia ladreinovich, whose monastic name was Antonii, archbishop 1210–1220. (See George P. Majeska, "Politics and Hagiography in the Early Rus' Church: Antonii, a Thirteenth-Century Archbishop of Novgorod," in *The Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture*, ed. Nicholas Lupinin, Donald Ostrowski, and Jennifer B. Spock (Columbus, OH: Research Center for Medieval Slavic Studies, 2016), 23–40.) The boyars usually controlled churches and monasteries via patronage (*ktitorstvo*) (Khoroshev, *Tserkov'*, 155–69).

100 I do not know where to situate the political piety of the Novgorodians within Birnbaum's picture of their *mentalité* as a contrast between down-to-earth practicality and the kind of fantasy epitomized by the *Tale of the Trip of Ivan of Novgorod to Jerusalem on a Devil*.

101 This aspect of Novgorodian history has no parallel to Western Europe. For comments on the comparison and contrast between Novgorod and medieval Europe, see Langer, "V. L. Ianin," 118–19; Andreev, "Problemy," 145; Ianin, *Novgorodskie posadniki*, 272–73 identifying parallel development of the sphragistic symbolism in Novgorod and Venice; Birnbaum, *Lord Novgorod the Great* on St. Sophia, Venice's San Marco, and Dubrovnik's St. Vlados; and Henrik Birnbaum, "Novgorod and Dubrovnik: Two Slavic City Republics and their Civilization," in his *Aspects of the Slavic Middle Ages and Slavic Renaissance Culture* (New York: Lang, 1991), 355–95 [originally a 1989 Zagreb pamphlet]; Anna Leonidovna Choroškevič, "Der deutsche Hof in Novgorod und die deutsche Herberge [Fondaco dei Tedeschi] in Venedig im 13/14. Jahrhundert. Eine vergleichende Vorstudie," trans. Gertrud Pickan, in *Zwischen Lübeck und Novgorod. Wirtschaft, Politik und Kultur*

the *Zadonshchina* fights “for the Rus’ Land and the Christian faith,” but had the Novgorodians participated, they could have mustered only half such a slogan. The ubiquitous appearance of the Novgorodian Land in scholarly works owes more to the influence of the myth of the Rus’ Land than to medieval Novgorodians. While not as anachronistic as allusions to the *Novgorodshchina*,¹⁰² its use ought to be tempered.

It is the negative explanation of the absence of the concept of the Novgorodian Land which must take precedence, and that explanation rests on Novgorod’s primary political attribute, the lack of an inherited princely line.¹⁰³ Because of that absence the city-state was able to develop a “republican” form of government and an oligarchic social order. In fact the limits of Novgorodian expansion were defined by the territories of western and Rus’ princely lines.¹⁰⁴ Without an entrenched domestic princely line, Novgorod could manipulate rival princely contenders and principalities to maintain its autonomy, a game Novgorod played well, until Muscovy changed the rules.¹⁰⁵ Novgorod’s way of life could not be exported to monarchic states.¹⁰⁶ Novgorod could not articulate a “Land” ideology, since that form of ideology depended upon the intimate connection between the Volodimerovich clan and the “Land.” In this sense the lack of a myth of the Novgorodian Land testifies to Novgorodian recognition of its political distinctiveness (later aped by Pskov, of course). There was no concept of the Novgorodian Land, only a phrase, because Novgorod lacked the essential element of a “Land,” its own dynastic line.

After Muscovy’s conquest of Novgorod, book-men in Novgorod eventually assimilated Muscovy’s self-identification as the Rus’ Land. A prime example of that cultural transfer dates to the reign of Ivan the Terrible. The *Tale of Ivan IV’s Campaign Against*

im Ostseeraum von frühen Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert. Norman Angerman zum 60 Geburtstag, ed. Ortwin Pelc and Gertrud Pickan (Lüneberg: Institut Nordostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 1996), 67–87; and Martyshin, *Vol’nyi Novgorod*, 49–57.

102 Froianov, *Miatezhnyi Novgorod*, 181.

103 For this reason, references to Novgorod as a patrimony (*otchina i dedina*) require further elucidation. See *GVNP* no. 20 (1446–1447), 37; no. 7 (1470–1471), 131; *NPL*, 51 (6718/1209–1210), 54 (6723/1215–1216), 81 (6763/1255–1256), 89 (6778/1270–1271) from the Old Recension; 346 (6841/1333–1334), 360 (6856/1348–1349), 391 (6906/1398–1399), 418 (6943/1435–1436), 426 (6953/1445–1446) from the Young Recension.

104 Mülhe, *Die städtischen Handelzentren*, 142.

105 Birnbaum, *Lord Novgorod the Great*, 82–100.

106 For this reason, I have difficulty accepting the assertion that Novgorod and Moscow were rivals in the late fifteenth century or alternative political options for all of Russia. Had Moscow lost the battle on the Shelon’ River, Novgorod might have survived longer as an autonomous city-state, but how would Moscow’s political organization have changed? The most explicit exposition of this argument is Henrik Birnbaum, “Did the 1478 Annexation of Novgorod by Muscovy Fundamentally Change the Course of Russian History?” in *New Perspectives on Muscovite History. Selected Papers from the Fourth World Congress of Soviet and East European Studies, Harrogate 1990*, ed. Lindsey Hughes (New York: St. Martin’s, 1993), 37–50, reprinted in Birnbaum, *Novgorod in Focus*, 166–80 (Birnbaum borrowed this hypothetical conceit from A. V. Isachenko), but it is implicit in the works of many other historians, for example, Joel Raba, “The Fate of the Novgorodian Republic,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 45, no. 105 (July 1967): 307–23.

*Novgorod in 1570*¹⁰⁷ describes in gruesome detail the sack of the city in 1569–1570 by Ivan IV and his *oprichniki*.¹⁰⁸ Although the accuracy of the narrative has been questioned¹⁰⁹ there is general consensus that its author was from Novgorod and thoroughly sympathized with Novgorod’s suffering. Not everyone thinks that this author was a contemporary of the event because the text survives only in later manuscripts. The phrase the “Novgorodian Land” does not appear in the text. However, its author lamented that such an event had never previously occurred in the “*Rossiiskaia zemlia*.”¹¹⁰ The adjective *rossiiskaia* derives from the word *Rossiia*, from the Greek *Ros* or *Rhos*. It was used in various grammatical forms during Ivan IV’s reign as an alternative to *Rus’* to convey imperial (after Ivan’s coronation as tsar in 1547) and ecclesiastical ambience.¹¹¹ *Rossiia* became the dominant imperial, non-ethnic concept for the “Russian” Empire only later, but already in the sixteenth century had partially acquired that nuance. In any event the author of the *Tale* utilized a Muscovite adaptation of the “Rus’ Land” for situating the event he described, eschewing a local perspective. He did not write that such a catastrophe had never previously occurred in the Novgorodian Land.

107 “Povest’ o pokhode Ivana IV na Novgorod v 1570 godu,” in *Izbornik: Sbornik proizvedenii literatury drevnei Rusi* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1969), 477–83.

108 In 1565 Ivan established the *oprichnina*, his personal appanage, from which he launched a reign of terror on the entire country. The *oprichniki* were the servitors of the *oprichnina*.

109 Hugh F. Graham, “How Do We Know What We Know about Ivan the Terrible (A Paradigm),” *Russian History* 14 (1987): 179–98.

110 “Povest’ o pokhode Ivana IV na Novgorod v 1570 godu,” 477.

111 Charles J. Halperin, “Rus’ versus Ros in Ivan IV’s Muscovy,” *Slavia* 86, no. 4 (2017): 367–75.