

IVAN THE TERRIBLE AND THE OTHER IN CURRENT HISTORY-WRITING¹

I

Since the 1990s the retrospective of Russian and East-European Early-Modern societies has largely benefited from several methodological turns. Objects and profiles of the past reinterpreted in cultural terms are emerging against the anthropological background. This trend does not proceed to better consent in the historical community; rather it reconciles them against Soviet interpretations of the past². In the times of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union the East-European Early-Modern period was conceptualized in terms of “growth”, understood as a strengthening of the rulership and concentration of territories under the power of monarchs – grand dukes, later tsars, of Moscow and kings of the “Jagiellonian Empire”³. However, the scope of their power and resistance to the challenges of protests and to the confrontation with enemies, with each other, with small independent principalities or “appanage” princes is still on the agenda. The reasons for changes in history-writing have not so much to do with the turn in the evidence that has come to light in these years, as with the notable shift in the methodological focus giving stimulus and rise to reinterpretations. All attempts to construct a unified image of the process of “centralization” have to face the flexibility of 16th century notions and it is symptomatic that fierce disputes are going around the task to overcome their semantic bias. There are no clear definitions of what the word “state” (*государство, państwo* etc.) or “people” (*народ, naród*) meant in Russia and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania for the subjects of the royal dynasties, as well as for the dynasts themselves⁴. The discussion leads one of the main discussers, Mikhail Krom to the conclusion that we need an intermediate concept of the

1 This article is part of the project «The Origins of Russian Emigration: Muscovites in Europe in the 16th century», maintained by the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung. The earlier version of this text emerged thanks to the discussion that took place at the Milan State University in June 2014. I am grateful to Prof. Giulia Lami, Prof. Mikhail Dmitriev and all the colleagues, who participated in the discussion. I would also like to thank my host Prof. Mathias Niendorf and Prof. Ludwik Steindorff for their important remarks in the later variant of the article.

2 See Dubrovskij 2005; Jurganov 2011; Platt 2011.

3 There are numerous historiographic overtones on the concepts of centralizing and concentration of power and territories in Early-Modern Russia and Grand Duchy of Lithuania (see Kappeler 1992; Niendorf 2010).

4 See Erusalimskij 2008.

political, which falls out of both the Aristotelian and Weberian idea of policy. Russians had neither a theoretical classification of political types, nor tolerated active striving for power. There was, however, a difference between sovereign and public deal, and even such reckless reformers, as Ivan IV, had to fit into the general will⁵. What is difficult to maintain in this viewpoint, is the presupposed consent-oriented theory of Russian political culture and its monolith and perennial nature.

Social conflicts have received in up-to-date history-writing and discussions much less attention and are still regarded rather in frames of the Marxist paradigm, usually with a grain of holistic theories. It is not surprising to find in what historians write about town, peasant and Cossack uprisings in the Muscovite state, Polish Crown and Lithuania the unprecedented retreat from the class and economic change in favor of theories, which stress social and cultural continuity, traditional values and representations, micro-motives and political agenda. My present work is to demonstrate challenges in the discussions about East-European power and protests, mainly in the 16th century, in current, mainly Russian, history-writing. Its exemplification for the present purpose, in order to narrow the focus of my overview, is inner conflict to emigration and, vice versa, emigration to an inner conflict perspective. Not only “normal” – of course, in Foucauldian terms – discrimination and imposed otherness, but also decisiveness, readiness and inclination to disagree with and to leave compatriots compose a serious crimp for any holistic insight into Early-Modern Russian societies. At least in those areas, where a holistic endeavor seems most relevant, I am seeking to depart from conventional thinking. We should forget about such evident stable things, as “Russian Tsar” (II), “Russian Society” (III-1) or “Russian Church” (III-2)⁶.

All concepts of the kind are constructed identities (“Self”), realities of imagination, perceivable only as specific and temporary results of cultural changes in the network of other identities (“Others”). In poststructuralist terms, the identity implies an inherently dialogical, not binary structure. Its positive self-description is ever self-defining in terms of the differences in the cultural mirror of every other identity which is thought and constructed as not-Self and grows to being Others of the Self. The main challenge to the Hegelian and Marxist dialectical strategy, but to some extent its critical reinterpretation and solution, is that the poststructuralist interpretation does not imply any *Aufhebung*⁷.

5 See Krom 2005.

6 Less vulnerable in view of the chosen strategy are cultural languages, manifestly declaring adherence to a holistic perspective. Not many cultural generalizations up to the moment have been tested on Russian Medieval and Early-Modern Russian sources. My questions and reservations for such languages as, for example, semiotics, phenomenology or hermeneutics, can be nonetheless directly deduced from those posed hereinafter.

7 See Neumann 1998.

 II

In Russian historical discourse Ivan the Terrible still metonymically symbolizes the *époque*, being one of the main objects of historical interpretations in Russian historiography and for its dialogue with world history-writing. His rule has become an experimental field of imagination, where authors seek to apply new conceptions, which are often contested⁸. Four mainstream directions of comparative analysis draw Ivan's image as it is set in world history narratives. From the meta-level perspective, that I have chosen here, these four main programs deeply influence decisions in the study of conflict and protests in Early-Modern Russia. 1. The first trend elaborates the idea, that Ivan IV was a Renaissance Prince. Originally it stems from the article written by Russian emigrant historian Michael Cherniavsky⁹. Cherniavsky's book *Tsar and people* was an inspiring attempt to inflame a somber surface of the Soviet agenda, which underwent renovation from the inside at the same time in the 1960s. With a tint of primordial intent, he described "Holy Russia", "Russian Tsar", "Russian People", "Russian Soul", "Mother Russia" as "myths" among others, - which, after Benedict Anderson and Larry Woolf, we would probably correct as "inventions". Quite symptomatically, these myths have been invented or have come to light thanks to nonmainstream writers, intellectuals and even emigrants¹⁰. Yet reading the book attentively we find concepts organizing the narrative as an uncompromised "Russian society" ("Russia")-centered construction¹¹. We know who was to express it in texts, cults and political decisions. Still what we do not know is who named and disregarded it. The least we can say is that the tsar's betrayer and emigrant Andrei Kurbskii (or his alter ego), not the tsar, introduced the "myth of Holy Russia", that much later, around 1812, appropriated the "Russian Tsar"¹².

In the last years of the Soviet Union, the "Renaissance" in relation to tsar Ivan was understood as optics to read his policy as a half-secular embodiment of his theatrical nature. Sigurd Schmidt in his last articles and public talks outlined Ivan's pursuit to representation and spectacular public ceremonies. Large cultural initiatives also pursued the goal of visual and textual building of an autonomous imperial

8 On history-writing as product of imagination see: White 1973; Ankersmit 1994; Wrzosek 1997.

9 Cherniavsky 1968.

10 See Cherniavsky 1961: on the "Holy Russia" especially pp. 101-127. See also: Kämpfer 1988; Kalugin 1998, p. 180; Erusalimskij 2008, pp. 159-166; Nowak 2011, p. 112; Dmitriev 2012, pp. 3-6.

11 See Cherniavsky 1961, pp. 9, 28-29, 32-33, 52-53, 128-129 etc.

12 See *ivi*, pp. 128-158. Quite revealing from this perspective is that in our days the myths of the "Russian Emperor" and of the "Russian triad" are reinterpreted as products of intercultural contacts with confronted "Others" and definitely not primordial structures. However, in both cases we are to deal rather not with the "Other in the Self", but the "Otherness of the Self" in Russian cultures. See Zorin 2004; Plokhly 2006.

idea¹³. Since the 1960s Schmidt's students built a group, which was occupied with the intellectual inheritance of the time¹⁴. Such a large project, as the *Illustrated Chronicle*, was recontextualized on the basis of its inscriptions into the late 1570s or early 1580s, although some historians find probable earlier dating of the beginning of the compilation and its first versions¹⁵. In the discussion court rivalry comes to the fore, while for Schmidt negative references to the nobles in the inscriptions do not mean that their families were in fact disgraced (*в опале*), and do not imply that the *Chronicle* was finished at the moment when private or clan disgrace took place¹⁶. Schmidt's opponents insist that the tsar could scarcely mention with criticism and accusations those aristocrats, who with their families still kept their court places¹⁷. Highly important for this group of researchers are not only official chronicles, but also the *Correspondence* between Ivan and his boyar prince Andrei Kurbskii, consisting of small extracts reproduced in the *Illustrated Chronicle*. The *Correspondence* in Schmidt's interpretation has grown into the long dialogue between two variants of social and political development, autocratic and moderate aristocratic. The talented writer on the throne advocated his autocratic efforts in an intellectual struggle with another brilliant writer, his defected slave. Ivan was founder of the despotic autocracy with its "order of intellectual conformism". Kurbskii advocated the idea of delegation of power and turned it into a stimulus for intellectual recusancy in Russia and in emigration¹⁸. Both adversaries formulated the long-term contradiction in political culture. Traces of the *Correspondence* are deeply rooted into Russian public debate and social representations, although in fact – and that is to be the point for the discussion – they are less evident in number and content of "non-official" manuscripts of the period and never go too far as to show that Russian intellectuals have ever commented Kurbskii's texts before the early 18th century. In the program article on the Russian emigration Sigurd Schmidt draws continuity from the *Correspondence* to the Russian political culture of the Modern period: «As a rule, the social thought of Russian political emigrants, notwithstanding the differences in their socio-cultural preferences and

13 See Šmidt 1999; Šmidt s.d.

14 See *Kružki istočnikovedenija* 2000.

15 See Amosov 2005; Morozov 2005.

16 To this conclusion came Sigurd O. Schmidt in his paper, presented at the conference «*Illustrated Chronicle of Ivan the Terrible*», in Munich, The Bavarian State Library, December, 2011.

17 See Kloss 1980; 1989, pp. 30-32; 2000, p. IX. In the last years, several detailed works link the court representation in Moscow in times of metropolitan Makarii (1542-1563) and in a period of growing crisis in the relations between the Church and the state (1564-1584): see Bogatyrev 2009. See also S. Bogatyrev's attempt to reattribute the *Book of Royal Degrees* to Metropolitan Filipp, referenced in: Erusalimskij 2012c; Sirenov 2010; Usačev 2009. Further discussion: Bogatyrev 2012; Usačev 2013.

18 See Šmidt 2005, pp. 11-64, here especially p. 15.

futurological constructions, stayed in opposition to the government. In their works we find a confrontation with the Russian officious doctrine in interpretation and estimation of the present and the past»¹⁹.

2. The general idea of the first trend merges the perennial cultural agenda with a metaphorical dialogism. It originates in the research tradition of Michael Bakhtin's book, known in English as *Rabelais and His World*²⁰, rather than in the works by Cherniavsky and his colleague Ernst Kantorovich²¹. In the 1990s this trend underwent strong criticism, mainly for its anachronistic or historically insensitive approach and underestimation of deep phenomenal strategies, in the series of books and articles by Andrei Karavashkin²² and Andrei Yurganov²³. Both in coauthored texts and separately they initiated the second strategy, which presupposed Old Russian fundamentals of Ivan IV's behavior²⁴. To some extent cultural reinterpretations were integrated with the first program and drew metaphors and conceptual schemes from it. At the same time, they were largely dependent on the symbolical and semiotic analysis of the Christian artifacts of the period. The central idea here was a separate development of Russian culture, the absence of an Ancient and Medieval cultural tradition in Russian lands and actuality of the Byzantine inheritance. The partisans of the trend, in my opinion, cultivate the hypothesis of specific medieval forms in Ivan IV's aspirations, that is, his

19 Ivi, p. 12.

20 Bachtin 1984.

21 Cherniavsky 1961 and 1968; Kantorowicz 1957. Although Schmidt warmly mentioned Cherniavsky in private talks, he probably never managed to read his works in detail, because they were written in English. Meanwhile Bakhtin's influence (directly and through Dmitrii Likhachev's mediation) on Schmidt is quite evident. See Šmidt 2003.

22 Karavaškin 1991; 2000; 2011. Karavashkin and Filiushkin make several references to each other criticizing widely on methods of hermeneutical reading of Russian Medieval texts. See also Filjuškin 2007.

23 Jurganov 1998. Yurganov's idea of "Medieval Russian Culture" was modelled after Aron Ya. Gurevich "Categories of Medieval culture", but Gurevich as an official reviewer of Yurganov's dissertation disagreed that Russia ever had any "Medieval ages" at all. Later Yurganov discussed Gurevich's anthropological method and defended his points, answering numerous participants of the discussion (see Jurganov 2001). In the second edition Yurganov reduced theoretical introduction to several pages, but the structure and main course of interpretation is preserved without considerable changes (Jurganov 1998).

24 See Karavaškin - Jurganov 2003. See further discussions and evaluations of phenomenological method: Krom 2004a; Karavaškin - Jurganov 2005; Ivanov 2005; Jurganov 2006; Rančin 2008. Sharp revision of Yurganov's methodological efforts undertakes Dmitrii Bulanin. Putting aside mastership invectives and reproaches, symptomatic seems to me Bulanin's accent on postmodern influences in Yurganov's publications, that Yurganov himself coherently denies: Bulanin 2008. (This article provoked in reply polemics online, with my comments among others, an open letter of protest and spiteful response of the editorial board. See <http://bulanin.blogspot.de/2010/09/blog-post.html?m=1>).

involvement and obsession with the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome²⁵. In some reinterpretations the place of Rome for Ivan either occupied Eternal Jerusalem, or New Sarai (Karakorum), or New Kiev, or hoped to be identified with Christ, or believed in the Last Judgment on earth, or maniacally defended his tsar's title or his dynasty²⁶. Despite historicist quests in phenomenological studies, the Other is intriguing the community, consolidating it under common symbols, languages, rituals and ideals. Not only foreign or imagined towns and states grow into the huge mythology of cultural appropriation, but also inner enemies, the domestic Others revive the thirst for unity. Vicious roots are so deep in this eschatological perspective, that only their complete eradication and purification can conserve the State and Orthodox Christianity. Ivan's invented power to punish and redeem leads to political eschatology, which redefines meaning and goals of State institutions, roles of the Church, Muscovite "citizenship": «Thus, the world is ordered piously if the tsar possesses his slaves and they wordlessly obey him. Ivan IV accuses Kurbskii and his cooperates that they unprecedentedly (*бесподобно*) sought to undermine piety and that he wanted to usurp the power given to the tsar by God and by his forefathers. Piety is the ideal basis of the cosmos. Nobody is to change the hierarchical structure in which the tsar is the minister (*слуга*) of the Heavenly Tsar»²⁷.

3. A conceptualization of this type is purely holistic. At least, it superposes Platonic, Neo-Platonic and dogmatic ideals on cultural structures, which historians are trying to discern in the evidence. Opponents disagree and remind us that the basic texts with the concepts of eternal tsardom and *translatio imperii* to Russia are mainly of later origins²⁸. The tsar's subjects did not necessarily accept the almighty power of the tsar²⁹, they were also hardly aware of either the Platonic or the Byzantine traditions³⁰. Several European monarchs blocked (these) Muscovite title ambitions, and Ivan had to defend his title *ad hoc* at one and the same time

25 See Morozov 1990; Pljuchanova 1995; Sinicyna 1998; Nitsche 1987; Hellberg-Hirn 2002; Korpela 2005.

26 See Raba 1995; Rowland 1996; Khodarkovsky 2004; Pelenski 1998; Uspenskij 1996; Jurganov 1997; Choroškevič 2003a; Filjuškin 2004; Bogatyrev 2007.

27 Jurganov 1997, p. 59.

28 See Keenan 1994, p. 26; Ploky 2006, pp. 145-151.

29 There is no need to come back to the roots of the research positions in this regard for the sake of the present overview. Some important references can be found in: Poe 1998; Kivelson 2002. In spite of numerous arguments maintaining the conception of conformist popular tsarism of the Early Modern Russian society and social backwardness of the intellectual culture, there is strong ground for further discussion in the field. See also provocative critical remarks in: Shields Kollmann 1997; Wirtschafter 2001; Sogomonov - Uvarov 2001.

30 See Živov 1988; Okenfuss 1995.

before his courtiers and international partners³¹. The idea of the dynasty is equally applicable to the third trend, which treats tsar Ivan as a Carolingian Renaissance Prince. This model prefigures his tsardom in an Early Medieval logic. Sergei Kashtanov and Daniel Rowland sought to apply this hypothesis to the sources of Tsar Ivan's time. Here, instead of the refined Renaissance Prince or Byzantine Eidos we deal with an ambitious ruler, who understood his tsardom as part of an alliance with the Church, but established a new nobility, the chancellery and rudimentary state institutions³². The role of the Other in the administrative system was played by the document forger. This task was very important for the stabilizing of legal procedures, so that the problem of capital punishment for forgery becomes for Kashtanov an important sign of the political maturity in XV-XVI century Russian lands, although the author remarks that the paragraph about the death penalty was borrowed for the Law Code of 1550 (*Судебник*) from the Lithuanian Statute of 1529 (*Литовский Статут*) and that in comparison to Polish and Lithuanian lands, in Muscovite Rus' «the death penalty for forgers was probably taken for uncustomary and too harsh»³³. Scholar conflict between conceptions of authored oeuvre and forgery of the Groznyi – Kurbskii Correspondence provides us with a significant argument in the discussion on the power-protest relations in Moscow. Does the Correspondence fit into the Carolingian model of the Russian state? Or are the disloyalty and disagreement in the texts of the period only small spots on the autocratic panel³⁴?

The main contra the third trend would be our weak knowledge about the tsar's archive and other state institutions, the archives of which burned down in fire in 1547, 1571, 1626, 1771, 1812 and others. The conclusions based on *argumentum ex silentio* lead to overstress scarcity in the evidence³⁵. Besides, the most representative descriptions of Russian administration of the period and its control over the territories are to be found in the commentaries of Greek and European travelers in Russia, whose reports, though in several cases very thin and clever, are always incomplete and sentenced to superficiality³⁶. In this field the best results are well

31 See Muresan 2008; Erusalimskij 2012a.

32 See Kaštanov 1992; 2014; Rowland 1995. Cf. Berelowitch 2001, pp. 19-24.

33 Kaštanov 2014, p. 361.

34 Since 1996 Sergei Kashtanov's seminar at the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow is my home in discussing various problems in areas of migration studies and intellectual history of Russia and Eastern Europe. The head of the seminar is cautious when expressing his own opinion in the discussions on the emergence of the Correspondence and Kurbskii's "History". But the focus of his criticism is always on the early manuscript tradition of the "Kurbskii literary collection" that Kashtanov and other colleagues stimulated me to scrutinize.

35 The difficulties of reconciling the evidence on the state institutions in 16th century Russia are carefully analyzed in Paškova 2000. See also: Bovykin 2014.

36 Poe 2000; Kolobkov 2002; Mund 2003. The study of Polish and Lithuanian de-

seen in publications by Anna Khoroshkevich and her colleagues³⁷ and by European researchers, who made available very important Russian-German phrase-books for this matter³⁸. From the perspective of the Renaissance – Pre-Renaissance discussion about Ivan IV, it is relevant to mention the huge literature on the Correspondence³⁹ or a bumper crop in the interpretations of Early Modern Russian book culture and of the biographies of the first known printers Ivan Fedorov and Peter Mstislavets⁴⁰. In both cases a Renaissance oriented intellectual contradicts the political system in the Russian state, leaves the country and indirectly continues his dialogue with the tsar or with the Muscovite circles⁴¹. Several examples of European intellectuals of Muscovite origin give more acute an idea of the cultural differences between the inhabitants of the Russian lands: “Muscovites” under control of the Russian state and “Ruthenians” in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Our attempts to reconsider the experience of those intellectuals who pushed forward the idea of the unified Russian lands do not go far beyond controversial stories. Among them are the works of a Muscovite mercenary on the Polish service and of the repatriate Ivan Peresvetov, the unsuccessful Schlitte affair, Ivan IV’s candidature on the Polish and/or Lithuanian throne, the Union of Brest, as well as Lev Sapieha and Jan Zamoyski’s projects. The climax of this story were the megaprojects of the Muscovite-Polish union in the Time of Trouble. Even if some historians doubt that a welcome on the part of Europeans or that the projects of unification with the Russian state mean de facto reciprocal acceptance in terms of cultural compatibility, there are no reasons to underestimate the impressions of diplomats, tradesmen, Church agents and mercenaries, who did find the Russian concepts generally translatable for their readers at home.

4. Actually, the first three frameworks of interpretation play not the leading role in our time, although such authors as Vladislav Nazarov, Boris Florja, Andrei Pavlov, Maureen Perrie, Mikhail Krom have been writing quite valuable generalizations on what could fit into one of these tendencies⁴². However, no less popular now is the research doctrine that deals with the rudimentary and archaic bolster of Muscovite everyday political and economic life. There are several presuppositions, elaborated in earlier historiography, which made way for this viewpoint. Namely, Vasilii Kliuchevskii and his student Pavel Miliukov sought to prove the pre-Christian

scriptions of the “Russian land” were recently under consideration in Karnauchov 2009; 2010.

37 Ul’fel’dt 2002; Štaden 2008-2009; Gerberštejn 2008; *Pamjatniki* 2002.

38 Fałowski - Witkowski 1992; 1994; 1996; 1997; Fałowski 2008.

39 See Ostrowski 2006; Keenan 2004-2005; Erusalimskij 2009b; Auerbach 2011; Bogatyrev 2012; Boeck 2012; Filjuškin, 2012.

40 See Nemirovskij 2010.

41 See Erusalimskij 2007a; 2011.

42 Nazarov 1996; Florja 2009; Pavlov - Perrie 2003; Krom 2010.

ground of Russian popular Orthodoxy and this conception was shared by Nikolai Galkovskii and his followers, including Boris Rybakov, in Soviet times. They found “religious dualism” in Russian Orthodoxy and made a huge effort to prove its basically pagan background⁴³. Being an adherent of the idea, Andrei Bulychev is the author of several provoking publications on cruelty and punishments in the time of Ivan the Terrible. According to Bulychev, Tsar Ivan deprived his opposition of the right to be buried in accordance with Christian norms. Several types of executions led the victims directly to their doomed afterlife, where they could not have been prayed and defended by Christians until the Last Judgment. Their afterlife did not resemble Purgatory; it was a pagan Hell, where a defunct lived circled by demons and was only partly, if at all, recalled by the Church. Bulychev claims that it reactualized ancient Slavic paganism and even influenced Ivan IV’s decision to organize Church memory of some victims of his terror as reimbursement for a non-Christian death of his own son Ivan Ivanovich⁴⁴. Although, as I have already mentioned, this conception sounds very unusual and intriguing, its disputable points lie in the area of my present concern. The courtiers and simple subjects are seen as silent objects of one rhetorical strategy. They agree to be killed, to be kept in the sinister afterlife and not to say a word against the tsar’s alleged paganism. Although the memorial repressions had only sporadic analogies before Ivan’s time, so far as after his death, a commemoration of those sentenced to death and decapitated silently was virtually a common entitlement that could not be prohibited by any accidental decision⁴⁵. The most difficult in the discussion is to find direct references to Ivan’s punishments in such an odd reception.

One more counterargument against the “archaic” conception is the strong kin interrelation in the milieu of Russian aristocracy. In many cases it was families and kin-groups that organized the commemoration of their representatives, no matter how just were the sentences and pretexts for their execution. This kin structure became the main topic for anthropological studies especially thanks to American historian Nancy Kollmann, the author of *Kinship and Politics* and *By*

43 The reinterpretations of popular paganism in Russian lands, including the period of the Russian state, by E. Levin and W.F. Ryan, are available in Russian: Levin 2004; Ryan 1999.

44 See Bulyčev 2005; Erusalimskij 2009a; Bulyčev 2012.

45 See Steindorff 1994; Dergačeva 2011; *Kormovoe pominovenie* 2012. L. Steindorff discusses the emergence of Church commemoration in the Russian lands in terms of continuity with the pagan era. At the same time, the scope of the influence of this practice there till the 17th century was quite limited. The so called *sinodiki*, lists of commemorated persons and families, were poorly spread and, in accordance with P. Bourdieu’s view, they played the role of a symbolic capital for rich and high-rank families who kept strong economic positions. With respect to B. Rosenwein’s study of French commemoration practice, L. Steindorff stresses the unifying social function of *sinodiki* in Muscovy, but points out that we still need a better understanding of family and clan preferences and devotions to monasteries. See Steindorff 2010.

Honor bound (the second was translated into Russian)⁴⁶. However, a strongly kin conception differs from the above mentioned Bulychev's one, in my idea it should follow the fourth group. Basically, the horizontal bounds built pre-Modern social structures, even if they played a sometimes palliative role for the growth of a slightly independent behavior and noble ideology of honor as the highest value⁴⁷. In Durkheimian terms, this mechanical solidarity contradicted the despotic intent of the monarchy, but still it never grew into organic solidarity and constantly reproduced pre-Modern cultural mechanisms. The doubts, expressed in Bruno Latour's "We have Never Been Modern", reached Slavonic studies in Daniel C. Waugh's conception of an un-Modern Russian society in early 18th century, André Berelowitsch's remarks on the logics in 17th century Russia, or Viktor Zhivov's reinterpretation of cultural reforms in pre-Petrine Russian state, but it has never appeared in histories of Ivan IV and of the Time of Trouble and it has left only a modest imprint on conflict and protest studies⁴⁸. This conception corresponds with some interpretations of Ivan IV's individuality. He was indeed strange and unordinary in his policy and in his private life. In practically all of Ivan's biographies we can find famous Vasilii Kliuchevskii's remark on oprichnina: «This institution has always seemed strange, both to those who suffered from it and to those who have studied it»⁴⁹.

Those who suffered are voiceless, and it strikes everyone, who would plunge in the history-writing. In one phrase a huge tradition of interpretation skipped Kliuchevsky's paradox in order to get rid of those who suffered and in order not to overlook what they could feel or think about oprichnina, because every line of its interpretation starts from the affirmation about the systemic misunderstanding of the contemporaries. For Ivan's biographers his actions were legitimate, even when they were crazy, openly sadistic or perverse. Personal psychopathology, forgotten for the most part of the 20th century, becomes from the late 1970s more influential in Tsar Ivan's regard. The most important are the theses about his bisexuality, growing paranoia, superiority mania, mental illness, or Edward Keenan's more somatic-oriented interpretation of Ivan's terror as result of sexual disability against the background of his growing Bekhterev illness (Ankylosing Spondylitis)⁵⁰. The vicious circle of interpretation normally begins from the idea, that Ivan had no plan or conception of rulership, he was a monster on the throne. Historians think

46 Shields Kollmann 1987; 1999.

47 See Berelowitch 2001; Eskin 2009. See also my review of A. Berelowitch and N. Shields Kollmann: Erusalimskij 2007b.

48 Uo (Waugh) 2003; Berelowitch 2000; Živov 2002, pp. 319-343.

49 Ključevskij 1994, p. 327.

50 See Bogatyrev 1994; Hellie 1987; Hellie 1997; Crummey 1987; Madariaga 2005; Choroškevič 2003a, pp. 129, 149, 204, 258, 322, 349, 383, 412, 425, 449, 550; Halperin 2007; Keenan 2008. The psychological approach to 16th century Russia is severely criticized in Ivanov 1997, pp.181-202.

that the stability and continuity of the state was profoundly based not on absolute power and its derivatives, but only on traditional institutions under the surface of politics. And the unconscious in Ivan or Ivan himself unconsciously acted in the framework of traditional “political folkways”, making him fight in and with clan, not class or any other, factions⁵¹.

III

What I sought to trace in this short survey is the way the typological parallels, that historians need, disclose their deep uncertainty about the nature of Ivan IV’s power. In fact, taking these attempts seriously – and there are apparently no reasons not to, – and given the lack or scarcity of evidence related to his motivations and strategies, cultural approaches deserve, I guess, more attention as modes of paradigmatic reduction, usually prefigured in Metonymy. Ivan IV or any other grand prince and tsar seem appear to be the main actors and main aim of the historical process. What is commonly interpreted in the history of our days as the tsar’s “reforms” of the 1540s and ’50s and what prince Andrei Kurbskii called a “great persecution” (*пожар лютости*) in the 1560s and ’70s, and what a dozen of foreigners in Russia explained as Ivan’s aggression on this or that cultural playground, I would propose to reinterpret in the paradigm of conflict and agreement, notwithstanding that most part of the evidence springs from the efforts to impose and overstress a holistic interpretation. But the constellation of fine methods of analysis allows at least doubting in the productivity of cultural unitarianism. Such strategies are normally rooted in the idea of continuous conflict, without any serious interruptions in the alleged bifurcation points of popular riots and state reforms, at least in 1547, 1565, 1572, 1584, 1598, 1606 or 1610. Let tsars play with their dices, what do we have besides to frame a story of protest and disloyalty from the “bottom” or with better regard to what should have been “Russian society”? Several examples hereafter will prepare us for the worst.

1. Anna Khoroshkevich pays more attention to the conflict, the disagreement and the contradictions⁵². But this is not an easy task. The stoutest solutions in her conception seem to me risky. Say, Khoroshkevich asserts, that diplomacy was an arena for protest. She devotes many pages of her research to find out collective and personal participation in the diplomatic Fronde. In contradiction to Cherniavsky or Schmidt, Russian frondeurs defend traditional values, they are pious Christians, and they fruitlessly admonish the tsar and his counselors to rule quietly. In the time of terror that was enough to be taken for perpetrator and betrayer. The sources

51 Here I am reminding a very influential article in history-writing outside Russia by Edward Keenan, which, as he acknowledged in a private talk in 2011, has been written as political expertise: Keenan 1986; Martin 2006.

52 See Choroškevič 2000; 1997; 1999; 2001a; 2001b; 2003b; 2006.

are obscure for any firm assertions in this regard. Muscovite diplomats have scarcely been revolutionaries or risked with their offices, when they, in terms of the time, played the fools (*дуровали*) or embroiled the tsar with the Krym khan (*ссорили*); all the diplomatic conspiracies and parties behind Ivan's back are being reconstructed intuitively on the basis of the sources, which represent inherently divergent understandings of the international policy. Thus, we should not expect short-term political structures to mirror the disobedience and conflict of the Other, when they only reproduce uncertainties of the Self⁵³.

The history of emigration gave historians one more chance for long-term solutions in the attitude to social protest. General parameters of emigration are still very disputable. How many courtiers, clerics and "simple" Muscovites emigrated in the Early-Modern period? All attempts to unveil the truth were merely declarative. Here is the example of such demographic conclusions: «In earlier periods (before the 17th century) emigration, in present meaning of the word, was very insignificant, if at all, episodic and rather individually-political (like prince Kurbskii, who has fled to Poland)»⁵⁴. The fact is that before I have started to systematically scan act books and unique documents of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania thousands of Muscovite families abroad only for the period between early 16th and early 17th centuries were at least in its larger part in complete oblivion and have never been statistically handled. There are fragmentary data on émigrés' life and behavior abroad, and we could hope to hear the Muscovites' voices, stories about their past and their rationales to leave their native land. Yet we have such stories extremely rarely. The general political economy of the terror prescribes a stable interpretative framework for emigrants. As Andrei Pavlov and Maureen Perrie put it, while discussing preconditions for oprichnina: «At that time, opposition sentiments were widespread amongst the service class. A serviceman's defection to Lithuania led to the persecution of his relatives and acquaintances, and this in its turn led to further defections»⁵⁵. The image like that, the self-devouring dragon, creates one more conundrum for interpretation of the evidence, since in most cases there are no one-way decisions in correlation between defections and persecutions; such decisions are prefigured by historians. Among about 1200 Muscovites in Poland and Lithuania in the 16th and early 17th I found only several dozens of those, who crossed the borders, certainly trying to save their souls in fear of punishments, and even in these cases we have quite a weak idea, whether their relatives or acquaintances were imprisoned or executed because of their flight or vice versa before their flight, and in that case having been a possible reason for their fleeing⁵⁶. And the other side of the same phenomenon is that the so called

53 See Choroškevič 2003a. Cf. Erusalimskij 2005.

54 Ioncev 1998, p. 67. Calculations are based on Obolensky-Ossinsky 1969.

55 Pavlov - Perrie 2003, p. 105.

56 See Kazakoŭ 2010; Erusalimskij 2011b; 2012b.

“deeds of surety” (*крестоцеловальные записи*) helped some of the alleged or real defectors avoid the death penalty and even longer disgrace.

In the shadow of higher politics and demographic reductions people “as they are” lurk in numerous sources eluding the consideration of specialists. What did cross-cultural contacts mean for the Muscovites? Did they ever think about a change of “citizenship”? Did they ever plan to emigrate? Why and where? Did they ever plan to betray the tsar? Did they ever think that in some situations they should have done it? These are not the questions that they were often asked on confession before the pope, although both Church and State since the end of the 15th century have monitored treasonous thoughts and since the second half of the 16th century have reached special instructions for confession of noblemen (*для вельмож*)⁵⁷. Answers need to shift in analytical procedures and in “linguistic protocol” of those “tiny stories” from Metaphor and Metonymy to less cohesive and more labor-consuming Synecdoche. In this field Inge Auerbach⁵⁸, Volodymyr Sobchuk⁵⁹, Hieronim Grala⁶⁰, Mikhail Krom⁶¹ deconstructed the topoi of the “Russian” Grand Duchy of Lithuania. They see the dispute over Lithuania and the subdivision of the Russian lands as a long-term process, close to the dynastic wars in Europe and depict the life of the Ruthenian “Russians”, and the defected Muscovites among them, in contrast to the Muscovite “Russians”. Auerbach put in doubt the compatibility of Kurbskii’s political thought with contemporary Muscovite reforms, reconstructed his day-after-day biography and “identity” on the basis of available legacy, especially his translations from the patristic tradition, and reappraised Oswald Backus’ conclusions on scope, directions and reasons for emigration in 16th century Muscovy.

In his monograph *Tsardom-dowager* Krom criticizes presumptions about “court parties” in Moscow in the time of Ivan IV’s childhood and youth. Grand princess-mother and boyars did not need any additional institutions, such as regency, so they ruled as if there was a full-aged grand prince on the throne. Conflicts among competing boyars were harsher, but they did not impede state institutions and all in all usual rotation in the elite. The strong point of Krom’s conception is that he postpones Ivan’s memoirs and maps court changes and reforms in the administration without veil of the tsar’s later impressions, so that in fact his book is not Ivan’s biography any more. And court intrigues around the child on the throne acquire the dimension of subordinate loyalties and, as in the story of the allegedly treacherous prince Andrey Staritskii, a detailed “thick description” of each visible side of the conflict. Such case-studies, as we have in both stories,

57 See Florja 1992; Korogodina 2006.

58 Auerbach 1969; 1977; 1985; 1987; 1990; 1997; 1999.

59 Sobčuk 1994.

60 Grala 1997a; 1997b; 1997c; 1999; 1999 (2000); Eskin - Grala 2000.

61 Krom 1993; 1994; 1998; 2000; 2004b; 2008; 2010.

through microhistory and anthropological methods deconstruct the monolith demographic “great stories” about the Other. The Other is wanted to tell his story. Suddenly, in Muscovite studies, it concerns not only “his”, but also “her” stories, given the considerable amount of female heroes among Russian emigrants. When women defect, flee or are taken prisoners they regain voice.

2. The last group of stories to be tackled here stress the so called external factor and all sorts of retrospection and propection in argument. More attention deserve lastly the periods, that have been earlier associated with instability and crisis. They are revealing for the researchers of other periods, since they give hints for an understanding of agreement and protest in the periods, when presumed normality dominated. The study of the aristocracy and administration in Russia in the Time of Troubles reveals close resemblance to Krom’s conclusions. Andrei Pavlov, Natalia Rybalko, Dmitrii Liseitsev describe the court and administration in periods of weakening and crisis year by year, as separate and rather stable structures⁶². New problems are posed. Sergei Platonov’s classical conception rested on the precondition, that a deepening of the crisis was the general tendency of the time, and it embraced ever new areas of social life in the Russian state, starting from the dying out of the Kalita dynasty, then going over the social conflict, and finally it took the form of a national war⁶³. Thanks to Alexander Stanislavskii the Time of Trouble is being described as civil conflict, in which the Cossacks and regional gentry played a significant role⁶⁴. Civil aspects of the war draw more attention, the imposters represented the political ideology of the Russian gentry (*дети боярские, городовое дворянство*)⁶⁵. Who initiated the conflict and who benefited from it? These are the questions for the discussion, which demonstrate a break with Platonov’s conception of a growing crisis. It turns out, that both “social” and “national” conflicts were initiated by the groups of competing gentry and less by the Boyar clans themselves. In order to wage war, all sides of the conflict needed large masses of mercenaries – Cossacks, foreign adventurers, impoverished gentry etc. A deeper scrutiny of Polish and Lithuanian material gives the same picture. King Sigismund III’s projects in Russia were never maintained by the representation of the gentry (*Sejm*). In Lithuania local gentry and magnates never supported intervention into Russia. Not a single official institution has ever conducted a campaign against Russia; it was the large set of separate operations. The third period in Platonov’s scheme misinterprets evidence, as far as the concept of “national” was not a precondition, but an effect of the conflict. And in terms of Slavoj Žižek, ethnic identities of friends and foes in the Russian Trouble (*Смыта*) had nothing in common with the origins of warriors or any “ethnic catalogues”;

62 See Pavlov 1992; Lisejcev 2009; Rybalko 2011.

63 See Platonov 1995.

64 See Stanislavskij 1990.

65 See Ingerflom 1992; Perrie 1995; Svak 2010.

their identities were “eclipsed in parallax”. In the long-term perspective, this type of war appears in the region already in the war for Livonia, when Ivan IV introduced large detachments of drafted Tatars, and Stefan Batory conducted campaigns with the help of mercenaries from all around Europe, including Muscovy⁶⁶.

Discussions on terror and protest in the Orthodox Church and clergymen also constitute an important area, although in this case the distinctions between agreement and dissatisfaction lie often in the personal relations and conflicts around Ivan’s soul. Several reinterpretations of metropolitan Filipp’s vita and its new stemma emerged⁶⁷. In general, the Church played a moderating role and supplied all sides of the conflict with reconciliation discourses. In contradiction to what historians of the second, holistic, mode of interpretation tend to recognize, I would stress that Church discourses were split in two general trajectories. One represented the idea of Church control over secular power, while the other discourse appears in the sources as apologetic. In our days historians of Church-State relations are entangled by the concepts of 19th century Russian historiography. We would rather structure historical intrigue in categories of “Josephites and Non-Possessors”, although our hope to understand protests better with the use of these concepts gradually fades away⁶⁸. They were convenient for history-writing, when researchers structured material in terms of dual strategies, parties or “historical forces”. The Russian Church fell victim to Hegelian metahistory and its Marxist version. But the main lesson of the discussion on the “Josephites – Non-Possessors” binary opposition, that could be drawn for the present topic, is that clergymen and Church discourses are to be integrated into the social pattern at least with the reservation, that crucial religious concepts were invented and do not correspond to the stories, ever written from both holistic and dualistic perspectives⁶⁹.

Church orthodoxy and heresies appear nip and tuck in the stories on 16th century Russian lands and change their shapes often simultaneously in present historical narratives. Since the late 1980s specialists rediscovered the Russian Counterreformation. The church was being purified, so that protests in Church needed qualification. As in Soviet times heretics were taken for a narrow circle of “progressive thinkers”, later on the discussion grew into large trouble, while specialists notice that heresies in Muscovy are described, imagined and voiced by their accusers, Orthodox writers. We are far from the Marxist interpretation of heresies as low class antifeudal revolts, and even in Soviet times Alexander Klibanov, Alexander Zimin and Jacob Lurie switched such a vague scheme into cultural interpretation of heresies as Early-Modern Utopianism, close to

66 See Erusalimskij 2012d.

67 See Kolobkov 2004; Lobakova 2006; Boeck 2007.

68 See Kurukin 1981; Ostrowski 1995; Pliguzov 2002; Šapošnik 2006; Goldfrank 2007.

69 Viacheslav V. Ivanov’s detailed explanation of binary-oriented models in anthropology in Ivanov 2008.

the European Reformation⁷⁰. At the same time, the word “heresy” in numerous contexts in the 16th and 17th century means any kind of dogmatic inconsistency and deviated thinking⁷¹. The dogmatic overtones of the controversies between official Church and the so called “Judaizers” and between “Possessors” and “Non-Possessors” are under discussion. However, the discussion concentrates more often on social and cultural meanings of polemic and rarely, and mostly ironically, comes back to the usual presuppositions of the Soviet history-writing. There are no progressive and reactionary “parties”, partisans and adversaries of the state centralization, representatives of this or that group in an assumed “class struggle” any more. The dogmatic polemic springs from earlier cultural contexts and from almost unperceivable streams of international intellectual contacts. For that reason the word “heresy” is often in use to mark the sphere of discontent. Ivan Viskovatyi in 1553-1554 suspected that new icons in the Kremlin Golden Palace were heretical, but the Church proved his inconsistency, although it is quite unlike that without the ground for accusations any court procedure of the kind could have been launched. Ivan Fedorov wrote sarcastically in 1574, that he had to flee from Moscow, because of accusations of “heresy” – nobody knows, what kind of accusations he meant, in that, abroad he has never been taken for apostate orthodox. Misuse of the word did not correspond to the general modus of thinking, but rather to the social disposition of an accused person and to the intent of the accuser. It is not surprising, that in the later years more reinterpretations deal with heresies as false rhetorical formations⁷², and even when the evidence contradicts this conception, it takes the partisans of the opposite opinion much time to prove something else⁷³.

IV

Only a few words are to be said to conclude. I did not intend to find solutions or obtrude my opinions for all the problems discussed above, although in several hints I noted my individual concerns in the ocean of the up-to-date history-writing on the Early-Modern Russian conflict. Concepts of subordination and protest in the Early-Modern Russian state undergo semantic relocation, but its directions depend on the language and narrative programs of historians. I described ready-made decisions as blank doors, although they are in fact the only doors we might go in so far. To the very least, several questions of this paper could be reduced not to conclusions, but to more general questions. The first arises from the critical examination of the sources. Are there subordination and conflict in the evidence,

70 See Dmitriev 1997.

71 Further insights see: Goldfrank 1998; Alekseev 2011; 2013.

72 See Zema 2005.

73 See Dmitriev 2002; Fleischmann 2006; Ivanov 2009.

hardly destroyed and consciously done away with? What strategy do we need not to slip into apologia of suppression? Where, and in which forms of narration and in what forms of prefiguration of the plot do we switch from the evidence to free imagination? To what extent does our knowledge of protest and disagreement depend on the understanding of subordination and suppression, and are we able to disconnect our solutions from cultural inevitability, as earlier when it was all set with rudimentary Marxism? Could we really be sure, that in the cases of tsar Ivan and prince Kurbskii we deal with clear delimitations of the personal and general, of the cultural and psychosomatic? What should we do when the habitual disposition of cultural Selves and Others is changed and there is no more Selves and Others, or they are inseparable from each other, or are they – as identities – totally invented? And when the conflict is reshaped and reinterpreted, does it influence reshaping the conceptions of control, subordination and consent?

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