

The First Campaign of Ivan III to Novgorod in 1471

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Abstract—In this paper, the alignment of political forces in Novgorod on the eve and during the campaign of the Grand Duke of Moscow Ivan III is considered. The author points to the rivalry of the pro-Moscovian and pro-Lithuanian groups existing in various social strata within the Novgorod archdiocese and among the Novgorod aristocracy and “*zhitny*” people.

—In this paper, the relationship between Moscow and Novgorod from the late 1450s to the early 1470s is studied. Based on new sources introduced by the author of this paper, it is established that the accession of Pskov, a “younger brother” of Novgorod, to Moscow did not take place in 1510, as stated in modern historiography, but in occurred in 1460. This radically changes the estimation of situation in Eastern Europe in the years 1460–1470. The transition of Pskov to under the rule of Moscow meant that a new and very large ruler appeared in the western lands of Russia, who could pose a threat to close states, such as Lithuania, Novgorod, and the Teutonic Order. The loss of Pskov influenced the position of Novgorod, which refused to pay the “black duty” as a tribute to the Golden Horde khans taking advantage of the illness of Grand Duke Vasili II. The current situation threatened a big war. Both Novgorod and Moscow were looking for new allies. Moscow managed to neutralize at least the Livonian part of the Teutonic Order and the Golden Horde of Khan Akhmat. Novgorod was forced to enter into vassal relations with Casimir IV, King of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The transition of Novgorod from the power of Ivan III to the power of Casimir IV took place in the late autumn of 1470, but in the spring of 1471 the Moscow prince, having gathered great forces, began a war with Novgorod, in which he was supported by many Novgorodians who were economically connected with Moscow. The Novgorodians, having been defeated on the Shelon and Northern Dvina rivers, turned to Casimir IV for help, but their embassy was not allowed to visit him in Livonia. Left without military support, the Novgorodians went to peace. The Korostyn Treaty of August 11, 1471, prohibited Novgorod’s relations with Lithuanian princes and placed local courts under the control of Ivan III.

Keywords: Ivan III, Archbishop of Novgorod, Marfa Boretskaya, Mikhail Olelkovich, battle on the Shelon River, Casimir IV

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During the reign of Ivan III, the first military clash between Moscow and Novgorod the Great took place in 1471. Very briefly, this event is described by the chronicler N.K. Nikolskii in the paper of 6979: “On the same summer, Grand Prince Ivan Vasilyevich came to Novgorod with his army and stood on the Shelon, and took a ransom of 16 000 rubles.”¹ The chronicles of Nikolskii were compiled in the 1550s in Novgorod. It is obvious that the interest in the events, which had occurred eighty years prior, had faded by that moment, and they were told in only 20 words. In the earlier monuments of the Russian chronicle, the narratives about the first attack of Ivan III on Novgorod are incomparably more comprehensively detailed, surpassing the text of the chronicler Nikolskii

by hundreds of times. Let us focus on the characteristics of the main examples of these monuments.

The most significant story about the Moscow–Novgorod War of 1471 from the viewpoint of both its volume and content is found in the Sofia II Chronicle. This chronicle was compiled in the sixteenth century at the Moscow Metropolitan Cathedra of All Russia. This chronicle reflects the opinions of the Russian higher church hierarches of different times about the events of 1471, their estimation, and support or condemnation of actions between the conflicting parties. To what time should the creation of such a narrative be dated? to the time of writing of the entire Sofia II Chronicle as a whole, i.e., to the sixteenth century, or to an earlier time of contemporaries of the events of 1471, who hotly and passionately discussed the vicissitudes of the war between Moscow and Novgorod? In one of the sections in the paper of 6979 from the Sofia II Chronicle, where apostates from the Ortho-

¹ *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* (Full Collection of Russian Chronicles) (hereinafter, *FCRC*), Moscow, 2000, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 609.

dox faith were condemned, an adherent of Metropolitan Isidore, who was exiled from Moscow at one time and occupied the metropolitan cathedra in Kiev in 1471, Gregory was mentioned: “Gregory, his [i.e., of Isidore, V.K.] apostate disciple, who is called metropolitan in Kiev.”² The issue concerns the Kiev Metropolitan Gregory the Bulgarian, who died in the winter of 1472–1473.³ In Russia of the fifteenth century, winter was considered to be the time from December 25, 1472, to March 31, 1473, including the modern chronology. Since Metropolitan Gregory the Bulgarian was alive when writing the paper of 6979 of the Sofia II Chronicle and occupied the cathedra of the Kiev Metropolis, the story about the events of 1471, which was included in the Sofia II Chronicle, should be dated to the time before the winter of 1472–1473. Most likely, the story about the events of 1471 was composed even earlier, in the last third or quarter of the same year, as the author of this description knew not only that the Kiev Metropolis was ruled by Gregory at this time, but also that there was not a drop of rain in Novgorod and its lands from May to September 1471.⁴

The comparison of the sunny weather in Novgorod of 1471 with the typical weather conditions in this region in previous years indicates that the description existing in the Sofia II Chronicle for the Moscow–Novgorod war of 1471 was compiled in Novgorod. Another indicator is the characterization given in this description for the head of the Novgorod diocese, Archbishop Theophilus. Theophilus is presented as an objective and level-headed church figure, who took care of his flock, i.e., the Novgorodians, who prevented them from converting to the Catholic faith. “Reverend Theophilus, a holy monk, who is their father called to dominion” as noted in the Sofia II Chronicle, “does well to keep them from such evil thoughts and commands them to cease such undertakings.”⁵ The pro-Moscow position of the Archbishop of Novgorod is emphasized, but nothing is said about the anti-Moscow actions of Theophilus, who sent his metropolitan army in 1471 against Ivan III. In addition, in the closing part of article 6979 from the Sofia II Chronicle, it is pointed out that, after the victory over Novgorod, Ivan III “granted” them, among others, “his churchman Theophilus, a holy monk called” and “took anger on Novgorod out of his heart.”⁶ The compiler of the analyzed story perceives with reverence the status of the Grand Duke of All Russia Ivan III. In paper 6979 of the Sofia II Chronicle, it is usually written as “to the Great Prince of All

Russia Ivan Vasilyevich,”⁷ Great Sovereign of the Russian lands, Grand Prince of All Russia Ivan Vasilyevich,”⁸ “Great Prince of All Russia Ivan Vasilyevich.”⁹ The recognition of the senior Moscow Ryurikovich as a sovereign of Russian lands and a Grand Duke of All Russia means that the author of the paper of 6979, being a Novgorodian and a person close to Archbishop Theophilus, was a supporter not so much of Ivan III as of those residents of Novgorod who advocated to retain loyalty to the Moscow Grand Duke rather than for the transition of Novgorod under the rule of the Polish king Casimir IV.

The second Russian Chronicle monument, which appeared a little later than the first one, is the Moscow Chronicle Code of 1479. In 1949, this code was published in the XXV volume of the Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles not in a “pure” form, but with a continuation up to 7000 (the last communication is about the death on May 3, 1492 [this date is incorrect, V.K.] of King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV).¹⁰ Thus, when describing the features of the story about the events of 1471 from the Moscow Code of 1479, we will use the text from the code of 1492 and its presentation until 1480.

In this text, attention is drawn to the frequent mentions about Metropolitan Philip of Moscow. Many Novgorod people wanted to join Ivan III and “his father Metropolitan Philip to Orthodoxy.”¹¹ The Grand Duke turns first of all to “his father Metropolitan Philip and his mother” with his reflections for advice.¹² This is Metropolitan Philip and his entourage, who meet Ivan III returning to Moscow in 1471 with a victory in the Kremlin.¹³ Since the actions and role played in 1471 by Metropolitan Philip who died on April 6, 1474,¹⁴ are mentioned in many places of the text, it is possible to say that the story of the Moscow–Novgorod war of 1471 was written in Moscow by a person close to the Metropolitan cathedra of All Russia between August 1471 and the beginning of 1474. The date can be clarified due to the remark in the Moscow Code of 1479, where the anti-Moscow minded Novgorodians are condemned: “Today, in the past 20 years before the end of the seventh thousand, some peoples want to retreat to the Latin king.”¹⁵ In Russia of the fifteenth century, it was believed that the death of this world would occur 7000 years after the Creation (according to the Bible). The chronicler believed that the illogical actions of Novgorodians occurred in his

² FCRC, Moscow, 2001, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 187.

³ B.N. Florya, Gregory, in *Pravoslavnyaya entsiklopediya* (Orthodox Encyclopedia).

⁴ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 195.

⁵ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 188.

⁶ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 205.

⁷ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 183.

⁸ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 191.

⁹ FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 201.

¹⁰ FCRC, Moscow, Leningrad, 1949, vol. 25, p. 338.

¹¹ FCRC, vol. 25, p. 285.

¹² FCRC, vol. 25, p. 286.

¹³ FCRC, vol. 25, p. 292.

¹⁴ FCRC, vol. 25, p. 300.

¹⁵ FCRC, vol. 25, p. 287.

time, just 20 years before 7000, i.e., in 6980. This date means the “last,” the latest date on which the chronicler wrote. According to modern chronology, that would be 1472, which completely fits into the above-mentioned broader time frame.

An ecclesiastical coloring of the source considered clearly emerges in the description of the behavior of Ivan III, who visited a number of Kremlin temples before going on a military campaign against Novgorod. At the same time, the author of the paper 6979 from the Moscow Chronicle of 1479 attributed several statements to the Grand Duke, which characterized him more than Ivan III. In particular, there is the illustrative appeal of the Grand Duke to his ancestors buried in the Kremlin Archangel Cathedral: “with prayer, help me against the apostates from the Orthodoxy of your country.”¹⁶ Thus, Ivan III became the main guardian of the faith on the lands belonging to his father, grandfather, great-grandfather, ancestors, etc. However, a little earlier, it was stated in the paper of 6979 of the Moscow Chronicle of 1479 that the opponents of the Grand Duke were Novgorodians, who manifested “impenitence and apostasy.”¹⁷ In addition, at the beginning of the same paper, it was pointed out that the reason for the war of Ivan III with Novgorod was the “traitors,”¹⁸ i.e., the actions of the Novgorodians, who made up the pro-Lithuanian party in Novgorod and advocated the transition of Novgorod under the rule of the Polish king. Hence, it turns out that the war of Ivan III with Novgorod in 1471 was explained in the entourage of the Russian Church’s head, Metropolitan Philip, who lived in Moscow, by Novgorod’s treason and the impenitence of many residents of Novgorod, who did not perceive Moscow’s admonitory arguments, and mainly by their apostasy from Orthodoxy.

The Stroeve list of the Novgorod IV Chronicle should be recognized as the third early historical source containing unique information about the Moscow–Novgorod clash of 1471. The Stroeve list was compiled in Novgorod in the 1470s. The last paper of this chronicle is dated to 6985 and describes a great fire, which occurred in Novgorod on September 21, 1476, and resulted in the yard of Marfa Posadnitsa, the most active participant in the events of 1471,¹⁹ being burned down. Hence, the paper of 1471 from the Stroeve list could not have appeared after September 21, 1476.

This text is quite extensive and, nevertheless, is much inferior in volume to the corresponding text of the Sofia II Chronicle, being almost 7.5 times smaller. The main interest of the Stroeve list of the Novgorod IV Chronicle as a historical source is that it contains

information about the diplomatic activities of the Novgorod pro-Lithuanian government during the war with Moscow in 1471 and also vividly characterizes the behavior of a representative from a certain group of the ordinary Novgorod population under military conditions. Such certain evidence will be estimated below in the section on the military actions between Moscow and Novgorod in the summer of 1471. It seems that the entire chronicle was compiled in the entourage of the regular clergy head of the Novgorod Republic, the prior of the Novgorod Yuriev monastery.

Here, the description of the Russian chronicle sources dedicated to the Moscow–Novgorod war of 1471 may be ended. However, this decision does not mean that other chronicles containing stories about the events of 1471 can be left aside. They are also available for research, and some valuable facts and evidence²⁰ can be extracted from them, but a detailed general description of such monuments will be omitted. The issue concerns chronicles such as the Typographic, Nikon, and Voskresensk ones, all of which are dated to the sixteenth century, as well as the Pskov chronicles.

Several words should be said about how the events of 1471 are estimated in contemporary historical science, generally, in Russian history. In 1960 in the Soviet Union, the very voluminous book by L.V. Cherepnin “Formation of the Russian Centralized State in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries” was published. One of the chapters in this book was devoted to the events of 1471. Though L.V. Cherepnin knew almost all the Russian sources, which described these events and talked about the confrontation between the pro-Moscowian and pro-Lithuanian parties in Novgorod, i.e., about political struggle in the Novgorod Republic,²¹ he estimated these events as a vivid example of class struggle in feudal Russia. Without establishing the time and place of the origin of each source or touching on its social and political nuances, the researcher combined the information from the chronicles of different times, both earlier (Stroeve List of the Novgorod IV Chronicle, Moscow Chronicle List of the End of the Fifteenth Century (List of 1479), Sofia II Chronicle) and later (different editions of the Typographic Chronicle, Nikon Chronicle, Lviv Chronicle,

²⁰For instance, it is pointed out in the paper of 6979 from the Ermolin chronicle (Chronicle List of the End of the Fifteenth Century) representing a brief narration for the paper of the same year from the Moscow Chronicle List of 1479 that “Prince of Yuriev, Duke Vasilii Fedorovich Velyaminov” had to take part in the Shelon battle together with two Moscow Dukes [1]. Prince Yuri is Yuri Dmitrovsky, a brother of Ivan III. The ancestors of Duke V.F. Velyaminov were famous Moscow boyars. If the information in the Ermolin chronicle is correct, this changes the characteristics of the Shelon battle, as there were more Moscow troops there. However, it is more likely that the mention about V.F. Velyaminov in the Ermolin chronicle is a later insertion.

²¹Cherepnin, L.V., *Obrazovanie Russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva v XIV–XV vekakh* (Formation of the Russian Centralized State in the XIV–XV Centuries.), Moscow, 1960, p. 855, note 2.

¹⁶FCRC, vol. 25, p. 287.

¹⁷FCRC, vol. 25, p. 286.

¹⁸FCRC, vol. 25, p. 284.

¹⁹FCRC, Moscow, 2000, vol. 4, part 1, pp. 446–449.

and a number of others) into an integral whole to construct the necessary picture of the political situation in the largest countries of Eastern Europe in 1471. Based on the text of the Sofia II Chronicle, according to which Ivan III mercifully forgave “*posadniks* and *tysiatskiis*, wealthy people, boyars, blacks, and Novgorod the Great as a whole,”²² Cherepnin decided that this source talks about black people, i.e., a declassified rabble as the lowest social category of the Novgorod society of the fifteenth century. However, black people in Russia represented a social stratum close to the stratum of royal ministerial servants in Western Europe. They were incorporated into the same social structure as chiliarches.²³ They were free and privileged producers, who usually worked for princes and provided for the existence of these princes and their families and, partially, their entourage. In the seventeenth century, most of the population in the capital Moscow were black people living in black hundreds and black suburbs. Such people can hardly be considered as a declassified rabble. The new interpretation of the events in 1471 by Cherepnin has proven to be artificial and has not found any support in the papers of later researchers.

The next year after the book by Cherepnin was published, the monograph “Novgorod and Novgorod Land in the Fifteenth Century” of the Leningrad historian V.N. Bernadskii²⁴ was issued. Bernadskii was already familiar with the same sources as Cherepnin, but his attitude to them was different. From these sources, he extracted certain data on the people participating on the side of Moscow or on the side of Novgorod in the war of 1471, on the size of troops in the rival parties, on the displacement of regiments, on small and great clashes between them, on the positions of Ivan III and its entourage, on the behavior of King Casimir IV, and on the Orthodox and Catholic princes of the church. Bernadskii had little interest in the questions concerning the origin of such facts, when and where they appeared, and how reliable they were. The historian considered the clash between Moscow and Novgorod as a struggle between two monolithic centers and, sometimes, forgot that the matter must concern the struggle of the Grand Duke’s power against the pro-Lithuanian party in Novgorod instead of Novgorod as a whole, where most of the population, as can be judged by different facts, supported Grand Duke of All Russia Ivan III instead of King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV.

²²FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 205.

²³Kuchkin, V.A., *Institutes of tysiatskiis in Medieval Russia, Materialy konferentsii “Vostochnaya Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekov’e. Spornye problemy istorii”* (Proceedings of the Conference “Eastern Europe in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Controversial Problems of History”), Moscow, 1993, pp. 46–48.

²⁴Bernadskii, V.N., *Novgorod i Novgorodskaya zemlya v XV veke* (Novgorod and the Novgorod Land in the XV Century), Moscow, Leningrad, 1961. This book was published two years after its author died.

Using the Avraamka Chronicle as a source when describing the Novgorod events in the 1460s, Bernadskii took it as the Smolensk Lord’s Chronicle written in 1495.²⁵ Later on, it was established that two independent manuscripts were combined within the same cover of the book with the Avraamka Chronicle: the Novgorod Archbishop Jonah’s List on the paper of the 1460s in large handwriting (the existence of such a list was flatly denied by Bernadskii) with the terminal paper of 6977 (1469) and two quires on later paper in finer handwriting with the note that the text of these quires was written by the “sinful” Avraamka on behalf of Smolensk Bishop Joseph in 1495. The aforesaid changes the attitude to the Avraamka Chronicle to make its communications earlier and more defined by the place of its origin. However, Bernadskii was somewhat skeptical about the evidence from the Avraamka Chronicle and did not always trust it, and therefore, apparently, he did not pay any attention to the communication of this chronicle from 6968, according to which “in the same winter, rebellious Pskovians in a disjointed mind, our imaginary brothers, who stood for Grand Duke Vasilii Vasilyevich and his sons by our sins, kept secret from its elder brother Novgorod the Great.”²⁶ According to the other sources, the secret transition of Pskov under the authority of the Moscow Grand Duke occurred in late January or at the beginning of February 1460.²⁷ The reference to the winter of 1460 in the Avraamka Chronicle (List of 1469) has proven to be reliable. Hence, the southwestern lands of the Novgorod Republic had already been under the authority of Moscow grand dukes for 11 years by the beginning of 1471 to facilitate their struggle for the lands of “elder Pskov’s brother” Novgorod and its vast volosts. Such important evidence from the sources of the fifteenth century was merely disregarded by Bernadskii. However, he thought that the treaty of 1471 considered below between the pro-Lithuanian government of Novgorod and the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV was quite real as were the consequences of this treaty. Bernadskii wrote:

²⁵Compare FCRC, St. Petersburg, 1889, vol. 16, p. 3.

²⁶FCRC, St. Petersburg, 1889, vol. 16, col. 202. The fact that Pskov was annexed to the Moscow possessions not in 1510 as considered in modern historical science, but earlier is evidenced by one of the papers from Ivan III’s will composed in 1503: “I bless my son with my patrimony and give him the city of Pskov and its towns, and with volosts, and villages, and the whole land of Pskov.” See *Dogovornye gramoty* (Contractual Charters, hereinafter, CC), no. 89, p. 357.

²⁷*Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), Moscow, Leningrad, 1941, no. 1, pp. 57–58. Grand Duke Vasilii II came from Moscow to Novgorod on January 20, 1460. After a while, the Pskovian mission went to Novgorod for negotiations with Vasilii II. When the negotiations were over, the Pskovians began to ask the Grand Duke to leave the Lithuanian Alexander Vasilyevich Chartorysky as governor in Pskov. Vasilii II agreed, but on the condition that he “kisses the life-giving cross for me and my children that he, Grand Duke, does not think evil of me, the Grand Duke, and my children.” However, Prince Chartorysky refused such a kiss and left Pskov on February 10, 1460.

“According to the treaty of 1471, traitorous boyars broke the primordial political communication of Novgorod with Great Russia and entered the system of the Polish–Lithuanian state.”²⁸

In the 1980s, the papers of V.L. Yanin on the history of Novgorod and the Novgorod Republic started to be published. In the small paper “The Fall of Novgorod,” the researcher highlighted the position of Novgorod in the years 1471–1480 from the beginning of its confrontation with Moscow to the complete transition of the Novgorod Republic under the rule of Ivan III. According to the scientist, the defeat of Novgorodians by the Moscow army occurred because “the unwillingness of Novgorodians, who lost faith in the boyar power to fight against the Grand Duke had played an important part.”²⁹ At first glance, it seems that we have a deliberate and well-argued decision. However, what should we do with the early evidence of the Sofia II Chronicle, according to which “at the same time, a great rebellion occurred among them [i.e., Novgorodians, V.K.] with many conflicts between those who would like to support the Grand Duke, and the others who supported the King”?³⁰ Or Ivan III did not understand at all, against whom he fought: his supporter or opponents? In 1471, Ivan III made the campaign not against the Novgorod boyars, but only against those of them who advocated the annexation of Novgorod to the Lithuanian state. There were some people in Novgorod who were firmly on the side of Moscow, and the old and customary relations with Moscow were much more valuable for them than the innovation of the Polish king. Ivan III always took into account this important circumstance when struggling in 1471 not only against the anti-Moscow minded Novgorod boyars, but also against the authorities of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order and Golden Horde Khan Akhmat.

The certain events of 1471 were described by Yanin by the later Nikon Chronicle of the sixteenth century.³¹ For some reason, the earlier narratives of the fifteenth century were left aside. When comparing the events of 1471 with each other, Yanin placed attention on the fact that these events were described in the chronicle’s papers of different years, and their chronological order raised some doubts. Thus, the arrival of Mikhail Olelkovich (Aleksandrovich), a placeman of the Polish King Casimir IV, to Novgorod is dated in the chronicle at 1470, and the treaty of Novgorod with Casimir IV might have been formalized, in the opinion

of Yanin, only after November 15, 1471.³² On what legal grounds might the Kievan Prince Mikhail Olelkovich, who served the Lithuanian ruler, have visited Novgorod in 1470 in the lead of a crowded escort?³³ Such contradictory evidence of sources did not become the subject of consideration for Yanin, as well as the question of whether the treaty of Novgorod with Casimir IV is a real agreement about the transition of the Novgorod Republic to under the authority of the Polish king, or whether it was a project, which was fixed on paper, but had not yet been implemented. Although Yanin confidently wrote that the reason for the clash between Novgorod and Moscow in 1471 was a religious discord, no source has reported a change of faith by even one of the supporters of the Moscow Grand Duke Ivan III or one of the supporters of the Polish king. The only source that correctly defines the reason for the conflict between Moscow and Novgorod is the Sofia II Chronicle, which includes the earliest narrative of the events of 1471. It is reported that the reason for this conflict was the refusal of the Novgorodians to pay Moscow the black duty, i.e., the Horde tax imposed first by the Karakoram khans and then by the Sarai khans on the Russian lands subject to them. The Sofia II Chronicle stated that “Now Novgorodian peoples..., they did not pay duties.”³⁴

The compiler of the Novgorod Archiepiscopal List of 1469, which covered the events of the early 1460s and the first seven years of Ivan III’s reign, often rested on the descriptions of Novgorod–Moscow contradictions. He dated their origin to 1461, when Grand Duke Vasilii II demanded that the Novgorodians pay the black duty: “In the same winter, the Novgorodians must pay black duty to the Grand Prince from the peasants.”³⁵ The Novgorodian *veche* patent, which allowed Grand Duke Vasilii Vasilyevich to collect “black duty for this year” from all the Novyi Torg volosts belonging to Novgorod the Great, has been preserved.³⁶ Initially, this patent was widely dated to the time between 1448 and 1461. However, it was established by Yanin in 1991 that this patent must be dated to 1461.³⁷ This date can be clarified. The Novgorod List of 1469 places the communication that the right to collect “black duty” from the Novgorod volosts was granted to Grand Duke Vasilii II by Novgorodians after the event that occurred on February 15, 1461, and before the event dated March 13, 1461.³⁸ Hence, according to this information, the

²⁸Bernadskii, V.N., *Novgorod i Novgorodskaya zemlya v XV veke* (Novgorod and the Novgorod Land in the XV Century), Moscow, Leningrad, 1961, p. 270.

²⁹Yanin, V.L., *Padenie Novgoroda* (Fall of Novgorod); Yanin, V.L., *Ocherki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda* (Essays on the History of Medieval Novgorod), Moscow, 2013, p. 343.

³⁰FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 171.

³¹Yanin, V.L., *Padenie Novgoroda* (Fall of Novgorod), pp. 343–344, notes 3–6.

³²Yanin, V.L., *Padenie Novgoroda* (Fall of Novgorod), p. 342.

³³FCRC, Moscow, 2000, vol. 4, p. 446.

³⁴FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2.

³⁵FCRC, vol. 16, col. 204.

³⁶*Gramoty Velikogo Novgoroda i Pskova* (Charters of Novgorod the Great and Pskov, hereinafter, *CHGP*), no. 21, pp. 38–39.

³⁷Yanin, V.L., *Novgorodskie akty XII–XV vv. Khronologicheskii kommentarii* (Novgorod Acts of the XII–XV Centuries. Chronological Comment), Moscow, 1991, no. 107, pp. 183–184.

³⁸FCRC, vol. 16, col. 204–205.

Novgorod *veche* patent was compiled between February 15 and March 13, 1461. Taking into account the fact that Vasilii II returned from Novgorod to Moscow on March 9, 1461,³⁹ being on the way for nearly two weeks,⁴⁰ the time of granting this patent is reduced to nine days between February 15 and 23, 1461. The validity of this patent expired in a year, i.e., on February 15–23, 1462. The struggle for the life of fatally ill Grand Duke Vasilii II also took in Moscow in this period. In the period from March 6 and 12, 1462, this duke “of sound mind and good memory” composed his will (i.e., “grand paper”), in which he took away from his wife a number of volosts and villages, which she had acquired even at her own expense. He took revenge on her for not allowing him to be treated as he saw fit. Nearly two weeks later, Vasilii II, remaining only “in his sense,” wrote his second will (the so-called “certificate of attribution”), in which he returned to his wife the possessions that had been taken from her.⁴¹ Vasilii II died on March 27, 1464. In all likelihood, the Novgorodians refusing to fulfil the latest agreement with the dying prince to pay the black duty to Moscow took advantage of switching the Moscow government’s attention from other matters to the health of Grand Duke Vasilii Vasilyevich.

However, Moscow demanded all the conditions of previous agreements to be fulfilled. The Novgorod Lord’s List of 1469 communicates about the departure of a great embassy led by Archbishop Jonah, three *posadniks*, and two *zhitny* (i.e., wealthy) persons from Novgorod on December 22, 1462, to Moscow “to make peace” without mentioning the reasons for discord. The embassy was received by Ivan III, his brother Dmitrov Prince Yuri, and Metropolitan Theodosius at the highest level and it spent a lot of time in Moscow and returned back to Novgorod only on February 9, 1463, but had not achieved any success. “However, no ‘blazii mir’ had managed to be made”⁴² as resumed by the Novgorodian Chronicler. Moscow and Novgorod stood on their positions until the very beginning of the 1470s to strengthen the relations with old allies and find new ones.

³⁹FCRC, Moscow, Leningrad, 1949, vol. 25, p. 276. Vasilii II turned back to Moscow “on the memory of 40 saint martyrs of Sebastia.”

⁴⁰In 1478, Ivan III arrived in Moscow as soon as on March 5 after leaving Novgorod on February 17, though he went with stops. See FCRC, vol. 25, p. 323. In 1496, Ivan III left Novgorod on March 10 to arrive in Moscow on March 24. See FCRC, Moscow, 2001, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 346.

⁴¹Kuchkin, V.A., Will of Vasily II and attached charter to it, in *Trudy Instituta Rossiiskoi Istorii* (Proceedings of the Institute of Russian History), Moscow, 2019, no. 15, pp. 21–35.

⁴²Ibid, col. 211–212. “Blazii mir” is most likely “favorable peace,” see Sreznevskii, I.I., *Materialy dlya Slovarya drevnerusskogo yazyka po pis’mennym pamyatnikam* (Materials for the Dictionary of Old Russian on Written Monuments), St. Petersburg, 1893, vol. 1, col. 112 (“blaz” (“блаз”)).

For Novgorod, the power over which was claimed by two groups of Novgorodians, pro-Lithuanian and pro-Moscovian, the question of paying the Horde tribute played an essential part. The supporters of the Polish king were against paying the duty to the khan. In the treaty with King Casimir IV, they agreed only for a one-time payment rather than a regular one.⁴³ In this problem, they could rely on the support of their policy from Novgorod as a whole, both pro-Lithuanian and pro-Moscovian inhabitants. The extant historical sources do not show how Moscow treated such matters, but communicate that Ivan III was ready for changes of an economic character. He addressed the Novgorodians: “But also I want to favor your, my patrimony.”⁴⁴ “Favor” might be expressed as the reduction or complete cancellation of a certain tax.

The main opponent of Ivan III was Polish King and Grand Duke of Lithuania Casimir IV. Many chronicles report that as soon as the Novgorod Bishop Jonah, who enjoyed great authority and influence, died in Novgorod (November 8, 1470), the Kievan Prince Mikhail Olelkovich (Aleksandrovich) arrived to the Novgorodians from King Casimir: “The king will give them Kievan Duke Mikhail Olelkovich. Prince Mikhail entered Novgorod, and the Novgorodians welcomed him with great joy”⁴⁵; “the king delegated the ambassador Mikhail Olelkovich, Kievan son. Novgorodians welcomed him with honor.”⁴⁶ The Prince of Kiev was a cousin of Ivan III on the female line. In encountering the cited texts and not comparing them with any others, many researchers believe that the matter concerns the arrival of a high person to Novgorod to negotiate with the leaders of Novgorod society on behalf of King Casimir. Such judgments have some grounds. It is known, for example, that Mikhail Olelkovich had some talks with Marfa Boretskaya. The Kievan Prince promised to the widowed *posadnitsa*, a strict and domineering woman, to give her a husband from the noble Polish lords, who would rule all the Novgorod lands together with her.⁴⁷ Here, it is illustrative that Mikhalko did not see himself in the role of such a governor. However, the resort to the Pskov Chronicles shows that the essence of the matter was different. The Pskov III Chronicle communicates that Mikhail Olelkovich did not arrive in Novgorod alone, and “very many people had come with him.”⁴⁸ Such a number of people sent to a large and bustling city means that there were troops among them. Apparently, Mikhail Olelkovich arrived in Novgorod in order to lead the Novgorod garrison reinforced by the Lith-

⁴³CHGP, no. 77, p. 132.

⁴⁴FCRC, vol. 25, p. 285.

⁴⁵FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, p. 170.

⁴⁶FCRC, vol. 25, p. 285.

⁴⁷FCRC, Moscow, 2001, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 185.

⁴⁸*Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), Moscow, 1955, no. 2, p. 172.

uanian cavalry. According to the chronicle data, Prince Mikhail stayed in Novgorod for four months and eight days.⁴⁹ Upon receiving the news about the death of his elder brother Semen ruling in Kiev, he left Novgorod together with his army on March 15, 1471, to resolve hereditary matters.⁵⁰

During Mikhail's residence in Novgorod, the supporters of the Polish king managed to transfer the Novgorod governors of Ivan III from Novgorod to the Rurik's Settlement located 4 km to the south of Novgorod. The chief governor of Ivan III in Novgorod, Prince Vasilii Fedorovich Shuisky, was deprived of his post and transferred to Zavolochye. Now the lands along the Northern Dvina have become the object of his management. In addition to the transfer of Ivan III's governors to new places in the Novgorod Republic, all the possessions of Ivan III and his brothers in Novgorod and the Novgorod land were confiscated.⁵¹ This was the result from the residence of Ivan III's cousin in Novgorod.

However, another illustrative case occurred when Mikhail Olelkovich was in Novgorod. Several days after Theophilus was elected as Novgorod Archbishop, "the Lord's key keeper Pimen who forcefully enraged Novgorod the Great by great dishonor, was arrested at the fortress, chastised, robbed, and fined 1000 rubles."⁵² This is that very Pimen with whom Marfa Boretskaya had whispered about spending the Kievan money, who must be bribed with them, and how much this would cost. The crackdown on Pimen, one of the main pro-Lithuanian leaders, indicates that there was a very strong party of Moscow supporters in Novgorod, who was not afraid of the actions of its political opponents and was ready to stand up for itself in case of aggressive actions from the warriors of Prince Mikhail Olelkovich. Other chronicles define the reason for the crackdown on the monk Pimen. After the death of his Lord Archbishop Jonah, this key keeper "also owned his [i.e., Jonah, V.K.] treasury and took it out for himself."⁵³

The results from the activity of this prince are most precisely estimated in the Pskov Chronicles: "Novgorod was strongly exhausted by food, drinks, and great gifts, and he robbed all the tributes by force when coming from them and arriving in Russa and, when coming from Russa, robbed all sweetwort, goods, and heads by great war to take the goods with

him and lead the heads up to the very edge."⁵⁴ The residents of Russa and other neighboring border Novgorod volosts had an illustrative example of how they would be managed by "the best Russian people" appointed by King Casimir IV to the administrative posts in Novgorod and its volosts, if they would join the Lithuanian state.

Active opponents of Ivan III were also the representatives of some Novgorodian noble families. Special attention should be paid to the heirs of Isaac Andreevich Boretsky, a famous Novgorod *posadnik*, his widow Marfa, and sons Dmitrii and Fedor.⁵⁵ This was a rich and tight-knit boyar family. When the yard of Marfa Boretskaya burned down in Novgorod in 1476, as mentioned earlier, it was remarked in the Novgorod IV Chronicle's Synodal List close to the Stroevo List that "splendid yard" burned down.⁵⁶ As established by Yanin, the head of the family, Isaac Boretsky, was first elected to the Novgorod *posadniks* before 1428, and died in the 1460s.⁵⁷ There exists a treaty document of 1439, according to which the governor of Novgorod, Isaac Andreevich, forbade German merchants to leave Novgorod until the return of Russian merchants from Tallinn and Tartu. The Novgorod government feared that the early departure of foreign merchants from Novgorod might lead to the unjustified arrest of Russian merchants in the Baltic States with their goods. The presence of foreigners in Novgorod allowed the Novgorod government to respond immediately with similar actions to the German guests in the case of unjustified actions to their merchants in the Baltic States. This was in 1439. In 1453 Isaac Boretsky had a conversation, most likely, in secret with the deacon Stefan Bradaty, who came to Novgorod from Moscow. Stefan Bradaty was a confidant of the Grand Duke Vasilii II. After meeting with Boretsky, Stefan left Novgorod and returned to Moscow. Boretsky also managed to bribe the cook Poganka of the former Grand Duke of All Russia Dmitrii Shemyaka, who lived in Novgorod, to put the poison brought by the deacon Stefan into the chicken cooked for his prince. After tasting it, Shemyaka died a few days later. The latest research has confirmed the correctness of the above chronicle information preserved only in the Rostov chronicle. In the Novgorod Sophia Cathedral, the remains of Dmitrii Shemyaka were found and transferred to the main Novgorod temple from the Yuriev Monastery in the seventeenth century. The remains turned out to be mummified, and arsenic, the most common poison used in the Middle Ages to eliminate enemies, rivals, or generally

⁴⁹ *Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), Moscow, 1955, no. 2, p. 175.

⁵⁰ *Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), Moscow, 1955, no. 2, p. 175.

⁵¹ *FCRC*, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 201.

⁵² *Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), Moscow, 1955, no. 2, p. 172–173.

⁵³ *FCRC*, St. Petersburg, 1855, vol. 6, p. 5. The end of the Balzerov and Goryushkin Lists of the Sofia I Chronicle of earlier recension, which leads the text up to 1523.

⁵⁴ *Pskovskie letopisi* (Pskov Chronicles), no. 2, p. 175. Instead of "korm" (кормъ), it would be more correctly to write "kormom" (кормомъ).

⁵⁵ *FCRC*, vol. 6, no. 2, cols. 174, 202; *FCRC*, vol. 25, p. 289.

⁵⁶ *FCRC*, Moscow, 2000, vol. 6, p. 450, var. 6.

⁵⁷ Yanin, V.L., *Novgorodskie posadniki* (Novgorod Posadniks), Moscow, 2005, p. 506.

undesirable people, was found in his bones and tissues.⁵⁸

Since the second quarter of the fifteenth century, Moscow Rurikovich fiercely fought with each other, captured close relatives, imprisoned them, injured them, and even gouged out their eyes, but never tried to take each other's lives. In 1453, the Novgorod boyar decided that he could dispose of the fate of a man who had been the Grand Duke of All Russia for several years and had no enmity towards the first administrative person of the Novgorod Republic.

After the death of Isaac Boretsky, his wife Marfa had numerous villages located on the banks of the Northern Dvina, small areas of lands near the White Sea near the Solovetsky Monastery and, most importantly, 714 villages and rural settlements in the Novgorod part of the Bezhetsky Verkh Uplands and the future Novgorod Derevsk and Obonezhsk *pyatinas* with 1458 peasant yards.⁵⁹ Marfa was closely related to the entourage of the Novgorod Archbishop Jonah, who died on November 8, 1470. Through this entourage, Marfa received money from the Metropolitan of Kiev and spent it on bribing the right people, who came to the *veche* and loudly demanded the transfer of Novgorod to under the power of the Polish king.

The eldest son of Marfa Dmitrii was elected a Novgorod graded *posadnik* in the prestorm time in February 1471. A few months later, he led the armed struggle of the Novgorod supporters of the Polish king with Moscow. However, he was captured by the Moscow voivodes and beheaded.

In addition to the Boretsky family, the Novgorod and Moscow chronicle monuments mention three more people, who firmly stood for the entry of Novgorod into the Lithuanian state. The Moscow Chronicle of 1479 mentions Vasilii Guba Seleznev, Yeremei Sukhoshchek, and Kyprian Arzubyev.⁶⁰ The Stroeve list of the Novgorod IV Chronicle clarifies the patronymics and social status of these people: Vasilii Ivanovich, Cyprian Sergeevich, and the Lord's *chashnik* Yeremia. Moreover, all of them are called boyars.⁶¹ However, Yanin has found out that only two people from this list were Novgorod boyars and elected as Novgorod graded *posadniks* almost at the same time. These are Dmitrii Boretsky and Vasilii Guba Seleznev.⁶² Two other people, Yeremei Sukhoshchek and Kyprian Arzubyev, belonged to another, not so high, but quite influential stratum of Novgorod resi-

dents, i.e., *zhitny* people.⁶³ Moreover, Yeremei maintained relations with the Novgorod diocesan cathedra, being his *chashnik* at the time of the Novgorod Archbishop Jonah. Strangely enough, the Novgorod diocese clergy hatched plans for a transition from the control of the Metropolitan of All Russia in Moscow to under the aegis of the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia. Thus, Pimen, the *chashnik* of the deceased Novgorod Archbishop Jonah,⁶⁴ who managed the property and income of the entire Novgorod diocese and, therefore, was very rich, did not hesitate to receive money from the Metropolitan of Kiev Gregory and sincerely shared his desire to head the Novgorod Archbishop's cathedra. The first attempt to become the Archbishop of Novgorod resulted in defeat for Pimen. He yielded to Theophilus. The different positions of the Novgorod Orthodox clergy may be explained by the fact that, according to the Sophia II Chronicle, the Metropolitan of Moscow Philip "sent his ambassador to Novgorod, placing excommunication and denunciation on them."⁶⁵ Even if such excommunication and denunciation was extended not to all the Novgorodians, but only to the lay Novgorodians, the closure of churches for the latter hurt the Novgorod white clergy, who were deprived of payment from the laity people for church services. For many representatives of this clergy, it would be better to serve the Metropolitan of Kiev, but retain the funds appropriate to their status.

On the other hand, there is also evidences of another kind. In the Stroeve List of the Novgorod IV Chronicle, there is information concerning a certain Novgorodian Upadysh who "pursued treachery to Novgorod and wanted evil to Novgorod the Great with his like-minded associates: he nailed five guns with rods..."⁶⁶ To nail the guns with rods, it was required to have necessary materials and special tools. To all appearances, Upadysh had them, and he himself belonged to the famous and wealthy Novgorod artisans, who were dissatisfied with the pro-Lithuanian party's policy and desired Novgorod to be defeated in its war with Moscow. Upadysh was arrested for damage to the guns and further executed. The Novgorodian chronicler accuses him of "wanting evil to Novgorod the Great," but does not say what Upadysh wanted for Moscow. According to the logic of his actions, he wanted its success and the retention of old relations with Novgorod. However, Upadysh cannot be considered as a Moscow placeman. Ivan III did nothing to save his life.

The episodes described from life in Novgorod in the period of spring–summer of 1471 illustrate the fraught atmosphere the Novgorodian society lived in

⁵⁸FCRC, St. Petersburg, 1910, vol. 23, p. 155.; Yanin, V.L., *Nekropol' novgorodskogo Sofiiskogo sobora* (Necropolis of the Novgorod St. Sophia Cathedral), Moscow, 1988, pp. 105–111.

⁵⁹*Istoricheskaya Entsiklopediya* (Historical Encyclopedia), Moscow, 1962, vol. 2, col. 618.

⁶⁰FCRC, vol. 25, p. 290.

⁶¹FCRC, vol. 4, p. 447.

⁶²On Vasily Guba Seleznev, see Yanin, V.L., *Novgorodskie posadniki* (Novgorod Posadniks), p. 503. However, Yanin gives no patronymic of this *posadnik*.

⁶³FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 202.

⁶⁴FCRC, vol. 16, cols. 223–224.

⁶⁵FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 170.

⁶⁶FCRC, Leningrad, 1925, vol. 6, part 1, no. 2, p. 447.

during those months. It was separated not only into the supporters of Great Duke of All Russia Ivan III and the supporters of Polish King Casimir IV, but also split into smaller social groups (different categories of clergy, various strata of artisans), who demanded satisfaction of their interests, but did not manage to get it from the pro-Lithuanian government, which had seized power.

Knowing about the irreconcilable contradictions in Novgorod society and the firm decision of some from this society to put Novgorod under the authority of the Polish king, Ivan III decided to start a war with Novgorod after consulting with his relatives and the princes who served him.

It is generally believed that Ivan III started the war with Novgorod on May 23, 1471, when Ivan III marched from Moscow to Novgorod the Great in the lead of a large army. Yanin writes that "On May 23, 1471, Ivan III announced his intention to dispose of Novgorod."⁶⁷

The unexpected attack of people of Vyatka on the capital Sarai in 1471, the only one during the Mongols' rule over Russia, turned out to be very successful. Khan Akhmat had gone out on a trip, and his capital was left without a military garrison. The people of Vyatka took advantage of this circumstance. They seized Sarai and began to empty it, when "they took a lot of goods and a lot of people captured," and immediately sailed back. Akhmat had traveled one day's march from the city. When he learned about the daring robbery of his capital by the Russian army, he immediately sent most of his cavalry troops along the left bank of the Volga, hoping to intercept the attackers somewhere, and locked the entrance to the Volga River from its multi-flowing mouth with his river fleet. He reckoned to kill of all the invaders from Vyatka. However, the people of Vyatka turned out not to be timid people. They defeated the Horde fleet and went further upstream the Volga with all their trophies. A new river barrier, the battle boats of the Kazan Khanate, was waiting for them at Kazan. However, this fleet was also defeated by the victors from Vyatka, who quietly reached their native places after a new victory.⁶⁸ It should be kept in mind that, according to the will of Vasilii II, Vyatka as a whole was given to his eldest son Ivan.⁶⁹ Hence, the entire operation of 1471 against Sarai was organized, planned, and implemented by Ivan III. In view of this fact, the question about the reasons for the two Volga victories by the people of Vyatka may be posed: were their rooks equipped with firearms, other weapons, or even light field guns? However, this is only a question. In gen-

eral, Ivan III achieved his main goal to demonstrate to the Khan Akhmat that, if a successful attack on his capital is possible when the khan leaves it for one day of riding, what would happen if the khan were to leave the capital for 20–30 days and go to fight with distant Moscow? A comprehensive lesson was taught and understood by the opposing side. The Khan of the Great Horde Akhmat evaded the campaigns and clashes that took place in 1471. However, he took revenge on Ivan III for the attack to Sarai in 1472.

As for the other object of Ivan III's attack on Novgorod, the Moscow Grand Duke began to send his troops against it in the spring of 1471. The regiments under the command of two talented generals of Ivan III, the Prince Dmitrii Danilovich Kholmsky and the Prince Fyodor Davydovich Starodubsky the Motley, were the first to march. They left Moscow "a week before Peter's Fast", i.e., approximately June 3, and had to go to the city of Russa. Their army comprised 10000 men.⁷⁰ Prince Ivan Striga Vasilyevich Obolenskii "with tsarevich Tatars" was sent "upstream along the Msta River."⁷¹ It was the shortest way to Novgorod from Northeastern Russia. Prince Ivan Obolensky had to stop between the upper reaches of the Tvertsa and Msta rivers to control the way from Novgorod to the Volga. Each of Ivan III's brothers had to move from their domains to the western borders of the Novgorod Republic, mercilessly ruining and destroying its rural settlements along the way: Yuri from Dmitrov, Andrei Bolshoi from Uglich, Boris from Vologda, and their close relative Prince Mikhail Andreevich from Vereya. Ivan III himself went on the campaign from Moscow after "fasting for two weeks of Peter's Fast"⁷², i.e., on June 24. Ivan III's son Ivan Ivanovich the Young, the Grand Duke, and Ivan III's brother Andrei Menshoy, Prince of Vologda, were left in Moscow.⁷³

The Moscow troops that invaded the Novgorod borders were positioned in such a way as to control the southern borders of Novgorod. On the one hand, this allowed them to prevent the possible movement of Lithuanian troops from the south to join the Novgorod forces and, on the other hand, the movement of Novgorodians from the north to the Pskov lands that had become part of Moscow's lands. For this reason, a great role in the military plans of Ivan III was allotted to the Shelon River. Originating north of Pskov, this river further flowed through the Novgorod lands and then flowed from the southwest into Ilmen Lake, by which it was possible to get to Novgorod itself after crossing it and entering the Volkhov River. About 19 km from the mouth of the Shelon River, the Mshaga River flowed into this river from the left side to fill the Shelon with water and make navigation

⁶⁷Yanin, V.L., *Ocherki istorii srednevekovogo Novgoroda* (Essays on the History of Medieval Novgorod), p. 343.

⁶⁸FCRC, vol. 25, p. 291.

⁶⁹*Dukhovnye i dogovornye gramoty* (Spiritual and Contractual Charters) (hereinafter SCC), no. 61, p. 194.

⁷⁰FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 171.

⁷¹FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 171.

⁷²FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 171.

⁷³FCRC, vol. 25, p. 290.

along it convenient even for large river boats for its last 19 km. The Moscow troops took up positions in advance on both the right and left banks of the Shelon River. Most of the Russian cavalry was located on the right bank of the Shelon River, and the rest was on the left bank, and the Tatar cavalry was hidden upstream along the river in a secluded place. The Moscow *voivodes* commanding these forces received news in advance that the Novgorodians, having gathered their troops, put them in boats and sent them to the mouth of the Shelon.⁷⁴ According to the Sofia II Chronicle, the 30 000-strong army of Novgorod sailed to this campaign.⁷⁵ They landed on the left bank of the Shelon River near the village of Soltsy. Having formed into battle formations, the Novgorodians hit the Moscow regiments. The Muscovites initially resisted, but could not withstand the growing onslaught and fled. At this moment, the Moscow cavalry standing on the right bank of the Shelon rolled down to the Shelon like a crumbling mountain upon an earthquake, crossed the river, and joined the battle. The hidden cavalry of Tatars also took the offensive.⁷⁶ The front ranks of Novgorodians stopped, faltered, and ran back. Their advancing comrades were running towards them. A collision was inevitable. As a result, the ranks of the Novgorodians were mixed up, and they suffered heavy losses from their pursuers, when 2000 peoples from the Novgorod supporters of the Polish King including their main leaders were captured.⁷⁷ Dmitrii Isaakovich Boretsky, Vasilii Guba Seleznev, Yeremei Sukhoshchek, and Kiprian Arzubyev were captured together with six other people, who were sent to Ivan III's headquarters. On July 24, 1471, Ivan III tried the prisoners in Russa. The first four of them were executed, the others were sent to Moscow.⁷⁸ The pro-Lithuanian party of Novgorodians, who came to fight with the Muscovites, blamed the pro-Moscow party for the defeat, and the latter blamed the supporters of the Polish King. Verbal accusations and insults were alternated with armed clashes. According to the compiler of the Moscow Chronicle of 1479, 12 000 Novgorodians died in such fierce skirmishes.⁷⁹

⁷⁴FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 197.

⁷⁵FCRC, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 196.

⁷⁶The Stroeve List of the Novgorod IV Chronicle communicates that, at the early stage of the Shelon battle, "the Novgorodians were attacked by the 'zapadnaa rat' of Tatars" (FCRC, vol. 4, pp. 446–447). "Zapadnaay rat" is an inconspicuous hidden troop. It is also known that, while on the way to Novgorod, Ivan III "sent Mikita Beklemishev to the field to look for the Prince Murtosa Mustofin's son and invite him to service. Nikita found him in the field, called him to the Grand Duke, and went with him to the son of the Grand Duke to Moscow before the Grand Duke arrived from Novgorod" (FCRC, vol. 25, p. 291). Such orders of Ivan III seem to be explained by the fact that some Tatarian units allied to Moscow had suffered great losses in the Shelon battle, and there was a need to replace them by more capable troops.

⁷⁷FCRC, vol. 25, p. 289.

⁷⁸FCRC, vol. 25, p. 290.

⁷⁹FCRC, vol. 25, p. 289.

After the bitter and very heavy defeat on the Shelon River on July 14, 1471, the pro-Lithuanian government of Novgorod decided to continue the war with Moscow. As communicated by the Stroeve List of the Novgorod IV Chronicle, Novgorod ambassador was sent to King Casimir IV with a request for military assistance "Novgorodians sent an ambassador to Lithuania to ask the King to get onto a horse to go to Novgorod, and the ambassador went to Nemtsy by a circuitous route to the German Duke Nester and turned back to Novgorod to say that Nester would not give a way through his lands to pass to Lithuania."⁸⁰ The "circuitous route" to Lithuanian Vilna for the Novgorodian ambassador in 1471 was the way northward (instead southward through Pskov, as Pskov was already part of Moscow land by 1471) and further westward to the German Baltic states. However, who was the German Duke Nester, who was mentioned in the Russian Chronicle and did not let the Novgorod ambassador to pass through his lands to Lithuania? The index of names to the IV volume of the Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles contains no name of a German Prince Nester. There is also no definition for the land belonging to Nester in the geographical index to the same chronicle. This has a very good reason. Nester or Nester' should be read in the Chronicle as master or mester', i.e., a fragment of landmaster title in the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. In the main Russian handwriting of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, both uncial and semi-uncial, the letter "м" was written in different fashions in at least three cases: (1) in the same fashion as nowadays, (2) the connecting line between two vertical lines of the letter "м" was drawn between the tops of these verticals and, in this case, this connecting line resembled a horizontal one and, for this reason, the letter "м" could be read as "п", and (3) the connecting line was drawn from the middle of one vertical of the letter "м" to the middle of the other vertical and, as such a line was similar to a horizontal one, the letter could be read not as "м", but as "н." The last variant of the letter "м" explains the appearance of the name Nester in the Stroeve list of the Novgorod IV Chronicle. In fact, there has never been such a German prince in history. However, in this case, his place is taken by the well-known master (mester), i.e., the head of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. In the period of time mentioned (July–August, 1471), this was Bernhard von der Borch, a former landmarshal of the Teutonic Order. He succeeded his predecessor Johann Waldhaun von Herse in March 1471 as a result of a successful conspiracy. Johann Waldhaun von Heerse himself, being the commander of Tallinn, was elected as a landmaster of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order in January 1470. During his 14-month rule of Livonia, he showed himself only by demanding that Pskov return the lands captured by Pskovians on the

⁸⁰SCC, no. 61, p. 194.

Order's territory back to Germans. Pskov refused. This episode quite definitely characterizes the position of one of the most influential political leaders of Livonia with respect to the Russian neighbors. It was hostile. On the contrary, the position of von der Borch, who led the conspiracy against von Heerse and did not let the Novgorod ambassador go to Casimir IV, was completely the opposite, to makes us think about whether von der Borch's conspiracy was organized and financed through Pskov by Moscow.

There was another circumstance that constrained the actions of the Polish King Casimir IV. On March 22, 1471, the Czech King Jiri of Podebrad died in Prague. He had no children, and by agreement with Casimir IV, he was ready to transfer the Czech throne to Casimir's eldest son Vladislav, about which he wrote in his will. But it was not only Casimir's son who sought to lead the Czech Kingdom. There were other very reputable applicants. To support his son, Kazimir, at the head of his army, arrived in the Czech Republic. This affected the political orientation of Czech dignitaries and pretenders to the Czech crown. On May 27, 1471, Vladislav, the 15-year-old son of the Polish King Casimir IV, was elected Czech king. The coronation took place only a few months later, on August 22 of the same year. The Novgorod ambassador, who went to King Casimir IV for help and was not permitted to pass through the territories of the Teutonic Order, could hardly have seen the king, even had he been allowed to pass. He would have had to travel several hundred kilometers more to Prague. The Novgorod supporters of King Casimir IV did not have a single serious ally left to help them to stand against Ivan III.

The former governor of Novgorod, Prince Vasily Fedorovich Shuisky, who was transferred to Zavolochye, decided to come to the rescue. Having gathered a fairly significant army from Zavolochians and Dvinians,⁸¹ he put them in a boat and sailed along the Northern Dvina to its upper reaches. In the early morning on July 27, 1471, right before sunrise, the fleet of Prince Vasilii Shuisky collided with the fleet of Ivan III's *voevodas*, to which the Vyatchanians and Ustyuzhanians were part. A stubborn battle broke out on one of the banks of the Northern Dvina. The Muscovites under the command of the Moscow boyar Vasilii Fedorovich Dobryansky Obrazets had managed to capture the banner of the Dvinians, killing three standard bearers at the same time. The same fate befell the great Dvinian *voivode* Ignat Kashin. Prince Vasilii Shuisky was wounded and fled in a boat to Kholmogory. However, the battle continued until sunset, and only then was stopped. The Moscow *voivodes* won a difficult victory, but the Podvinian towns were easily conquered by them.⁸²

⁸¹The Ermolin Chronicle also adds the Vologzhanians to them. See *FCRC*, St. Petersburg, 1910, vol. 23, p. 159.

⁸²*FCRC*, vol. 25, p. 290; *FCRC*, St. Petersburg, vol. 6, no. 2, col. 176.

The resources of the Novgorodians were exhausted, and they asked for peace. In Ivan III's camp located in the village of Shelon, the Archbishop Theophilus of Novgorod appeared with *posadniks* and *boyars*. All of them repented of having raised their hand against the Grand Duke, the true lord of Novgorod the Great, and asked him for forgiveness. Ivan III did not start to pursue his enemies and showed mercy to them, but did not accept them into friendship. The next Moscow–Novgorod treaties were compiled on August 9–11, 1471, in the village of Korostyn located on the shore of Ilmen Lake 6 km from the mouth of the Shelon River. The first treaty dated to August 9, 1471, concerned the payment of an indemnity of 15500 rubles imposed on Novgorod (from the pre-agreed sum of 16000 rubles, the Novgorodians initially paid 500 rubles to Ivan III). The payment of 15500 rubles was to begin on the Feast of the Virgin Nativity (September 8, 1471) and end in four stages on the Feast of the Virgin Assumption (August 15, 1472). The treaty was compiled in the presence of five boyars and five *zhitny* people, i.e., one boyar and one *zhitny* person from each end of Novgorod. Such a delegation guaranteed that the necessary sum would be gathered from all over Novgorod.

More long-term agreements were written in the so-called Korostyn Treaty on August 11, 1471. This treaty was compiled in two copies for Novgorod and Moscow. The first of them dealt with the new rules of Novgorod's relations with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Any contacts with this neighboring state were forbidden to Novgorodians. Archbishops of Novgorod were to be appointed only in Moscow in the Kremlin in Assumption Cathedral at the Metropolitan Peter's tomb. Church duties were collected from the Novgorod *volosts* in the old way. Princes were forbidden to have their own villages in the Novgorod land. However, the old princely possessions and privileges were restored in the Novgorod Republic. The recent confiscation of Moscow possessions was canceled. The princes could not draw the people from the Novgorod land to Suzdal. However, the Novgorodians could not judge the Suzdalians on their territory; a trial concerning them might be carried out only on grand ducal or princely domain lands.⁸³

The Moscow version of the Korostyn Treaty concerned the rights and functions of the Grand ducal administration in Novgorod. The representatives of this administration received the right to participate in local Novgorod courts. The location of the courts was brought to the Settlement. Two judges took part in a trial: a boyar from Novgorod and a boyar from the Grand Duchy. If there was disagreement between them, the case was transferred to the judges of a higher instance: the Grand Duke, his son, or his brother. Thus, the Moscow side gained supreme control over the local court. Ivan III got the right for a part of the

⁸³*CNGP*, no. 26, pp. 45–48.

payments on pledges in inventory lists and refused the funds that he could have got from some Novgorod volosts. The Novgorodians had to return the lands acquired by them in due time from the Rostovians and the Belozertsians to the Grand Duke.⁸⁴ In general, the text of the Korostyn Treaty was compiled carefully and objectively. It did not contain any attacks against the Novgorodians who lost the war, demands for the extradition of people who fought against Ivan III, terms on the confiscation of property or possessions, or forced relocation of Novgorodians to other places. Ivan III could not have known that all this would occur just a few years after the turbulent events of 1471.

⁸⁴*CNGP*, no. 27, pp. 48–51.

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