

Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship

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Ivan IV was the head of a theocratic state and an ardent participant in the spiritual culture of his church. He nevertheless seems to have deliberately flaunted the religious standards which were the basis of his legitimacy, especially during the *Oprichnina* (1564–1572). He reveled in blasphemy and his cruelties often manifested the ironic twist of what is termed “*glumlenie*”: he denigrated his victims, ostentatiously violating their status by immersing them in inverted worlds of carnival.¹ Although scholars have explored Ivan's motivations, no one has adequately explained the contradiction between his affirmation of his official status as model Christian and his blasphemous and immoral behavior. To the question “Did Muscovite Literary Ideology Place Limits on the Power of the Tsar (1540s–1660s)?” Daniel Rowland answers that “wise advisers” appealed to normative notions of a tsar's “piety” to limit his power and restrain his evil deeds. However, when such “advisers” confronted Ivan IV with his “tyranny,” he did not respond on religious or any other grounds. Rowland concludes that “only brute force enabled him to act in contradiction to the prevailing ideological norms.”²

Most scholars who have discussed Ivan's religious ideology have not seen any relationship between his sense of his own sacredness and his actions during the *Oprichnina*. This is true of the nineteenth century historian, V. O. Kliuchevskii, who suggested that in his own mind Ivan IV had developed a “whole theology of political self-deification in the form of a learned theory of his own power as Tsar . . . Distracted by malice and imaginary fears, he . . . was not able to bring his abstract

1. For instance, during the sack of Novgorod, Ivan was said to have hosted the Archbishop Pimen's “marriage” to a mare and to have forced him to ride her backwards to Moscow with his legs tied together, strumming on the bagpipes and playing on the zither (the instruments of the *skomorokhi*), where he was to enter his name in the register of *skomorokhi*. See Hugh F. Graham, ed., “A Brief Account of the Character and Brutal Rule of Vasil'evich, Tyrant of Muscovy” (Albert Schlichting on Ivan Groznyi), *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 9, no. 2 (1975): 204–72, esp. 235–36. See also D. S. Likhachev and A.M. Panchenko, (“*Smekhovoi mir*” *drevnei Rusi* [Leningrad: Nauka, 1976], 39–42) who, in analyzing Ivan's verbal abuse, provide a parallel example of denigration of an enemy through associating him with the musical instruments of the *skomorokhi*. They also point out (*ibid.*, 33–35) that Ivan denigrated himself through carnival behavior to inflict punishment, to instruct, etc. His behavior can be summarized under the term “*glumlenie*” which, according to *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XI–XVII vv.* (Moskva: Nauka, 1977, 4: 36–37) referred to carnival-type games, including blasphemous forms of masking and dancing characteristic of the *skomorokhi*, and also to ironic joking, the explicit purpose of which was denigration.

2. See *The Russian Review* 49 (1990): 125–55, especially 145 and 149. On the question of the limits on the tsar's powers, see also *St. Filipp Metropolitan of Moscow—Encounter with Ivan the Terrible*, trans. R. Haugh and N. Lupinin (Belmont: Nordland, 1978), 147–56.

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theory into conformity with concrete historical reality."³ Marusha Smilyanich has speculated that Ivan IV appreciated the distinction between "political" and "religious" virtue, but she has given no evidence that he himself interpreted his actions in either of these terms. While acknowledging that "religious Scripture provided the foundation for his political practice" and he saw himself as a king by "divine right," Smilyanich's machiavellian model obviates the necessity of describing a connection between Ivan's religious ideology and his practice.⁴ Michael Cherniavsky has stated that Ivan IV saw himself as the image of Christ on earth with "two bodies," human and divine; expanding the limits of his authority, he emphasized his divine at the expense of his human nature.⁵ But Cherniavsky does not discuss how Ivan's focus on his divinity might have manifested itself in action. Only A. M. Panchenko and B. A. Uspenskii have pointed out archetypes of the divinity of Christ with which Ivan IV identified and by which he justified atrocities during the *Oprichnina*.⁶ Panchenko and D. S. Likhachev argue that Ivan saw his "immoral" actions from a worldview structurally and cognitively antithetical to the Christian: through an analysis of Ivan's "language" of gesture, they conclude that he embraced the *skomorokhi* "antiworld" as a weapon against his political enemies; furthermore, they viewed certain would-be "Christian" aspects of the *Oprichnina*, such as its monastic regime, as manifestations of parody.⁷ They have not, however, reconciled Ivan's obscene "travesties" of Christian morality with his continuing attestations of his legitimacy as Christian tsar.

In this study I will argue that Ivan IV developed a personal mythology of kingship by which he interpreted his blasphemies and atrocities during the *Oprichnina* as Christian and which he articulated to justify himself in face of criticism and betrayal by his subjects. Ivan's mythology was a variant of the commonly accepted paradigm of his legitimacy, derived from the official ideology of sacred kingship developed by the Metropolitan Macarius after 1547. The official "Wisdom" theology of the Muscovite State provided Ivan with a language which encompassed his dual nature in Christ so that, in his own eyes at least, there was no contradiction between his violence and his sense of himself as a model Christian king. I hypothesize that, on a subcon-

3. See V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1957), II: 196.

4. M. A. Smilyanich, "Tentative d'explication de la personnalité d' Ivan le Terrible," *Revue des études slaves* 48 (1969): 117-27.

5. Michael Cherniavsky, (*Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961], 50) writes that "... in Ivan's eyes his own humanity is fully absorbed by his godlike office."

6. A.M. Panchenko and B. A. Uspenskii, "Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii: kontseptsii pervogo monarkha" in *Trudy otdela drevnei russkoi literatury (TODRL)* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1983) 37: 54-78.

7. See "Smekhovoi mir" *drevnei Rusi*, 32-44, 62. On the connection between Ivan's writings and his actions, see 40. On the "kromeshnyi mir" as an "antiworld" to the Christian one with an element of unreality, nonsense or masquerade, see *ibid.*, 57-75. On the monastic regime of the *Oprichnina* as parody, see *ibid.*, 61.

scious level, Ivan's personal mythology was a compensatory response to extreme paranoia, seen by some scholars as the most convincing explanation for the *Oprichnina* and its excesses.⁸ While these scholars have deduced Ivan's paranoia from his behavior, I propose that his self-mythologization compensated for his paranoia and made him feel invulnerable: in extreme anxiety his psyche created a symbolic solution. A complete, if implicit, myth system mediated between the official Wisdom paradigms of his kingship and the sadism he inflicted on his people so that he could make sense of his behavior, feel himself in control and relieve himself of unbearable dread.⁹ If, however, this myth system was a response to criticism and anxiety, it also enabled Ivan to define himself to himself in his own terms. By defining himself as a moral absolute like God Himself, his mythology alleviated the existential crisis he experienced as a result of his sense of abandonment.¹⁰ Implicit was the idea that his actions partook of a higher sacred meaning which was accessible only to the initiated: he differed from others not only by his kingship but also by his "knowledge" of the sacred. The official doctrine of his likeness to God allowed him to portray himself as exclusive judge, both of himself and of others, rather than to absolve himself of responsibility for his atrocities.¹¹

In order to understand how Ivan IV arrived at his mythology of kingship, it is important to remember that ritualized behavior, which saturated the life of a tsar, was a "reactualization" of Christian myth, an "imitation of paradigmatic divine models."¹² All of official Muscov-

8. R. Crummey pointed out that Kliuchevskii in his *Sochineniia*, 2: 157-99 was the first to suggest the possibility that Ivan's personality rather than political or social causes was the key to the *Oprichnina*. Even though Ivan believed he was using the *Oprichnina* to establish his absolute power, "its structure, policies and methods reflected Ivan's unbalanced mind rather than the social realities with which he was trying to deal." See R. Crummey, "Ivan the Terrible," in *Windows on the Russian Past*, eds. Samuel H. Baron and Nancy W. Heer (Columbus: American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, 1977), 57-74, esp. 57. On Ivan's paranoia as an explanation for the *Oprichnina*, see R. O. Crummey, "New Wine in Old Bottles? Ivan IV and Novgorod," *Russian History* 14, nos. 1-4 (1987): 61; and Richard Hellie, "What Happened? How Did He Get Away with It? Ivan Groznyi's Paranoia and the Problem of Institutional Restraints," *ibid.*, 199-225.

9. Stressing that the paranoid has the ability to function completely rationally and normally in spheres not affected by his delusional system, Richard Hellie posited Ivan's use of the ideology of sacred kingship elaborated under the Metropolitan Macarius to justify his actions to himself (*ibid.*, 217).

10. On Ivan's assertion of absolute power over the Church and absolute authority over its dogma (his role as an "apostle of dogmas") in relation to tradition, see *St. Filipp Metropolitan of Moscow*, 143-47.

11. Hellie (*ibid.*, 217) has proposed that Ivan's sacral sense of self allowed for moral escapism.

12. See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), 95-99, esp. 98. Ivan IV frequently manifested his ritual efficacy in public ceremonies throughout the calendar year, such as the Palm Sunday ritual, the Blessing of the Waters at Epiphany, the autumn pilgrimage on foot to the Holy Trinity Monastery, etc. See I. Zabelin, *Domashnii byt russkikh tsarei v XVI i XVII st.* (Moscow: Tovarishestvo tipografii A. I. Mamontova,

ite culture was oriented on the sacred and defined by ritual and myth which expressed a system of analogies between archetypes of Christ, the king and the state. The meaning of this system was not derived from one text alone, but from an assemblage which included the liturgy and other rituals, icons and hagiography. What united these texts were "dominant ritual symbols" which, together with symbols of lesser condensation of meaning, defined the parameters of the culture.¹³ An essential function of a hierarchy of symbols was to identify and unite part and whole in an implicit dialectic between opposites.¹⁴ Opposites were in a symmetrical relationship, "inverted" mirror images of one another, and unities in their own right (parts equal to the whole). As I will demonstrate by an analysis of the iconography expressing the Wisdom theology of the "Word," this dialectic was used to articulate the integrity and equality of Christ's two natures, divine and human. Wisdom iconography also interpreted the cosmos and the tsar as a unity of opposites, "mirroring" one another in analogy to Christ. In the case of the cosmos, the opposites were Uncreated and Created Wisdom; in the case of the tsar, his own divine and human natures. Ivan interpreted his violence during the *Oprichnina* as a manifestation

1895), 367-444; and Joanna Hubbs, *Mother Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 182-90. For an analysis of the way a court ritual articulates a mythology of kingship, see Michael Flier, "Emperor as Mythmaker: Ivan the Terrible and the Palm Sunday Ritual," forthcoming in *Rossica*, eds. C. Ingerflom, T. Kondrat'eva, R. Wortman and B. Uspenskii, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, and Moscow: Progress, 1992).

13. See Victor W. Turner, *Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 27-32. "Dominant symbols" distill to a symbolic essence the "total system of interrelations between groups and persons that makes up . . . society. . . . Some of the meanings of important symbols may themselves be symbols, each with its own system of meanings." In other words, they not only condense the "system of interrelations," they also subsume the "hierarchy" of lesser symbols which serve as intermediate links in the creation of symbolic interrelationships between different aspects of the society. Turner includes the following in the dominant symbol's function of "condensation": "unification of disparate significata. The disparate significata are interconnected by virtue of their common possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought. . . . The very generality of [such qualities or links of association] enables them to bracket together the most diverse ideas and phenomena. . . ." Turner is speaking of ritual. The same hierarchical structure can be found in myths which represent the "narratives associated with rites" according to Fitzroy Richard Somerset, Baron Raglan, *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), 141.

14. As Ernst Cassirer has written, in "mythic ideation . . . the mental view is not widened, but compressed; it is, so to speak, distilled into a single point . . . Every part of a whole is the whole itself; every specimen is equivalent to the entire species. The part does not merely represent the whole, or the specimen its class; they are identical with the totality to which they belong . . . Here one is reminded forcefully of the principle which might be called the basic principle of verbal as well as mythic 'metaphor'—the principle of *pars pro toto*." See *Language and Myth*, trans. S. K. Langer (New York: Dover, 1946), 89-92. On the dialectic of opposites, see *Forest of Symbols*, 28 and Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *Journal of American Folklore* 68 (1955): 439-92.

of the Plenitude of the Word by identifying it with the dialectic between his divine and human nature.¹⁵

Ivan IV's personal mythology derived from a system of analogies of himself with the "dominant" symbol of Christ as Word (Slovo, Logos) and Wisdom. The official paradigms of Wisdom theology which mediated between the tsar and the Word appear in Table 1. This system represents a hierarchy of symbols of divine Plenitude; each level denotes a unity of opposites around a center. Each symbol is implicitly contained in and analogous to the next most "dominant" or "higher" symbol; since each level of the hierarchy represents a part equal to the whole, the higher symbols are also implicitly "condensed" in the lower ones. The whole hierarchy is a unity both through such "condensation" and through its shared "center." Ivan's personal mythology was consistent with this official religious mythology. It was elaborated in an assembly of texts (behavioral and written), of which no single text articulated the entire mythology; even as a whole, the hierarchy of symbols remains implicit rather than explicit. Although metaphors and

15. The theological motivation for this system of analogies could be found in the treatise "On the Celestial Hierarchies" of the Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite, which was included by the Metropolitan Macarius in his Great Book of Hours for Reading. See *Velikie minei chet'i sobrannye userossiiskim mitropolitom Makariem* (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi akademii nauk, 1870), October, day 3 (VMCh), 263–375. In chap. 3, 297, the Areopagite likens those who have perfected their true natures and become like God to a "mirror" illuminated by divine light. This light was the expression of the "energies" through which God related to the world "outside" of his transcendent essence. They expressed the common "will" of the three Persons in Trinity and the means of the "in-dwelling of the Holy Trinity" in the Creation. They were also called "wisdom" as well as "grace," "rays of divinity," "divine light," "power," "glory." See Vladimir Losskii, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, (London: James Clarke, 1957), 67–90, 138–39. On the doctrine of energies in the writings of Dionysios the Areopagite and his commentator Maximus the Confessor, see *idem*, *The Vision of God* (London: Faith Press, 1963), 99–110. See also *idem*, *The Mystical Theology*, 97. Losskii (in *The Mystical Theology*, 86) notes that the image of the mirror was used to explain the mystery by which the hidden and unknowable God becomes manifest in creation by way of divine energies. "God, who is inaccessible in His essence, is present in His energies 'as in a mirror,' remaining invisible in that which He is; 'in the same way we are able to see our faces, themselves invisible to us in a glass,' according to a saying of St. Gregory Palamas." The necessity of revealing the unknowable and transcendent in concrete earthly images gave rise to the deliberately paradoxical and esoteric symbolism of Wisdom iconography. In the Areopagite's epistle "Titu-ierarkhu, voprosivshemu poslaniem, chto takoe dom Premudrosti, chto—chasha i chto—eda ee i pit'e. Deviatoe," he writes "... obo ... sviashchennykh uslovykh znakh bogovyrazheniia ... stavshikh delimymi iz edinykh i nedelimykh, obraznymi i mnogovidnymi iz besformennykh i neobraznykh, koikh skrytiu krasotu esli by kto-nibud' smog uvidet', nashel by vse tainstvennym i bogovidnym i napolnennym mnogogo bogoslovskogo sveta. ... chtoby ne stalo dostupnym dlia neposviashchennykh vsesviatoe i chtoby otkryalos' ono tol'ko istinnym priverzhentsam blagochestiia ... vidim takzhe i vsesviateishikh angelov cherez zagadki, tainstvenno bozhestvennoe otkryvaiushchim. . . ." I have cited Gelian Prokhorov's modern Russian translation which he presents side by side with the Slavonic translation in "Poslanie Titu-ierarkhu Dionisiia Areopagita v slavianskom perevode i ikonografiia 'Premudrost' sozda sebe dom," *TODRL* 38 (1985): 23–27.

Table 1:
Hierarchy of Symbols of Divine Plenitude
(The unity of opposites)

<i>Level One: The Word</i>
<i>The Divine Nature—The Human Nature</i>
Christ's Fatherhood—Christ's Sonhood
Sabaoth—Lamb
Christ Enthroned—Emmanuel
Sovereignty—Virginity
Lord of Hosts/Sacred Combat—Martyrdom
<i>Level Two: Wisdom</i>
Uncreated—Created
<i>Level Three: The Tsar</i>
Severity—Meekness
Justice—Chastity
Angel—Monk
(Archangel Michael—Fool)

symbols in Ivan's writings and actions which implicitly identified him with the "Word" exist in only elliptical and fragmentary form, they nonetheless represent a complete structure of meaning. This structure included, for example, paradigms designed to sanctify Ivan's victory over Kazan in 1552 as a purificatory rite establishing his legitimacy and sanctifying the violence. When he applied these paradigms to his actions during the *Oprichnina*, however, he extended them beyond their official boundaries in order to sacralize atrocity and blasphemy.

My analysis of Ivan's personal mythology rests on a group of texts whose attribution to Ivan IV is contested due to the fact that no sixteenth century copies exist: the "First Epistle to Prince Kurbskii," purportedly composed during the period of the *Oprichnina*'s inception (1564); his "Testament" and "Canon to the Terrible Angel General," both hypothetically dated in 1572, and his "Epistle to the Kirillo-Be-loozerskii Monastery" (of 1573, purportedly, after he had begun to dismantle the *Oprichnina*). Edward Keenan's study of Ivan's correspondence with Prince Kurbskii alerted scholars to question the authenticity of a medieval text whose attribution cannot be empirically verified by study of the manuscript tradition. Scholars have attempted to prove the authenticity of the texts attributed to Ivan by demonstrating that their facts are historically sound, by pointing out common thematic, stylistic and linguistic features, and by highlighting psychological dimensions thought to reflect Ivan's response to the historical conditions that he was confronting.¹⁶ This study will offer further evidence of the authenticity of the texts believed to be associated with the period of

16. See "Pervoe poslanie Ivana Groznogo Kurbskomu: 1-ia prostrannaia redaktsiia," in Ia. Lur'e and Iu.D. Rykov, *Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim*, 12-52;

the *Oprichnina* by demonstrating that together, despite their diverse and inscrutable manuscript histories, they manifest a coherent symbolic system reflecting a single consciousness. That the consciousness uniting them is Ivan IV's is evident in both their re-creation of the paradigms of the official mythology of sacred kingship developed at the time and in the fact that they complement in meaning concrete symbolic actions of Ivan's *Oprichnina* recorded by witnesses. These texts and Ivan's actions together comprise a personal mythology of kingship.

I will first elucidate the nature and structure of the symbolic language with which Ivan legitimized his violence; I will then argue that the personal mythology in which Ivan embodied this language was a compensatory response to his extreme anxiety resulting from his sense of betrayal by his people. I will conclude by examining his generation of a mythology of kingship in a metonymical system of analogies identifying his violence against his own people during the *Oprichnina* with the redemptive power of the Word.

his "Poslanie v Kirillo-Beloozerskii monastyr'" in D. S. Likhachev and Ia.S. Lur'e, *Poslaniia Ivana Groznogo* (Moscow: Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1951), Slavica-Reprint, no. 41 (Düsseldorf: Brücken-Verlag, 1970), 162-92; D. S. Likhachev, ed., "Kanon i molitva Angelu Groznomu voevode Parfeniiu iurodivogo (Ivana Groznogo)," *Rukopisnoe nasledie Drevnei Rusi: Po materialam Pushkinskogo Doma*, ed. A.M. Panchenko (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972), 10-27; "Dukhovnaia gramota tsaria Ivana Vasil'evicha IV," in R. C. Howes, trans. and ed., *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 155-73. See Edward L. Keenan, *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha: The Seventeenth-Century Genesis of the 'Correspondence' Attributed to Prince A.M. Kurbskii and Tsar Ivan IV* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971). On the literature concerning the authenticity of the correspondence between Ivan IV and A.M. Kurbskii, see Charles Halperin, "A Heretical View of Sixteenth-Century Muscovy: Edward L. Keenan: The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, Neue Folge*, Band 22, 1974, Heft 2, 160-86; Ia. Lur'e and Iu.D. Rykov, *Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim*, (Leningrad: Nauka, 1979) 251-54. Likhachev (*Rusopisnoe nasledie*, 17) attributes the "Canon and Prayer" to Groznyi on the basis of its author's pseudonym, *Parfenii iurodivyi*. Another text with the same pseudonym, "Poslanie neizvestnomu protiv Liutorov" was a reworking of Ivan's "Otvét Ianu Rokite," produced around 1572, according to Likhachev. Likhachev dates the "Canon and Prayer" to the same year. The canon's expression of Ivan's fear of sudden and unexpected death suggests that it was written during the time of his withdrawal to Novgorod when he was expecting a second Tatar invasion. Likhachev notes that the "Canon and Prayer" express the same state of mind as the "Testament" which S. V. Veselovskii ("Dukhovnoe zaveschanie Ivana Groznogo kak istoricheskii istochnik," *Izvestiia AN SSSR, Seriia istorii i filosofii* iv, no. 6 [1947]: 505-20) has dated between June and August 1672 on the basis of internal evidence. The testament is a highly unique example of its genre surviving in only one nineteenth century copy of an eighteenth century copy of an alleged original that circulated in private circles, as a kind of draft. Veselovskii points out that the confessional preamble is uncharacteristic of the genre of grandprincely will. This preamble is the subject of my analysis here and expresses, as I claim, the work of Ivan's personal myth-making to which he devotes himself during this period. For Likhachev's dating of the "Epistle to the Kirillo-Beloozerskii monastery" (which contains historically verifiable facts but exists only in copies dating from the late seventeenth century), see "Poslanie Groznogo v Kirillo-Beloozerskii monastyr' 1573 g.," *TODRL* 8 (1951): 247-87.

The official mythology of Ivan IV's sacred kingship grew gradually out of two major trends: the mythology of the Russian prince which centered on the ruler's likeness to the human Christ-Martyr, and the so-called "Wisdom theology" which articulated the ruler's likeness to the divine Person of Christ in the Trinity (the Word).¹⁷ First developed in Byzantium, this theology underwent native development, especially in Kievan Rus' and late fifteenth century Novgorod, and was elaborated at length in the cathedrals of the Moscow Kremlin, renovated after the fire of 1547, and in other literary and ritual "texts" during the reign of Ivan IV.¹⁸ Ideologists of theocracy used Muscovite Wisdom theology to endow the "abstraction" of the state and the grand prince's newly assumed rank of tsar with symbolic "flesh and blood" by associating them with the body of Christ. For this purpose, they created texts in which a system of symbols identified part and whole, and endowed the part with the creative energy of the whole.

By interpreting the traditional understanding of the tsar's two natures by analogy to Christ as Word, Wisdom ideologists implicitly identified the tsar with both the Second Person in the Trinity and God the Father himself.¹⁹ This analogy rendered the tsar the expression of Di-

17. Cherniavsky (*Tsar and People*, 52) noted that the absorption of the myth of the saintly prince into the new myth of the tsar "destroyed the tension between the twin but unequal natures of the Agapetan ruler." The Wisdom theology of Macarius and his circle emphasized the unity of the two natures in the Word.

18. On the ideology of the Russian prince as martyr, see *Tsar and People*, 5-49. On the identification of the tsar with God, see Viktor M. Zhivov and Boris A. Uspenskii, "Tsar' i Bog: Semioticheskie aspekty sakralizatsii monarkha v Rossii," in B. A. Uspenskii, *Russkaia kul'tura i iazyki perevodimosti*, (Moscow, Nauka, 1987), 47-153, esp. 47-61. On Wisdom theology in Byzantium and Russia, see Pavel Florovskii, "O pochitanii Sofii, Premudrosti Bozhiei v Vizantii i na Rusi," *Trudy piatogo s'ezda russkikh akademicheskikh organizatsii za granitsei*, Part I (Sofia, 1932), 485-500. O. I. Podobedova (*Moskovskaia shkola zhivopisi pri Ivane IV: Raboty v Moskovskom kremle 40-kh-70-kh godov XVI v.* [Moscow: Nauka, 1972]) describes in detail the new iconography produced under the Metropolitan Macarius located predominantly in the Kremlin cathedrals of the Dormition, the Annunciation and the Archangel Michael, the Cathedral of the Intercession of the Mother of God in Red Square (St. Basil's) and the Golden Throne Room of the Tsar's palace. Its abstruse subject matter called forth new iconographic themes based on untraditional sources. These innovations and the unprecedented sacralization of the historical process made them highly controversial. See David Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair of 1553-4," *Russian History* 8 (1981): 317. On the theological grounds for the controversy, see "O pochitanii Sofii, Premudrosti Bozhiei v Vizantii i na Rusi," 490-95.

19. On the interrelations of the Persons of the Trinity, Their nature as Parts equal to the Whole, see Vladimir Losskii, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 71, 80-83 and 242. The Logos is "the force or power (*δυναμις*) of the Father, or his operation (*ἐνέργεια*) . . . the divine 'idea and energy' manifesting itself in creation . . . 'Power and Wisdom,'" (71). On the Christological orientation of Wisdom theology, see also Fiene, "What Is the Appearance of the Divine Sophia?" 449-76. The essential importance of the unity of Christ's two natures as a paradigm of divine Wisdom was expressed in a text attributed to Zinovii Otenskii, "Skazanie izvestno, chto est' Sofei Premudrost' Bozhiiia," written to illuminate the name of the Novgorod Cathedral of St. Sophia and come down to us in seventeenth century manuscripts. See A. I. Nikol'skii, "Sofia Premudrost' Bozhiiia: Novgorodskaia redaktsiia ikony i sluzhba Sv.

vine Providence, the idea in the mind of God before the beginning of time (Uncreated Wisdom). In elaborate iconographic schema, ideologists interpreted all of historical time as the vehicle of God's Self-realization as Created Wisdom; the tsar and the state were at the center of this system of analogies. The function of tsar and state as "condensation" of past and future was also expressed in the so-called "Third Rome" doctrine which envisioned Muscovy and her tsar as the apotheosis of all that came before it, the fulfillment of biblical prophesy and the earthly expression of the future divine eschatological unity of Creation and God.²⁰

Tsar and state were also identified with the Word in its divine transcendence and plenitude which unified opposites.²¹ Iconographic schema interpreted the Word as a mediator between Uncreated and Created Wisdom, "high" and "low," "divine" and "human," and revealed that each of these oppositions not only was a path to the other, but also implicitly contained the other. Within this paradigm of transcendent unity, "lowliness"—the human nature of Christ—had the predominant mediating function:²² Christ's incarnation was the necessary

Sofii," *Vestnik arkheologii i istorii* 17 (St. Petersburg), prilozhenie III, 92–98. It draws on the sources of Wisdom theology from the Psalms, Proverbs, the "Epistle of Dionysios the Areopagite to the Hierarch Titus," and the writings of John the Damascene and John the Divine to characterize Wisdom and identify it with the Word. Its main focus is a refutation of the heresy which refuses to recognize the unity of Christ's human and divine natures in his Personhood as Word.

20. The "Poslanie Munkhinu na zvezdochetstev" stated its central idea: "... iako vsia khristianskaia tsarstva priidosha v konets i snidoshasia vo edino tsarstvo nashego gosudaria." See V. N. Malinin, *Starets Eleazarova monastyria Filofei i ego poslaniia: Istoriko-literaturnoe issledovanie* (Kiev: Tip. Kiev-Pecherskoi Uspenskoi Lavry, 1901; rpt., Westminster, Farnborough, Hants: Gregg, 1971), 45. The "Third Rome" theory was articulated at the end of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century in several works commonly attributed to the monk Filofei of the Eleazarova monastery of Pskov, the above mentioned epistle, which was included in Macarius' Great Book of Hours for Reading, and two other works, "Poslanie o krestnom znamenii" addressed to the Muscovite Grand Prince and "Ob obidakh tserkvi." It represented a key element in the full-fledged ideology of the state developed during the reign of Ivan IV through the efforts of Metropolitan Macarius and his circle. For the texts, see *ibid.*, 37–47, 49–66. See also Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 71; D. Stremoukhoff, "Moscow the Third Rome, Sources of the Doctrine" in *The Structure of Russian History*, ed. Michael Cherniavsky, (New York: Random House, 1970), 108–25 esp. 115; and A. L. Gol'dberg, "Ideia 'Moskvatretii Rim' v tsikle sochinenii pervoi poloviny XVI v.," *TODRL* 37 (1983): 139; and *idem*, "Tri 'poslaniia Filofeia'" *TODRL* 29 (1974): 68–97.

21. On Wisdom as the unity of opposites, see subject heading number 94 in the table of contents of the Pseudo-Areopagite's "On the Divine Names," in *VMCh*, 380; see also chap. VII, Part I of "On the Divine Names," as well as the commentary of Maximus the Confessor in *VMCh*, 542–43; and the "Poslanie Titu-Ierarkhu." For a discussion of the Pseudo-Areopagite's ideas of transcendence and divine Plenitude, see Losskii, *The Vision of God*, 99–104. On the importance of the Pseudo-Areopagitic corpus for Wisdom iconography and theology in the Muscovite period, see Prokhorov, "Poslanie Titu-Ierarkhu Dionisiia Areopagita," 7–41; on the medieval Slavonic translation of the Pseudo-Areopagitic corpus, see *idem*, *Pamiatniki perevodnoi literatury XIV-XV vekov* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1987).

22. See Losskii, *The Mystical Theology*, 105.

condition for actualizing the transformational power of the Word, its ability to unite spirit and matter, time and eternity, and to purify the world of sin. By analogy, the tsar's ability to ritually cleanse and purify his kingdom and make it the image and likeness of God depended on his "piety," his imitation of the obedience of the human Christ to the Word and Providence of His Father.

Christ as Word "condensed" two functions in his capacity to sanctify Creation and to overcome oppositions and to make them mirror images of one another. The first function was associated with eternity and the polarity "high" and derived from Christ as an uncreated Person of the Trinity from before the beginning of the world (the Word) and as eschatological Lord of Hosts. Together these represented the integrity of Christ's divine nature; they brought together beginning and end, divine idea and its fulfillment, and the creative power of the Word and the purificatory power of the Warrior-Judge.²³ The archetype signifying the unity of these two—Christ's eternal sovereignty over creation—was the Sabaoth. The archetype of Christ Emmanuel expressed the second function of the Word. It was situated in historical time and embodied the polarity of the "low" in its function of mediating with the "high." The Emmanuel was, according to the prophet Isaiah, a human child who was born to "sit on the throne of David" realizing the providence of the Word in Trinity as the "messenger of the Great Council."²⁴

Wisdom theology envisioned the lowliness of the Word-Emmanuel as the pivot of the divine economy. It was the mechanism of cosmic redemption at the Second Coming; it made the created world a "mirror" of the uncreated God and fulfilled the providence of the Trinity. The Emmanuel was implicitly linked to the Trinity by the dogmas of "kenosis" and divine "condescension" of the Word in "uncreated energies."²⁵ In His role of bridging the gap between the divine idea (Uncreated Wisdom) and its fulfillment (Created Wisdom), the Word in Trinity divested Himself of His power as King and took on the human flesh of the Child-Emmanuel. When the Emmanuel became a Man, He fulfilled the providence of His Father and guaranteed His own resurrection as the messianic Inheritor of the throne of David at the end of time. His resurrection represented a "return" to His ontological status as King-Sabaoth. The incarnate Christ-Emmanuel thus brought together beginning and end, and revealed God as Sabaoth; He identified the ontological glory of the Word in Trinity with the glory of

23. See *ibid.*, 71, 82, 98.

24. See Isaiah 7:14, and 9:6 in the Septuagint: "For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder: and his name is called the Messenger of great counsel . . . His government shall be great, and of his peace there is no end. It shall be upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to establish it and to support it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." On the Trinity as a "council" see *ibid.*, 94; and "Slovo Ioanna Zlatoustia 'O vohelovechenii gospodi,'" in *Margarit* (Moscow: 1641), 476–76 ob.

25. See Losskii, *The Mystical Theology*, 139–49.

Christ at the Second Coming through His human obedience and Self-sacrifice (Martyrdom). Thus, the transformational power of the Emmanuel's lowliness as a Child or Martyred Man was a "mirror image" of the creative and purificatory power of the Sabaoth.

The four-part icon in the Annunciation Cathedral in the Kremlin is a visual representation of the "divine economy" based on the dual nature of Christ: it articulates the hermeneutics with which Ivan IV could formulate his personal mythology.²⁶ It offers composite images of Christ which signify the union of His human and divine natures, the Divine Plenitude. Moreover, it places these images within a hierarchy of symbols which mirror one another and, together, express Wisdom theology (see plate 1). The introductory panel of this icon (upper left) depicts the Fatherhood of God and His Providence as revealed through the Word (see plate 2). The upper register of this panel portrays the Creation; the lower register depicts the creation of Adam and Eve, the expulsion from Paradise and the murder of Abel by Cain inspired by the devil. Providence is intrinsic to these scenes from Genesis, but set apart in the lower register: the Archangel Michael, the Angel of History, instructs Adam and Eve on how to live after the fall. The portrayal of the fall as providential in the lower register counterbalances the portrayal of the act of Creation in the upper. But the iconography of the Creator-God also indicates that the expiation of sin and death was in the mind of God from before the beginning of time. Composite images of Christ's dual nature identify the expiatory power of His lowliness with the creative power of the Word, and the purificatory power of the Lord of Hosts defeating the devil and death.

At the center of the upper register is the Creator-God in the image of the Ancient of Days according to Daniel 7:9.²⁷ On either side of him are symmetrical images of Creation through the Word in the form of an Angel. On the left the Angel is crucified in His human nature. The wings enfolding Him signify the unity of His two natures achieved through the crucifixion.²⁸ The wings also identify Him as the Messen-

26. On the "divine economy," see *ibid.*, 82, 139; on the four-part icon, see Podobedova, *Moskovskaia shkola zhivopisi*, 40–58. Podobedova sees this icon as the culmination of a whole cycle of dogmatic and Christological icons commissioned by Macarius after the fire of 1547. It was the object of violent controversy during the Viskovatyi affair. See also I. Ia. Kachalova, N. A. Mayasova and L. A. Shchennikova, *Blagoveschenskii sobor Moskovskogo kremlia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1990), 61–64 and 178–86 (plates).

27. The Ancient of Days, according to the vision of Daniel, 7:9 was a favored iconic expression of the Word in His dual nature as Sabaoth-Emmanuel. In his vision Daniel referred to the Second Coming as a process of enthronement of the Ancient. Daniel's image of enthronement linked the Ancient to the Emmanuel-Sabaoth according to Isaiah's prophecy that a child "shall be upon the throne of David" who is messenger of the Great Council (the Trinity containing all the days of the world from before the beginning of time).

28. Podobedova's interpretation of the wings on the Christ to the right of Ancient of Days as a symbol of His dual nature applies also to the wings on the Christ to his left (see *op.cit.*, 44). On the angelic Christ, see Meyendorff, "L'iconographie de la sagesse divine," 266–69; and Fiene, "What is the Appearance of the Divine Sophia," 457–60.

ger of the Great Council according to Isaiah 9:6, fulfilling the potential of His divine nature. The crucified Emmanuel rests in the bosom of a King who represents His divine nature in its two instantiations: the Fulfillment of His potential—the messianic Successor to King David—and the Source of His potential—the Father in Trinity. The third Person of the Trinity is present in the form of a Dove over the head of the crucified Angel and below the crowned head of the Word-King which symbolizes the Holy Spirit set free by the crucifixion to sanctify the world. Thus the image of the Word on the left of center represents the inner dynamism of the Godhead in Trinity implicit in the act of Creation and in the Creator Himself in the center. The Angel to the right of center also presents the Word as the Messenger of the Great Council. Introduced into the universe by God the Father, He embodies the personal “energy” of both creation and His incarnation as Emmanuel. Each of the three images in the upper register recapitulates the meaning of the other: they mirror one another and also implicitly encompass the Providence in the creation and fall of man portrayed in the lower register.

Self-identities are again depicted in the panel on the upper right, dedicated to “The Only Begotten Son and Word of God” (see plate 3).²⁹ Here the Plenitude of Wisdom is portrayed, again in upper and lower registers, with the dead human Christ in the center of the panel. In the center of the upper register is a circle enclosing the Word as Emmanuel and the Dove, beneath the Ancient of Days, also encircled. Emmanuel holds a scroll on which is written “The spirit of grace, the spirit of wisdom . . .” To the right is the Archangel Michael in front of a building representing “Wisdom’s house.” Facing the dead Christ in the center, the archangel indicates that Christ’s defeat of death through death will make the world Wisdom’s house. The archangel holds a mirror which reflects the “firmament” immediately beneath his feet and which symbolizes the oneness of the Uncreated Wisdom of the Word and the Created Wisdom of the world. He also holds a spear with a cross on the end, signifying that it is the crucifixion which gives him the power to overcome death and reveal the glory of the Lord at

29. See *Moskovskaia shkola zhivopisi*, 45. The images of the Word in this panel recapitulate and extend the meaning of the images of the Word in the upper left hand panel depicting the Creation, beginning with His manifestation in Trinity. The angels on the right and left of the Emmanuel are in reverse order to the angels to the right and left of the angelic Christ in the “Creation” panel. The moon and the sun on the left and right of the “Trinity” respectively are present also in the panel of the Creation between the upper and lower registers, dividing the act of creation from created being. The firmament beneath the feet of the Archangel Michael to the right of the Trinity recapitulates the firmament in the upper register of the “Creation” panel. The entrance of death and sin into the world in the lower register of the upper left hand panel is countered in the lower register of the upper right hand panel by the defeat of death by Death through the crucifixion of Christ. On this panel’s realization of the liturgical verses, “*Raspyisia zhe Khriste Bozhe, smertiu smert’ popravyi, edin vse-sviatiia Troitsy, spokloniaemyi otsu i sviatomu dukhu*” and “*pochi ot vsek del svoikh Edinorodnyi Syn Bozhii, smotreniem ezhe na smert’, plotiu subbotstvoval, i vo ezhe be paki vozvrashchsia voskreseniem,*” see Podobedova, 48.

the Last Judgment. On the left of the upper register, in symmetry to the Archangel Michael, stands the Archangel Gabriel in front of a building representing the New Jerusalem (the apotheosis of the unity of Created and Uncreated Wisdom at the end of time). Like the Archangel Michael, he holds a symbol of the crucifixion, the eucharistic cup. Together, the two archangels and the Word-Emmanuel in the upper register embody the entire Providence of the Word realized through the death of Christ.³⁰ Individually, each represents Christ's human nature (as Emmanuel or the Crucified) and his divine nature (as the Ancient of Days and the Plenitudes of Wisdom's house, the New Jerusalem, etc.)

The portrayal of the crucified human Christ in the center of the panel is the lynchpin of the "divine economy" depicted in the upper register. It is also the source of the "power" revealed in the lower register which dramatizes the eschatological implications of Christ's death. On the left in this register is the Last Judgment symbolized by the battle of Armageddon which includes the Archangel Michael and the Lord of Hosts, according to Revelation 19, and, among the apocalyptic warriors, a personification of death defeating sin, the cause of death. The Warrior-Lord of Hosts on a cross slightly above the archangel indicates the power of the crucifixion to realize the promise of the Word (Creation as the New Jerusalem and Wisdom's house). Thus the upper and lower registers are mirror images of one another, portraying respectively the glory and power of the Word accomplished through His death. Together they unite the glory of the Word in Trinity with the power of Christ's death and reveal the Wisdom of the Word.

Another icon, the Wisdom icon of the Lamb Enthroned, gives fur-

30. I am following the interpretation of Podobedova (*ibid.*, 51), who notes that the building behind the Archangel Michael is portrayed according to the iconography associated with Proverbs 9:1, "Wisdom Built Herself a House," and who interprets the disc held by the archangel as a "mirror." L. A. Shchennikova (*Blagoveschchenskii sobor Moskovskogo Kremliia*, 62) calls the disc simply a "heavenly sphere" and considers the building behind the archangel to be a synagogue and a symbol of the Old Testament. She supports this reading by an interpretation of the building to the right of the Word as the New Testament and the Christian Church (both earthly and eschatological), and by an interpretation of the moon near the "synagogue" and the sun near the "church" as reflections of the old and new laws. I believe that her interpretation of the buildings and the sun and moon complements Podobedova's which focuses on the role of the imagery on the right as a symbol of the Providence realized on the left. Together the two buildings represent the "in-dwelling" of the Wisdom of the Logos in the Church (a traditional interpretation of the icon of "Wisdom's House"). The sun and moon together refer to the act of creation as an expression of the Providence of the Word and symbolize a progression from the reign of death to eternal life. The icon indicates that this progression occurs through the incarnation, alluded to by the Archangel Gabriel, and the crucifixion symbolized by the eucharistic cup he holds. This same complex of meaning is found in the icon of Wisdom's House conveyed by images such as Wisdom's house, the eucharistic cup, the Emmanuel in glory and the Child Emmanuel with His mother Mary. On the meaning of the iconography of "Wisdom Built Herself a House," see Fiene, "What Is the Appearance," 454-55; Prokhorov, "Poslanie Titu-Ierarkhu Dionisiia Areopagita," 8; Meyendorff, "L'iconographie de la Sagesse Divine."

ther expression to the symmetries of the divine and human nature which manifest God's Plenitude.³¹ Its scriptural subtext identifies Christ's human "self-sacrifice" within history with His "kingship" over history at the end of the world, thus unifying both sacrifice and kingship in cosmic terms. In one image this icon subsumes the cosmic implications of the portrayal of the Word in the upper right panel of the four-part icon: the Lamb on a throne symbolizes the "Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world." The power of the Lamb to cleanse the whole world reveals Him as the Word incarnate in history realizing the providence of the Trinity, according to John 1:26–36.³² The Lamb is also the King enthroned according to Revelation 5:12–13: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches and wisdom . . . and Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." This icon thus interprets Christ's sacrifice as an expression of power and sovereignty analogous to the Plenitude of the Lord of Hosts and Sabaoth. It exemplifies the paradox stated in a central text for Wisdom theology, I Corinthians 1:23–31: Christ crucified embodies the "power of God, and the wisdom (*premudrost'*) of God."³³

Thus the iconography of Macarius and his circle elaborated a hierarchy of symbols which joined the Word in Trinity, the world and man. Each level in this hierarchy consists of a unity of oppositions which signify the Self-identity of the Word. Each level unites low and high, man and God, part and whole by analogy to the relationship of the Son to the Father through the Spirit in Trinity, as expressed in the iconographic paradigms of Level One of Table 1.

Because at the end of time the divine Plenitude of the dual nature of Christ would be fully manifest, Muscovite Wisdom iconography often portrayed the "power" of the Word in eschatological images. These images frequently depict the unity of Martyrdom with Sacred Combat and Enthronement, informed by Revelation 19:1–21, explicitly by 19:11–21, which portray the marriage supper of the Lamb as the sacred combat of the Lord of Hosts at Armageddon.³⁴ One icon, "The Blessed Host of the Heavenly Tsar," takes its title from the liturgical verses celebrating martyrs as participants in the eschatological army of warriors in Christ.³⁵ The icon of St. George the Dragon Slayer is another

31. On the icon of the Lamb Enthroned, see Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair," 322.

32. See the words of John the Baptist in John I: 26–36. The Baptist is acknowledging the historical Christ as the Redeemer, Who paradoxically came "after" but was "before him" (as the Word).

33. On the importance of I Corinthians 1: 23–31 for Wisdom theology, see Fiene, "What Is the Appearance," 449; and Jean Meyendorff, "Wisdom-Sophia: Contrasting Approaches to a Complex Theme," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987): 391–400.

34. Flier ("Emperor as Mythmaker") describes the central importance of Revelation 19:11–16 in the extensive cycle of frescoes portraying the Last Judgment in the Annunciation Cathedral of the Kremlin.

35. See Daniel Rowland, "Biblical Military Imagery in the Political Culture of Early Modern Russia: The Heavenly Host of the Blessed Tsar," forthcoming in *Medieval Russian Culture*, eds. Michael Flier and Daniel Rowland, II; and I. A. Kochetkov, "K istolkovaniiu ikony 'Tserkov' voinstvuiushchaia," *TODRL* 38 (1985): 204.

expression of this theme, implicitly associating Martyrdom (portrayed in other icons depicting his life) and Sacred Combat: on a white horse by analogy to the apocalyptic Lord of Hosts in Revelation 19:11, he fights cosmic evil, symbolized by the Snake-Dragon.³⁶ Wisdom iconography thus identifies sacred "power" with combat and provides a paradigm of sacred violence that could be used to justify the tsar's military aggression. Most explicit are the icon "The Blessed Host of the Heavenly Tsar" portraying Ivan's victorious return from the battle of Kazan' and a miniature identifying Ivan, victor over Kazan', with St. George the Dragon Slayer.³⁷

Just as sacred paradigms served as a source for the official identification of the tsar with the Word and Wisdom (Levels One and Two in Table 1), the dual nature of the tsar was rendered paradigmatically at his human level (Level Three in Table 1). As human and divine, the tsar united the opposition of meekness and severity (*smirennaiia groza*).³⁸

36. During the reign of Ivan III, this image became the coat of arms of the Grand Prince, and ultimately of the Moscow state. See *Moscow: Treasures and Tradition* (Washington and Moscow: Ministry of Culture of the USSR and Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 67 and 70; and Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 43, and his footnote 97. On the snake as a symbol of cosmic evil and Adam's sin in Muscovite theocratic ideology, see M. Pliukhanova's forthcoming article on the "Tale of Peter and Fevronia" in *Annali slavistica* (Annali del' Instituto Universitario Orientale, Naples) no. 1 (1992). The Lord of Hosts sits upon His white horse as He had sat on a throne in His manifestation as Lord our God eight verses earlier.

37. Cherniavsky reproduced this miniature in *Tsar and People*, plate 3. The significance of the icon, "Blessed Is the Host," as a symbolic representation of the power of the enthroned tsar is implied by its place in the Cathedral of the Assumption in front of the "Tsar's Place," the so-called "Throne of Monomakh." Its association with Martyrdom and Combat will be discussed below. Another "text" which associates the victory over Kazan' with Martyrdom and Enthronement was the Palm Sunday ritual (see Flier, *Emperor as Mythmaker*). The function of the "enthroned tsar" as a dominant symbol condensing the meanings contained in the Word was clearly expressed in the frescoes in the Golden Throne Room which Podobedova sees as the culmination of the meaning of the new iconography created by Macarius and his circle after 1547. The tsar's throne on the floor was in a symmetrical relationship with the Word-Emmanuel-Judge in the center of the dome. Between tsar and Word were images of Created Wisdom and the hierarchy of being which tsar and Word respectively condensed in their roles as dominant symbols. In the dome Created Wisdom was manifest in images of plenitudes (Wisdom's House, the Church, the round of seasons, etc.); on the walls Created Wisdom was portrayed as the progression of sacred history, climaxing in the reigning tsar. See Podobedova, *Moskovskaia shkola*, 59–69 as well as her inset chart of the Throne Room's iconography. Michael Flier ("Putting the Tsar in His Place: The Apocalyptic Dimension of the Golden Throne Room," forthcoming in *Russian Review*) analyzes the significance of the iconography. On how a contemporary cycle of iconography—the reliefs on the throne of Monomach in the Cathedral of the Assumption, the frescoes of the portals of the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael, the frescoes on the walls of the Golden Throne Room and the illustrations which appeared in the description of the coronation of Ivan IV in the "Tsarstvennaia kniga"—all elaborate the sacred meaning of the tsar's enthronement, see Podobedova, 23.

38. The phrase "*smirennaiia groza*" occurred in the Valaamskaia Beseda of the mid-sixteenth century. See Marc Szeftel, "The Epithet *Groznyi* in Historical Perspective" in *The Religious World of Russian Culture, Russia and Orthodoxy: Essays in Honor of Georges Florovsky*, ed. Andrew Blane (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 111. See also G. N. Moiseeva, *Valaamskaia beseda—pamiatnik russkoi publitsistiki serediny XVI veka* (Moscow-Leningrad:

Muscovite ideologists used the epithet *grozny* to express attributes of the tsar's divine nature consonant with his newly acquired grandeur as "tsar" over the world-Christian empire. Marc Szeftel has demonstrated its association with "justice" and "wisdom" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries;³⁹ Panchenko and Uspenskii further elaborated its sacral connotations, pointing out that the *groza* of Ivan IV associated him with the *grozny* God Sabaoth and Archangel Michael.⁴⁰ Official ideology associated Ivan's campaign against Kazan' in 1552 not only with the Martyrdom, Sacred Combat and Enthronement of the Word, but also with the tsar's severity.⁴¹ The icon "The Blessed Host of the Heavenly Tsar" portrays Ivan leading his army from Kazan' behind the Archangel Michael, "dreadful (*grozny*) general" of the heavenly host, to the heavenly city of New Jerusalem and the Mother of God with the Child Emmanuel (Hodigitria).⁴² The tsar's soldiers are an apocalyptic army of martyrs, assisting in the victory of the Lamb, the Word of God, according to Revelation 19:11–14.⁴³ The icon proclaims that, by waging war in the historical present, the Russian tsar was participating in the victorious progress of the chosen people to the end of sacred history and the fulfillment of its meaning through Martyrdom and Sacred Combat. Like the Archangel Michael, he was a general of the Lord of Hosts.⁴⁴

As a vehicle of God's wholeness and Wisdom, the "severe" or "dreadful" Justice of the Word was expressed in Wisdom theology by paradox, through its opposite: violence and apparent destruction could be cosmic renewal.⁴⁵ The Archangel Michael mirrored Satan when he

Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1958). For the priest Sylvestr's articulation of this concept to Ivan IV, see A. A. Zimin, *I. S. Peresvetov i ego sovremenniki* (Moscow: Izd. Akademii Nauk, 1958), 60.

39. Szeftel, "The Epithet *Grozny*," 101–17.

40. See Panchenko and Uspenskii, "Ivan Grozny i Petr Velikii," 54–78.

41. Szeftel ("The Epithet *Grozny*" 107–11) speculated that Ivan's association with "*groza*" began with his victory over Kazan'.

42. Scholars have offered two interpretations of the place of Ivan IV behind the Archangel Michael. See Podobedova, *Moskovskaia shkola*, 24; and I. A. Kochetov, "K istolkovaniiu," 192–95.

43. The title of this icon, "Blessed Is the Host of the Heavenly Tsar," was taken from the liturgical *stikhira* celebrating martyrs as participants in the eschatological army of warriors of Christ. See Rowland, "Biblical Military Imagery"; and Kochetkov, "K istolkovaniiu ikony," 204.

44. See Podobedova, *Moskovskaia shkola*, 22. She assumes that this icon was created in the 1550s after the battle against Kazan'. Rowland (*op. cit.*) notes that Ivan IV's actual battle standard bore words from Revelation 19:11–14. Of this battle standard, Ivan wrote to Kurbskii in *Perepiska*, 32: "Ta zhe, po bozhiiu izvoleniiu so krestnonosnoi khorugviiu vsego pravoslavnago khristianskogo voinstva, pravoslavnago radi khristianstva zastupleniia, nam bo dvigshimsia na bezbozhnyi iazyk Kazanskii. . . ." On the importance of the Archangel Michael as a sacred paradigm for Ivan IV, see Panchenko and Uspenskii, "Ivan Grozny i Petr Velikii," 68–69.

45. The Areopagite's treatise, "On the Divine Names" (chap. IV, sects. 19–35) illuminates how evil serves the higher good (Wisdom): "Yea, is not the destruction of one thing often the birth of another? And thus it will be found that evil maketh

overcame Satan at the apocalyptic Armageddon or Marriage Supper of the Lamb: he "feasted" on the blood of "kings and captains and mighty men" to punish them for satiating themselves with the blood of the saints (Revelation 19).⁴⁶ This destruction negated the negative, canceled it out by turning it back on itself; it expressed the transformational energy of the Word which would bring forth the New Jerusalem out of the fallen Babylon. In historical time, the archangel ensured that death contained its opposite, that it was the beginning of a passage to a new life in heaven or hell. He separated the soul from the body either gently or violently, depending on the moral state of the deceased, and guided it through the twenty toll houses (*mytarstva*) leading to God. Michael's justice as the Angel of Death was simultaneously dreadful and merciful: it "corrected" (transformed) the sinner into a true "son of God."⁴⁷

Thus, the "severity" of the Muscovite tsar reflected the purgatorial aspect of Michael's "dreadfulness": Ivan's justice would "purify" his Russian people; it would make them "martyrs" for the faith and reveal them to be "chosen people." The tsar could thus interpret his violence as the opposite of what it appeared to the profane eyes of the world. A further expression of paradoxical violence is a painting on Ivan's sepulchre in the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael which depicts him as the "arm" of Michael, the Angel of Death.⁴⁸ It portrays the boyars who abandoned him during the Regency (described in his first epistle to Kurbskii) feasting together in their pride and powerlust while Death shoots an arrow into their midst. It refers to Ivan's actions against "usurpers" and prefigures the apocalyptic "Judgment against the Unrighteous."

contribution unto the fullness of the world, and through its presence, saveth the universe from imperfection" (see *VMCh*, 480). Of angels of destruction he writes: "Hence evil inhereth not in the angels; they are evil only in so far as they must punish sinners. But in this respect even those who chastise wrong-doers are evil, and so are the priests who exclude the profane man from the Divine Mysteries." See *The Divine Names*, 113, 119–20, 127 and *VMCh*, 490–91. All passages from "On the Divine Names" will be cited from the translation of C. E. Rolt, *The Divine Names and the Mystical Theology* (London: S.P.C.K., 1940). See also Prokhorov, *Pamiatniki perevodnoi literatury*, 19.

46. Likhachev ("Canon and Prayer") notes the folkloric association of Michael with the "wise snake," an image which reflects Michael's dual association with wisdom and evil that serves the good. Ivan IV refers to Michael as both "*khitryi*" and "*mudryi*" in his "Canon."

47. See Panchenko and Uspenskii, "Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 69. They base their analysis on *Izmaragd* (Moscow: Moskovskaia staroobriadcheskaia knigopechatnia, 1911), l. 95ob.–96. On punishment as a sign of special election, see *Domostroi* (Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1971), *Rarity Reprints*, nos. 18, 20–28. Panchenko and Uspenskii (*op.cit.*, 71) also note the folk interpretation of Michael's "*groza*" as a sign from God.

48. Podobedova believes that this painting refers to Ivan's earlier persecutions of the boyars in the 1550s. However, as she admits in a footnote, it is equally possible that this painting was done after the *Oprichnina* and after Ivan's death. Therefore it could have been influenced by Ivan's own interpretation of his actions during the period of the *Oprichnina*. See *Moskovskaia shkola*, 33.

The Muscovite ideologists of kingship envisioned the tsar's "justice" as a function of his "meekness" by analogy to the Wisdom paradigm of the eschatological empowerment of the Word through the Martyrdom of the Lamb in Revelation 19. Chastity implicitly entailed the purification essential for Martyrdom; and chastity, like Martyrdom in Revelation 19, was also associated with justice and enthronement, as the eulogy to Ivan IV's father, Vasili III, specifically states: "Verily are you called tsar for you reign over passions . . . you are crowned with the diadem of chastity and arrayed in the purple robe of justice."⁴⁹ Chastity was seen as a manifestation of the Wisdom of the Word because it could subsume its opposites: it entailed both the passive acceptance of the suffering resulting from repression of passions (meekness) and active battle to restrain passions. It presented to Wisdom ideologists a model of self-purification which condensed the symbols of Martyrdom and Combat; as such, it was a "condensation" of the tsar's justice and severity. In Chastity as a unity of opposites, Martyrdom dominated Combat; in Justice, Combat dominated Martyrdom: they were two manifestations of the transcendent wholeness of the tsar's human and divine natures. Without the self-purification symbolized by Chastity the tsar could not purify others, i.e., dispense justice. The tsar's soul was a mirror which was "ever cleansed and [which] continually shines with divine rays so that it learns the judgment of things";⁵⁰ this self-cleansing, denying the self for the sake of the "whole," "taught" Justice, "the judgment of things." Chastity implicitly gave the tsar the likeness of an angel which, according to Dionysios the Areopagite: "... in perfecting the divine likeness, is a pure and unsullied mirror [which is] both transfused with light and emanates light, ... both cleansed and cleanses, ... both perfected and perfecting."⁵¹

49. "Po istine ubo tsar' narichashesia, izhe tsarstvuia nad strast'mi i slastem odolavati mogii, izhe tselomudriia ven'tsem ven'channyi i porfiroiu pravdy obolchenyi." See *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* (PSRL), (St. Petersburg: Tip. M.A. Aleksandrova, 1913; rpt. Düsseldorf: Brücken-Verlag, 1970) 21: 2, 605-15, esp. 610. I have used Cherniavsky's translation in *Tsar and People*, 46. See also Ihor Ševčenko, "A Byzantine Source of Muscovite Ideology," *Harvard Slavic Studies* 2 (1954): 163. Ševčenko (*ibid.*, 159) points out that the inclusion of almost the whole of this work into the *Stepennaia kniga* testifies to its importance. He presumes it was written shortly after Vasili III's death during the period of the regency. He notes (161) that the passage cited above derived from the "Hortatory Chapters" of the sixth century Byzantine writer Agapetus addressed to the Emperor Justinian (see 147). At the heart of the concept of "chastity" was the Agapetan concept of the two natures of the ruler (by analogy to the two natures of Christ). It was first used to define the attributes of a Russian ruler in relation to Grand Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii in the Laurentian Chronicle under the year 1175: "est'estvom bo zemnym podobn est' vsiakumu cheloveku tsesar, vlastiiu zhe sana iako Bog." See Ševčenko, 142.

50. "po podobiiu zertsala vseгда ischishchaetsia i bozhestvenymi luchami vynu oblistaema i veshch'mi razsuzheniia ottuda nauchaetsia." See PSRL 21, no. 2: 610.

51. This is my translation. See "On the Celestial Hierarchies," *VMCh*, 297-98: "podobiiu bozhestvenaia sovershaia, zertsala chista i neskvern'na . . . ezhe ovom ubo prosveshchatisia, ovom zhe prosveshchati; ovom ubo ochishchatisia, ovom ochishchati; i ovom ubo s' versatisia, ovom zhe s' vershenodeistvovati."

The tsar's kingship through Chastity also implicitly identified him with the Angel of Wisdom as portrayed in the "Novgorod" icon of divine Sophia.⁵² Sitting on the seat of judgment in imperial regalia, this angel represents the Messenger of the Great Council in the image of the King "upon the throne of David ... with judgment and righteousness," according to Isaiah 9:6.⁵³ The tsar/angel is also implicitly the Emmanuel, the "child ... whose government is upon his shoulder ... [who] shall sit upon the throne of David" A contemporary interpretation of this angel, the "Narration about the Image of Sophia, the Wisdom of God," focused on another paradigm of the unity of Christ's dual nature: "Virginity-Sovereignty," analogously to the opposition "Chastity-Justice" characterizing the tsar.⁵⁴ According to this interpretation, Wisdom is in the guise of an angel of "virginity" (*dev'stvo*) which empowers, as does the tsar's "chastity" (*tselomudrie*). Virginity is a form of humility which endows the angel as Sophia with sovereignty over her passions. "On her head is the tsar's crown, for humble wisdom is king over the passions ... in her hands she is holding a scepter to indicate her rank as ruler." Moreover, the evocations of the angel's "sovereignty" lay bare the cosmic, messianic "wisdom" implications of the tsar's sovereignty: her Virginity makes her ruler over creation. Immediately above her head emerges the figure of the Word, the Uncreated Wisdom of which she is a created personification.⁵⁵ The "Narration" identifies in the shining face of the angel the divine "fire" which signifies the transformational energy of the Word. This energy is identified with the self-purification inherent in Chastity, which transforms man into an angel. "For fire is the Godhead, burning the carnal passions and enlightening the pure soul ... for a pure life makes one equal to the angels."

The Angel of Wisdom thus provides an implicit frame of reference for the portrayal of the tsar in the eulogy. She embodies the same

52. The etymology of the Russian word for "chastity," *tselomudrie*, reveals its associations with both "wisdom" and "wholeness." Of course this wholeness, in its mystical sense, referred to the body of Christ, the Church, the place of the "in-dwelling" of Wisdom. In Muscovite ideology this "place" also included the pious, chaste tsar. On the Novgorod Sophia icon, see Florovskii, "O pochitanii Sofii," 498-500; Meyendorff, *op.cit.*, 394-400 and plate 5; V. I. Antonova and M. E. Mneva, *Katalog drevnerusskoi zhivopisi* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1963), II: 100; Nikol'skii, "Sofia Premudrost' Bozhia."

53. See Fiene, "What Is the Appearance of the Divine Sophia?" 457-59.

54. This "skazanie o obraze Sofii" appears in icon painting manuals and also in compilations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in Tolkovye Apokalipsy, according to Florovskii ("O pochitanii Sofii," 495-98). Florovskii, who does not provide references, appears to be basing his facts on an article cited by A. I. Nikol'skii ("Sofia Premudrost' Bozhia," 72) without page references by G. D. Filimonov, "Ocherki russkoi khristianskoi ikonografii Sofia Premudrost' Bozhia," in *Vestnik obshchestva drevne-russkago iskusstva za 1874-1876 gody*. Nikol'skii (*ibid.*, 73-74) found and analyzed a fifteenth century copy entitled "Slovo o premudrosti." I cite the "skazanie" from Nikol'skii's citation from a seventeenth century manuscript published by Tikhonravov (Nicol'skii gives no bibliographical information).

55. Nikol'skii, "Sofia Premudrost' Bozhia," 72-73.

complex of symbols manifest in other Wisdom expressions of Christ's dual nature, for example the icon of the Lamb Enthroned which identifies the expiatory power of "lowliness" (Virginity) with the purificatory power of Christ Enthroned (Sovereignty). When the eulogy applied this symbolism to the tsar, it implicitly represented his chaste-justice as the vehicle by which the Word would unify Created and Uncreated Wisdom. By analogy to the Angel of Wisdom in the Novgorod Sophia icon, the tsar was also implicitly likened to Emmanuel-King. This paradigm of the tsar's chastity and the paradigms of his justice discussed earlier represented inverted mirror images of each other, revealing the identity of the king's two natures. Thus the official ideology of the king's plenitude was a result of an elaborate series of linkages between his meek-severity or chaste-justice, and the Virginity-Sovereignty of the Word. Ivan IV would later enhance his chastity so that it was of equal symbolic importance with his justice. In so doing, he drew on a paradigm of his human nature which had cosmic implications symmetrical with those of his officially sanctioned likeness to the Archangel Michael and Lord of Hosts.

The paradigm by which Ivan could present his chastity as the pivotal force fulfilling divine Providence was Folly in Christ. Holy Folly offered him a language of paradox with which to acknowledge his human nature in its sinfulness. By interpreting the unity of opposites through this paradigm, Ivan united his official chastity with his actual "self-pollution," and revealed this "pollution" to be an inverted (lowly) version of cleansing evil analogous to the archangel's Justice. The paradoxical nature of the paradigm of Holy Folly derived from its connection with Wisdom and the transcendence of God. St. Paul indicated that the Fool's mystical language expressed his esoteric knowledge of the divine Idea immanent in sacred history: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (2 Cor. 2:7). Dionysios the Areopagite elaborated on I Corinthians 1 and stated that the Wisdom of God can be revealed only in "negative terms . . . in a sense contrary to the usual ones."⁵⁶ In I Corinthians 1 Paul himself engaged in this language of negation when he presented "foolishness" in Christ as a manifestation of the "wisdom" of God, "weakness" as proof of the "strength" of God, "martyrdom" on the cross as a form of "power."⁵⁷ The lower term encompassed the higher and was thus inverted. Paul associated Holy Folly with the state of corruption visited on the human race by Adam: "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day" (I Cor. 4:13). A Fool openly acknowledged his

56. See *The Divine Names*, chap. VII, part 1, 147; *VMCh*, 543.

57. Wisdom tradition, deriving from I Corinthians 1 and other Pauline epistles, associated the "power" of Christ's human nature with Folly in Christ. Dionysios the Areopagite ("On the Divine Names") defines "Folly" as the highest revelation of divine "Wisdom" on the basis of I Corinthians 1. See *The Divine Names*, chap. VII, Part I; *VMCh*, 542-44: "Bue Bozhie premudreishe chelovek glagolet (1 Korin.1:25)."

corruption by making himself a "spectacle unto the world" (I Cor. 4:9). Clothing himself in Adam's sin, he indulged in a masquerade which disguised his true likeness to Christ. In old Russian culture, Folly in Christ was a recognized model of sanctity achieved through "pollution"; the Fool's association with dogs demonstrated his uncleanness.⁵⁸ A Fool typically "feigned madness . . . [and] immorality."⁵⁹ His behavior was superficially similar to the "masking" and "travesty" with blasphemous connotations (*glumenie*) associated with his antagonists, the *skomorokhi*.⁶⁰

Appearing to the world as the opposite of what he was, the Fool exemplified self-humiliation. He appeared as sinful and blasphemous in order to bring judgment and suffering on himself and expiate his innate sin in Adam. The abuse that he provoked likened him to the kenotic Christ, whose faith and love were manifest in reverse degree to His abandonment and humiliation by men.⁶¹ Paul understood the Fool's self-degradation as a radical imitation of Christ's kenosis, His compassionate outpouring from His divine essence into the human condition, His extreme degradation, climaxing in His humbling Himself "unto death."⁶² The humiliation of Christ invalidated the distinction between clean and unclean, upheld fanatically by the Pharisees who became the emblem of the falsely righteous.⁶³ The unclean were clean to the degree that they made their debasement a source of community and purificatory love: debasement and self-pollution became archetypes of Martyrdom and brother love. The Fool communed with the whole human community in sin, in archetypal Adam and the "lost

58. On the Fool and dogs, see Likhachev and Panchenko, *Smekhovoi mir*, 153.

59. See Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind* (Belmont: Nordland, 1975), II: 316.

60. See "Smekhovoi mir," 93.

61. On the Fool's language of paradox and his techniques of provoking vilification, see also D. S. Likhachev and A. M. Panchenko, "Smekhovoi mir," 127-39. They give examples from the life of Ivan's contemporary, St. Basil the Blessed. See also Natalie Challis and Horace Dewey, "Basil the Blessed, Holy Fool of Moscow," in *Ivan the Terrible: A Quarcentenary Celebration of his Death*, 47-59. The Life of the holy fool Andrei provides an example of a fool being beaten because his "madness" is interpreted as *glum* (see *VMCh*, 1-3 Oktiabr', 89).

62. On Christ's kenosis as an expression of the language of negation characteristic of Holy Folly, see Losskii, *The Mystical Theology*, 138, 142. On the relationship between kenoticism and foolishness, see Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind*, II: 321; and Likhachev and Panchenko, "Smekhovoi mir," 95. On kenosis as the humiliation of Christ, see Phillipians 2:6-8, which describes Christ sacrificing His high position as a "king of heaven" and taking on the aspect of a "slave": "Smiril sebe, poslushliv byv dazhe do smerti, smerti zhe krestnoi." See *Bibliia sirech knigi sviashchennago pisaniiia vethhago i novago zaveta* (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tipografia, 1891). See also Losskii, *op.cit.*, 147-48. In chap. 7, Part 1 of "On the Divine Names," the Areopagite's commentator, Maximus the Confessor, places Christ's kenosis or emptying out (*istoshchenie*) in the context of Wisdom. Appearing to the Greeks as weak (*nemoshchno*) even "unto death": "sitse ubo ist'shchanie narichiut' Bozhii Slova v" chelovechenie, . . . preispolnenno premudrosti i sily i spaseniia." See *VMCh*, 543-45.

63. Fedotov (*The Russian Religious Mind*, 1:127) points out that the acceptance of what was formerly considered unclean, according to the vision of Peter (Acts 10), was characteristic of kenoticism.

sheep" of Christ's parable. Paul's description of the all-encompassing nature of the Fool's pollution in both time and space (he is the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things unto this day) implicitly likened him to the Lamb of God, redeeming the "sin of the world" (John 1:26–36; emphases mine).

The Fool's self-humiliation could be active as well as passive, could involve symbolic Combat as well as symbolic Martyrdom. His "filthiness" combatted sin in his persecutors by presenting it to scrutiny: ostensibly polluting himself by violating normal codes of conduct, the Fool provoked his persecutors to judge him unjustly, thus exposing their hypocrisy and false-righteousness. By forcing the proud to confront their sin by his self-degradation, the "weakness" of the Fool was transformed into a judgment of others, similar to the Archangel Michael's "merciful justice" which also confronted sinners with their own evil. The Fool's spiritual gifts of prophecy and clairvoyance were weapons analogous to the sword of the archangel. Exposing others by exposing himself, the Fool challenged them to the same penitence and renewal as he himself had undertaken. By his own behavior, he invited them to also become Martyrs in order to Combat sin.⁶⁴ They would thus become brothers in salvation.

The chaste tsar and the polluted Fool occupied two places on the continuum of the increasing transformational power of the Word. Both tsar and Fool identified with the community and, as such, could manifest Justice. However, official ideology recognized only quietistic monastic virtue rather than Holy Folly as the ideal of a chaste and just tsar, and this led to both Vasilii III's and Ivan IV's assumption of the monastic habit immediately before death.⁶⁵ Ivan IV stated his wish to become a monk to the brothers of the Kirillo-Beloozerskii Monastery;

64. See Fedotov, *Russian Religious Mind*, II: 316–44; "Smekhovoi mir," 101–4, 111–15.

65. The tsar's chastity lacked the militancy of the Fool's pollution and was not confrontational with the self or the world. Nor did it participate to the same extent in the providential dynamism of God's Wisdom. It was manifest as it appeared to the eyes of the world rather than in paradoxical form. The difference between the tsar's chastity and the Fool's pollution reflected the difference between angelic and archangelic nature: the latter was a heightened manifestation of the former. The tsar's chastity made him like a monk who was believed to have an angelic nature. In the *Stepennaia kniga*, the eulogy of Vasilii III, (attributing to him justice and chastity) was part of a larger passage entitled: "Vkratse pokhvala samoderzh'tsu Vasiliuu, i o postrizhenii ego i o chiudesnom otshestviii ego k bogu" which presented his taking on the monastic habit at death as the logical outcome of his life. See *PSRL*, 21, pt. 2, 610. The "Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe," which was included in the *Velikie minei chet'i*, was an important ideological statement of the monastic virtues which should inform sacred kingship, conveyed by Varlaam, "mnikh premudr . . . mudrstvuia bozhestvenaa." See I. N. Lebedeva, "Afanaseivskii izvod i litsevyie spiski Povesti o Varlaame i Ioasafe," *TODRL* 39 (1985): 47. The Golden Throne Room contained a scene from this tale. It is published in *VMCh* under November. On the role of kenoticism and its association with monastic virtue in the ideology of both prince and tsar, see Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 5–43; and Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, 1: 94–110.

he claimed to be "half-monk" even as he continued to rule.⁶⁶ Custom (rather than official ideology) associated Holy Folly with the tsar's justice, revealing the intimidating humility of the Fool to be a measure of the "humble severity" of the Muscovite king.⁶⁷ The Fool enjoyed the unique prerogative of critiquing a tsar's justice and was allowed to serve as his conscience. According to contemporary tradition, only the holy fool Nikola of Pskov was able to do what Ivan's other "wise advisers" (even those from the highest ranks of the clergy) were unable to: successfully criticize the tsar's brutal actions, cause him to question their righteousness and change his course.⁶⁸ Ivan IV saw himself as "half-monk" and half-fool in Christ.⁶⁹

By appealing to Wisdom archetypes of Chastity/Justice and Fool/Archangel Michael, Ivan could portray himself as a unity where opposites mirrored one another and encompassed the plenitude of Cre-

66. See "Poslanie v Kirillo-Beloozerskii monastyr'," 164 "... i az greshnyi vam izvestikh zhelanie svoe o postrizhenii, ... I svoe obeshchanie polozhikh vam s radostiiu, iako nigde inde, ashche blagovolit, v blagopoluchno vremia zdравu postrishchisia, tochiu vo prechestnei sei obiteli prechistyiya bogoroditsy ... I mne mnitsia okaianomu, iako ispolu esm' chernets ...".

67. On the special relationship of king and Fool, see Likhachev and Panchenko, "Smekhovoi mir," 159-79. See also Joanna Hubbs, "Mother Russia's Champions: Imolated Tsarevich and Holy Fool," in *Mother Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 190-95. Official ideology corroborated Ivan's own personal identification with Holy Folly indirectly in the *Stepennaia kniga* (composed in the 1560s during the time of the *Oprichnina*). See *PSRL*, 21, pt. 2, 629. To indicate Ivan's miraculous birth (which demonstrated his likeness to Christ and placed him in the context of other scriptural figures enjoying miraculous births such as John the Baptist and the Mother of God), it describes Elena Glinskaia consulting with the fool Domentii about "what" she will give birth to. The fool is said to have prophesied "Titus, a large mind." See Isolde Thryet, "'Blessed is the Tsaritsa's Womb': The Myth of Miraculous Birth and Royal Womanhood in Muscovite Russia," forthcoming in the *Russian Review*. Thryet notes that the name Titus referred to the fact that Ivan was born on the fast day of the apostles Bartholomew and Titus. The reference to the "broad mind" may reflect Ivan's ideologists' appreciation of his theological scope (as demonstrated through the actions and words of the 1560s evincing his personal mythology of kingship).

68. On the fool Nikola of Pskov's confrontation with Ivan IV as he prepared to sack the city, see the accounts of Sir Jerome Horsey and Giles Fletcher, in *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, eds. L. E. Berry and R. O. Crummey (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 268, 218-20; and *Pskovskie letopisi*, ed. A. Nasonov (Moscow-Leningrad: AN SSSR, 1941), II: 115-16. Tradition later attributed some of Nikola's paradoxical gestures towards Ivan IV to the holy fool Basil who became associated with the messianic potential of the state as a whole when Tsar Fedor dedicated a chapel to him in the Cathedral of the Intercession of the Mother of God built in honor of Ivan's victory over Kazan', and buried his relics there. See Challis and Dewey, "Basil the Blessed," 55-56.

69. In the "Poslanie v Kirilo-Beloozerskii monastyr'," 162-65, Ivan testified to his desire to become a monk even while he presented himself as a fool: after reveling in profound self-degradation as was characteristic of the Fool ("A mne, psu smerdiashchemu, komu uchiti i chemu nakazati, i chem prosvetiti? Sam bo vseгда v pian'stve, v blude, v preliubodeistve, v skverne, vo ubiistve"), he exposed his "madness" and identification with the "slavery" of Christ: "ponezhe vy mia ponudiste, mala nekaia ot svoego bezumiia izreku vam, ne iako uchitel'ski i so vlastiiu, no iako rabski" (my emphasis).

ated and Uncreated Wisdom. Michael's cleansing destructiveness, which mirrored the pure filthiness of the Fool, ridded the earth of the whole legion of sinners from the beginning of the world; the Fool's self-pollution cleansed himself as well as his judges of the last remnants of man's generic sin in Adam. Identifying Martyrdom and Combat, suffering and aggression, good and evil, Ivan's dual nature evinced the purificatory power implicit in Christ's angelic nature. It was analogous to the "two-edged sword" of the apocalyptic Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:16) to be wielded in "archangelic" militancy. To himself Ivan's atrocities during the *Oprichnina* were just such a sword: they were of a destructive evil which manifested the higher good hidden in God's transcendent Wisdom. They cleansed both himself and his people, and kept history on its predestined course.

Ivan felt the need to wield this two-edged sword of purification because the breakdown of his relationship with his people tarnished his kingdom's likeness to Christ. That likeness derived from his spiritual reciprocity with the people, which hinged on chastity and humility. Ivan believed that the people betrayed him when they refused to take his sin on themselves and atone for it as he did for theirs. Muscovite ideologists buttressed Ivan's paranoia by emphasizing the cosmic implications of his relationship with his people. On the one hand, they impressed upon him his primary responsibility for safeguarding the messianic Church; on the other, conceiving of the state as an organic unity, they envisioned his power as a function of his reciprocal relationship with his people.⁷⁰ If the people betrayed their tsar, they forced upon him a solitary self-cleansing, previously shared.

The "House Orderer" presented an implicit model of the reciprocity of tsar and people. It described the family as a microcosm of the kingdom, and the heads of households as microcosms of the tsar, responsible to him as he was responsible to God and to them. Heads of households were to "carry in themselves the Tsar's name," and perfect their own likeness to Christ's divine-human nature. They were enjoined to "serve justice," "save" the members of their households "with fear," "constrain them with severity" (*pretiti grozoiu*), "and in every way . . . keep them in spiritual and bodily cleanliness and . . . care for them as if they were your own body for God has said we are all one body . . ." (emphasis mine).⁷¹ A head of household should also cleanse himself through humility and even martyrdom; he should embrace persecution from members of his own household and even from unjust kings. The more innocent his suffering, the more merit he would receive.⁷² Cleansing himself in this manner, his soul became a mirror

70. The tsar's responsibility for the messianic Church was explicit in Filofei's epistles about the "Third Rome." See also Rowland, "Did Muscovite Literary Ideology Place Limits on the Power of the Tsar (1540s-1660s)?" *The Russian Review* 49 (1990): 146-48.

71. *Domostroi*, 9-10 (my translation).

72. *Ibid.*, 27; 68-9. Rowland, ("Did Muscovite Literary Ideology"), discusses how the idea of the tsar as tyrant could exist in an ideology which perceives of the tsar as

contributing to the brightness of his sovereign's soul, and his justice strengthened and participated in the tsar's own. Ivan IV would assert that his people could bring about their sovereign's renewal and purification from sin.

Ivan's first epistle to Andrei Kurbskii expresses his loss of community with his people and his sense of isolation and abandonment.⁷³ Ivan felt that the boyars were compelling him against his will to bear alone the burden of divine Providence, that by refusing to take on the tsar's and Christ's image, Kurbskii was clouding the mirror of the tsar's soul and corrupting the "beauty of his power."⁷⁴ The boyars' unwillingness to endure suffering for his and the kingdom's sake, their refusal to submit themselves to his justice, their corruption by pride, their self-indulgence and their lust for his own position jeopardized the reciprocity of king and kingdom. Kurbskii refused to endure in-

the image of God. See also G. Fedotov, *St. Filipp*, 155–56. According to his "Life," the Metropolitan Filipp, while insisting on his obligation to speak the truth to the tsar if the latter was acting as a tyrant, also affirmed his obligation to suffer at his hands and become a martyr. See *ibid.*, 131. In other words, Iosif Volotskii's famous advice not to obey tyrants does not necessarily urge active disobedience, but rather the higher obedience to God of innocent suffering for the sake of the truth: "If there is a Tsar who rules over men, and who is ruled by evil passions and sins, by greed and wrath, cunning and falsehood, pride and anger, and worst of all by lack of faith, and one who abuses, such a Tsar is not a servant of God but of the devil and is not a Tsar but a torturer . . . You should not listen to any Tsar or Prince who leads you to impiety and cunning, even though torture or death threatens you. Witness the prophets, apostles and all the martyrs for they were killed by impious rulers because they did not submit to the commands of such rulers. "See chapt. 7 of Iosif Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, ed. A. Volkov (Kazan': Tip. Imperatorskago universiteta, 1896). I have used Haugh's and Lupinin's translation in Fedotov, *op.cit.*, 155.

73. Crummey ("New Wine in Old Bottles?," 72) writes that the loneliness and responsibility of the autocrat make him particularly vulnerable to paranoia and rage. In his first epistle to Kurbskii Ivan presents his sense of loneliness and abandonment as the catalyst for his rage and for the mythology making it sacred.

74. Ivan wrote in *Perepiska*, 39: "Az zhe ubo veruiu, o vsekh svoikh sogresheniikh vol'nykh i nevol'nykh sud priati mi, iako rabu i ne tokmo o svoikh, no i o podovlastnykh dati mi otvet, ashche chto moim nesmotreniem pogreshitsia." In his first epistle to Kurbskii, Ivan explained his persecutions of the clergy as well as the boyars. He discussed at length how the Priest Sil'vestr took advantage of his filial obedience to steal power from him (see *Perepiska*, 30–33). His ability to murder the Metropolitan Filipp and purge the Church hierarchy arose from his conviction of his own spiritual superiority and independence of his Church elite. On the Priest Sil'vestr's teaching to Ivan that the tsar is responsible for the sins of his people, see Zimin, *I. S. Peresvetov*, 60. Ivan referred to the "beauty" of his power when he described Sil'vestr's and Adashev's betrayal in the redaction of the first epistle published in *Poslaniia Ivana Groznogo*, 37. His apparently aesthetic characterization of his power was in fact theological. Its "beauty" derived from divine beauty, which the Areopagite described in "On The Divine Names," Chap. 4, part VII, emphasizing its function of revealing divine goodness and unity: "This one Good and Beautiful is in Its oneness the Cause of all the many beautiful and good things . . . the intercommunion of all things according to the power of each." See *The Divine Names*, 95–96; *VMCh*, 451–53. According to his "Life," the Metropolitan Filipp used the same idea when confronting the tsar with his violations of "piety." "Devout one, of whom have you become so jealous that it forces you to change the beauty of your face?" See Fedotov, *St. Filipp*, 121.

nocent suffering at the sovereign's hands: instead of cleansing himself through obedience, he gave way to wrath and exhibited rebellious pride by fleeing persecution to enter the service of the Polish-Lithuanian king. Moreover, by accusing Ivan of breaking God's laws, Kurbskii exhibited false righteousness since he himself was the first offender.

... being angry at a man, you have stood up to God ... If you are so righteous and pious ... why have you feared an innocent death ... that is the will of God—doing good to suffer. If you are so righteous and pious, why have you not wished from me, your contentious sovereign, suffering and the inheritance of the crown of life.⁷⁵

If Kurbskii had remained in Russia and suffered for his sovereign's sake, he might have moved Ivan to repent his vengeful wrath, and to forgive and save his former favorite.

You have shown yourself in opposition to God and have repudiated all the holy, pure saints shining forth in fasting and ascetic feats, who have shown mercy to the sinful; for among them you will find many who have fallen and risen again ... , and have given their hand to the suffering, and mercifully led them away from the abyss of sins, according to the apostle, "seeing them as brothers rather than as enemies"—these you have repudiated!⁷⁶

Kurbskii's refusal to sacrifice himself was a judgment on the tsar; it demonstrated the traitor's violation of Christ's law of charity.⁷⁷

Now I fear that you, by accusing me of being unhealable and ridden with pus, have implicated yourself as well. Is it possible that you do not accept the repentant David in whom repentance preserved a prophetic gift, nor the great Peter who suffered as a man during the savior's passion. But Jesus accepts them ...⁷⁸

75. All translations from the first epistle are mine. See *Perepiska*, 13–14: "i na cheloveka voz" iariusia, na boga vozstal esi ... Se bo est' volia gospodnia—ezhe, blagoe tvoriashche, postradati. I ashche praveden esi i blagochestiv, pro chto ne izvolil esi ot mene, stropitivago vладыki, stradati i venets zhizni naslediti?" Ivan earlier appealed to the doctrine of his two natures explicitly: "Voz" iariusia na cheloveka i bogu prirazi-tisia; ino bo chelovechesko est', ashche perfiru nosit, ino zhe bozhestveno est'" (13–14). Ivan's first epistle is responding to Kurbskii's which can be found in *Perepiska*, 7–11.

76. *Perepiska*, 16–17: "bogu protivni iavliaiushchesia kako i sviatykh vsekh pre-podobnykh, izhe v poste i v podvize prosiavshikh, milovanie, ezhe ko greshnym, ot-vergoste; mnogo bo v nikh obriashcheshi padshikh i vozstavshikh (vosstanie ne bedno!) i strazhdushchim ruku pomoshchi podavshe, i ot rva sogresheniia milovatel'ne voz-vedshikh, po apostolu, 'iako bratiiu, a ne iako vragov imushche'—ezhe ty otvergl esi!" Implicit are the words of Romans 14: 1, 10. "Nemoshchnogo v vere prinimaite bez sporov o mneniakh ... A ty chto osuzhdaesh' brata tvoego? Ili i ty chto unizhaesh' brata tvoego? Vsi bo predstanem sudishchu Khristovu."

77. *Perepiska*, 19, 41, 99: "Kto ubo tia postavi sudiiu ili vladatelia nado mnoiu? Ili ty dasi otvet za dushu moiu v den' Strashnago suda? ... Solntse ne zaidet vo gneve vashem', ty zhe i na sud khoshcheshi itti bez proshcheniia i molitisia za tvoriashchikh napasti otritsaeshisia."

78. *Perepiska*, 52: "Nyne zhe boiusia, da ne tochiu gnoi mi vneseshi neiztselnoiu. Ni Davida priemlia, kaiushchesia, emu zhe prorocheski dar pokoianie sobliude, ni Petra velikogo, postradavsha nechto chelovechesko pri spaseni strasti? No Isus priem-let"

Ivan's accusing Kurbskii of the same sins which Kurbskii attributed to Ivan derived from the tsar's personal vision of their mutual interdependence for salvation. Indeed, if he himself was polluted by his wrath against his former favorite, it was because Kurbskii judged him in wrath, rather than fostering his sovereign's repentance through self-sacrifice. Ultimately, the tsar accused Kurbskii of being an "iconoclast heretic" because he believed that Kurbskii denied his former sovereign as the image of God on earth, and because he refused to participate in the creation of a community in Christ.⁷⁹

The refusal of Ivan's subjects, beginning with the boyars, to exercise Chastity and Justice toward him for the sake of the larger community which he represented was a catalyst for Ivan's self-perception as Holy Fool. In response to betrayal, he presented himself as an "inverted," sacral form of his enemies: in him unrestrained wrath was a heightened form of Chastity and Justice, while in them it was a lack of these virtues. His radical humility was more militant than the commonly accepted understanding of Chastity and emerged as Holy Folly in the symbolic language of the *Oprichnina*. Repudiating Kurbskii's pride and alluding to his own humility, Ivan reminded Kurbskii that "strength is made perfect in weakness" (*nemoshch'*; 2 Cor. 12:9).⁸⁰ He implicitly likened the humiliations and abandonments he endured involuntarily at the hands of his enemies to the kenotic degradation and Martyrdom of Christ, and presented them as sources of community and spiritual power. "... not with wounds, nor drops of blood, but with much sweating and toiling have I been burdened by you unnecessarily and above my strength! Your many meannesses and persecutions have caused me, instead of blood, to shed many tears, and to utter sobs and have anguish of my soul . . ."⁸¹ Ivan also described his childhood suffering in terms that recalled Paul's portrayal of his foolish degradation (I Cor. 4): Paul was "naked," "hungry" and "thirsty." The boyars brought up Ivan, a future king, and his brother "like children of the poorest" (*ubozheishuiiu chad'*), making them "suffer" for want of clothing and food.⁸²

The boyars' refusal to support Ivan made him vulnerable to human weakness of will, or concupiscence. Ivan used the word "*nemoshch'*" for

79. See *Perepiska*, 13. Uspenskii and Panchenko ("Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 72) give a similar interpretation of Ivan's accusation. Ivan writes to Kurbskii, *Perepiska*, 14: "Smotri zhe sego i razumei, iako protivliaiasia vlasti bogu protivitsia; ashche ubo kto bogu protivitsia,—sei otstupnik imenuetsia . . . Razumei zhe rechennoe, iako ne voskhishcheniem priakhom tsarstvo; tem zhe naipache, protivliaiasia vlasti, bogu protivitsia."

80. See *Perepiska*, 18: "blagodat' bozhia v nemoshchi sovershatisia, a vasha zlobesnaia na tserkov' vostaniia razsyplet sam Khristos."

81. See *Perepiska*, 42: "Kol'mi zhe pache nasha krov' na vas vopiet k bogu, ot vas samekh prolitaia: ne ranami, nizhe krovnyimi potoki, no mnogimi poty, i trudov mnozhestva ot vas priakh i otiagcheniia bezlepa, iako po premnogu ot vas otiagotikhomsia pache sily! Ot mnogago vashogo ozlobleniia i oskorbeniia i utesneniia, vmesto krovi, mnogo izliashasia nashikh slez i vozdykhaniia i stenaniia serdechnaia."

82. *Perepiska*, 28: "iako ubozheishuiiu chad'. My zhe postradali vo odeianii i v alchbe!"

this state of sinful “weakness,” the same word found in Paul’s description of the Fool’s penitential self-degradation in the Slavonic translation available to Ivan. “. . . although I bear the purple, yet at the same time I know that by nature I am just as burdened with weakness as all other men, not as you heretically pronounce in your wisdom and order that I stand higher than the laws of nature.”⁸³ Ivan’s assertion of human “weakness” in the face of his kingship was a gesture of profound humility with expiatory power because it asserted his brotherhood with his people; it made him superior to the falsely righteous boyars who demanded that he stand above the human condition. They, though lower in rank, stood in judgment of him for human weakness; Christ himself, although a King, had such loving compassion for the human condition, He condescended from his Kingship and embraced it. The boyars were heretics denying Christ when they stood in judgment of their humiliated sovereign.⁸⁴

Ivan emphasized that his “condescension” to share the sins of his people served the higher good by creating community and compensating for his isolation from the boyars. His use of the word “condescension” (*skhozhdenie*) had theological echoes, recalling the “condescension” of Christ to take on lowly manhood, resulting in His kenosis.

If you recall that something was amiss in my steadfastness in the Church and that there were games, that was due to your devious intentions, for you catapulted me out of my peaceful spiritual life and like Pharisees thrust onto me an almost unbearable burden, yourselves not lifting a finger . . . Concerning games, then, condescending to human weaknesses [*nemoshchi*], since you had attracted away many of the people with your devious plans, . . . I arranged so that the people recognized us as its master and not you traitors.⁸⁵

Ivan was thus the opposite of Kurbskii: he embodied the humility of Christ and was one with his people in sin (and grace) while Kurbskii evinced satanic pride and self-righteousness, and stood alone against

83. *Perepiska*, 38–9: “Bezsmerten zhe byti ne mniusia, ponezhe smert’ Adamskii grekh, obshchedatel’nyi dolg vsem chelovekom; ashche bo i perfiru noshu, no obache vem se, iako po vsemu *nemoshchiiu* podobno vsem chelovekom, oblozhen esm’ po estestvu a ne iako zhe vy mudr” stvujete, vyshe estestva velite byti mi,—ot eresi zhe vsiakoi” (my emphasis). Ševčenko (“A Byzantine Source,” 168) points out that this passage against Kurbskii uses a phrase from Agapetus which Metropolitan Filipp used against him according to his Life: “Esli i vysok ty sanom, no estestvom telesnym podobn vsiakomu cheloveku.”

84. *Perepiska*, 52: “Ne stydishi li sia, ezhe Isus chelovekoliubets’ *nemoshchi* nasha priimshu i nedugi ponesshu, ne pravedniki prishedshu prizvati, no greshnyia na poikoianie” (my emphasis).

85. *Perepiska*, 16: “Ashche li zhe o sem pomyshliaeshi, iako tserkovnoe predstovanie ne tako i igram bytie, se ubo vashego zhe radi lukavago umyshleniia byst’, ponezhe mia istorgoste ot dukhovnago i pokoinago zhitiiia, i brechia, fariseiskim obychaem, bedne nosima, na mia nalozhiste, sami zhe ni edinyim perstom ne prikosnustesia; . . . Igram zhe-*skhodia nemoshchi chelovechestei*; ponezhe mnog narod v sled svoego pagubnago umyshleniia ottorgoste . . . togo radi i az sei sotvorikh . . . daby nas, svoikh gosudarei, poznali, a ne vas, izmennikov” (my emphasis).

tsar and God. At the same time, Ivan believed that his voluntary "weakness" not only exposed Kurbskii's pharisaical self-righteousness but also empowered him to be an arm of God's Justice against all treachery. Through his exercise of divine judgment in the present, he would transform the present into a kind of "toll house" to the New Jerusalem.

And I confess and know, that those who . . . trespass God's law are not only going to be tormented in the beyond, but here too they will experience the anger of a righteous God according to their evil works and drink the cup of God's anger and suffer many forms of punishment, and once they leave this world they will receive the bitterest judgment while awaiting the Savior's just judgment.⁸⁶

Ivan would be the vehicle of God's "righteous anger" against the unrighteous wrath of his enemies by presenting himself as an inverted (i.e., sacred) mirror image of them. He would manifest Chastity through its opposite, participation in sinful carnival-type games enjoyed by the folk. Moreover, he envisioned immersion in sin as a form of Justice against his enemies: it would rectify their subversion of his relationship with the community of his people. His chastity and justice in negative form (through sin) would exemplify the dynamics characterizing Angel and Fool.

In his first epistle to Kurbskii Ivan already exhibited the essential attributes of his dual nature in Christ which he would develop later. He would dramatize the Pauline dialectic between "weakness" and "strength," associated with the Wisdom interpretation of Christ's human nature, and Holy Folly in particular at the very inception of the *Oprichnina*. He demonstrated his purificatory "weakness" by withdrawing from the capital and ostensibly relinquishing his power; in the Aleksandrovskaia suburb (*sloboda*), he underwent a personal crisis so profound that it caused a change in his appearance. On the symbolic level, Ivan's withdrawal from the throne was an act of radical kenosis, a voluntary self-humiliation similar to his degradation by the boyars in childhood. It was a path to its opposite, "resurrection" and empowerment through Sacred Combat and Judgment. This overtly penitential act presaged Ivan's re-emergence with new powers: the people pleaded with him to take back the throne and freed him from control of Boyar Council. He then transformed his former expiatory self-exile "outside" into a sacred life "beyond" (*oprish'*) by establishing the *Oprichnina*.⁸⁷

86. *Perepiska*, 39: "Az zhe ispovedaiu i vem, iako ne tokmo tamo mucheniia, izhe zle zhivushchim i prestupaiushchim zapovedi bozhiia, no i zdes' pravednago bozhiia gneva, po svoim zlym delom, chashu iarosti gospodnia ispivaiut i mnogoobraznymi nakazanii muchatsia, po otshestvii zhe sveta sego, gorchaishee osuzhdenie priemliushche, ozhidaiushche pravednago sudishcha spasova."

87. Albert Schlichting ("A Brief Account," 218) wrote that when Ivan abdicated the throne he expressed his desire to become a monk. When he emerged with new powers by founding the *Oprichnina*, he did so as a fool. The term "*oprish'*" most frequently occurred in law codes to mean "apart from," referring to a widow's portion. However, Panchenko and Uspenskii ("Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 73, quoting S. V.

Ivan felt himself entitled to occupy a position of inviolability and symbolic transcendence in relationship to Russia analogous to the relationship of the resurrected eschatological Christ Judge to his Creation. By implication, the *Oprichniki* represented Ivan's archangelic mediators with the Land (*Zemshchina*), instantiations of the Archangel Michael wielding the two-edged sword of the Word. As the arm of the tsar's severity, the *Oprichniki* were servants of the Archangel Michael engaged in Sacred Combat. During their raids they were also like Michael Angel of Death, delivering sinners to hell (pending the Last Judgment). The apocryphal representation of Michael's procession through the toll houses to hell in the "revelation of the terrible punishments . . . through the Archangel Michael" provided Ivan with a kind of guidebook for his atrocities:⁸⁸ punishments mirrored the sinners' crimes, doubling unto them double, exemplifying the logic of apocalyptic justice according to the Book of Revelation.⁸⁹ In this sense, the dogs' heads tied to the *Oprichniki*'s horses were the symbol of Justice: they confronted sinners who had judged the tsar in wrath "like dogs" with emblems of their own pollution.⁹⁰ The humiliating and debasing nature of these punishments re-established community: the people would suffer as had the tsar. Moreover, when the *Oprichniki* confronted the sinner with his sin and revealed the "hidden councils of his heart" before the Last Judgment, they were acting as fools as well as servants of the archangel.⁹¹ Their association of Justice with militant Holy Folly was made explicit when Ivan supplied them with brooms.⁹²

Veselovskii) point out a sacral connotation of the term "*oprich*" as "beyond," a connotation which surfaces in the distinction between "*oprich*" and "*krome*" to characterize otherworldly life: "Po togdashnim predstavleniiam o potustoronnem mire, tsarstvo bozhie bylo tsarstvom vechnogo sveta, za predelami, oprich', krome kotorogo nakhodilos' tsarstvo vechnogo mraka." Ivan in *Perepiska*, 26 seems to be using the word "*oprich*" in both senses when he prefers it to the word *krome* to distinguish his "God-given" loyal commanders from the traitors: "bozhieiu pomoshchiiu imeem u sebe voevod mnozhestvo i *oprich*' vas, izmennikov" (my emphasis).

88. See Panchenko and Uspenskii, "Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 74–75.

89. See *Revelation*, 18:6 in which John describes the retribution against the Harlot.

90. See *Perepiska*, 41: "i siia ubo veste, za koe delo ezhe vostaste na mia i chto vasha nenavist' ko mne, . . . s milostiiu mest' vam vzdakh."

91. See I Corinthians 4. The *Oprichniki* are fulfilling in relationship to other "traitors" Ivan's threat against Kurbskii in *Perepiska*, 41, 52: "On ubo, gospod' bog nash Isus Khristos suditel' pravednyi, ispytaia serdtsa i utroby, i ashche pomyslil kto chto, i v megnovenii oka, vsia bo sut' naga i otversta pred nim, i nest' izhe ukryetsia ot ochiiu ego, vsia vedushchemu ubo tainaia i sokrovennaia; . . . oblichiiu tia i predstavliu pred litsem tvoim grekhi tvoia" (my emphasis).

92. Tradition denoted the Fool's function of cleansing by his conventional gesture of "sweeping out" with a broom (*vymetanie*). See Uspenskii and Panchenko, "Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 73. According to Uspenskii and Panchenko, tradition also applied this language to "pretenders" to sacred kingship who were ridding their kingdom of a corrupt ruling tsar. Ivan saw himself as a legitimate king who was simultaneously a fool, cleansing and exposing subjects who were illegitimate usurpers of "the beauty of his power."

At the same time that the *Oprichniki* embodied the Justice of the archangel and the Fool, they manifested the paradoxical Chastity of Holy Folly. In a display of "filthiness," they indulged in carnival-type "games," masquerades and blasphemies (*glumlenie*) which simultaneously disguised and actualized the redemptive power of their lowliness in Christ. The dogs' heads tied to their horses symbolized not only the pollution of their enemies turned against them in terrible Justice. In light of the Fool's penitential association with dogs in old Russian tradition they also symbolized "foolish" self-pollution. These grotesque adornments were symbols with "two edges," marking the *Oprichniki*'s atrocities as both instruments of higher Justice and of their own humiliation. The *Oprichniki*'s self-debasement, however, went beyond their identification with dogs or even with the "filth of the world": in the garb of devils, they masqueraded as "outcasts" from God's world (actualizing the cosmic sacral implications of Ivan's self-exile from Moscow immediately prior to the *Oprichnina*). Called "*kromeshniki*," agents of hell, their self-humiliation through masquerade was so extreme that they appeared as the "inverse" of their hidden selves and manifested good through evil.⁹³ Their dress represented a travesty, a provocative blasphemy which was meant as self-degradation. By likening themselves to the fallen angel, they expressed the radical humility which invested them with the archangel's power. Both the *Oprichniki*'s dress and the dogs' heads were symbols of contradiction peculiar to Folly: presenting themselves as the opposite of their true natures by indulging in carnival "games," they dramatized the "mystery" of God's "hidden wisdom."⁹⁴

The orgiastic triumphal feasts which followed the *Oprichniki*'s raids combined the same contradictions. On the one hand, they were implicitly associated with divine judgment, the apocalyptic Marriage Feast of the Lamb hosted by the Archangel Michael. On the other, they were a deliberate display of blasphemy and self-pollution: Ivan read passages

93. Panchenko and Uspenskii ("Ivan Groznyi i Petr Velikii," 73) note that Kurbskii attributed to the Metropolitan Filip the appellation "*kromeshniki*" for "*oprichniki*." On the association of fools and devils, see "*Smekhovoi mir*," 116–19. Dionysios the Areopagite contributed to the logic of interpreting the *Oprichniki*'s demonic garb as an "inversion" of the kenosis of Christ by stating that devils manifest a "weakness" [*nemozhenie*] which was a negative version of Christ's "weakness" (*nemoshch'*) and resulted from a deficit in their nature rather than its compassionate outpouring. "The evil in them is . . . a declension from their right condition; a failure, an imperfection, an impotence, a weakness (*nemozhenie*), loss and lapse of that power which would preserve perfection in them." See *The Divine Names*, 122; *VMCh*, 494: "zli zhe glagoliutsia nemoshchi radi v ezhe po est'stve deistva. Prevrashcheni ubo . . . i prikladnykh im iz'shestvie, i bezchinie, i nes' vershenie, i nemozhenie, i spasaiushchaia ezhe v nikh s' versheniya sily *nemoshch'* i obezhanie i otpadenie" (my emphasis).

94. As inherently good devils who appear evil, the *Oprichniki* revealed the Wisdom according to which devils are not "naturally evil . . . for they cannot destroy things which by their nature are indestructible And destruction itself is not evil in every case and under all circumstances." See Dionysios the Areopagite, *The Divine Names*, 120 (Chapt.IV, part 23); and *VMCh*, 491.

from the church fathers and the scriptures on fasting and self-restraint while his men overindulged themselves.⁹⁵ Like the Fool's penitential overindulgence in evil, these orgies were an inversion of the apocalyptic feast.

As extensions of Ivan's own mystical body in Christ, the *Oprichniki* moved in the same sacred spectrum as he himself: they were both monks and fools, depending on their degree of militancy. While at headquarters they dressed like monks and exercised monastic discipline, in harmony with the laws of the Church. When engaging in sacred warfare against their own and the "Land's" sin, they revealed their hidden likeness to archangel and Fool, which allowed them to trespass the limits of the law. In Ivan's eyes, their folly enabled them to actualize the messianic redemptive potential in their monkish natures.⁹⁶

In their militant apotheosis the *Oprichniki* were vehicles of the tsar's heightened sacredness in dialectical response to the breakdown of his reciprocity with his people. Ivan's correspondence with Kurbskii gives us a sense of this dialectic: the treachery of the boyars and others corrupted the mutual work of spiritual self-purification between tsar and people, thus casting Ivan upon his own resources. Their refusal to serve as "intercessors" for his own sin through suffering for his sake necessitated his radical self-humiliation and identification with the people in carnival "games." Their lack of humility necessitated his extreme humiliation of them by means of these same "games." One means of restoring his reciprocity with his prideful subjects was to turn them into humble servants of community in Christ by forcing them to become monks.⁹⁷ They would then share in the tsar's penitential work, which he believed made him himself like a monk. However, since he did not find his own monk-like chastity adequate to heal the rift in his community with his boyars, he demanded a more radical form of penitential suffering from them as well. The *Oprichnina* offered Ivan both a means of self-humiliation and a means to humiliate his persecutors; it was intended to overcome the division between them, redeem the kingdom and keep intact the "Chosen People's" covenant with God.

In 1572 Ivan expressed his faith in the higher goodness and justice of the *Oprichnina*, and the sense of the power he gained through radical humility when he escaped to Novgorod in fear of a second Tatar attack. The earlier rebuke of the Tatars when they had ravaged Moscow in 1571 was a sign of Ivan's special status in God's eyes as a defender of the faith; the fact that he saw the Tatars as the arm of God's justice against him was evident in his speech to the khan's ambassador as reported by a contemporary;

95. Likhachev and Panchenko, "*Smekhovoi mir*," 61.

96. Albert Schlichting describes the monastic regime of the *Oprichniki* in "A Brief Account," 232.

97. Ivan defends this practice in *Perepiska*, 17.

Tell the miscreant and unbeliever, thy master, it is not he; it is for my sins and the sins of my people against my God and Christ; he it is that has given him, a *limb of Satan*, the power and the opportunity to be the instrument of my rebuke, by whose pleasure and grace I doubt not of revenge, and to make him my vassal or long be (emphasis mine).⁹⁸

Other texts which he is purported to have written while in Novgorod—his “Canon and Prayer to the Dreadful Angel General” and his “Testament”—indicate that Ivan conceived of this period as a time of reckoning for himself, a kind of rehearsal for the Last Judgment. The self-assuredness conveyed in the “Canon” and “Testament” must also be understood as compensatory responses to the existential crisis which the paranoid tsar must have experienced as he waited to see whether his faith in his higher mission would in fact be justified by his ultimate deliverance from the Tatars. This crisis led Ivan to crystallize in these works the hierarchy of the archetypes and dominant symbols of Wisdom theology, whose power he felt he was manifesting during the *Oprichnina*.

In the “Canon,” Ivan pleaded before the Archangel Michael for his worthiness to be spared a brutal death and implicitly justified his works, which now included the martyrdom of the Metropolitan Filip and the rape of Novgorod. The pseudonym “*Parfenyi iurodivyi*” shows that his “works” should be understood in the Wisdom language of paradox: “*iurodivyi*” in Russian means Holy Fool and “*Parfenyi*” means “chaste” or “virgin” in Greek. “Fool” implied that Ivan’s recent atrocities were penitential, while “virgin” implied that he had indeed purified his human nature through his folly and was deserving of resurrection after death. He thus explicitly attributed his penitential overindulgence and self-pollution to the chastity of a holy fool and intimated his participation in Divine Wisdom. The rest of the text dramatizes the dialectic between purity and pollution implicit in his pseudonym. While explicitly arguing that he deserved a “gentle death” (because he was pure), he emphasized his “weakness” and self-pollution. His penitential self-degradation earned him the right to appeal to the Mother of God, whose unconditional mercy and intercession for the radical evil in mankind made her the patron of holy fools. He invoked the larger community in Adam and in Christ, with which he had identified in his folly, to pray for the redemption of his body after death. The forgiveness granted him for any excesses in his folly for their sake would assure his resurrection, compensating for his boyars’ and clergy’s lack of charity to him as a man. Through the intercession of the Mother of God and all Christians, he believed his angelic body would attain the likeness of the archangel himself, his patron and intercessor. In Ivan’s

98. Although he wrote in Elizabethan English, Jerome Horsey nevertheless seems to faithfully reflect the sense of the tsar’s actual words, since his reported speech manifests the mode of thinking evident in Ivan’s earlier actions and writings. See his “Travels” in *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom*, 274.

own capacity as intercessor-saint, he would “stand before” the community of the chosen people in its march towards victory. He had enumerated in his correspondence with Kurbskii the hierarchy of intercessors “standing before” Christians which mediated between them and the Trinity by way of pious “tsars”:

For we Christians acknowledge as standing before us the triune God-head, knowledge of which we have gained through Jesus Christ our God, and also through the intercessor for the Christians, who was worthy to be the mother of the God Christ, the most pure virgin, and then standing before us are all the heavenly powers, archangels and angels, for the Archangel Michael stood before Moses and Joshua the son of Nun and all Israel; he also stood invisibly before the first Christian tsar, Constantine, in the piety of his newly gained grace. The Archangel Michael moved before his army and defeated *all his enemies*, and from that time even until the present day he aids all pious tsars (emphasis mine).⁹⁹

In his “Canon” Ivan identified himself with this hierarchy manifesting the Trinity. Through his holy folly, which gave him the likeness of Jesus Christ, he communed with the Mother of God and the Archangel Michael. He thus implied both his sense of election, of participation in the army of the Lord of Hosts moving through sacred history to fulfill the providence in the Word, and his faith that he would ultimately be victorious over *all* enemies (internal and external). He implicitly justified his actions against his internal “enemies” during the *Oprichnina* in the same terms as his ideologists justified his campaign against the Tatar Khanate of Kazan’ in 1552, i.e., as a pivotal moment in the progression of his chosen people to the New Jerusalem. His deliverance from a violent death at the hands of the Tatars, for which he was now praying to the archangel, would validate his interpretation of the *Oprichnina* as a manifestation of the higher Justice and Providence of the archangel, his patron.

While pleading in the “Canon” that the paradigm Chaste/Justice inspired his atrocities—in which Chastity was associated with the Holy Fool and the Mother of God, and Justice with the archangel—Ivan did not need to specify his participation in the Word in Trinity. It was implicit in his dramatization of the oppositions defining his dual nature, and the Word implicitly stood behind and subsumed all the others to whom he appealed. Ivan was, after all, pleading for intercession with the Word, his implicit mirror image, the highest paradigm of his

99. See *Perepiska*, 36. “My zhe ubo, khristiiane, znaem predstateli trichislennoe bozhestvo, v ne zhe poznanie privedeni bykhom *Isus Khristom* bogom nashim, tako zhe zastupnitsu khristianskuiu, spodobl’shusia byti mati Khrista boga, *prechistuiu bogoroditsu*; i potom predstateli imeem vsia nebesnyia sily, arkhaggeli, i aggeli, iako zhe Moiseiii predstatel’ byst’ *Mikhail arkhaggel*, Iisusu Navginu i vsemu Izrailiu; ta zhe vo blagochestie novei blagodati pervomu khristianskomu tsariu, Konstantinu, nevidimo predstatel’ *Mikhail arkhaggel* pred polkom khozhdashe i vsia vragi ego pobezhdashe, i ottole dazhe i donyne vsem blagochestivym tsarem posobstvuet” (my emphasis).

sacred nature. His evocation of Michael as "wise" also inserted into his text the dominant symbol of Wisdom, which was inherent in the symbol of the Word and which united under its aegis Fool and archangel, the Mother of God and the providential Christian community.¹⁰⁰

When addressing his sons in expectation of his death in the "Testament," Ivan did make explicit the dominant symbol of Wisdom inherent both in his dual nature in Christ and in the symbolism surrounding the *Oprichnina*; at the same time, he left his holy folly implicit in paradox. Prior to discussing his divine "power," he described his "weakness":

I was stripped of the raiment of shelter of grace and was left half dead of wounds, . . . but more than seeing can show, still alive, but, because of my sordid actions, worse to God than a stinking and abominable corpse which the priest sees but does not heed, and even the Levite with aversion passed me by. Indeed from Adam to this day I have surpassed all sinners in unlawfulness, [and] because of this I am hated by all . . . But what then shall I do, for Abraham will not know us, Isaac will not be cognizant of us, and Israel will not recognize us!¹⁰¹

Just as he was the most lost of the lost sheep, the worst of sinners, he was an outcast to sacred history, shunned by Israel and by God.¹⁰²

As one would expect, the radical nature of his penitential evil and degradation endowed Ivan with correspondingly cosmic, providential significance: his humiliation was a sign of his election, a foolish form of Martyrdom numbering him among the chosen. In his "Testament" Ivan refers to his sins as "*glumlenie*" as if to emphasize that they were indeed a carnival masquerade hiding the higher Wisdom of Martyrdom. His hidden wisdom is also evoked in the "Testament" by a series of paradoxes: rejected by Christians and Jews alike, and even by God, Ivan was all the more a son of God. He included passages from Wisdom tradition, the Old Testament Book of Proverbs which associated him

100. For lack of space, I have not discussed the central importance of the Mother of God in the theology of Wisdom, her presence in the icons about Divine Wisdom which I have discussed, or her significance for Ivan's understanding of his own sacredness.

101. *Testaments*, 307–9; the Russian can be found on 155–57: "No pache nezheli vozmnitisia vidiashchim, no ashche i zhiv, no bogu skarednymi svoimi dely pache mertvetsa smradneishii i gnusneishii, ego zhe ierei videv, ne vniat, Levit i toi vozgnushavsia, preminu mne. Ponezhe ot Adama i do sogo dni vsek preminukh v bezzakoniakh sogreshivshikh, sogo radi vsemi nenavidim esm' . . . ubiistva, i bluda, i vsiakago zлаго delaniia . . . i *inkh nepodobnykh glumlenii* . . . no chto ubo sotvoriu, ponezhe Avraam ne uvede nas, Isaak ne razume nas, i Izrail' ne pozna nas" (my emphasis).

102. Ivan was implicitly taking on himself Kurbskii's accusation that he "was destroying the strong in Israel." He first presented and then refuted Kurbskii's accusation in *Perepiska*, 26: "ne vem, kto est' sil'neishii vo Izraili, ponezhe bo Russkaia zemlia pravitsia bozhiim miloserdiiem, i prechistye bogoroditsy milostiiu, i vsekh sviatkh molitvami, i roditelei nashikh blagosloveniem, i posledi nami, svoimi gosudari."

with Divine Wisdom by whom "kings reign and princes decree justice." Masquerading as an outsider to history, he in fact embodied the Idea of the Father as it is manifest in the Son and realized in history by just kings.¹⁰³

The introduction to the "Testament" concludes by laying bare the device by which Ivan manifested the Wisdom entitling him to teach his sons: the dialectic between his self-denigration and his attainment of the knowledge of Christ. In the spirit of St. Paul he wrote: "Because of this [his manifestation of Wisdom], I offer advice to you, my children, inasmuch as I have, from my miserable state [*ubozhestvo*], understanding [*razum*], grace, and God's gift."¹⁰⁴ This passage, the inverse of Ivan's earlier self-presentation, is reminiscent of 2 Corinthians 11: 6, 7 and 22-23:

But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge [*razum*]; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things. Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted . . . Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a Fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes (wounds) above measure . . ."¹⁰⁵

This passage from St. Paul expressed clearly that magnified connection with the Divine which Ivan achieved through his magnified self-abasement (and his experience of this dialectic as Folly in Christ). In an implicit subtext to his evocation of his "understanding in Christ," he referred "through negation" to his own uniqueness. This passage "thoroughly made manifest" the election which entitled Ivan to go beyond tradition in his actualization of the paradoxical unity of Christ's divine/human natures.

The "Testament" also makes explicit the dominant symbol, Wisdom, whose plenitude Ivan believed he manifested in amplified form by paradoxically combining weakness and strength. The dialectic between his sonship and fatherhood in God, and between his "miserable state" (*ubozhestvo*) and his "understanding" (*razum*) in his "Testament" is analogous to the dialectic between his chaste pollution and his likeness to the "wise" archangel in the "Canon": as the means to Ivan's

103. He cited passages associating Wisdom with himself as teacher and king: Proverbs 1:20-21, 8:1-4, and 3:14-15. The importance of Proverbs for Wisdom theology and iconography in the Byzantine and Muscovite contexts is generally recognized. See Florovskii, "O pochitanii Sofii," 485. Meyendorff ("L'Iconographie de la Sagesse Divine," 259-66) describes the tradition identifying Wisdom, as revealed in Proverbs 9:1-5, with the Word.

104. This is my translation which differs from Howes. See *Testaments*, 157: "Sego radi i az predlagaiu ucheniia, eliko moi est' razum, ot ubozhestva moego, chadtsa moia, blagodat' i bozhii dar vam."

105. "Ashche bo i nevezhdza slovom, no ne razumom: no vezde iavl'shesia ot vsem v vas. Ili grekh sotvorikh sebe smiriaia, da vy voznesetesia . . . Evree li sut'; i az. . . Semia avraamle li sut'; i az. Sluzhitelie li khristovy sut'; ne v mudrosti glagoliu, pache az. V trudekh mnozhae, v ranakh prebole" (my emphasis). See *Bibliia*.

full identification with the Word as Wisdom, his folly in Christ fulfilled the messianic implications of his kingship.

Ivan's decision to dismantle the *Oprichnina* suggests that he believed that the *Oprichniki* had not succeeded in justifying themselves to him (or by implication, to God): their inefficacy in cleansing themselves and the "Land" of sin had made necessary God's chastisement of Muscovy by means of the Tatars. And the ultimate defeat of the Tatars by the armies of the *Zemshchina* (the Land) underscored the *Oprichniki*'s loss of God's grace and providence. Ivan indicated his personal transcendence of the *Oprichniki* by mirroring his previous actions: just as he had separated himself from, punished and purified the "Land" by setting up the new administrative order of the *Oprichnina*, he dismantled the *Oprichnina* by separating himself from it and setting up a new administrative order. He did so consistent with the apocalyptic logic of divine Justice which had informed his actions during the *Oprichnina*: since the *Oprichniki* allowed Moscow to be ravaged by the Tatars, Ivan set a Tatar, Simeon Bekbulatovich, on the throne to administer their downfall.¹⁰⁶ This Tatar in Ivan's service was a symbolic "arm of Satan," just as the Tatars had been demonic servants of God chastising Russia for her sins. Christianized but still Tatar, he was an avenging "angel" in the disguise of the fallen one, a sacred devil set upon the "devils" of the *Oprichnina* who had lost their sacredness. As such, Bekbulatovich manifested the power of the archangel in the degraded form characteristic of Holy Folly just as the *Oprichniki* earlier had done. The tsar was the higher power behind the Archangel-Bekbulatovich, analogous to the transcendent Word; but he enacted a kind of kenosis: evincing the humility of the Fool, he presented himself as a mere man, an ordinary noble and obedient slave of Bekbulatovich. The latter's punishments and changes served Ivan's higher justice which derived from his Christ-like humility before the Land. Together in folly, he and Bekbulatovich symbolized the two sides of the tsar's human/divine nature as an interdependent "system" for healing the community through the Wisdom of the Word. His use of a Tatar to dismantle the *Oprichnina* once it had become a source of internal pollution was a symbolic closure of the official and personal systems that justified his violence.¹⁰⁷

106. Skrynnikov (*Ivan the Terrible*, 162–71) discusses the "reign" of Bekbulatovich as a period when the "tsar destroyed the group of boyars that dominated the oprichnina in its last phase."

107. Symbolically, the victory over Kazan' marked Muscovy as a "world" empire, the last in the succession of kingdoms moving sacred history to its end (see M. B. Pliukhanova, "Kazan' i tsar'grad. O montazhe istochnikov v 'Kazanskoi istorii,'" in *Montazh: Literatura, iskusstvo, teatr, kino* [Moscow: Nauka, 1988], 190–213). The actions of the *Oprichnina* made Muscovy worthy of her "external" status by cleansing her internally so that she remained a vehicle of grace. Thus the *Oprichnina* symbolically contributed to the process of the assumption of messianic status associated with the victory over Kazan'. This justified Ivan's applying the same set of symbols to both and also to the dismantling of the *Oprichnina* by the tsar and Bekbulatovich, after he transferred the function of insuring Muscovy's sacred inviolability from the *Oprichniki* to the armies of the Land.

Thus Ivan's interpretations of himself and his actions from the beginning to the end of the *Oprichnina* represent a coherent system analogous to the Wisdom interpretation of the tsar's "two bodies" in Christ. His first epistle to Kurbskii at the beginning of the period portrays his "strength in weakness" and includes intimations of the paradigm of Holy Folly which, together with his identification with the Archangel Michael, justified his actions. His ability to adapt his personal mythology of his duality in Christ to his circumstances, and to use it to justify both the creation and dismantling of the *Oprichnina* indicates its compensation for his paranoia. In response to criticism, he justified himself by interpreting himself as a heightened form of the organic unity of the state, as a part equal to and condensing the energy of the whole. In so doing, he proved himself a master myth-maker, defining his own sacredness by analogy to the higher paradigms of Christian myth elaborated by his official ideologists to express the messianic concept of state and tsar.

By creating a myth in which he was an "end in himself" Ivan gained a sense of control and reduced his anxiety. By incorporating it into the dialectic of his dual nature in Christ, he rendered coherent a world made threatening and unmanageable by paranoid delusions of betrayal by his own people and by foreign invasion. When his enemies' false judgments humiliated him, he countered their power over him by humiliating himself further, thereby humiliating and exposing them. His enemies were compelled to acknowledge their own sins when they confronted Ivan's wrath—which they had refused to forgive. Through Holy Folly, he thus transformed their judgments of him from unbearable threats to catalysts of their mutual renewal. Combined with his likeness to the Archangel of Death and Providence, Holy Folly provided him a structure by which to interpret the machinations of his enemies as an impetus to the realization of his higher purpose of redeeming his kingdom and the world.

Ivan superseded traditional concepts of the tsar's sanctity and made himself a moral absolute by balancing his official likeness to the archangel with his likeness to the Fool in Christ. Both polarities of his dual nature in Christ were manifest through paradox: his model of his divinity in Christ emphasized the paradoxical nature of violence; his model for his humanity in Christ inversely emphasized the paradoxical nature of his suffering. Overall, his likeness to Christ emphasized his transcendence of normal worldly wisdom, his hidden essence. It indicated that Ivan could violate God's laws for the world while manifesting a higher truth and Justice and retaining his spiritual superiority over others.

While Ivan IV's personal mythology of kingship was creative and even innovative, it was in keeping with the spirit of his time and revealed him to be a man of his age. His mythology was an extension of the laws underlying the official mythology of kingship and the state, a pre-existing symbolism of Divine Wisdom—its symmetries, oppositions and inversions. In this sense, my examination of Ivan IV's personal

mythology is a case study (albeit in the context of a pathology) of the Muscovite medieval mind. It illuminates the symbolic processes which Muscovites could utilize to cope with personal and social stresses and to assert their identities. The same is true of Ivan's ritualization of his violence. Natalie Zemon Davis's analysis of the "rites of violence" in sixteenth century France suggests an interpretation of Ivan's "rites of violence" as a "normative" phenomenon characteristic of early modern culture.¹⁰⁸ Although Davis acknowledges that the mob violence she describes must have been an outlet for personal pathologies, she sees it as more related to the "normal" than the pathological because it "connects intimately with the fundamental values and self-definitions of a community."¹⁰⁹ Ivan IV legitimized the "mob violence" of his *Oprichniki* by integrating it with his sacral status as defined by an elite community of ideologists. Just as, according to Davis, the mob violence in sixteenth century France had a "structure" derived from the current store of punitive and purificatory traditions, Ivan's atrocities and blasphemies also exhibited a structure drawn from both Christian and folk tradition.¹¹⁰ These actions were not expressions of inchoate, brute

108. See Natalie Z. Davis, "The Rites of Violence," *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 152–89. Ivan's Muscovy can be considered "early modern" in its transition from a "feudal" appanage system to a centralized state. According to Davis (156) the French "rites of violence" were attempts at "purification" in response to the population's sense of ritual pollution reflected in the split between the Protestants and the Catholics. The desire for purification and to assert proper trinitarian dogma against heresy was a central motivating force of the ideological establishment which provided Ivan with the religious paradigms sacralizing his violence. Ivan's own desire to assert his legitimacy and to cleanse the kingdom of "heretics" such as Andrei Kurbskii motivated him to interpret his acts during the *Oprichnina* by analogy to the purificatory power of the Word. The Church's concern with establishing ritual purity and right dogma was evidenced by the Stoglav Council, the trial of the "heretic" Bashkin in 1553, the Viskovatyi affair, the writings of Ermolai Erazm, especially his "Kniga o troitse," and the explicitly dogmatic icons and frescoes such as the four-part icon mentioned above. See Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair," 300–1 and especially his extensive bibliography; on Ermolai Erazm, see Pliukhanova's forthcoming article on "The Tale of Peter and Fevroniia," in *Annali Slavistica*. Podobedova (*Moskovskaia shkola zhivopisi*, 32, on the basis of an analysis of the iconography of the Kremlin Cathedral of the Archangel Michael) suggests how the desire to establish ritual purity through dogmatic icons and frescoes was intimately connected with the cult of the tsar and with the articulation of national identity. In opposition to the French people, whose violence was often structured as a response to the failure of the government to exercise justice and purify the society (according to Davis, *ibid.*, 165–69), Ivan conceived of his violence as an act of justice in response to what he believed was the failure of his people to purify themselves and him through expiatory humility and thus to serve the government.

109. Davis, "Rites of Violence," 186.

110. Davis (*ibid.*, 178–80) notes that rites of violence were frequently borrowed from the repertory of folk justice and had comic or carnival overtones which served the purpose of humiliation. She describes a case in which a "priest was ridden backward on an ass" and required to crush his host and burn his own vestments at the end of his ride, calling to mind the punishment of Archbishop Pimen of Novgorod mentioned in footnote 1. Davis (172–73) also notes that the aggressors could themselves use a carnival situation as the occasion for purificatory violence, wearing various

force, as Dan Rowland has argued. Instead, as Panchenko and Uspenskii have remarked, they were rationalized within the official interpretation of his divine nature in Christ. However, as Cherniavskii indicated, Ivan's divine nature existed in a relationship with his human nature. His interpretation of his humanity in Christ was the lynchpin of his whole mythological system and its function of self-justification. Although it is true, as Likhachev and Panchenko have pointed out, that Ivan articulated his violence in folk language, this language was a subdominant and symmetrical system within Holy Folly, the Wisdom language of his humanity in Christ.

This elucidation of Ivan's personal mythology also indirectly addresses the "intellectual silence" of Muscovy which has long vexed scholarship. At the heart of this silence is a paucity of expository works explicating the values and assumptions of Muscovite tradition.¹¹¹ There are no writings which logically expound the doctrines of Wisdom theology or of Christ's dual nature, or which codify the ideology of sacred kingship and the state. Connected with this lack are questions of the literacy, and level of education and sacred knowledge in the society. How can we assume that Ivan had access to the sophisticated and elaborate set of assumptions which I believe informed his personal mythology? How (in the absence of reliable textual evidence) can we know that he was even literate, whether he wrote or dictated to his scribes texts which reflected a deep acquaintance with Christian tradition? Or that he read (or had read to him) those theological works, such as the writings of Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite in Macarius's Great Book of Hours for Reading, which underlay the official ideology of kingship, and which I propose informed the symbolism of the *Oprichnina*? I suggest that the answers to these questions are articulated in ritual and myth, and in an aesthetic vision of the world in icons as well as narrative texts.

Muscovite tradition was articulated in representations and narratives which identified part and whole, as did Divine Providence in Wisdom theology. The wide range of meanings of these narratives which gave form to the world and to thought were derived by analogy. Identity was not formalized logically but analogically, i.e., in the language of the sacred. Meaning was implicit: it was condensed in sacred symbols and in the structure of its sacred narratives. It became explicit only when it was evoked experientially, by a concrete situation such as imputed heresy, betrayal or other definitive moments involving the legitimization of the state.

As chief participant in the ritual and myths sacralizing the state, Ivan absorbed their inherent structure of meaning experientially. He

types of masks. She writes (185) that the "zeal for violent purification led to new organizations." Similarly, Ivan's desire to purify his kingdom led to its bifurcation into the *Oprichnina* and the *Zemshchina*.

111. See George Florovskii, "The Problem of Old Russian Culture," *Slavic Review* 21, no. 1 (March 1962): 1-15.

did not necessarily have to be a scholar or to read Dionysios the Areopagite to understand these structures: he was surrounded by Wisdom theology's dynamic of revelation in iconographic and narrative texts. To use a musical analogy, it is possible that he could play the piece (i.e., recapitulate the structures of meaning) without necessarily reading the individual notes (the sources). Not only could he "play by ear," he could improvise. However, the evidence suggests that Ivan could read. His reply to the apostle of the Bohemian Brethren, Ivan Rokyta, in 1570 has come down to us in a sixteenth century manuscript and its authenticity has been corroborated by foreign sources. It is testimony to Ivan's broad knowledge of sacred texts, which he rephrased by memory, and of his understanding of essential dogmas.¹¹² One who had so deeply internalized sacred knowledge would likely have internalized the poetics of revelation mediating between the hidden God and himself as tsar in Muscovite Wisdom tradition and would have been able to compose his own text.

Acknowledgment of Ivan's personal mythology of kingship as a "normative" rather than exceptional phenomenon has broad implications. In the name of community, Ivan's mythology of kingship justified a form of government in which the sovereign was completely identified with the state, was an end in himself and his own judge. Ivan's inner dynamic, meant to heal both tsar and people, in fact set in motion a vicious cycle of escalating violence. On the one hand, Ivan's mythology created a wholeness of self by resolving the conflict between his inherited Christian morality, his pagan blasphemies and his inner impulses; on the other, it justified the destruction of his society. His myth of his reciprocal relationship with his people which confirmed to him his nature as a moral absolute had dire consequences for his own time and established a woeful precedent for later Russian history.

112. See V. A. Tumins, *Tsar Ivan IV's Reply to Jan Rokyta* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971). If one accepts the authenticity of Ivan's first epistle to Kurbskii, it gives evidence that Ivan knew the works of the Pseudo-Areopagite in the *Velikie minei chet'i*. See *Poslaniia Ivana Groznogo*, 531-32.



PLATE 1

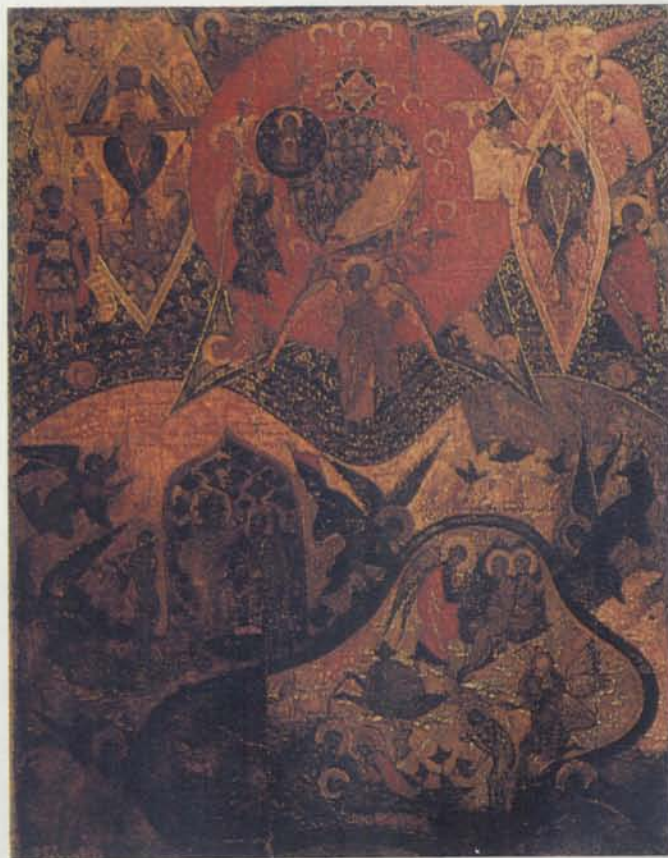


PLATE 2



PLATE 3