

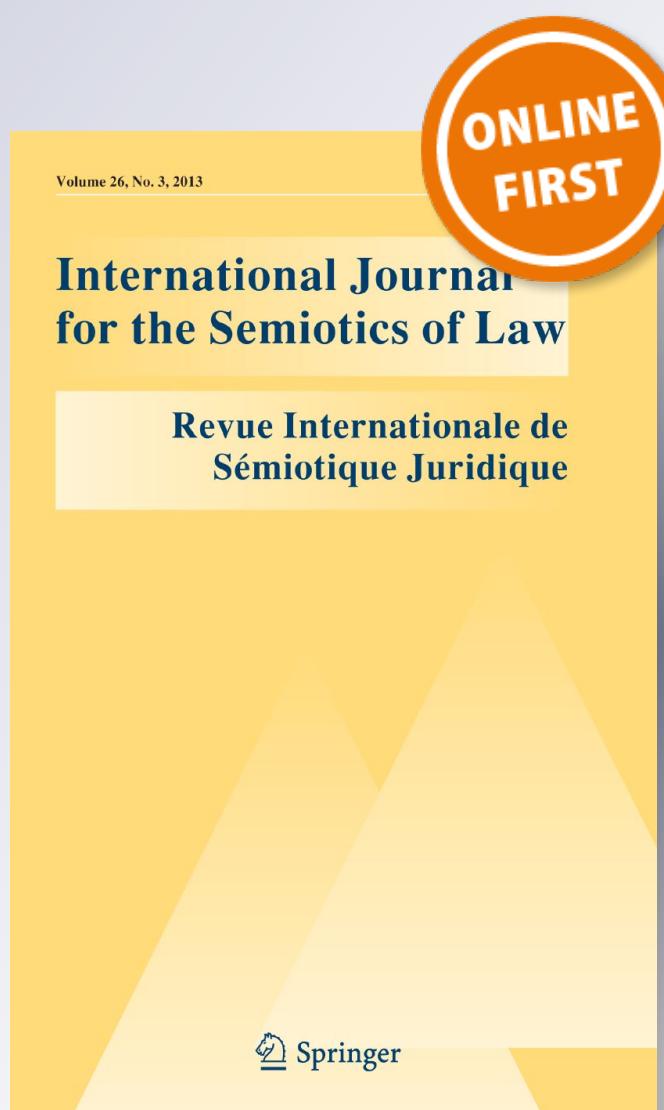
*The Historical Basis for the Understanding
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Based on Analysis of Components in the
Concept of a State, Established Between the
Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*

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The Historical Basis for the Understanding of a State in Modern Russia: A Case Study Based on Analysis of Components in the Concept of a State, Established Between the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

Natalia P. Koptseva¹  · Alexandra A. Sitnikova¹ 

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Abstract Using semiotic and historical methods, the article recovers the ancient Russian concept of ‘state’, which appeared and gained a foothold in the Russian social and cultural space in the fourteen and fifteenth centuries. In the authors’ opinions, this content has determined the basic features for understanding the State in modern post-Soviet Russian society to date. Accordingly, it is important to reassemble the main conceptual threads in the ‘state’ concept during the epoch of Ivan the Terrible, the Muscovite Tsar, the epoch when the ‘state’ concept gained a foothold in Russian political culture. To re-establish the content of the ‘state’ concept, a historical description, an etymological and comparative analysis of this concept, as well as content analysis of the first epistle from Tsar Ivan the Terrible to Duke Andrei Kurbsky were employed. As a result, it was possible to recover the aspects of the ‘state’ concept that continue to be reproduced in post-Soviet Russian culture and predetermine certain elements of modern Russia’s political outlook. This concerns the central role of the ‘sovereign ruler’ in the State, the ideal of the ideological unity, the State’s mission of mediation between man and God, the hierarchy of the State and the sacral role of the ruler at the peak of this hierarchy.

Keywords Semiotic analysis · The concept of “state” · Ancient Russian history · Ivan the Terrible · Content analysis · Etymological analysis

1 Introduction

The research into the Russian concept of “state” emerges from the problem of using the word “state” in contemporary Russian political, philosophical, and cultural discourses. Even though a great number of scientific definitions for the meaning of

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“state” exist, the exact meaning of this word as it is used in oral or written speech often remains completely unknown, this not only applies to everyday language but also in spheres of life where the word “state” is a fundamental term: politics and philosophy. The word “state” is an active component of the modern lexis, employed in everyday speech. With this view in mind, the following task has been set in the research: to specifically define the phenomenon which was called “state” in Ancient Rus’, and to determine whether the ancient Russian conceptual representations of a state correspond with the modern ones. It is necessary to answer the question about what conceptual meaning is held in the word “state”, which is reproduced in modern post-Soviet Russia.

A study of the concept of “state” as a specific national and cultural phenomenon requires the justification of its importance to national culture. The topicality of the concept of “state” for Russian culture is in itself tangible: the word is fairly common, often used in everyday speech and in socio-political texts (especially newspapers). In order to determine the relevance of this conceptual research based not only on perceptions, it is worth referring to data from The Frequency Dictionary of The Russian Language [1], where the word “state” is the sixty-third most popular noun (out of forty thousand words) in the Russian language (the rank of the word “state” in the word frequency dictionary is specified excluding prepositions and pronouns, which definitely lead in the overall frequency list). The word “state” appears most commonly in newspapers and magazines texts (138 out of 460 cases of use), to the same extent in drama, academic, and journalistic texts, and least often in literary texts (5 out of 460 cases of use). Therefore, the word “state” is one of the keywords in Russian culture. Moreover, as it is indicated in The Frequency Dictionary, the word “state” is a keyword in journalistic, documentary, and official discourses. Overall, this specific nature of the word “state” conforms with the fact that a state is traditionally regarded as a political, diplomatic, economic, and historical concept, and is far less frequently presented as a cultural one. From this perspective, it is necessary to define what it means to consider the concept of “state” as a specific concept from Russian culture (rather than a political or economical one for instance). The answer is derived from the definition of the concept, where the concept is situations typical of the national culture that exist in the individual’s mental world and reify themselves in a language. The definitions of the word “state” itself are also of importance: “The State is a political form of social organization” [2], “the State is to be compared with: tsardom, empire, kingdom, land, country ruled by a monarch” [3].

Thus, to understand the concept of “state” as a specific cultural concept means to consider “state” as a typically Russian idea about a form of societal organization, a typically Russian idea about what a country must be, as the word “state” is enshrined in the Russian language in verbal and visual texts. The aim of the conceptual study of the “state” also includes revising the fact of relativity in the representation of a state; the cross-cultural study indicates that the representation of a state in the Russian national mentality is predicated by the development of Russian culture and is not the only possible one. The cross-cultural study is designated to focus on the possibility of another conceptual meaning of the cultural phenomenon.

The objective of this study is to reveal, on the basis of semiotic analysis of the concept of “state”, the substance of the given concept at the time of its appearance in ancient Russian history, and to find the historical basis for the modern understanding of a state in the post-Soviet Russian collective consciousness.

The concept of “state” in the ancient Russian culture will be studied. In addition, the reasons for this study’s focus on the understanding of the “state” concept specifically in ancient culture must be clarified, rather than, in the Soviet period for example. This research studies the concept of “state” in ancient Russian culture due to the fact that the period between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is when the word “state” emerged, and is therefore the time of cultural and political phenomena; the occurrences which were given a new name: the “state”.

Unlike “tsardom” or “autocracy” for example, the word “state” has not turned into a historical phenomenon, and continues to be the most topical word in modern Russian discourse. It can be assumed that Russian culture preserved conceptual ideas about a “state”, which originate from the times of Ancient Rus’ in the era of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

This statement is underpinned by a number of academic studies. Thus, in 2009, the results were obtained from the associations experiment completed by one of the authors of this article, Alexandra Sitnikova, following the “Themed associations series” methodology on the “state” among 204 students of the Siberian Federal University (Krasnoyarsk Territory, Russia) in the first through to the fourth year of study. The word “state” was the stimulus for generating various associations. Modern Russian respondents most common reactions to the word “state” were recorded in the experiment’s results, which identified a number of consistent associations and showed the popularity of a response to a factor of at least 70 (1/3) respondents (the number of questionnaires which contain this association are indicated in parentheses; hyphenation provides the popularity of this association in 204 questionnaires in percentage): president (121)—59.3%, power (104)—50.9%, laws (93)—45.5%, politics (84)—41.1%, country (77)—37.7%, rights (73)—35.7%.

The personality of the head of state has the largest number of associations—59.3%. In addition to the idea of “president”, it is possible to specify a number of additional associations indicating the relationship of the concept of “state” with the personality of the ruler (the number of questionnaires is indicated in parentheses, where such associations appeared): president (121), tsar (30), Putin (30), Medvedev (18), sovereign (17), ruler (14), Ivan the Terrible (7), Peter I (7), Lenin (7), monarch (6), Stalin (6), Yeltsin (5), king (5), head (4), leader (3), emperor (3), the Queen of England (2), the head of state (2), queen (2). Overall, analysed over a thousand of words associations were analyzed. The research allows the conclusion to be made that the majority of the state’s characteristics in modern students’ views would still differ from the ancient Russian understanding of the state. And only one feature remains constant: the understanding of the concentration of state power in the personality of the ruler, contemporarily—in the personality of a president. Further studies will either confirm or clarify this conclusion [4–6].

2 Literature Overview

The historical era and personality of Ivan the Terrible (1530–1584) has repeatedly attracted the attention of many researchers. Among the monographs and scholarly articles it is worth highlighting works by such authors as Isabel De Madariaga @ @ [7], Robert Payne, and Nikita Romanoff [8], Boris Floria [9], Dwyer, Michael G., Juan J. Campo, and Kerry J. Kessler [10], Anne Fine [11], Maureen Perrie [12, 13], and Andrei Pavlov [14], Ian Grey [15], Michael Cherniavsky [16], and many others. Ivan the Terrible was one of the key figures in the historical concepts developed by the founders of Russian history: Nikolay Karamzin (1766–1826) [17], Sergey Solovyov (1820–1879) [18], and Vasilii Klyuchevsky (1841–1911) [19]. The era and actions of Ivan the Terrible are often compared with those of Joseph Stalin [12, 20–22, et other]. These researchers note the great significance of Ivan the Terrible's reign for subsequent Russian historical eras, and particularly emphasize the similarities between Ivan the Terrible's mindset and Stalinism, between the period of this tsar's reign and the culminations of the Stalinist era. In the context of this study, it is important that Ivan the Terrible as an archetypal figure in Russian history has been stressed repeatedly (at least for its Stalinist period). The idea has been perpetuated among modern Russian historians that the reign of Ivan the Terrible marks the beginning of a specific period in the Russian State related to the coronation of the first tsar on the Muscovite Tsar's throne [23–26, et other].

The etymological method applied for the historical and cultural research of certain concepts proves to be one of the most widespread methods of research, and is currently an element of the modern comparative method. The contemporary significance of the etymological analysis is studied by such authors as Marko Snoj [27], Anatoly Liberman [28], Walter Skeat [29], and other prominent linguists. For the purposes of this study, etymological analysis is important to establish the origin of the concept of “state” during the period between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, based on the comparison of state with the terms “tsardom”, “land”, and some others.

Tsar Ivan the Terrible's correspondence with Duke Andrei Kurbsky is a relic of ancient Russian literature. Despite the fact that Edward L. Keenan [30] questioned the authenticity of authorship of both Ivan the Terrible and Andrei Kurbsky, most historians refused to accept this version and consider that these texts are authentic documents of European publicism from the sixteenth century [31–34].

Thus, preliminary literature review has revealed that the reign of Ivan the Terrible is considered important for understanding the dynamics of the Russian historical world view. The summary of research conducted by way of content analysis was described in article Natalia P. Koptseva, Vladimir S. Luzan, Veronica A. Razumovskaya, Vladimir I. Kirko [35], which can be referred to on this topic. The study will detail brief reviews of academic researches on specific aspects of the problem being studied.

3 Materials and Methods

The study of the concept of “state” in the Russian culture is based on the following methodological model: the etymology of the word “state”, analysis of historical events that have determined the specificity for the understanding of a state in Russian culture, cross-cultural research, content analysis of the text in the epistle from Tsar Ivan IV to Duke Andrei Kurbsky, the interpretation of the results of the study, and the dictionary definition of the “state” concept in Russian culture. This study will not offer a separate justification for the content analysis, and is fully focused on the study of the “state” concept in the culture of Ancient Rus’ as a space of the initial (base) formation of this concept in Russian culture, which influences the post-Soviet socio-cultural understanding of a state. The application of content analysis to Ivan the Terrible’s first epistle to Duke Andrei Kurbsky allows us to expand historical ideas about a state and to identify the content of this concept from the Ivan the Terrible’s world view, who was not only a tsar and a statesman, but to a certain extent also a thinker who has revealed his original world view in this correspondence.

4 The Concept of “State” in Ancient Russian Culture: The Etymology of the Word “State” and Historical Analysis of this Concept

Before proceeding to consider the concept of “state” in Russian culture, it is necessary to identify a somewhat common understanding of a “state”. As a state is clearly not just a nation-defined perception of the given existent phenomenon, but also has some stable properties that exist in almost every culture. It is proposed to distinguish between the idealistic understanding of “state” formed in the fields of philosophy, politics, economics, and understanding of “state” as it exists in people’s mental representations, that is the concept of “state”. From a policy perspective, a state is a primary political institution created within a particular territory through the use of an apparatus of power, whose decisions are binding for the whole society; society’s socio-political organization. A state as an economic entity is an aggregate of bodies and individuals that have accumulated economic power in their hands, and make economic decisions on a state scale, administering state property. The philosophical understanding of a state has been expanded since ancient times, and it is known that many philosophers formed an idea of a state, for instance Plato, Aristotle, T. Hobbes, et al. G.W.F. Hegel is the author of one of the main philosophical concepts of a state. According to Hegel, the State is the Spirit existing in the world (*Weltgeist*) which is characterized by a self-consciousness. “The Idea of the State is itself divided into three moments: (a) the immediate actuality of the State and is an individual state as in a self-dependent organism, system of government, or Constitutional Law; (b) the relation of states to other states in International Law; (c) the universal Idea as a genus and as an absolute power over individual states—the mind which gives itself its actuality in the process of World-History (...) The state in its actuality is essentially an individual state, and beyond

that a particular state. Individuality is to be distinguished from particularity: The former is a moment in the very Idea of the state, while the latter belongs to history” [36: 284].

In the event of reference to Hegel’s understanding of a state in the study of “state” from the perspective of Cultural Studies is aimed at understanding particular states as special cultural and historical conditions for the realization of the highest ideas of a state. Moreover, as it has already been noted, the cultural conceptual study is not focused on understanding the political and economic characteristics of a state, but on the understanding of specific mental representations of a state within a specific culture; and is the culture of Ancient Rus’ in the context of this study.

4.1 The Etymology of the Word “State” and the Cognate Words: “Land”, “Country”

In proceeding with the etymological study of the concept of “state”, it should be noted that the problem of naming the legal system and political life in Russia specifically using the word “state” is one of the key problems in the modern philosophy of law and political science in Russia. In an attempt to build a qualitative and modern concept of a rule-of-law state in Russia, legal scholars and political scientists inevitably come to the conclusion that the meaning of most words in modern political discourse seems incomprehensible. Scholars get involved in tracing the origins and etymology of words in political discourse and realize the fact that the words used in the Russian politics predetermine the construction of the power system in Russia, and do not allow for the development of a rule-of-law state, oriented towards the people living in this state. Apparently, above all the problem is caused by the fact that Russian legal scholars and political scientists seek to build a rule-of-law state similar in its structure to the Western model and are inevitably confronted with the fact that in the West the meaning and content of the word are completely different to the Russian equivalent of “state” (Russian: “gosudarstvo”) used in translation. Thus, Chetvernin V., the apprentice of Nersesyants V.S (author of the Russian textbook on the philosophy of law), explicitly affirms that the modern development of the philosophy of law in Russia requires the introduction of an alternative word to the word “state”: “As for the term “**state**”, it traditionally means **something belonging to the monarch, the monarch’s property**, and not the public and legal conditions implied with the term “*Stato*” and derived from it “state”, “*Staat*”, etc. In Western Europe, these terms have emerged to define a certain reality, which evolved in the Early Modern Period, and this public power reality of a rule-of-law type was developed at that very point and nowhere else. Unfortunately, this did not happen in Russia, where the term “**state**” took root, which I can only use in my report and my scientific research subject to certain conditions, assuming that it is permissible to translate what the Greeks named **polis**, the Latins referred to as **civitas**, and what is today referred to as **state**, *Staat*, etc., and the word “state” (“*gosudarstvo*” in Russian) since no other term exists. In fact, some kind of new term could be created or invented, but it is easier to explain that a state is in the sense of libertarian juristic theory an organization of public and political power of a

rule-of-law type, the essence of a state is a rule-of-law entity, and a state is a necessary institutional form of freedom” [37].

The problem of the national specificity and historical certainty of the Russian term “state” is raised by M.V. Ilin in his paper. He believes that the conceptualization of a state is carried out by shifting away from the archaic cognitive scheme towards a new phenomenon. A generic idea is employed of a leader as a lord, i.e. a powerful figure conducting relations with strangers, guests (i. e. *host–stranger, enemy, guest, landlord as a participant of the friendly exchange and *pot–landlord, “himself”). The Lord acting as an organizer of relations with others—outsiders, performs a purely political, albeit primitive, function. Later, the so called splitting of the notion into the considerably everyday interpretation of hospitality and into its sacralization occurred: transferring the name *lord* over to the giver of wealth, the patron of friends (Orthodox Christians) and defender against foes (non-Christians). The intermediate, specifically political meaning of arranging relations with other political and protesting communities temporarily acquired a latent state and was brought out of communication. A state is initially interpreted as the worthiness and attribute of a person perceiving the grace of the Lord above and passing it on to the people of his land—countrymen—as well as the ownership of the host in his house, estate. Subsequently, already under the crisis conditions of the estate way of life, the attributes and properties of the Lord/Monarch are transferred to the political system, and there these are finally identified with the system itself [38].

It is not by chance that M.V. Ilin’s paper is referenced in sufficient detail. This due to the fact that the concepts themselves “suggest” making a connection between the “state” and the “Lord”, and then the country acts as a divine gift to its owner. But the problem is that in reputable etymological studies by Fasmer M., Preobrazhensky A., Chernykh P. Ya. and in other sources, this etymological relationship may not be specified at all or it is mentioned, not as the fundamental, but as one of a number of other alleged etymological histories. The present etymological study is largely aimed at a more detailed and thorough consideration of the etymological roots of the word “state”.

The word “state” appears in the old Russian language in the fifteenth century, and continues to be officially used in the sixteenth century, and is widespread in the seventeenth century. “State” is a word of ancient Russian origin, which is indicated by all etymological data. The word “state” (“gosudarstvo”) comes from the ancient Russian word “monarch” (“gosudar”), which has been existent since the fourteenth century: “From the word “monarch” (“gosudar”), using the suffix of an abstract name -stvo to mean “the activity of an individual named in the root”, the noun “gosudarstvo” was built (“state” in English). This word is found on the monuments dating from the fifteenth century. Originally it meant “the manifestation of the power of the monarch”, then “the lands under his authority”, later “the political organization of the ruling class in the country, as well as the country itself with a political organization” [39]. Different researchers believe that the word “gosudar” (monarch in English) can be derived either from “Gospod” (the Lord in English) or from “gospodar” (master in English). Etymological data indicates that the word Gospod” (the Lord) and “gospodar” (master) are formed from the Indo-European

stems *gost*—master, sovereign; and *potis*—mighty, powerful. Thus, the etymological meaning of the word “*gospodar*” (master) is a mighty host.

The transformation of the word “*gospodar*” (master) into “*gosudar*” (monarch) and subsequently into “*gosudarstvo*” (state) is associated with the manifestation of the stem “*sud*” (judgement) in the word: “The emergence of the form “*gosudar*” instead of “*gospodar*” can hardly be explained solely on a phonetic basis: apparently, this is the influence of the stem “*sud*” (judgement) (“*gosudar*”—the supreme judge)”. “There are suppositions that the word “*gosudarstvo*” (state), as well as the word “*gosudar*” (monarch) are formed from the stem “*sud*” (judgement), therefore, “*gosudar*” is the supreme judge and “*gosudarstvo*” (state) is a sovereign way to reign with the right of a judgment” [40].

Etymologically, the meaning of the word “*gosudarstvo*” (state) is as follows: the territory ruled by the mighty host, master; the territory ruled by the Lord through the mediation of the master; the territory where the master has the right to administer his own judgement.

It is important to note that the word “*gosudarstvo*” (state) occurs in the fifteenth century and begins to be officially used only in the sixteenth century. Therefore, the ancient Russian state did not use this word at all during the first five centuries of its development. Let's look at those names that have been traditionally used by people in ancient Rus' for naming their State, these are “*zemlya*” (land) and “*strana*” (country) (a combination of “Russian land” is the most common name referred to in the letters of Ivan the Terrible, the phrase “Russian land” is used by Joseph Volotsky, etc.)

The word “*zemlya*” (land) is of Slavic origin. Originally land was used in the sense of “bottom”, and as evidenced by the etymological research of Yu.S. Stepanov, the overall notion of land, bottom, man has always been associated in contrast with top, sky, gods. In the eleventh century, the word “*zemlya*” (land) became very widely used with the meaning of land, world, country, property, and estate. Consequently, the historical development of the concept of “*zemlya*” (land) undergoes the following changes: rather than the land-bottom, the sphere of human life as opposed to the heavenly world of the gods, the land—along with the refusal of the pagan world view in the eleventh century—gains the meaning (except the direct meaning of a “topsoil”) of the territory belonging to someone. “Russian land” in this case is the territory belonging to Russians.

The Slavic word “*strana*” (country) is derived from “*storona*” (party, side), which in its turn comes from the old Slavic “*storna*”, which means a space. The Old Church Slavic word is closely related to words of different origin: “*prostor*” (vastness), “*prosteret*” (to spread), “*rasstilat*” (to unfold), etc. Therefore, it is once again the case that the word has spatial and territorial characteristics [41].

Thus, the original denomination of the Russian State was primarily associated with local spatial designations: vastness and land. However, in the fifteenth century a word appeared in the Russian language to replace the word of Old Church Slavic origin: the word “state”, which added new meanings to the “Russian land”, and emphasized these new meanings. Henceforth, the main meaning became the presence of a reigning individual who owns Russian land and subjugates the Russian people, while the Russian land became the territory where the monarch

could pass their judgment. As it will later become clear, this shade of meaning is not accidental: In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Russian Tsar bore the full responsibility of the Russian people on Judgment Day, and could pass his own judgment on the land, foreshadowing heavenly judgment. The affinity of origin and phonetic form between the words “gosudar” (monarch) and “gospod” (the Lord) emphasized the idea that the individual acting as the head of the Russian State is a mediator between God and man.

4.2 Cultural and Comparative Analysis of the Concept of “State”

The comparison of the Russian word “state” with the word “state” in other languages enables us to discern the differences in the formation of the Western countries and Russia. Thus, the words “the state” in English, “Der Staat” in German and “L’État” in French have a common origin from the Latin word “status”, meaning a location, position, standing, civic position. This proves that the words “state”, “Der Staat”, “L’État” are connected by the process of natural establishment of a state and that of its positions. Words related to state administration in European languages appeared simultaneously to the process of forming national states in the Middle Ages. In English for example, the words “state, government, reign” appeared during the period from 1066 to 1485, which means after the Norman Conquest, along with the establishment of a state structure. The comparative analysis of names used to identify the state as an organism of social unity among the people inhabiting a specific territory and nation in different languages reveals the specificity of the Russian concept of “state”, unlike the other languages that do not imply status (as in the standing and dignity) of a state among other nations, but the concentration of all the social unity on the identity of a monarch.

In the cultural and comparative study the denomination of state in the Chinese language can also be considered. The conclusion about how a state is understood in the Chinese language can be made quite relatively, as the etymology of the Chinese name for the “state” 国 is unknown to us. One can look at the meaning of this character only in the context of China’s self-denomination (中国), which means “The Celestial Empire”, or literally “Middle Kingdom”. Based on the above, we propose that the understanding of “state” in Chinese culture is associated with the idea about which place occupies an earthly human territory within the overall structure of the Universe. So, China is an earthly state between Heaven and underground states.

Therefore, the cultural comparative study has established that all cultures have a special word for the denomination of the form of social unity in a specific country. In addition, the existing words show that the understanding of the essence of social unity is different and nationally idiosyncratic in each country. In ancient Russian culture “state” implies a certain societal unity, where the unity of society is held together by the power of the country’s mighty host, at the cost of his right to pass judgment on this territory. In European countries, the words “the state”, “der Staad”, “el’State” originating from the Latin word “status” primarily emphasize the legal position, the rank (most likely a high rank) of a country in relation to other

countries. The Chinese State (国) draws attention to the location of the earthly country within the overall picture of the Universe.

Thus, the ancient Russian word “state” primarily implies an individual through whom power is exercised within a particular territory; while the European words signify the high rank and state of status of a state (probably among other states). Etymologically, the concept of “state” implies the obligatory personal embodiment of all the forces of a state in one monarch, whose most significant function is deemed to be the ability to pass judgment on the people inhabiting the territory owned by him. Considering the historical situation, it becomes clear why the formation of the concept of “state” includes the judicial function of the monarch as an important characteristic. The affinity of origin and phonetic form of the words “gosudar” (monarch) and “gospod” (the Lord) emphasizes the meaning that an individual acting as the Head of the Russian State is a mediator between God and man. Until the sixteenth century, the word “state” is not used in texts: other words existed to denominate Rus’: “Russian land” and “side (country)”. Thus, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can be considered the time when ancient Rus’ shifts away from calling its territory “land” and “country” towards understanding it as a “state”. Initially the “name” of a state was connected with its territory and with specificity of that territory: vast, wide, expanding. Changes occur in this understanding starting from the fifteenth century: the personality of the monarch subordinating all the territory and people of the Russian State becomes central in the referral to Russian land.

4.3 Historical Determinants for the Formation of the Concept of “State” in Ancient Russian Culture

The history of the word “state” draws our attention to ancient Rus’ during the epoch at the turn of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries: the word emerges in the fifteenth century and is preserved in written texts from the sixteenth century. The study of history in the context of this research is devoted to the analysis of the conflicting views about what the Russian State should be like at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the resolution of these contradictions during the reign of the Tsar Ivan the Terrible.

The epoch at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is truly controversial and significant for the development of Russian State, which is considered in historical texts such as: the epoch of Russian autocracy’s formation; the epoch of Rus’ inheritance of Orthodoxy according to the model of the Byzantine Empire; the epoch of the most intense activity of ancient religious nonconformists; the epoch of the national self-identity of the Russian people; the epoch that predetermined the cruel and frightening policy of the Russian State. Thus, let’s consider the key events and ideas of the historical period in ancient Rus’ in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, and evaluate the effects of these historical facts on the formation of the concept of “state” in ancient culture.

Before proceeding with the analysis of the historical situation at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the context of history’s admission of semantic content into the “state” concept, it is necessary to delineate the range of literary

sources that have influenced the formation of conclusions in this section of the research, and to identify the cultural scientist's research position when carrying out historical analysis. The fact is that a large amount of literature has been devoted to the time period under consideration in this research. In line with modern science, a historical research is often impacted by the particular personal world view of the author. This phenomenon is described in the book by E.M. Elyanov "Ivan the Terrible: Creator or Destroyer?" [42], where the author analyses over ten different points of view on the epoch of Ivan the Terrible stemming from the personal academic passions of each of the academics. Hence, it is impossible not to list the books that have had an impact on the study; the books that formed the basis for the collection of facts to understand the concept of "state" in the context of history. Above all, historical analysis requires references to primary sources of historical facts; below are the sources for this study: "the Enlightener" by J. Volotsky [43], "The address on the conviction of heresies by Joseph Volotsky" [44], addresses from the holy man Philotheos [45], epistles from Tsar Ivan IV etc.

Russian history can not be considered without studying the textbooks: Lyzlov A. "Scythian history" [46], Karamzin N.M. "History of the Russian State" (Vol. 5–8) [17], Klyuchevsky V.O. "Russian history. A full course of lectures" (Lectures 21–40) [19], Kostomarov N.I. "Russian history in biographies of its main figures" (first division: The domination of the House of St. Vladimir, second edition: The fifteenth–sixteenth centuries), Solovyov S.M. "History of Russia from ancient times" (Vol. 5–6) [47]. The ethnic history of Rus' provided in the book by Gumilyov N.L. "From Rus' to Russia" (Chapter III. The Muscovite Tsardom) [48]. The history of Russian autocracy's development can be traced in the book "Autocracy. The idea of the power of tsars" by A.N. Bokhanov [49]. The history of the Russian church, which also reflects the important facts about the formation of the Russian State, is considered on the basis of books by Nikolsky N.M. [50] and Kartashev A.V. [51]. The philosophical and religious views of the thinkers of ancient Rus', whose disputes gave rise to a large number of contradictions in the development of the State in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, are considered in books "Philosophical thought in medieval Rus'" and "Heretics and Orthodox Christians" by Zamalyaev A.F. [52]. Analysis of the ideological foundation of the Russian State, starting from its ancient period and ending with the modern situation is presented the book by Bachinin V.A. "National idea for Russia: the choice between Byzantism, evangelism, and secularism (Historical essays on political theology and cultural anthropology)" [53]. Analysis of the historical situation is also given in articles devoted to this period in Russian history. The present study draws on some facts from articles by Romanov A.A. [54], Trepavlov V.V. [55] and Kvividze N.V. [56]. The relevance of historical the events that took place in Ancient Rus' at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries up to the modern historical situation is indicated in theses: for example, Krapchunov D.E. [57], Storchak V.M. [58], Kazharov A.Kh. [59].

Let's also define the position of research in terms of this historical analysis. The study does not so much rely on primary sources of historical material, but to a greater extent on existing historical research. Modern historical science is aware of the prejudice of each researcher in relation to the interpretation of facts. The

researcher of culture in the field of history already finds themself in a secondary situation to interpret the interpretation. The only possibility to at least to some extent avoid this secondary situation is the method of identifying the historical facts, occurring in all historical studies, and the proposal of own interpretation of such facts in a manner consistent with the purposes of our own research. This methodological course of study is consistent with the hermeneutic method of cognition by Gadamer H.-G., who uncovered the problem of pre-understanding in the contemporary humanities: a researcher is always in a situation of the preset knowledge that will be obtained by the researcher the research process. “In the so-called humanities, to a certain extent, it is found (...), that their subject is something to which a learner belongs with the need to recognize oneself. (...). If the own view of each historian on their knowledge and values is always visible, then the acknowledgement of this is not a reproach against the historian’s scientific character. It remains unknown whether the historian is mistaken because of the limitations of his point of view, misunderstanding and appreciation of tradition, or whether he has succeeded in correctly highlighting objects not observed until now, thanks to the advantage of his point of view, which has allowed him to discover something similar to direct modern experience” [60: 615–616].

In the case of this study, the analysis of the historical situation is preceded by etymological knowledge and the existence of a researcher in the context of Russian culture in general, which is studied by way of research into the concept. The etymological knowledge orientates the study towards the search for such facts in the history of the Russian State, which might predetermine the understanding of states as a personal embodiment of the societal unity in Russian culture, and predetermines the judicial nature of a state, as well as the search for such facts that expand knowledge of the concept of “state” in Russian culture.

Therefore, based on the analysis of the data sources, we will select the key moments in the historical circumstances that have influenced the formation of the concept of “state” in the culture of ancient Rus’, and explain the reason for our conclusion.

4.4 The Concept of “State” as the Judgment Before Judgment Day

Since the second half of the fifteenth century, and particularly after 1453, the year of the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the eschatological mood was heightened in Russia. This was due to a specific fact: the Orthodox ecclesiastical calendar was calculated until the year 1492 (7000 years from the creation of the world, which was also associated with 7 day creation of the world, after which everything was meant to come to an end). As Romanova A.A. indicates in his article, waiting for the end of the world truely had a great impact on people’s minds. Firstly, at the end of the fifteenth century the popularization of ideas about the end of the world (as in the modern era) had not yet occurred, and it was hardly the first preparation for the end of the world in the history of ancient Rus’. Secondly, people began to hand over their land to monasteries and monks so that they would pray for the salvation of their souls; not many people were hopeful that life would continue after the year 1492, and did not plan for the future. Thirdly, representatives of the Church and the

Orthodox States corresponded with each other and reflected on the meaning of the end of the calculations in the ecclesiastical calendar in year 1492, and did not calculate a new ecclesiastical calendar until the fateful year had passed: “To all intents and purposes, there were no plans for the 18,000 years up to the time of the church leaders, thus, no ecclesiastical calendar was compiled. The words of the Holy Fathers, the interpretation of which could be dual, were considered as prediction of the end of the world before the year 7000” [54: 220]. Fourthly, the fall of the Byzantine Empire was fit into prophetic predictions about events occurring on the eve of the end of the world. The eschatological expectations were also connected with expectations of a new Tsar-Archangel advent, in the texts of the new tsardom is called “The Tsardom of the Archangel Michael”. Overall, Romanov A.A. characterizes the significance of the doomsday expectations in Rus’ at the end of the fifteenth century as follows: “To characterize the eschatological mood in Russia in the fifteenth century, primary importance underlies the fact that, firstly, people were interested in the eschatological records of both the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries (when all the dates listed in the records had already passed), the data of which was collected from different sources; secondly, they were resisted (by way of removing the manuscript or tearing the sheets out)” [54: 235]. Hence, the expected end of the world did not happen, which is believed to have affected the intensification of heretical movements in Rus’. In the context of the present study, let’s also suppose that the long awaited Judgment Day influenced the formation of the concept of “state” in the culture of ancient Rus’. Judgment Day did not occur, as a result of which the Judgment was expected from the State. It should be noted that the judicial function is always an underlying state function (“... the general historic idea of supreme power as an arbitrator and a patron” [55: 125]), but as a result of particular historical events, the idea of a state as a Judge for the people gained special relevance and gained prominence among other state functions.

The anticipation of Judgment Day also influenced the process of unifying the Russian people, as the text of St. John the Devine’s Book of Revelation refers not only to the personal stance before the judgment of the Lord, but also the nation’s stance: “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy. For all nations shall come and worship before thee” (The Revelation of St. John the Divine, Chapter 15). As a result the idea was also formed that the monarch is the representative of his people on Judgment Day: if every person is judged only for his sins, then the monarch will be judged for the sins of all the people. Despite the fact that the expected “end of history” had not occurred, it can be assumed that God’s chosen head of state assumed the right to pass the divine judgment on the Earth.

Thus, “Sudebnik [Code of Law]” of 1497 may be regarded as the most meaningful legal document during the reign of Ivan III. And during the time of Ivan the Terrible (IV), the work to supplement the Code of Law of Ivan III was no less pertinent: the Sudebnik of 1550 issued during his reign is significant: “Considering the adoption of the Sudebnik of 1550, Karamzin acknowledges the desire Ivan IV had to be the “Tsar of Truth...” [42: 52].

Let’s suppose that the idea of the manifestation of divine judgment in earthly life also became embodied in the events of the oprichnina period. Oprichnik is a

bodyguard, a person in the ranks of the oprichniki troops (detachment of bodyguards), i.e. a personal guard established by Ivan the Terrible within the framework of his political reforms in 1565. Oprichnina is a part of the state policy in the Russian State from 1565 to 1572 which was included in the implementation of emergency repressive measures; the confiscation of feudal property and land for the benefit of the state, the fight against alleged treason among the boyars and ducal aristoi, which concluded in mass executions.

Ivan IV sets forth his understanding of the role of Judgment Day and the tsar's role in a nation's obedience to God: "I know and believe that those who live an evil life and disobey God's commandments, will be punished not only in Heaven, but also will drink the cup of the God's fury here on Earth for their evil deeds and suffer multifarious punishments, and when beyond the veil, awaiting God's righteous judgment will undergo the bitterest condemnation, and after judgment—endless torment. This I believe of the Lord's Judgment Day. Despite the Manichaeans, despite your vile lies that I don't want to give an answer for my sins, I know that Christ owns and rules over all in Heaven, Earth and the Underworld and punishes the disobedient with torments. I believe that I, as a slave, will shall be judged not only for my sins, willing and unwilling, but also for the sins of my subjects committed due to my negligence—is your forgery not laughable when it is possible not to obey the King of Kings, even if mortal power can pass judgment by force?" [61: 81–82]

The eschatological mood in the late fifteenth century coupled with the development of national identity could have had an impact on the formation of the mentality of the Russian people, an important constant of which became the awareness of one's own sinfulness, and consequently the constant expectation God's punishment, and following the cancellation of the end of the world—the monarch's. This historical fact implies that the Russian concept of "state" contains the idea of a state as the punisher and as merciful judiciary board.

4.5 The Concept of 'State' as an Ideological Unity

The emergence of the state as an ideologically unified organism can be demonstrated by the example of several historical and religious phenomena. Firstly, there is the example of oppositional confrontation between Moscow and Novgorod as fundamentally different ideas about the political structure of life in a society. This confrontation, in the end, was resolved in Moscow's favor: when in 1478 Novgorod lands were finally annexed to Muscovy, Novgorod's progressive minds were transferred to Moscow, and in 1569–1570 the Oprichniki troops were led to Novgorod by Ivan the Terrible, and from 27 thousand to 7000 thousand Novgorodians seeking freedom of thought were slaughtered. Secondly, the emergence of the ideological unity of the ancient Russian State took place during the fierce polemical struggle of the Josephites and representatives of the Sect of Skhariya the Jew (under the name of Joseph Volotsky, the Heresy of "the Judaizers") with the participation of the Non-possessors led by Nil Sorsky, and after his death, by his disciple Vasily Patrikeev (Vassian Kosoi).

The Novgorod Republic, which had lasted until 1478, was always understood as an independent and autonomous society in ancient Rus'. As almost all researchers note, medieval Novgorod was a unique space in ancient Rus' for the following reasons. (1) The existence of the Novgorod Veche, which endowed a community of city residents with legislative and judicial power; i.e. "state" laws were not proposed by a sole duke to all the citizens of the community, but a uniform public law was formed on the basis of multifaceted civil opinion. (2) Close cooperation of Novgorod with Western countries, and as a consequence the permeation of Renaissance rationalistic ideas in Novgorod towards the end of the fifteenth century. (3) The peculiar mentality of the Novgorodians, who were always characterized by a love of freedom, education, and critical rational thinking (which influenced the birth of religious heretical movements in medieval Rus', specifically on the territory of Novgorod). (4) A more pronounced desire for individualism than in other ancient Russian lands: it was on Novgorodian land where a large number of small churches have been founded for chamber prayer, chamber communication with God, and sometimes the tendency towards individualism in Novgorod's religiosity reaches extreme radicalism—'heretics' refused to pray in churches, because they believed that the Church in general is an obstacle between man's communication with God, and therefore preferred praying in the open air.

Let's turn to Moscow. Which processes characterize the establishment of Moscow's statehood?

1. The centralization process in the ancient Russian State which is directly associated with the expansion of Moscow begins in the fifteenth century. The starting point for the development of the centralized ancient Russian state can be considered the fourteenth century, when the economic and political foundations of the Muscovy state were laid. In the fourteenth century, a key political figure for the formation of a centralized state is Duke Ivan Danilovich Kalita (1325–1340), who begins to expand the territory of Muscovy by buying lands around Moscow, and also receives the right to the Grand Duchy of Vladimir in 1339 from the khans of the Golden Horde. 1480 is the year when the Tatar-Mongol rule over Russian land came to an end. By this time, there is complete de facto subordination of ancient Russian territories to a single centre: Moscow (along with Novgorod). In the sixteenth century in the epoch of Ivan the Terrible, the territory of the Russian State expands along with ideological subordination to the ideas of Moscow statehood.
2. The idea of a God-given mandate for Moscow to become the capital city that is able to bring together the Russian people in Orthodox unity is developed. The idea of the right given by God for Moscow manifests itself and is emphasized at different levels. Firstly, the Trinity celebration begins to be especially venerated in Muscovy, which on the one hand is due to the fact that the Trinity patroned by Sergius of Radonezh, Russia's main saint in the fourteenth century, and on the other hand by the fact that the biblical story about the appearance of the Trinity to Abraham and Sarah narrates the prophecy to Abraham that the chosen people will come from him. The God-given right for Moscow is also embodied

by the fact that the Russian metropolitan selects this city as the place for his burial.

The Metropolitan agreed to move to Moscow on the condition that the Cathedral of the Dormition would be constructed in the Kremlin, which Metropolitan Peter appointed as the place for his burial. Henceforth, the city of Moscow became the chosen burial place for the ancient Russian metropolitans: “If you listen to me, my son, and build the temple of the Mother of God in this city, then you too will become famous more than other dukes, and your sons and grandsons will be glorified through centuries, and this city will be famous among other Russian cities. Its enemies will be put to shame, and God will be glorified therein; the saints will live, and even my bones will be buried there” [62]. The situation with Moscow’s God-given right is also highlighted with the wording “Moscow is the third Rome” uttered by the monk Philotheus: “Two Romes have fallen, but the third one is standing, and there shall be no fourth” [63]. Thus, the idea of the Russian State’s God-given right for the preservation of Orthodoxy is formed. It is necessary to consolidate the idea of Moscow as the third Rome, that is on the one hand the country inheriting the Orthodox religion, and on the other hand emphasizing its own national (third) identity. According to this concept, Moscow acts as the heiress of the Byzantine Empire, which has been an authority for Russian people for four and a half centuries. Accordingly, in the second half of the fifteenth century Moscow is characterized by all the fundamental qualities for the development of a centralized unified state: a stable economic situation; centralized state territory and the ideological prerequisite for Russian people from all territories to accept Moscow’s high importance.

Therefore, the coexistence of two polar models of the state system in ancient Rus’—Novgorod and Moscow—led to the adoption and rigid imposition of the model of Moscow’s statehood. Along with the rejection of the Novgorod statehood model and the destruction of this model, the possibility of coexistence of several opinions within a unified state was abandoned (rejection of pluralism of positions), denying a person the possibility of individual development and the possibility of an independent position within the State, the denial of the development of the Western rational way of thinking. Thus, the concept of ‘state’ presupposes ideological state unity. In ancient Russia it is considered that state unification cannot be achieved without the ideological unity of people.

The idea about the necessity for monocentric decision-making at state level is also found in texts by Ivan the Terrible: “You saw with your own dishonest eyes that Rus’ was in ruins, when each city had its own rulers, and so you can understand what this is. The prophet spoke of this: “Woe to the house that is run by a woman, a city that is ruled by many!” As you see, when many people rule, even if they are strong, brave and reasonable, but they do not have unified power, and it will be like women’s madness. For just as woman—unable to come to a single decision—first one, then another, so shall the many rulers of a kingdom not be able to decide: the opinion of one shall differ from the another” [61, p. 54].

Let us consider the peculiarities in the development of ideological unity in ancient Rus’ at the turn of the sixteenth century in the example of the confrontation

between religious non-conformists and the followers of the traditionally prevalent Orthodoxy of Rus'.

The religious life of ancient Rus' at the turn of the sixteenth century with its contradictions can be compared to some extent with the religious inquiries at the time of the first Ecumenical Councils, when only the conciliar opinion of Christians could unequivocally decide which understanding of the Christian religion is true. It was the conciliar faith of the participants in the first Ecumenical Councils that facilitated the adoption of the dogma of the Trinity of God, the recognition of the divine nature of Christ, the establishment of the custom of monastic life, etc. The Orthodox religion had existed in this form in Byzantium, was adopted by Rus' and existed without recognition of its national religious identity until the fifteenth century.

The doctrine manifested by the supporters of the monk St. Joseph Volotsky (1439–1515) was based on the theological justification of the state's establishment and the "divine origin" of the tsar's power. This doctrine was supported by the monk, Philotheus of Pskov, the proponent of the concept of "Moscow as the Third Rome", which formed the basis of the official ideology of the Russian tsars. An opponent of Joseph Volotsky was another monk, St. Nilus of Sora (1433–1508), who believed that the aims of the "earthly" state do not coincide with the missions of Christian salvation, and that Christian monks should not blindly serve the "earthly sovereigns". These religious disputes are essential for understanding how the doctrine of the state developed in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.

At the end of the fifteenth century the heresy of the 'Judaizers' reached its peak popularity. This name was given to these religious teachings by their main opponent, Joseph Volotsky, while in modern academia a less biased name is adopted: the Sect of Skhariya the Jew. The heretical doctrine, which was born among Novgorod merchants, preached obedience to the Law of Moses, that is, the Old Testament, rejecting the laws of the New Testament for the following reasons: heretics denied the dogma of the Trinity of God and the divine essence of Jesus Christ. Moreover, Novgorod–Moscow heretics denied monasticism as an organ of the Christian religious society, since the biblical text does not say anything about monastic practice, and monasticism was established by the fathers of the Christian Church, i.e. by people. In the context of the idea that the teachings deliberately rejected the official culture, and represent the life-determining forces that mainly formed the world view of the era, it is interesting to look at the Sect of Skhariya the Jew from a positive perspective. Let us note that evidence of the heretics' world view is rather scarce and can be found almost exclusively on officially supported refutations, namely the legend of Joseph Volotsky "the Enlightener", which does not allow a full understanding of those people who held the ideas of heretics. Considering the fact that the Sect of Skhariya the Jew developed among the Novgorodians who were freedom-loving people that sought a rational understanding of religious phenomena, where "the Strigolniki" teachings had been previously developed, the main purpose of which was direct communication with God: outside of the Church, outside religious rites, and in the open air; we can assume that the heretics sought to rationally comprehend divine law. V.A. Bachinin defines the Sect of Skhariya the Jew as an Orthodox teaching of the evangelical type, that is: "An

evangelical inherently holds a world view, which fully relies on the Holy Scripture. They are guided by a distinct consciousness that *man's physical self* must be in direct, hierarchically immutable submission to the *inner self*, i.e. to the individual spirit seeking God” [53].

Based on Fedor Kuritsyn’s view, the central representative of the heretic movement in Moscow, V.A. Bachinin formulates the following principles of the Sect of Skhariya the Jew:

1. a critical attitude towards church tradition and conviction that the individual faith should be based on the Holy Scripture;
2. rejection of icon worship;
3. rejection of a significant amount of the Orthodox Church’s rituals;
4. the need for direct prayerful communication with God, the conviction that there should be no intermediaries between God and man;
5. rejection of the official Church’s right to a spiritual monopoly;
6. rejection of monasticism and monasteries;
7. refusal to worship halows;
8. the preaching of broad democratization of the “book teaching”;
9. high appreciation of the active engagement of the human mind and all positive manifestations of personality;
10. the idea of the equality of all people and nations.

The heretics’ rational world view was also reflected by the fact that the majority of them were the most educated people of their time: few people could outwit them in religious disputes, and the heretics were also interested in astrology, astronomy, and “black magic”. They tried to find a scientific application for their own knowledge. The Sect of Skhariya the Jew did not recognize the power held by the Church, church hierarchy and church acquisition of land and “fees”. One might say that the denial of the special religious status of monasteries and monasticism in general characterizes the religious ideas of the epoch. If before the fifteenth century monasticism was the mainstay of religiosity in Rus’: monks provided spiritual protection for people with their prayers, and monasteries with their serf-type fortresses provided physical defence of cities against attacks. At the turn of the sixteenth century, monasticism lost its protective power and handed over the care for the physical and spiritual well-being of people to the monarch with a God-given right to rule.

The Heresy of the ‘Judaizers’ was so strong at this time that at some point there was the possibility that it would become official, while for some time the Moscow metropolitan was Zosima, the representative of the Novgorod and Moscow heretics, and heresy was supported by members of the ducal family. In many ways, this process was prevented due to the anti-heretic struggle of Joseph Volotsky. His efforts resulted in the resolution on the execution of heretics at the Moscow Cathedral in 1504.

Apart from the Sect of Skhariya the Jew, at the turn of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries there are two religious and philosophical teachings in Rus’: the first—the Josephites—was proposed by Joseph Volotsky (1440–1505), and the second—the

Non-possessors—was led by Nil Sorsky (1433–1508). The teachings of Nil Sorsky developed the Byzantine doctrine of Hesychius and implied the separation of church and state, its removal from worldly affairs, since the church was understood as an institution that was not originally created to have any physical power, but to care for the spiritual aspect of human life. But this direction did not widely disseminate at the turn of the century, due to the fact that the concept of Hesychasm developed by Nil Sorsky implies individual communication of man with God, the choice of an individual religious path. While at the turn of the century, the conciliar way of religious communication between man and God was more pertinent in Rus' and was further developed by Joseph Volotsky.

Joseph Volotsky's ideas developed from the notion of tsarist power as a limited power over people in their earthly existence: "People should serve tsars trembling with fear, as a person who has taken power from God and can torment and bode people corporeally, not mentally, and give them tsarist honor, and not a divine one" [52: 175] to the idea of unlimited tsarist power, caring for the soul and body of their subjects. The bodily care for the subjects consists, according to Joseph Volotsky, of physical protection from external enemies and injustice, and the spiritual care of eliminating the heretical discord within Orthodox teachings. The Hegumen of Volotsk is one of the first ancient Russian thinkers to develop the idea of absolute, as in God-given, tsarist power.

The idea of the divinely anointed ancient Russian sovereign is traditional for Christian Orthodoxy: firstly, the Byzantine Empire was ruled by divinely anointed emperors with one of their central tasks being protection and sacrificial intercession for their people before Christ; secondly, during the rise of the Grand Principality of Vladimir, the idea of the similarity of Russian dukes to biblical kings was formed, for example the principedom of Andrei Bogolyubsky was compared with the reign of King David. It would also be important to consider the description of Joseph Volotsky's characteristic views proposed by V.A. Bachinin, who attributes the Hegumen's teaching to the Byzantine type of religiosity. He writes that the Byzantine type of religiosity goes back to the Byzantine model of Orthodoxy which has become established on Russian soil, has taken deep roots, and over time has absorbed a multitude of national, sociocultural, psychological and mental traits inherent in the Slavic character. The Byzantine-Orthodox inception was incorporated with the national Russian beginning, and as a result a type of person with a great-power consciousness was formed, which was later easily transformed into imperial consciousness. This character was the product of a rigid system of traditional society and a closed state. Orthodoxy was firmly entwined with Caesaropapist political traditionalism and with Russian nationalism therein. It was distinguished by the conviction that the young Russian state should become the successor of the deceased Byzantium [53].

According to V.A. Bachinin, Joseph Volotsky's religiosity is characterized as follows:

1. an appeal to fear as the main religious and psychological regulator of the relationship between the monk and God, church hierarchs and monastic authorities. Joseph's theology was built on the idea of God as Tsar and Judge, who generates sacred fear among people [53]. Such an emphasis on fear as a

means of religious communication between God and man is not accidental in Rus', since at the time of the Grand Duchy of Vladimir's dominance over all others, Russian religiosity was peculiar due to the construction of the relationship between man and God according to the model of "serving God trembling with fear", which was linked to the relevance of the text of the "Psalter" by King David, where fear and trembling" before God was an ineluctable quality for a Christian. The development of religion of ancient Rus' in the subsequent times has always preserved this aspect of fear in the relationship between man and God, and was embodied in relationship between the Russian people and the monarch.

2. The desire for power and order, as discipline and strict order were central in the organization of communication between the monk (the person of reference) and God.
3. Social orientation towards thinking, pragmatism, a productive approach in general. The desire for action, a way of thinking focused on the external world, gave rise to a break with inner religiosity.
4. A sacralized perception of tsarist power.
5. Duality of world view. The ancient idea of splitting the unified into two opposites and the struggle between them assimilated by Joseph, provided his black and white picture of the social world. He tended to divide everyone into two opposing camps to then consider the true and just in the church and state spheres through the prism of this division and opposition. The logical consequence of such oppositions was the substantiation of the necessity for an irreconcilable struggle against everything that did not correspond with his personal notions of truth and justice. Thus, Joseph defended the legitimacy and the need for the repression of all dissidents [52].
6. Priority of the conciliar principle over the individual one.

Thus, at the cusp of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries there was a significant religious confrontation between the Sect of Skhariya the Jew and the Josephites. Each religious teaching had its own religious program and certain world view positions. At the Council of 1504 the Josephites defeated the Sect of Skhariya the Jews, who were executed. Joseph Volotsky's book "the Enlightener" became a reference book for Tsar Ivan the Terrible (1530–1584), which became the standard embodiment of the individual for the ancient Russian State, who incorporates secular (temporal) and ecclesiastical (divine) power. Tsar Ivan the Terrible acted as a center of reference for ensuring the social unity of the ancient Russian state.

It is worth noting that the question of the heretics' execution was one of the central issues among religious polemics at the turn of the sixteenth century, when the views of the Hegumen of the Joseph Volokolamsk Monastery and the representative of "the Zavolzhian Elders", Nil Sorsky, collided. Before the Council of 1504 there was no case of the death penalty for religious views in Rus'. Nil Sorsky preached an idea, according to which heretics should be released from imprisonment, since the earthly Church has no right to impose physical punishment for religious views. In contrast, Joseph Volotsky insisted that heretics should be executed; imprisoned in dungeons, and also be burned at the stake. The ruling of the

Moscow Council of 1504 resolved the dispute about execution for religious apostasy in Joseph Volotsky's favor. "Moscow heretics were judged by the Church Council in 1504. The council insisted that the most active heretics—Ivan Volk, Mikhail Konoplev and Ivan Maximov—should be burned in a cage in Moscow, and Nekras Rukavov; in Novgorod, after cutting off his tongue. Spiritual inquisitors headed by Metropolitan Simon, also insisted on the burning of Archimandrite Cassian of Yuriev. His brother Ivan the Black defected to the enemy's side.

The bloody terror against the participants of the anti-church movement did not end there. Joseph continued to seek them out and betray them to severe punishment. Similar to Joseph, according to the chronicles, Tsar Vasily Ivanovich (Tsar Vasily IV) ordered to send the remaining heretics "into the dungeons and keep them there until the end of their days" [64].

Thus, the fact of the Tsar's official acceptance of the type of religiosity Joseph Volotsky proposed at the beginning of the sixteenth century influenced the development of the concept of 'state' in Russian culture as follows. The concept of "state" presupposes the prevalence of belief in a state's power over rationalistic analysis, and knowledge of state laws; "state" presupposes the individual's obedience and discipline for the successful implementation of the intermediary function of the sovereign for communication between God and the Russian people; "state" assumes that a person serves the sovereign trembling with fear. The concept of 'state' presupposes obligatory ideological unity (if ideological unity between people of one country is absent, it can not be called a 'state') of people of one country, dissidence absolutely must be suppressed (and the dissent may be suppressed contrary to the Christian commandment 'thou shalt not kill', since a 'state' is a higher structure that can not be judged according to human laws). The pluralism of religious and ideological views was not acceptable.

4.6 The Concept of 'State' as the Personal Mediation of a Sovereign Between the Russian People and God

The problem of the tsarist nature of the State; their power was the central problem of the ancient Russian thinkers of the sixteenth century. As historians point out, the model of tsarist power in Russia was formed according to the model of power in the Byzantine Empire, which was called 'caesaropapism'. This model assumes the dominance of the State over the Church. The secular ruler ('Caesar') took on the role and the functions of a higher spiritual hierarch (a 'pope' or patriarch). At the same time, the State that has the 'right to a sword' extended the emperor's sovereignty over the entire sphere of religious and ecclesiastical issues. The Church did not exist autonomously, but was under state authority. In ancient Rus', the Josephites develop the doctrine about the divine nature of tsarist power. As a result, the model of ancient Russian statehood is a caesaropapist form of sovereign rule based on the fact that state power possesses a divine nature.

In addition to the Byzantine inheritance of the caesaropapist model of government in Rus' in the sixteenth century, an original understanding of the nature of tsarist power is formed, which was expressed in the new title of the ruler; the tsar, and to denote the state power in Rus' the word autocracy appeared.

Traditionally, the title of Russian Tsar goes back to the Byzantine imperial title; Caesar, but there are also versions according to which the Russian title is more oriented towards conveying the idea of succession from the Old Testament kings, primarily King David and King Solomon.

Since the time of Ivan the Terrible, the Russian sovereign acquires not only a new title, but also a new coronation rite for Rus', modeled on the Byzantine custom. Thus, the concept of Russian autocracy presupposes an understanding of the tsar's role as an intermediary between God and man. On the one hand, the Russian Tsar is the embodiment of the supreme Creator, the Author and the Judge in the earthly world: "The higher kingdom served as a standard, a token of a perfect idea, which the Orthodox ruler must invariably follow. "The tsar is nothing but a living and visible image, that is, a living image of the very King of Heaven" [65: 203]. On the other hand, the Divine Law is a limitation of the sovereign power's boundlessness: "Only the fulfillment of 'evangelical truth' on Earth can become the embodiment of the true kingdom. Sylvester was the first among Russia's public thinkers to place and sharply define the problem of the autocracy, not just as a realization of God's authority, but also as God's limitation of power" [64: 199].

Let us turn our attention to one more remark from A.N. Bokhanov, that the Russian national consciousness became a 'state' at the time of the emergence of a uniform state, and the concepts of 'state' and 'national' acquired a tautological character" [62: 207].

Hypothetically, it can be assumed that 'tsardom', 'autocracy' and 'state' are synonymous in the ancient Rus' of the sixteenth century. Each word, in one way or another, contains the idea of the intermediary role of the sovereign in the relationship between man and God: 'tsardom' through the prism of caesaropapism and underlined by God's divine anointment of the Russian sovereigns similar to that of biblical kings. 'autocracy' through the prism of a tsar's monocratic government of the State with the condition of his 'autocracy' in relation to himself as well; not to dare to trespass the law established by God, who granted this power to the sovereign. 'state' through the prism of emphasizing the judicial mediation of the sovereign in the relationship between man and God. The word 'state' did not subsequently acquire a pronounced historical and political distinction and continued its existence in the Russian language, whereas 'tsardom' and 'autocracy' were phenomena related to the historical order of the time. The present study is aimed at establishing the conceptual essence of the word 'state' by revealing the historically relevant components of this word, which indicate that from century to century this word holds and passes certain conceptual settings related to the historical situation from the end of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Thus, the study of the historical determinants in the development of the 'state' concept in ancient Russian culture allows for the following conclusion:

The conceptual content of the word 'state' holds a representation of the fundamental sinfulness of man within a unified society. In accordance with this, a person awaits punishment or mercy on the part of the sovereign, who is able to do this in advance of the divine supreme Judgment. The concept of 'state' is the judicial power God has granted to the ruler of a country over the citizens of the society entrusted to him.

The concept of ‘state’ is the ideological unity of all people in the country. In the historical situation of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, the State’s ideological unity was permitted to be achieved through the forceful elimination of ideological contradictions.

The ancient Russian concept of ‘state’ developed within the context of the historical events of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries as the only opportunity to achieve harmonious relations between man and God. The State became the only structure that could facilitate intermediary communication between man and God. Independent private relations between man and God without state mediation were prohibited.

Let us also assume that the conceptual name ‘state’ is the same actual historical phenomenon as ‘autocracy’ or ‘tsardom’, in spite of the fact that the word has been preserved for referral to contemporary cultural phenomena, while the words ‘tsardom’ and ‘autocracy’ are used only for referral to cultural phenomena of the past.

5 The Specificity of the ‘State’ Concept in the First Epistle from Tsar Ivan the Terrible to the Duke Andrei Kurbsky

Etymological data indicates that the word ‘state’ can be found in ancient Russian written texts from the sixteenth century. One of the most vivid examples of the use of the word ‘state’ is the text of the first epistle from Tsar Ivan the Terrible to Duke Andrei Kurbsky [65]. The study of the conceptual meaning of the word ‘state’ within the framework of this text calls for the addition of a certain disclaimer: the fact is that in the sixteenth century the word ‘state’ appears in the texts, but does not receive much circulation. Thus, in the text of Ivan the Terrible’s epistle this word occurs in different forms only four times, but such words as ‘monarch’, ‘tsardom’ and ‘tsar’ are the most frequent words in the letter (they appear 129 times in the text of 10,470 words). In this case, let us clarify the reasons why this text can be analysed in order to understand the concept of ‘state’ in ancient Russian culture. Firstly, in phraseological expressions in the Russian language—such as ‘tsardom-state’, ‘tsar-state ruler’, ‘in some tsardom, in some state’, ‘in a far-away tsardom, in a far-away state’ [66]—the synonymous use the words ‘tsardom’ and ‘state’ is brought to our attention. Secondly, in the explanatory dictionary of the Russian language edited by D.N. Ushakov, tsardom is defined as a “state ruled by a tsar” [67], and V.I. Dahl’s explanatory dictionary says: “The State, i.e. tsardom, empire, kingdom, land or country under the sovereign’s rule”, which means tsardom is one of the forms of existence of the State that developed in Rus’ in the sixteenth century. Therefore, we can assume that the analysis of such words as ‘sovereign’, ‘state’, ‘tsar’ and ‘tsardom’ in the text from Ivan the Terrible to Duke Andrei Kurbsky provides knowledge of the ‘state’ concept in ancient Russian culture.

Let us employ the content analysis method to the text of the epistle. We will highlight designated words as units of analysis. Resulting from the analysis of all the examples of these words’ usage in the text of the letter, we suggest that three semantic groups should be created that reveal the meaning of the concept ‘state’ as a tsardom in this text: (1) features of tsardom; (2) negative practices for tsardom; (3) positive practices for tsardom (Table 1).

Table 1 Three semantic groups should be created that reveal the meaning of the concept ‘state’ as a tsardom

| Features of tsardom | Negative practices for tsardom | Positive practices for tsardom |
|--|---|---|
| Tsars cannot be subject to the same laws as ordinary Christians (“Is it proper for a tsar to turn the other cheek if he is beaten by another one?”). The Tsar is not equal to an ordinary Christian, he is a supreme being | <i>On the part of the monarch:</i> Not to rule the State To comply with the desires of the State’s subjects To have relations with serfs, ask serfs for help in maintaining the State To be an unrighteous ruler To be a tsar by name but not by deed To grant tsarist power to priests and popes To listen to priests and advisors To weaken tsarist power To leave the State without tsarist power, as such states cease to exist To withdraw from God To allow the tsardom to disintegrate due to chaos and internecine feuds To leave the tsardom without a ruler To ruin the tsardom like the Greeks To govern the tsardom not alone, but with many minds To divide the tsardom <i>On the part of man:</i> To wage war against the Tsar Not to seek another monarch To betray the monarch; To desire complacency instead of the State Not to want to live under the Monarch | <i>On the part of the monarch:</i> To take care of the State To hold Russian land To be a righteous monarch To be the only tsar in the State To receive the grace of God To be a legitimate tsar To save the State from disorder and villains To be prudent, which means to be sometimes meek, sometimes cruel, to show mercy and gentleness to the kind, cruelty and violence to the evil To make the evildoers tremble with fear. To be ready to do anything for the sake of the State (“Remember the greatest of all kings, Constantine: he killed his own son for the sake of the State!”) Autocracy Upholding military bravery in the army The conquest of other states <i>On the part of man:</i> To trust the State in one’s soul To recognise the State To preserve devotion before the Tsar To be acquiescent before the Tsar |
| At the same time a tsar is a mortal being like any other men | | |
| The Tsar will stand before God on Judgment Day like all other people | | |
| Like any other person, the Tsar crosses over from the Earthly Kingdom to the Heavenly Kingdom after death | | |
| The Tsar obeys only God | | |
| The Tsar should praise God | | |
| The Tsar is appointed by God, he is born a tsar | | |
| It is the Tsar’s duty to care for the bodies and souls of other people | | |
| The Tsar occupies the throne, governs and owns the State | | |
| The Tsar ‘bears a sword’ to intimidate evil people, he should punish, act to inspire fear, prohibition, discipline, and, last but not least, enforce the death penalty | | |
| The Tsar treats his people as parents treat their children | | |
| Moscow is the Tsar’s city | | |

Moreover, it should be noted that the text is abound with ancient examples of imperial reign, in particular the first Christian king Constantine is mentioned several times, as well as the biblical kings David and Solomon.

Thus, the concept of 'state' as a tsardom is the sociocentric unity of the Russian people, ensured by the autocratic rule of the divinely anointed sovereign: born in the tsardom, inheriting the tsarist power from the time of the Byzantine emperors and even that of the biblical kings. The popular election of the Tsar is fundamentally impossible, since such a path leads to the destruction of the State. The rule of a divinely anointed sovereign is mainly guided by the Ten Commandments, which can be applied by kings (the criterion for choosing suitable commandments cannot be established in the text), and also by the notion of a state's virtue: to preserve the State's territorial and ideological integrity, to protect the State from external and internal enemies, to keep the people in subordination to a common tsarist law, to take care of the bodily and spiritual well-being of the people, and to thereby prepare the Russian people for the coming of Judgment Day. In return, man should make every effort to obey the sovereign's decisions and to be humble before him, whether he is righteous or unrighteous, for the sake of maintaining state integrity, without which the State's physical existence cannot be ensured, since in the text most examples of disobedience to the Sovereign, the violation of his autocracy show that in this case, states come to decline, as the Greek Empire was destroyed by the Ottoman Empire.

6 Conclusions

The etymological analysis of the concept of 'state', the consideration of the historical characteristics of the epoch when this concept appears, as well as the content analysis of the first epistle of Tsar Ivan the Terrible and the Duke Andrei Kurbsky allow us to outline the following features of the concept of 'state' in ancient Russian culture:

1. The Russian state is a tsardom governed by an all-powerful tsar.
2. The State emerges when the Tsar and the people mutually follow certain conditions. The State is able to exist when the Tsar is guided by divine (Orthodox) law in state affairs, acting as the God's only earthly co-ruler. The State emerges when the people unanimously desire a conciliar unity: they are ready to fully submit to the Tsar's decisions; pray to God that he will be granted a conciliar unity; they are ready to sacrifice their lives for the good of the State.
3. The State is a fundamentally hierarchical sociocentric unity, in which there can be no equality between tsars, those close to the tsars, and subjects. This is obvious, because the Tsar is not only human, but is also chosen by God.
4. The conciliar unity of all people in the establishment of the State whole is a divine gift for Rus'.
5. In ancient Russian culture, a person cannot help wishing to become part of the State, since the State is understood as the only way for the Russian to achieve a relationship with God, the hope for admission into the Kingdom of Heaven.

6. In the minds of the Russian people, there is still a close connection between the concept of ‘state’ and the individual at the head of this organism. In this case, the identity of the Tsar was replaced by that of the president. The historical basis for this understanding is the formation of the ‘state’ concept’s content in ancient Rus’ in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries. The meanings of the ‘state’ concept which developed in this epoch continue to dominate in post-Soviet Russian public consciousness. Further research could be focused on a more detailed and justified identification of the ‘state’ concept’s content in modern Russian post-Soviet culture.

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