

# The epoch of Ivan the Terrible. The origins of Russian history, its authors and their methods

## 1.

### THE GREAT STRIFE AS A COLLISION BETWEEN TWO DYNASTIES. THE END OF THE HORDE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE ROMANOVIAN REIGN

The epoch of Ivan the Terrible is considered to be known to us quite well. Alas and alack, this is far from truth, as many of the modern historians are well aware.

However, this fact usually remains concealed from public attention for reasons made obvious below. Apparently, the epoch of Ivan the Terrible is one of the most obscure, interesting and intriguing periods in Russian history. It is this very epoch that serves as a watershed between the times when Russia had also been known as the Horde and the reign of the Romanovs.

These two epochs are separated by the reign of Ivan the Terrible and the Great Strife of the XVI-XVII century that came in its wake. It is usually presumed that the Great Strife began after the death of Boris Godunov; however, we shall demonstrate the fallacy of this presumption shortly. The strife began much earlier, and covers almost the entire epoch of “Ivan the Terrible”. This is one of the major discrepancies between our version and that of the Millerian and Romanovian historians.

## 2.

### SURVIVING ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS DATING FROM THE EPOCH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE

R. G. Skrynnikov, a famous researcher of the epoch in question, tells us the following:

“The primary hindrance encountered by every researcher of ‘The Great Terror’ of the XVI century [the author is referring to the epoch of Ivan the Terrible – Auth.] is the extreme scarcity of sources. Historians are forced to construct long chains of hypotheses in order to solve equations with many variables ... The archives of the Oprichniks that contained the court files dating from the terror epoch [the epoch of Ivan the Terrible – Auth.] were destroyed completely” ([755], page 10).

Further also: “The condition of the XVI century Russian archives and libraries is the worst in Europe” ([775], page 23).

Moreover, even the documents that did reach our day bear distinct traces of later tendentious editing. Skrynnikov reports the following:

“The official chronicle of the Czars has reached our days in a number of copies. The first chapters of the Synodal chronicle served as a draft of sorts. This text was edited under Adashev, with a clean copy made subsequently. It was a splendid edition illustrated with a multitude of brilliant miniatures ... The very

beginning of the book describes the demise of Basil III. It was supposed to span the entire reign of Ivan the Terrible; however, the work on the Book of the Czars had been interrupted, and somebody's authoritative introduction introduced a great many corrections and insertions" ([776], page 81). Thus, the Book of the Czars is by no means an original document, but rather somebody's more recent version.

Many of the alterations introduced into the book are of a polemical and rhetorical nature; D. N. Alshitz was the first to have noticed the striking similarity between the insertions and the first epistle of Ivan the Terrible to Kurbskiy, suggesting them to be related" ([775], page 25). However, Russian historiographers have long ago voiced the justified opinion that the famous correspondence of Ivan the Terrible and Kurbskiy is a literary work of fiction written by S. I. Shakhovskiy in the XVII century ([775], page 37). Therefore, the rather precarious remark of the historians about the insertions into the Book of the Czars being similar to the correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Kurbskiy must imply that the chronicle itself (the Book of the Czars, that is) was written and edited in the XVII century. It may have been an in-between version that did not receive royal support despite the exuberant luxury of the edition and was therefore abandoned.

Are there any original documents left by Ivan the Terrible? Next to none, as we are told. D. S. Likhachyov points out: "Most of Ivan's documents, likewise many other Russian literary works, only survived as late copies made in the XVII century" ([651], page 183). As Romanovian copies, in other words. As we have already mentioned, the Romanovs destroyed most of the old Russian historical documents in the XVII century and edited others in a manner they found convenient.

It is presumed that several original documents dating from the epoch of Ivan the Terrible have reached our days: "fortunately, some of Ivan's works survived as XVI century copies, namely:

- Ivan's letter to Vassily Gryaznoi,
- Epistles to Simeon Beckboulatovich,
- Letter to Stefan Batorius dating from 1581,
- Letter to Sigismund II Augustus,
- Letter to Khodkevich,
- Letter to Elisabeth I, Queen of England,

- A copy of his [Ivan's – Auth] theological dispute with Jan Rokita" ([651], page 183).

These documents are all there is! Neither the famous Oprichnina edict, nor the famous synodical that is supposed to have been written by Ivan after his repentance. Even the original of his last will and testament has perished. We must point out that the testaments of many other Muscovite princes are supposed to have reached us in their original form. For instance, Vassily I Dmitrievich (1389-1425, which predates Ivan's time by 150 years, no less) has written three different wills over the years of his reign, and all of them have presumably survived as originals ([794], pages 149-150). Even the original testament of Ivan Kalita is said to have survived ([794], page 147), despite being 250 years older than the documents of Ivan the Terrible, which "has only survived as a single later copy, which is in a poor condition and does not contain any date" ([775], page 51).

By the way, even in the precious few cases when the original document should theoretically be in a perfect condition, the situation lacks clarity completely. For example, the letter sent by Ivan the Terrible to Elizabeth I, Queen of England, is an official document that has survived as an original. The parchment scroll, which is a great deal more resilient than paper, has been kept in London ever since its reception from Moscow in 1570 ([639], pages 587 and 115). However, this missive "contains a number of lacunae, and the text is illegible in a number of places" ([639], page 587). The document must have been damaged deliberately for some reason.

It is presumed that the predecessors of Ivan the Terrible have left a large number of original documents behind. For instance, the compilation entitled *Russian Seals of State* ([794]) contains a list of some 40 allegedly original documents dating from the epoch of Ivan III Vassilyevich. However, there isn't a single document with a personal seal of Ivan the Terrible anywhere in this compilation.

Thus, the only documents that contain information pertinent to the epoch of Ivan the Terrible have reached our epoch as recent copies. For instance, the entire famed history of Ivan the Terrible and his deeds is based on rather suspicious copies manufactured in the XVII century the earliest. Skrynnikov's fundamental oeuvre dedicated to the epoch of Ivan the Ter-

rible ([775]) does not contain a single original document in the “Sources” chapter – little wonder that he should allude to equations with multiple variables, qv above.

### 3.

#### **ODDITIES IN THE TRADITIONAL VERSION OF THE BIOGRAPHY OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE**

We shall refrain from giving a detailed rendition of Ivan’s biography as it is reflected in school textbooks, assuming the reader to be familiar with it from the multitude of available sources. We shall cover it in brief so as to point out the numerous oddities contained therein – those are often quite out of proportion. The most conspicuous ones are as follows:

1) In 1553 Ivan the Terrible appoints a council of custodians for none other but himself. It is presumed that the council’s mission had been the custody of his infant son Dmitriy. However, Ivan recuperated from his ailment, yet did not dismiss the council. Could there have been a council of custodians over an omnipotent monarch in good health?

2) Fealties to Ivan the Terrible were sworn several times, which is quite nonsensical, since this event takes place only once in a lifetime of a single monarch. Nevertheless, there were several fealties sworn to Ivan; moreover, he was even inaugurated for a second time, with much pomp and fanfare, many years after his ascension to the throne. Could it be that his first inauguration in 1547 was forgotten, and so it was decided to repeat it in 1572, 25 years later? There were no other multiple fealties or inaugurations anywhere in Russian history.

3) Ivan the Terrible makes Simeon Beckboulatovich Czar – presumably in order to replace himself, no less. The absurd “explanation” is that he found it easier to control the Duma in this manner.

4) Ivan the Terrible had destroyed Novgorod completely and then decided to move the capital, the court and the state treasury there, qv in [775], page 498 – presumably to install his throne among the charred ruins of the city.

All of these oddities make historians characterise Ivan the Terrible as a schizoid. P. I. Kovalevskiy, for instance, used to claim that “the Czar had been a neurasthenic, and his paranoia and persecution mania

resulted in the creation of the Oprichnina” ([775], pages 500-501).

Indeed, a person acting in such a manner resembles a schizoid to a great extent. However, we must enquire whether we do indeed have an understanding of the events that took place in that epoch. Do they all pertain to the biography of a single monarch? Could it be that several monarchs were compressed into just one Czar? This would change our entire perception of the epoch in question. Let us relate our hypothesis.

#### **4. THE GREAT STRIFE OF THE XVI-XVII CENTURY AS THE EPOCH OF THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE OLD RUSSIAN (MONGOLIAN) HORDE DYNASTY AND THE NEW WESTERN DYNASTY OF THE ROMANOV.**

##### **The end of the Russo-Mongolian Horde in the XVII century**

According to our hypothesis, the entire reign of “Ivan the Terrible” (1547-1584) can be naturally divided into four reigns of four different Czars, which were later united into a single figure by the historians. This was done in the XVII century, under the Romanovs, for a distinct political purpose – namely, justifying the claim for the Russian throne made by Mikhail Romanov, the founder of the dynasty. An image of a “great and terrible Czar” who had reigned over 50 years was introduced into the mass consciousness for this purpose. The Romanovs had several goals in mind.

The matter is that the Great Strife of the XVI-XVII century had not been a mere internal conflict in the Great = “Mongolian” Empire, but rather a long and bloody civil war, one that has led to radical changes in the Russian governmental system. The old Horde dynasty was defeated; the palace revolution was instigated by the representatives of the Romanovs, a group of aristocrats that had hailed from Pskov in the West of Russia. They had come to power in the imperial capital and changed the character of the government completely. This revolution was supported by the adherents of the Reformation in the Western Europe. The historical epoch to follow had been cardinally different, qv in CHRON6.

This is what we believe to have taken place ac-

ording to our reconstruction. We shall proceed to explain how the Romanovs rewrote the history of this coup d'état for the subsequent generations.

First and foremost, they proclaimed the previous Horde dynasty “illegitimate”, and the entire “Mongolian” (Great) epoch in Russian history, a period of exploitative foreign rule, also known as The Great Yoke. The predecessors of the Romanovs (the Horde Khans of Russia) transformed into savage invaders from faraway eastern lands who had usurped the throne of the Ryurikovich dynasty, and the former life of the country under the “Mongolian invaders” became a grim age of violence. The Romanovs themselves were therefore acting as the “restorers of the true Russian rule” who came to rescue the country from the cruel “foreign invaders”, or the Tartars. “Godunov the Tartar” was declared a villain to par no others and an infanticide.

The elegance of the fraud is amazing – the Romanovs did not alter actual historical facts, changing their interpretation and context instead. This has led to profound distortions in the Russian history of the Great = “Mongolian” period. The remnants of the Cossack troops (or the former Horde) were driven towards the faraway regions of the empire and declared runaway slaves and exiled villains. The surviving historical documents were edited tendentiously, having transformed completely. The Romanovian historians received direct orders to create a history of the “malicious Horde” and created a seemingly plausible version. However, they could not alter everything; we have therefore got some hope of reconstructing the true picture of our history.

However, despite this primary strategic objective, the Romanovs had a number of other goals in mind. Those were of a technical and tactical nature, but vital to the Romanovs nonetheless, namely:

a) To conceal the fact that the Great Strife really began in the middle of the XVI century and not in the XVI – back in the days of “Ivan the Terrible”, and their own subversive role therein.

b) To justify their claims for the throne (they had claimed kinship with the previous legitimate Czar for this purpose).

c) To conceal their participation in the Oprichnina and the power struggle, blaming the “Terrible Czar” for all of the bloodshed.

d) To trace their origins to Anastasia Romanova, presumably the “only legitimate wife” of “the Great Czar”.

This may be the reason why the Romanovian historians collated four Czars into one, falsely presenting their wives as the wives of a single ruler. Bear in mind that the ecclesiastical law makes the fourth wedding the last one that is still legitimate; therefore, the marriages of the last two kings were invalidated, and their children deprived of the rights to the throne. Then Czar Fyodor Ivanovich was declared to have died without an heir – falsely so. His son, Czar Boris Fyodorovich (“Godunov”), was declared usurper of the throne, which is also untrue.

## 5.

### THE “REIGN OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE” IN OUR RECONSTRUCTION

#### 5.1. Ivan IV Vassilyevich as the first Czar of “Ivan’s epoch”, regnant in 1547-1553

A diagram that reflects our hypothesis schematically can be seen in fig. 8.1.

In 1547 the 16-year-old Ivan IV Vassilyevich ascended to the throne ([776], page 23). The Czar’s subjects swore fealty to their new sovereign. According to our hypothesis, he was married only once – to Anastasia Zakharyina Romanova, whose father, Roman Zakharyin, had been the de facto founder of the Romanovian dynasty ([775], page 94). The reign of Ivan IV Vassilyevich lasted until 1553. The most important event of his reign had been the conquest of Kazan in 1552. The very next year, in 1553, Ivan Vassilyevich fell seriously ill. He had already had an infant son called Dmitriy, and another one was born a while later ([775], page 109). Historians are of the opinion that Dmitriy’s death came immediately after the “crisis”. Our reconstruction demonstrates this to be false. “Ivan IV became afflicted by a grave ailment. He was delirious with fever and ceased to recognize his kin. His demise was expected to happen any day. In the evening of 11 March 1553 a group of boyars that had been close to the Czar swore fealty to Dmitriy, the infant heir to the throne” ([776], page 48).

Our opinion is that the health of Ivan IV Vassilyevich had really deteriorated to such an extent that

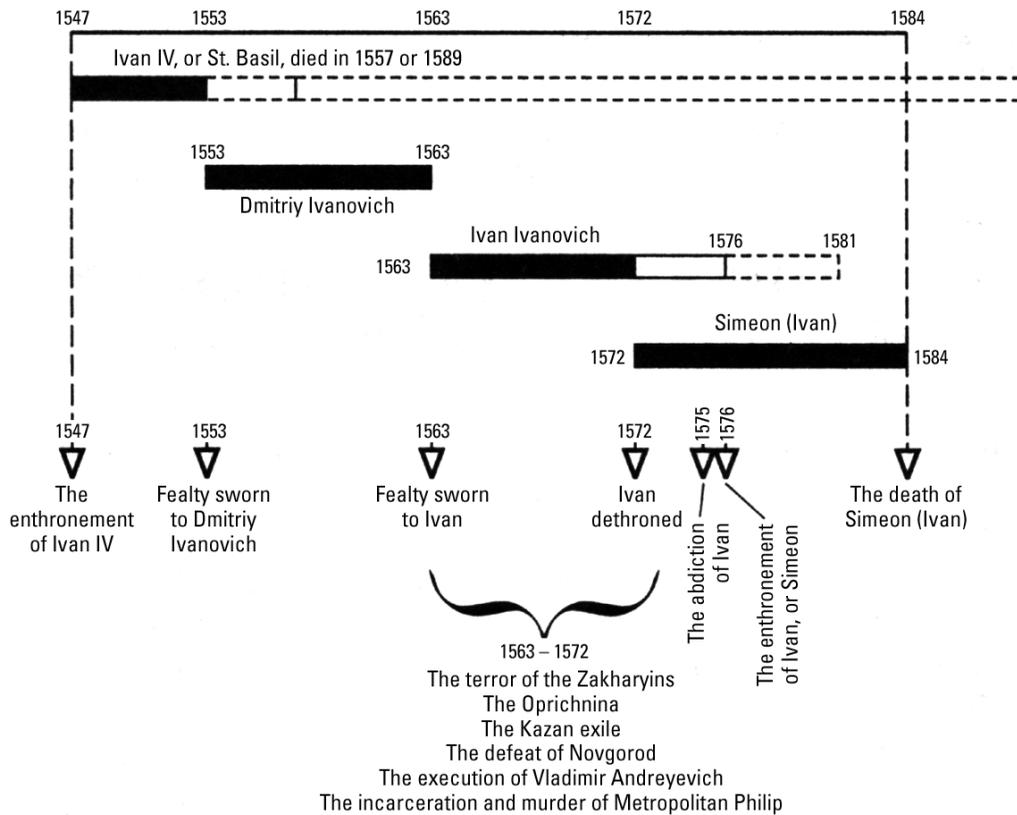


Fig. 8.1. The epoch of “Ivan the Terrible.” According to our reconstruction, four Czars, or Khans, had reigned during this epoch, and not just one, as the Romanovian historians believe.

he could not participate in the affairs of state any longer. He may indeed have died shortly afterwards. Skrynnikov points out the following circumstance, which might serve as an indirect confirmation of this fact: “the prematurely sworn fealty of 1553 demonstrates that the Zakharyins had been quite certain of the Czar’s imminent demise” ([775], page 114).

Ivan IV had become extraordinarily pious before having fallen ill. It is known that he was under a strong influence of a priest called Sylvester around that time: “The conviction of the priest and the stories that he had told the 17-year-old monarch impressed Ivan greatly. The transformation of Ivan the Terrible into a religious fanatic can be credited to Sylvester ... The fact that the Czar had become a born-again Christian made a great impact on the customs of the court. The English travellers who visited Russia in those

days were amazed by the habits of the Muscovite ruler ... The Czar shunned coarse amusements and did not like hunting much, finding a great pleasure in liturgies ... Ivan had his first visions the very same year [in 1552 – Auth.]” ([775], page 125).

Skrynnikov also reports that this epoch had been one when the so-called “*yourodivye*”, or “God’s fools” – one of the most respected ones “had been Vassily the Blessed, who had gone without clothing in the winter and summertime alike and work heavy chains of iron on his neck. His death was recorded in the official annals of the state; the holy man was buried in the Troitse-Sergiyev Monastery, and his funeral was attended by a great many people” ([775], page 126).

The most authentic and the earliest of the surviving portraits of Ivan the Terrible is the so-called Copenhagen portrait, according to [776], page 182 (see

fig. 8.2). It is kept in the royal archive of Denmark. This portrait is in fact an icon – it is written upon a wooden board with egg-yolk paint in a manner characteristic for icons. Moreover, this icon has a special indentation, wherein the actual artwork is located, with the edges of the portrait protruding outwards. This is something we only find on icons, since these indentations pertain to ecclesiastical symbolism. One must also point out the fact that the manufacture of such an indentation is anything but easy – this made icons a great deal more difficult to manufacture in accordance to special requirements of the ecclesiastical authorities. This is a detail that pertains to old icons painted on wooden boards before the XVII century at least.

Our reconstruction is as follows: Vassily the Blessed is none other but Czar Ivan IV Vassilyevich (1547-1553).

We are of the opinion that in 1553 Czar Ivan fell gravely ill and therefore severed all his ties with the state and the affairs thereof, having become a pious ascetic, or a “God’s fool” (*yourodivy*). The very name Vassily is but a version of the Greek word “*basileus*”, which translates as “king”. When Ivan = Vassily the Blessed (the Blessed King) had died, his death was naturally registered in the official annals, and his funeral was attended by multitudes of people – it wasn’t a mere ascetic that they buried, but rather a former Czar! Ivan IV = Vassily the Blessed was subsequently canonised. Apart from Vassily the Blessed, the Miracle Worker from Moscow, the Orthodox calendar also mentions Ivan the Blessed, also a Muscovite and a worker of miracles – however, no details of his life are known. It is presumed that he died in Moscow in 1589, and his body was “ceremonially buried in the Church of St. Vassily the Blessed” ([362], Book IV, annotation 469 to Volume X). The very same Cathedral of St. Vassily the Blessed, in other words. It could be that the same historical personality (Ivan = Vassily the Blessed) ended up listed twice – once as Vassily, and once more as Ivan.

The fact that Ivan IV, the conqueror of Kazan, can be identified as St. Basil the Blessed is indirectly confirmed by the fact that the famous Pokrovskiy Cathedral on the Red Square in Moscow, which was built to commemorate this conquest, is still known as the Cathedral of St. Basil the Blessed.



Fig. 8.2. The icon that portrays Ivan IV (St. Basil?) Kept in the National Museum of Copenhagen. Taken from [780], colour inset after page 64.

## 5.2. The infant Dmitriy Ivanovich as the second Czar from the period of “Ivan the Terrible” regnant in 1553-1563. The de facto reign of the elected council

Nowadays it is presumed that the first son of Ivan IV (the infant Dmitriy) had died immediately after the fealty sworn to him by the boyars in 1553 ([775], page 109). However, the documents tell us that a council of custodians was elected for the infant Dmitriy, and remained active until 1563. It is presumed that after the sudden death of the infant, Ivan IV instantly got better and proceeded to appoint a body of custodians over his own self. Historians construct different theories in order to explain the nature of this ultra-peculiar custody.

According to our reconstruction, there had indeed been an appointed council of chosen custodians, however, it was ruling on behalf of the infant Czar Dmitriy and not the adult Ivan. The fealty was also sworn to the infant Czar.

Although “Ivan IV had appointed his brothers-in-law as chief custodians (D. R. and V. M. Youriev-Za-

kharyin) ... the influence of the Zakharyins began to waver rapidly after the events of 1553-1554" ([775], pages 111 and 117). The matter is that "the boyar council had disapproved of the Zakharyins and their leadership greatly" ([775], page 111). The real position of the Zakharyins (Romanovs-to-be) had been extremely unstable around that time: "The aristocracy did not want to yield the power to the Zakharyins, who neither had authority, nor popularity" ([775], page 115).

The key positions in the council became shifted to Adashev and the Glinskiys, the relations of the previous Czar's mother, or the grandmother of Dmitriy. "The feud between the Glinskiys and the Zakharyins had been an old one ... When M. Glinskiy led his troops to Livonia in 1558, his soldiers were treating the entire region of Pskov [the domain of the Zakharyins (Romanovs) – Auth.] as enemy territory" ([775], page 147).

Thus, the Zakharyins (the ancestors of the Romanovs) become distanced from Dmitriy's throne and lose their position in the government ([775], page 120). They are replaced by the Glinskiys.

The difference between our version of the events that took place over this decade (1553-1563) and the traditional version is that we ascribe these years to the reign of the infant Dmitriy, and not Ivan IV. The main event of this reign is the Livonian War.

Our reconstruction is as follows. In 1563, Prince Dmitriy, aged around 12, had died. We believe his death to have been ascribed to the epoch of Godunov by the Romanovian historians – namely, 1591 ([777], page 67), as the famous story of "Prince Dmitriy and his tragic demise in Ouglich". He must have indeed died in Ouglich – however, we date this event to 1563, and not the epoch of Godunov.

We shall withhold from giving a list of all details and proceed to trace out some of the parallels between the tragic demise of Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich in the alleged year 1553 and that of Prince Dmitriy Ivanovich under Godunov in 1591. The formal ruler had been Czar Fyodor.

The traditional version of the "first death" of the infant Prince Dmitriy in 1553 (10 years earlier than our date) is as follows. He is presumed to have drowned by accident, due to the carelessness of his nanny. She is supposed to have been getting into a

boat when the gangway flipped over and the infant fell into the water and drowned ([775], page 117).

The traditional version of Prince Dmitriy's "second demise" in 1591 is also known quite well – the famous "Ouglich Tragedy" as described by Pushkin, among others. Also an infant, also a son of Ivan IV Vassilyevich, also an accident that took place due to the negligence of a nanny – the child had allegedly stabbed himself to death with a knife during a fit of epilepsy.

Our opinion is that the Ouglich Tragedy reflects the real death of Prince Dmitriy in 1563 – however, this event only took place once, and became duplicated later, in the XVII century, which is when the Romanovs began to relate the history of the Horde in the version they could benefit from.

#### BRIEF COROLLARIES.

a) The consensual point of view over the period of 1553-1563 is as follows: Czar Ivan withdraws from the affairs of state, and a council of custodians led by Adashev begins to rule on his behalf.

b) We are of a different opinion – Czar Ivan abdicated and became an ascetic. The next Czar was his infant heir Dmitriy. The de facto ruler had been Adashev, head of the custodian council known as *Izbrannaya Rada* (the latter word is similar to "Orda", or "horde").

### 5.3. The "third period of Ivan the Terrible" as the reign of the infant Ivan Ivanovich in 1563-1572. The Zakharyins (Romanovs) and their ascension to power. The repressions and the Oprichnina

Our reconstruction is as follows. After the demise of Prince Dmitriy in 1563, the second son of Ivan IV (Ivan Ivanovich) became Czar. He must have been raised by the Zakharyins (the Romanovs), since nobody could have guessed that Dmitriy would die in early adolescence and thus make Prince Ivan heir.

Indeed, when we return to the Millerian and Romanovian version, we see that in 1563 "a new oath of loyalty was sworn before the Czar" ([775], page 171). It is presumed that this third oath was sworn to the same Czar Ivan IV, who had presumably still been alive. Once again, historians are forced to invent explanations of this mystical third featy.

The balance of power was shifted in favour of the

Zakharyins. The *Rada*, or the council of the custodians, had been destroyed, and Adashev was refused entry to Moscow. The Zakharyins gathered all the reins of power in their hands and instigated the mass repressions, or the famous terror of the epoch of “Ivan the Terrible”, *qv* below.

In 1563, “a decade and a half after the coronation, the envoys sent by the Patriarch of Constantinople brought the edict of the Ecumenical Council to Moscow, which confirmed the rights of the Muscovite to the title of the Czar ... This event was celebrated with lavish church processions, and its primary objective had been the affirmation of Ivan’s power” ([776], page 70; see also [775], Chapter 7, and the ensuing chapters 8–15). Isn’t it odd that the power of the Czar needed to be “affirmed” in the seventeenth year of his reign?

“Having ousted both Adashev and Sylvester, Ivan IV [the young Czar Ivan Ivanovich, according to our hypothesis – Auth.] began to conduct his affairs aided by no one but his closest kin, paying no regard for the age-old tradition. The boyars were furious about the actions of the Czar, and positively loathed the Zakharyins, who were blamed for the death of Adashev” ([775], page 171). The famous mass repressions commonly ascribed to “Ivan the Terrible” only began around this time.

We are of the opinion that the repressions did in fact take place – however, they were masterminded and perpetrated by the Zakharyins, who had launched a campaign of eliminating their opposition, which nearly amounted to the entire Old Russian (or “Mongolian”) aristocracy of the old Horde dynasty. The two groups – the imperial forces of the old Horde and the new pro-Western group of the Zakharyins (later known as the Romanovs) that plotted for the throne. The conflict in question was nothing short of a civil war, and marks the actual beginning of the Great Strife in Russia (or the Horde).

Russian history was written around this time; more specifically, the first attempts of revising it have been made. The goals were blatantly political, which is common knowledge nowadays: “Concern about the emerging boyar heresy had led the monarch to the idea of revising the history of his reign, which was implemented in 1563–1564” ([775], page 172). Modern research demonstrates that the chronicles were writ-

ten on French paper, imported from France for this purpose specifically ([775], page 20). “The official Muscovite chronographic activity reached its peak in the 1550’s and the early 1560’s; its complete cessation after 1568 had taken place for a number of reasons ... The fate of the people who were put in charge of the chronicle production had been tragic ... The typesetter Ivan Viskovatiy was executed ... All attempts of resurrecting the civic chronicle writing were doomed because of the reigning terror. Any servant of the state who would replace the killed I. Viskovatiy would be putting his life in mortal danger if he decided to describe the Novgorod pogrom” ([775], page 22).

Thus, we learn that the people who were writing Russian history in that epoch were simply destroyed. Moreover, we are shown a place which is obviously “dangerous for chronographic science” – the Novgorod pogrom. We are beginning to see the reason why – this was the moment when the name “Novgorod the Great” was taken away from Yaroslavl and ascribed to a town in the Pskov region. The underlying motivation had been political through and through. The power was seized by a new dynasty – the Zakharyins, later known as the Romanovs. They had a domain of their own in Polotsk, which is in Western Russia, and were close to Pskov and the territories of the Hanse. They were obviously striving to distort Russian history in order to conceal the true origins of the Old Russian dynasty, or the Horde (which had hailed from Yaroslavl, also known as Novgorod the Great). This dynasty needed a new virtual homeland somewhere in the Pskov region, or the North-West of Russia, which is whence the Zakharyins themselves had originated. Having changed the geography of historical events (as well as their datings, as one might well assume), the Zakharyins (Romanovs) were creating an illusion of a “solid historical foundation” for their own genealogy.

In 1564 the Oprichnina was established officially. “One of the Oprichnina’s primary instigators had been the boyar V. M. Youriev-Zakharyin, and the Zakharyins had stood at the centre of the group that had launched the Oprichnina machine” ([775], page 225).

We deem it extraneous to list the details of the mass repressions here; they are known well enough, and the readers can turn to a great many works that cover the epoch. Let us merely emphasise that the en-

tire “mass repression period” of Ivan the Terrible is encompassed by the period between 1563 and 1572 – the reign of the adolescent Ivan Ivanovich, or, rather, the Zakharyins (future Romanovs), who had ruled on his behalf.

The primary landmarks of the terror are as follows: the establishment of the Oprichnina in 1564, the Kazan exile of 1565, the plot of the groom Fyodorov-Chelyadnin, the punitive expedition to Novgorod and the destruction of the city in 1569-1570, the murder of Metropolitan Philip and Herman, the Archbishop of Kazan, the murder of Vladimir Andreyevich, one of the Czar’s relations, and the mass executions of the boyars in 1568 ([775], page 338).

The “White Hood Dispute” took place in the very same year of 1564.

Our commentary. The Council was solving the issue of whether the Metropolitan of Moscow had the right for wearing a white hood, which had formerly been the exclusive privilege of the Archbishop of Novgorod. Therefore, the issue had been one of making the rank of the Muscovite Metropolitan (who was actually known as the “Metropolitan of Kiev”) equal to that of the Archbishop of Novgorod. The aim had been that of raising the importance of Moscow and diminishing the importance of Novgorod the Great, or Yaroslavl.

The destruction of Yaroslavl, or Novgorod the Great in 1569-1570 had been the culmination of the terror known as the Oprichnina. It is presumed that the city was demolished completely, with all of its inhabitants sent into exile, also accompanied by the execution of Prince Vladimir Andreyevich Staritskiy, a member of the royal dynasty. The events of this epoch testify to the fact that a civil war began around this time. Our interpretation of these famous events is as follows.

The new groups of the Zakharyins (Romanovs) decided to eradicate the Old Russian dynasty of the Horde, whose old capital and citadel had been in Novgorod the Great, or Yaroslavl. The Muscovite troops of the Zakharyins destroyed Novgorod, or Yaroslavl, and executed Vladimir Andreyevich, who could have made claims for the throne as a representative of the old Horde dynasty.

As a result, the Horde is provoked into providing armed resistance. The Millerian and Romanovian ver-

sion presents it as the invasion of the Crimean Khan. In 1571 the Crimeans, or the Horde, approached the walls of Moscow, which was taken and burnt to the ground. Czar Ivan had “abandoned his army and made his escape to Rostov” ([776], page 162). A short while earlier, in 1569, the Czar had asked for political asylum in England, obviously having an intimation that the events might take a turn for the worse. The famous “Moscow Process” begins. The Horde’s power grows, and the Zakharyins (Romanovs) begin to suffer defeat after defeat, likewise their allies. The activity of the famed Malyuta Skouratov-Belskiy and Vassily Gryznoy is dated to this very period – it is presumed that they took no part in the initial wave of repressions launched by the Zakharyins. They become active after the Novgorod pogrom ([776], page 160), and therefore act as the representatives of the Horde and merciless punishers of the usurpers (the Zakharyins, later known as the Romanovs). Indeed, “Skouratov had helped Ivan the Terrible to get rid of the old guard of the *oprichniks*” ([776], page 175). The guard of the Zakharyins, in other words.

It turns out that Malyuta Skouratov of the Horde had been the nemesis of the perpetrators of the Oprichnina terror, hence his demonised image in later historiography. The consensual version of history betrays the origins of its authors – the Zakharyins and their offspring, the Romanovs.

The victory of the Horde results in the destruction of the old Duma appointed by the Zakharyins, and the execution of Basmanov, its leader. The new Duma was formed “of the top ranking aristocracy ... All of them had suffered from Basmanov’s repressions, likewise their relatives” ([776], pages 174-175). Immediately after that, “the English ambassador was notified that the secret negotiations about the possibility that the Czar and his family might be given asylum in England were to be ceased” ([776], page 189). In 1572, a royal edict came out “forbidding the use of the very word Oprichnina” ([776], page 190).

This is how the first attempt of the Zakharyins (Romanovs) to seize the throne had fallen through. The positions of the Great = “Mongolian” Horde were restored; moreover, the capital of the country was transferred to Novgorod for a while: “The Czar was serious in his intentions to settle in his new residence [Novgorod – Auth.]. The royal court on Nikitskaya

Street was cleaned, and the Czar's palace prepared for dwelling. A new bell was hung in Yaroslav's Court, "next to the royal palace" ([775], page 374). Even the royal treasury was transferred to Novgorod from Moscow ([776], page 181). A propos, it turns out that "the treasures brought to Novgorod were stored in the cellars of the church that had stood in Yaroslav's Court" ([776], page 189). Nowadays it is presumed that the city in question is the remote Novgorod-upon-Volkhov, which is situated deep in the north-western marshes; according to our version, they were taken to the much closer city of Novgorod that is known as Yaroslavl nowadays – quite naturally so, seeing as how the latter is the old capital of the Great = "Mongolian" Empire of the Horde. The famous "Yaroslav's Court" is but the palace square in Yaroslavl. The capital of the Horde was temporarily relocated back to the Volga.

Let us sum up. Modern historians see the period of 1563-1572 in the following light: the de facto power is in the hands of the Zakharyins (also known as the Romanovs), who had "concentrated civil powers in their hands and governed the country on behalf of Prince Ivan, a maternal relation of theirs" ([776], page 165). Historians tell us that the country was governed from the court of the young Prince Ivan, and that the Zakharyins had ruled on his behalf.

Our point of view is as follows. What we claim is virtually the same thing – the Zakharyins rule the country on behalf of the young Czar Ivan. The difference between the two versions is that the learned historians consider this period to fall into the 50-year reign of a fictitious Czar known as "Ivan the Terrible", whereas we suggest that Ivan IV had already died by that time, and that the regnant monarch was the young Ivan Ivanovich.

#### **5.4. Simeon Beckboulatovich regnant in 1572-1584 as the "fourth period of Ivan the Terrible"**

In the Millerian and Romanovian history Ivan IV "The Terrible" abdicated in 1575, and had "installed his servitor, a Tartar Khan named Simeon Beckboulatovich, as his heir. The Tartar had settled in the royal palace [sic! – Auth.], and the 'Great Monarch' moved to the Arbat [sic! – Auth.]. The Czar started to move

around Moscow 'with a simple entourage, just like the boyars,' and got into the habit of sitting in the distance from the 'Great Prince' [the Tartar Simeon, that is – Auth.], who had sat upon a luxurious throne, heeding his orders meekly" ([776], page 195). Simeon had been Head of the Civilian Duma, and was of a royal origin ([776], page 201).

These absurdities of the Millerian and Romanovian version make one understand just why the historians tend to interpret these actions of Ivan the Terrible as symptoms of schizophrenia. However, we are of the opinion that nothing of the kind ever took place – the documents report the real inauguration of a flesh and blood Russian Czar, also known as Khan Simeon of the Horde. This takes place after the victory of the Horde; there is no other "Terrible Czar" anywhere in his vicinity. All we have is the phantom reign of "Ivan the Terrible", later personified by the Romanovs.

In the Millerian and Romanovian version, "Ivan the Terrible" (who became known as "Ivanets of Moscow" was granted Pskov and the neighbouring lands as his domain (see [775], page 487).

Our reconstruction is as follows. After the civil war of 1571-1572, the Muscovite party of the Zakharyins (the Romanovs) was defeated and put to complete rout. The executions of the head *oprichniks* begin in Moscow, likewise the archbishop who had slandered Archbishop Philip. Historians call this "The Moscow Process", or the "Moscow Rout" ([775], page 163). The most distinguished old clans, which had been subjected to mass repressions, become the heads of the new Oprichnina, and the military Horde comes to power once again. The Yaroslavl (Novgorod) dynasty is back on the throne. Our version is confirmed by the old documents: "The army of the Oprichniks became reinforced by the unprecedented influx of over 500 Novgorod aristocrats ... The Czar had tried to create a new power out of the Novgorod *oprichniks*" ([776], page 169).

The capital was even transferred to Novgorod for a while. The new government was headed by Simeon Beckboulatovich – apparently, the youngest son of Ivan III, or the uncle of the deceased Ivan IV. In 1575 the young Czar Ivan Ivanovich is forced to abdicate. In 1576 a lavish official inauguration of Simeon takes place; he adopts the royal name of Ivan. The custom

of changing one's name during inauguration had been common in Russia, as we see from the example of Vassily III. Simeon must have been rather old, around 70 years of age. The Millerian and Romanovian version de facto confirms this – it turns out that “Ivan the Terrible” becomes “an old man of a frail health around this time”. Indeed, according to the historians, “in the years that followed [the abdication of Ivan Ivanovich in 1575 – Auth.] the Czar, whose health had formerly been perfect, begins his persistent search of good doctors abroad” ([776], page 178).

It is curious that Moscow all but ceased to be a capital city during this period. First, an attempt of transferring the capital to Novgorod was made, where the construction of the royal court and a mighty citadel had commenced; it was however left unfinished for some reason ([776], page 169). However, the Czar must have had his own reasons for moving the capital to Tver, which is exactly what the historians are telling us: “Upon leaving Moscow, Simeon became ‘Great Prince’ in Tver” ([776], page 205). The words “Great Prince” are in quotation marks – apparently, learned historians truly dislike the chronicle's report of Simeon being the Great Prince. How could there be a “Great Prince” active under a living Czar and Great Prince “Ivan the Terrible”? However, we are told that “Ivan the Terrible” also moved to Staritsa, which is right next to Tver, in the last years of his reign, accompanied by his family ([776], page 228). Everything is perfectly clear. As we already mentioned, Czar Simeon had indeed moved to Tver. “Ivan the Terrible” in the last years of his reign and Khan Simeon are the same historical personality.

Thus, historians are of the opinion that between 1572 and 1584 “Ivan the Terrible” absurdly hands his royal power over to Simeon the Tartar and loses access to the affairs of the state.

Our opinion is as follows. After the return of the old Horde dynasty to the position of power in 1572, the Horde Khan Simeon, head of the Civil Duma, becomes the de facto ruler of the Empire. In 1575 the 22-year-old Czar Ivan Ivanovich, who was already deprived of actual royal power in 1572, had to abdicate formally in favour of Simeon. This is the famous “abdication of Ivan the Terrible” dated to 1575 ([776], page 195). The throne went to Simeon, Khan of the Horde, who had reigned until 1584.

Therefore, we see Czar (or Khan) Simeon upon the throne in 1575, and in 1576 the “second” lavish inauguration of “Czar Ivan” takes place. According to our reconstruction, Khan Simeon came to power after the civil war of 1571-1572 (possibly, a son of Ivan III, who had had a son named Simeon). In 1576 he must have received the royal name of Ivan. Indeed, after the inauguration of Ivan, Khan Simeon moves to Tver. The Czar is reported to have spent the rest of his life in Staritsa, near Tver. It is known that Ivan the Terrible had died as an old man of a poor health. However, Ivan IV was born in 1530, so he would have been a mere 54 years of age in 1584, when “Ivan the Terrible” is presumed to have died. A man of this age would hardly be referred to as “old”. Historians “explain” this “express aging” by Ivan's mental illness. On the other hand, the age of Simeon, the son of Ivan III, must have been 80 years or so in 1584. Indeed, Ivan III died in 1505, 79 years before 1584. Ivan III had several children; the only son of his we know nothing about is Simeon. This makes our assumption about Simeon “Beckboulatovich” being the son of Ivan III, or the uncle of Ivan III and the great-uncle of Prince Ivan, quite plausible.

Let us also make the following remark in re the change of name at inauguration. This custom is known to have been adhered by some of the Muscovite Great Princes – Vassily III, for instance, had been known as Gavriil before having ascended to the throne ([161], page 68).

Moreover, it had even been obligatory for the bride of the Czar to change her name in Russia! “A bride would have to undergo a ceremony of royal sanctification upon entering the royal palace. A special prayer would be read for this occasion, and a royal diadem put upon her head. The bride was christened princess and given a new royal name” ([282], page 111). This custom had survived until the XVII century. Thus, in 1616 Maria Ivanovna Khlopovnykh, the bride of Mikhail Romanov, changed her name to that of Nastassya: “The Czar's bride moved into the top part of the royal palace and christened Princess Nastassya” ([282], page 114).

The throne of Moscow had been occupied by Ivans and Vassilys exclusively for over 150 years. This fact by itself leads one to the idea that the change of name at inauguration had been a rule in Russia, since the

names of the royal offspring had all been different. The inauguration did not necessarily take place immediately before ascension to the throne – Russian Czars followed an old Byzantine tradition of crowning their heirs in infancy. The name Vassily is simply the Greek word for “Czar” or “King” – “Basileus”.

Prince Ivan apparently was neither jailed nor executed in 1572 due to his small age, and therefore escaped responsibility for the actions of the Oprichnina taken on his behalf. However, he had to vacate the throne. The period between 1572 and 1584, up until the death of “Ivan the Terrible” is marked by external wars and an utter absence of repressions inside the country.

### 5.5. The famous synodical of “Ivan the Terrible” as repentance for the young Czar Ivan Ivanovich

We are approaching the end of the epoch of “Ivan the Terrible”. Ivan Ivanovich dies in 1581 ([776], page 236). His death “had made a strange impact on the soul of the Czar, who was in a state of a profound mental crisis and made something utterly unprecedented. He decided to ‘forgive’ all the ‘traitor’ boyars, executed at his orders, *post mortem* ... Ivan the Terrible gave orders for the deacons to make detailed lists of all the victims of the *oprichniks*. These lists were sent to the largest monasteries of the country, accompanied by large sums of money” ([776], page 236).

It is usually presumed that Ivan the Terrible had done this being overcome by remorse after having murdered Prince Ivan. However, according to the documentary evidence, Prince Ivan had not been murdered (see [775]), and so the “repentance” of “Ivan the Terrible” could have taken place at any time, and not necessarily in 1581.

Our explanation is as follows – the repentance was made by Simeon, or Czar Ivan, for the recently deceased former Czar Ivan Ivanovich, who had been regnant when the Zakharyins carried out their mass repressions. It is perfectly natural that the money should be sent to the churches so as to make the clergy pray for the soul of the former Czar.

The readers shall find that our point of view eliminates all the oddities inherent in the official version – the Romanovian dating of the “penance” is quite ab-

surd, since there is no reason why this “penance” would have to correspond with the death of Ivan Ivanovich, if one is to assume “Ivan the Terrible” was trying to have his own sins forgiven.

## 6. THE CREATION OF THE *Litseyoy Svod* AND ITS DATING

“The illustrated chronicles, known as *litseyoy*, occupy a special place among all the chronicles found in Moscow. They are comprised of 10 volumes of some 20 thousand pages, and 16 thousand artful miniatures. The two last volumes of the ‘Litseyoy Svod’ describe the reign of Czar Ivan IV” ([775], page 20).

Let us ask our normal question: when were these chronicles compiled? We are referring to the famous Litseyoy Svod (which has not been published to date, by the way, which is very odd indeed). The answer is obvious – it turns out that a popular XIX century opinion had considered the Litseyoy Svod to have been compiled as recently as in the second half of the XVII century, which is in perfect correspondence with our reconstruction.

Indeed, “A. Y. Presnyakov was the first to dispute the traditional XIX century opinion that the grandiose chronicles of the Litseyoy Svod had really been compiled in the second half of the XVII century” ([775], page 20). A. Y. Presnyakov wrote this in 1893. Therefore, historians only learnt about the “great antiquity” of the Litseyoy Svod at the very end of the XIX century.

It is also known that some large-scale chronographic activity was started in the reign of “Ivan the Terrible” – the surviving content lists of the royal archives are telling us so. Let us note that the archives themselves perished completely, although a few content lists have survived ([775], pages 21-22). Documents demonstrate that the writing and the editing of the chronicles peaked in the period of the Oprichnina – Skrynnikov points out that this activity had ceased completely after the end of the Oprichnina in 1568. The chronographic activity was led by the typesetter Ivan Viskovaty ([775], page 22), a creature of the Zakharyins (Romanovs), qv in [776], page 165. He was executed after the civil war of 1570-1572, qv above.

It is common knowledge that the tremendous Litsevoy Svod contains numerous subscripts of a political nature; in many cases, they are very close to the famous “epistles of Ivan the Terrible to Prince Kurb-skiy” stylistically ([775], pages 26-27). Let us reiterate that the latter have been identified as a late literary work, apparently dating from the XVII century ([651], comments). Historians themselves admit that the chronicles dating to the epoch of “Ivan the Terrible” are extremely tendentious – presumably edited by “Ivan the Terrible” personally ([775], pages 28-31).

## 7. IN RE THE NUMEROUS WIVES OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE

We are told about the seven wives of “Ivan the Terrible” (five or six, depending to several other sources). A large amount, at any rate – see the work of N. M. Karamzin, for instance, comment 554 to Volume 9. Had this indeed been the case, we would be faced by an explicit breach of ecclesiastical tradition, and a unique event in Russian history. There was a multitude of books written on this subject – from works of dramatic art to collections of jokes.

There is nothing odd about it from our point of view. Among the “seven wives of Ivan the Terrible” were the wives of the three Russian Czars of the Horde (several of them, at any rate). Each of the Czars had been married three times maximum, and so the church tradition that forbids a fourth marriage had not been broken. Therefore there is no record of any conflict between “Ivan the Terrible” and the church

stemming from his multiple marriages, presumably unlawful. The Romanovian theory about the “illicit marriages of Ivan the Terrible” was introduced much later, already after the Great Strife of the XVI-XVII century.

According to our reconstruction, Ivan IV had only been married once – to Anastasia Romanova. Having united the reign of Ivan IV and the reigns of his sons into a phantom reign of a nonexistent monarch, historians were forced to ascribe all the wives to a single Czar – namely, Ivan the Terrible. This hypothesis is indirectly confirmed by the fact that “Ivan the Terrible” would often find a bride for his son whenever he decided to marry someone himself. For instance, “he chose Marfa Vassilyevna Sobakina, the daughter of a Novgorod merchant, from many maids, having also chosen Yevdokia Bogdanova Saburova as the bride for his oldest son” ([282], page 111). Also: “before Ivan Vassilyevich decided to marry for the seventh and last time, he also married off his youngest son Fyodor” ([282], page 135).

According to evidence offered by Possevino, Prince Ivan Ivanovich, the son of Ivan IV, had a total of three wives ([282], page 203). Maria Nagaya, the mother of his son Dmitriy (later declared impostor), must have been the last one of the three.

We are therefore of the opinion that the multiple wives of “Ivan the Terrible” are most likely to be distributed in the following manner:

- *one* wife of Ivan IV – Anastasia Romanova,
- *Three* wives of his son Ivan Ivanovich,
- *One* wife of Czar Fyodor – Irina Godunova,
- *One or two* wives of Khan Simeon (Ivan).