

TERTIUS ROMANE: AN EXAMINATION OF MYSTICAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY
IN MUSCOVITE RUSSIA

A Thesis
by
EVAN WALLACE

Submitted to the Graduate School
at Appalachian State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

May 2018
Department of History

TERTIUS ROMANE: AN EXAMINATION OF MYSTICAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY
IN MUSCOVITE RUSSIA

A Thesis
by
EVAN WALLACE
May 2018

APPROVED BY:

Anatoly Isaenko, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Thesis Committee

Jason White, Ph.D.
Member, Thesis Committee

Ralph Lentz II, M.A.
Member, Thesis Committee

Dr. James Goff
Chairperson, Department of History

Max C. Poole, Ph.D.
Dean, Cratis D. Williams School of Graduate Studies

Copyright by Evan Wallace 2018
All Rights Reserved

Abstract

TIERTUS ROMANE: AN EXAMINATION OF MYSTICAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY IN MUSCOVITE RUSSIA

Evan Wallace

B.A., University of Central Florida

M.A., Appalachian State University

Chairperson: Dr. Anatoly Isaenko

The relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian state has received less than required academic attention. In the post-Soviet space, the Russian Church has again begun to interact with the Russian state. Through research of Russian primary sources including chronicles, vitae of princes, and various correspondence, this paper traces the origins of the relationship between Church and State and examines both the mystical and political theological actualities of such. This thesis demonstrates similarities, historical themes, and aspects of Church and State interactions through a comparison to Ernst Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* that can be applied to examine modern day Russian Church and State political theology. Ultimately the notion laid out by modern political theorists such as Carl Schmitt that the state has secularized theological themes is partially disproven by a case study of Russian history.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank those that to whom this work is indebted, for starters my thesis chair Dr. Anatoly Isaenko, who worked tirelessly with me during my academic pursuit. This academic pursuit would have been impossible without the help of Professor Ralph Lentz, who is a bastion of arcane knowledge here in the North Carolina mountains. I would also like to thank Dr. Jason White for his efforts and time spent on my thesis. Of the countless colleagues who have provided me with a plethora of information and feedback I am especially appreciative of Kate Bloom, Jewel Parker, and Patrick Kellam. Very infrequently have I found professors who embrace the ethos of teaching such as Dr. Bruce Janz, my undergraduate professor of whom withstood a barrage of my questions and proceeded to walk me through Christian mystical studies; knowledge of which this work is indebted to. None of this could have been possible of course without the loving support of my mother and my fiancée Ashley.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
Foreword.....	x
Chapter 1. Russian Foundational Identities of Church and State	1
Chapter 2. Kievan Rus' Political Folkways and Gradual Convergence with the Christian Model of Sovereignty	18
Chapter 3. From Whence They Came: Byzantine-Kievan Heritage and the Formalization of Dynastic Continuity	44
Chapter 4. Blessed Be the Host of the Kingdom of Heaven	55
References	78
Vita.....	83

Chapter One: Foundational Identities of the Russian Church and State

“Of all the cultural accomplishments of Byzantium, none was more important than the bringing of Christianity to the Slavs.”

James Billington in *Icon and the Axe*¹

1.1 Introduction:

The role of Christianity in Russian history and culture is indisputable. In his seminal monograph on the cultural history of Russia, James Billington sets “the Christian heritage” of Russians as a primary force behind the collective culture of the nation itself.² The unique relationship that exists between the Russian Church and State magnates show a cooperative political framework which is tensioned between the tendencies of rigid absolutism by the government and the strict adherence to Eastern Orthodox theology by church leaders. Today, freed from the secular chains of communism, the Russian government and church increasingly embrace each other politically, economically, and culturally in a brotherly fashion. Speaking in reflection of the turbulent conditions in Russia during the 1990s, Patriarch Kirill, the primate of the Russian Orthodox See, rejoiced at Vladimir Putin’s leadership: “... Through a miracle of God, with the active participation of the country’s leadership, we managed to exit this horrible, systemic crisis”³. This reestablished kinship between the church and Putin-led government continues to produce visible transactions. According to a recent *Aljazeera* article:

... many of Putin's opponents believe the glowing endorsements and mutual back-slaps the Kremlin and the Orthodox Church give each other these days are contributing to ever more

¹ James Billington, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 4.

² James Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, ix.

³ Gleb Bryanski, “Russian patriarch calls Putin era ‘miracle of God,’” *Reuters UK*, February 8, 2012, accessed December 7, 2017, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-russia-putin-religion/russian-patriarch-calls-putin-era-miracle-of-god-idUKTRE81722Y20120208>.

tightly defined social and religious conservatism, intolerant nationalism and a growing personality cult around the president.⁴

Examples of these so-called “back-slaps” are abundant as monastery lands, once annexed from the church and doomed to fit communist machinations are returned with a smile from the faithful convert to Russian Orthodoxy, President Putin.⁵

Significantly, the resurgence of the Russian church’s political agency in the post-Soviet era is an exact antithesis to the argument laid out by Carl Schmitt in his 1922 monograph, *Political Theology (Politische Theologie)*. Schmitt, a German jurist turned Nazi sympathizer and academic held “... that the church habitually meddled in affairs beyond its concern and that theory opened many avenues for politicizing society.”⁶ Schmitt described the modern state as exclusively secular and yet still indebted to Christian theology:

All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver – but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts.⁷

Schmitt’s description of deistically influenced modern politics, a rise in democracy, proves problematic when applied to the contemporary political situation in Russia where since the Soviet Union has fallen and once again political interactions between church and state have been increasing. It would appear recent interactions between the Russian church and state demonstrate “the church meddl[ing] in affairs” by influencing Russian politics and thus

⁴ Glenn Ellis, “Putin and the ‘triumph of Christianity’ in Russia”, *Aljazeera*, October 19, 2017, accessed November 14, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/europe/2017/10/putin-triumph-christianity-russia-171018073916624.html>.

⁵ Ivan Watson, Maria Stromova, and Antonia Mortensen, “The rise of the Russian Orthodox Church,” *CNN*, March 30, 2017, accessed December 7, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/30/europe/russian-orthodox-church-resurgence/index.html>.

⁶ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), xxiv.

⁷ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 36.

regaining its political agency. It is here that I will argue that to understand Russian political history, one must understand Russian political theology as the two are inseparable. I will set out to trace how political-theological interactions between the Russian Church and State have grown symbiotically from their foundations in the 10th century. Furthermore, I assert that although the Russian church was cast into seclusion during the Soviet period, that in recent years the Church has experienced a return to its revered status as both a spiritual guide and political entity.

To demonstrate this, an examination of church and state interactions from Russia's Kievan Rus' foundational roots to the early days of the Romanov dynasty (10th – 17th century) will commence. The period outlined in this examination offers a plethora of case based evidence ranging from government correspondence to politicized church iconography as well as what could be labeled as a period of heightened church and state interactions. Special attention will be given to the 'mystical' assets of these political theological interactions as mysticism played a prominent role in both the tradition of the Eastern Orthodox church and Russian collective cultural consciousness. Here, as will be seen below, Ernst Kantorowicz' study of the development of Western political theology in *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* also sheds important light on the development of Russian political theology.⁸

The genesis of cooperation between the Russian church and state accompanies their foundation. Both institutions can be characterized as influenced by the Byzantine metropole from their tenth century inception. As the small city and trading post of Kiev grew in size through the ninth and tenth centuries due to its trade relationship with Constantinople, it grew enthroned in power through alternative yet synchronous methods. Similarly, less than a century

⁸ Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

later the Russian church blossomed from the same radiating influence from the religious Byzantine metropole, Constantinople.

1.2 Foundation of the State

The foundation of the Russian state requires a careful analysis as important aspects of statehood often established their precedent before formal manifestation. Writing during the late 11th and early 12th centuries from the Crypt Monastery in Kiev, the monk Nestor, Russia's first hagiologist, provided a foundational narrative known today as the *Primary Chronicle (Povest' Vremennykh Let)*. The source is presented by the monastic author as a historical account, but today it is recognized as both a historical and mythological account of the advent of an organized Kievan Rus'.⁹ Despite the current perceptions of the text as such, the narrative Nestor laid out has grown engrained into the Russian historical conscious. The foundations of the Kievan Rus' state is a direct result of the actions undertaken by Oleg of Novgorod, the Uncle of Rurik's son Igor.

It was between 870 and 879CE when Rurik, the Varangian founder of Russia's first dynasty and prince of Novgorod "on his deathbed, [he] bequeathed his realm to Oleg."¹⁰ The chronicle leads readers to believe that Oleg was acting as client-prince in the Scandinavian model as Rurik's son Igor assumed rule in 913CE.¹¹ Oleg had come from Novgorod, a community nestled close to modern day Saint Petersburg. For this reason, Novgorod was viewed as the original seat of Kievan Rus' culture. Oleg planted the seat of power in Kiev when in 880-

⁹ Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark Steinberg, *A History of Russia to 1855*, 7th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 22-25.

¹⁰ Samuel Cross and Olgerd Sherbowitz-Wetzor, eds. *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 2012), 60.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 71.

882CE he led a force to annex control of the city-state from his brother Askold. When Oleg usurped Askold in Kiev, the chronicler Nestor states that “Oleg set himself up as prince in Kiev, and declared that it should be the mother of Russian cities.”¹²

Byzantine sources speak of the role of Kiev during this period, affirming Nestor’s chronology. By the 10th century as recorded by Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, Kiev was a hub for Slavic exports. The Dnieper river and its tributaries carried goods every November from regional Slavic tribes to Kiev where they were transported down the Black Sea and into Constantinople.¹³ Edward Gibbon speaks of the primarily economic relationship between the pagan Kiev and Constantinople by granting little attention to anything past the blossoming trade industry. What little Gibbon says about interactions between traders can be drawn from his statement that “some of their countrymen resided in the capital and provinces; and the national treaties protected the persons, effects, and privileges of the Russian merchant.”¹⁴ The extent of relations between the two neighbors during the pagan period of Russian history was just that, economic with small interactions between the aristocratic traders who earned stay in Constantinople.

By seizing power from his brother, Oleg had established Kiev as the seat of tribute from other Slavic tribes and established the trade city as the metropole of Kievan Rus’. Kiev’s placement in regard to the Black Sea and Byzantium predisposed it to grow enriched as the increasingly economically and politically connected city bottlenecked all Slavic trade through it to Constantinople. The question of if Oleg’s reseating of the loose confederation consisting of Eastern Slavic tribes from Novgorod to Kiev in 882CE resulted in increased socio-religious

¹² Ibid, 61.

¹³ Riasanovsky and Steinberg, *A History of Russia to 1855*, 39.

¹⁴ Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Vol. 5. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 589.

influence of their Southern neighbors the “Greeks” will become apparent.¹⁵ While Oleg laid the foundations for the state, his religious confessions went out to the Slavic deity Perun rather than a member of the Divine Trinity.¹⁶ An examination of the foundation of the Christian religious state must wait until the reign of Vladimir, Grand Prince of Kiev who was the grandson of Igor.

1.3 Foundation of the Church

Until the reign of Prince Vladimir of Kiev, Slavic Paganism had represented the widespread belief of Kievan Rus'. The Christianization of Rus' was not only a cultural and political victory for Prince Vladimir of Kiev, but also a move that forever indebted Russian theology and political theory to Byzantine influence. The commencement of Byzantine religious influence over Rus' stemmed from Grand Prince Igor's wife, Princess Olga, (known today also as Saint Olga) who converted from Paganism to Christianity when she visited Constantinople between 948-957AD. The traditional account of the baptism includes the tale of Olga withdrawing her head from the baptismal basin whereupon “the patriarch congratulated her with the words, ‘blessed are you among Russian women because you have loved the light and abandoned the darkness. The sons of Russia will not cease to bless you for generations of generations and unto the last of your descendants.’”¹⁷ The near prophetic blessing by the

¹⁵ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 63. Nestor's usage of the ethnic nomenclature designation Greek when addressing Byzantine historical actors is a result of his Christocentric worldview where Greek Christian influence represents an opinion the largest ethnic credential displayed by the Byzantine Empire.

¹⁶ “According to the religion of the Russes, the [Russians] swore by their weapons and by their god Perun, as well as by Volos, the god of cattle, and thus confirmed the treaty.” Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 65. An excerpt demonstrating the active conformance and embracement of Slavic Paganism by Oleg during the negotiations of peace between the aforementioned and the Byzantine Empire.

¹⁷ Daniel Shubin, *A History of Russian Christianity*. Vol. 1: From the Earliest Years through Tsar Ivan IV. (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), 17.

Patriarch of Constantinople Polyeuctus manifested nearly instantaneously. It was during the regency of Olga from 945-960CE that Byzantine aristocratic proselytism had begun to gather a collective of affluent traders in Kievan society.¹⁸ Upon learning of her Son Svyatoslav's unwillingness to convert, Princess Olga lamented "My son, I have learned to know God, and am glad for it. If you know him, you too will rejoice"; but Svyatoslav was unconvinced and held fast to Slavic pagan roots.¹⁹

Prince Vladimir, the son of Svyatoslav born in 958CE, had, just as his father, held strong to his pagan faith. Vladimir was a son by Svyatoslav's concubine from Novgorod. Svyatoslav had two other sons Yaropolk and Oleg from his first marriage who respectively had been placed in charge of Kiev and Dereva.²⁰ It was in 978-980CE when Vladimir marched into Kiev followed by Varangian allies and murdered his brother Yaropolk in his father's kremlin.²¹ Vladimir is described as reigning alone in Kiev; in 980 he "set up idols on the hills outside the castle with the hall: one of Perun, made of wood with a head of silver and a mustache of gold, and others of Khors, Dazh'bog, Stribog, Simar'gl, and Mokosh."²² The erection of the pagan statues showed Vladimir's commitment to polytheism, yet his conversion to Christianity seven years later shows a distinct change promoted by economic and political motives.

The Russian Chronicle states that in 986CE, Vladimir was visited by a group of Bulgars "of the Mohammedan faith" which led the Grand Prince to inquire "what was the nature of their religion."²³ It was after the Muslims' visit that Vladimir invited representatives of all faiths to make a case for their religion. Just as the Islamic faith was ruled out since "Drinking...is the joy

¹⁸ Vladimir Volkoff, *Vladimir the Russian Viking* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2011), 18-25.

¹⁹ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 83.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 90.

²¹ *Ibid*, 93.

²² *Ibid*.

²³ *Ibid*, 96.

of the Russes,” the Roman Catholic Germans were turned away for similar cultural misfits. It was not until when a scholar from Byzantium arrived that Vladimir was piqued by Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Accepting the Eastern variant of Orthodox Christianity was both a logical and politically sound decision for the Grand Prince of Kiev. The Byzantine tradition “gave the Kievan prince and state a stronger ideological basis urging the unity of the country and at the same time emphasizing its links with Byzantium and with the Christian world as a whole.”²⁴ The “Christian world” represented a large portion of Europe, and gave the Grand Prince valuable western contacts during the extent of the Mongol yoke. Nestor presented the Baptism of Vladimir as a planned strategic move, for when the Byzantine scholar pressed Vladimir to undergo the rite he states, “I shall wait yet a little longer.”²⁵ A “little yet longer” was two years later in 988CE when Vladimir was baptized in the Church of St. Basil in Kherson, a city Vladimir had annexed to force the hand of Basil II.²⁶

Vladimir’s baptism acted as means to a previously promised powerful political marriage, to the daughter of the Byzantine emperor Romanos II, Anna. The capture of the Byzantine outpost of Kherson was Vladimir’s show of force to make the Byzantine Emperor keep his promise of allowing the Kievan prince to marry his sister. During the previous year in the winter, Vladimir had concluded such an agreement in exchange for military assistance to the Emperor Basil II.²⁷ The arrival of the Varangian warriors sent to Constantinople by Vladimir in the spring of 988CE was pivotal to saving Basil II from being usurped by Bardas Sclerus, a

²⁴ Riasanovsky and Steinberg, *A History of Russia to 1855*, 32.

²⁵ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 110.

²⁶ Ibid, 113.

²⁷ John Norwich, *A Short History of Byzantium*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 210.

popular general, who along with his troops sat “on the Asian side of the Bosophorus.”²⁸ The political aspect of the marriage is impossible to ignore, for the relationship between Kievan Rus’ and Byzantium up to the point of royal marriage had been purely economic.²⁹ Past this, Vladimir’s Baptism was a requirement of the marriage, a condition the Macedonian dynastic family would see adhered to.³⁰ In examining the relationship between Byzantium and Kiev in the tenth century, historian Nicolas Zernov describes the baptism of Vladimir and his peoples as profitable in Byzantine-Kievan relations as stated before “the difference of religion, however, hindered closer co-operations between Russia and her more cultured neighbors.”³¹

Having accepted the Eastern Orthodox faith (at least nominally), Vladimir is shown by the Primary Chronicle to have paradigm shifted from a pagan prince to a model Christian monarch. The Chronicle reports when Vladimir returned to Kiev in 988CE he proceeded to destroy the pagan icons which he himself had set up eight years earlier, famously having the gilded statue of Perun “dragged along the stream to the Dnieper” so as to “let it loose.”³² Vladimir’s subsequent mass baptism of his realm, a ceremony which required the attendance of all “inhabitants, rich or poor,” showed his interest in his entire populace’s spiritual salvation, an important aspect of the piety a Christian monarch.³³ The monotheistic religion had natural advantages when compared Slavic paganism. The political power of Vladimir and his successors

²⁸ Dimitri Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs* (Crestwood, NY: Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1994), 61.

²⁹ “But your prince has now made known that he will forward a certificate to our government, and any agents or merchants thus sent by the Russians shall be provided with such a certificate that a given number of ships has been dispatched. By this means we shall be assured that they come with peaceful intent.” Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 74. The basis for the agreement between the Grand Prince Igor and Byzantium in this 945AD treaty was purely economic, as it serves as the introductory statement.

³⁰ Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs*, 61.

³¹ Nicolas Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome* (New York: AMS Press, 1971), 16.

³² Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 116.

³³ Ibid.

as the Grand Prince strengthened the throne of Kiev when compared to his polytheistic ancestors. Rural communities that once worshipped deities venerated by region were now forced to turn to the single point of religious influence and emanation in the young Russian See, Kiev.

Nestor continues Vladimir's pious narrative, in 996AD, returning to Kiev from campaigning in Croatia, Vladimir witnessed the completion of the Church of the Dormition of the Virgin. Feeling rejoiced, Vladimir engaged in additional philanthropic works, bringing a large feast of "bread, meat, fish, various fruits, mead in casks, and kvass" which were to be "driven through the city."³⁴ Vladimir is characterized after his baptism as a model Christian monarch by Nestor. An amusing tale in the chronicle fables Vladimir's devout and overzealous adherence to Christian principles:

While Vladimir was thus dwelling in the fear of God, the number of bandits increased, and the bishops, calling to his attention the multiplication of robbers, inquired why he did not punish them. The Prince answered that he feared what the sin entailed. They replied that he was appointed of God for the chastisement of malefaction and for the practice of mercy toward the righteous, so that it was entirely fitting for him to punish a robber condignly [...]³⁵

Vladimir internalized the bishop's advice and "abolished the wergild and set out to punish the brigands."³⁶ The detailing of Vladimir in such a positive light casts a stark difference from rulers and folk who were in years earlier described as "pagans, and therefore ignorant."³⁷

Vladimir's adherence to the rigidity of Byzantine Orthodoxy was either a well-orchestrated performance or an actual overzealous application of his newfound spirituality. In the aforementioned episode, Vladimir is shown to fail to punish the criminals in Kiev because

³⁴ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 121.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 122.

³⁶ *Ibid*.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 65.

“he believed this to be incompatible with the law of Christian love.”³⁸ This zeal appears to have been shared between Vladimir and his people, for “the Russians displayed much spontaneity and vigor in their approach to their new religion.”³⁹

1.3 The Grand Prince’s “Two” Bodies

Vladimir’s baptism in 987CE makes him the first Rurik prince to be eligible for examination under the framework laid out in Ernst Kantorowicz in *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. The theory and actuality of the King’s “two” bodies according to Kantorowicz is best examined through a property issue between the sixteenth century English aristocratic Lancaster family and the crown where-in lawyers laid out that:

The King has in him two Bodies, viz., a Body natural, and a Body politic. His Body natural (if it be considered itself) is a Body mortal, subject to all Infirmities that come by Nature or Accident, to the Imbecility of Infancy or old Age, and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People. But his Body politic is a Body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy of Government, and constituted for the Direction of the People, and the Management of the public weal, and this Body is utterly void of Infancy, and old Age, and other natural Defects and Imbecilities, which the Body natural is subject to, and for this Cause, what the King does in his Body politic, cannot be invalidated or frustrated by any Disability in his natural Body.⁴⁰

The Plowden case allowed Kantorowicz to further understand the political theology of the king’s two bodies in which the “body politic” existed in one physical body the “body natural,” is inferior in both representation and agency. Kantorowicz states “the body politic is ‘more ample and large’ than the body natural,” and that the latter has the ability to “reduce, or even remove, the imperfections of the fragile human nature (the body natural).”⁴¹

³⁸ Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome*, 26.

³⁹ Ibid, 27.

⁴⁰ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 7.

⁴¹ Ibid, 9.

Drawing on Vladimir as an example, we see this transformation in the Primary Chronicle. As Vladimir seemingly moved away from the pagan tendencies of greed and pillage towards Christian kingship it could also be described as his coming into his mystical body. Citing Sir Edward Coke's work, Kantorowicz states that "Coke, when discussing the politic body of the king, added in parenthesis: [...] it is called a mystical body."⁴² The mystical nature of the Christian king (or in our case Grand Prince or Tsar) is as such: the two bodies within the king are indivisible, that is until death.⁴³ It is upon the death of a king that his body natural separates from his body politic. The body natural decomposes, and the superior body politic, what might be labeled the legacy and supremacy of the king, is thus transferred to the next monarch. The mystical aspect of this is just that, a king's two bodies exist within one vessel, the body natural and the extent or nature of their interaction internally is given no further definition as the mystical state is ineffable. Past this, the mystical experience "is not that of union with the divine, but the sense of the presence of God within one's life, or communion with God," the king's mystical body would logically operate in similar fashion.⁴⁴ The ineffability of the mystical twinned body of the King grants power out of, if nothing else, a unique position in relation to the godhead, and thus agency.

1.4 The Mystical Two Bodies of the Grand Prince

Christian mysticism played a large role in Kantorowicz's examination. When discussing how English jurists went about describing the "dogma" of the king's two bodies the author labels

⁴² Ibid, 15.

⁴³ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁴ David Stewart, *Exploring the Philosophy of Religion*, 7th ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, 2010), 7.

the task “a veritable sword dance.”⁴⁵ The role of mysticism, as well as the mystical nature of the church and trinity are not as subaltern in the East as they are in the West. Vladimir Lossky, a distinguished Orthodox theologian writes this about mysticism in Russia:

The eastern tradition has never made a sharp distinction between mysticism and theology; between personal experience of the divine mysteries and the dogma affirmed by the church. The following words spoken a century ago by the great Orthodox theologian, the Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, express this attitude perfectly: ‘none of the mysteries of the most secret wisdom of God ought to be appear alien or altogether transcendent to us, but in all humility we must apply our spirit to the contemplation of divine things’.⁴⁶

Lossky later goes on to state “far from being mutually opposed, theology and mysticism support and complete each other. One is impossible without the other.”⁴⁷ The personal aspect of Eastern Orthodox Christianity alongside the role of contemplation is what gives mysticism such kindling to grow in the Russian Orthodox See. The ingrained nature of mystical ideology into Russian consciousness is not lost to Western academicians and is commonly employed. When describing the cultural perceptions and mythology of fire, one of the largest dangers to Muscovite society, James Billington directly quotes the Eastern Mystic Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in saying “fire is in all things...manifesting its presence only when it can find a material on which to work...”⁴⁸

Just as Pseudo-Dionysius’s descriptions of cherubim within his mystical account of the celestial hierarchy added further definition to the state of being ablaze, his widespread influence of apophatic theology in the Church places a variant emphasis on the argument of the divine nature of God or the Godhead. Kantorowicz’ examination of the godheaded nature of the king suffers a disappointedly finite examination through the historical kingship of the British

⁴⁵ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 12.

⁴⁶ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1944), 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, 24.

monarch. The extent of interaction with the idea of the godhead comes with a brief examination of when, in 1041CE, “the Speaker of the House of Commons saw fit to compare the body politic of the realm of the realm with the Trinity: the king, the Lords spiritual and temporal, and the Commons jointly formed a trinity in unity and unity in trinity.”⁴⁹

The role and primacy of negative theology in the Russian Orthodox Church introduces a new point to be examined in the political theological examination of the godhead. In speaking of the role of positive and negative theology, a distinction made by Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite, Vladimir Lossky states “Dionysius distinguishes possible theological ways. One – that of cataphatic or positive theology – proceeds by affirmations; the other – apophatic or negative theology – by negations.”⁵⁰ The Russian Orthodox opinion of which is more spiritually profitable is shown by the author, “it is by *unknowing* (*αγνοῶντας*) that one may know Him who is above every other possible object of knowledge.”⁵¹ The negative theology of the Russian Orthodox Church seems to introduce an additional layer of nuance to the relation of one to the divine trinity. Thus, the less than fixed state of ones’, say the sovereign’s, position regarding the emanation of grace from the Godhead can be examined politically.

Writing about a later period, Valerie Kivelson examines the fragile nature of political ideology granted to the Russian sovereign by their Christian faith: “the same ideological vocabulary that fostered harmony and social integration could also serve as a destabilizing force, turning the urban populace against the tsar himself.”⁵² Kivelson’s examination of the 1648 Moscow uprising brings light to how susceptible even the tsar was. Tsar Alexei, returning from

⁴⁹ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 227.

⁵⁰ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 25.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Valerie Kivelson, “The Devil Stole His Mind: The Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising,” *The American Historical Review* 98, no. 3 (June 1993), 745.

his annual pilgrimage to the Trinity-St. Sergei Monastery “refused the petitions proffered by his subjects.”⁵³ Alexei’s refusal of his peoples’ petitions immediately created contention, inciting a twelve-day riot which had devastating effects and left “half the city la[id] in charred ruins, hundreds or even thousands of people had burned to death in the fire, three top advisors to the tsar had been killed by popular demand.”⁵⁴ A break in pious tradition of receiving petitioners at the gates of the Moscow kremlin had led the young tsar to take “a dangerous step toward undermining his own authority.”⁵⁵

The tsar, deriving his right to rule from the precedent that he acted as “God’s earthly agent,” had broken a long-held Muscovite cultural canon through his actions.⁵⁶ The end result of the 1648 uprising demonstrates how the Christian Russian sovereign’s role which stemmed from that of Prince Vladimir of Kiev was fully established, known, and enforced by Muscovite denizens of all walks of life. The levity of the situation is properly demonstrated by the fact that Alexei could barely protect his brother-in-law, the rich boyar Boris Morozov, from the will of his own people.⁵⁷ The failure of Alexei to receive his petitioners and the immediate riotous reaction shows a break in long held religio-political tradition. This expectation of such actions from the Christian sovereign can be traced back to Vladimir’s reign, and will be examined further in the coming chapters.

Vladimir’s, and thus every Russian sovereign’s mystical connection to the godhead is not the only instance that requires further examination past Kantorowicz’s theory, the question of where he inherited or came into his body politic from is another. The sudden shift of religious

⁵³ Ibid, 738.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 732.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 742.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 741.

affiliation of both “king” and “country” left Vladimir as the founder of Christian Rus’ which creates a chasm of difference between him and his pagan Varangian ancestors. In describing the inseparable relationship between the body natural and body, Kantorowicz defines the “migration of the ‘soul,’ that is, of the immortal part of kingship, from one incarnation to another...”⁵⁸ As stated above, Vladimir, being the first baptized ruler in Kievan Rus’ had no Christian predecessors to inherit his body politic from.

The question of where he acquired his Christian body politic is answered in the *Primary Chronicle* when Nestor speaks of the collective Kievan despair and new veneration of the deceased Prince Vladimir “he is the new Constantine of mighty Rome, who baptized himself and his subjects; for the Prince of Rus’ imitated the acts of Constantine himself.”⁵⁹ Vladimir was not the founder of his body politic, rather the inheritor of a Byzantine one. Vladimir’s subsequent marriage to Anna, Emperor Basil’s “unwedded sister,” reinforces his attempts to establish his body politic.⁶⁰ Speaking of Anna and her political role, George Majeska says that:

While the Byzantines had developed an extensive and very useful system of marriage-sealed alliances, a princess born in the sacred palace while her father ruled held a very special place in this system. Such a princess, a *porphyrogenita* (born of the imperial purple) was so intimately connected with the sacred person of the emperor that she was never allowed to marry a foreign ruler.⁶¹

Vladimir’s marriage to Anna shows the preferential treatment of the Rurik dynasty by the Byzantine Emperor. The need for the Varangian warriors to act constantly as reinforcement in Constantinople shows the dependency on foreign military aid and most certainly acts as precursor to the crippling situation the empire later found itself in. A similar marriage proposal

⁵⁸ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 13.

⁵⁹ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 124.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 112.

⁶¹ George Majeska, “Russia: The Christian Beginnings,” In *Christianity in Russia 988-1988*, ed. by Albert Leong, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1970), 22.

to the to-be emperor of the Holy Roman Empire Otto II had been turned down previously, a result of the deepening but not yet visible chasm between Eastern and Western Christianity.⁶² The fact that Vladimir returned the city of Kherson located near the Black Sea in 988CE “as a wedding present” when in fact earlier that year “Vladimir proceeded with an armed force against Kherson” shows that the annexation of the Byzantine Empire’s militarily strategic city seated to the north of the Black Sea was cleverly schemed to force Basil II’s hand.⁶³

As demonstrated earlier, the Byzantine opinion on the newly established alliance with the Russians was that of delight “the situation in the Balkans was rapidly deteriorating” and Vladimir was prepared to address such a threat.⁶⁴ The shrewd political maneuvering not only increased the agency of the young Kievan Rus’ realm, but started a tradition of celebrated Byzantine heritage, that is Third Rome, which will be discussed at length later on. The legacy laid by Vladimir during this critical period of Russian history forever shaped the political and religious landscape of the Russian Orthodox Church and State, and Vladimir’s actions led him to being canonized as a saint in the church years later, the political implications of which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 111.

⁶⁴ Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs*, 62.

Chapter Two: Kievan Rus' Political Folkways and Gradual Convergence with the Christian Model of Sovereignty

“Arise, [Prince Vladimir] see your child Georgii [Iaroslav the Wise], see your scion, see your beloved, see him whom the Lord has drawn forth from your loins; see him gracing the throne of your land, and rejoice and be glad.”

Metropolitan Hilarion in his *Eulogy to Prince Vladimir*¹

2.1 The Legacy of the Grand Prince Vladimir

Writing during the mid-eleventh century, the Metropolitan Hilarion composed his “Sermon on Law and Grace” (*Slovo o zakone i blagodati*) thirty-five years after the death of the Grand Prince. Writing less than a year after his ascension as primate of the newly founded Kievan See, Hilarion utilized his eulogy contained within to act as “an eloquent appraisal of the significance of Russia’s conversion to Christianity.”² Drawing on the Byzantine influence of the young Church, Hilarion conflates and aggrandizes Vladimir’s baptism and subsequent baptism of his people directly to the origin of Constantinople itself:

What great praise goes to you, who have not only confessed that Christ is the Son of God but have also established the faith throughout this land, and erected churches of Christ, and brought in His ministers, as did the great Constantine, whom you equaled in wisdom, in love for Christ, and in honoring His ministers. He [Constantine], together with the holy fathers of the Nicean Council, prescribed the law for men; while you often gathered and took counsel in great humility with our new fathers, the bishops, asking how to establish the law among these newly cognizant men.³

In the wake of the Grand Prince’s reign Kievan Rus’ found its provinces loosely organized and tied to Kiev by means of trade, taxation, and most importantly, Christianity. The late Russian historian Vasily Kluchevsky echoed the sentiment of Hilarion and appropriately emphasized the cultural and social evolution that occurred after the baptism of Kiev. Kluchevsky writes that

¹ Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev, “Metropolitan Hilarion’s Eulogy of Prince Vladimir, CA. 1050,” in *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1, *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century*, ed. George Vernadsky (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 28.

² George Vernadsky, *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1, *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century*, ed. George Vernadsky (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 27.

³ Hilarion, “Metropolitan Hilarion’s Eulogy of Prince Vladimir, CA. 1050,” in *A Source Book for Russian History*, 28.

event set into motion “a new trend of political ideas and relations in Rus” as well as “the notion that a sovereign ruler is appointed of God to establish and maintain the internal order of his state equally with its external security.”⁴ Janet Martin, the leading modern historian of the Russian medieval period devalues Klyuchevsky’s analysis, stating that Christianity “furnished the Riurikid dynasty with an ideological foundation for its exclusive rule over Kievan Rus’.”⁵ While there is no doubt that Christian ideology provided Riurikid dynasty with exclusive rule, theology played an *active* role within their political machinery, keeping it from the secular realm. With the positions newly revered status, the princes of Kiev now acted not only as a political entity but also as an individual chosen by God to uphold the moral convictions of Orthodox Christianity. Vladimir’s kin and successors had been left with a recently Christianized realm that still persisted on legal, social, and cultural customs from a bygone pagan era. Over the course of the next century, as will be shown, the ecclesiastical influence of the both spiritual and political entity of the Kievan church grew engrained into the young and growing Russian states’ jurisprudence and culture in a symbolic and effective manner.

Those unfamiliar with the general chronology and narrative of Russian history might expect to see a taut dynastic line drawn from the Grand Prince Vladimir, the first Christian Riurikid prince to the eventual cessation of the dynasty upon the death of Tsar Fyodor I, the second son of Ivan IV (the Terrible) in 1598. The succession problem stems from two issues, the first is that Vladimir was at one point in time a pagan prince rather than Christian. During the years of his pagan belief, Vladimir “had three hundred concubines at Vyshgorod, three hundred

⁴ Vasily Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, vol.1, trans. Charles Hogarth (New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), 88.

⁵ Martin’s persistent designation of the “ideological” influence is ahistorical for this period, rather political theology was effectively seated in role and active during this period in Janet Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 10.

at Belgorod, and two hundred at Berestovo in a village still called Berestovoe.”⁶ Vladimir’s pagan lust was noted by Nestor who commented how he was “insatiable in vice” and “a libertine like Solomon.”⁷ The result of Vladimir’s lust was no less than twelve sons, all of whom had a legitimate claim to the Kievan throne.⁸ The second issue amplifies the first, for Vladimir left very little instruction to his sons regarding the structure of his domain, and thus his death in 1015 CE “sparked a succession struggle.”⁹ In the wake of Prince Vladimir, Russia experienced a period that both led to the first canonized saints of the Russian Orthodox Church as well as a less than civilized, and thus more barbaric system of succession in the Rurikid line of princely succession. Through centuries of intermingling with Slavic pagan customs, the Russian Christian political folkway grew to primacy from its tenth century Byzantine-Kievan roots.

2.2 The Tragedy of Boris and Gleb Vladimirovich

In divvying up his provinces amongst his male line, Vladimir’s primary motivation was “to facilitate the introduction of Christianity around his lands” which led him to “place his sons, each with his own *druzhina*, in towns on the frontiers of Kievan Rus’.”¹⁰ His eldest surviving son Sviatopolk, known today as Sviatopolk the Accursed, assumed Kiev and the seat that his father had once occupied. Sviatopolk’s younger brother Boris was leading a campaign against the Pechenegs when Vladimir passed away.¹¹ As a result, Sviatopolk’s welcome in Kiev was less than celebrated by many, as the *Primary Chronicle* brings elucidation to the situation:

⁶ Samuel Cross and Olgerd Sherbowizt-Wetzor, eds. *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 2012), 94.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 22.

⁹ Ibid, 22.

¹⁰ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 11.

¹¹ The Pechenegs were semi-nomadic Turkic peoples who in the eleventh century occupied the eastern girdle of the Black Sea above Bulgaria and thus the Danube river. Their location and proximity to the Kievan trading route to Constantinople resulted in frequent spurs between the two. For more information on the geographic context of

Upon his father's death, Svyatopolk settled in Kiev, and after calling together all the inhabitants of Kiev, he began to distribute largess among them. They accepted it, but their hearts were not with him, because their brethren were with Boris.¹²

Upon Boris's return from campaign, he was urged by his "father's retainers" to take up the Kievan throne. In accompanying the Kievan *tisiatch* on campaign, Boris had built a rapport with Kiev's boyars that led many to support "Vladimir's favorite" son.¹³ Unwilling to supersede his older brother, Boris protested the suggestion and asserted that Svatopolk should "take the place of my father in my heart."¹⁴ According to the chronicler Nestor, this pledge of fealty meant nothing to Svatopolk for he was "filled with lawlessness."¹⁵ The biblical parallels drawn in the *Primary Chronicle* are impossible to ignore, and the accursed prince began to plot about how he might dispatch his favored brother, Boris. In doing so, the chronicler states that Svatopolk "adopt[ed] the device of Cain" (that is, the biblical son of Adam and Eve who murdered his brother Abel).¹⁶ Boris was murdered by conspirators dispatched by Svatopolk, the initial assault of which Boris survived. It was only when his body was wrapped that Svatopolk himself noticed his brother was still breathing that a Varangian in the company of the Kievan prince "drew his sword and plunged it into his heart." The murder is reported to have occurred in 1015 CE.¹⁷

The events leading up to the murder of Boris are painted by the chronicler with heavy Christian allegory. The fealty that Boris had pledged to his brother alongside the claim that he

Kievan Rus' see Ian Barnes, *Restless Empire: A Historical Atlas of Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Belknap Press, 2015), 8-18.

¹² Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 126.

¹³ "The great towns were themselves organized upon a military basis and maintained each of them a local force called a *tisiatch* (literally, a thousand) – the *tisiatch*, again, being subdivided into a number of *sotni* (hundreds) and *desiatki* (tens)." Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, 89; Volkhoff, *Vladimir the Russian Viking*, 295.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*; For the account of Cain and Abel see Gen. 4:1-24 ESV.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

was *in media res* of his matins and prayers when murdered resulted in his canonization.

Sviatopolk's evil deeds were not done yet however. Nestor continues to inform readers that the "impious" prince "then reflected, 'Behold, I have killed Boris; now how can I kill Gleb?'"¹⁸

Again drawing comparisons of Sviatopolk to Cain, Nestor describes the prince Gleb being summoned by his brother to Kiev under the auspices of his deceased father. Stopping for the night in Smolensk, the prince was informed at daybreak that "he should not set out, because his father was dead and his brother had been murdered by Svyatopolk."¹⁹ Upon hearing the news the young prince Gleb "wept and prayed with lament," wherein he "received encouragement from God, pray for me that I may endure the same passion."²⁰

The murder of Gleb carries curiously similar themes to that of Boris. For, it was while he was in prayer when the conspirators seized his boat and coerced his cook, Torchin, to stab Gleb to death. Both Boris and Gleb were interred next to each other in the Church of St. Basil. The memory of these two pious princes had a heavy impact on Kievan Rus' sentiment; the brothers were canonized as passion bearers, that is an individual who died in a Christ-like manner.²¹ A brief intermission from chronological events in the *Primary Chronicle* after the burial of Boris and Gleb in the form of impassioned prose encapsulates the collective cultural legacy of the brothers:

To all that suffer ye give relief. Rejoice, Boris and Gleb, wise in God. Like streams ye spring from the founts of life-giving water which flow for the redemption of the righteous. Rejoice, ye who have trampled the serpent of evil beneath your feet. Ye have appeared amid bright rays, enlighten like beacons the whole land of Rus'. Appearing in faith immutable, ye have ever driven away darkness. [...] Like beacons supernal and zealous guardians, ye dwell with God, illumined forever with light divine, and in your

¹⁸ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 128.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Passion Bearers are saints in the Orthodox Church who underwent cruelty and oppression in a spirit of meekness and non-resistance to evil, regarded as tantamount to the status of martyrdom, especially as that witness to the church in heroic gentleness of Christ." John McGuckin, *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, vol. 2 (West Sussex, England: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 440.

courageous martyrdom ye enlighten the souls of the faithful. [...] Ye glorious ones, with the sacred drops of your blood ye have dyed a robe of purple which ye wear in beauty, and reign forevermore with Christ, interceding with him for his new Christian nation and for your fellows, for our land is hallowed by your blood.²²

The death of Boris and Gleb wasn't enough for Svyatopolk however, in an attempt to rule all of Rus' he began to "reflect on how he would kill all of his brethren."²³ A younger son of Vladimir, Yaroslav the prince of Novgorod, however, would prevent such actions from taking place. Upon hearing of his brother's treachery, Yaroslav gathered an army and began to march south from Novgorod.²⁴ The two faced each other along the Dnieper river in 1016 CE, for three months according to the chronicle, neither brother commenced an attack.²⁵

It was only when the Dnieper river froze over that Yaroslav advanced his troops into attacking Svyatopolk's.²⁶ Due to the topographical nature of the battle field, Svyatopolk was unable to receive assistance from his Pecheneg allies forcing him to retreat not to Kiev but rather to Poland.²⁷ So it was in 1016 CE that Yaroslav took up the throne in Kiev until when in 1018 CE Svyatopolk returned from Poland with his retinue bolstered by the support of his father-in-law King Boleslaw of Poland. With a sizeable army Svyatopolk was able to temporarily regain control of Kiev forcing Yaroslav to flee north back to Novgorod.²⁸

In Novgorod the discouraged Yaroslav made plans to "escape overseas" which was met by disgruntlement of the Novgorodian aristocracy who proceeded to pledge sums of money if Yaroslav would take up against his brother once again in the field of battle.²⁹ With the collected sum, Yaroslav was able to supplement his forces with Varangian allies, and his brother did the

²² Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 129-30.

²³ *Ibid*, 130.

²⁴ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 22.

²⁵ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 131.

²⁶ *Ibid*.

²⁷ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 22.

²⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁹ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 132.

same to his forces with the assistance of the Pechenegs.³⁰ The two brothers met in battle at the Al'ta River, at the same location where four years before Boris had been slain.³¹ The importance of the location was not left unjustified, as Nestor reports that “Yaroslav halted at the site where Boris had been slain and, lifting up his hands to heaven, exclaimed, ‘The blood of my brother cries aloud to thee, oh Lord. Avenge the blood of this just man. Visit upon this criminal the sorrow and terror that thou didst inflict upon Cain to avenge the blood of Abel.’”³²

Several days later, Yaroslav had defeated his brother in battle for the last time. Although Svyatopolk escaped unscathed, an illness over took him several days later while in retreat leading to his death while being carried on a litter by his cohorts.³³ Yaroslav once again returned to Kiev, where he was constantly challenged by his brother Mstislav for the throne from 1019-1029 CE wherein the *Primary Chronicle* simply reports that “Peace prevailed.”³⁴ So it was until sometime between 1034-36 CE that the two brothers operated as co-rulers until Mstislav died during a hunting expedition, and the death of his son a year earlier left Yaroslav as “the sole ruler in the land of Rus’.”³⁵ Yaroslav came into much favor from his people; he is described as being pious and wise, the latter of which grew to be appended to his name after his death.

2.3 The Actualities of Christianity’s Guidance on the Kingdom of Rus’

The widespread adoption of Christianity by an entire population in a seemingly instantaneous fashion would certainly be considered an act of proselytizing perfection. The actuality of such has been frequently called into question by scholars. The mass baptism of

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid, 133.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 136.

³⁵ Ibid.

Kiev, and subsequent “transformation of Kiev’s architectural landscape” cannot be ignored.³⁶ As Vladimir erected a church dedicated to St. Basil in the same location where the pagan idols that he himself had ordered installed, he was seemingly attempting to wipe one religious tradition from the slate and thusly replace it with another. Such transitions rarely go as planned as religion undoubtedly acts as both a cornerstone of society and culture, a more than effective proof to those who claim that theology only ever results in ideology. The successional struggle between Vladimir’s sons shows just how practical and effective Christian morality was in Rus’ during this time. Janet Martin describes the reality of the situation by showing the resistance to proselytism exhibited by the denizens of Novgorod:

When Christian clergy arrived in Novgorod and threw the idol of Perun into the Volkhov River, for example, they provoked a popular rebellion. [...] Nevertheless, the populace remained stubbornly pagan; only gradually through the eleventh century did Novgorodian women, for example, replace the pendants and amulets they wore on their breasts to ward off evil spirits with crucifixes and small icons.³⁷

This period of Russian history is best classified as one where Christianity was paired with Slavic paganism as the dominant partner, rather than completely replacing it.³⁸

In speaking about the sons of Yaroslav in 1068CE, Nestor affirms Janet Martin’s analysis with contemporary sentiment. A group of nomads known as the Polovicians began to invade and attack Rus’, and so three princes set out against the invaders.³⁹ Apparently, the princely group and their retinue were unable to defeat the Polovicians, and Nestor’s account of why is important to analyze. The inability of Izyaslav, Svyatoslav, and Vsevolod to subdue the invaders is described as an act of God:

God in his wrath causes foreigners to attack a nation, and then, when its inhabitants are thus crushed by the invaders, they remember God. Intestine strife is invited by the craft

³⁶ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 9.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 11.

³⁸ Billington, *The Icon & the Axe*, 18.

³⁹ Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 146.

of the devil. For God wishes men not evil but good; while the devil takes his delight in cruel murder and bloodshed, and therefore incites quarrels, envy, domestic strife, and slander.⁴⁰

Nestor is, of course, referring to the barbaric tendencies between princes which even after the death of Yaroslav the Wise continued to plague the *Christian* image of the princes of Rus’.

These individuals, that is the Rurikid princes, in the words of Ernst Kantorowicz, were supposed to “become the *christomimētēs* – literally the ‘actor’ or ‘impersonator’ of Christ” whereupon “the king (in our case prince) *becomes* deified for a brief span by virtue of grace.” The fact they were not fulfilling such a role resulted in negative commentary, a politically aimed pushback and reminder from the monastic community.⁴¹

In another departure from the chronological narrative, Nestor takes time to examine the situation of the Christian faith in the kingdom of Rus’ stating that no one could “call ourselves Christians as long as we live like pagans.”⁴² Breaking from his self-established top-down narrative fashion, Nestor describes the lack-luster faithfulness of the lay population in stating “the churches still stand; but when the hour of prayer is come, few worshippers are found in the church, for this reason we shall suffer at the hand of God all sorts of chastisement and then incursion of our foes, and at the command of God we shall endure punishment for our sins.”⁴³ In what Janet Martin labels “a failure to honor the Christian tenet of brotherly love,” the historical princely actors are cast as the antithesis to the saints Boris and Gleb who were later canonized in 1072CE.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 47.

⁴² Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 147.

⁴³ Ibid, 147-8.

⁴⁴ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 23.

2.4 Contemporary Analysis and Treatment of Russian Princely Succession

Where Martin's analysis falls short is her failure to continue develop such an idea, the realization of the importance of theology, instead the author persists that "despite the chronicle's interpretation, an examination of the inter-princely contest reveals that other factors associated with the dynastic and political organization also influenced the events."⁴⁵ The actuality of the secessionist struggle being portrayed as a failure to uphold the Christian tenant of brotherly love was a required theme for dynastic legitimacy in later Russian rulers.⁴⁶ To explain, the eventual Russian princes, tsars, and emperors had no legitimate dynastic claim due to centuries of fratricidal wars over the Kievan and later Muscovite thrones. With no blood claim to dynastic legitimacy, another channel of shared tradition must exist so that the shared "soul" can migrate from one ruler to another.

Remember from the introductory chapter that Ernst Kantorowicz dictates that the "migration of the 'Soul,' that is, of the immortal part of kingship, from one incarnation to another as expressed by the concept of the king's demise is certainly one of the essentials of the whole theory of the King's Two Bodies."⁴⁷ There can be no doubt that the Christian aspect of brotherly love is a subset of the perceived nature of a pious Christian sovereign. Added to this, there is no scholar who would not affirm that the Russian sovereigns valued their heritage both for pride as well as proof of their legitimacy. Even Sophie the princess of Anhalt-Zerbst (later Catherine the Great) recognized the need and power of this Russian variant of dynastic credentialing and paired herself in alternative fashions to Peter the Great to protect her claim to

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ The theme of brotherly love is one that is consistently carried between both Old Testament and New Testament narratives. For examples see Rom 12:10 ESV; Heb 13:1 ESV; 1 Jn 4:20 ESV; 1 Thess 4:9 ESV.

⁴⁷ Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 13.

the throne.⁴⁸ Here the dynastic heritage of Vladimir and the shared Christian heritage of Russian princes instead becomes the vehicle in which these later rulers lay their claim; with no pure blood claim to their ancestral past, other aspects of culture stood in its place. Although Janet Martin's professor Edward Keenan began to trace this Christian genealogical heritage in some form in his later years her devaluation of the role of this shared Christian heritage seems to break away from her late professor's contemplations.⁴⁹

Dr. Keenan had in a lecture he gave in the Fall of 1974 started to discuss "the growth and nature of the Grand Prince's body politic," which he apparently had preliminarily traced from Ivan IV to "the reign of Ivan's grandfather, Ivan III."⁵⁰ His commentary, while focused around his recent publication of *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha: The Seventeenth-Century Genesis of the "Correspondence" Attributed to Prince A. M. Kurbskii and Tsar Ivan IV*, which discredited a large swath of primary sources via literary analysis, barely scratches the subject of dynastic divine ordination but demonstrates he was well aware of such factors. The article's editor, Russell Martin, in the introduction concludes that this lecture was perhaps a buildup to "something even more substantial."⁵¹

Despite not engaging the political theology of the Christian genealogical heritage of the Rurik princes directly, Dr. Martin's analysis does unknowingly support the notion in alternative fashions. In analyzing the inter-princely secessionist struggles that marked the eleventh and twelfth century political landscape, Dr. Martin points out that a "exclusive Riurikid dynastic rule

⁴⁸ Robert Massie, *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman* (New York: Random House, 2011), 574.

⁴⁹ Martin lists Dr. Edward Keenan, the late Harvard University professor as one of her primary influences in her acknowledgement section, see Janet Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1580* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), xii.

⁵⁰ Edward Keenan and Russell Martin, eds., "The Tsar's Two Bodies," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 51, (March 2017): 20-22.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 5.

over all the lands of Rus' persisted.⁵² In discussing a conference held in 1097 in Liubech about conflict between two dynastic branches, the author also points out that the Grand Prince Sviatopolk “retained Kiev, [and] the ‘heritage’ of his father Iziaslav.” The heritage she refers to is where Sviatopolk laid his claim and was affirmed.⁵³ This formalized system of succession which accounted for this heritage was known as the rota system wherein:

The princes did not remain permanent, irremovable rulers of the provinces originally allotted to them, but that, according as changes occurred in the family through death, one or more of the members junior to the deceased were promoted to provinces superior to those which they had previously held. This process of promotion was based upon a definite rota and carried out in exactly the same order of seniority of the princes as the order in which the original allotment had been made. The system expressed, before all things, the idea of the indivisibility of princely power, for, although the princes divided that power among themselves, they never parted with a share of it to an outsider, but succeeded each other strictly according to seniority,⁵⁴

The role that these princes provided was not limited to just symbolic quips and intradynastic conflicts; within each of their realms the heavenly ordained Rurikid prince “was responsible for collecting tribute and taxes, for providing security and maintaining order, administering justice, and supporting the Church.”⁵⁵

The seemingly hot-swappable nature of the Rurikid princes was not without function however, for the system “compensated for the high rates of early death” amongst the warrior-princes of Rus' who were still “liv[ing] like pagans.”⁵⁶ Indeed, as discussed before, the transition of an entire society from pagan beliefs to Christianity no matter the degree of cultural assimilation is less than perfect. The rota system thus can be characterized as one that attempted to satisfy both the Christian requirements of a sovereign as well as needs of princes who still

⁵² Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 32.

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, vol.1, trans. Charles Hogarth (New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), 98.

⁵⁵ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 32.

⁵⁶ Ibid; Cross, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 147.

carried on dangerous expeditions in mimicry of their pagan ancestors. This transition from what may be labeled pagan political theology to that of Christian political theology, where according to the French jurist Jean Bodin there is a “sovereign prince who is answerable only to God.”⁵⁷ The princes of Kievan Rus’ were still generations away from reaching such a status, wherein their “power is absolute and sovereign,” as there had yet to be a prince who rose above the ranks of his princely cohorts to a point where he was only “commanded by the law of God and of nature.”⁵⁸ Such an undeniable connection to the divine would not be achieved until the likes of later Muscovite princes such as Ivan III and the first Tsar Ivan IV. In the years before such leaders, often church members acted as intercessors of Christianity morality in a plethora of roles.

2.5 The Actualities of Princely Power

Thus, the power of the prince at this point in time was directly weighed against the economic, political, and religious might of the province he was placed in. These factors which added to the might of the prince were generally external to his own actions which, in turn, limited the agency of the bearer of the princely title. The slow transition from what we can now label the pagan political folkway can be demonstrated by the actions of the Novgorodian *Veche*, a political unit we will examine momentarily. By the twelfth century, the province of Novgorod had grown into its own agency. The economic ties stemming from Novgorod had broken away from Kievan centered trade in and around the Black Sea and instead “Novgorod traded on a large scale with the island of Gotland and with the ports of the Baltic coast line, but its merchandise

⁵⁷ Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty: Four Chapters from The Six Books of the Commonwealth*, trans. Julian H. Franklin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.

⁵⁸ Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, 8.

also reached England, Flanders, and other distant lands.”⁵⁹ Novgorod’s attachment to the Hanseatic league led many historians to label it as “a commercial republic.”⁶⁰ Indeed the economic might of the province allowed it to, in 1156CE, “obtain virtual independence in religious administration too by seizing the right to elect its own archbishop.”⁶¹

This break from centralized religious authority was not truly so, and as will be shown shortly, limitations were also placed on princely power as well. The *veche* or *vietcha* (town councils) in Novgorod represented a larger share of political agency when compared to the *veche* of other provinces, and as such it stands useful to examine. Klyuchevsky speaks of how some princes grew forced to share power with such town councils:

Now, however, that the authority of princes was beginning to wane, in consequence of their innumerable [fratricidal] feuds and the frequent changes of the local ruler, the importance of the great towns began to wax in corresponding proportion, until at length the increased political influence of the towns caused the extinct order of wardens to become replaced by *vietcha* (town councils) representative of the citizens as a whole.⁶²

The role of the *veche* could not be ignored; Klyuchevsky later states that “without entirely overriding the sovereign rights of the princely house” the town council “had come to rank at least *equal* in importance the with local princes.”⁶³ A tale from *The Chronicle of Novgorod* shows the actuality of such political implications. The Chronicle reports an incident in 1270CE wherein the town “set about driving *Knyaz* Yaroslav out of the town” and to undertake such a task the citizens “summoned a *Veche* in Yaroslav’s Court.”⁶⁴ The *Veche* proceeded to assemble a

⁵⁹ Riasanovsky and Steinberg, *A History of Russia to 1855*, 78.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 74.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, 115.

⁶³ Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, 117.

⁶⁴ Vernadsky offers the best description of the term *Knyaz* with its pagan heritage, “Prince. Before the coming of the Varangian princes, in the 9th century, the eastern Slavic tribes of Poliane, Drevliane, Krivichi, and others had their own princes and princelings called kniazia.” George Vernadsky and Ralph T. Fisher, et al. *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 39; Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes, *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016-1471* (London: Forgotten Books, 2015), 104.

document of complaints, which was dispatched to the prince Yaroslav.⁶⁵ The complaints were varied, but a majority of them spoke to the “faults” of prince Yaroslav, primarily his transgressions toward individual citizens:

Why hast thou taken up the Volkhov with snarers of wild cusk, and taken up the fields with catchers of hares? Why has though taken Olex Mortkinich’s homestead? Why hast thou taken silver from Mikifor Manushkinich and Roman Boldyzhevich and Varfolomei? And another thing, why dost thou send away from us the foreigners who dwell among us? [...] And now, *Knyaz* we cannot suffer thy violence. Depart from us; and we shall think of a *Knyaz* for ourselves.⁶⁶

Prince Yaroslav apparently was not ready to surrender his princely seat, and he dispatched

Svyatoslav and Andrei Vorotislavich back to the *Veche* to convey the message that he

“renounced all that, [the *Veche*’s claims] and [he] [kisses] the Cross on all your terms.”⁶⁷ The

Chronicler reports the response of the *Veche* which was brief and of a threatening nature:

“*Knyaz*, go away, we do not want thee; else we shall come, the whole of Novgorod, to drive thee out.”⁶⁸

The Novgorodian *Veche* attempted to elect their own *Knyaz*, offering the princely seat to one Dmitri Alexandrovich, who refused the post because he was a nephew of Yaroslav as well as out of consideration for the *rota* ladder.⁶⁹ It was after this that Yaroslav began gathering forces to retake his seat, wherein “he sent Ratibor to the Tartar *Tsar* asking for help against Novgorod.”⁷⁰ The Tartars agreed to help Yaroslav and during the same year the forces of Novgorod and the forces of Yaroslav “stood a week the ford [...] on opposite sides.”⁷¹ It was only with the intervention of Cyrill II, the Metropolitan of Russian Orthodox Church, that the

⁶⁵ Michell and Forbes, *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016-1471*, 104.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 104-5.

⁷¹ Ibid, 105.

incident was brought to cessation without violence.⁷² The intercession by Cyrill II was sent from Vladimir and read:

The Lord God has given to his apostles and their heirs in place of himself the power to bind and to loose. We are apostolic heirs, and have the figure of Christ and the power of his kingdom. I am the first pastor of all Russia, and I order you, gentlemen: fear the Lord God, and respect your prince, and do not make strife, and do not shed blood. There is repentance and forgiveness for every wrong and every sin. Grand Prince Yaroslav repents of everything in which he is not right, and asks forgiveness and does not want things to continue in this way. And I command you to receive him with sufficient honor. If you in your rage united yourselves by an oath not to accept Grand Prince Yaroslav, I will deliver you from this oath and will forgive you and bless you. Do not make strife, do not shed blood, rest in peace and love. But if you do not heed me, I will place a spiritual burden upon you.⁷³

It was only after such an intercession by the spiritual father Cyrill II that the *Veche* of Novgorod relented and Yaroslav “took a peace on all the terms of Novgorod; they set Yaroslav and led him up to the Cross.”⁷⁴ The chronicler appropriately attributes the deliverance from bloodshed to Cyrill II stating “and God did not allow the shedding of Christian blood.”⁷⁵

Yet earlier in Cyrill II’s metropolitan career, he had been council to another prince of Novgorod. Alexander Nevsky, known today as St. Alexander Nevsky, demonstrates the growing power, influence, and primacy of the Russian Orthodox Church in the mid-thirteenth century. In 1242CE, the Swedes, accompanied by the Livonian order, decided to attack Novgorod. Alexander Nevsky, the prince of Novgorod “upon hearing these words, [...] went to the Church of Holy Sophia, and, kneeling before the altar, he began to pray, shedding tears.”⁷⁶ The Pskovian chronicler spends time examining the faith of Alexander Nevsky, showing how

⁷² Andreii N. Mouravieff, trans. Rev. R. W. Blackmore. *A History of the Church of Russia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1842), 48.

⁷³ Joseph T. Fuhrmann, “Metropolitan Cyril II (1242-1281) and the Politics of Accommodation” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 24, no.2 (1976): 169.

⁷⁴ Michell and Forbes, *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016-1471*, 105.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Anonymous Chronicler, “Tale and the Life and Courage of the Pious and Great Prince Alexander.” In *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, ed. Serge A. Zenkovsky (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), 230.

monumentally his faith allegedly influenced his actions. The account of the Battle on Ice by the chronicler affirms the aforementioned:

On Saturday [April 5th, 1242] when the sun rose, the two armies clashed. There was horrible bloodshed and such a noise from the breaking of lances and clanging of swords that one could think that the ice itself on the lake was breaking. And the ice itself was so covered by blood that it could not be seen. I was told [by a witness of the battle] that a godly regiment in the heavens came to help Alexander. And so the Germans were defeated with the help of God and the enemy fled and they were pursued and cut to pieces by his warriors so that one could think that these warriors were rushing through the sky. And the enemy did not know wither to escape, and God glorified Alexander here before all the regiments in the same way as Joshua, son of Nun, was glorified by Jericho. And God placed in Alexander's hands those who bragged: "Let us take Alexander with our own hands." And there was nobody to resist him in the battle.⁷⁷

By the end of his reign, Alexander and the people of Rus' had seen foreign invaders from both East and West, both Christian and Heathen. Distinctly alone regarding Christian allies, the Russian Church continued to grow weary as "Romans" opposed and threatened their religious institution in similar fashion to heathens. With no natural religious allies, the Church would soon turn inwards to armor itself against Western and Heathen interests. In his cumulative history of Russia, Geoffrey Hosking sets the battle on Lake Peipus as an event that "established the Narva River and Lake Peipus as a permanent dividing line between Orthodoxy and Western forms of Christianity."⁷⁸ There can be no doubt that such themes are mobilized in modern political rhetoric in Russia, President Putin's actions certainly affirm such a stance.

2.6 The Abbot Sergius, Prince Dimitrii, and the Internalization of the Christian Political Folkway

There are few instances as renown as the events leading up to and the battle of Kulikovo in 1380CE. In a period where almost all hope had been lost under the Mongol Yoke, the battle

⁷⁷ Ibid, 231.

⁷⁸ Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: A History*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 65.

of Kulikovo acted as the first successful venture by the Russians to remove themselves from the sequestration of Sarai, the European capital of the Mongols. The life of the Abbot Sergius, known today as St. Sergius demonstrates the growing influence of Moscow and her princes. Born in 1314CE according to his hagiographer, Epiphanius, Bartholomew (later Sergius after taking monastic vows) grew up in the “ancient city” of Rostov, and his father was the boyar Cyril who “had become impoverished” as a result of the “frequent inroads of the Tatars”.⁷⁹ At the age of twelve, Bartholomew who was unable to read and thus behind in his studies, was sent out to locate horses that had run away into the fields near his house, a theme which has striking similarities to the biblical narrative of Saul.⁸⁰ It is here that one of the most iconographic events of the Abbot Sergius’s life occurs, for it is said that in his search he ran across a monk praying under a tree. While venting about his concerns regarding his education to the hermit, Bartholomew invited him to dinner where upon his exit he declared that “Bartholomew would serve the Holy Trinity, and would lead many to an understanding of the divine precepts.”⁸¹

The generation that St. Sergius belonged to was one of despair, for “he belonged to the generation which started life when the last men who remembered the days of freedom had already gone, and when the hope of liberation had almost vanished from the heart of the defeated nation.”⁸² The Mongol Yoke, as it is known today, had subjugated the princes of Rus’ to pay

⁷⁹ Nicolas Zernov, *St. Sergius – Builder of Russia with The Life, Acts and Miracles of the Holy Abbot Sergius of Radonezh*, trans. Adeline Delafeld. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), 13; George Fedotov, ed. John Meyendorff, *The Russian Religious Mind II: The Middle Ages The 13th to 15th Centuries* (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1975), 199.

⁸⁰ Zernov, *St. Sergius*, 13; “Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys." 1 Samuel 9: 3, ESV; George Fedotov brilliantly points out this biblical narrative used for parable by St. Epiphanius the Wise in his *The Life, Acts, and Miracles of our Blessed and Holy Father Sergius of Radonezh*; Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind II*, 262.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*, 7.

tribute in Sarai, the European capital of the Tartars.⁸³ Since 1236CE when Mongol armies had launched an offensive that destroyed the neighbors of Russia, the cities of the Bulgars, much of the mid-Volga had been brought into their domain. In their Eastward expansion, the Mongolians (lead by Genghis Khan's second son Batu) fixed their eye on "the Rus' lands," and although the arrival of the Mongols did not come "as a complete surprise" to the princes of Rus'; "the Riurikid princes failed to take any extraordinary defensive measures" against them.⁸⁴

However, it should be noted that while the Mongols "destroyed much of the Russian economy and severely depleted the population," the Russian Orthodox Church during this period "grew enormously in material resources" while "under Mongol protection."⁸⁵ It is here we must take a quick break from our narrative to examine the political implications of Mongol rule of the Russian lands. One question that must be raised is about Mongolian influence on Russian political institutions. In his article "Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century," historian Charles Halperin contests Donald Ostrowski's conclusions laid out in his monograph *Muscovy and the Mongols* claiming that "Ostrowski advances far beyond the limits of these institutions in delineating Mongol influence."⁸⁶ Ostrowski had claimed that Muscovite political, military, and economic institutions had heavily "borrowed" from the respective Mongol institutions, to which Halperin discredits due to a lack of "sufficient evidence of what the Qipchaq Khanate practice[s] was," which made "any projection of it onto Muscovy most speculative," and therefore "not convincing."⁸⁷ While eventually Muscovite institutions adopted

⁸³ The European Mongolian capital of Sarai in the thirteenth century lay on the edge of the Caspian Sea, in between the Volga tributaries, for more see Ian Barnes, *Restless Empire: A Historical Atlas of Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Belknap Press, 2015), 18-21.

⁸⁴ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 135.

⁸⁵ Charles Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Mediaeval Russian History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 8-9.

⁸⁶ —, "Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century" *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no.2 (Spring 2000), 239.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

strategies, terminology, and methodology from their Mongol overlords, it is clear that the religious institution of Russia, the Orthodox Church, survived the yoke relatively unscathed. While the metropolitan of the Church was frequently in contact with “the Mongol court,” these interactions were shaped by the Mongol “respect and tolerance for all religious institutions,” leading “the Russian Church [to enjoy] special privileges.”⁸⁸

The Church’s involvement with the Golden Horde appeared to be ceremonial exchange for such special privileges as “the Church regularly prayed for the khan,” cooperated with the Mongols for “mundane matters,” and more often than not, the metropolitan sent bishops to Sarai to act as diplomatic agents.⁸⁹ More important than the Church’s involvement with the Golden Horde was, perhaps, the mystical reaction by the monastic community, which forever changed the course of Church and State relations through its own established precedent. It is here that we can return to our narrative of Bartholomew of Rostov, for the rest of his life acts as the perfect case study of both the monastic reaction to the Mongol Yoke and also the new relationship between Church and State as well. Sergius’s hagiographer Epiphanius the Wise speaks of how Cyril, Bartholomew’s father, fell into social and fiscal bankruptcy and his relocation of Radonezh:

Cyril, devout servant of God, led the life of a wealthy and renown Boyar, in the province of Rostov, but in later years was reduced to poverty. He, like others, suffered from the invasion of Tatar hordes into Russia, from the skirmishes of troops, the frequent demands of tribute, and from repeated bad harvests, in conjunction with a period of violence and disorder which followed the great Tatar war. When the principality of Rostov fell into the hands of the Grand Duke Ivan Danilovich of Moscow, distress prevailed in the town of Rostov, and not least among the princes and boyars. They were deprived of power, of their properties, of honors and rank, of all which Moscow became the possessor. [...] A severe persecution followed, and many of the remaining inhabitants of Rostov were constrained to surrender their estates to the Muscovites, [...] Cyril, God’s devout servant, avoided further misfortune by escaping from his native town. He assembled his entire

⁸⁸ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 155.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

household and family and with them removed from Rostov to Radonezh, where he settled near the church dedicated to the Birth of Christ, which is still standing to this day.⁹⁰

Ivan Danilovich of Moscow, better known as Ivan Kalita, or Ivan “Moneybags” plays an important role in Russian history. As the Grand Duke of Moscow, he was known as the “gatherer of Russian lands” through his loans to impoverished principalities his successors were able to annex indebted lands into the growing metropolis of Moscow.⁹¹ The growing power of Moscow and Cyril’s troubles can be attributed mainly to “the geographical position of [Moscow] and the genealogical position of its Prince,” which “entailed economic advantages” to the Prince of Moscow according to Klyuchevsky.⁹² It was also because of the growing primacy of Moscow and the bygone “desolation of Kieff (Kiev)” that in 1325 CE Metropolitan Peter, later St. Peter, transferred the metropolitical throne to Moscow “for Vladimir (the metropolitical throne from 1316-1325) ceased to be the capital,” giving Moscow not only the “Great Princedom” but the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church as well.⁹³

Growing into adulthood in Moscow allowed Bartholomew to “bec[o]me a Muscovite in the most receptive years of his life.”⁹⁴ When his parents passed away, Bartholomew at the age of twenty-three and his brother Stephen “in the tradition of ancient monasticism” moved to the only “desert” Russia had to offer, that is its deep forests to build a small cabin for their quarters alongside a chapel, the start of the now famous Trinity-Sergius Lavra.⁹⁵ In taking up in the

⁹⁰ Epiphanius the Wise, “The Life, Acts, and Miracles of our Blessed and Holy Father Sergius of Radonezh.” In *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, ed. Serge A. Zenkovsky (New York: Meridian Books, 1974), 265.

⁹¹ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 178-9.

⁹² Klyuchevsky, *A History of Russia*, 281; Janet Martin also affirms the outcomes of St. Sergius’s family as a result of the actions of Ivan Danilovich, see Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 179.

⁹³ Andreii N. Mouravieff, trans. Rev. R. W. Blackmore. *A History of the Church of Russia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1842), 51.

⁹⁴ Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind II*, 203-4.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 204; “Blessed Bartholomew now came to him, [Stephen] and begged him to accompany him in the search for some desert place. Stephen assented, and he and the saint together explored many parts of the forest, till finally they came to a waste space in the middle of the forest, near a stream.” Epiphanius the Wise, “The Life, Acts, and Miracles of our Blessed and Holy Father Sergius of Radonezh.” In Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, 266.

Russian wilderness, Bartholomew, now tonsured as Sergius, left behind his aristocratic past and took up a humble form of asceticism. This mystical ideal of leading an impoverished lifestyle “based upon the imitation of the humiliated Christ” has become labeled as kenoticism, and as word traveled of the humble Sergius the monastery grew in size as those who had grown up in generation of strife came to join the Abbot Sergius in the wilderness.⁹⁶

This new type of monasticism did not exist in such forms in Russia prior to this. The hermitic tendencies of Sergius were a reaction to his contemporary situation, to the political unrest that had rooted him from Rostov, to the civil unrest that was occurring in cities, as well as the situation of subjugation cast onto Russia by the Mongols. While speaking about the desert origins of the kenotic, that is self-emptying tradition, George Fedotov states “Bartholomew in his youth, could hardly have acquired a deep knowledge of literature and of the restrictions imposed upon the anchoritic life. Neither could ancient Russia offer him any model for this life.”⁹⁷ In his reaction to the contemporary situation Muscovites faced, Sergius left behind any religious heritage from the Russian socio-religious pagan past, a sign of the Byzantine influenced Russian Christian political folkway coming to primacy. The mystical and ineffable sentiment of Sergius would lead the religious community of his followers. The tradition of kenoticism which became formalized by Sergius’s hagiographer Epiphanius allowed monasticism to shift “from urban settlements to the wilderness of the great forests of northern Russia.”⁹⁸

The tale of Sergius includes how far his pious and humble behaviors went. Epiphanius states that “blessed Sergius never wore new clothing, not any made of fine material, no colored, nor white, nor smooth and soft; he wore plain fine cloth or caftan; his clothing was old and worn,

⁹⁶ Ibid, 210.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 203.

⁹⁸ Mary Pat Fisher, *Living Religions*, 9th ed. (Boston: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2014), 334.

dirty, patched.”⁹⁹ The result of such humbleness resulted in an instance where a visitor approached the monastery and asked “Where is Sergius? Where is the wonderful and famous man?” A brother of the monastery replied that Sergius was digging in the garden, as he frequently did. When the visitor grew impatient he “peeped through an aperture” only to be disappointed to see “the saint wearing shabby attire, patched, in holes, and face covered with sweat,” which led him to distrust that “this was he of whom he had heard.” When Sergius emerged from the garden and his labors, the monk informed the lay visitor “This is he whom you wish to see,” to which the visitor did not believe and replied:

I came to see a prophet and you point out to me a needy-looking beggar. I see no glory, no majesty and honor about him. He wears no fine and rich apparel; he has no attendants, no trained servants, but is but a needy, indigent beggar.¹⁰⁰

The “indigent beggar” was later put to shame when “a neighboring prince arrived at the monastery, with great pomp, accompanied by a retinue of boyars, servants, and attendants” and proceeded to, “from a distance, made a low obeisance to Sergius.”¹⁰¹ The service the tale provides is that of allegory, the neighboring prince may have been given advanced information on how the abbot dressed but he still recognized him with the appropriate gravitas, an *affirmation* of Sergius’ piety and importance past earthly decorum.

The humiliation of this lay individual was rectified later by St. Sergius, for Epiphanius states Sergius was kind to him, but the principle of the event remains to readers. Sergius, by his own actions had removed from himself any vestiges of superiority and preeminence. As a humble, Trinity loving servant of God, Sergius was able to make friends with political actors such as Grand Duke Dmitry Ivanovich, later known as Dmitry Donskoi. The relationship

⁹⁹ Epiphanius the Wise, “The Life, Acts, and Miracles of our Blessed and Holy Father Sergius of Radonezh.” In Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, 276.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 277.

between the Abbot of the Trinity Lavra and the Grand Duke of Moscow grew to critical importance in 1378-1380CE when the leader of the Golden Horde, Mamai, began to gather support for a joint campaign against Moscow so as “to force the grand prince of Vladimir, Dmitry Ivanovich, to pay tribute to him.”¹⁰² By the time that Dmitry was able to collect tribute “and to dispatch it to Mamai,” it was already too late as the “Tatar forces, supplemented by troops hired from the Caucasus and along the Black Sea coast, had begun advancing northward.”¹⁰³

Drawing on his previously “successful efforts to consolidate his power,” Dmitry was able to assemble an army built from military forces by many of the Russian principalities. The narrative of the Battle of Kulikovo always includes that famous story of the Grand Duke Dmitry visiting the Abbot Sergius at this monastery:

The puissant and reigning prince, who held the scepter of all Russia, great Dmitry, having a great faith in the saint [Sergius], came to ask him if he counseled him to go against the heathen. The saint, bestowing on him his blessing, and strengthened by prayer, said to him: “It behooveth you, lord, to have a car for the lives of the flock committed to by God. Go forth against the heathen; and upheld by the strong arm of God, conquer; and return to your country sound in health, and glorify God with loud praise.”¹⁰⁴

So it was in September of 1380CE that the Grand Duke of Moscow, Dmitry, marched with his forces to Kulikovo field near the Don river to face both Mamai and the Lithuanians who fought alongside him. With the support of the pious and now widely renown Abbot Sergius of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, Dmitry carried a blessing that could only be compared to the papal banner William the Conqueror brought with him from the Pope of Rome to the 1066CE Battle of Hastings.

¹⁰² Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 213.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Epiphanius the Wise, “The Life, Acts, and Miracles of our Blessed and Holy Father Sergius of Radonezh.” In Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, 284.

Spiritually bound to his piety, humility, and humble image by the “imitation of a humiliated Christ,” the Abbot Sergius and future generations of monastics were mystically endowed and thus some of the first who could appear alongside, rather than instead of the prince, or now, Grand Prince, without imposing on their sovereign ideal and image.¹⁰⁵ Centuries of intra-fratricidal war and dynastic secessionist issues had made the princely line value their image as Christian princes as their sole affirmation of their sovereign rights. While the Crowns given to the Kievan Rus’, Rus’, and Muscovite princes was essentially “a visible, material, exterior gold circle or diadem with which the Prince was vested and adorned at his coronation,” the piece of regnal jewelry was near useless without a cultural and religious affirmation of sovereignty and symbolism. These two components of affirmation, which were granted to the Grand Duke Dmitry Ivanovich by the Abbot Sergius in his public affirmation and support of him gave the now Grand Prince a so called “invisible Crown” which was fully responsible for “encompassing all the royal rights and privileges indispensable for the government of the body politic – which was perpetual and descended either from God directly or by the dynastic right of inheritance.”¹⁰⁶ This monarchist claim grew further solidified in the future by the introduction of Muscovite regalia which was mythological regarding its’ Byzantine origin from the Monomachos dynasty in the fifteenth century.

The Battle of Kulikovo changed Russia’s standing in the Eastern European stage. Past this, a new relationship between Church and State manifested. Where before in the Kievan period, as laid out by Prince Vladimir of Kiev “the civil authority was obligated to materially support and protect the authority of the Church, while the Church would provide morality and an ethical basis which would have a benevolent and beneficial influence on the population,” the

¹⁰⁵ Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind II*, 210.

¹⁰⁶ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two*, 337.

Church now had come into the political agency of *affirmation*, wherein prelates could fortify sovereign claims laid by Princes and Tsars. This foundation of partnership, rather brotherhood, worked because the image of the church had grown exemplified by its kenotic piety which was in a realm of authority unto its own when compared to the illustrious God anointed sovereign. Upon speaking of the image acquired by the Muscovite prince after the events of Kulikovo, Klyuchevsky states “the people looked upon the Muscovite Prince as their popular leader in the struggles of Rus with external foes,” as well as Northern Russians, “saw in the Muscovite Prince the “eldest son” of the Russian Church – closest friend and coadjutor of the supreme Russian hierarch.”¹⁰⁷ In the wake of the re-envisioned roles of both Church and State, Russia had left behind her bygone pagan political folkway and had fully adopted the Byzantine influenced, Christocentric model of sovereignty. This lengthy process of cultural assimilation throughout the centuries had nearly ripped the principalities of Rus’ apart from the inside, but now Moscow’s Byzantine heritage would grow further affirmed and lay at the core of political, cultural, and economic ventures.

¹⁰⁷ Kluchevsky, *A History of Russia*, 293.

Chapter Three: From Whence They Came: Byzantine-Kievan Heritage and Muscovite Dynastic Continuity

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, lo I, the sinful poor slave of God, Dmitriy Ivanovich, write [this] testament, being of sound mind. I give [this] arrangement [ryad”] to my sons and to my princess. [...] And I bequeath my patrimony, Moscow, to my children, to Prince Vasiliy, to Prince Yuriy, to Prince Andrey, [and] to Prince Petr.”

Dmitry Donskoy in his *Second Testament of Grand Prince Dmitriy Donskoy*¹

3.1 The *Vitae* of Muscovite Princes and their Political Utility

Following the events of the Battle of Kulikovo, the Muscovite prince found himself in a new position of primacy from being battle tested. As the evening of the fourteenth century approached in Russia, a new political system had emerged. Gone were the days of princes using the title *kynaz* (prince) amongst other pagan cultural traditions. What remained however, was the Golden Horde. Moscow had done well to establish itself during the thirteenth century, but the Battle of Kulikovo had little effect on the already strained relations. At the battle, Dmitrii Donskoi had defeated Mamai, but “when Tokhtamysh seized Sarai and defeated Mamai, Dmitrii Donskoi, like other north-eastern Russian princes, immediately acknowledged his suzerainty as khan of the Golden Horde by sending their messengers and costly gifts.”² While the defeat of Mamai emboldened the Muscovites, Dmitrii Donskoi and his successors still “depended upon the Golden Horde.”³ The power of the Golden Horde was never the same again; the decay of the Mongol European capital of Sarai had been put into motion.⁴ It is important to note that even on his deathbed, Dmitrii Donskoi and his principality Moscow had yet to achieve supremacy within the Russian lands.⁵ While the Muscovite Grand Prince was to this point unable to stake a true

¹ Dmitriy Donskoy, “The Second Testament of Grand Prince Dmitriy Donskoy,” in *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*, translated and edited by Robert Craig Howes (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 208.

² Janet Martin, “The Emergence of Moscow (1359-1462),” in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, ed. Maureen Perrie, vol.1 *From Early Rus’ to 1689* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 163.

³ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 187.

⁴ *Ibid*, 215.

⁵ *Ibid*.

sovereign claim due to the suzerainty of the khan, the *vitae* of the Muscovite princely line show the foundations of such claims being laid. It is during the period of the last Grand Princes of Moscow that modifications to documentation, chronicles, and certain Muscovite *vitae* that the mythological Kievan-Byzantine heritage and dynastic claims were established.

As had been custom in Moscow since the reign of Ivan Kalita, the Grand Prince Dmitrii Donskoi sat down in 1389CE to write his second testament, the first of which had been written prior to his “campaign against Tver’ which took place in 1375.”⁶ In lieu of the Metropolitan Pimen who had departed Moscow for Constantinople, Dmitrii wrote his testament in the “presence of Abbot Sergiy [Sergius] and Abbot Sevastian,” showing that the relationship between the Grand Prince and the Abbot of the Trinity-Sergius Monastery in Radonezh was still existent.⁷ Unlike his father, Ivan II, Dmitrii’s testament granted his first son, the soon to be Vasilii II, his “patrimony, the Grand Principedom.”⁸ This was “the first instance in which one of the grand princes bequeathed the Grand Principality of Vladimir to his son,” which further fortified the preeminence of Dmitrii’s son Vasilii.⁹ Past this, the ornamental vestmental heirlooms that had come to represent the physical iconography of the Muscovite Grand Prince were passed to Vasilii:

And lo, I bless my children. To my oldest son, Prince Vasiliy, [I bequeath] the icon [which is] the work of Paramsha, the golden chain which Princess Vasilisa gave me, the great golden belt with precious stones without a strap, the golden belt with a strap [which is] the work of Makar, the shoulder pieces of the grand prince, [and] the Golden Cap.¹⁰

⁶ Robert Craig Howes, “Commentary of The Second Testament of Grand Prince Dmitriy Donskoy,” in *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*, 216.

⁷ Dmitriy Donskoy, “The Second Testament of Grand Prince Dmitriy Donskoy,” in *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*, 217.

⁸ *Ibid*, 212.

⁹ Robert Craig Howes, “Commentary of The Second Testament of Grand Prince Dmitriy Donskoy,” in *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*, 213.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 216.

The aforementioned Golden Cap since the reign of Ivan Kalita had always been willed to “the oldest son of the grand prince.”¹¹ By the reign of Ivan IV the Golden Cap, or the Cap of Monomakh, had become iconographic in regard to Muscovy’s claim to their Byzantine-Kievan heritage. The story of where the twelfth century Kievan Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh obtained his regalia from does not appear in the *Povest' Vremennykh Let (Primary Chronicle)*.

Where the story does appear however is the *Voskresenskaya Chronicle* as well as the *Nikon Chronicle*, both of which were published during the second half of the sixteenth century, decidedly during the reign of Ivan IV.¹² In these accounts Vladimir Monomakh obtained the Golden Cap from the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Monomachus in 1113CE:

Tsar Constantine sent to Grand Prince Vladimir the Metropolitan of Ephesus, Neophytus, [here follows the names of several other emissaries] . . . and he sent with them, to the grand prince, the cross from the life-giving tree, and he took from his own head the tsar’s [i.e., Caesar’s] crown, which is called the Cap of Monomakh, and the carnelian box – the very one from which August Caesar of Rome derived pleasure – and golden chains, and other gifts of the tsar. And Metropolitan Neophytus and the bishops came to Grand Prince Vladimir and they began to beseech the grand prince in the name of the tsar: “The tsar begs of your highness peace and love, and may the Church of God be without disorder and may all Orthodoxy be in peace under the very power of our empire and of your great autocracy of All Rus’, and may you be called henceforth the tsar and crowned by God.” And from that time Grand Prince Vladimir was called Monomakh and Tsar of Great Rus’, and he lived with Tsar Constantine henceforth in peace and love.¹³

The obscurity of this mythological narrative cannot be ignored. The first of which is the title *tsar* being granted to Vladimir Monomakh by Constantine Monomachus. The Kievan prince in the early twelfth century would have had no claim to such a lofty title; such sovereign designations did not get applied to Russian princes until (at the earliest) the reign of Ivan IV’s grandfather, Ivan III. Past this, according to Jaroslaw Pelenski, “there is no evidence of any direct historical

¹¹ Robert Craig Howes, “Heirlooms and Princely Regalia,” in *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*, 98-103.

¹² *Ibid*, 101.

¹³ *Polnoye sobraniye russkikh letopisey*, Vol. VII, *Voskresenskaya letopis'*. (St. Petersburg, Russia, 1851), 23.

relationship between the two Monomachs (Vladimir and Constantine)” since Constantine Monomachus died in 1055CE, just two years after Vladimir Monomakh had been born.¹⁴

3.2 The Actions of Ivan III of Moscow

The purpose for such claims can be easily distinguished, for they are “similar to other medieval and early modern historical legends composed with the purpose of proving a distinguished lineage for the ruling dynasty with the aim of elevating the status of a state in the community of other states.¹⁵ Later versions of Dmitrii Donskoi’s laid the first direct claim to Kievan dynastic succession for the Muscovite ruler. The appended version of the *vita*, dated to around 1453CE contains a more expanded opening statement which states that Dmitrii was:

The most fertile branch and the most beautiful flower from the God-planted orchard of *Car* Vladimir, the New Constantine who baptized the Russian land, and he was [also] a kinsman (*srodnik*) of Boris and Gleb, the miracle workers.¹⁶

This new dynastic claim laid out by the posthumous editors of Dmitrii’s *vita* further signify the merging of the Vladimir Grand Principality into the Grand Principality of Moscow, perhaps a final consolidation of power. The date of the document containing such outlandish political claims would have only been made after the fall of Constantinople (1453).¹⁷ The fact that these textual claims were appended during the reign of Ivan III, Grand Prince of Moscow, is no coincidence, but rather of purposeful intent to help create a narrative for Ivan who had married Sophia Palæologus, a Byzantine princess of the Imperial Palæologus family in 1472CE.¹⁸ The

¹⁴ Jaroslaw Pelenski, “The Emergence of the Muscovite Claims to the Byzantine-Kievan ‘Imperial Inheritance,’” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* no.7 (1983): 527.

¹⁵ Pelenski, “The Emergence of the Muscovite Claims,” 527.

¹⁶ Jaroslaw Pelenski, “The Origins of the Official Muscovite Claims to the ‘Kievan Inheritance,’” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol.1 (March 1977): 40.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 42.

¹⁸ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 245.

implications of the union between the Muscovite prince and the Byzantine princess will be discussed later.

It was also during the reign of Ivan III that additional Byzantine dynastic symbolism was adopted. Of the appropriations from the collapsed empire, the double-headed Byzantine eagle which was used by both the Rurikid and Romanov dynasties was one. Alongside this, Ivan's "employment of Byzantine-style seals and ceremonies" enabled him to further develop the mythological dynasty with the Byzantine "grand symbols and imagery."¹⁹ The growing primacy of Moscow required such a claim as a form of credential. By the time Ivan III was placed on the Muscovite throne "no prince in northern Russia had the strength to withstand the might of Moscow."²⁰ The last province to be annexed into the Muscovite realm was of course Novgorod. For centuries the city had protected itself against Mongol attrition through its connections to the West via the Hanseatic League, and the province also was represented by Russia's most powerful *veche* as demonstrated in the last chapter.

It was in 1478CE that Ivan had finally completed the process of bringing Novgorod under the reign of Moscow. The siege of Ivan was originally intended to coerce Novgorod to provide more reparations to Moscow, to return the lands it has seized, and to break its ties with Lithuania, after a month of heavy besiegement the Novgorodians were forced to surrender.²¹ It is widely reported that as a display of his new authority, Ivan removed the *veche* bell which used to resonate when the *veche* assembled.²² The symbolism of such an act cannot be ignored, for a population that was largely illiterate the role of such symbolic actions was largely recognized. It is also during the reign of Ivan II that the "ideal" relationship between grand prince and

¹⁹ Martin, *Medieval Russia 980-1584*, 258.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 248.

²¹ *Ibid*, 254.

²² *Ibid*.

metropolitan was fully “inherited from Byzantium as a reflection of the relationship between the basileus and patriarch.”²³ It was according to Byzantine political theory that the primate of the church and the sovereign of the state “were two arms of the same body politic.”²⁴ This ideal of the so-called Byzantine symphony of powers became “striven after” within the Muscovite realm to a certain extent.²⁵ While maintaining good relations with the church and his boyars, Ivan III was instrumental and had a significant role in the creation of the Muscovite state.²⁶

3.3 Mythological Byzantine-Kievan Heritage Formalized

The role of these mythological dynastic claims was to legitimize Muscovite sovereignty, as well as attach the Muscovite princely line to the baptizer of Rus’ Prince Vladimir and Byzantium. Centuries of intra-fratricidal wars and varied secessionist claims from the bygone Pagan era had left the Prince of Moscow with a less than perfect dynastic lineage. The Russian Church stood in a different position after the fall of Constantinople: one of primacy rather than subjugation, and it was from this point that Moscow “was the only important city left in Eastern Christendom which was ruled by a Christian prince.”²⁷ As such “Russia was no longer a metropolitan province, but she was the heir and successor of Byzantium. [...] she was to become the third and last Rome.”²⁸ The regalia with its mythological origins, such as the golden cap of Vladimir Monomakh, took on unprecedented iconographic power as well.

Without a direct dynastic claim to the Rurikid prince Vladimir of Kiev, pieces such as the cap of Vladimir Monomakh took up representing such claims instead. The iconography of such

²³ Donald Ostrowski, “The growth of Muscovy (1462-1533),” in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol.1: *From Early Rus’ to 1689*, ed. Maureen Perrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 219.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, 220.

²⁶ Ibid, 221.

²⁷ Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome*, 31.

²⁸ Ibid.

royal ornaments forged a legendary claim of ancestry to the near ancient princes of Kiev, and the fact that they were in the possession of the Muscovite princely family granted them, and them alone, the sole claim to such a mythological heritage. With the golden cap, the *crown* of the Muscovite realm, the Grand Prince of Moscow had a physical claim to sovereignty, and these claims were steeped in the Kievan-Byzantine heritage of the regalia. It was later with Ivan III's marriage to Sophia Palæologus and with such ornamentation that "Russians won their political independence [from the Mongols] and their prince acquired the title of 'the Autocrat' or 'Tsar,' which belonged to the Emperor alone."²⁹

The crown as a sign of sovereignty has long held such symbolism including in Christian narratives. When Joash was anointed the King in Judah they "put the crown on him and gave him the testimony. And they proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and they said, 'Long live the king.'"³⁰ It should be noted that Kantorowicz states that "the perpetuity of the head of the realm and the concept of a *rex qui nunquam moritur*, a 'king that never dies,' depended mainly on the interplay of three factors: the perpetuity of the Dynasty, the corporate character of the Crown, and the immortality of the royal Dignity."³¹ The "perpetuity of the Dynasty" that Kantorowicz is referring to is, of course, an unbroken chain of succession, at least mystically. This aforementioned test of longevity was adopted from Romano-canonical doctrines, which held that while "the head could and did die," meaning a king, in his mortal body would eventually die but that "the continuity of the "complete" corporation [i.e. dynasty] depended on the continuity of the head" through "a continuity vested successively in single persons."³²

²⁹ Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome*, 35.

³⁰ 1 Chronicles 23:11 ESV

³¹ Kantorowicz, *The King's Two*, 316.

³² Ibid.

This by the Middle ages had “developed a relatively complicated machinery of state administration,” wherein the process of “continuity” had become marked by both an interregnum and the officiation of a coronation.³³ Whereas in England by the mid sixteenth century the coronation was “but a royal ornament and outward solemnization of the descent,” the Muscovite Kingdom had just begun such a process.³⁴ Thus, while the West was breaking away from such ecclesiastical themes Russia was beginning to formalize them. It is for such reasons that conclusions drawn by Carl Schmitt cannot be validated here. For, it was only during the reign of Vasily III, known as Vasily the Blind, that at the core of the political structure in Muscovy was the dynasty. Martin states that this dynasty “had evolved so that the figure of the grand prince, followed by his eldest son and heir, assumed prominence over even his closest relatives.”³⁵ This, paired with the near nonexistent state of the Mongol Yoke, gave Vasily III’s son Ivan IV the appropriate political agency to, in January 1547CE, assume the Muscovite throne as tsar.³⁶

The fact that it took nearly five centuries for the Russians, who had been baptized by the now legendary Prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988CE near the shores of the river Kherson to lay their first *legitimate* claim to a true Christian sovereign should come as no surprise. The ceremony of the anointment during the reigns of these later Muscovite Princes and Tsars had become more theologically enriched. It is sheer coincidence that in the very year that Archbishop Cranmer, who, “when addressing King Edward VI on his coronation” claimed that “the oil [for anointing] if added, is but a ceremony,” the Grand Prince Ivan of Moscow was being

³³ Ibid, 316-7.

³⁴ Ibid, 317.

³⁵ Martin, *Medieval Russia, 980-1584*, 327.

³⁶ Ibid, 331.

crowned Tsar.³⁷ The authority for such a coronation, the “streams of authority,” had reached the Muscovite Prince by none other than the Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev.³⁸

As the mediaeval anointments of kings in England went through a “devaluation” from both hierocratic and juristic issues, becoming more secularized, the Muscovite realm engaged in the “actual increase of mysticism connected with the performance [coronation]” as well as the symbolism of the ceremony.³⁹ The speech Ivan delivered at his coronation shows how the formula of Muscovite sovereignty was “emerging through veils of mythology and tradition.”⁴⁰

He said:

Father, Most Holy Metropolitan by the will of God, our ancestors, the Grand Princes, have from the earliest times to the present day handed down the Grand Principality to their eldest sons. Thus my father, Grand Prince Vasily Ivanovich of all Russia during his lifetime endowed me with the Grand Principality of Vladimir and of Moscow and of Novgorod and of all Russia, and commanded that I should ascend the grand princely throne and be anointed and crowned with the Tsar’s crown [Cap of Vladimir Monomakh], according to ancient customs. And my father, the Grand Prince, wrote about this in his testament. Therefore, our father, thou shouldst bless my ascension to the throne and pronounce me Grand Prince and Tsar crowned by God. Thou shouldst crown me now with the Tsar’s crown according to the ancient ceremonies of the Tsars and according to God’s will and the blessing of my father, Grand Prince Vasily Ivanovich.⁴¹

Ivan’s ability to lay such claims came from the mythological dynasty narrative that was posthumously imbedded in Dmitrii Donskoi’s last *vita*. The marriages of Vladimir of Kiev, and Ivan’s grandfather, Ivan III to Byzantine princesses brought with them their *porphyrogenita*, that is their imperial purple.⁴² This, paired with the mythological account of Vladimir Monomakh and his proceedings with the Byzantine emperor Constantine Monomachus, gave the Muscovite realm both a hereditary and symbolic claim “to become the third and the last Rome.”⁴³

³⁷ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 318.

³⁸ Robert Payne and Nikita Romanoff, *Ivan the Terrible* (New York: Copper Square Press, 1975), 65.

³⁹ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 318.

⁴⁰ Payne and Romanoff, *Ivan the Terrible*, 67.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Majeska, “Russia: The Christian Beginnings,” 22.

⁴³ Zernov, *Moscow the Third Rome*, 31.

The importance of the Christian themes in the coronation speech delivered by Ivan alongside the anointment cannot be ignored for they enforce and legitimize the notion of Christ-centered kingship. Ivan, as will be discussed in the next chapter, presented himself as *christomimētēs* where he assumed to be “literally the ‘actor’ or ‘impersonator’ of Christ – who on the terrestrial stage presented the living image of the two-natured God.”⁴⁴ If such claims are to be considered valid, as they were during his reign than Ivan was a *persona mixta* “in the religio-political sphere” wherein “the ‘mixture’ referred to the blending of the spiritual and secular powers and capacities united in one person.”⁴⁵ Whereas “Pope Innocent III granted to the bishops the anointment with chrism and on the head, but denied emphatically the same privilege to the Prince,” which was a “complete reversal” of Christ-centered kingship, Ivan did the exact opposite.⁴⁶ For, at this point, there was little comparison between the offices of the Russian primate and the Grand Prince. Recall our discussion of the kenotic Abbot Sergius and his humble and pious attitude. The precedent that St. Sergius established prevented such disputes of religious primacy.

At the end of the of the sixteenth century the Muscovite realm effectively represented a model Christian kingdom. With both Church and State members operating in a symphony like fashion, the Russian Church grew to become a pillar of Moscow’s political culture. Traumatized by the West during the Northern Crusades and subjugated to the Mongols, and thus later Islamic rule the Muscovites cannot be considered either Eastern or Western. The Russian Church provided an identity that every Muscovite could get behind, that is the baptized designation of Christianity. With a mythological account of their *pater padre*, the blessed Prince Vladimir of

⁴⁴ Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 47.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 42.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 319.

Kiev, the Russian identity became entwined with the church, a feature that still exists today as will be discussed later. It would be up to the first Tsar of Russia, Ivan IV in 1553CE to destroy the last remnant of the Mongol Yoke, the tartar city of Kazan to realize the actuality of Moscow as the third and final Rome.

Chapter Four: Blessed be the Host of the King of Heaven

“And as the words of God encircled the whole world like an eagle in flight, so a spark of piety reached even the Russian kingdom.”

Ivan IV in his response to Prince A. M. Kurbskii¹

3.1 Ivan IV’s Coronation as the Confluence of Legend and Sovereignty

The history of Ivan Groznyi and his reign has long been hotly contested by scholars. The life of the first true Tsar of Russia can truly be described as extraordinary, the events of which have led to him being classified as “a madman, a paranoid” by many historians.² The reign of Ivan IV represents a culmination of the mystical political theology that existed and was sustained in the Russian State from the early Modern Period to 1917, in a post-Soviet space it once again becomes a point of comparison. Born into the family of the Grand Prince Vasily III of Moscow on August 25, 1530 CE, Ivan, the primogeniture prospect of the Riurikid dynasty had been from birth slated to be the next sovereign in the Russian realm. Through the literary revisionist labors of both his father and grandfather Ivan found himself situated to shake his kingdom to the core with ambitious political, military, and cultural works. With the cap of Vladimir Monomakh placed on his head by the Metropolitan Makarii, Ivan was mystically endowed and sanctioned by God as sovereign. His internalization, and thus extension of such themes into his reign demonstrate the unprecedented power that his utilization of Christian themes of sovereignty armed him with.

¹ Ivan IV, “Epistle of the Tsar and Sovereign to all his Russian Kingdom and those that violate the oath of allegiance, against Prince Andrey Kurbsky and his comrades, concerning their treacheries” in John Fennel, ed. *The Correspondence Between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia 1564-1579* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 13.

² Martin, *Medieval Russia, 980-1584*, 329.

Thus, it was in a similar method that Ivan conceived the “ambitious and politically controversial plan” to be enthroned as the tsar of all Rus’.³ The title itself was rooted from Church texts which codified Old Testament kings as the ‘tsars’ and as such Christ as the Heavenly Tsar. The affirmation of the mythological foundations of dynastic continuity laid by Ivan’s ancestors allowed him to take the title that had previously been reserved in Russian political vocabulary for rulers such as the Byzantine emperor or Tatar khan. The result of such efforts, which were embarked upon by Ivan according to Sergei Bogatyrev were “to restore the prestige of the dynasty at home and abroad.”⁴ The political transformation that occurred regarding the princely throne of Moscow has differences when compared to Western counterparts. The first of which is that while Ivan was grand prince, he was just *primus inter pares* or first among equals, a status which regarded his throne less sovereign than it actually was. It was only when Ivan assumed the title of tsar that he became the God chosen ruler and “received supreme authority over other princes and members of court.”⁵

This shift however was not predetermined after Ivan’s birth, the decades and even centuries old propaganda that allowed Ivan to obtain the title of tsar can be attributed to both his Christocentric worldview as a response to the atrocities he suffered as a child (confinement, lack of communication with family, etc). However, it is important to note that the Muscovite mythological dynasty was already deeply engrained into the contemporary scene that Ivan was born into, and which now fully attached the Rurikid family to Imperial Roman history. An incomplete manuscript from the monastery of Volokolamsk, dated between 1523 CE and 1533 CE duly reports:

³ Sergei Bogatyrev, “Ivan IV (1533-1584),” in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol.1 *From Early Rus’ to 1689* ed. Maureen Perrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 245.

⁴ Sergei Bogatyrev, “Ivan IV (1533-1584),” 245.

⁵ Sergei Bogatyrev, “Ivan IV (1533-1584),” 247.

Augustus, the Roman Caesar...began to impose tribute upon the whole world...And he established...Prus, his kinsman, on the banks of the river Vistula...up to the river called Nieman, which flows to the sea. Prus lived for many years, until the fourth generation; and thenceforth and to this day it is called the Prussian land. At that time a certain vovoda of Novgorod, Gostomysl by name, was nearing the end of his life; and he called to him all the rulers of Novgorod and said to them: "Oh men of Novgorod, this is my counsel to you: that you send wise men to the Prussian land and invite a ruler for yourselves from among the [princely] lines that are there." And they went to the Prussian land and found there was a certain prince, Riurik by name, who was of the lineage of the Roman Caesar Augustus. And the envoys from all the people of Novgorod besought Prince Riurik to come and rule over them. And Prince Riurik came to Novgorod, [...] And thenceforth it was called Novgorod the Great; and the grand prince Riurik was the first to rule there. The fourth generation from Prince Riurik was the grand prince Vladimir, he who illumined the Russian land through holy baptism in the year 6496 [988]. And the fourth generation from Prince Vladimir was the grand prince Vladimir Vsevolodovich Monomakh, his great-grandson. When he reigned in Kiev as grand prince...he gathered a host of many thousands, and he sent them to Thrace, a province of Tsar'grad [Byzantium], and he took many captives and returned with great wealth. And the pious tsar Constantine Monomachus then reigned in Tsar'grad; [...] And he reached a wise and regal decision, and dispatched envoys to the grand prince Vladimir Vsevolodovich [...] he took the tsar's crown from his head and placed it upon a golden tray; and he ordered brought to him [...] and he sent them to the grand prince Vladimir Vsevolodovich, entreating him and speaking thus: "Accept from us, O Godloving faithful Prince, these worthy gifts which since the immemorial beginnings have been the tsar's lot [...] we ask your Grace for peace and friendship, so that God's churches may be undisturbed, and all Orthodoxy may live in peace under the present power of our empire and under your free autocratic rule over great Russia."⁶

The long formulated off-shoot circumstances of Byzantine affiliation and endowment was finally connected in a text just years before Ivan's coronation. Taken at face value, as it was by the largely illiterate population who learned of such origins by a Church which had a vested interest in having "the God-crowned tsar" in truth and legend were nearly indistinguishable.⁷ George Vernadsky in his commentary on the Volokolamsk manuscript states that chronological issues,

⁶ Anonymous, "Legends About the Origins of the Moscow Dynasty," in *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1 *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century* ed. George Vernadsky (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 159.

⁷ Anonymous, "Legends About the Origins of the Moscow Dynasty (Preface)," 159.

such as the fact that Constantine Monomachus was dead when Vladimir Monomakh became the prince of Kiev, were “apparently not well enough known to present any difficulty.”⁸

From his birth Ivan was encircled by an embittered cohort of Muscovite boyars, or aristocrats. These former princes and land owner’s families had been absorbed into the growing primacy of Moscow by Ivan’s ancestors who had been partitioning regions into Muscovite authority for several generations. The death of the Grand Prince Vasily III in December 1533 CE led to the three-year-old Ivan being nominally named grand prince creating a power vacuum within the Muscovite aristocracy.⁹ The Nikonian Chronicle demonstrates the strife around Ivan stating “the boyars [were] given to corruption without restraint; and they stirred up much bloodshed among themselves, and they dispensed justice wrongfully.”¹⁰ The results of such bloodshed and dispensations of injustice manifested themselves frequently. The murder of Feodor Mishurin, Ivan’s personal secretary, for “personal gain” and the removal of Metropolitan Danil to the Josephite monastery in Volokolamsk occurred in 1539 CE.¹¹ By 1542 CE the power struggle situation had escalated to where “the boyars therefore became resentful against Prince Ivan and the metropolitan and began plotting evil with their advisers.”¹²

The leading boyar family instigating such actions was the power hungry Shuiskii family, when the next Metropolitan of Moscow, Iosaf was imprisoned in the Troitskii hostel he was nearly killed. He survived because “the Troitskii abbot Aleksei, invoke[ed] the name of Sergii

⁸ George Vernadsky, “Legends About the Origins of the Moscow Dynasty: Preface,” in *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1 *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century* ed. George Vernadsky (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 158.

⁹ Sergei Bogatyrev, “Ivan IV (1533-1584),” 240.

¹⁰ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543),” in *A Sourcebook for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1 *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century* ed. George Vernadsky (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 132.

¹¹ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543),” 133.

¹² Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543),” 133.

the Miracle Worker, barely kept them from murder.”¹³ It was on December 29th, 1543 CE when the thirteen-year-old Grand Prince Ivan “could no longer tolerate the boyars’ unruly and willful doings.”¹⁴ In revenge for acting without his consent Ivan:

Ordered that their leader, Prince Andrei Shuiskii, be seized and delivered to the dog-keepers, and the dog-keepers took him and killed him, while dragging him to the prison, in front of the Rizpolozhenskii Gate, inside the city [Kremlin]; and [the tsar] banished [Shuiskii’s] friends; and from that time the boyars began to fear the sovereign.¹⁵

With both his lay and aristocratic population in line, the young sovereign finally grasped his agency; effective power had been granted to Ivan through both his actions and lineage. Ivan’s coronation took place on January 16, 1547, and the Nikonian Chronicle describes the full event.

Ivan was coronated just as his ancestors allegedly were:

The pious grand prince Ivan Vasil’evich of all Russia was crowned tsar of Russia by the most holy Makarii, metropolitan of all Russia, and the archbishops and bishops, and the archimandrites, and the entire holy council of the Russian metropolitanate, as had been crowned his ancestor the great tsar Vladimir Monomakh, with the life-giving cross and the tsars crown and necklet; as with the same life giving cross and tsar’s crown [crown of Monomakh] and necklet his ancestor Grand Prince Vladimir had been crowned Russian tsar in ancient times: invested with the regal purple, he had been given the name of Monomakh by the most holy metropolitan of Ephesus the lord of Neophytus, with the blessing of the patriarch of Tsar’grad and upon the entreaty of the Greek tsar Constantine Monomachus.¹⁶

With the coronation ceremony completed, Ivan IV had successfully done what both his father and grandfather had been unable to effectively achieve. Ivan was the first tsar (Caesar) of Russia, operating on mythological and Christological precedent laid down by his dynastic ancestors. The next task that laid before Ivan was for him to demonstrate his ability to operate

¹³ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543,” 133.

¹⁴ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543,” 133.

¹⁵ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543,” 133.

¹⁶ Chronicler Nikon, “The Nikonian Chronicle on Boyar Rule during the Childhood of Ivan IV (CA. 1539-1543,” 133.

by the will of God, an opportunity that presented itself in 1552 CE with his siege of the Khanate of Kazan.

4.2 Ivan as the Church Militant in the siege of Kazan'

Readers may recall the events surrounding the Battle of Kulikovo in 1380 CE. With the blessing of the Abbot Sergius, the prince Dmitrii Donskoi was able to fend off both Western and Mongol attackers. The action of both the abbot and prince in this historical event were of a defensive nature. The role that Christianity in times of war has performed is often multifaceted. During the crusades Christian imagery was invoked to provide impetus and motivation to attack, the image of God can be utilized in many forms to promote what may be seen as Christian interests. This, paired with the nature of salvation in the Church, provides the Christian religion with a base that grows involved in all aspects of war from the personal to grandiose via the doctrinal notion of "just war". It was during the early reign of Ivan that his religious zeal offered him justification to deliver a final blow to the remnants of the Golden Horde.

Having fully stepped into his role as Russia's true and first tsar by the fifth decade of the sixteenth century, Ivan was ready to divest his realm from the Tatar Khanates of Kazan'. To this point via segue of a difficult truce, Muscovy was obliged to commit the entailing terms of tribute.¹⁷ In 1547 CE Ivan had attempted to, with a small force, take Kazan' which later forced Moscow to reluctantly accept Safa-Girey as the khan of Kazan'. It was not until 1552 CE when Ivan attempted to place a Muscovite governor over Kazan' rather than nominate another khan from the Crimean Khanate.¹⁸ The historical events leading up to the toppling of the Khanate of Kazan' when paired with the ecclesiastical actions in the annexed province of Kazan demonstrate that Ivan acted as a leader in the *Ecclesia militans* (Church militant). By leading his

¹⁷ Martin, *Medieval Russia*, 351.

¹⁸ Martin, *Medieval Russia*, 352.

forces into Kazan' the young Russian sovereign drew direct parallels between his conquest and Christians who struggle as the soldiers of Christ against sin, the devil, and "the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."¹⁹ The overwhelming victory for Russia allowed Ivan to both culturally and mythologically paint a scene similar to the third state of the Church in Catholic ecclesiology, that is the *Ecclesia triumphans* (Church triumphant). Ivan mystically utilized the *Ecclesia triumphans* in an eschatological fashion. Muscovy's triumph over the Khanate of Kazan' was not resulted in the decimation of Moscow's nearest Islamic neighbor, but a mystical comparison of a supreme fashion of the Church that is prepared to receive Christ.²⁰ The Russian Orthodox Icon *Blessed Be the Host of the King of Heaven*, which was painted shortly after Ivan's victory in Kazan, is effective propaganda by which he contributed to his ancestors' claim of Moscow being the third Rome. There can be no doubt that Ivan recognized the iconographic importance of such an event. By destroying the closest heathen and Muslim city to Moscow, Ivan was able refine his image as a true Christian sovereign, reinforce the claim that Moscow was the third Rome, and add territory to the Muscovite realm.²¹ It was also after the siege that the Church was able to slowly proselytize the native population of Kazan through what can be labeled as an *adaptive* model of Orthodoxy, and add territory to its monastic holdings.

¹⁹ Ephesians 6:12 ESV

²⁰ In terms of an eschatological view, the 1553 CE victory over Kazan' represents both the happiness of heaven and the glorification of, in this instance, Russian Orthodox Christians. "Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.'"

Revelation 7:13-16 ESV

²¹ The Khanate of Kazan' stood just five hundred miles from Moscow, the metropolitan city of Russia. Ian Barnes, *Restless Empire: A Historical Atlas of Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press at Harvard University, 2015), 30-31.

Knowing that this conquest would shape his rule for years to come, Ivan took extraordinary steps to prevent failure as had occurred in his last attempt to annex Kazan'. In 1550 CE, a Muscovite fortress was erected on the border of Kazan', and in 1552 CE Ivan IV and 150,000 Muscovite troops marched on the Khanate of Kazan who, by best estimates, had no more than 30,000 troops.²² Just as his ancestor Dmitrii Donskoi had done, Ivan had appealed to his metropolitan, Makarii, to justify the conquest. Makarii had long been an advocate for converting Muscovy's non-Orthodox populations, and upon hearing out Ivan he blessed his decision to attack the Khanate of Kazan for "the holy churches and for Orthodox Christianity."²³ The language used by the metropolitan allowed this conquest's perceived motives of land, wealth, and divestment of the tributary to the Khanate to be transformed and idealized into a religious struggle, that of the Church militant.²⁴ The cooperation between Church and secular officials during and after the siege of Kazan' do well to demonstrate the relationship and emulation of the Byzantine political and theological tenant of *Symphonia*, where the Church and State are viewed as a complement to each other.

The Church however did not simply play a spiritually profitable role of an advisor. Instructions from prelates were put to use both during and after the conquest in a theocratic manner to help achieve Muscovite goals, both secular and religious. On his march to Kazan, Ivan addressed his boyars and voyevodas (military leaders) as well as all of his troops making sure they knew the true reason of the conquest. His words were no doubt designed to exemplify the Christian aspect of the conquest and Ivan's own role as both a Heavenly endowed leader and pious Christian:

²² Martin, *Medieval Russia*, 352.

²³ Matthew Romaniello, "Mission Delayed: The Russian Orthodox Church after the Conquest of Kazan," *Church History* 76, no. 3 (September 2007): 513.

²⁴ Romaniello, "Mission Delayed," 513.

Therefore strive together and suffer for piety, for the holy churches, for the Orthodox Christian faith, summoning God's merciful aid with the purest trust in Him, and strive on behalf of our brothers, those Orthodox Christians who have been made captive for many years without reason and who have suffered terribly at the hands of the infidels of Kazan. Let us remember the words of Christ, "Greater love hath no man than his, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Let us therefore pray to Him with a full heart for the deliverance of the poor Christians, and may He protect us from falling into the hands of our enemies who would rejoice over our destruction. I therefore bid you to serve us as much as God will help you. Do not spare yourselves for the truth. If we die, it is not death, but life! If we do not make the attempt now, what may we expect from the infidels in the future? I myself have marched with you for this purpose. Better that I die here than live to see Christ blasphemed and the Christians, entrusted to me by God, suffering at the hands of the heathen Tatars of Kazan. No one can doubt that God will hear your continuous prayers and grant us His aid. I shall bestow great rewards on you, and I shall favor you with my love, and provide you with everything you need, and in every way I shall reward you to the extent that God in His mercy offers His aid. And I shall take care of the wives and children of those who die!²⁵

As cement solidifies an erected structure, Ivan utilized his position in the Orthodox Christian worldview to incentivize and achieve his military conquest. In his speech he lays out his role, a role that could only be granted to a sovereign with two bodies. As stated before, every Christian sovereign had not one but two bodies, the body natural and the body politic. It was Ivan's body politic that "ha[d] been raised to angelic heights," which enabled Ivan to reward his troops "to the extent that God in His mercy offers His aid."²⁶ The Muscovite throne had grown enriched from its primacy over other Rurikid princes enabling Ivan to make such extraordinary promises.

Thus, it was Ivan's body natural, that is his physical body, that came from the loins of Vasily III, his father, that endowed him with such a physical wealth. It was the mystical relationship between the body natural and the body politic that enabled Ivan to make such decisions. Endowed with the wealth from his ancestors alongside the Christian underpinnings of his state of sovereignty, Ivan was no doubt perceived by his contemporaries and lay population as the mystical vehicle for the will of God. As a mystical vehicle for the will of God, Ivan

²⁵ Ivan Groznyi, "Therefore strive together," *Nikonovskaya Letopis, Pskovskaya Pervaya Letopis*, XIII, 203, 499.

²⁶ Kanotorwicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 8-9; Ivan Groznyi, "Therefore strive together," *Nikonovskaya Letopis, Pskovskaya Pervaya Letopis*, XIII, 203, 499.

operated upon the mystical aspect of *ineffability*, his experiences, perceptions, and actions willed by God “def[ied] verbal description,” and thus designated him as the sole proprietor and interpreter of his body politic and its relationship to God.²⁷ Ivan throughout his life is shown to aptly understand this dynamic as well as use it to his advantage, an issue which will be examined more later.

The speech of Ivan to his aristocrats, generals, and military was not the only religious act Ivan pursued on his journey to Kazan however. According to Matthew Romaniello, Ivan himself acted as the connection “between Orthodox ritual and conquest” by stopping at cathedrals in both Vladimir and Murom for blessings from their prelates.²⁸ After an initial skirmish with a force of five thousand Tartar cavalymen who charged out from behind the gates of Kazan’, Ivan ordered that three church tents were to be erected, one dedicated to the Archangel Michael, the other to St. Catherine the Martyr, with the last being dedicated in the honor of St. Sergius who at this point in Russian history had become recognized as a miracle worker alongside his actions before Kulikovo.²⁹ It was in the church tent dedicated to St. Sergius the once Abbot of the now fully established Trinity-Sergius Lavra that Ivan dismounted from his horse and offered nearly “continuous prayer” through the weeks of besiegement on Kazan’.³⁰ Ivan, acting as the leader of the Church militant heeded his own words delivered in his aforementioned speech and engaged in overzealous contemplation and prayer. Although he and his voyevodas had assembled a force that outnumbered the Khanate of Kazan’s forces five to one, Ivan recognized the spiritual importance of the deliverance of Kazan from heathenism.

²⁷ Louise Nelstrop, *Christian Mysticism: An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Approaches* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 5.

²⁸ Romaniello, “Mission Delayed,” 515.

²⁹ Payne and Romanoff, *Ivan the Terrible*, 117-118.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 118.

While clergymen erected church tents, attended to the wounded, and performed other sacramental duties, the Church also assisted in defensive measures. The defensive fortifications that were provided to Muscovite soldiers in some areas were monasteries. Earlier Muscovite princes had embellished their city with rare fortifications of masonry construction, and these projects were often walls erected to protect the city. According to David Miller, between 1363 CE and 1387 CE sixteen such projects were undertaken in the region; this new construction was associated also with the monastic community and as response to plague outbreaks.³¹ Fortifications and walls were soon considered status quo in monastic architecture and provided shelter to those seeking safety from whatever affliction was troubling Moscow.³² Romaniello states that in the region of Kazan' "monasteries became part of the region's physical defenses."³³ The Church was financially responsible for maintaining the stone walls and turrets, which was no easy task in a region where a majority of the population wasn't Christian and thus didn't supply financial support. The fact that twenty monasteries had been established in Kazan' within a decade of the conquest demonstrates several things.³⁴

First, as was common in Russian theocratic practices, monasteries and convents in Kazan' were built via instruction of the tsar's government, leaving the prelate of the region, the Archbishop of Kazan' to coordinate construction of new monastic defenses and carry the resulting financial burden.³⁵ The duties of the Archbishop thus carried some interesting requirements. In a region where few natives were Christian the financial difficulties encountered by monasteries limited the clergymen's abilities to perform traditional sacral duties, and labor for

³¹ Martin, "The Emergence of Moscow (1359-1462)," 169.

³² Ibid, 169-70.

³³ Romaniello, "Mission Delayed," 524.

³⁴ Ibid, 522.

³⁵ Ibid, 524.

construction was often performed by local peasantry requiring “a high level of cooperation.”³⁶ Financial support did come from taxation; the “revenues of the conquered district” were granted for “support of the prelate.”³⁷ While the Church under the leadership of the Moscow Metropolitan Makarii was affixed on “the conversion of many thousands of heathens and Mahometans,” there existed a tug and pull of resources between the interests of the State in fortification and the interests of the Church in conversion.³⁸

Many historians have characterized such opposing views as a breakdown of this *theocratic symphonia*. Romaniello states that such interactions “should not, however, be taken as a sign that the Orthodox Church and the Muscovite government had similar goals.”³⁹ Despite these historiographic interpretations, the conversion of denizens in a newly acquired region alongside the construction of fortifications via monastic architecture served both purposes of State and Church. Michael Khodarkovsky for instance has shown that both acceptance of the political authority of the tsar and the conversion to Russian Orthodoxy were required for one to blend into the Russian cultural hegemony.⁴⁰ There is no doubt that both Church and State viewed the Kazan’ territory with the same concern, by 1555 CE the archbishopric seat of Kazan’ ranked third in Russian Church hierarchy just after the Metropolitan of Moscow and the Archbishop of Novgorod and Pskov.⁴¹ Such a hierarchal ranking for a new region placed importance on Kazan’ over much older regional sees. This notion is further enforced by the fact that prominent clergymen selected for Kazan’ were “prominent member[s] of [...] Muscovy’s

³⁶ Ibid, 524.

³⁷ Andreii Mouravieff, *A History of the Church of Russia* trans. R. W. Blackmore (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1838), 108.

³⁸ Mouravieff, *A History of the Church of Russia*, 108-109.

³⁹ Romaniello, “Mission Delayed,” 522.

⁴⁰ Michael Khodarkovsky, “Four Degrees of Separation: Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Muscovy,” in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359-1584*, ed. A. M. Kleimola and G. D. Lenhoff (Moscow: “ITZ-Garant,” 1997), 248-66.

⁴¹ Romaniello, “Mission Delayed,” 516.

most prestigious monasteries.”⁴² One could go so far as claiming that the only disagreement between the prelates of the Church and the Tsarist government would have been around which task took precedent over the other, since both ventures drew upon similar resources.

The actions undertaken by both Ivan IV and the Church demonstrate a cohesive narrative of cooperation, yet this adaption of the Byzantine *Symphonia* by Russia, as with any other political relationship throughout history, was not perfect. Ivan through his pious actions had illuminated his plight against the Muslim and animistic population of Kazan as an answer to the toppling of Byzantium by the Islamic Turks in fifteenth century.⁴³ As a crusade of God, it was not Ivan’s cohort of 150,000 troops nor the one hundred and fifty pieces of artillery that continuously barraged the wooden walls of the city of Kazan’ that delivered the province to Russia, but rather the will of God.⁴⁴ Such military ventures *required* such preparation as this was not just a triumph of Russia over Tartar oppression, but also a triumph of Christianity over Islam, viewed as the final blow of revenge for Christianity’s forced divestment of Constantinople at the hands of the Islamic Turks. The goals of both State and Church met in confluence with the siege of Kazan’. From the Church’s foundation since the reign of Prince Vladimir of Kiev in the tenth century, it had been subjugated to the primacy of the Byzantine Church. In taking Kazan’, the Church took one more step toward being recognized as the Mother Church of Eastern Christians as the State “claimed new lands, adding to [the tsar’s] subjects the diverse animistic and Muslim

⁴² Romaniello, “Mission Delayed,” 516.

⁴³ Dr. Backus discusses the cultural landscape of the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe and the cultural loss of Byzantium and the near East by its fall in Oswald Backus, “Was Muscovite Russia Imperialistic?” *The American Slavic and East European Review* 13, no.4 (December 1954): 524-525.

⁴⁴ There can be no doubt that 150,000 troops alongside 150 pieces of artillery represented an overzealous preparation to ensure not only victory, but a triumphant one. For more information on Ivan’s encampment see Martin, *Medieval Russia*, 352.

population of Turkic Tatars,” a situation that would be dealt with by the direct assistance of the church.⁴⁵

Upon his return to Moscow, Ivan is recorded as having visited the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, a planned visit. At the Sretinsky Monastery he was met by clergymen carrying an assortment of crosses, banners, and icons to celebrate the triumphant conqueror. Present at the monastery were the princes Mihailo Bulgakov and Ivan Morozov, both of whom had served Ivan’s father and grandfather. The Metropolitan Makarii was also present, who embraced Ivan and delivered a special blessing.⁴⁶ Upon receiving his blessing from the prelate of the Church, Ivan faced the crowd and delivered a speech framing the conquest as purely Christian and him as a pious leader:

Before I set forth on the campaign against Kazan, I took counsel with the Metropolitan Makarii and the clergy about how the Khan of Kazan and his people were devastating the Russian land, the towns and villages, the churches and monasteries, and how countless Christians including priests and monks, boyars and princes, youths and children, men and women, had perished or had been taken prisoner and dispersed over the face of the earth. All this happened because of our sins and *especially because of my sins*. Thus it was that on your advice we set out and make war against them. I urged you to pray to God, the Virgin and all the saints for our well-being and for the forgiveness of our many sins and for the deliverance from the barbarians.⁴⁷

The nature of representation employed by Ivan once again operates off his mystical relationship to God. Ivan Groznyi the man and his body natural had sinned before, but under the authority of God as Tsar he would always be forgiven.

4.3 Ivan and His Image of the Church Militant

⁴⁵ Romaniello, “Mission Delayed,” 511.

⁴⁶ Payne, *Ivan the Terrible*, 137-138.

⁴⁷ Groznyi, “Long Live our God-fearing,” NL, PSRL, XIII, 223, 518.



Figure 1. *Blessed Be the Host of the King of Heaven* by Athanasius, Metropolitan of Moscow, accessed April 7, 2018, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/ZgGHzgID8lTUVw>.

Writing just years after the death of Ivan IV, Prince Ivan Katyrev-Rostovsky composed *The Book of Annals*. In his account of the tragedies that Muscovy had faced, the author presents a description of Ivan IV that presented him in a schizophrenic fashion:

Tsar Ivan was physically unattractive, had gray eyes, a hooked and long nose, and was tall, lean, and with broad shoulders and chest. He had great physical prowess and was a person of great acumen, being well read, erudite, and very eloquent. He was fearsome to the enemy, and was always prepared to fight for the fatherland. He was cruel to his subjects given to him by the Lord, being always ready to spill their blood, and both merciless and daring at killing. He ordered that many people be slain, from infants to the aged; he laid waste to many of his own cities; and many clergymen were thrown into prisons and mercilessly executed at his orders. He committed many other evil deeds to his own people, deflowering many girls and women in his lust. This Tsar Ivan did many good things, however, and he cared very much for his armies, generously rewarding them from his treasury. Such was Tsar Ivan.⁴⁸

After the siege of Kazan', the young Tsar became enchanted with the ideal of not only reclaiming what he perceived to be his hereditary lands and also fulfilling his vision of Moscow as a Third Rome. Through his mystical relationship to God, Ivan saw potential to proceed with whatever he willed unquestioned. The events of Kazan' had been symbolically engaged as an

⁴⁸ Prince Ivan M. Katyrev-Rostovsky, "A Description of the Tsars and Their Families," in *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, ed. Serge A. Zenkovsky (New York: Meridian Publishing, 1974), 388.

act of the Church militant, the besieged city of Kazan' was the biblical city of Sodom and its near neighbor Moscow was the "new Israel."⁴⁹

To maintain such an allegory long after the Khanate of Kazan' had toppled, Ivan commissioned the prelate of the Russian Church and his own confessor, the Metropolitan of Moscow, Athanasius, in the 1550s to create a thirteen-foot-long icon relaying the events of the battle through biblical allegory. The icon entitled "Blessed Be the Host of the King of Heaven" (Fig. 1) was one of the first Russian iconographic works to include a living person, that is Ivan IV in it, and still today it is recognized as one of the largest icons from the medieval period. In one fluid scene, the icon demonstrates the fall of Kazan', the resulting spiritual profitability for Moscow, and Ivan's claims to the pseudo-Monomakh dynasty alongside all of Russia's spiritual leaders. When combined, these thematic elements paint a larger theme, that is Moscow by the eyes of its contemporaries was the Third Rome. The detail and symbolism packed into the iconographic work is almost unavoidable even by the most novice eye, and the work in the sixteenth century had "go[ne] much further in its undisguised propaganda" than any previous works and established a new precedent of the inclusion of political aspects in Christian iconography that has yet to be displaced in the Russian Orthodoxy tradition.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Dean McKenzie, "Political Aspects in Russian Icons," in *The Millennium: Christianity in Russia*, ed. Albert Leong (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 145.

⁵⁰ McKenzie, "Political Aspects of Iconography," 145.

The first examination that can be made is that the soldiers presented in the iconography are all haloed, a very mystical feature, presenting the 1552 CE siege of Kazan' in a crusade like fashion. On the left corner (Fig. 2) of the icon, the New Israel with the Theotokos (Eastern



Figure 2. On the left, Moscow as the New Israel featuring the Theotokos and Child. On the right, Kazan' enflamed as Sodom.

Church nomenclature for Mary) and Child are featured. Paradise river is shown to be sourced from the iconographic crib of Christ, and Byzantium is also shown alongside the river, but its stores are depleted. On the right corner (Fig. 2) of the icon the city of Sodom is depicted enflamed. The contrast between

the two cities cannot be ignored; near Moscow the trees are plentiful and filled with fruit whereas in Kazan' the city is surrounded by destruction. The procession of the soldiers toward Moscow illustrate a triumph wherein Ivan IV is led by the Archangel Michael (Fig. 3) who is turned

slightly backwards as he beckons Ivan to enter the realm of paradise, Moscow. The young Ivan IV (Fig. 4) is depicted as a warrior returning successfully from his military venture. Above him three angels gather to present him with the golden crown of Vladimir Monomakh. Each of the angels represents the territories Ivan ruled over; Muscovy, Kazan and Astrakhan. Behind Ivan is a questionable figure surrounded by foot



Figure 3. Archangel Michael beckoning Ivan IV.

soldiers. The figure (Fig. 5) is wearing the Golden Cap of Monomkah and carrying an Orthodox



Figure 4. *Ivan IV's Apotheosis.*

Moscow's Byzantine heritage is the founder and baptizer of Rus' the Grand Prince Vladimir of Kiev. Vladimir's placement behind the harbinger of imperial purple speaks both to the chronology and subjugation of the Russian church to the Byzantine Patriarch during the first few

centuries of its existence. With such an iconographic work installed in the Kremlin, visitors to cross and is either Vladimir Monomakh or Constantine Monomachus. The differentiation between the Kievan prince and the Byzantine emperor for the implied allegory however is irrelevant. The two figures in regard to the implied allegory both represent a transition of the imperial purple from Byzantium to Moscow. The cap of Monomakh appears twice in the icon demonstrating and reinforcing the claim to an undisturbed dynastic lineage between Ivan and his ancestor Vladimir Monomakh. The direction of the procession towards Moscow and away from Kazan' can also be interpreted as a representation of transfer of the imperial purple from Constantinople to Moscow. Behind the figure of



Figure 5. *Vladimir or Constantine Monomakh followed by St. Vladimir and his sons Boris and Gleb.*

centuries of its existence. With such an iconographic work installed in the Kremlin, visitors to

Ivan's court were forced upon every instance of visitation to lay their eyes upon such symbolism of the living tsar.

4.4 The Mysticism of Ivan IV and Muscovy's Fall into Chaos

As do many who have great accomplishments in their youth, Ivan faced a series of troubling events heading into his later years. Ivan's military campaigns continued, and in 1556 CE he successfully toppled the Khanate of Astrakhan' which removed the immediate presence of Islamic forces from the Russian steppes. The product of these victories was almost exclusively personal to Ivan IV. However, neither Kazan' nor Astrakhan' posed any real danger to Moscow.⁵¹ Years later, during the Livonian war, the remnants of the Khanate would shore up with Western allies to terrorize Russia from near Western borders. The Muscovite army had undergone a transformation from a system of tributary ranks drawn up from various provinces to a large, centralized army under the sole command of Ivan. The post-war Ivan resembled nothing close to the child who was frequently dependent on boyars for assistance; he frequently had his spiritual and secular advisors questioned, tortured, and investigated.⁵²

The ever-growing divide between Ivan IV and his aristocracy reached critical mass when in 1564-5 CE, he established a policy which is known today as the *oprichnina*. Ivan's first wife, Anastasia Romanov, a relative of the future Romanov dynasty and aristocratic family, had passed away in the summer of 1560 CE. She had been ill for over six months and her death had "thr[own] Ivan into paroxysms of grief."⁵³ With the death of his beloved first wife, Ivan lost the last tangible connection to the Moscow elite; they were now no different from his growing list of

⁵¹ Martin, *Medieval Russia*, 353.

⁵² Sergei Bogatyrev, "Ivan IV (1533-1584)," 240.

⁵³ Payne, *Ivan the Terrible*, 172-3.

enemies and conspirators in his mind. Ivan's swift departure from Moscow is reported by the Nikonian Chronicle, which also entails his grievances with his boyars:

[Ivan had departed from Moscow]; His departure was not such as heretofore, when he would journey to monasteries to pray, or travel around the countryside to attend to his pleasures: for he took with him the sacred objects, icons and crosses adorned with gold and precious stones, and gold and silver vessels, and all [types of finery][...] And in Moscow... all were perplexed and dismayed at such a grand and unusual departure of the sovereign, and no one knew the route of his journey, nor where he was going. [...] [He claimed his boyars] had amassed great wealth but would not exert themselves for the sovereign and his realm and all Orthodox Christendom, and would not defend Christendom against its enemies, the Crimean [Tatars], the Lithuanians, and the Germans, but rather would do violence to Christians. [...] And the tsar and grand prince, from the great sorrow of his heart, not wishing to suffer their many treacherous deeds, forsook his realm and set forth, to reside wherever God might instruct him.⁵⁴

The long-term effects of the *oprichnina* have boundless political implications, but for an examination of political theology, it is important to distinguish where Ivan viewed himself in comparison to church prelates in this particular situation. The chronicler later reports that "Afanasii, metropolitan of all Russia, and the entire holy council, [petitioned] the sovereign and entreat[ed] him to show them his mercy, and not to forsake his realm, and not to surrender them to be ravished by wolves, and, above all, *to deliver them from the hands of the strong.*" Such a passage can lead one to muse where Ivan ideologically positioned himself in the church hierarchy in both the earthly and celestial realm.⁵⁵

While Ivan may have presupposed a position in the celestial hierarchy, there are documentary sources that show this was a more frequent theme rather than occasional occurrence. Ivan appears to have been enchanted with the political theology that as the Christian sovereign in the Kingdom of Muscovy, he was both (as a tsar) above judgement from any being who questioned his task and in a more spiritually profitable position than any clergyman.

⁵⁴ Chronicler Nikon, "On the Establishment of the Oprichnina," in *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1 *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century* ed. George Vernadsky, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 142-143.

⁵⁵ Chronicler Nikon, "On the Establishment of the Oprichnina," 144.

Writing to Ivan from Lithuania the banished Prince Andreii Kurbsky was able to lay objective criticism on the tsar without fearing punishment. In his first letter he lays out commentary about how Ivan has mistreated the Muscovite boyars, him included, asking “what guilt did they commit before you, O tsar, and in what way did they, the champions of Christianity, anger you?”⁵⁶ He then proceeds to remind his once close friend of how even the life of a tsar is fleeting:

Deem not, O tsar, and think not upon us with your sophistic thoughts, as though we had already perished, massacred [though we are] by you in our innocence and banished and driven out by you without justice; rejoice not in this, glorying, as it were, in a vain victory; those massacred by you, standing at the throne of Our Lord, ask vengeance against you; whilst we who have been banished and driven out by you without justice from the land cry out the day and night to God, however much in your pride you may boast in this temporal, fleeting life, devising vessels of torture against the Christian race, yea, and *abusing and trampling on the Angelic Form*,⁵⁷

Ivan’s response to such criticism holds to his typical form, the dispatch commences with a lengthy statement of his pedigree, complete with the third Rome narrative claiming he came from “the great tsar Vladimir Monomakh, who received the supreme honour from the Greeks.”⁵⁸

Ivan’s assertion that Kurbsky’s flight to Lithuania “broke the oath on the Cross,” and that he had “even embarked upon the destruction of the Church,” demonstrates that national identity and Russian Orthodoxy were at this point in time one of the same.⁵⁹ Just as Ivan perceived his relationship to God to as mystical, that is undefined and ineffable, he also perceived the relationship between Church and State to operate on the same qualities. Within the Western theological canon this could present some problems, but Ivan IV as a child had taken readings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, a Syriac monastic who is known for his treatise on negative or

⁵⁶ Andreii Kurbsky, *The Correspondence Between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia 1564-1579* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 3.

⁵⁷ Andreii Kurbsky, *The Correspondence*, 9.

⁵⁸ Ivan IV, *The Correspondence Between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia 1564-1579* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 13.

⁵⁹ Ivan IV, *The Correspondence*, 17.

apophatic theology.⁶⁰ Such apophatic theology offers a different perception on how a zealot such as Ivan might operate as “there is no theology apart from experience.”⁶¹ Ivan’s worldview was formulated when he was a child, when his days were spent studying biblical texts amongst other Orthodox treatises. His formulation of the mystical apophatic theology into a Christocentric worldview propelled his religious zealotry, and it could be said that the only man Ivan feared was actually no man, rather the holy trinity. It is for such reasons that the man who murdered his own son, and countless Russians took a monastic tonsure before his death.⁶²

Ivan passed away on March 17, 1584 CE. His departure from the earthly realm cast Russia into a period of chaos notoriously labeled as the “time of troubles” today. His death was mourned by his enfeebled son Fyodor, who was never able to fill his father’s shoes and effectively operated under a regency of the future Tsar Boris. The Metropolitan of Moscow upon learning of the death of Ivan chanted “Where is the city of Jerusalem? Where is the wood of the life-giving Cross? Where is our Lord Tsar, the Grand Prince Ivan Vasilievich of all Russia? Why hast thou left thy Russian Tsardom and thy noble children and left us all orphans?”⁶³ With his death, Ivan Vasilievich was rejoined with his body natural in the ground and Russia was left to deal with the implications of his self-supposed theocratic monarchy.

4.5 Epilogue

Writing about the time of troubles Russian historian Averkii Palitsyn demonstrates how the national identity of Orthodoxy Christianity, promoted and pursued by the Rurikid princes,

⁶⁰ Ivan has been historical recognized to have read Pseudo-Dionysius, he recants large portions of his treatise in his first dispatch to Andreii Kurbsky in Ivan IV, *The Correspondence*, 142-147.

⁶¹ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1976), 39.

⁶² Payne, *Ivan the Terrible*, 423.

⁶³ Payne, *Ivan the Terrible*, 429.

had become a usable chosen trauma: “The enemies [Lithuanians and Poles, followers of the second pseudo-Dmitrii] overcame the Orthodox Christians and, with nothing to hinder them, came [in 1608] to the ruling city of Moscow and besieged it, intending to capture it. Who can describe the misery that prevailed at this time throughout Russia?”⁶⁴ Such themes of political theology never presented themselves for examination in the West. Currently Russia has turned the period leading up to and the time of troubles into a usable past.⁶⁵ In recent years the holiday of the Great October Socialist Revolution has found itself replaced by state mandate with “the Day of National Unity,” which commemorates the day in 1612 when the Polish army was expelled from Moscow.⁶⁶

In the West where authorities such as Carl Schmitt have dispensed with mystical Christian theological influence upon the modern state, Russia stands undefined and rarified. Political theology and the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church has swung back into the light with the fall of the USSR. Even the once KGB operative Vladimir Putin turned President of the Russian Federation legitimized his authority by becoming an Orthodox Christian in the 1990’s after a harrowing (or staged) accident. His frequently inquiries and discussions with church prelates send echoes through the confluence of the collective history of the people of the land of Rus’, even his first name is one popularized by the now Christian saint and baptizer of Russia, the Grand Prince Vladimir. As Russia continues to look for a post-Soviet identity, a close eye must once again be kept on church and state relations for the two appear again to embracing each other in a brotherly fashion.

⁶⁴ Averkii Palitsyn, “On the Time of Troubles 1608-1612,” in *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, vol.1 *Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century* ed. George Vernadsky, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 189.

⁶⁵ Eve Levin, “Muscovy and Its Mythologies: Pre-Petrine History in the Past Decade,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 no. 4 (Fall 2011): 774.

⁶⁶ Eve Levin, “Muscovy and Its Mythologies,” 773.

Bibliography

- Anonymous, et al. *Polnoye sobraniye russkikh letopisey*. Vol. VII & XIII, Voskresenskaya letopis'. St. Petersburg, 1851.
- Backus, Oswald. "Was Muscovite Russia Imperialistic?" *The American Slavic and East European Review* 13, no.4 (December 1954).
- Barnes, Ian. *Restless Empire: A History Atlas of Russia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Belknap Press, 2015.
- Billington, James. *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture*. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.
- Bodin, Jean. *On Sovereignty: Four Chapters from The Six Books of the Commonwealth*. Trans. Julian Franklin. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Bryanski, Gleb. "Russian Patriarch Calls Putin Era 'Miracle of God'" *Reuters UK*. February 8, 2012, accessed December 7, 2017, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-russia-putin-religion/russian-patriarch-calls-putin-era-miracle-of-god-idUKTRE81722Y20120208>.
- Cross, Samuel and Olgerd Sherbowitz-Wetzor, eds. *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text*. Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 2012.
- Ellis, Glen. "Putin and the 'Triumph of Christianity' in Russia." *Aljazeera*, October 19, 2017, accessed November 14, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/europe/2017/10/putin-triumph-christianity-russia-171018073916624.html>.
- Fedotov, George and John Meyendorff. *The Russian Religious Mind II: The Middle Ages to the 13th to 15th Centuries*. Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1975.
- Fennel, John, ed. *The Correspondence Between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia 1564-1579*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.

- Fisher, Mary Pat. *Living Religions*, 9th ed. Boston: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2014.
- Fuhrmann, Joseph. "Metropolitan Cyrill II (1242-1281) and the Politics of Accommodation." *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 24 no.2, 1976.
- Gibbon, Edward. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Vol. 5. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.
- Halperin, Charles. "Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no.2 (Spring 2000).
- . *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Mediaeval Russian History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Hosking, Geoffrey. *Russia and the Russians: A History*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2011.
- Howes, Robert Craig. *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967.
- Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Keenan, Edward and Russell Martin. "The Tsar's Two Bodies." *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 51, (March 2017).
- Khodarkovsky, Michael. "Four Degrees of Separation: Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Muscovy." In *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359-1584*, ed. A. M. Kleimola and G. D. Lenhoff. Moscow: "ITZ-Garant," 1997.
- Kivelson, Valerie. "The Devil Stole His Mind: The Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising." *The American Historical Review* 98, no.3 (June 1993).

- Kluhevsky, Vasily. *A History of Russia*. Vol.1. trans. Charles Hogarth. New York: Russell & Russell, 1960.
- Leong, Albert, ed. *Christianity in Russia 988-1988*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1970.
- . *The Millennium: Christianity in Russia*. New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990.
- Levin, Eve. "Muscovy and Its Mythologies: Pre-Petrine History in the Past Decade." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 no. 4 (Fall 2011).
- Lossky, Vladimir. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1944.
- Martin, Janet. *Medieval Russia 980-1580*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Massie, Robert. *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman*. New York: Random House, 2011.
- McGuckin, John. *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, vol. 2. West Sussex, England: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Michell, Robert and Nevill Forbes, *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016-1471*. London: Forgotten Books, 2015.
- Mouravieff, Andreii. *A History of the Church of Russia*. Trans. Rev. R. W. Blackmore. London: Oxford University Press, 1842.
- Nelstrop, Louise. *Christian Mysticism: An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Approaches*. Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2009.
- Norwich, John. *A Short History of Byzantium*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.
- Obolensky, Dimitri. *Byzantium and the Slavs*. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994.
- Payne, Robert and Nikita Romanoff. *Ivan the Terrible*. New York: Copper Square Press, 1975.

- Pelenski, Jaroslaw. "The Emergence of the Muscovite Claims to the Byzantine-Kievan 'Imperial Inheritance.'" *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, no.7 (1983).
- Perrie, Maureen. *A Cambridge History of Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Riasanovsky, Nicholas and Mark Steinberg. *A History of Russia to 1855*, 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Romaniello, Matthew. "Mission Delayed: The Russian Orthodox Church after the Conquest of Kazan." *Church History* 76, no. 3 (September 2007).
- Schmitt, Carl. *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Trans. George Schwab. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985.
- Shubin, Daniel. *A History of Russian Christianity*. Vol.1: From the Earliest Years through Tsar Ivan IV. New York: Algora Publishing, 2004.
- Vernadsky, George, ed. *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*. Vol. 1: Early Times to the Late Seventeenth Century. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972.
- Volkoff, Vladimir. *Vladimir the Russian Viking*. New York: The Overlook Press, 2011.
- Watson, Ivan, Maria Stromova, and Antonia Mortensen. "The Rise of the Russian Orthodox Church," *CNN*, March 30, 2017, accessed December 7, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/30/europe/russian-orthodox-church-resurgence/index.html>.
- Zenkovsky, Serge. *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*. New York: Meridian Books, 1974.
- Zernov, Nicolas. *Moscow the Third Rome*. New York: AMS Press, 1971.

Zernov, Nicolas. *St. Sergius – Builder of Russia with The Life, Acts and Miracles of the Holy Abbot Sergius of Radonezh*. Trans. Adeline Delafeld. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939.

Vita

Evan Wallace was born in Raleigh, North Carolina to Dr. Ronnie Mitchell Wallace and Cristin Gaines Miller. He graduated from Eastern Florida State College with an Associate of Arts degree in 2014. The following Fall he attended the University of Central Florida where he awarded a degree in History with a minor in Religious and Cultural Studies in the Spring of 2016. In the Fall of 2016, he accepted a graduate assistantship at Appalachian State University in the department of History, he was awarded his Master of Arts in May of 2018. In the Spring of 2018 he was awarded a research assistantship at the University of Central Florida's Texts & Technology PhD program where he will begin his doctoral work in the Fall of 2018.