

A review on the book on russia's state of being under ivan the terrible's ruling

[History](#)



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The 1st sentence in the chapter is too basic. Russia's land empire was formed between 1480 and 1783, to be exact. Also, Poland continued to rival Russia until it got divided between three powers, Lithuania didn't. Instead, Russia and Poland competed for the influence of Lithuania, each demonstrating Orthodox and Catholic religions, respectively. Poland won the diplomatic battle, and pagan Lithuania became Catholic. However, Russia won the influence of Ukraine, and Ukraine became Orthodox. As a final result of these challenges, Lithuania was annexed and Poland divided—all by Catherine the Great. Anyway, I was correct in saying in Chapter 9 that the culture of Kievan Rus' was more boring than that of the Byzantine Empire. This is correct, but the latter is gone for more than 450 years now, while Russia stands to this day.

“ Mongol control never reshaped basic Russian values, for the rulers were interested in tribute, not full government.” Correct. In Chapter 9 outline, I said that it is important not to place too much emphasis on Mongol rule in Russia, and this quote proves my point of view.

Ivan the Great liberated most of Russia from the Mongol rule, assumed control of ALL Orthodox churches, and was the 1st official czar (tsar) of the Russian people. He is worthy of being titled “ Great”. Unlike his successor, he also restored the economy (not by conquest), previously destroyed by the Mongols.

Ivan the Terrible is definitely worthy of the title “ Terrible”, although not by means that most people think of. The book talks about the negative aspects of the czar, but there were just as many (if not more), positive characteristics. True, in the 2nd part of his reign, he killed nobility, being the first version of Stalin. Just like Stalin, he was also paranoid. However, unlike Stalin, he never killed some 20, 000, 000 of ordinary, innocent people. He actually went out of Moscow because he was afraid of conspiracy. However, both nobles and the people still liked and supported him for his previous accomplishments (which I'll soon describe), so he returned to Moscow. When he returned, though, he had little hair, which meant that he suffered another mental breakdown (he ripped his hair out of his head). Yet even during the 2nd part of his reign, he accomplished the task of forming the 1st Russian “ secret police”. Future czars would use them in the future, and it was this police that stopped many rebellions and prevented assassinations of the czars.

Now let's talk about the 1st part of his reign. He was “ terrible” to Russian nobles, but he was also “ terrible” to Russia's enemies. Now Russia was finished defending the land from the Mongols! Now she was ready to attack! The 1st civilization destroyed by the Russians was the Khanate of Kazan', and Ivan the Terrible participated in the battle. His army killed 43, 000 Mongols. Russians used explosives to destroy the city walls! Ivan the Terrible succeeded in wiping out a whole civilization, an accomplishment that is almost impossible to achieve today. He changed the territorial map of Russia, so his name is worthy of being entered in a world history textbook, not just Russian history. The so-called “ conquest” of Siberia also occurred

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during his reign. Also, the conquest of Kazan' paved the way of exterminating at least 2 other Khanates. So, if we call Ivan the Terrible "terrible", than we must remember that he was probably more terrible to his enemies than he was to Russians.

The book talks too briefly about the Time of Troubles. It started when some successor, Dmitry, was assassinated. It is unknown to this day who killed him. Boris Godunov was the primary suspect, since it was he who succeeded Dmitry. Dmitry's mother became a monk. Then real confusion began. Some Polish monk believed that he was Dmitry, who somehow escaped death. In history the monk is referred to as False Dmitry. Dmitry's mother "recognized" him as her son, for some odd reason, probably because she was afraid that the monk would kill her if she told the truth, or maybe because she was mentally unstable, unable to bear Dmitry's death, or in denial. False Dmitry gained support of Poland, and decided to stage a coup in Russia. He succeeded! For some reason, Boris Godunov died. Maybe it was a heart attack. Many mysteries were happening in the Time of Troubles. False Dmitry didn't look like Dmitry at all; he had a "big pimple on his face, with an expression both unsympathetic and melancholy". However, he proved to be a smart ruler. The fact that he always referred to himself as Dmitry proves that he was really crazy enough to believe that he is Dmitry. Not much is known about him, though. His best resource was a Lithuanian jail! He didn't get a chance to rule much, though, because Russians soon realized that he wasn't Dmitry. They surrounded the palace and killed False Dmitry and all of his supporters. Then they burned False Dmitry's body (after killing him), and fired his ashes from a cannon in the direction of Poland. Right after

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False Dmitry's death, though, came ANOTHER false Dmitry, referred to as False Dmitry II. Unlike the previous one, he didn't think that he was Dmitry, and his supporters didn't think that, either. Also, Bolotnikov's rebellion occurred, the first organized Russian rebellion of peasantry. Finally, the kings of Poland and Sweden intervened for demand to be kings of Russia. Swedes and Poles were actually ready to fight each other for the kingdom of Russia! The situation seemed hopeless for the Russian people. Suddenly, the proudest event of Russian history happened. Eastern part of Russia managed to absorb enough strength to destroy Bolotnikov's rebellion, kill False Dmitry II, with his wife being imprisoned for life, and deny Swedish and Polish claims to the throne, with Michael Romanov emerging the victor. Later, Sweden was beat by Peter the Great, while Catherine the Great annexed more than a third of Poland.

Now a mistake the book makes about Peter the Great: " He traveled widely in the West, incognito..." No! Even though he tried to be anonymous, people always recognized him (primarily by his height, I guess, which was almost 7 feet tall). Peter achieved a territorial victory against Sweden, and annexed Latvia.

It's good that the book doesn't mention the number of lovers Catherine the Great had. It would've been embarrassing. Over the course of her reign, she had 21 known lovers, with the last one at the age of 60. This proves that she never was stable, never able to settle down. Catherine the Great annexed 1/3 of Poland, Lithuania, and Crimean Khan/Turks. Even though it is important to note that she annexed more than Peter the Great, she could not

have done it without Peter I taking care of the Swedish problem, and annexing Latvia. Peter I in turn couldn't have done it without Ivan the Terrible beating Mongols and the Khanate of Kazan'. " Three partitions, in 1772, 1793, and 1795, eliminated Poland as an independent state, and Russia held the lion's share of the spoils". It could be argued that Germany had the most industrialized and populated, although not the largest, sector of Poland. However, since Russia gained most territory, future invaders, such as Napoleon, would have trouble penetrating such huge amount of territory. Catherine the Great also put down a second organized peasant revolt, Pugachev's rebellion. Both Peter the Great and Catherine the Great unintentionally made the peasant life worse.