
RISE OF MUSCOVY

❖ CIVIL WAR BETWEEN VASILII 2 AND HIS KINSMEN

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AGENDA



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INTRODUCTION

- ❖ The Muscovite Civil War, or Great Feudal War, was a prolonged conflict that cast its shadow over the entire reign of Vasily II of Moscow (from 1425 to 1453). The two warring parties were Vasily II, the Grand Prince of Moscow, as one party, and his uncle, Yury Dmitrievich, the Prince of Zvenigorod as the other party.
- ❖ But in the end, Vasily II regained his crown. It was the first civil war in the history of Muscovy, whose largely peaceful rise had been predicated on a lack of conflict within the ruling family.



BACKGROUND

- ❖ The Mongol invasions of 1236-1241 left the Russian principalities subjugated by the Golden Horde. In the 13th-15th centuries, the Khan of the Golden Horde appointed the Great Prince, who in the 14th century resided in Moscow.
- ❖ In the 13th century the medieval Rus' consisted of a set of relatively small and weak principalities, fighting and making alliances against each other.
- ❖ One bigger principality, the Grand Duchy of Moscow, grew due to a series of clever policies and became the biggest one in central Rus'. In 1380 Dmitry Donskoy, the prince of Moscow, even managed to fight the troops of Golden Horde in the Battle of Kulikovo and win.

SECOND PERIOD (1434-1436)

- ❖ The brothers of Vasily Yuryevich — Dmitry Shemyaka and Dmitry Krasny — refused to lend him any support. Anticipating that Vasily would not be able to keep Moscow for long, they preferred to ally with Vasily II so that eventually they could get additional lands from him.
- ❖ In 1435, Vasily managed to collect an army in Kostroma and moved in the direction of Moscow. He lost a battle on the bank of the Kotorosl River to Vasily II and fled to Kashin
- ❖ The two armies were stationed on two banks of the Kostroma River and could not start fighting immediately. Before the fight started, the two cousins concluded a peace treaty.
- ❖ He lived until 1448, but chronicles do not mention him between 1436 and 1448; apparently he was imprisoned all this time.

PHOTOS OF THAT PERIOD



THIRD PERIOD (1436-1453)

- ❖ But in 1430–1, within a year of one another, Vitovt and Photius both died. Shortly afterwards, the eldest of Vasilii II's uncles challenged his nephew for the throne of Vladimir. He and Vasilii each appealed to the Mongol Khan Ulu-Muhammed.
- ❖ Although Vasilii was awarded the patent, his uncle none the less contested the decision and seized Moscow in 1433.
- ❖ When he died in 1434, his sons continued the war even though, according to the principle of seniority their father had invoked, they had no claim to the throne.



THIRD PERIOD (1436-1453)

- ❖ The triumph of Vasili II over his uncle and cousins enabled him and his heirs to continue, virtually without restraint, the process of consolidating Muscovite authority over the northern Rus lands and forming a centralized, unified state to govern them.
- ❖ The principle of vertical succession, confirmed by the war, limited the division of lands to the formation of apanage principalities for the grand prince's immediate relatives.
- ❖ By the mid-fifteenth century the princes of Moscow had fashioned a new political structure, centred around their own enlarged hereditary domain and their dynastic line.
- ❖ Built upon territorial, economic, military, and ideological foundations that displaced both the traditional heritage of Kievan Rus and Tatar authority, the new state of Muscovy was thus poised to exploit the disintegration of Golden Horde and the reduction of Lithuanian expansion and to become a mighty Eastern European power.

Thank you

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