

since there had been a French hospital in our building (one of the few stone edifices that was fortunate to survive the great fire). This may be true; however, seeing how there were no significant battles around Moscow in 1812, and no one has managed to find any monuments or inscriptions that would identify the dead in question as French soldiers brought here after other battles of the war with France, as well as my own memories of people mentioning fragments of weapons obviously dating to an earlier epoch found on this site, I believe it would be worthy to check the relics for compliance with your version”.

We believe this research would be of the greatest interest indeed.

11.3. The Andronikov Monastery and the Battle of Kulikovo

The famous Spaso-Andronikov Monastery, one of the oldest monasteries in Moscow, is situated right next to the Kulishki – it stands atop the steep bank of the Yaouza, on the left of the Taganskaya Square = Krasniy Kholm (The Red Hill) as seen from the Kulishki, qv in figs. 6.54 and 6.55. These places are most likely to have some relation to the Battle of Kulikovo as well, which must be why the Andronikov Monastery had been founded there in the first place. The construction and the decoration of the Spasskiy Cathedral, which is part of the monastery, are reported to have been carried out in 1390-1427 (see [569], pages 1-2). In other words, the stone cathedral was constructed right after the Battle of Kulikovo, which dates to 1380. There is indeed some memory of the fact that the monastery was founded to commemorate the battle. The cathedral only assumed its modern shape in the XIX century, when it was reconstructed after the Napoleonic invasion ([556] and [805], see fig. 6.56). Apparently, “in the XII-XIX century the cathedral was disfigured by reconstructions, which also resulted in the destruction of the old frescoes. The dome fell in during the fire of 1812, and the cathedral had undergone a radical reconstruction” ([805]). It turns out that there aren’t even any drawings of the cathedral as it had been before the reconstruction. Historians tell us that “no knowledge of the cathedral’s original appearance survived” ([556]). The XX century “restoration” of the cathedral was based upon



Fig. 6.54. Andronyev (or Andronikov) Monastery in the XVIII century. Taken from [568], page 71.



Fig. 6.55. General view of the Andronikov Monastery in the XVIII century. Watercolour by Camporesi. Taken from [100], page 132.



Fig. 6.56. The Spasskiy Cathedral of the Andronikov Monastery in its modern condition. Photograph taken in 2000.

rather vague preconceptions of how the cathedral “should have looked in reality”. We learn that “a great many researchers of Russian architecture have studied the cathedral in order to reconstruct its initial appearance ... The cathedral was restored in 1960 by a group of architects headed by L. A. David” ([805]).

The art critic V. G. Bryussova writes the following: “the Andronikov Monastery and its Spasskiy Cathedral rank occupy a special place in history of Russian culture. Andrei Roublev lived and worked here; this monastery also became his final resting place. The monastery had once been exceptionally famous, but there is a strange veil that obscures its history from us. Chronicles describe the construction of virtually every other stone church in Moscow, but there isn’t a single word to be found about the construction of the Andronikov monastery’s cathedral – all we find amounts to stray bits of misleading information” ([100], page 49).

On the other hand, “the analysis of written sources that report the construction of the monastery leads us to the firm conclusion that its founder had been none other but Cyprian [the metropolitan active at the time of the Kulikovo Battle – Auth.] ... Upon having reached the pan-Russian pulpit, Cyprian decided to commemorate the victory over Mamai ... he founded a monastery ... and made Andronik (Andronicus) Father Superior ... it is understandable just why the consecration of this cathedral was related to the famous image of the Sudarium, which had decorated the military banners since times immemorial, helping the Russian army on the battlefield, according to folk tradition. The very architectural appearance of the cathedral embodies the concept of a victory monument perfectly” ([100], page 121).

M. N. Tikhomirov gives the following characteristic to the Andronikov Monastery, emphasising its importance:

“The Andronikov Monastery became a key cultural centre of Moscow soon immediately after its foundation ... in one of the sources we find a description of the ceremony held by Dmitriy Donskoi after his victory at River Don. This description must have been made after the demise of Cyprian, which gives it a certain fable-like quality; nevertheless, the events it is based upon are real. Therefore, the victory of the Russian army at the Don became associated

with the Andronikov monastery as well” ([842], pages 222-223; also [843], pages 243-244).

There is evidence of Cyprian meeting Dmitriy Donskoi on the site of the monastery after the Battle of Kulikovo. According to V. G. Bryussova, “Cyprian’s edition of the ‘Tale of the Battle with Mamai’ introduces the dramatized story of Cyprian meeting Dmitriy Donskoi at the site where Andronikov monastery was to be built” ([100], page 121).

The visit of the monastery’s Spasskiy cathedral in 1999 left the authors with a sad and sombre impression. According to the *Concise History of the Andronikov Monastery* ([569]), written by the archpriest of the cathedral, the “Spasskiy cathedral of the monastery, formerly known as Spaso-Andronikov Monastery, is the oldest surviving temple in Moscow ... In the days of the monastery’s third Father Superior, Reverend Alexander ... a cathedral of white stone was erected here, one of ‘great beauty’, with ‘artwork a living marvel’ ... made by Andrei Roublev and Daniel Chorniy ‘in memory of their fathers’ ... the construction and decoration were carried out in 1390-1427 ... the frescoes of the divine masters were destroyed in the XVIII century, with nothing but the floral ornament in the altar window niches remaining intact” ([569], pages 1 and 2).

We are thus told that the artwork of the Spasskiy cathedral survived the “horrible yoke of the Horde and the Mongols”, likewise the turmoil of the XVI century with the *oprichnina* etc. It had even stood through the Great Strife of the XVII century. Yet in the XVIII century, when the Romanovs finally gathered all the reins of power in their hands, they gave orders to destroy all the frescoes of the monastery. Why on earth would anyone do that? The scale of the Romanovian “rectification” of Russian history is plainly visible for any visitor of the Spasskiy cathedral – the vast space of the walls and the dome is completely blank. The order given by the Romanovs was carried out meticulously – there is no plaster on any wall, just bare bricks. All of this must have taken a tremendous amount of labour – one would have to find workers, construct the scaffolding and pay for the whole affair. The vandals did not even deem it necessary to paint the walls; we see nothing but chiselled brick and mortar surface nowadays – the past was eradicated in the cruellest manner imaginable. After

all, the Romanovs could have justified their orders to destroy the old frescoes of the Spasskiy cathedral in some way, calling them dated or claiming them to be in a poor condition. They did nothing of the kind – the unique “Mongolian” frescoes were destroyed barbarically, with blatant contempt for the old history of Russia.

As a matter of fact, we only learnt about the XVIII century Romanovian destruction of the frescoes in the Spasskiy cathedral from the materials published by the cathedral’s provost Vyacheslav Savinykh in 1999 ([569]). Modern historians remain very tight-lipped when they are forced to speak about the Romanovian outrage – V. G. Bryussova, for instance, the author of a voluminous work entitled *Andrei Roublev*, which contains a detailed rendition of the Andronikov monastery’s history, doesn’t go beyond the following two cautious phrases: “It is possible that a description of the mural artwork before the destruction will be found in the archives – that should be worthy of our attention” ([100], page 53). Also: “The only surviving fragments of the frescoes can be found in the opening slopes of the altar windows” ([100], page 53).

The two fragments of the old artwork in the window niches are the only remnants of the cathedral’s former splendour. It is noteworthy that they are of an ornamental nature – neither saints, nor angels or indeed any other imagery familiar to us nowadays. The remaining ornament fragments are quite unusual. It isn’t even “floral”, as the guidebook is telling us ([569], page 2). We see circular wheel patterns and various geometric figures. On the left window one sees a cross formed by a circle and four Ottoman crescents. According to Bryussova, “One of the elements reminds us of the ornament from the famous Ouspenskiy cathedral in Vladimir ... a similar motif is also present in the Assumption Church on the Volotovo Field ... The publications concerned with masterpieces of decorative artwork sadly don’t devote enough attention to the reproduction of ornaments and other decorative motifs” ([100], page 53). The topic is thus of little interest to contemporary historians.

As we see, the symbolism used in the pre-Romanovian ecclesiastical decorative art had radically differed from the style of the Romanovian cathedrals that has existed ever since the XVII-XVIII century. It

is possible that one can get some idea of what the old Russian Horde style had been like if one studies the artwork of the Muslim mosques – ornaments of floral and geometric nature, with no human figures in sight. Let us remind the reader that the recently uncovered old artwork in the Cathedral of St. Basil in Moscow is also ornamental in character (see CHRON6 for more details).

As we are beginning to realise, once the Romanovs managed to strengthen their position, they proceeded to instigate radical changes in the symbols used by the state and the church, as well as the ecclesiastical rituals. The goal had been the complete erasure of the Great = “Mongolian” Russia from historical memory – the “unacceptable” Ottoman crescents and stars etc. One must think that the old artwork of the Spasskiy Cathedral in the Andronikov Monastery had some quality about itself that provoked particular hatred from the part of the Romanovs, which had resulted in the barbaric destruction of the entire artwork of the monastery. It must have suffered a particularly gruesome fate because of its being directly related to the history of the Kulikovo Battle in Moscow – it is possible that the cathedral’s walls were decorated by icons and murals that depicted the battle in a veracious manner. This would be only expected, after all, since, as we have already mentioned, there are legends about Dmitriy Donskoi met on this very spot after the Battle of Kulikovo.

A similar process took place in the XVII-XVIII century Western Europe, when the ancient history was being altered there as well. Bear in mind that the Ottoman star and crescent were removed from the spire of the huge Gothic cathedral of St. Stephan in Vienna, qv in CHRON6, Chapter 5:11. The Romanovs were chiselling the artwork off the walls of the Kremlin cathedrals around the same time, and so on, and so forth. See more on this below in CHRON4, Chapter 14:5.

Let us return to the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery. This is what the cathedral’s provost, Archpriest Vyacheslav (Savinykh) is telling us in his work: “The righteous prince Dmitriy Donskoi had prayed in the Spasskiy cathedral shortly before the Battle of Kulikovo [it is presumed that a wooden church was built here in 1360, and rebuilt in stone after the Battle of Kulikovo – Auth.] ... This is also where he had praised



Fig. 6.57. The general view of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery's old necropolis, which isn't on the premises of the monastery anymore. In the background we see the monastery's wall, which was rebuilt in the XX century. The warriors buried on the Kulikovo Field were buried on this cemetery. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 6.58. The square on the site of the monastery's old necropolis. Photograph taken in 2000.

the Lord for victory. The bodies of many heroes that fell in this battle are buried in the churchyard of the monastery" ([569], page 1). This fact is also mentioned in [556]. "The oldest necropolis in Moscow, which is of great historical significance, had remained within the confines of the friary for a long time. It is known that Most Reverend Sergiy of Radonezh had visited the monastery on the night before the battle ... He blessed the army for victory. The heroes of the great battle, who have fallen for the Motherland, were buried in the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery with great solemnity; ever since that day, this churchyard has served as the last resting place of the soldiers who fell defending their country" ([556]).

And so it turns out that many of the soldiers who had fallen in the Battle of Kulikovo were buried on the churchyard of the famous Andronikov monastery. Our reconstruction offers a perfect explanation of this fact, suggesting the Battle of Kulikovo to have taken place on the territory of Moscow.

Nowadays the old necropolis of the Andronikov monastery is de facto destroyed. As we were told at the museum of the monastery, the enormous necropolis was bulldozed in 1924, with no stone left unturned. Most of its territory is located outside monastery premises, since one of the friary's walls was moved in the XX century. This had halved the monastery's territory, and the former necropolis ended up outside its confines. Modern photographs of the site where the necropolis had been situated formerly can be seen in figs. 6.57 and 6.58. Nowadays one finds a square there, with a tram-line right next to it. The wall of the monastery that one sees in figs. 6.57 and 6.58 was built in the XX century to replace the old wall, which had once encircled the entire necropolis. Several wooden crosses have been installed here recently to mark the old burial ground (see figs. 6.59 and 6.60). As we have been told in the Spasskiy cathedral, these crosses were put there with the explicit aim of commemorating the heroes who had died in the battle of Kulikovo and were buried here in the XIV century. There are plans of erecting a chapel here.

It is most noteworthy that the voluminous work of V. G. Bryusova ([100]) remains completely silent about the fact that many of the Kulikovo heroes were buried in the necropolis of the Andronikov monastery. There isn't a word about it in the modern book by the archaeologist L. A. Belyaev entitled *Moscow's Ancient Monasteries (Late XIII – Early XV century) and Archaeological Data* ([62]), either. L. A. Belyaev offers a very comprehensive collection of monastery-related data, yet doesn't utter a single word about the old graves of a great many heroes of the Kulikovo battle. He also remains completely silent about the destruction of the frescoes in the XVIII century. Why would that be? Reluctance to get involved with contentious issues, or mere ignorance?

We deem either to be a crying shame – how could this possibly be true? Many heroes who had fallen in the Battle of Kulikovo, one of the most important battles in Russian history, are buried in the famous



Fig. 6.59. Large wooden cross, installed in memory of the warriors who had been killed in the Battle of Kulikovo and buried in the old cemetery of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery. This information was related to us by the monastery museum workers. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 6.60. Another cross installed near the previous one, also in memory of the warriors who had died in the Battle of Kulikovo. Photograph taken in 2000.

Fig. 6.61. A XVI century headstone from the necropolis of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery. Currently kept in the museum of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery in Moscow. We see an old forked three-point cross on the stone – this is how the Russian headstones had looked before the XVII century. However, the inscription was renewed – it may be a copy of the obliterated initial lettering, but this isn't quite clear. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 6.62. Another XVI century headstone from the necropolis of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery exhibited in its museum. We also see the ancient forked cross; there had once been some lettering in the top part, but it was chiselled off – the remaining fragments don't let us reconstruct a single word. Photograph taken in 2000.

Fig. 6.63. Top parts of the XVI century headstones with lettering from the museum of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery. Photograph taken in 2000.



Andronikov monastery, which is located in the very centre of Moscow – yet the modern historians and archaeologists do not so much as make a passing reference to this fact, pretending it to be of no interest or feigning nescience. Let us reiterate: we believe this to be utter and complete disgrace. The provost of the Spasskiy cathedral is the only person to mention the ancient graveyard next to the church ([569], page 1) – yet the learned historians remain deaf. How come that the numerous heroes of the Kulikovo Battle buried in the Andronikov and the Old Simonov monasteries didn't deserve so much as a mention in history textbooks? How come there is no monument here – nor flowers, nor visitors?

In March, 1999 we saw two old headstones in the museum of the Andronikov Monastery, allegedly dating from the XVI century (see figs. 6.61, 6.62 and 6.63). This is what the museum annotations tell us, at least. We see a forked or t-shaped cross on both of them, which looks exactly the same as the crosses on the headstones from the Old Simonov monastery. One of the headstones from the Andronikov monas-

tery still bears marks of an old inscription, which was obviously chiselled off and replaced by a new one, qv in figs. 6.61 and 6.63. The letters look very clean and accurate, and visibly differ from the old and worn-down pattern on the headstone.

Some old inscription had been chiselled off the second headstone as well, in a very blatant and barbaric manner, qv in fig. 6.62 and 6.63. The perpetrators did not even care about covering their tracks, and their intention to erase the inscription from the stone and from human memory is right out there in the open. Had they intended to use the stone for another grave, the old text would have been removed with more care. This was not the case – we see huge and uneven indentations in the stone (fig. 6.62).

Once we sum up the above data, we get a very clear picture of the following: it turns out that there are old burial grounds in Moscow, which are very likely to be the last resting place of the warriors killed in the Battle of Kulikovo, namely:

- 1) The gigantic graveyard of the Old Simonov monastery, qv above.
- 2) The huge necropolis of the Andronikov monastery, qv above.
- 3) The mass burial grounds in Moscow, qv above.
- 4) The hypothetical burial ground next to the Church of All Saints at Kulishki.
- 5) The mass burial grounds on the actual site of the Kulikovo Battle, or the modern Peter the Great (former Dzerzhinsky) Academy mentioned in the letter of I. I. Kourennoi, qv in CHRON4, Chapter 6:11.2.

Let us reiterate that there were no such burial grounds found anywhere in the region of Tula, where the Battle of Kulikovo is supposed to have taken place according to the modern historians, despite the fact that they were sought with great diligence.

11.4. The modern Dmitriy Donskoi memorial at the foot of the Red (Krasniy) or Taganskiy Hill in Moscow

Nowadays the former Kulikovo field contains the Solyanka Street, the Yaouzskiy Gate, the Foreign Literature Library and the high-riser on the Kropotkinskaya Embankment in Moscow. As we already mentioned, Mamai stood camp on the Red Hill (*Krasniy Kholm*), where one finds the Taganskaya underground

station nowadays (hence the name of the Krasnoholmskaya Embankment).

Therefore, the troops of Dmitriy Donskoi must have crossed the Yaouza and headed towards the Red Hill, upwards between the Library and the high-riser.

It is most curious that a memorial was erected on this very spot in 1992, on 25 September, or the day of the Kulikovo Battle. The monument has the shape of a cross that stands upon a foundation of granite. The name of the sculptor is Klykov; there is an inscription upon the granite saying: “There shall be a monument to St. Dmitriy Donskoi, the Righteous Prince and the Defender of Russia. 25 September 1992” (see fig. 6.51).

There must be some tradition that connects this place with the Battle of Kulikovo and the name of Dmitriy Donskoi, one that remains alive despite everything – let us remind the reader that the Battle of Kulikovo is reported to have taken place on 25 September 1380. It is most significant that the cross in question is facing the actual Kulikovo field, somewhat sideways across the Yaouza!

12. THE BATTLE OF KULIKOVO ON AN XVII CENTURY ICON

Let us study a rare depiction of the Kulikovo Battle on an old icon from Yaroslavl dated to the middle of the XVII century and uncovered as late as 1959 ([996], pages 136-137; also [142], page 130). The icon depicts the life and the deeds of Sergiy of Radonezh ([142], page 130). We reproduce it in fig. 6.64. The icon is considered “a masterpiece of the Yaroslavl school and the XVII century Russian art in general” ([142], page 132). In the very centre of the icon we see Sergiy of Radonezh. The icon is “complemented by a battle scene below that shows the defeat of Mamai’s troops, pained on a long and relatively narrow board (30 centimetres). The anonymous artist created a unique painting of the famous Kulikovo battle, with an unprecedented amount of details, figures and explanatory subscripts” ([142], page 133).

In fig. 6.65 one sees the left part of the board, whereas the right part is reproduced in fig. 6.66. Let us also clarify the exact meaning of the term “uncovered” as applied to icons. Icons were usually cov-