

# **Crisis: ~~The~~ Time of Troubles (1598–1613)**

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# The 'Time of Troubles' (*smutnoe vremia*).

- The age of transformation began with acute crisis—the 'Time of Troubles' (*smutnoe vremia*). This crisis began a new period in Russian history, the new 'troubles' begins in the 1680s.
- This period divides into successive 'dynastic', 'social', and 'national' phases that followed upon one another.
- The 'Dynastic period' or 'First phase' begins with the extinction of the Riurik line in 1598.
- This first phase was unusual because the only dynasty that had ever reigned in Russia suddenly vanished without issue, and due to this it triggered the first assault on the autocracy.
- In the broadest sense, the old order lost a principal pillar—tradition (*starina*); nevertheless, there remained the spiritual support of the Orthodox Church and the service nobility.
- Muscovy responded to the extinction of its ruling dynasty by electing a new sovereign. Boris Godunov— a Russian nobleman but he was not from an élite family.

# Boris Godunov– As A Ruler

- But Boris had prepared his development under Tsars Ivan the Terrible and Fedor Ivanovich .
- After Fedor's death, Boris was formally 'elected' as Tsar Boris by a council (*sobor*) who had gathered in Moscow. The Church, which Boris had earlier helped to establish its own Patriarchate, supported his election.
- Boris's position was secure. Apart from fact that his government was surround with enormous burdens and problems, Boris himself failed to invoke respect from his subjects.
- Moreover, his open efforts to ascend the throne give belief to rumours that he had arranged the murder of Tsarevich Dmitrii, Ivan's last son, in 1591. Although an investigation confirmed that the death was accidental.



# Fall Of Boris Empire

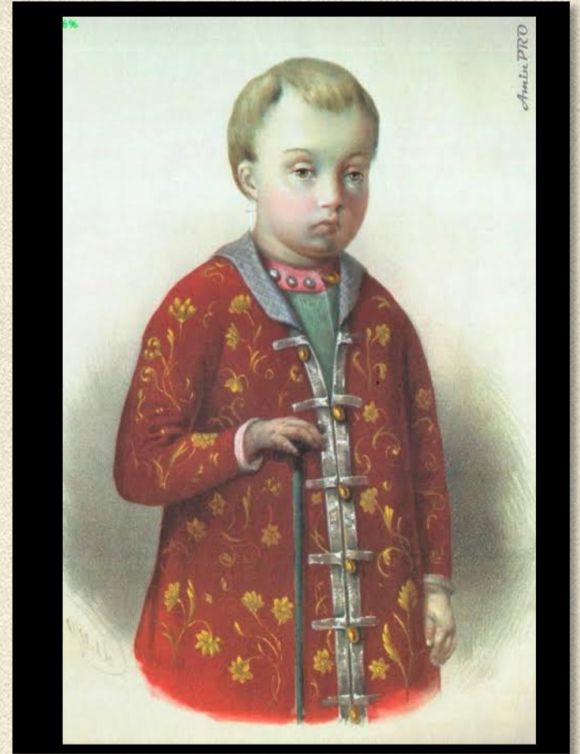
- Boris was unable to consolidate power after accession to the throne.
- His attempt to tighten control over administration failed because of the Muscovite procrastination and corruption.
- He was also not able to train better state servants: when, for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, Muscovy dispatched 18 men to study in England, France, and Germany, not a single one returned.
- Boris attempted to establish order in noble-peasant relations, but nature herself interceded. From the early 1590s, in an attempt to protect petty nobles and to promote economic recovery, the government established the 'forbidden years', which—for the 1<sup>st</sup> time—imposed a blanket prohibition on peasant movement during the stipulated year.

# End of The First Phase

- In autumn 1601, however, Boris's government had to retreat and reaffirm the peasants' right to movement: a catastrophic crop failure in the preceding summer caused massive famine that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.
- The following year the government again had to rescind the 'forbidden year', a step that virtually legalized massive peasant flight.
- Moreover the government welcomed movement towards the southern border area (appropriately called the *dikoe pole*, or 'wild field'), where they helped to reinforce the Cossacks and the fortified towns recently established as a buffer between Muscovy and the Crimean Tatars.
- But many peasants sought new landowners in central Muscovy adding to the social unrest. In fact, in 1603 the government had to use troops to suppress rebellious peasants, bondsmen (*kholopy*), and even *déclassé* petty nobles.

# Death of Tsarevich Dmitrii and Boris

- The general sense of catastrophe mounted, rumours suddenly spread that Tsarevich Dmitrii had not died at Uglich, but had miraculously survived in Poland-Lithuania.
- When the Polish nobles launched their campaign from Lvov in August 1604, their forces numbered only 2,200 cavalrymen.
- By the time they entered the Kremlin, Boris himself had already died (April 1605), and his 16-year-old son Fedor was promptly executed.



# Shuiskii and Russian culture

- Above all, the Polish presence exposed old Russian culture to massive Western influence and provoked a strong reaction, especially against the foreigners' behaviour—their clothing, customs, and contempt for Orthodox religious rites.
- It is hardly surprising that Shuiskii himself mounted the throne—this time 'chosen' by fellow boyars, not a council of the realm.
- Alexander Nevsky he represented the hope of aristocratic lines pushed into the background by Boris and Dmitrii.





# Eliminated the threat

- Shuiskii immediately faced a serious challenge—the Bolotnikov rebellion, the first great peasant uprising in the history of Russia.
- Hardly had Vasiliï eliminated the threat from peasants and Cossacks when he faced a new menace from the Poles
- The past of this second False Dmitrii is murky but he apparently came from the milieu of the first.



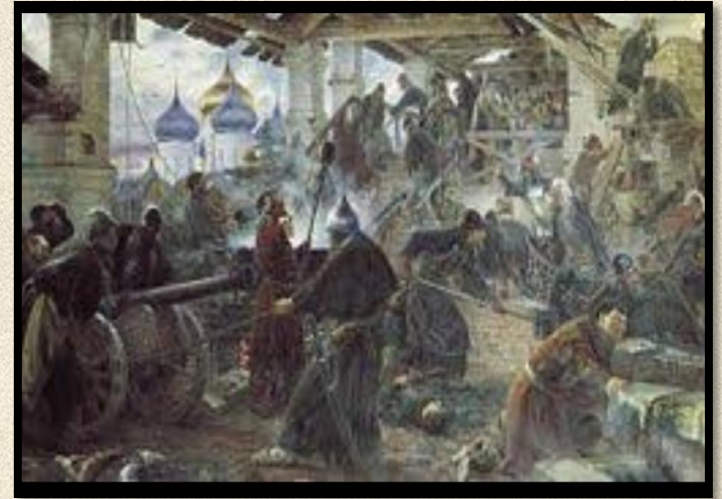
# Military success

- After establishing headquarters in the village of Tushino, he was joined by the wife of the first False Dmitrii, 'Tsarina Maryna', who 'recognized' the husband who had so miraculously survived.
- After some initial tensions, Moscow and Sweden soon enjoyed military success, overrunning the camp at Tushino at the end of 1609; a few months later the Swedish troops marched into Moscow.
- As Vasili's power waned, in February 1610 his foes struck a deal with the king of Poland: his son Władysław, successor to the Polish throne, would become tsar on condition that he promise to uphold Orthodoxy and to allow the election of a monarch in accordance with Polish customs.



# Agreement of 7 boyars

- Thus, for the first time in Russian history, élites set terms for accession to the throne.
- The agreement provided for a council of seven boyars (legitimized by an ad hoc council of the realm), which, with a changing composition, sought to govern during the interregnum.
- That Muscovy obtained neither a Polish tsar nor a limited monarchy in 1610 was due to a surprising turn of events in Smolensk.



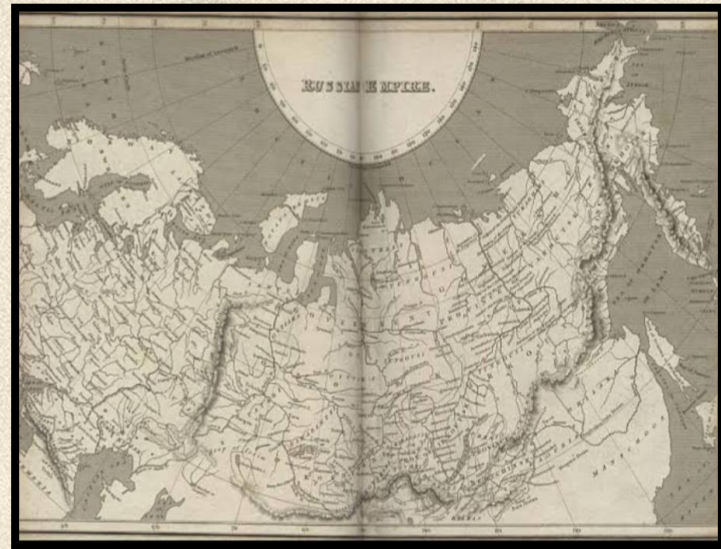
# Second Levy

- The tensions were soon apparent in Moscow, where the high-handed behaviour of the Poles and their Russian supporters triggered a popular uprising in February-March 1611.
- In response Nizhnii Novgorod and Vologda raised the 'second levy', which united with the former supporters of the second False Dmitrii and advanced on Moscow.
- The supreme council of his army functioned as a government (for example, assessing taxes), but avoided any promise of freedom for fugitive peasants once the strife had ended.



# Liberation of Moscow

- The 'third levy', though beset with internal differences, nevertheless liberated Moscow in October 1612.
- The liberation of Moscow did not mean an end to the turbulent 'Time of Troubles': for years to come, large parts of the realm remained under Swedish and Polish occupation.
- And, despite the election of a new tsar, society became more self-conscious as it entered upon decades of tumult in the 'rebellious century'.



# Thanks

## QUESTIONS

1. How the dynasty phase begin and how it effect populace of Muscovy?
2. When the polish nobles launched their campaign from Lvov in August 1604, how many cavalymen were there from their forces?
3. What did Vasily do when he faced the new menace from the poles?