



Fig. 14.27. The Louzhetskiy Monastery of Our Lady's Nativity in Mozhaysk. View from the north. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.28. The Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. We see the courtyard. In 1999, some two metres of the turf were removed. The former level of soil can be judged by the dark strip at the bottom of the monastery's cathedral. One can also see that the windows of the cathedral have been elevated except for one window, which had been at ground level when the excavations were conducted. In the foreground we see a few sarcophagi of the XVII-XIX century, unearthed during excavations and arranged in accurate rows. The level of soil in the courtyard now corresponds to that of the XVII century. Photograph taken in 2000.

Dmitriy Donskoi” ([536], page 100). The monastery exists until this day, although it has been reconstructed (see fig. 14.27).

In 1999-2000, the archaeological and restoration works in Louzhetskiy friary resulted in the removal of two-meter layers of the ground. In fig. 14.28 we cite a photograph of 2000 made in Louzhetskiy monastery after the top layers of the ground were removed. The dark strip at the bottom of the cathedral corresponds



Fig. 14.29. One of the ancient Russian headstones unearthed from the XVII century foundation of the Louzhetskiy Monastery during the excavations of 1999-2000. It was used as construction material during the epoch of the first Romanovs. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.30. Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. The foundation of a destroyed XVII century church with old Russian headstones used as construction material. According to the writings on the headstones, we see the remains of construction works conducted in 1669 or later. Photograph taken in 2000.

to the thickness of the removed layers – it was painted with dark paint after exposure. These excavations in the friary courtyard revealed an amazing picture, which we shall relate in the present section. We are very grateful to Y. P. Streltsov, who had pointed out to us the facts that we shall be referring to herein.

It turned out that extensive construction works were conducted in the friary in the second half of the XVII century. The old headstones from the Russian



Fig. 14.31. A XVII century headstone immured in the foundation of the demolished church of the Louzhetskiy Monastery, which was uncovered during the excavations of 1999. The epitaph reads: “Our Lord’s servant, Sister Taiseya, formerly Tatiana Danilovna, died on the 5th day of January in the year of 7159”. The year corresponds to 1651 A.D. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.32. A XVII century headstone immured in the foundation of the demolished church of the Louzhetskiy Monastery, which was uncovered during the excavations of 1999. The epitaph reads: “Our Lord’s servant, Brother Savatey Fyodorov, son of Poznyak, died on the 7th day of February in the year of 7177”. The year corresponds to 1669 A.D. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.33. Ancient headstone of white stone with a triangular cross engraved upon it, which was used as construction material in the foundation of the XVII century church of the Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. The foundation was unearthed after the excavations of 1999. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.34. Headstones of white stone with engraved triangular crosses. Immured in the foundation of a XVII century church. Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.35. Headstones of white stone with engraved triangular crosses. Used as construction material in the foundation of a XVII century church. Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.

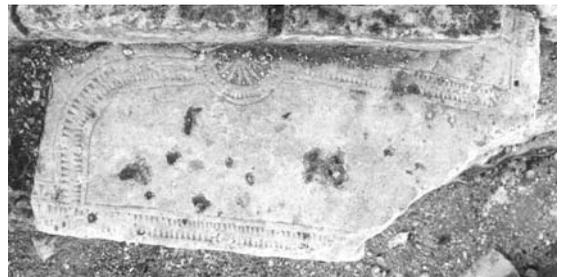


Fig. 14.36. Headstone of white stone with a triangular cross engraved upon it. Immured in the foundation of a XVII century church. Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.

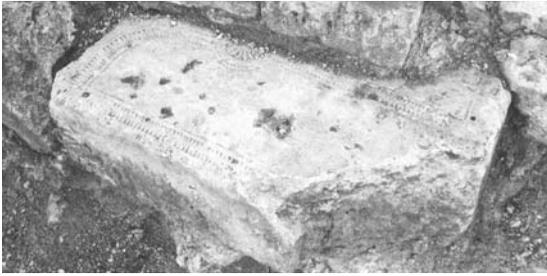


Fig. 14.37. Headstone of white stone with a triangular cross engraved upon it. Used as construction material in the foundation of a XVII century church. Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.38. Headstones of white stone with triangular crosses immured in the foundation of a XVII century church. One of them is marked "7 February 7191". The dating converts into the modern chronological system as 1683 A. D. Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.39. Fragment of a headstone with an exceptionally large triangular cross engraved upon it. We see the central part of the cross, which has remained intact. Apart from that, on the side of the headstone we see the remnants of an ornament that one often sees on other old Russian headstones. From the masonry of the XVII century church at the Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.40. Fragments of the ancient Russian headstones used in the XVII century masonry of the Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.41. The four-pointed cross on the ancient Russian headstone looks like a bird's footprint or a triangular forked cross with an extra branch at the top. It differs greatly from the four-pointed crosses commonly found on Christian graves. The Louzhetskiy Monastery, Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.



Fig. 14.42. Ancient Russian headstone with a five-pointed forked cross uncovered from the XVII century masonry of the Louzhetskiy Monastery in Mozhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.

cemeteries were walled up into the fundamentals of the XVII century constructions. The amount of headstones used as construction material is so tremendous that one gets the impression local cemeteries were completely stripped of headstones at some point in time. One must note that the old headstones that were hidden from sight as a result of this operation were considerably different from the ones presented as “specimens of the Old Russian style” nowadays. Almost all of the old headstones found in Louzhetskiy monastery during the excavations are covered in the exact same kind of ornamental carving as the ones from the Old Simonov monastery – a forked cross with three points, *qv* in fig. 14.29.

After the top layer of ground from the site next to the northern wall of the monastery’s main Cathedral of Our Lady’s Nativity had been removed, the foundation of a small church was found. It was built in the XVII century (see fig. 14.30). The time of its construction can even be indicated with more precision as postdating 1669. Apparently, the builders have used the old headstones alongside some of the “fresh” slabs of stone in a number of cases. There aren’t many such slabs in the foundation, but a few are present. In the summer of 2000 we have seen two of those – one dating from 7159, or 1651 A.D. in modern chronology, and the other, from 7177, or 1669 A.D. (see figs. 14.31 and 14.32). Thus, the construction works must have been carried out after 1669, since we find a stone with that dating in the foundation.

The general impression that one gets after familiarizing oneself with the results of the excavations conducted in the Louzhetskiy monastery is as follows. Apparently, in the XVII century the old headstones were removed from cemeteries en masse, and used as construction material (in particular, for the abovementioned foundation of a small church in the XVII century, which contains several dozen old headstones. Many of them became chipped or were broken so as to fit into the construction (see figs. 14.33-14.39). The numerous fragments of the old headstones became unstuck during the excavations. Some of them have been cleaned from the dirt and arranged in a pile in the courtyard of the friary (see fig. 14.40).

Most of these old headstones bear the symbol of a three-point forked cross; however, there are several exceptions. For instance, one of the fragments found



Fig. 14.43. Headstone of the intermediate variety – with old-fashioned ornamentation, but sans forked crosses. Manufactured during the epoch of the first Romanovs. We see two epitaphs with dates: “On 6 August of the year 7149, the Servant of our Lord, infant Andrei, son of Pavel Fyodorovich Klementyev, rested in peace” on the left and “On 5 February of the year 7149, the Servant of our Lord, infant Pyotr, son of Pavel Fyodorovich Klementyev, rested in peace”. The years convert into the modern chronological system as 1641 and 1643. The lettering was done by a professional carver, likewise the ornamental pattern at the edges of the stone. The epitaphs are authentic. The Louzetskiy Monastery of Mzhaysk. Photograph taken in 2000.

in the Louzhetskiy monastery is decorated with a four-point cross, but the shape is different from that of the modern crosses – this one resembles the footprint of a bird (see fig. 14.41).

Another rare specimen is a five-point forked cross. A slab with such a cross was discovered by Y. P. Streltsov and G. V. Nosovskiy, one of the authors, in the summer of 2000, in the foundation of the stone staircase that had once led to the gate of Our Lady’s Nativity Cathedral from the west. The staircase is in ruins nowadays, and has been replaced by modern metallic stairs. However, a part of the foundation remained



Fig. 14.44. This is all that remains of the ancient frescoes from the Cathedral of Our Lady's Nativity at the Louzhetskiy Monastery. The frescoes were chiselled off together with the plaster in the epoch of the XVIII-XIX century and piled up at the southern wall of the monastery, right next to the gate. Piles of rubble and plaster fragments were discovered here after the excavations of 1999. Photograph taken in 2000.

intact. This is where this rare old headstone was discovered (see figs. 14.42 and 14.43).

All the frescoes in the monastery's Cathedral of Our Lady's Nativity were chiselled off. We are familiar with such displays of all-out demolition from what we found in the cathedrals of the Muscovite Kremlin, qv in CHRON4, Chapter 14:5. The pre-Romanovian frescoes there have also been chiselled off, and they were anything but "ancient and dilapidated" when they got destroyed – not even a hundred years old. Something of this sort must have taken place in the Louzhetskiy monastery, Mozhaysk. Many small fragments of chiselled-off plaster covered in dots of bright paint from the old frescoes were piled up right in the yard of the monastery. They were discovered in the course of the excavations in 1999. We have seen them in the summer of 2000 (see fig. 14.44). Apparently, the old frescoes of the Russian cathedrals had failed to correlate with the reality tunnel of the Romanovian historians and contradicted the Romanovian version of the Russian history, and therefore became destroyed – first in the Muscovite Kremlin, and later throughout all of Russia.

The destruction of the frescoes on the walls of the ancient Russian churches and cathedral is rather typical. Sometimes historians manage to blame it on the "intervention forces of the Poles and the Lithuanians running rampant in the epoch of the Great Strife",

who appear to have possessed a certain inexplicable penchant for the destruction of monastery libraries, ancient artwork and any artefact that might provide us with information concerning the old Russian history in general. Sometimes we are told that an ancient cathedral "has never been decorated" – presumably, there was enough money for the construction of this cathedral, but the artwork had fallen prey to the lack of funds, so the walls were simply whitewashed. However, occasionally, as is the case with the Louzhetskiy monastery of Mozhaysk, it is admitted that the frescoes were destroyed by the Romanovian authorities. Why was that done? No explanations are ever given by the representatives of historical science; however, our reconstruction explains everything perfectly well.

Let us return to the Russian headstones of the old kind found in the Louzhetskiy monastery. The inscriptions upon them are of the utmost interest – especially the opportunity of finding a pre-Romanovian inscription. Unfortunately, it turns out that there are either no inscriptions on the stones whatsoever (as one sees in fig. 14.29, for instance), or there is some lettering that is presumed to date from the XVI century, but appears to be counterfeit (alternatively, it is genuine and dates from the epoch of the Romanovs). We shall discuss this in more detail below. For the meantime, let us just reiterate that we haven't managed to find a single authentic inscription dating from the pre-Romanovian epoch on these stones – it appears that all the old headstones with such inscriptions were destroyed, or subjected to the chisel at least. However, even after this procedure the silent stones must have remained a nuisance for the Romanovian historians, and were thus taken away from the cemeteries and buried underground, where no one could see them. After the religious reform (qv described in CHRON4, Chapter 14:6) the Russian cemeteries became outfitted with a new kind of headstone, the Romanovian model, quite unlike its predecessor. Later it all became conveniently forgotten.

However, below we shall see that the Romanovs haven't come up with this radical method at once. They had initially tried to correct the inscriptions on some of the old headstones at least. And so they had launched a campaign for the erasure of inscriptions found upon some of the ancient headstones and the complete destruction of the rest. The old stones or the