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Russia and Siberia: The Beginning of the Penetration of Russian People into Siberia, the Campaign of Ataman Yermak and it's Consequences

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The penetration of the Russian people into Siberia probably began more than a thousand years ago. Old Russian chronicles mention that already in the 11th century, the northwestern part of Siberia, then known as *Yugra*¹⁾, was a “*volost*”²⁾ of the Novgorod Land³⁾. The Novgorod *ush-*

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- 1) Initially, Yugra was the name of the territory between the mouth of the river Pechora and the Ural Mountains, where the Finno-Ugric tribes historically lived. Gradually, with the advancement of the Russian people to the East, this territorial name spread across the north of Western Siberia to the river Taz. Since 2003, Yugra has been part of the official name of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug: Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug—Yugra.
- 2) Volost—from the Old Russian “power, country, district”—means here the territorial-administrative unit of the aboriginal population with the most authoritative leader, the chief, from whom a certain amount of furs was collected.
- 3) Novgorod Land (literally “New City”) refers to a land, also known as “Gospodin (Lord) Veliky (Great) Novgorod”, or “Novgorod Republic”, with its administrative center in Veliky Novgorod, which had from the 10th century a tendency towards autonomy from Kiev, the capital of Ancient Kievan Rus. From the end of the 11th century, Novgorod de-facto became an independent city-state that subdued the entire north of Eastern Europe. At the head of Novgorod, according to the form of its state structure—an oligarchic republic—were several boyar families (descendants of the clan nobility) and the top among the rich merchants. Being the largest trade center in

*kuiniks*⁴⁾, who actively expanded the lands of *Veliky Novgorod* (the official name for the medieval Novgorod Republic) to the North and the East, and collected *dan*⁵⁾ (tribute) in furs from the local aboriginal population, were followed by Novgorod merchants and so-called *promyshlennye lyudi* (“entrepreneur-hunters”)⁶⁾ who traded with the *Voguls* and *Ostyaks*⁷⁾ who lived between the Ural Mountains and the river Ob, exchanging their goods for furs. Later, in the 12th–13th centuries, the Novgorod citizens mastered the Pechora route (along the Pechora River, which originates in the Ural Mountains) beyond the *Kamen* (“Stone”, old Russian name for the Urals till the end of the 18th century). But, at the same time, the role of the Novgorod in this territory was not limited to only collecting *dan*: there was already a wide-spread colonization of the outskirts of the Novgorod Land by the Russians on a permanent basis, as a result of which many small towns, *ostrozhi* (wooden fortresses), and winter quarters appeared in the Northern Urals⁸⁾.

By the end of the 14th century, Novgorod merchants had sent large expeditions beyond the Urals. It is known that in 1384, the detachments

North-Eastern Europe, Novgorod later became an active partner of the Hanseatic League, a trade association of cities in North-Western Europe, created in 1358. After the annexation of Novgorod by Moscow in 1478, the territory of the Moscow principality more than doubled at the expense of Novgorod Land.

- 4) Ushkuy—the small ship or boat. Ushkuynik—river robber; Novgorod ushkuyniks—groups of daring men who went on predatory campaigns for prey. In Novgorod, young people, setting off on a voyage under the leadership of experienced warriors, thus underwent a kind of initiation rite, earned glory for themselves and performed feats in the name of Veliky Novgorod, thereby glorifying their homeland.
- 5) Dan—“to give”, monetary or natural tribute duty, quitrent; urgent payment of the conquered people to the winner.
- 6) Promyshlennye lyudi—people engaged in the trade-hunting for fur-bearing animals or the organization of such a business, sometimes on a large scale, attracting dozens of people for this at their own expense.
- 7) Voguls and Ostyaks—the old names of the Mansi and Khanty people, respectively, who formed the native population of the northern part of Western Siberia.
- 8) Ostrozhok—a small fort, a small fortified point, for the purpose of defense, surrounded by a wall of vertically installed logs, pointed at the top. Zimovye is a temporary dwelling built by hunters for the winter period. Until the 18th century, these were fortified buildings that made up the original settlements of Russian promyshlennye people and Cossacks in the Urals and Siberia, which would subsequently grow until they received the status of a city like Irkutsk.

of Novgorod pioneers reached the lower stream of the Ob River. Novgorod was interested in obtaining furs from the slopes of the Northern Urals for trade with the Hanseatic cities. In addition, at that time, the demand for furs began to grow in the markets of the other Baltic States and South Russia. Therefore, Novgorod people went to the slopes of the Northern Urals for sable, ermine, marten, arctic fox and squirrel.

After the subordination of Novgorod to Moscow in 1478, the Moscow *voivodes*⁹⁾ began to collect tribute from the former eastern Novgorod lands. In 1483, a special military campaign to the Ural land of Pelym took place, under the joint command of the voivode Prince Fyodor Kurbsky and Ivan Saltykov, in which the inhabitants of Veliky Ustyug¹⁰⁾ also took part. Moscow voivodes with military men marched along Tavda River and further, the rivers of Tobol and Irtysh, finally reaching the Ob. As a result of this campaign, practically all *kniazec*¹¹⁾ of the left bank of the Ob below the mouth of the Irtysh recognized their subordination to the Grand Prince of Moscow, Ivan the Third. It is also known about several other large campaigns of Moscow voivodes beyond the Urals. For instance, in 1499, a large campaign took place under the leadership of two voivodes, Prince Semyon Kurbsky, and Prince Petr Ushaty, with more than four thousand military people who came from the rivers of the Northern Dvina, Vaga and Pinega as well as from Veliky Ustyug, Vyatka and other towns and territories of the Russian North. The winter campaign took place on skies and lasted until spring. It resulted with the appearance of Russian troops in the lower parts of the Ob basin. The main result of these campaigns, which lasted till the beginning of the 16th century, was the strong consolidation of the north-

9) Voivode—a military leader, senior in the army, appointed from among the representatives of the nobility. In the 16th century to the first half of the 18th century, in the Russian state—an official who manages the administrative territory.

10) Veliky (Great) Ustyug—a city in the Russian North. According to historical sources, it was regularly mentioned from the beginning of the 13th century. In 1999, it was declared the birthplace of the all-Russian Santa Claus, *Ded Moroz* (“Grandfather Frost”), making the city a popular place for family tourism.

11) *Kniazec* (“little prince”)—this is how the Russians called the chiefs and other leaders of the aboriginal clan groups, distinguishing them from the bulk of their people.

ern part of Western Siberia with the Moscow principal, the Grand Prince Ivan the Third; his son Vassily the Third, who became the Grand Prince after him, even decided to include in his title “the ruler of the lands of Obdorskaya and Kondinskaya”, which laid in the lower parts of the Ob basin.

Nevertheless, despite its beginning so long ago, the advance of the Russian people eastward through the 16th century was extremely slow. The fall of the trading activity of the Hanseatic League, following the Moscow defeat of Novgorod trade, sharply reduced the need for the export of Russian furs, and the external factor—the Tatar khanates, which were fragments of the Golden Horde—not only prevented the penetration of the Russian population to the east, but also, at times, forced the Moscow government itself to take active military action, both offensive and defensive. The need for furs, which was reduced as a result of the defeat of Novgorod, was satisfied mainly through the supply of sables from Perm and Pechora.

However, in the middle of the 16th century, the trade relations of the Russian state, both with Western Europe and with the East, expanded. In 1553, the British opened a sea route to Russia around the Scandinavian Peninsula and after that for several decades tried to go directly to the fur-catching areas: agents of British trading companies engaged in the fur trade were scouring the entire Russian North, and already in the 1580s they moved across the Urals to the Ob. As a result, in response to an increase in the flow of “soft gold” (fur) from Muscovy, a lively fair of Russian fur was established in Leipzig in the 16th century.

In addition, after the annexation of the Kazan and Astrakhan khanates to the Russian state in the 1550s, the merchants of Transcaucasia, Turkish Ottoman Empire, Iran (then *Persia*) and Central Asia grew interested in Russian furs. With all this, both from the west and from the east, the Russian market achieved high demands on the quality of furs, which was even registered in the Trade Book, created in 1575 by the government of Ivan the Fourth (aka “Ivan the Terrible”). All that led to the very quick growth of the interest across the most active part of the commercial circles of the Russian state, especially among the inhabitants of northern

Pomorie, and then of the Moscow government.

Meanwhile, the activity of Russian merchants led to the fact that the North of Western Siberia was well mastered by them even before the campaign of Cossack ataman¹²⁾ Ermak, which is usually considered to be the beginning of the annexation of Siberia by the Russian state. Already in the 1550s the inhabitants of the Russian North, the *Pomors*¹³⁾, knew that in the east, beyond the Ugra land, lies a certain place called “Mangazeya” that was rich in fur-bearing animals. Later the British became interested in this information. Apparently, by this time, the Pomors moved along the coast of the Arctic Ocean. There is documented information that by this time they already reached the mouth of the Ob. Anyway, in the 1570s the land (“zemlitsa”¹⁴⁾) called Mangazeya was already well known to Russian polar sailors. And during the reign of Fyodor Ioannovich (Ivan the Fourth’s son), at the Moscow markets, the Mangazeya sables, along with Pechora sables, were considered to be the best. As a result of such violent activity, by the end of the 16th century, the lower reaches of the rivers Pur and Taz (flowing into the Gulf of Ob between the Ob and the Yenisei) were actually captured by the Pomor commercial people, who also built a number of fortified trading posts, including at the site of the future Mangazeya. Thus, while the Moscow government in the eastern direction was still engaged in the development of the vast territory of the recently annexed Volga region, considering the Siberian Khanate as a buffer state on the new eastern border, the Pomor merchants continued moving further and further to the east, looking for new areas rich in sable and entering into trade contacts with the aboriginal population, while creating a network of *zimovyeyes* (winter

12) Ataman—the elected leader of the free cossacks (see below). Those who were accepted for public service in the 16th–17th centuries sometimes became appointed as a commander of the unit.

13) “Pomors” are residents of Pomorie. In Russia, Pomorie was called the coast of the White Sea.

14) Zemlitsa—literally: a small land, territory. In Siberia, “zemlitsa” was the name for the territories inhabited by tribal groups of aborigines, which, as a result of their annexation to the Russian state, were taxed (dan). At the same time, the “zemlitsas” became taxable units, volosts.

bases) and small “towns”.

It is also known, that long before the founding of Mangazeya in 1601, the Pomor merchants were well acquainted with the regions of the rivers Taz and Turukhan as with the lower reaches of the Yenisei: in 1595, the Dutch, who stood near the coast of Vaygach island (at Yugorsky Peninsula), heard from Russian sailors that from Kholmogory (a city in the lower reaches of the Northern Dvina river) some several ships came to the river Ob every year, and even went further to the river Gallisi (Yenisei), where they traded with the locals. Moreover, information about the penetration of Russian commercial people by sea spread far to the east by the second half of the 16th century and, in Western Europe, the English and Dutch, relying on this information, repeatedly attempted to find the northeastern route to India. At least five such expeditions are known, and all of them were organized between 1580 and 1625.

The foreign policy successes of the Moscow government on the eastern borders (the annexation of the Kazan and Astrakhan khanates) not only opened trade routes to Asia for Russian merchants, but also contributed to the formation of a pro-Russian orientation within the Siberian Khanate. Russian victories made a serious impression on Yediger Khan, a ruler from the local Taybugid dynasty; in 1495, the Tatar Bek Makhmet Taybugi overthrew the Siberian Khan from the Sheibanid dynasty, who were the descendants of Sheiban, the grandson of Genghis Khan, and had occupied the Siberian throne since the formation of the Siberian Khanate at the end of the 14th century. In the 1550s, Khan Ediger acquired a dangerous enemy in the person of Kuchum, also Genghizid, one of the sons of the Bukhara Emir Murtaza. Kuchum planned to restore historical justice and return the Siberian throne to the descendants of Genghis Khan by occupying it for himself¹⁵⁾. Forced to seek allies for himself, Khan Ediger decided to accept the protection from the Russian Tsar, promising to pay him a lot of tribute (dan). In response, Ivan the Fourth agreed to take the Siberian Khanate “under his own high hand” and added to his old titles one more title: “sovereign

15) Kuchum was the son from one of the younger wives of Murtaza and therefore did not actually have a chance to ascend the Bukhara throne.

of all Siberian lands.”

The annexation of the Volga region to the Muscovite kingdom and the transfer of borders in the east to the Urals drew attention to the “new zemlitsa” from commercial people. The greatest activity in the Kama region and Perm lands adjacent to the Middle Urals was developed by the Stroganov family of merchants¹⁶⁾, who moved to Sol Vychegodskaya city from Novgorod during the reign of Ivan the Third. Having received land near the Kama River to search for copper, silver and tin ore in 1556, the Stroganovs in just two years achieved the right to engage in salt mining in those places. At the same time, it is known that Anika Stroganov and his sons in the 1560s were actively engaged in the purchase of furs in the north of Western Siberia; he sent his people through the upper reaches of the Pechora River to the Ob River to trade with local tribes, receiving expensive furs for very small change. It is clear that he was interested in maintaining this situation by hiding his trade from the government. So the desire of the Stroganovs to expand their monopoly rights to the exploitation of natural resources beyond the Urals was quite natural. From the late 1560s they began promotion of all kinds of entrepreneur activities to appropriate the resources of Siberia, so by the beginning of the 1570s they already had a network of their fortifications in the areas adjacent to the Urals and finally received from Ivan the Fourth the right to create their own armed units. In 1574, the Stroganovs received the tsar’s permission to build their fortified towns on such rivers as Tobol and Irtysh.

But by this time, the situation for the Russian state on international stage had become seriously complicated: Moscow was failing in the Livonian War, which was fairly prolonged on the western borders, dur-

16) The Stroganovs belonged to the richest merchants of Russia. Repeatedly supported Moscow princes and tsars financially, they received serious benefits for their activities. Being engaged in salt mining, under Tsar Ivan the Terrible, they received a 20-year exemption from all taxes. In the Cathedral Code of 1649, the Stroganovs were registered in a separate line as “eminent people”. Under Petr I (aka “Peter the Great”), the Stroganovs entered the Russian nobility and accepted the title of barons. Under Catherine II—the title of counts, first of the Holy Roman Empire, then of the Russian Empire.

ing which the Rzeczpospolita (then Poland) and Sweden became both opponents of the Russians. Such a peculiar situation was smartly used by the Crimean Tatar Khanate, also supported by the Ottoman Empire, who gained strength and began to raid Russian territory more actively. In this situation, Russia was forced to abandon an active Eastern policy. Kuchum took advantage of this situation and succeeded in defeating the Siberian Khan Ediger in 1563 and seizing the whole Siberian Khanate. At first, Kuchum confirmed his loyalty to Moscow and continued to pay *dan*. But after the Crimean Khan Devlet-Girei burned Moscow in 1571, Kuchum's behavior changed dramatically—he not only ceased to consider himself a vassal of the Russian Tsar, ceasing to pay *dan*, but also, relying on help from detachments of Nogai nomads and Bukhara troops, who had previously helped him to seize the Siberian throne, began to organize armed raids on the Ural lands, that were already the possessions of the Stroganovs.

In such a situation, the Stroganovs had to attract the free Cossacks¹⁷⁾ to defend their possessions. The result of this was the military campaign of Ataman Yermak in Siberia, which ended in the defeat of Khan Kuchum and the beginning of the annexation of all of North-East Asia by the Russian state¹⁸⁾.

Ataman of the Volga Cossacks, Yermak, previously served for about

17) A “Cossack” is a free, independent person, an adventurer, a vagabond (from the Turkic languages). By the end of the 16th century in the lower reaches of the rivers of Eastern Europe, a number of what might be considered republics of military brotherhoods developed, whose representatives lived by robbing neighboring territories and trading ships passing along the rivers. The Russian government sought to use these republics to defend its southern borders and periodically recruited Cossacks as an armed force. As a result, some of the Cossacks who retained their independence from the state remained free, and those who entered the service became servicemen and received the sovereign's salary (monetary, grain and salt).

18) For a long time, there has been a point of view in the scientific literature that Yermak set off on a campaign against Kuchum on September 1, 1581, which dragged on for a long time. Professor R.G. Skrynnikov, in our opinion, proved with reasonable certainty that the campaign, which began on September 1, 1582, went very rapidly and the capital of the Siberian Khanate was already occupied on October 26. At the same pace, later detachments of Russian military servicemen made their campaigns along the rivers of Eastern Siberia.

twenty years in the troops of Ivan the Terrible, and actively participated with his detachment in the events of the Livonian War, where he obtained extensive experience in commanding Cossack detachments. At the end of the winter of 1582, when the war was already close to the end, he left the western theater of military operations and returned to the Volga. There he received an invitation from the Stroganovs to enter their service to protect their possessions from the raids of Kuchum's troops.

When Yermak and his Cossacks arrived to the Stroganovs' land in the Perm territory adjacent to the Urals, they realized that the main military forces of the Siberian Khanate were located north from there, as Kuchum's eldest son, Alei was just raiding Russian territories. Learning that the Siberian Khanate was not expecting any counter attack, Yermak decided to march straight to the capital of the Khanate, the city of Kashlyk, or Isker. The Stroganovs supplied Yermak's detachment with everything necessary for such expedition: all weapons, powder, other ammunition (including even three light cannons), food, and so on. The detachment, numbering about 540 Cossacks, set out on a campaign on September 1, 1582. They moved hastily on the rivers, using *strugi* (special boats¹⁹⁾). Yermak and his people also took all the humans they met on the way with them, just to be sure that any information about their movement would not be spread. As a result, on October 26, 1582, the Cossacks, absolutely unexpectedly for Kuchum, appeared in front of Kashlyk. The army hastily assembled by Kuchum could not provide serious resistance to Yermak's detachment, despite the fact that the Tatars also had firearms, including cannons, and so they were defeated. Kuchum, with his entourage and guards, fled to the east, to the Barabinskaya Steppe. A month later, on December 5, north of Kashlyk, the Cossacks defeated the main military forces of the Siberian Khanate, which was headed by Kuchum's nephew Mahmetkul.

19) Strug—Russian river flat-bottomed sailing-rowing vessel of various sizes. On the Northern Dvina river there were strugs with a displacement of up to 160 tons. Yermak's strugs, considering the size of the rivers along which he crossed the Urals, were small.

After overthrowing Khan Ediger in 1563, Kuchum for seven years fought against the Tatar nobility with the help of the detachments of Bukharians and Nogais who came with him, spreading Islam. The Tatar nobility was forced to submit to Kuchum, but their dissatisfaction with the new ruler still remained. Therefore, when Yermak defeated its army, the Siberian Khanate disintegrated: the Tatar *Murzas*²⁰⁾ ceased to obey Kuchum and began to pursue an independent policy – some of them became allies of the Cossacks, others showed complete independence from anyone, while Seid Khan, the nephew of the former-ruler Ediger Khan, ousted by Kuchum, even began to do some attempts to return the Siberian throne to the Taybugids dynasty. But the bulk of the semi-sedentary Tatar population as well as the Khanty and Mansi, who were previously subordinate to Kuchum, recognized the power of the Cossacks and began to pay them *dan* in the same amount as they paid to Kuchum.

Despite the fact that original plan to raid the Siberian Khanate aimed nothing except to seize prey, now Yermak's Cossacks unexpectedly found themselves able to subdue this semi-nomadic state formation, which occupied almost the entire south of Western Siberia from the Ural Mountains to the forest-steppe territories of the Ob region. But Kuchum, now roaming the steppes of southern Siberia, still remained a serious enemy and managed to take revenge on Yermak for his earlier defeat: on the night of August 5-6, 1585, Yermak, accompanied with only small part of his detachment returning from another campaign in search of Kuchum, was killed in a fierce battle at the place of his overnight stay. By this time, other military detachments already began to come to Siberia from the Moscow kingdom to build fortified points and to complete the final subordination of Siberia to the Moscow tsar. The first Russian fortified point on the territory of the Siberian Khanate was the city of Tyumen, where the first permanent Russian garrison was located. The city was located on the river Tura, a tributary of the river Tobol, which made it possible to control the route from the European

20) Murza—from the Persian “prince”. The title of the Tatar nobility. Tatar murzas who switched to the Russian service often received princely titles.

part of Russia (then “mainland”) to Siberia. The construction of *izbas*²¹⁾ for military servicemen testified to the fact that the Russians came to this land in earnest for a long time.

The next Russian fortified point was Tobolsk. According to documentary sources, the Tobolsk *ostrog*²²⁾ was built in the spring of 1587 by a detachment of military servicemen led by the *pismenny golova* (“literary head” in Russian, meaning certain rank of state servicemen)²³⁾ Danila Chulkov. The place for the *ostrog* was chosen very smartly on the top of the Alafei mountain just two *versts*²⁴⁾ from the mouth of the river Tobol and 15 *versts* from Kashlyk, the former capital of the Siberian Khanate. Tobolsk naturally inherited political and administrative ties that had developed over decades from the former Tatar capital. Therefore, already in 1590, when the Siberian Khanate finally fell and its capital²⁵⁾, Kashlyk, began to rapidly lose its role, and the first voivode, Prince Vladimir Koltsov-Masalsky, arrived to the Tobolsk *ostrog*, Tobolsk achieved the status of a city and became the military-administrative center of all Siberia.

During the first two or three years of its existence, Tobolsk depended on Tyumen as the very first Russian city in the new “sovereign patrimony”²⁶⁾, but since it became a city itself, all the relations between Mos-

21) Izba—a type of housing for the Russian population of the forest zone and the North, built from logs.

22) Ostrog—in contrast to the ostrozhek (see above), was a small wooden fortress with towers (blind and passable), ditches and other defensive fortifications. The walls of the fortress could be in the form of vertically dug sharpened logs, like in the ostrozhek, but they could also be “gorodny”—a chopped wall, sometimes—double, with a space filled with stones.

23) Pismenny golova (“the literary head”)—is one of the officials who formed the regional administration of the Moscow state and subordinate to the city (district) voivode. They were appointed from among the nobles.

24) Versta—the Russian unit of distance measurement, equal to 1066.8 meters. It was used before the introduction of the decimal system in the USSR in 1927.

25) The end of the existence of the Siberian Khanate is considered the capture of Seid Khan by the Russians in 1587.

26) Patrimony—family real estate, inhabited land. In Siberia, the entire territory annexed to the Russian state was considered by the official authorities as “the sovereign’s patrimony.” The Moscow tsars were seen as the successors of the khans of the Golden Horde (the “white tsar” was the ruler of the White Horde—the main part of

cow and the Siberian administration began to be conducted through it. Moreover, Moscow demanded that all issues from the Siberian governor must be resolved through Tobolsk, which was a new thing in the practice of administrative management of the Russian state. Due to the distance from Moscow, it was difficult to control the actions of each individual voivode beyond the Urals, so the central government really faced the need not only to control the activities of the Siberian voivodes, but also to unite them, to set a general direction in solving public policy issues.

In the Russian state system of the 17th century, each city or town with its *uyezd*²⁷⁾ directly depended on the central institutions, but at the same time, in some remote areas there was a new practice of the administrative unification of several *uyezds* into larger units called *razryad*²⁸⁾. The Tobolsk *razryad* probably became the very first attempt of such a formation when it was introduced in 1590. The most important moment in the history of Tobolsk was the establishing there of an archbishop's chair as early as in 1621. The newly obtained status of the spiritual center of all Siberia contributed to an even greater increase of its importance as the main city beyond the Urals.

The exceptional importance of Tobolsk and the large volume of document circulation forced the Moscow authorities to appoint two voivodes and two *diaks*²⁹⁾ to that city, and at least two *pismenny golovas*. At the

the Jochi ulus, the possession of Genghis Khan's older son) and the annexation of the Siberian Khanate was only the submission to the central government of the still autonomous part of the Horde. Other Siberian territories that did not know statehood were viewed in Moscow as a continuation of the Siberian Khanate.

- 27) *Uyezd*—in ancient Russia: *okruga*, a group of *volosts* that gravitated towards the city, a territorial and administrative unit, the basis of the administrative division of the Russian state.
- 28) *Razryad*—large military-administrative units created on the outskirts of the Russian state by combining some *uyezds* for operational management of the territory and solving military problems that arise, a prototype of the future *gubernies* (prefectures, or states).
- 29) *Diak*—a key-person of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Russian state. *Diaks* were sort of clerks who supervised the work of central government bodies; they were assistants to the heads of large orders or headed minor, secondary orders and local government bodies, heading the *syezhaia izba* (*razrad* or *uyezd* office) and the whole process

same time, one of the voivodes, officially called “voivode first class”, was usually chosen from the social elite of Russian society, being sometimes even a relative of the tsar’s family. Under Tsar Boris Godunov, it was voivode Semyon Saburov; under the Romanov dynasty there were a few members of the Saltykov family, Andrey Naryshkin, the Sheremetevs, the princes Golitsyn, and so on. The office of the Tobolsk voivodes was also used as a place of honorary exile for “unreliable” (according to the government documents) representatives of the nobility, such as Matvey and Petr Godunovs, Prince Yuri Suleshev, Prince Fyodor Telyatevsky, princes Ivan and Grigory Kurakin, and Prince Dmitry Trubetskoy.

The Tobolsk voivodes continued to occupy a higher position than their colleagues in other regions, even after few other *razryads* were established in Tomsk (1629), Yakutsk (1638) and Yeniseisk (1677). The voivodes of the new administrative formations continued to carry out their activities and to keep contacts with Moscow through the mediation of the Tobolsk voivodes. This was also facilitated by the fact that the supply of the Siberian garrisons had been continued through Tobolsk. All kinds of supplies, cash and grain salaries went through Tobolsk to other parts of Siberia, and the whole general distribution was also made in Tobolsk. At the same time, the Tobolsk voivodes had to ensure the delivery of supplies and salaries to certain transshipment points, some of them often being very remote, and control their arrival to the destination.

Tobolsk voivodes, if necessary, were engaged in search for all kinds of disturbances and abuses by voivodes of the other places and fortresses of Siberia, including those of the *razryad* level. And if the demand arose, they even appointed some of the Tobolsk nobles and the *boyarskie deti* (“boyar children” in Russian)³⁰⁾ to the place of the deceased or removed

of office work. Since the 15th century, diaks have been receiving estates for their service. In the hierarchy of the Sovereign Court, they place between boyars and nobles.

30) Boyarskie deti (“boyar children”, or sons)—an estate that existed in Russia at the end of the 14th century to the beginning of the 18th century. In the 16th–17th centuries, boyar children, along with the nobles, were included in the number of “servicemen in the homeland” and carried out compulsory service, for which they received estates, were registered in tenths in the counties and constituted the local cavalry. In the 17th

voivodes, taking on direct responsibility for managing *thas uyez*d.

In fact, the Tobolsk voivodes were the commanders-in-chief of the Siberian armed forces, with a right to make a decision to provide any military or administrative assistance to all Siberian towns and fortresses, and not only by the forces of the Tobolsk garrison, but also through giving instructions to other voivodes about sending detachments of a certain number to help each other, at their own discretion moving military servicemen from one garrison to another. They were also supposed to take measures to extend the power of the Moscow sovereign to new territories, assisting other voivodes in such activities.

Almost within the first years of its existence, Tobolsk was overgrown by its *posad*³¹⁾. The population of the town inhabitants grew so rapidly that, by the end of the 17th century, it more than doubled the number of the city's military servicemen. At the same time, arable farming was developing around Tobolsk; in the 1620s, it grew so much that made it possible to provide bread (actually, wheat) for the entire South of Western Siberia.

Convenient geographical location allowed Tobolsk to inherit from the former capital of the Siberian Khanate the role of the most important trade center, including its international directions. Bukhara merchants, who previously carried out trade between Central Asia and the Siberian Khanate, resumed those relations since 1595, bringing their first caravans to Tobolsk, and then gradually began to settle in the main city of Siberia, making this trade permanent. The main flow of goods from Siberia to the European part of Russia, and vice versa, went through Tobolsk, which entrusted the voivode of this city to take care of customs control.

All these circumstances not only allowed the Tobolsk voivodes to play

century, numerous boyar children did not always have the opportunity to get an estate and became a contingent for the formation of regiments of the “new system”—soldiers and dragoons, in Siberia—for service in the Cossacks. In a number of cases, boyar children, having no means of subsistence, were forced to become slaves.

31) Posad—originally inhabited by *posad* (trade and handicraft) people, the territory outside the fortified princely, boyar or church settlement (Kremlin, Detinets, monastery). The *posad* was the part from which the future city grew.

an important role in the governing of Siberia in the 17th century, but also led them to become the main representatives of the tsarist power in the distant and huge “sovereign patrimony”. This also determined the role of Tobolsk in the emergence of some Siberian cities and fortresses, the formation of their garrisons, the providing of military servicemen not only with the sovereign’s salary, but also with everything necessary to perform their functions and duties.

If the construction of Tyumen in 1586 and Tobolsk a year later showed that the Russians had come to Siberia to stay, then the Berezovsk ostrog, set up a few months later than Tobolsk, consolidated Russian influence on the northern outskirts of the former Siberian Khanate. The construction of an administrative center in the lower reaches of the Ob River made it possible to take under state control the movement of commercial people to Siberia through the Northern Urals, who were actively engaged in fur trade in the North of Siberia and trade with the local population. Berezov was built on the left, northern bank of the Sosva River, about 20 versts from its confluence with the Ob.

Further advancement of detachments of Russian military servicemen to the east took place along the Ob. The first Russian settlement on the Ob, Obgorodok, emerged in 1585 on the right bank of the Ob at the confluence with the Irtysh River. This town existed until 1594, when a decision was made to move it up the river in order to secure the already paid *dan* (*yasak*)³²⁾ territories to the Russian administration and create conditions for further movement up the Ob and its tributaries of *yasak* collectors³³⁾. One of the reasons for the transfer of the Russian town to these limits was the existence on the right bank of the Ob River of the so-called Piebold Horde, a military-political formation of quite numerous

32) *Yasak* is a natural tax, *dan*, a tribute levied by furs. It is assumed that the term was introduced by Genghis Khan and approved in his code of laws “*Yasse*”. In Pre-revolutionary Russia, *yasak* was natural tax obtained from the peoples of Siberia and the North, mainly furs. Until the beginning of the XVIII century was also collected from the peoples of the Volga region.

33) *Yasak* collectors—military servicemen who used to be sent in small groups to collect *yasak* straight from the already taxed aboriginal population. In the outlying, border districts, their task was also to collect information about not yet explained *zemlitsa*, “land”.

Ob-Selkups, which prevented the advance of the Russians further east and put political pressure on the Ostyak groups already exploited by the Russians. Therefore, the construction of a Russian fortified point on the border with the Piebald Horde, called Surgut, made it possible to restrain the penetration of hostile Selkups into the already imposed *yasak* regions and, at the same time, have a base for the penetration, if necessary, for the detachments of military servicemen into the territory of the Piebald Horde itself.

The need for the subordination of the Piebald Horde to the power of the Russian administration arose in the coming years. The fact is that serious concern in Tobolsk and in Moscow was caused by a rumor about an attempt by Kuchum, who continued to harbor illusions about the recapture of his khanate, to establish allied relations with the *kniazec* of the Piebald Horde Vonya, who was once in a certain political dependence on the Siberian Khanate. Vonya could put up to 400 warriors against the Russian troops, and, acting together with Kuchum, could even destroy Surgut. The Russian government took such information very seriously and decided to inflict a “preemptive strike” on the Piebald Horde, to equip a powerful military expedition against it. It was supposed to gather in the spring of 1597 in Surgut a few detachments from several Siberian cities: 50 military servicemen and 100 Tatars from Tobolsk, 50 Cossacks with five regimental *pishchal* (cannons) from Berezov and 100 Ostyaks of Prince Igichey Alacheyev. In Surgut they were supposed to be accompanied by 100 Surgut military servicemen and 150 Ostyaks from reliable *volosts* (districts). It was assumed that the head of the campaign would be Surgut *pismenny golova* Ivan Kamelin. However, that spring, for some unknown reason, the campaign against the Piebald Horde did not take place: the new voivode, Prince Semyon Lobanov-Rostovsky, and the *pismenny golova* Ivan Rzhevsky, both sent to Surgut in the same 1597, were actually ordered to use the same forces to make a trip to the Piebald Horde, but the schedule was changed into the spring of the next year, 1598. It must be assumed now that finally the campaign against the Selkups took place, since it was after 1598 that the Piebald Horde, as a political entity, ceases to be mentioned in documen-

tary sources, and in the center of its territory the Narym ostrog appears, with a garrison of about 20 yearlings³⁴⁾ sent there from Surgut.

Since the Narym ostrog was built on the Ob River, but not far from the mouth of the river Ket, the further advance of the detachments of *yasak* collectors was quite expected up this river with the construction of a Russian fortified point. Such was the Ketsky ostrog that soon appeared on the river Ket, through which the advance of Russian military servicemen to the Middle Yenisei began.

If the northern cities ensured the consolidation of their uyezds “under the sovereign’s hand” and established, to a large extent, control over the advancement of fur resources, then Tobolsk, which became the main city of Siberia, experienced a serious threat from the steppes, primarily from Kuchum himself.

To cover Tobolsk and to defend the Tatar volosts that turned themselves to the Russian side from Kuchum, it was decided to build a fortress city at the mouth of the Tara River. In 1594, Prince Andrei Yeletsky with a detachment of 147 Moscow warriors and 20 carpenters from city Perm were sent to Siberia to build that fortress. In Tobolsk, they were joined by the Kazan military servicemen, prisoners of the war, exiled to Tobolsk to serve, mostly Tatars and Bashkirs, about 500 people in total. In addition to them, military servicemen from other Siberian places also took part in the campaign. Although the new city was built a day’s journey from the mouth of the Tara River, it got its name from the name of this river.

Tara Fortress with its enforced garrison strongly covered Tobolsk from the steppes. Along the way, in a parallel with the construction of Tara, another big task was solved: how to provide the growing Russian population with salt. The construction of Tara significantly facilitated access to the Yamysh salt lake³⁵⁾, located in the steppe around the Irtysh

34) Yearlings—military service people sent from the garrisons to serve in fortified points, ostrogs in remote areas. Initially, they were sent really for a year, until the arrival of the shift—the next unit. Gradually, with the expansion of Russian possessions in Siberia, yearlings were sent to the service for a longer period—for 3–4 or more years.

35) Now—Lake Kalatuz, 45 km southeast of Pavlodar, Kazakhstan.

River. Groups of military servicemen from different garrisons were sent to that lake almost every year, although those trips were rather dangerous. Salt could be brought in very large quantities. In 1629, for example, more than 350 tons of salt were brought to Tobolsk from Yamysh.

Tara, being located on the border of Russian possessions, for a long time practically did not have its own peasant population. As a result, despite having land suitable for arable farming, for a long time there was not enough locally grown grain in Tara: with a large number of garrisons and the inability of military servicemen to work as farmers, its small peasant population (no more than 30 people even in the middle of the 17th century) was not able to provide it with bread, making up no more than 1/8 of the total need. The Tara voivodes were annually forced to send special military groups to Tobolsk and Tyumen to buy bread.

The construction of Berezov, Surgut and Tara finally consolidated practically the entire territory of the former Siberian Khanate under the rule of the Russian administration. Tobolsk, having become the main city of Siberia, was now surrounded by Russian cities, and increased its role as a military-administrative center of all Russian possessions in the East.

Thus, the slow penetration of Russian people into Siberia through the Northern Urals, which began long ago, was furthered by Yermak's campaign in the end of the 16th century, and ended up in the subordination by the Muscovite kingdom of almost the entire territory of Western Siberia. Russian administrative centers with military garrisons created on the annexed territory made it possible not only to restrain Kuchum's attempts to regain the khanate, but also, to a large extent, to control the flows of Siberian furs. Among other things during this period, the prospects for the further advancement of the Russian people in the East and the expansion of the borders of the "sovereign patrimony" were opening up.

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