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### **Novgorod the Great Court Instances in 1584-1616**

The proceeding of law, one of the main functions of administering and day-to-day life of the Muscovite Csardom, is not well studied on the level of regions. The concrete mechanisms of the judicial functioning in 16th – early 17th centuries (before the Law Code 1649), the institutions and quasi-institutions that provided “Justice and Trial” in the regions are known only through rare mentions in the legislative and justice acts. The judicial infrastructure here is the content and levels of Court instances, the space of its competence, the nomenclature of cases judged by these instances.

The sources are connected with two judicial instances in Novgorod the Great: 1) Court Office (*Sudnyj Prikaz*) that was the instance provided judging on behalf of the City Governor, and 2) Court Yard (*Sudnyj Dvor*) that was in fact Novgorod City Court and provided justice on behalf of elected judiciaries.

Other lower instances towards the Court Office were:

- Courts of *Guba* elders in the countryside districts (*pyatinas*).
- Courts (?) in suburbs
- Courts in Zaonezhje. That region was a special part of the Novgorod Land with no private landownership

Courts in central offices in Moscow were the upper instance for the Novgorod Court Office. During the Time of Troubles the governing bodies were not changed significantly. However, political separation of this or that territory of Muscovy from Moscow created some peculiarities in its governing. After General Jacob Delagardie conquered Novgorod the Great in July 1611, and then signed an alliance with Novgorodians, a special political regime started to be built in the city.

The law enforcement in Novgorod of 1611-1615 was proceeded on the principles shaped by the end of the 16th century. Since 1550, the official basis for making court decisions has been the coded legislation, and the Sovereign’s orders. The competence of the Novgorod City Court (and other court instances) was not limited with court cases. All the instances worked also with slavery deals. This fact corresponds with the certain ambivalence of office functions in the Early Modern Muscovy, of undivided state of the court and administrative power in the Muscovite culture.

Novgorod court instances adopted well to the political changes in 1611. Disappearing of “Moscow” was quite imperceptibly for the Novgorod court daily life. The decision-making center shifted to the Novgorod Record Office. In the most complicated cases the higher powers were asked for a final verdict. Destroying of the system happened only after the cruel changing in the politics, in the style of governing, in the connection between the “Russian”, and “Swedish” powers in 1615, when more or less direct Swedish military administration had been established. At the same time, adaptation of the judicial system to the situation of the lack of “Center” shows a special particularity of the Muscovite political system/culture. After collapse of the “Muscovite Csardom” in 1610 the local culture demonstrated a high level of preservation, and reproduction.