

Brief Abstract

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The Muscovite Ruling Oligarchy of 1547-1564: its Composition, Political Behaviour, and Attitudes towards Reform

In recent decades considerable progress has been made in elucidating the assumptions and the dynamics of Muscovite court politics, and further scrutiny is attempted in this enquiry into the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564. Chapters 1 to 3 are devoted to groundwork. In Chapter 1 an introduction to the ruling oligarchy is provided against the background of Muscovy's contemporary government and population. The goal of territorial aggrandisement pursued by Muscovite rulers from Ivan III favoured "rationalisation" of the central government and reforms of the army's discipline and technology; moreover, the wars of conquest left untouched no element of the population. Tsar Ivan and his exercise of authority were especially strongly affected: the precedents established by earlier rulers encouraged him to consider Muscovy his private votchina, but such an attitude became increasingly anachronistic as the realms expanded and the tasks of governing it grew too complex for any one man. During the Oprichnina he attempted to resolve this contradiction by ruling autocratically; autocratic rule and those circumstances favouring it by 1564 are the dissertation's main theme. Even before 1564 Ivan IV was the central actor in Muscovite politics, and criteria are advanced whereby advisers close enough to qualify for the ruling oligarchy are identified. The mid-sixteenth century, as a prelude to autocracy, was a critical moment in Muscovite politics; the rich and varied historiography is surveyed in Chapter 2. The sources – their authors, dates, and value as historical evidence – are critically assessed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 to 7 comprise the heart of the dissertation. In Chapters 4 to 6 an attempt is made to identify members of the ruling oligarchy of 1546-1564; their political behaviour and where feasible, their political attitudes are explored. In Chapter 7 the attitudes individual members maintained towards particular reforms envisaged at mid-century are explored. The dissertation's main conclusions are systematically expounded in Chapter 8, and as appropriate, their broader implications for Russian and European history are brought out.

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This dissertation is primarily an enquiry into Muscovite court politics of the mid-sixteenth century – its actors, its premises, and its dynamics. Such an enquiry is justified inasmuch as the 1547-1564 period was unusually rich in fundamental changes – changes which taken together, imparted a noticeably more modern cast to the realm – and we could legitimately seek to ascertain which Muscovites presided over the grand principality's destinies at that time, how they gained their influence, and in what contexts they might have deployed it. In 1547 Ivan IV formally adopted the tsar's title which Russian rulers bore until the Revolution. His growing role in court politics was thereby symbolised; the fluctuations in the political fortunes of boyar cliques would become less important than during his minority. During the late 1540s the attempts made by Ivan III and Vasily III to subdue the Kazan' khanate were resumed, and when Kazan' fell in October 1552, the foundations were laid for the Russian Empire which Peter the Great proclaimed; moreover, the Astrakhan' khanate fell beneath Muscovite domination in 1556, and in the Livonian War, which began in 1558, Ivan sought conquests on his northwestern flank. His ambitious programme of territorial expansion held far-reaching consequences for his dominions. Considerable effort was required to tap Muscovy's financial resources to support his wars; furthermore, the army's fighting capacity needed to be upgraded. New central government agencies showing at least moderate specialisation of tasks were instituted to help realise both goals; the modern Weberian State was being built, although it existed as such in Muscovy only from the mid-seventeenth century. A barrage of legislation was introduced unprecedented in

Muscovy and unequalled until Peter the Great's reforming zeal burst upon the realm; the new laws would probably provide useful guidelines for the administration of the conquered territories. Still further change was initiated during the winter of 1564-1565 as the Oprichnina began and Muscovy was divided politically and administratively into two parts, the oprichnina and the zemshchina. The winter of 1564-1565 also witnessed the beginning of autocratic rule in Russia – we emphasise, nevertheless, that autocracy was never monolithic – and thus, the 1547-1564 period can be considered a prelude to autocracy. In the dissertation we strive particularly to identify those political circumstances which at mid-century favoured the onset of autocratic rule.

The enquiry into mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics is most appropriately pursued within the framework of three fundamental questions: Muscovy's political order and more specifically, Ivan's role, the ruling oligarchy and its membership, and the dynamics determining the political fortunes of members. In this abstract the range of issues which are generated by these questions and of conclusions cannot be presented fully; a sampling of those queries and conclusions which seem most important must suffice. Yet even within the dissertation itself, various topical queries cannot be answered satisfactorily because of inadequate evidence; several instances are mentioned in this abstract. Nor are queries necessarily handled more easily because the pertinent evidence is relatively abundant: various sources are marred by tendentious editing. A further complication is that while the historiography surrounding mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy is rich and varied, objective accounts are rather rarer: Ivan IV and his reign have evoked strong sentiments in numerous historians, popular and scientific alike, and biases resulting from Marxist or other political preferences must also be recognised. On the other hand, antecedents can be traced to the approaches adopted in the dissertation to the three aforementioned questions surrounding mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics.

Various issues pertaining to Muscovy's political order from 1547 onwards and Ivan's part therein are now raised; where appropriate, we indicate how our approaches are reconciled with previous scholarship and suggest whether and if so, then how our treatment might be accounted original. It is generally agreed that the contemporary Muscovite political order was highly centralised; Ivan needed not greatly to fear opposition arising from large and historically important territories, and the two remaining udel princes, Prince Yury Vasil'evich and Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa, were largely under his thumb. In fact, the Kremlin and more specifically, the court were the focal point of Muscovy's political and military order, and in probing Muscovite politics during the 1547-1564 period, we may therefore focus upon the Kremlin and the court. Moreover, most historians have believed that Ivan was the central actor in Muscovy's political order at mid-century; accepting this result, we are allowed accordingly to devote attention to the nature of the authority he wielded after 1547.

How Ivan exercised authority varied according to circumstances, and diverging assessments of his manner of ruling have been offered. Certain historians from Tatishchev onwards have portrayed him as an autocrat; in fact, the Oprichnina has on occasion been reckoned the moment when autocratic rule began in Russia. Yet Klyuchevsky affirmed that at least until the seventeenth century, Muscovy's rulers presided over their dominions much as a "typical votchinnik" ruled his votchina; this manner of ruling mirrored reality before the grand principality began expanding under Ivan III but continued to influence the mentality of Muscovy's rulers even after the realm grew too large for them to exercise the predominantly direct, personal authority characteristic of the "typical votchinnik". What is more, amidst the debates of the late 1940s and the early 1950s concerning the proper periodisation of Russian history, the view was advanced that Ivan's authority was restricted from the mid-sixteenth century onwards – particularly, by the zemskie sobory. In seeking to capture the nature of the

authority he wielded at mid-century, we attempt to take into consideration the three aforementioned views, and hopefully we have classified somewhat the ambiguities, nay, the paradoxes surrounding his authority; these ambiguities and the attempt he made, especially during the Oprichnina, to resolve them are the dissertation's main theme.

If Ivan IV's central role in Muscovite politics is accepted, then he evidently qualified for membership of the ruling oligarchy; the view that mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy was, in fact, ruled oligarchically is relatively familiar. The task of identifying other members of the ruling oligarchy becomes, in effect, a question of pinpointing those Muscovites who either are documented as having discussed major issues of foreign or domestic policy with the tsar or who might be assumed from the tasks they discharged to have entered into such dialogues. Hopefully our attempt to formulate explicit and relatively systematic criteria whereby Ivan's fellow members of the ruling oligarchy might be identified represents another scholarly gain. Before particular members are pinpointed, the weightiest questions of foreign and domestic policy are defined; how those Muscovites who probably discussed these questions with Ivan are determined depends upon the extant evidence. Sometimes his intimates are identified through the testimony of contemporaries: Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr are outstanding examples of such advisers. But Muscovites depicted by contemporaries as belonging to the ruling oligarchy after 1547 are relatively few. It is symptomatic that Tsar Ivan and Prince A.M. Kurbsky are the only "well-born" Muscovites known to have written anything about politics at mid-century, and we are accordingly impeded in reconstructing political events and the attitudes of their participants towards them. As for the remaining members of the ruling oligarchy, we can make preliminary observations concerning the elements of the population from which they most likely originated; we are especially eager to establish whether Muscovites had to be "well-born" to enter the ruling oligarchy. The slaves, the serfs, the peasants, and the townsmen are all

unpromising sources of members. In light of Muscovy's political traditions, prominent ecclesiastics together with various boyars and okol'niche recruited from princely or untitled boyar lineages would be expected to qualify for membership. That certain of the most capable and ambitious amidst the provincial servitors who migrated at mid-century from the uezdy to Moscow might also achieve membership needs to be allowed for, whether or not they became boyars or okol'niche. Moreover, diverse heads of central government agencies might be assigned membership; unfortunately, the extant evidence does not enable us to identify continuously the heads of every known central government agency. The methods of collective career biography pioneered by Sir Lewis Namier and other scholars and exploited most successfully within the Muscovite context by Robert Crummey aid greatly in pinpointing which candidates for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy did, in fact, belong. Not only are we helped to identify particular members – and this endeavour is accorded substantial attention; we can affirm that Ivan's fellow members stemmed largely from the foremost clergymen, the members of princely or boyar lineages, and the middle-ranking servitors who moved to Moscow.

To identify the members of the 1547-1564 ruling oligarchy is an important step; yet the ways whereby they acquired their influence and sought to reinforce it must be probed, as must the contexts where it was deployed. Take, for example, Ivan himself. Historians have grasped that his legitimacy depended upon his birth to the Daniilovichi; an elected ruler could have won acceptance in sixteenth-century Muscovy only with great difficulty. Leaving aside the specific forms the tsar's political behaviour assumed – these are relatively familiar – we remark that Ivan's relations with his courtiers were substantially harmonious until 1560 when he underwent complex and poorly understood psychological changes possibly triggered by the death of his beloved first wife, Tsaritsa Anastasia. After 1560 he grew increasingly suspicious, and by 1564 he resolved to concentrate all political authority within his own hands and thus to rule

autocratically; from the early 1560s onwards his brutal impulses won freer rein, and Muscovites who incurred his wrath could be tortured or executed. That personal relations were the stuff of Muscovite politics has been recognised by historians; we seek to document that Ivan's intimates won his confidence through their moral authority, their friendship with him, their talents and proved loyalty, and their marriage ties with him, to name some of the most usual routes. Should we attempt to ascertain how members of the ruling oligarchy strove to retain their influence and if possible, to expand their clout and prestige, useful guidance is provided from other periods of Muscovite and Russian history; nevertheless, these results need to be documented for the 1547-1564 period. We attempt to show, for instance, that "well-born" courtiers, particularly within the ruling oligarchy, sought to forge prestigious marriage alliances. The patronage networks known at other times were almost certainly operative at mid-century, and we could go a step further and enquire how greatly kinship ties affected the dispensation of patronage and other forms of political behaviour; this query is especially topical because of the attention given it by historians during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To provide an answer, we examine the patterns apparent when the ranks of boyar and okol'nichie were granted together with the lists of courtiers who united in ad hoc situations to pursue political goals, and so forth. Aleksey Adashev's career is instructive inasmuch as it helps us to answer the question: to what extent did those middle-ranking servitors who migrated from the uezdy to Moscow adopt the values and the forms of political behaviour typical of members of the princely and the established boyar lineages?

We attempt to address these and other enquiries concerning the Muscovite ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 in the eight chapters of the dissertation. In the first chapter, easily the longest, the ruling oligarchy is defined and criteria for identifying its members advanced against the background afforded by a survey of Muscovy's population and government. Two preliminary chapters are offered, however, before our enquiry into

the ruling oligarchy begins: the historiography surrounding mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics is treated in Chapter 2, and the sources and their value as historical evidence are appraised critically in Chapter 3. In Chapters 4 to 6 individual members of the ruling oligarchy are pinpointed, and the premises and the dynamics of Muscovite politics are identified, particularly with reference to the changes these were undergoing as Muscovy moved ever closer to the Oprichnina and the introduction of autocratic rule. In Chapter 7 the attitudes particular members maintained towards particular reforms contemplated at mid-century are treated: a fuller portrait of the mentality animating the members in question is painted, and the dynamics of Muscovite politics are illustrated. In Chapter 8 the dissertation's main conclusions are expounded.

In closing, we expound systematically the dissertation's main conclusions. Firstly, the nature of Ivan's exercise of authority after 1547 contained ambiguities: in certain senses, after 1547 the tsar's rule over Muscovy resembled a "typical votchinnik" over his votchina even more than had Ivan III's or Vasily III's, while in other senses Muscovy could no longer be ruled as the ruler's votchina. As the Oprichnina approached, Ivan sought to remove these ambiguities by exercising undivided political authority, that is, by ruling autocratically. Yet these ambiguities, which arose as Muscovy grew too large to feel one man's authority at every point from Ivan III's reign onwards, were not easily resolved, and indeed they persisted even into the imperial era. Tsar Ivan's yearning to rule autocratically surely resulted, in part, from the frustrations with the Muscovite political order his grandfather and his father bequeathed: close cooperation with the foremost ecclesiastics and the boyars was considered a desideratum, and in the early years of his reign as tsar, he, too, respected this premise, even though he was obliged to reckon with representations made to him concerning sundry measures he intended to adopt. The persecutions and the executions he unleashed from the early 1560s injected a new, sinister note into his relations with his courtiers; the intense fear which doubtless resulted probably helped him to introduce

autocratic rule during the Oprichnina. Even before the early 1560s, however, various circumstances helped to render the courtiers disunited. The concern which "well-born" Muscovites felt for their relative standing under the mestnichestvo system provoked rivalries and jealousies. Since under the mestnichestvo system the relative standing of the members of a lineage was enhanced as they won promotions within the service hierarchy, we should expect that as some members entered the ruling oligarchy, they would exert pressure upon Ivan to grant their kinsmen such promotions, and the known promotions to the ranks of boyar and okol'nichiy support this conjecture. However, a few particular lineages – most notably, the descendants of the fourteenth-century boyar A.I. Kobyla, embracing the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, the tsar's in-laws from his first marriage, the Sheremetevs, the Yakovlevs, and so forth – were unusually by successful in gaining such promotions amidst the general inflation of honours apparent at mid-century; this will have engendered profound resentment among the members of lineages which were not similarly honoured. If the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins could figure among Ivan's closest advisers within the ruling oligarchy because of their marriage ties to him, personal relations helped other members of the ruling oligarchy to gain and to retain favour. The priest Sil'vestr and Metropolitan Makary long retained membership probably because they enjoyed moral authority in Ivan's eyes. Aleksey Adashev and I.M. Viskovaty were long-time members most likely because they impressed the tsar as outstandingly capable and utterly loyal; it is also significant that Adashev, whose birth was undistinguished, enjoyed sufficient clout vis-à-vis Ivan that he could adopt substantially the mores of "well-born" courtiers.

**THE MUSCOVITE RULING OLIGARCHY
OF
1547-1564:
ITS COMPOSITION, POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR,
AND
ATTITUDES TOWARDS REFORM**

by

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Preface

This dissertation is concerned with Muscovite court politics in the middle of the sixteenth century. It is an attempt to shed light upon a period of Russian history which has engendered a considerable amount of controversy among historians from the eighteenth century to the present day.

In this dissertation the following conventions have been observed:

Russian words and names familiar to English-speaking readers are spelled according to conventional English spelling (e.g., "Ivan", "tsar", "Volga"). Other Russian terms are given in transliterated form. We have, for the most part, relied upon the British system of transliteration outlined by W.K. Matthews, "The Latinisation of Cyrillic Characters", *SEER* 30 (1952), pp. 531-48. However, several exceptions should be mentioned. Symbols which were declared obsolete after 1917 are first converted into their modern equivalents and then transliterated. "E" and "e" are invariably rendered "e" ("Elena", not "Yelena"; "Solov'ev", not "Solov'yov"). When personal names are transliterated, the endings "ЫЙ" and "ИЙ" are given as "y" (hence, "Makary", not "Makariy"). The ending "ia" is used in preference to "iya" when the names of women are rendered (thus, "Anastasia", and not "Anastasiya").

As far as dating is concerned, it should be borne in mind that in sixteenth-century Muscovy dates were reckoned according to the Byzantine system from the creation of the world in 5508 B.C. As the year began on 1 September and ended on 31 August, 5509 should be subtracted from the date given in the sixteenth-century Muscovite sources for the last four months of the year and 5508 for the first eight. Wherever feasible the years are cited in the dissertation are those A.D. But when it is impossible to avoid stating years in the Muscovite fashion, the following procedure is employed: firstly, the Muscovite year is given; then two successive years A.D. follow

in brackets; the Muscovite year began on 1 September of the first year and ended on 31 August of the second. Inverted commas precede the Muscovite year and follow the second bracket. For example "the year 7064 (1555-1556)" denotes the Muscovite year 7064, beginning on 1 September 1555 and concluding on 31 August 1556. It should be recalled that in the sixteenth century Muscovite dates lagged by nine days the equivalents in the Gregorian calendar.

Even the works of the most distinguished scholars rely on part upon the findings of earlier researchers and upon the encouragement and the criticism of friends and colleagues. We can advance only modest claims for our scholarship, and our debt to others is correspondingly greater. It is obvious, however, that all errors, grave or minor, of fact or interpretation, are ours and ours alone.

Special thanks are due to Professors J.L.I. Fennell and D.D. Obolensky. Professor Fennell has guided the doctoral research from its beginning to its conclusion. It was he who suggested Muscovite court politics of the mid-sixteenth century as a subject of enquiry, and he has given unstintingly of his time in correcting our tentative draft of the dissertation. Several discussions with Professor Obolensky helped us at an early stage to hammer out the topic of the dissertation, and his stylistic recommendations have been most valuable.

We express our gratitude to Mr J.S.G. Simmons of All Souls College, Oxford, for bibliographical references and to Professor J.L.H. Keep of the Department of History of the University of Toronto, who shaped the views we advance on certain key issues.

The Russian Research Center of Harvard University has proved a stimulating environment in which to complete the doctoral research and to prepare the text of the dissertation. Divers conversations with Professor Edward Keenan of the Department of History of Harvard University impelled us to adopt new perspectives in examining mid-

sixteenth-century Muscovite court politics, and Dr John LeDonne, Visiting Scholar of the Russian Research Center and Guggenheim Fellow, by expounding upon sundry questions of court politics in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, has helped us to bring our conclusions into sharper focus.

We are deeply indebted to Mrs Catherine Thomas for the patience and the skill with which our manuscript has been typed.

The doctoral fellowship of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada has enabled us to pursue our researches in the idyllic setting of Oxford, and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom, in granting us an award under the Overseas Research Students – Fees Support Scheme, has eased the burden still further. We are also obliged to the John M. Olin Foundation for a fellowship awarded through the Russian Research Center of Harvard University and to the Russian Research Center itself for a post-doctoral appointment.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the interest and the support extended to us by family and friends.

Last but not least, however, we should convey our thanks to those scholars from Tatishchev to Skrynnikov with whom we are debating in the course of the dissertation. They have taught us a great deal, and our obligation to them is very substantial indeed.

John Eric Myles

Ottawa, October 1987

List of Abbreviations

AAE	Akty, sobrannye v bibliotekakh i arkhivakh Rossiyskoy imperii Arkheograficheskoyu ekspeditsiyu Akademii nauk
AE	Arkheograficheskiy ezhegodnik
AFZKh	Akty feodal'nogo zemlevladieniya i khozyaystva XIV-XVI vv.
AGR	Akty, odnosyashchiesya do grazhdanskoy raspravy drevney Rossii
AI	Akty istoricheskie, sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoyu komissiyu
Akty Yushkova	Akty XIII-XVII vv., predstavlenyye v Razryadnyy prikaz predstaviteleyami sluzhilykh familiy posle otmeny mestnichestva, Ch. 1-ya (1257-1613 gg.)
ASEER	American Slavic and East European Review
Chteniya	Chteniya v Imperatorskom Obshchestve istorii i drevnostey rossiyskikh pri Moskovskom universitete
C-A SS	Canadian-American Slavic Studies
DAI	Dopolneniya k Aktam istoricheskim, sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoyu komissiyu
DDG	Dukhovnye i dogovoryne gramoty velikikh i udel'nykh knyazey XIV-XVI vv.
DNR	Drevnyaya i novaya Rossiya
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
DRV	Drevnyaya rossiyskaya vivliofika, soderzhashchaya v sebe sobranie drevnostey rossiyskikh, do istorii, geografii i genealogii rossiyskikh kasayushchikhsya
ESBE	Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar' Brokgauz i Efron
FOEG	Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte
GVNP	Gramoty Velikogo Novgoroda i Pskova
HSS	Harvard Slavic Studies
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
IA	Istoricheskiy arkhiv
IORYaS	Izvestiya Otdeleniya russkago yazyka i slovesnosti

IRGO	Izvestiya Russkago genealogicheskago obshchestva
IS	Istoriya SSSR
IV	Istoricheskiy vestnik
IZ	Istoricheskie zapiski
JGOE	Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas
LIRO	Letopis' Istoriko-rodoslovnago obshchestva
LZAK	Letopis' zanyatiy Arkheograficheskoy komissii
ODB	Opisanie dokumentov i bumag, khraryashchikhsya v Moskovskom arkhive Ministerstva yustitsii
OSP	Oxford Slavonic Papers
PDS	Pamyatniki diplomaticheskikh snosheniy drevney Rossii s derzhavami inostrannymi
PI	Problemy istochnikovedeniya
PKMG	Pistsovyaya knigi Moskovskago gosudarstva. Ch. 1-ya. Pistsovyaya knigi XVI veka
PKOP	Pistsovye knigi Obonezhskoy pyatiny 1496 i 1563 gg.
PRP	Pamyatniki russkogo prava
PSB	Polski słownik biograficzny
PSRL	Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisey
RBS	Russkiy biograficheskiy slovar'
RH	Russian History
RIB	Russkaya istoricheskaya biblioteka, izdavaemaya Arkheograficheskoyu komissieyu
RIS	Russkiy istoricheskiy sbornik
RIZh	Russkiy istoricheskiy zhurnal
RK	Razryadnaya kniga 1475-1598 gg.
RL	Russkaya literatura
RM	Russia Mediaevalis
RSJB	Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin
RV	Russkiy vestnik

SA	Sovetskie arkhivy
SAI	Sbornik Arkheologicheskogo instituta
SEER	Slavonic and East European Review
SGGD	Sobranie gosudarstvennykh gramot i dogovorov, khranyashchikhsya v Gosudarstvennoy Kollegii inostrannykh del
SIRIO	Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago istoricheskago obshchestva
SR	Slavic Review
TKDT	Tsyachnaya kniga 1550 g. i Dvorovaya tetrad' 50-kh godov XVI v.
TMGIAI	Trudy Moskovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Istoriko-arkhivnogo instituta
TODRL	Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoy literatury
TRHS	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society
UZ MGU	Uchenye zapiski Moskovskogo Gosudarstvennogo universiteta
VEv	Vestnik Evropy
VI	Voprosy istorii
Vremennik	Vremennik Imperatorskago Obshchestva istorii drevnostey rossiyskikh
VV	Vizantiyskiy vremennik
ZhMNP	Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnago prosveshcheniya
ZOR GPB	Zapiski Otdela rukopisey Gosudarstvennoy publichnoy biblioteki SSSR imeni V.I. Lenina

1

**The Muscovite Ruling Oligarchy
of the
Mid-Sixteenth Century
against the Background
of
Muscovy's Government and Population**

The reign of Ivan IV has long fascinated laymen and historians alike. The former have been captivated in the first instance by Ivan himself and especially by the demoniacal cruelty with which he allegedly persecuted his foes. The popular view of him has doubtless been influenced significantly by Sergey Eisenstein's classic film. Historians, too, have on occasion painted him in idealised shades, either as a monster whose moral fibre was dangerously weak or as one of Russia's greatest rulers. More thoughtful scholars, however, have grappled with the question of whether – and if so, then why – his reign should be considered, as it frequently is, a central episode in Russia's history.

The sheer length of Ivan's reign renders it noteworthy. He became grand prince in December 1533 when his father, Vasily III, died, and occupied the throne until his death in March 1584. Moreover, to mention but several of the hallmarks of this half-century, it brought Muscovy recurring political crises and acute conflicts between different elements of the population, and while the Muscovite economy had been relatively prosperous in the first half of the sixteenth century, growing economic dislocation befell much of the realm from the 1560s onwards; recovery became apparent only as the 1580s wore on.

When Ivan IV became grand prince in 1533, he was but an infant of three, and his widowed mother, Elena Glinskaya, ruled as regent until she died in April 1538; subsequently the country was ruled by a series of court cliques. Until he reached his mid-teens, he was to a considerable extent a figurehead, generally playing only a marginal role in formulating the fundamental decisions of foreign and domestic policy. This circumstance was altered only in the second half of the 1540s.

Ivan IV's coronation as tsar in January 1547 was a landmark event in his reign, and it can be considered to have ushered in a new chapter in Muscovite history. The significance of the enthronement is best comprehended at two levels. Firstly, notice was served that henceforth Ivan sought to deal as an equal with the foremost crowned

heads of Europe. True, his grandfather, Ivan III, had employed unofficially the title of tsar in diplomacy, and his father had continued this practice.¹ But neither his grandfather nor his father had presumed formally to adopt the tsar's title. Etymologically the title tsar' is derived from the Latin caesar, whence the German title Kaiser also originated, and for Ivan IV formally to style himself tsar was to claim for himself a majesty Europeans could recognise if not necessarily accept. Furthermore, his new title sharply differentiated him from the remaining princes descended from Ryurik, nay, elevated him above them. It symbolised his heightened resolve no longer to be dominated by his courtiers;² in fact, from the late 1540s onward he played a central role in shaping and executing major policy decisions.

Ivan IV's coronation as tsar, fraught with meaning as it was, did not effect a radical reordering of the realm, and indeed dramatic change came only in the winter of 1564-1565 when the Oprichnina was introduced and Muscovy was divided administratively into two parts, the oprichnina and the zemshchina. The Oprichnina, the third stage of Ivan's reign, brought prolonged suffering to many Muscovites, and their woes were not ended until 1572.³ A heartfelt sigh of relief was doubtless heard throughout the realm when the Oprichnina was disbanded; the tsar himself effectively conceded that it had been a nightmare for Muscovy, for he forbade any mention of it.⁴

¹ See M.A. D'yakonov, Vlast' moskovskikh gosudarey: ocherki iz istorii politicheskikh idey drevney Rusi: do kontsa XVI v., SPB, 1889, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, pp. 134-6. D'yakonov observed that Vasily III employed the tsar's title in diplomacy more frequently than his father and even used it in charters dispatched to Muscovite addressees. Ibid., pp. 135-6.

² If we can believe Ivan's testimony, Prince I.V. Shuysky and various other courtiers flouted his authority during his minority. See D.S. Likhachev, ed., Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim, Leningrad 1979, pp. 27-9.

³ We have accepted A.A. Zimin's and R.G. Skrynnikov's view that the Oprichnina was, in fact, abrogated in 1572; see A.A. Zimin, Oprichnina Ivana Groznogo, Moscow, 1964, pp. 430-80 passim and R.G. Skrynnikov, Oprichnyy terror, Leningrad, 1969, pp. 143-89. P.A. Sadikov asserted that the Oprichnina terminated only when Ivan died; see P.A. Sadikov, Ocherki po istorii oprichniny, Moscow and Leningrad, 1950, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, pp. 44.

⁴ Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 40.

Nevertheless, the tense, fearful atmosphere it had fostered persisted until he died. What is more, the Livonian War continued to drain the country's financial resources until it was terminated in 1582.

Of the four periods into which Tsar Ivan's reign has been broken down, it is the second, extending from 1547 to the winter of 1564-1565, which concerns us presently. This was an era when Muscovy oscillated between continuity and change, and one of our main goals, particularly in this chapter and the conclusion, is to identify the elements of each. The innovations of the 1547-1564 period were numerous and far-reaching in their consequences, and taken as a whole they imparted a noticeably more modern cast to the realm: Muscovy resembled significantly more closely its counterpart of the seventeenth century, and in certain regards the way had been paved for the imperial epoch. Ivan's coronation as tsar is an important example: Russia's rulers used this title until the 1917 Revolution. But long-standing customs and the mentality which they embodied could not be uprooted overnight; if anything, Muscovites, Ivan among them, esteemed highly "ancient tradition" (starina). The 1547-1564 period might therefore be characterised as containing a fundamental conflict between old and new. The nature of this contradiction and its implications for Muscovy's political history are a major theme of this dissertation; moreover, we shall enquire whether, and if so, then how, attempts were made to lessen the tension.

The competition between continuity and change so evident in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy had been brewing since the reign of Ivan III. The innovations effected under Ivan III exerted a great enough impact upon the grand principality of Moscow that we might legitimately consider the Muscovite period of Russian history as beginning with his accession; furthermore, when we compare Ivan IV with previous rulers of Moscow, it often suffices to refer to his father and grandfather. In certain contexts his reign may be regarded a complement to Ivan III's: sundry enterprises initiated by Ivan III were brought to fruition after 1547. But the result was to set

Muscovy upon an intrinsically new course. The peculiar intensity with which Ivan IV pursued divers other goals sought by his grandfather and his father also modified essentially the path of Muscovite history. In the following paragraphs we shall discuss the relations which Muscovy maintained with other realms in the mid-sixteenth century together with the changes contemporaneously evident in Muscovite government: the legacy bequeathed by Ivan III and Vasily III is apparent in both spheres, and both afford important examples of continuity and change within the 1547-1564 period. How the reigns of Ivan III and Vasily III affected the Muscovite population from the grand prince down, and the extent to which the constituent elements of the population experienced continuity and change in the mid-sixteenth century will be discussed later in this chapter. When the innovations befalling the Muscovite realm and its population during the 1547-1564 period are treated, however, it is crucial to enquire whether Muscovites were ready for such changes.

A cardinal feature of Muscovy's foreign relations after 1547 is that Ivan IV, unlike his predecessors of a century or two earlier, was unencumbered by claims of suzerainty emanating from Byzantium or the Golden Horde. Yet this situation arose relatively recently: Ivan III was the first grand prince of Moscow unburdened by such demands. After Russia was converted to Orthodoxy, various Western Europeans considered Byzantium Russia's suzerain.¹ But even in the Kievan era the Byzantine emperors were unable in practice to exercise control over Russia, and any claims to rule they might have raised became meaningless when Russia fell beneath the Golden Horde. The Russian Church was the prime channel whereby Byzantium could wield influence in Russia, as appointments to high ecclesiastical offices were frequently made or endorsed in Constantinople.² Yet in Russian eyes the Greek Church compromised

¹ A.A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?", *Speculum* VII (1932), pp. 352-60.

² Byzantium's impact on Russia's early history, particularly its ecclesiastical life, is depicted in J. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the rise of Russia*, Cambridge, England, 1981.

itself gravely in 1439 at the Council of Ferrara-Florence by consenting to unite with the Roman Church, and the Russian autocephalous church originated in 1448 when the Russian Iona was chosen metropolitan at a council of Russian bishops.¹ Moreover, Byzantium itself fell to the Turks in 1453, and when Sofia Palaeologa, niece of Constantine XI, the last Byzantine emperor, became Ivan III's second consort, Muscovy, as the strongest Orthodox realm, could arguably be considered Byzantium's successor;² Ivan IV's attitude towards his Byzantine antecedents will be examined subsequently. Furthermore, when the Muscovite forces repulsed the Tatars in the celebrated confrontation of 1480 on the Ugra River, the suzerainty which the Golden Horde had achieved over the eastern Slavs in the thirteenth century was finally terminated. While the suzerainty of the Golden Horde was operative, tribute was required, the rulers of Russian principalities and grand principalities were long obligated to be confirmed in office, and so forth. After 1480, however, Ivan III and his successors could enter rather more confidently into relations with foreign sovereigns.

Even under Ivan III Muscovite ties with other countries were significant and expanding, and further contacts were made under Vasily III. When the Tatars subdued Russia, contacts with Byzantium and western Europe were restricted, and Russia's isolation was accentuated;³ Muscovy's diplomatic and military involvements during Ivan III's reign are therefore especially noteworthy as they reveal that isolation was being ended. On his eastern flank Ivan III had to reckon with the successors of the

¹ G. Vernadsky, A History of Russia, 5 vols, New Haven and London, 1943-69, III, pp. 325, 330.

² The degree to which Byzantine traditions, especially court titles and ceremonial, were evidenced in Muscovy after Ivan III married Sofia has been debated. Ostrogorsky claimed that Ivan incorporated the Byzantine two-headed eagle into his arms and introduced Byzantine ceremonial into Muscovy and that Russia subsequently became the repository of Byzantium's faith, political ideas, and spirituality. G. Ostrogorsky, Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates, 3rd ed., Munich, 1963, p. 473. V.I. Savva, by contrast, contended that Sofia's impact upon Muscovite court titles and ceremonial was greatly exaggerated; see V.I. Savva, Moskovskie tsari i vizantiyskie vasilevsky, Khar'kov, 1901, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969. Savva's views find resonance in Vernadsky, A History, IV, pp. 25-6 and J.L.I. Fennell, Ivan the Great of Moscow, London, 1963, pp. 319-20.

³ N.V. Riasanovsky, A history of Russia, 2nd ed., New York, 1969, p. 79.

Golden Horde; moreover, there were diplomatic relations with Constantinople.¹ On his western flank relations with Poland-Lithuania loomed large – Muscovy twice waged war with Lithuania – and in 1501 the Muscovite army moved against Livonia.² Ties with Denmark were initiated in 1493, and Muscovy fought the Swedes in 1495-1496.³ Muscovite envoys were on occasion sent to the Holy Roman Empire and Moldavia.⁴ Under Vasily III Muscovite envoys penetrated more deeply into western Europe. In 1524 a Muscovite delegation reached England, and Holland was visited by Muscovites in 1527.⁵

After 1547 Muscovy maintained relations with those countries with which it had been diplomatically or militarily engaged under Ivan IV's father and grandfather. But on balance Muscovite foreign policy was fundamentally transformed. Now it embraced realms and rulers which had previously lain outside its scope, and Muscovy would henceforth possess extensive diplomatic and commercial ties spreading far in all directions. We note in passing, however, that new methods of handling Muscovite diplomacy became imperative as Muscovy's foreign relations grew increasingly complicated.

In several instances the links with other realms forged after 1547 were merely the first step in the subjugation of these lands to Muscovy or subsequently the Russian Empire. In 1555 envoys from the Siberian khanate approached Tsar Ivan and offered tribute;⁶ this culminated in the early 1580s when Muscovites led by Ermak conquered

¹ A.N. Nasonov, L.V. Cherepnin, A.A. Zimin, eds, Ocherki istorii SSSR: Period feodalizma: konets XV v.-nachalo XVII v., Moscow, 1955, p. 155.

² Fennell, Ivan the Great, pp. 211-86.

³ Ibid., pp. 170-5; Ocherki istorii SSSR, p. 149.

⁴ Ocherki istorii SSSR, pp. 149, 158-60.

⁵ See ibid., p. 162, n. 4-5 for documentary references.

⁶ SIRIQ LIX, No. 31, pp. 479-80.

Siberia on his behalf. Envoys from Bukhara and Khiva visited Moscow in 1558-1559 to discuss trade opportunities, and by 1584 no less than six Bukharan and two Khivan delegations had journeyed to Moscow for trade negotiations.¹ These budding ties with Bukhara and Khiva peaked in the second half of the nineteenth century when the Russian Empire established protectorates over the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva.² Similarly, the mastery which the Empire achieved in Trans-Caucasia during the first quarter of the nineteenth century had roots in the 1547-1564 period. That the ruler of Kakhetia supplicated Ivan IV in 1564 for assistance against Suleiman the Magnificent and the Persian shah exemplifies how Muscovy was becoming implicated in local conflicts.³

At the same time Muscovy developed important ties with countries not fated to succumb to Russian domination. The growth of continuous commercial and then diplomatic links with the rising nations of northwestern Europe counts among the more conspicuous changes of the mid-sixteenth century.⁴ In 1553 an English expedition headed by Richard Chancellor, seeking a northern maritime passage to India and China, reached the mouth of the Northern Dvina River, and when the Muscovy Company received its charter from Queen Mary in February 1555, notice was served that influential elements within England favoured the expansion of English commerce with

¹ PSRL XIII, p. 313; E.N. Kusheva, "Politika Russkogo gosudarstva na Severnom Kavkaze v 1552-1572 gg.", IZ 34 (1950), p. 268.

² How the Russian Empire acquired and exercised protectorates over the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva is surveyed in S. Becker, Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968.

³ Kusheva, "Politika", p. 269.

⁴ Within western Christendom the 1547-1564 period embraced the end of the Reformation and the beginning of the Counter-Reformation: specifically, the Counter-Reformation probably commenced in 1559 at the third session of the Tridentine Council, where the Roman Church went over from a defensive to an aggressive posture. The Reformation contributed significantly to the evident shift of the centre of gravity within European civilisation west and northwest from the Holy Roman Empire and Italy. See G.R. Elton, "Introduction: the Age of the Reformation", in The New Cambridge Modern History, 13 vols, Cambridge, England, 1957-79, II, pp. 2, 22.

Muscovy.¹ Later in 1555 Ivan granted the Company permission to send its ships to northern ports and authorised its agents to travel and to trade freely within Muscovy.² Dutch ships attained the shores of Russian Lapland in 1565 and called at sundry northern ports,³ and thus, direct Muscovite commerce with Holland originated. The Dutch share of Muscovy's foreign trade later exceeded the English and remained relatively important well into the seventeenth century.⁴ Moreover, after an envoy of the shah visited Moscow in 1553, Persia assumed a higher profile in Muscovite diplomacy.⁵

Under Ivan IV Muscovy, centrally located and possessing a growing network of diplomatic and commercial relations, was exceptionally favourably situated to launch an ambitious programme of territorial aggrandisement. In attempting to define the extent to which Ivan sought after 1547 to exercise authority outside of existing Muscovite boundaries, we shall begin by considering whether or not he harboured aspirations to universal rule. This query is pertinent: until the Fourth Crusade (1204) the Byzantine emperors customarily advanced claims to world domination, and had Muscovy's Byzantine heritage been completely absorbed into Ivan's notions of the origins of his authority, we would expect him to raise similar claims, so characteristic

¹ The Muscovy Company is treated in T.S. Willan, The Early History of the Russian Company, 1553-1603, Manchester, 1956, and is reexamined by S.H. Baron, "Ivan the Terrible, Giles Fletcher, and the Muscovite Merchants: A Reconsideration", SEER 56 (1978), pp. 563-85, and idem, "The Muscovy Company, the Merchants, and the Problems of Reciprocity in Russian Foreign Trade", FOEG 27 (1980), pp. 133-55.

² Baron, "The Muscovy Company", p. 134.

³ V.A. Kordt, "Ocherk snosheniy Moskovskago gosudarstva s Respublikoyu Soedinennykh Niderlandov po 1631 g.", SIRIQ CXVI, pp. XIX, XXVI.

⁴ An older but nonetheless useful account of the commercial rivalry between England and Holland vis-à-vis Muscovy is provided by I. Lubimenko, "The Struggle of the Dutch with the English for the Russian Market in the Seventeenth Century", TRHS Fourth Series, VII (1924), pp. 27-51.

⁵ A.P. Novosel'tsev, "Russko-iranskies politicheskie otnosheniya vo vtoroy polovine XVI v.", in A.A. Zimin, V.T. Pashuto, eds, Mezhdunarodnye svyazi Rossii do XVII v.: Sbornik statey, Moscow, 1961, p. 448. Thus, while Muscovite ties with Persia from the late sixteenth century onwards are better known, they had identifiable antecedents.

of Byzantium's rulers in its heyday.¹ On present evidence, dreams of universal rule appear little to have enticed him, and it is striking that like his grandfather and his father, he maintained a distinctly cool attitude towards campaigns intended to wrest control of formerly Byzantine territory from the Turks.² In 1576, for example, he refused to join other European rulers in a league against the Turks, even though his title of tsar would doubtless have been recognised more widely had he participated.³ However, Ivan's overall attitude towards the Byzantine legacy is most aptly described as eclectic: he stressed his Byzantine antecedents when it suited his purposes. The Patriarch of Constantinople, acknowledging him as tsar in 1561, portrayed him as the protector of the Orthodox everywhere and thereby justified generations of Muscovite tsars and Russian emperors in depicting themselves as the source of succour for Orthodox Christians outside Russia.⁴ In striving to show himself worthy of such an awesome responsibility, Tsar Ivan emphasised that he could legitimately be considered the successor to the Byzantine emperors.⁵ Only as champion of the Orthodox, however, did he assert universal authority.

While Ivan IV's hunger for territorial gain was seemingly not insatiable, he retained a healthy appetite for acquisitions at the expense of realms lying to the west and the northwest and to the east and the southeast. From his accession as grand prince through the end of the sixteenth century Muscovy expanded from 2.8 million square kilometres to 5.4 million square kilometres, and a sizeable share of this increase fell

¹ G. Ostrogorsky, "The Byzantine Emperor and the Hierarchical World Order", *SEER*, 35 (1956-7), pp. 1-15.

² D.S. Likhachev, *Natsional'noe samosoznanie drevney Rusi*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1945, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, p. 97.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ N.F. Kapterev, *Kharakter otnosheniy Rossii k pravoslavnomu vostoku v XVI i XVII stoletiyakh*, 2nd ed., Sergiev Posad, 1914, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1968, pp. 29-30. Only the Patriarch could acknowledge Ivan as guardian of Orthodox Christians everywhere, and we might conjecture that Ivan aspired to such recognition when he sought acceptance of his tsar's title from the Patriarch.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

within the 1547-1564 period.¹ The Kazan' khanate was subjugated in 1552, and the Astrakhan' khanate passed under Muscovite control in 1556. In 1558 Muscovy entered the ill-conceived Livonian War with Poland-Lithuania, and the Muscovite forces achieved some notable victories in its opening years and penetrated Livonia;² nevertheless, the conflict ultimately brought Muscovy little real advantage. For Ivan to wage prolonged warfare almost simultaneously on different flanks was ambitious, and we might therefore explore Muscovy's strategic circumstances at mid-century and attempt to assess the goals pursued on each flank.

Ivan IV's military objectives after 1547 reveal significant continuity with those espoused by Ivan III and Vasily III. When the Golden Horde crumbled, its heirs, most notably the Crimean khanate, the Kazan' khanate, and the Nogay horde, confronted Muscovy on its southern and eastern flanks and were but poorly reconciled to its hard-won independence. Considering the grand principality legitimate prey, they made frequent raids to further claims to sovereignty and to obtain the slaves vital for their primarily nomadic, parasitic, and war-like polities; the first known attack occurred in 1468, and thereafter such incursions took place almost annually, although Ivan III's skilful diplomacy secured something of a respite until 1504.³ The Kazan' khanate, located at Muscovy's back doorstep, was most conveniently positioned to wreak havoc within his realm, and it scarcely surprising that his reign witnessed the first attempts to achieve a protectorate over the khanate if not outright to incorporate it within the Muscovite realm.⁴ At the same time he nursed aggressive intentions vis-à-vis his

¹ A.I. Kopanev, "Naselenie russkogo gosudarstva v XVI v.", *IZ* 64 (1959), p. 246; R. Hellie, Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy, Chicago and London, 1971, p. 21.

² Muscovy controlled central and eastern Livonia from 1558 until 1581-2. N. Angermann, Studien zur Livlandpolitik Ivan Groznyjs, Marburg/Lahn, 1972, p. 25.

³ J.L.H. Keep, Soldiers of the Tsar, Oxford, 1985, p. 15.

⁴ Muscovy's relations with the Kazan' khanate from the latter's emergence until 1552 are treated in J. Pelenski, Russia and Kazan, The Hague and Paris, 1974, pp. 23-61.

western neighbours. He asserted suzerainty over Livonia; in fact, he and his eldest son Ivan sent a substantial force headed by Prince D.D. Kholmisky *inter alia* to collect tribute past and present allegedly owed by the bishopric of Dorpat.¹ The grounds whereby the grand prince justified exacting tribute are unclear; perhaps Kievan traditions influenced his thinking since the forbears of the contemporary Livonians had rendered tribute to sundry Russian princes in the Kievan era.² The view that Muscovy should ideally represent a reincarnation of Kievan Rus' was given impetus from 1493 onwards, as Ivan III styled himself sovereign "of all Rus'" (*vseya Rusi*).³ However, for Muscovy to assert authority over those lands inhabited by Orthodox eastern Slavs which were formerly included within the Kievan realm was to raise the spectre of war with Poland-Lithuania, but the events of 1500-1503 depict Ivan as unflinching before this prospect.⁴ It is a curious paradox that he devoted such inordinate attention to his western frontiers when his southern and eastern boundaries were more vulnerable to attack. To acquire lands formerly subject to the Kievan rulers was a matter of prestige, whereas to maintain unceasing vigilance against the successors to the Golden Horde was a strategic necessity.⁵ Yet the paradox remained unresolved under Vasily III. On the one hand, the Crimean Tatars were a dangerous enough foe that in 1521 they could come within reach of Moscow. Sigismund Freiherr von Herberstein, an envoy of Emperor Charles V, describes graphically what consternation they evoked: Vasily fled and allegedly hid under a haystack, and "gifts" (that is, tribute) were presented, whereupon the khan withdrew accompanied by numerous

¹ *GVNP* No. 78, p. 133.

² Angermann, *Studien*, p. 8.

³ *SIRIO* XXXV, No. 19, p. 80.

⁴ Fennell, *Ivan the Great*, pp. 211-86.

⁵ Keep, *Soldiers*, p. 15.

prisoners.¹ On the other hand, the grand prince was prepared to expend considerable effort to conquer Smolensk in 1514.² Nor was Ivan IV conspicuously more adroit in coordinating Muscovy's foreign and military policies: for instance, in 1571, while Muscovy remained entangled in the Livonian War, the Crimean Tatars raided the capital, inflicting substantial damage to life and property.³ Indeed, it can be said that from Ivan III's reign onwards Muscovy effectively pursued two foreign and military policies, one eastern and one western, and these were inadequately harmonised until the mid-seventeenth century; it is questionable, nevertheless, whether this resulted from circumstances or a failure realistically to decide priorities.

To refer solely to the precedents underlying the wars of conquest Ivan IV entered after 1547, however, would be misleading. The manner whereby he sought to enlarge his territories and the successes he sometimes enjoyed both served to set Russia on a new path, a path which in certain important respects anticipated the changes of the Petrine era. We have already indicated that the Kazan' khanate fell to his forces in 1552 and that the Astrakhan' khanate was subjugated in 1556. But merely to observe that in subduing the Kazan' khanate he realised a dream cherished by his grandfather and his father does not go far enough; nor is it sufficient to comment that when the Astrakhan' khanate fell, Muscovy thereby attained access to the Caspian Sea. In fact, these victories exerted a noteworthy impact upon the ethnic and the religious make-up of Ivan's subjects. The Muscovite population had hitherto consisted mainly if not exclusively of Orthodox Russians;⁴ now the rulers of Moscow would exercise abiding

¹ Ibid., pp. 15-6; S. Freiherr von Herberstein, Beschreibung Moskaus der Hauptstadt in Russland samt des moskowitschen Gebietes 1557, intr. and ed B. Picard, Graz, Vienna, Cologne, 1966, p. 153.

² Ocherki istorii SSSR, p. 159.

³ A vivid contemporary account of the havoc the Crimean Tatars wrought in Moscow in 1571 is provided by Heinrich von Staden, Aufzeichnungen über den Moskauer Staat, ed F.T. Epstein, 2nd ed., Hamburg, 1964, pp. 70-7.

⁴ The late fifteenth-century registers of inquisition for the Obonezhskaya pyatina mention Karelians. PKOP, pp. 5, 35.

dominion over a significant Moslem Tatar population. The conquests of the mid-fifties along the Volga were the initial step in converting the Muscovite grand principality into a Russian Empire, ruling distant territories inhabited by ethnically and religiously diverse peoples;¹ yet only in 1721 was Peter the Great proclaimed Russian Emperor. Furthermore, whatever motives prompted Tsar Ivan to seek mastery of Livonia after 1558 – and these have provoked a lively scholarly debate² – the struggle he waged was vastly more determined than any of his grandfather's initiatives and scarred Muscovy more grievously. Clearly, though, had Livonia been conquered, Muscovy would have gained a footing on the Baltic littoral, and in this sense the Livonian War anticipated the Northern War which Peter the Great conducted between 1700 and 1721.

We must also point out for balance sake that preoccupied as Ivan IV was with his western and northwestern borders, especially after 1558, he did not completely neglect to secure his southern flank. This is particularly evident in his attempts to extend the frontier defence system. His efforts did not lack antecedents. The initial attempts to erect defensive barriers to repulse steppe marauders were made in the tenth century around Kiev, although these efforts fell into desuetude after the Golden Horde

¹ Nolde represents the conquest of the Kazan' khanate as the initial step in the formation of the subsequent Russian Empire. Baron B.E. Nolde, *La formation de l'Empire russe*, 2 vols, Paris, 1952-3, I, pp. 1-128 *passim*.

² Solov'ev defined substantially the terms of the debate surrounding the motives for the Livonian War. He averred that Ivan IV sought to expand Muscovy's economic and cultural ties with the West and wished to conquer divers Baltic ports in furtherance of this goal. At the same time he remarked that even in the Kievan era Russian princes had mounted claims to sovereignty over Livonia and that Livonia's enfeebled situation of the mid-sixteenth century probably sorely tempted Ivan to resurrect such claims. S.M. Solov'ev, *Istoriya Rossii s drevneyshikh vremen*, 15 vols, Moscow, 1960-6, III, pp. 496-522 *passim*. Both motives have found support in twentieth-century historiography. Ivan's desire for increased contacts with the West has been emphasised by S.F. Platonov, *Ivan Groznyy*, Berlin, 1924, pp. 83-6; Ya.S. Lur'e, D.S. Likhachev, and Ya.S. Lur'e, eds, *Poslaniya Ivana Groznogo*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1951, pp. 487-8; *Ocherki istorii SSSR*, p. 370. The specifically economic motives have been emphasised by the Swedish historians A. Arnell, *Die Auflösung des livländischen Ordensstaates*, Lund, 1937, pp. 10, 14, 16, and A. Attman, *Den ryska marknaden i 1500-talets baltiska politik. 1558-1595*, Lund, 1944, pp. 121-3. Angermann has adopted a fundamentally different approach. He has examined the records of the negotiations between representatives of Muscovy and Livonia from 1554 onwards and has concluded that the tribute Muscovy claimed from the bishopric of Dorpat was the primary cause of disagreement; the Kievan precedents for such tribute were mentioned by the Muscovite side during the negotiations of 1554. Angermann, *Studien*, pp. 8, 15-9. The sources fail unambiguously to specify Ivan's foremost motive.

conquered Kiev.¹ As the yoke imposed by the Horde weakened, a frontier defence system along the southern border of the grand principality of Moscow to impede Tatar predators seemed advisable. In the fifteenth century this entailed a fortified line running from Kozel'sk through Tula and Serpukhov to Nizhniy Novgorod.² After 1547 Ivan IV strengthened the fortified line passing through Tula, which became the main frontier defence coordination centre, and from the early mid-fifties onwards he built a second fortified line from Putivl' through Ryl'sk (1557), Novgorod Severskiy (1557), Orel (1567), Novosil' (1565), Ryazhsk (1558), and Shatsk (1553) to Alatyr' (1565 to 1575).³ However, the 1571 incursion of the Crimean Tatars into the Muscovite heartland amidst the chaos of the Oprichnina revealed how watchful Muscovites had to remain if the extended frontier defence system should provide an effective deterrent.⁴

This enquiry into diplomatic and military policies in the mid-sixteenth century provides a foundation for comprehending contemporary Muscovite government and particularly the changes it underwent: in Muscovy as elsewhere in Europe military-related needs supplied a powerful impetus to "rationalisation". In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to illustrate that the diplomatic and the military policies prosecuted by Ivan III and Vasily III shaped significantly those pursued by Ivan IV after 1547; how Muscovite government was modified at mid-century is similarly treated most appropriately with reference to the precedents established under the tsar's grandfather and father.

¹ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 174.

² Ibid., p. 175.

³ Ibid.

⁴ After the Tatar incursion of 1571, however, the southern frontier defence system functioned effectively enough that Moscow was never again caught completely unawares by Tatar marauders. Ibid., p. 176.

It is now proposed to concentrate upon Muscovy's central government, where sustained military operations exerted an exceptionally strong impact from the closing decades of the fifteenth century.¹ Under Ivan III Muscovy subdued most other Russian polities; few remained outside Muscovite control when Vasily III became grand prince in 1505, and he continued his father's conquests. In 1547 only a handful of udely persisted. To administer the expanded grand principality presented formidable challenges. When Ivan III became grand prince in 1462, his realm was administered as his private estate through the agencies of his household; such cozy ways grew unfeasible as his domains were enlarged, however, and his private lands became distinguished administratively from his realm overall. As the fifteenth century concluded, a few household agencies acquired characteristics of the subsequent prikazy, becoming, so to speak, "prikaz-like agencies", and in the following half-century several prikazy arose.² Moreover, the 1547-1564 period was unusually rich in new prikazy, and additional prikazy continued to be formed even into the early eighteenth century.³ No little attention will be devoted to these prikaz-like agencies and prikazy which existed by the winter of 1564-1565.

Three queries are especially relevant in this context. The circumstances under which prikazy appeared must be identified, and whatever common features are evident in the stages of genesis need to be pinpointed. It is necessary to explore how the

¹ The term "government" denotes those individuals exercising legitimate authority and protecting and adapting the realm by taking and executing decisions; see D.E. Apter, "Government", in D.L. Sills, ed., International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 17 vols, New York, 1968, 6, pp. 214-5. In the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite context, to distinguish central and local government seems more meaningful than to differentiate between military and civil government, because in reality those who took and executed decisions of military policy were not always distinguished clearly from their counterparts who took and executed decisions concerning civil policy. Loosely speaking, the ruling oligarchy of our title embraced those members of the central government who participated actively in shaping fundamental decisions of foreign and domestic policy.

² In discussing the central government agencies, we designate as "prikaz-like agencies" those agencies which, while possessing the defining structural and functional characteristics of prikazy, evolved from the grand princely household and performed administrative tasks long typical of it.

³ All attested Muscovite prikazy are surveyed in P.B. Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", RH 10, Pt 3 (1983), pp. 294-330.

prikazy operated and single out what typified their functioning. Finally, the competence of each prikaz should be defined. The answers to these queries in their turn permit important conclusions. The prikazy originated directly or indirectly in response to military-related exigencies; moreover, the competences of the prikazy indicate how far "rationalisation" had proceeded. The responsibilities the senior prikaz officials discharged were weighty enough for us to consider them serious contenders for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy, which is later reconstructed. Most importantly, however, the manner of operating intrinsic to the prikaz shows how Ivan IV deployed his authority after 1547; the ambiguities, nay, the paradoxes surrounding his exercise of authority at mid-century and his efforts to resolve them are the most important theme of this dissertation. The emergence of prikazy was not the only way whereby Muscovy's ambitious programme of territorial aggrandisement affected the central government's organisation and activities. A few examples will suffice to demonstrate this point. That sustained warfare requires sound financial underpinnings is self-evident, but as new territories were added to the grand principality, the resources which could be tapped became increasingly uncertain. From the close of the fifteenth century attempts were made to measure Muscovy's wealth, as officers of inquisition were dispatched to sundry parts of the realm to compile descriptive registers. This practice continued in the second half of the sixteenth century, and sections of the registers of inquisition then prepared are a source consulted in this dissertation. Furthermore, Muscovy's wars with its western and northwestern neighbours hammered home how crucial changes in the technology, organisation, and discipline of the Muscovite army were needed to avert ignominious defeats. Reforms were introduced under Ivan III and Vasily III, and Ivan IV built moderately upon this legacy after 1547; in fact, certain of his reforms presaged the measures of Peter the Great.

Before coverage of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite army can be initiated, it is necessary to define the focus of our examination. The army is not treated

comprehensively. An attempt is made, rather, to identify those elements of the army which affected fighting capacity most vitally, and with reference to such elements show continuity and change. It is stressed that the combatants themselves are presently treated only when this attempt is thereby furthered.

The cavalry represented the backbone of the army of the grand principality of Moscow well before Ivan III's reign, and this remained true until the end of the sixteenth century, when the Poles and the Swedes replaced the Tatars as Muscovy's most menacing foes; when the Poles entered Moscow in 1611, the weaknesses of the traditional army were mercilessly exposed, and after the "Time of Troubles" Muscovite leaders grasped that it had drastically to be overhauled to avoid renewed humiliation.¹ The weapons which the preponderant majority of sixteenth-century Muscovite cavalymen bore on campaign seemingly differed little from those of Kievan warriors and included bows and arrows, sabres, and occasionally spears and lances: all 279 cavalymen from the Kolomna uezd in 1577 had bows and arrows, and none had firearms.² The sixteenth-century Muscovite cavalry was suited more to warfare as the Tatars practised it – largely raiding and looting.

Yet Ivan IV's cavalry of the 1547-1564 period was stronger and capable of more sophisticated tactics than its counterpart of Vasily II's day a century previously, and again the reign of Ivan III was a watershed. As the remaining Russian polities were incorporated into the grand principality of Moscow, their armies, in the first instance their cavalries, fell under Ivan III's overall control. Such a process continued under Vasily III as additional Russian lands fell under Muscovite domination, and by the mid-sixteenth century almost all Russian armies were controlled by Tsar Ivan.³

¹ Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 167-8.

² Ibid., p. 30.

³ Yet a few private armies, for example, that of Prince I.F. Mstislavsky, persisted at mid-century. PKMG II, pp. 1582-95.

Furthermore, by 1547 Muscovy's cavalry had long since ceased to be an amorphous mass: Ivan III had divided the cavalry into five regiments – the "Great", "Vanguard", and "Rearguard regiments" together with the "Right" and "Left Hands", and the Muscovite cavalry would continue thus to be organised through the reign of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich.¹ It should also be mentioned that from the 1550s onwards Ivan IV revealed himself increasingly intolerant of failure by cavalymen to render their prescribed service or to bring the appropriate equipment. From 1556 reviews were held where military preparedness was verified and deficiencies of horses and hardware rectified; that these reviews were taken seriously is suggested by the report that in 1556 one cavalryman was fined one ruble for not possessing a helmet.² Such regimentation was a prerequisite if more advanced technology and field tactics were to be introduced.

At the same time the extent to which the Muscovite cavalry was becoming a rationalised, disciplined force in the mid-sixteenth century should not be over-emphasised. It was frequently difficult to induce the rank-and-file cavalymen to report for service and even more troublesome to convince them not to desert.³ There was no division of labour or even the smallest degree of specialisation of tasks.⁴ It is especially relevant in the context of the present dissertation to observe that outstanding generalship was not the only or even the foremost criterion employed when regimental commanders were assigned; in certain instances other considerations were weighted much more heavily.

The cavalry was supplemented in the mid-sixteenth century by several new units. The zhil'tsy, who did not necessarily hold lands near Moscow, but lived and served in the capital in shifts a quarter of the year at a time, are evidenced from the early

¹ In pre-Petrine Russia the term "regiment" denoted a large unit, usually combining different arms.

² Hellie, Enserfment, p. 31.

³ Ibid., p. 32.

⁴ Ibid.

1550s; they were included within the "Great Regiment" during campaigns.¹ The Cossacks became better integrated into the Muscovite army. True, for Cossacks to serve in Russian armies was nothing new: they are attested in this capacity as a free, light cavalry band as early as 1444.² However, the Kazan' campaign of 1552 is the first major campaign where Cossack units served as an incorporated part of the Muscovite army, subordinated to its commanders.³

The 1552 Kazan' campaign was also the first where regimental artillery was used.⁴ Cannon were known on Russian soil in the late fourteenth century, but they were almost certainly imported from the West, and they affected only modestly the art of war in Russia during the first half of the fifteenth century.⁵ Nevertheless, the role of artillery in the Muscovite army was considerably broadened under Ivan III. By the 1470s Muscovy produced its own artillery pieces, and whereas prior to the 1470s firearms influenced the outcome of only four or five battles out of twenty-two where artillery was employed, between 1470 and 1520 twenty instances of the use of artillery are known, and in sixteen firearms affected the result of the battle.⁶ Certainly Muscovy could ill afford technologically to lag behind its western neighbours: for example, in 1501, for want of firearms, Muscovy was defeated by the Livonians on the Siritsa River, ten kilometres from Izborsk and on Lake Smolino, thirty kilometres from Pskov.⁷ It has been affirmed that artillery was slow formally to be recognised as an

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-4, 29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³ A.V. Chernov, Vooruzhennye sily russkogo gosudarstva v XVI-XVII vv.: s obrazovaniya tsentralizirovannogo gosudarstva do reform pri Petre I, Moscow, 1954, pp. 29-30.

⁴ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 156.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 153-4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

integral part of the Muscovite army.¹ However, an important precedent for its use was established when Ivan gave each regiment two to four light cannon for the 1552 Kazan' campaign.²

The army which Peter the Great bequeathed to Russia was also presaged by the strel'tsy or musketeers, who were constituted in 1550.³ They represented an élite force of 3000, chosen from the so-called pishchal'niki, men with handguns, and their task was to ensure the tsar's bodily safety.⁴ The strel'tsy played a noteworthy role in the palace coup attempts in 1682 and 1698;⁵ and they persisted into the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, their significance for Russian military history extends much further. The strel'tsy were the first infantry force except for the pishchal'niki recruited from the Muscovite population, and this shows that Ivan grasped how essential it was to supplement the cavalry with infantry.⁶ What is more, whereas all previously existing parts of Muscovy's armed forces had served only when summoned, the strel'tsy served continuously. Not only did this mark the first instance where the standing armies arising in the sixteenth century in divers western European countries found any kind of counterpart in Muscovy, but the strel'tsy supplied a precedent upon which Peter the Great could build an integrated standing army.⁷

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Keep, Soldiers, p. 61. Chernov asserts (Vooruzhennye sily, pp. 46-7) that strel'tsy units existed in 1545-7, but Zimin has shown that this claim depends upon doubtful evidence; see A.A. Zimin, Reformy Ivana Groznogo, Moscow, 1960, p. 346.

⁴ Keep, Soldiers, p. 61.

⁵ The role the strel'tsy played in the palace coup attempts of 1682 and 1698 is depicted by V.I. Bugarov, Moskovskie vosstaniya kontsa XVII veka, Moscow, 1969, pp. 197-244 passim, 363-414.

⁶ Previous infantrymen were foreign mercenaries. Hellie, Enserfment, p. 161.

⁷ Keep, Soldiers, p. 56. This treatment of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite army is intended to indicate the direction in which it was evolving. For more comprehensive coverage, see the monographs of Chernov, Hellie, and Keep.

As the Muscovite armies enjoyed noteworthy successes in subordinating other Russian polities in the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries, it proved increasingly unworkable for the enlarged grand principality to be administered through the relatively unsophisticated household agencies which Ivan III had inherited and by officials to whom he gave specific commissions of limited duration. In the following discussion the grand princely household of the second half of the fifteenth century will be considered with reference to the prikaz-like agencies it engendered before the winter of 1564-1565, specifically, the Dvorets, or as it was called episodically from 1524 and regularly from mid-century, the Bol'shoy Dvorets, the regional dvortsy, the Kazna, and the Konyushennaya izba. Treatment of the prikazy themselves is deferred. In analysing the prikaz-like agencies and the prikazy alike, we emphasise that we focus upon them as institutions; the officials who staffed them are referred to only to clarify their institutional nature.

When Ivan III's reign began in 1462, the Dvorets was the foremost administrative agency of his household, indeed the only continuously operating agency capable of administering his realm as it was progressively augmented, and it deserves attention as a source of prikaz-like agencies. The Dvorets is less closely documented prior to the mid-fifteenth century; nevertheless, the tasks it discharged varied greatly. Moreover, the individual d'yaki who staffed the Dvorets and whose commissions are especially revealing of how it functioned were given assignments not concentrated within specific administrative spheres. Yet by the early sixteenth century the Dvorets had become a prikaz-like agency.¹

What does it imply concretely to assert that the Dvorets had assumed prikaz-like features? Before this query can be answered, sundry preliminary questions must be resolved. Firstly, we should define how the characteristics of prikazy are ascertained.

¹ A.K. Leont'ev, Obrazovanie prikaznoy sistemy upravleniya v russkom gosudarstve: Iz istorii sozdaniya tsentralizirovannogo gosudarstvennogo apparata v kontse XV-pervoy polovine XVI v., Moscow, 1961, p. 25.

If, for instance, we were guided solely by the earliest attested reference in the sources to the Bol'shoy Dvoretz as a prikaz, we should infer that it became prikaz-like only in 1572.¹ But is the first known allusion to a prikaz a reliable measure of when it originated? Is it not equally possible that the initial reference to a prikaz merely confirms a process already in motion? Perhaps we should most appropriately deduce that this evidence does not allow us to conclude when a prikaz arose.² A more productive approach to characterising prikazy is to describe the steps whereby prikazy arose and to depict how they operated subsequently. Fortunately, the prikazy of the second half of the sixteenth century are portrayed in sufficient detail in the sources that we can characterise how they originated and then functioned. A pattern is indeed evident in the stages in which prikazy appeared. In the initial step the d'yaki working within one or another of the existing agencies began to specialise in certain kinds of administrative tasks, that is, the commissions the d'yaki received were not general. Then individual d'yaki received most if not necessarily all commissions falling within some one of the administrative spheres in which they were previously represented. Finally, those d'yaki whose commissions were concentrated within a given administrative sphere were definitively dissociated from any earlier operating agency; in fact, this was often confirmed when such d'yaki were granted separate premises.³ When scrutinised closely, the commissions entrusted to d'yaki in agencies functioning before the mid-sixteenth century indicate that behind old terminology lurked new agencies which were being constituted in the three stages we have outlined.⁴ In the last quarter

¹ Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", p. 307.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 25.

³ Ibid., pp. 71-2.

⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

of the fifteenth century the tasks given the Dvorets became moderately specialised, and its d'yaki tended repeatedly to execute similar kinds of assignments.¹

To describe how prikazy originated is one manner of characterising them; how they operated is an additional consideration. It must be stressed that prikazy were continuously functioning administrative agencies rather than specific commissions of limited duration given to particular d'yaki by the ruler.² Also essential to the prikazy was the judicial authority reposed within them. Each prikaz was headed by several judges, chosen from the boyars, the okol'niche, and the senior d'yaki who staffed it, and they would normally judge cases falling within its jurisdiction; what is more, one judge would usually be considered its head.³

Before discussing the Dvorets at length, it is necessary to take stock. The stages in which prikaz-like agencies and prikazy arose have been identified as have their functions. This analysis can be supplemented with a few broader remarks. For tasks of specific kinds to be concentrated within individual agencies surely qualifies as "rationalisation"; for d'yaki to acquire comparatively better-defined competences would also further efficiency. On the other hand, the growth of prikaz-like agencies and prikazy presumably modified fundamentally the manner in which the rulers of Moscow deployed their authority. Both could function largely without directives from the ruler, and the heads, in particular, enjoyed considerable independent authority. When the grand principality of Moscow was administered as the grand prince's private estate through his household agencies, his exercise of authority was direct and personal; now "rationalisation" forced Muscovite rulers to delegate part of their authority to their subordinates, and hence they wielded a less direct, more impersonal authority. We can

¹ Ibid., pp. 33-9.

² The term prikaz was formerly employed to denote particular commissions of restricted duration. Ibid., pp. 53-5.

³ Ibid., p. 27.

probably surmise that after 1547 Ivan IV welcomed such "rationalisation" inasmuch as it aided him in attaining his military goals; that he accepted willingly the restrictions it imposed upon his exercise of authority, however, is much less likely.

In the mid-sixteenth century the Bol'shoy Dvorets was that prikaz-like agency with the lengthiest antecedents, and the tasks it discharged in the preceding half-century illustrate cogently the competence of a prikaz-like agency and the extensive authority its head, the Bol'shoy dvoretskiy, wielded. Since the Bol'shoy Dvorets had evolved organically from the former grand princely household administration, the ruler's private estates not surprisingly continued to enter its purview. Throughout the first half of the sixteenth century those officials – namestniki, volosteli, and others – appointed to oversee local government on the ruler's estates were named through the Dvorets and later the Bol'shoy Dvorets, and at least one charter regulating the privileges and the responsibilities of the population of a village situated on the grand princely estates was issued at the dvoretskiy's bidding.¹ Furthermore, the dvoretskie played a noteworthy role when pomest'ya were hewn from the grand princely estates and allocated.² The links between the dvoretskie and the pomeshchiki were affirmed especially strongly at various moments in the first half of the sixteenth century when dvoretskie rode into battle leading regiments composed of pomeshchiki.³ The Bol'shoy Dvorets also had a long tradition of handling questions of monastic landholding. The dvoretskiy is first mentioned as exercising judgment in a charter of 1507, and the dvoretskiy is indicated as judge of all matters connected with monastic landholding in a majority of the pertinent charters issued in the 1520s and the 1530s; numerous others were drafted at his command.⁴ When the judicial and financial privileges granted sundry monasteries

¹ Ibid., p. 38.

² Ibid., p. 39.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

vis-à-vis certain of their lands were reviewed at the beginning of the 1550s,¹ established practice placed the Bol'shoy dvoretskiy in a favourable position to influence Tsar Ivan's measures. This supports the view that the Bol'shie dvoretskie of the 1547-1564 period were counted among his intimate advisers.

From the closing decades of the fifteenth century the Dvorets was accompanied by regional dvortsy which were formed largely to administer the territories which Muscovy annexed. For example, the Tver' dvorets was created shortly after the grand principality of Tver' fell to Ivan III in 1485, and the Novgorod dvorets is dated the end of the fifteenth century.² By 1550 alongside the Bol'shoy Dvorets stood the dvortsy of Tver', Novgorod, Ryazan', Dmitrov, Zvenigorod, and Uglich, and during the fifties dvortsy of Moscow, Nizhniy Novgorod, Kazan', and certain other centres are attested.³ Through the first half of the sixteenth century the regional dvortsy discharged in their territories tasks similar to those of the Bol'shoy Dvorets. They were formally instituted to administer the villages and hamlets on the grand prince's private estates in these territories, but in reality their competence ran rather further. How powerful the Novgorod dvoretskiy was during the 1530s emerged when the forces of Prince Andrey Ivanovich of Staritsa attempted to conquer Novgorod in 1537: the dvoretskiy I.N. Buturlin superintended the defence.⁴ Like the Bol'shoy Dvorets, the regional

¹ The May 1551 review of the judicial and the financial privileges previously granted divers monasteries in respect of various of their estates is portrayed in N.E. Nosov, Stanovlenie soslovno-predstavitel'nykh uchrezhdeniy v Rossii: Izyskaniya o zemskoy reforme Ivana Groznogo, Leningrad, 1969, pp. 118-239. Unfortunately, Nosov's painstaking analysis is flawed. In his view, discernible phases in the awarding of monastic immunity privileges are evident after 1462, and a recognisable policy concerning such privileges was consistently pursued in each phase. Hence the May 1551 review appears a response to the policies characteristic of successive phases. However, Kashtanov justifiably doubts whether the extant charters granting monastic immunity privileges indicate consistent policies; he has argued persuasively that the charters were heavily influenced by the immediately attendant political circumstances. See S.M. Kashtanov, Sotsial'no-politicheskaya istoriya Rossii kontsa XV-pervoy poloviny XVI v., Moscow, 1967, *passim*.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 41.

³ This is documented in Chapter 5.

⁴ PSRL III, p. 149.

dvoretskie participated actively when pomest'ya and votchiny were awarded to servitors; divers charters conferring pomest'ya were, in fact, retained within the archives of the regional dvortsy.¹ The regional dvortsy are documented as having commissioned registers of inquisition; moreover, they investigated disputes over landholding, which reinforces the view that by the mid-sixteenth century the regional dvortsy had become prikaz-like agencies.²

It must be emphasised that like the Bol'shoy Dvoretz, the mid-sixteenth-century regional dvortsy were indeed central government agencies: all were situated in Moscow save the Novgorod dvoretz, and this exception is explained by specific historical circumstances.³ That large and traditionally important parts of Muscovy were linked administratively with the capital is significant. Had they been grouped together administratively, a shared political identity might have emerged, and they could have opposed more powerfully those policies emanating from Moscow which they found inimical. As matters were, considerations of opposition mounted by local centres except, perhaps, Novgorod could play a relatively secondary role in Ivan IV's political calculations.

The Kazna was the remaining prikaz-like agency operative when Ivan III died. It proceeded from the Dvoretz in the last quarter of the fifteenth century; it coincided approximately with the more elaborate taxation system necessary to administer the expanded realm and to support Muscovy's wars on its eastern and western flanks.⁴ By the beginning of the sixteenth century it had become a full-fledged prikaz-like agency. A definite staff structure is depicted in Ivan III's testament: he alludes to the kaznachey,

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 42.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 44-7.

the pechatnik, and the d'yaki.¹ The competence of the Kazna is particularly striking: its foremost purpose was to gather taxes, rents, and duties arising mainly from those lands not constituting part of the grand prince's private estates.² This definition entailed the recognition that his lands were distinct from the realm overall; in fact, the kazna of the dvoretskiy and the Kazna headed by the kaznachey were differentiated in Ivan III's testament.³ Separate premises are evidenced from 1491.⁴

The competence of the Kazna was hardly restricted, however, to gathering taxes, quitrents, and duties. Even before the Sudebnik of 1550 the kaznachei exercised judgment in numerous cases involving the taxation entering the Kazna and those collecting it;⁵ this supports the view that the Kazna can indeed be considered prikaz-like. Several articles of the 1550 Sudebnik provided a formal basis for the kaznachei to serve as judges of the tsar.⁶ Furthermore, foreign merchants were obliged to present their wares first to the kaznachei and the d'yaki of the Kazna, who purchased the grand princely requisites and allowed them subsequently to sell to private customers.⁷ From the 1530s well into the 1560s the kaznachei sometimes participated immediately when

¹ DDG No. 89, p. 363.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 48-50. During the Mongol period the area one could plough with a sokha – the two-tined sokha was the basic tillage implement – became a tax unit. Just after the mid-sixteenth century an attempt was made to standardise the tax assessment procedures for various kinds of landholders, and the term sokha was used for much larger units of land (the "big sokha"). On servitors' lands the sokha included 800 quarters of good, 1,000 of average, and 1,200 of poor land. Ecclesiastical landholders and the "black peasants" were assessed at a higher rate: a smaller area comprised a sokha on their lands. Hellie, Enserfment, p. 125. Smith has warned, however, that the units of arable land included within the sokha were only notional; the estimates of the officers of inquisition remained important. Moreover, whatever success the attempts to standardise tax assessment procedures enjoyed varied throughout the realm and by the type of land tenure. For instance, the Moscow neighbourhood was most easily controlled, whereas remoter parts of Muscovy might preserve their particularities longer. R.E.F. Smith, Peasant farming in Muscovy, Cambridge, England, 1977, p. 109.

³ DDG No. 89, p. 363.

⁴ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 56.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 48-9.

⁶ B.D. Grekov, ed., Sudebniki XV-XVI vekov, Moscow and Leningrad, 1952, pp. 141-3, 150-1.

⁷ E.g. AAE I, No. 289, p. 352.

charters of local government were issued. For instance, those boyars having charge of cases of brigandage were to be joined by the kaznachei in maintaining surveillance over the locally elected agencies instituted in the 1530s to investigate and resolve suits involving brigandage.¹ Finally, the kaznachei exercised jurisdiction over the gatekeepers and the pishchal'niki.²

The last prikaz-like agency operating in the mid-sixteenth century to be discussed here is the Konyushennaya izba, which had custody of the tsar's stables. Its staff structure was formed by the early sixteenth century, and included the konyushiy, the yasel'niche, and d'yaki; a konyushenny pod'yachiy is attested in 1553.³ Ivan III's testament indicates that the konyushiy and the yasel'niche had their own kazna into which flowed payments from sundry villages and hamlets subject to the konyushiy's jurisdiction;⁴ the konyushiy could most likely exercise judgment in disputes surrounding such payments. Separate premises, in the form of the Konyushennaya izba, are evidenced from the mid-sixteenth century.⁵

As for the prikazy themselves, the Razryad, once described as "the dominant bureaucratic organisation in early modern Russia",⁶ will be considered first. It, too, had antecedents in Ivan III's reign, although it evolved into a prikaz only later. That military service registers (razryadnye knigi) were initially compiled in the final quarter of the fifteenth century is almost certainly not accidental.⁷ As Muscovy acquired other

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 48.

² Ibid., p. 47.

³ Ibid., p. 66.

⁴ DDG No. 89, p. 363.

⁵ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 65.

⁶ Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", p. 323. We refrain from translating the name Razryad as "Military Chancellery" since other agencies were concerned with military affairs in one way or another.

⁷ V.I. Buganov, Razryadnye knigi posledney chetverti XV-nachala XVII v., Moscow, 1962, pp. 5, 7. The early military service registers were only fragmentary.

polities, and divers princes and their boyars entered Ivan III's service and attended him at court, it was essential to establish whose claim was strongest when several courtiers vied for prestigious posts in the armed forces or at court; such rules were particularly necessary since senior courtiers could scarcely be expected willingly to relinquish their claims.

The principles whereby competing claims could be resolved were expressed in the so-called mestnichestvo system. Its implications for the political behaviour of courtiers are not treated here; nevertheless, its fundamentals are depicted with a view to demonstrating the administrative changes it entailed. From the late fifteenth century until 1682 the mestnichestvo system defined the relative standing of courtiers.¹ It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that this was quite distinct from the service ranks evident amidst the servitors. To bestow service ranks was the ruler's prerogative, whereas a courtier's standing was a complex phenomenon dependent upon genealogical distinction, marriage ties, and the record of service he and his forbears had amassed; however, service rendered to former ruling houses of the principalities and grand principalities incorporated into Muscovy was not discounted. The "rules of the game" provided that nobody could be compelled to serve in a subordinate position to someone whose standing was lower than his own.² If a courtier were appointed to a position he considered dishonourable, he would submit a petition to the ruler for redress of grievance, citing the precedents: that he or, more frequently, a close kinsman (normally within the last two generations) had served at an equivalent or superior level to an ancestor of the individual now nominated as his superior.³ Detailed military service

¹ Unfortunately, when the mestnichestvo system was abolished in 1682, very many mestnichestvo records were destroyed. A valuable fresh interpretation of the political background to the abolition is provided by M.A. Volkov, "Ob otmene mestnichestva v Rossii", IS 1977, No. 2, pp. 53-67.

² R.O. Crummey, "The Reconstitution of the Boiar Aristocracy, 1613-1645", FOEG 18 (1973), p. 206.

³ Keep, Soldiers, p. 24.

registers proved invaluable when conflicting claims had to be verified. From the early sixteenth century records of the seating arrangements at ceremonial court occasions were appended to the military service registers; for all their seeming triviality they, too, illuminated the relative standing of courtiers. The earliest military service registers were prepared chiefly by d'yaki from the Dvorets;¹ however, to keep track of the genealogies of courtiers, the marriage ties which they and their kinsmen contracted, and the record of service which they, their kinsmen, and their relatives-by-marriage assembled grew increasingly complicated, and a specialised agency was required. During the 1520s the Razryad emerged as a prikaz, operating continuously and staffed by d'yaki whose tasks reveal moderate specialisation.² From the 1530s d'yaki "v razryade" are attested in the sources; indeed, their number remained largely unchanged until the last quarter of the seventeenth century.³

What was the competence of the Razryad in the mid-sixteenth century? Its foremost purpose was to categorise the service obligations and the rewards of the middle and upper-ranking servitors of the tsar.⁴ The d'yaki were not thereby accorded the authority themselves to exercise judgment when mestnichestvo conflicts arose; mestnichestvo disputes were ordinarily investigated by boyar commissions or the tsar himself. Yet the d'yaki were strategically situated heavily to influence the verdict in such cases; thus, they approximated prikaz d'yaki. During one mestnichestvo hearing it was affirmed that the charters resolving such suits were invalid unless they were signed by razryadnye d'yaki, and in 1585 the d'yak Vasily Shchelkalov drafted the charter concluding the mestnichestvo dispute initiated by Prince G. Dolgoruky against

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 79-81.

² Ibid., p. 81.

³ Ibid., pp. 112-3, 116; N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki XVI veka, SPb, 1888, p. 81.

⁴ Keep, Soldiers, p. 35.

I. Pleshcheev without a formal determination by the boyar commission.¹ What is more, it was mainly razryadnye d'yaki who compiled the Gosudarev rodoslovets and the Gosudarev razryad, completed in 1555 and 1556 respectively, and both were eminently useful tools when mestnichestvo disputes were explored.² The tasks of the d'yaki "v razryade" were not thereby exhausted. In the seventeenth century all appointments to local government positions made from Moscow were, in fact, achieved through the Razryad, and even before it originated as a prikaz, d'yaki who would later serve therein participated in such appointments: several charters which nominated kormlenshchiki – namestniki, volosteli, and other local officials who obtained their livelihood from the population they governed – were issued between 1516 and 1533 and bore only the signature of the future d'yak "v razryade" Elizar Tsyplyatev.³ During the 1550s the d'yaki of the Razryad strove actively to ensure that the service obligations associated with pomest'ya were actually discharged. For example, charters bearing the signature of such d'yaki were dispatched to Novgorod releasing aged or infirm pomeshchiki from service requirements and stipulating that they should be replaced by sons, nephews, or grandsons.⁴

By the mid-sixteenth century numerous pomeshchiki were so impoverished that their capacity fully to discharge their service obligations was impaired. Of the 222 pomeshchiki tabulated in the 1556 review of the pomeshchiki of the Kashira vicinity, 152 lacked any kind of weapon,⁵ and detailed calculations support the view that this can probably be ascribed to indigence: the costs of the obligations which the celebrated

¹ P.I. Ivanov, "Mestnichestvo", RIS II (1838), pp. 120, 127-8.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 97-8.

³ Akty Yushkova No. 99, p. 84, No. 123, p. 94, No. 127, pp. 108-9.

⁴ E.g. DAI I, No. 47/I, pp. 65-6, No. 47/III, p. 66.

⁵ Chernov, Vooruzhennye sily, pp. 79-80.

Service Code of 1555-1556 imposed weighed heavily upon the provincial servitors.¹ Why numerous pomeshchiki had become poverty-stricken is relatively easily explained. Pomest'ya were normally not large, and the soil was often of low quality. In recruiting labourers to work the soil, the pomeshchiki were disadvantaged vis-à-vis larger landholders, who could offer prospective labourers better terms. Moreover, the pomeshchiki evidently lacked knowhow, and military service frequently forced them to neglect their lands precisely during the season when the major agricultural operations were under way.² The plight of the impoverished pomeshchiki could scarcely be ignored in Moscow, since it threatened to undermine the attempt made in the Service Code of 1555-1556 to standardise the military service obligations falling upon secular landholders.

To regulate service landholding throughout Muscovy so that all service requirements were faithfully discharged became an increasingly complicated task as failures to render the prescribed service could scarcely be tolerated, and a central agency where questions involving service landholding could be treated was necessary. To institute such an agency in turn was moderately to synthesise the competences of the Bol'shoy Dvorets, the regional dvortsy, and the Kazna: the Bol'shoy Dvorets and the regional dvortsy were implicated because of their connexions with service landholding, and the Kazna was affected since service-liable lands were taxed unless immunities were granted. Before the mid-sixteenth century sundry d'yaki from these agencies signed charters pertaining to pomest'ya and the attached service obligations, but they could hardly be considered "pomestnye d'yaki": they paid equal attention to questions of

¹ By examining the pomeshchiki of the Staraya Rusa uezd during the first half of the sixteenth century, Degtyarev has demonstrated that almost 90 percent of them had too little land to meet their obligations according to the Service Code of 1555-6. See A.I. Degtyarev, "Dokhody sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev v 1-oy polovine XVI v.: po materialam Novgorodskogo i Staroruskogo uезда Shelonskoy pyatiny", Problemy otechestvennoy i vseobshchey istorii 3 (1976), pp. 88-9.

² Keep, Soldiers, p. 45.

votchina landholding.¹ The Pomestnyy prikaz was created at the beginning of the fifties, as Muscovy girded itself for the final assault on the Kazan' khanate, and separate premises were attested in 1555-1556.² By the mid-fifties the Pomestnyy prikaz had become the centre where questions involving service-liable lands scattered throughout the realm were resolved. For example, a 1556 charter dispatched from the Pomestnyy prikaz to Novgorod stipulated that every effort should be exerted to find references in the local records to a certain pomest'e.³ From 1556 the votchiny of secular landholders fell into the competence of the Pomestnyy prikaz, for the Service Code affirmed that lay votchinniki, like pomeshchiki, were liable for military service.⁴ By the 1580s and the 1590s special votchina registers were maintained within the Pomestnyy prikaz; when votchiny were sold and purchased, the transactions were to be recorded there, and failure to comply could cause the votchiny in question to be confiscated.⁵ The votchina registers supplemented the evidence of the registers of inquisition, which were themselves preserved within the Pomestnyy prikaz in the second half of the sixteenth century.⁶

Yet another prikaz was the Bol'shoy Prikhod, which originated in the mid-sixteenth century and which most likely arose in response to military-related exigencies. It appeared in 1553-1554, and it was initially the centre where the large and rapidly growing tax to maintain the postal system, the gunpowder tax, the tax levied to finance the extended frontier defence system erected in the 1550s and the 1560s, and a few

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 122-7.

² Ibid., pp. 119, n. 4, 130, 133; Hellie, Enserfment, p. 37. The Pomestnyy prikaz persisted until 1720. Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", pp. 305-6.

³ DAI I, No. 52/XXXVI, p. 116.

⁴ PSRL XIII, p. 269.

⁵ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 33-4; AGR I, No. 79, p. 221.

⁶ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 34.

other taxes were all gathered.¹ In "the year 7075 (1566-1567)" taxes to support the pishchal'niki were also paid to the Bol'shoy Prikhod.² That the d'yaki of the Bol'shoy Prikhod could indeed exercise judgment was evidenced in the spring of 1563 when two of its d'yaki investigated complaints of the Moscow Simonov Monastery against divers tax-farmers.³

The Razboynyy prikaz also became a full-fledged prikaz in the mid-fifties, although its seeds had been sown earlier. Its beginnings are seemingly connected with the charter of 23 October 1539 intended to combat brigandage in the Beloozero uezd. The charter allowed officials chosen from the local population to track down brigands and to execute them after they confessed to their malfeasance. These local officials were not to be punished by the namestniki or the volosteli for bringing brigands to justice, but they were subject to surveillance from Moscow: their names were to be forwarded to the boyar Prince I.D. Penkov and his associates.⁴ Penkov and his subordinates were thereby given a definite task to be discharged on an abiding basis. Furthermore, as early as February 1540 his successor, Prince I.V. Shuysky, is represented in a charter as exercising judgment in matters of brigandage which the local elders in question could not resolve themselves.⁵ Nevertheless, it would be premature to speak of a Razboynyy prikaz before the mid-fifties, even though the evolving agency occupied separate premises not later than 1552.⁶ The d'yaki handling questions of

¹ Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 268.

² Ibid. p. 277; The Bol'shoy Prikhod endured until 1680; see Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", p. 308.

³ Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 278-9.

⁴ PRP IV, pp. 176-8; H.W. Dewey, ed., Muscovite Judicial Texts, 1488-1556, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1966, pp. 33-4.

⁵ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 163. The basic charters pertaining to local government reform at mid-century are found in A.I. Yakovlev, ed., Namestnich'i, gubnye i zemskie ustavnnye gramoty Moskovskago gosudarstva, Moscow, 1909.

⁶ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 160; SIRIQ LIX, No. 24, p. 365.

brigandage served simultaneously in the Bol'shoy Dvoretz or the regional dvortsy, and only in the mid-fifties did d'yaki begin primarily to concentrate upon questions of brigandage;¹ this coincided chronologically with the important regulation of 18 January 1555 designed further to combat brigandage and with the reforms of local government introduced in the mid-fifties. The Razboynyy prikaz continued to handle cases of brigandage until it was abolished in 1701.²

The Posol'skiy prikaz is the last prikaz discussed here. It originated in 1549, when diplomatic affairs were entrusted to the pod'yachiy I.M. Viskovaty and he was awarded separate premises;³ it served as a focal point of Russian diplomacy until 1718.⁴ The Posol'skiy prikaz did not lack antecedents. During the first half of the sixteenth century the most influential boyars had participated prominently in shaping Muscovite foreign policy; sundry dvoretskie joined in negotiations with envoys from other European realms; and the kaznachei handled talks with envoys from the successors to the Golden Horde.⁵ A central agency to manage Muscovite diplomacy was a timely innovation since Muscovite diplomatic links became considerably more numerous and regular in the 1550s. However, even after 1549 divers boyars, Bol'shie dvoretskie, and kaznachei remained active in Muscovite diplomacy. Several examples will convey the flavour of Viskovaty's tasks. In 1570, when Ivan pointed out to the boyars that they should consider an armistice in the ongoing Livonian War, he communicated his own views to them through Viskovaty.⁶ The unofficial contacts

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 166-7.

² J.L.H. Keep, "Bandits and the Law in Muscovy", SEER 35 (1956-7), p. 222.

³ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 151-2.

⁴ Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", p. 306.

⁵ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 138-42.

⁶ Ibid., p. 149; SIRIQ CXXIX, No. 13, pp. 183, 186, 188.

abroad of various boyars and the metropolitan were placed under his control.¹ The instructions to Russian envoys were drafted under his supervision, and when they returned their report was presented to him for forwarding to Tsar Ivan.² The English delegation of 1555 headed by Richard Chancellor was received by Viskovaty rather than a kaznachey, and he was influential enough to arrange Chancellor's audience with the tsar.³ In the 1550s d'yaki from other agencies sometimes helped Viskovaty, but after he was named pechatnik in 1561, retaining general responsibility for the Posol'skiy prikaz, its d'yaki were not usually connected with other agencies.⁴

It is proposed to conclude this overview of mid-sixteenth century Muscovite government by treating briefly local government. The aforesaid reforms of local government doubtless count among the most significant reforms of the 1550s; moreover, while questions of local government are not central to our enquiry into the contemporary ruling oligarchy, they are not utterly unrelated. It is not proposed to survey local government comprehensively, but rather to depict the most important modifications it underwent after 1547 and their antecedents.

The changes evident in local government at mid-century had roots evident in the early sixteenth century if not previously. As the sixteenth century began, the foremost local government officials were the namestniki, the volosteli, and their subordinates; these persisted into the mid-sixteenth century, and it is the namestniki who were most likely to belong to the ruling oligarchy. We are therefore justified in devoting our

¹ SIRIO LIX, No. 5, p. 59, No. 31, p. 470; Ibid., LXXI, No. 6, pp. 90-9.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 147.

³ R. Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, 12 vols, Glasgow, 1903-5, II, pp. 291-6.

⁴ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 151. A Postel'nichiy prikaz may have originated at mid-century; the evidence is inconclusive. Ibid., p. 69. A separate Yamskiy prikaz to handle postal communications within Ivan's increasingly far-flung domains did not exist until 1567; however, related matters were managed by d'yaki from the Bol'shoy Dvoretz and the Kazna. Ibid., pp. 170-4.

greatest attention to the changes which their powers underwent in the preceding half-century. Traditionally a namestniki was responsible for ensuring that his town was properly defended against intruders; he exercised judgment in criminal cases arising within the surrounding uezd; and he apparently participated in collecting sundry indirect tax levies.¹ Yet the powers of the namestniki were abridged noticeably in the first half of the sixteenth century, and the middle-ranking servitors were most often the recipients of their former powers. For example, early in the century the namestniki yielded their power over fortification construction to special officials, the gorodovye prikazchiki, who were customarily chosen from middle-ranking servitors.² Subsequently, the competence of the gorodovye prikazchiki was enlarged. From the end of the 1530s the judicial powers of the namestniki were restricted. Mention has been made of the Beloozero charter of 23 October 1539 which authorized locally chosen officials to pursue and to execute brigands; the namestniki and the volosteli could not punish these officials for discharging their duties.³ However, the charter and its implications must be explored more fully. Basically, the charter indicated that these officials were to be headed by three or four middle-ranking servitors, specifically deti boyarskie;⁴ once more, the middle-ranking servitors profited conspicuously when the powers of the namestniki and the volosteli were curtailed. Furthermore, the charter should not be considered evidence of "democratisation": the continued interest of the central government in maintaining surveillance is apparent in the supervisory role accorded

¹ N.E. Nosov, Ocherki po istorii mestnogo upravleniya russkogo gosudarstva pervoy poloviny XVI veka, Moscow and Leningrad, 1957, pp. 183-97; Hellie, Enserfment, p. 35.

² Hellie, Enserfment, p. 35. For a different theory of the process whereby gorodovye prikazchiki appeared, see S.M. Kashtanov, "K probleme mestnogo upravleniya v Rossii pervoy poloviny XVI v." IS 1959, No. 6, pp. 135-41. However, Kashtanov agrees that the gorodovye prikazchiki were mainly middle-ranking servitors. Ibid., p. 139. Attempts to control the kormlenshchiki were made even as the fourteenth century ended. Smith, Peasant farming, p. 104.

³ PRP IV, pp. 176-9; Muscovite Judicial Texts, pp. 33-4.

⁴ PRP IV, p. 176; Muscovite Judicial Texts, p. 33.

Prince I.D. Penkov and his associates.¹ Another approach is preferable in assessing the consequences of the charter. The officials envisaged therein can probably be regarded as belonging to a local élite, and the charter's result was thus to render Moscow's policies more immediate to the population by associating a local élite with them. Perhaps a similar outcome was intended when charters permitting locally elected officials to apprehend and where appropriate to punish malfeasants were dispatched to Kargopol' (1539), the Slobodskoy gorodok at Vyatka (1540), Sol' Galich (1540), and divers other localities.²

After 1547 the powers of the namestniki and the volosteli were pruned more rapidly. Ivan IV proclaimed at the council of February-March 1549 that henceforth the deti boyarskie were no longer subject to the jurisdiction of the namestniki except in certain unusually grave cases.³ This concession was seemingly confirmed by Article 64 of the 1550 Sudebnik.⁴ Moreover, Article 68 of the Sudebnik required "district elders" and tseloval'niki to be instituted in those volosti which had previously lacked them and affirmed that the namestniki, the volosteli, and their subordinates should not administer justice unless a "district elder" and tseloval'niki from the plaintiff's or the defendant's volost' were present.⁵ In 1555-1556 virtually all namestniki and volosteli throughout Muscovy together with their underlings were deprived of their offices as almost all kormleniya were abolished under the Service Code.⁶ The "district elders"

¹ PRP IV, p. 178; Muscovite Judicial Texts, p. 34.

² Nosov, Ocherki, pp. 236-88.

³ S.O. Schmidt, "Prodolzhenie khronografa redaktsii 1512 g." IA 7 (1951), p. 296.

⁴ See Sudebniki, pp. 256-63 for B.A. Romanov's detailed arguments to this effect.

⁵ Ibid., p. 163; Muscovite Judicial Texts, p. 64.

⁶ PSRL XIII, pp. 267-8. A few namestniki persisted, however. For example, I.P. Fedorov was namestnik of Smolensk from December 1558 until September 1560. See A.A. Zimin, "Spisok namestnikov russkogo gosudarstva pervoy poloviny XVI v.", in AE za 1960 god, Moscow, 1962, p. 40. In the seventeenth century, as Muscovite local government acquired a more pronouncedly military character, the voevody, who wielded extensive military and civil powers, somewhat approximated the namestniki; the "district" institutions became mere tools in their hands. Probably the

acquired jurisdiction over most criminal matters and were to maintain general superintendance; detailed enquiry into the known "district elders" of the 1550s and the 1560s reveals that they were very often chosen from the court deti boyarskie, who counted among the middle-ranking servitors.¹ The "district" officials probably had no counterparts elsewhere in Europe.² Furthermore, under the zemstvo reform of the mid-fifties smaller territories for the administration of justice were constituted, and minor offences were handled by local officials normally elected by the townsmen and the peasants; the close central control exerted over these officials most likely served to identify them in the popular mind with Moscow's policies.³

Before leaving Muscovite government, we take stock. To what degree, it might be asked, did the changes evident in Muscovite government in the mid-sixteenth century indicate that a modern State was emerging? In attempting to answer this question, Max Weber's definition of the modern State has been accepted here. In the most pertinent part of his definition, he emphasised legislation as the basis whereupon justice is dispensed and the realm administered; thus, authority is wielded in a predominantly impersonal manner.⁴ The 1497 Sudebnik might appear to provide precisely such a basis, but viewed in perspective this code failed fundamentally to revise the existing legal and administrative orders. Forty-four of its 67 articles were devoted to trial procedures; moreover, its treatment of trial procedures was scarcely exhaustive, and very many important matters remained outside its scope.⁵ No barrage of legislation

best modern survey of seventeenth-century Muscovite local government is found in H.-J. Torke, Die staatsbedingte Gesellschaft im Moskauer Reich: Zar und Zemlja in der altrussischen Herrschaftsverfassung, Leiden, 1974, pp. 44-88.

¹ Nosov, Ocherki, pp. 328-39; *idem*, Stanovlenie, p. 381. The changes local government underwent in different parts of Muscovy in the mid-1550s are surveyed *ibid.*, pp. 421-526.

² Hellie, Enserfment, p. 316, n. 132.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 35; Smith, Peasant farming, p. 105.

⁴ M. Weber, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 2 vols, Cologne and Berlin, 1964 ed., I, p. 40.

⁵ M.F. Vladimirov-Budanov, Obzor istorii russkago prava, 7th ed., Pg and Kiev, 1915, p. 216.

supplemented the 1497 Sudebnik, and custom still found wide-ranging application.¹ A new code was imperative by the mid-sixteenth century if the chaos which crept into various spheres of Muscovite life during Ivan IV's minority was to be eliminated. The 1550 Sudebnik is doubtless the most familiar enactment of the mid-sixteenth century, and it was Muscovy's main law code until the Ulozhenie of 1649. True, the 1497 Sudebnik was regarded as a precedent. Sixty-seven of its 100 articles were anticipated by the provisions of the 1497 Sudebnik, and trial procedures were again assigned no little attention.² Consideration was accorded in sundry articles to the privileges and the responsibilities, especially in trials, of the boyars, the okol'nichie, and other officials who would staff the prikazy as they arose.³ Particularly revealing, however, is Article 98, which stipulated that the regulations issued later to cover unforeseen eventualities should be regarded as supplementing the Sudebnik.⁴ Apparently a body of written law was intended to surround the Sudebnik and further to clarify procedures, which became a desideratum as Muscovy expanded and the tasks of government grew more complex. Certainly the outpouring of legislation manifest at mid-century, unmatched under earlier rulers of Moscow and unequalled subsequently until the reforming zeal of Peter the Great burst upon Muscovy, suggests that Weber's modern State was being built rapidly.

At about the same time the government and especially the prikazy and the prikaz-like agencies evinced partially but not fully the characteristics Weber ascribed to polities where the authority of law is exercised in its purest form. In seeking to identify

¹ According to Kaiser, traditional procedure retained great vitality in trials conducted by Muscovite judges even in the sixteenth century. D.H. Kaiser, The Growth of the Law in Medieval Russia, Princeton, 1980, p. 186.

² Sudebniki, pp. 141-77 passim, 192-3.

³ E.g. ibid., pp. 141-4, 149-51, 159-60, 162, 165, 168-71.

⁴ Ibid., p. 176.

such characteristics, he concentrated upon the administrative officials and the offices they occupy; three of the characteristics he proposed which seem particularly germane with respect to the mid-sixteenth-century Moscow agencies are cited:

- (i) each office has a clearly defined competence in a legal sense;
- (ii) officials are chosen according to their qualifications for their appointment;
- (iii) officials treat their offices as their sole or at least their primary occupation.¹

How applicable to Muscovy was each of these characteristics?

A moderate specialisation of assignments was inherent in the prikaz-like agencies and the prikazy, and a similar concentration was evident in the duties of their officials; furthermore, the new prikazy which arose after 1547 promoted greater specialisation in the responsibilities of agencies and individual officials. But the degree of specialisation and "rationalisation" should not be overrated. Sometimes the Bol'shoy Dvoretz exercised jurisdiction over villages and hamlets which strictly speaking fell within the competence of a regional dvoretz.² During the 1550s very many of the regulations of the Pomestnyy prikaz issued concerning pomest'ya were ordered by the Razryad.³ What is more, the posts the officials of the central government agencies occupied lacked a sharply defined competence: for I.M. Viskovaty after 1561 to double as pechatnik and supervisor of the Posol'skiy prikaz is a salient example showing how easily a prikaz official's competence could be blurred, and this example is not isolated. In conclusion whatever degree of specialisation was apparent at mid-century in the tasks of central government agencies and their officials was at most only moderate.

The exact extent to which preferment in the central government agencies was obtained by merit after 1547 depended substantially upon circumstances. The influx of new blood into these agencies is a cardinal feature of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite

¹ Weber, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, I, pp. 161-3.

² N.P. Likhachev, Razradnye d'yaki, p. 37; AI I, No. 134, p. 195.

³ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 115; DAI I, No. 52/VI, pp. 90-1, No. 52/VIII, pp. 92-3.

administrative history, and the lesson was familiar to contemporaries: Prince A.M. Kurbsky, for instance, relates with dismay that Ivan IV chose his d'yaki from priests' sons or the rank-and-file population.¹ True, the sources which depict officials discharging their duties are very often laconic, and how skilfully the tasks were executed is difficult to measure. But we may almost certainly conjecture that Viskovaty, who stemmed from Pereyaslavl' dvoryane, and other elements of the new blood rose primarily because of conspicuous talent.² Other considerations could intervene, however when Ivan selected heads of central government agencies from amidst the "well-born": he could hardly afford to appoint dullards whatever their background was, but ties of kinship and marriage were sometimes crucial in determining which of the otherwise suitable candidates would be chosen. Several Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, for example, probably became heads of central government agencies because they were royal in-laws.³ In sum, noteworthy abilities, while eminently desirable, played a variable role in shaping Tsar Ivan's appointments.

Finally, it should be noted that officials of the central government agencies scarcely devoted themselves exclusively or even mainly to tasks connected with their posts. Muscovy was virtually continuously at war after 1549, and the career biographies of such officials, which are too numerous to document meticulously here, indicate that they not infrequently saw military action. Moreover, sundry officials apart from Viskovaty participated actively in Muscovite diplomacy.

¹ Prince A.M. Kurbsky, History of Ivan IV, ed and trans. J.L.I. Fennell, Cambridge, England, 1965, p. 97. Priests' sons were indeed included among the d'yaki: for instance, the priest Sil'vestr's son Anfim was a d'yak. SIRIO LXXI, No. 3, p. 23. Yet other d'yaki stemmed from the dvoryane and the traders; still others were the sons, even the grandsons of d'yaki. See S.O. Shmidt, "O d'yachestve v Rossii serediny XVI v.", in Problemy obshchestvenno-politicheskoy istorii Rossii i slavyanskikh stran: Sbornik statey k 70-letiyu akademika M.N. Tikhomirova, Moscow, 1963, pp. 186-8.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 146.

³ Hellie is correct in remarking that merit shaped significantly who obtained promotion within the service hierarchy. R. Hellie, Slavery in Russia 1450-1725, Chicago and London, 1982, p. 394. But to ignore the contribution of other factors seems misleading.

The cases cited reveal that while the central government agencies were undergoing "rationalisation" in the mid-sixteenth century, the process was hardly complete, and the authority of law was not absolute. Indeed, it is worth pointing out that while recorded legislation became an increasingly important countervailing source of authority after 1547, on balance Ivan IV's personal authority remained dominant. In fact, the authority the Muscovite tsars wielded prior to the mid-seventeenth century was so personal in nature that to speak of the State in a modern Weberian sense is inadmissible.

If reference to the "State" is anachronistic in the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite context, then allusion to the corollary of the State, society, is equally inappropriate. Society as it is customarily understood in the West entails recognition by the State of the right of groups within the population to legal status and a legitimate sphere of free action; such recognition came to Russia only under Catherine the Great.¹ Ivan IV's nine million to ten million subjects at mid-century are therefore most suitably considered a "population".²

In the remainder of this chapter the Muscovite population of the mid-sixteenth century will be surveyed. It is not examined exhaustively, and specialists may find the coverage inordinately cursory. The main effort is to identify and characterise succinctly the basic elements of the population, and especially to show the changes they were undergoing. This serves a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it aids in pinpointing those elements which seem the most promising sources of possible members of the ruling oligarchy we seek to reconstruct. Furthermore, any prosopographical enquiry into the ruling elements can easily become so narrowly focussed that the circumstances in which they operated are neglected.³ This pitfall can hopefully be avoided, and, moreover, additional insights into the causes of reform at mid-century can be furnished.

¹ R. Pipes, Russia under the Old Regime, London, 1974, pp. 70-1.

² Kopanev, "Naselenie", p. 246.

³ Cf. the comments of L. Stone, "Prosopography", Daedalus 100 (1971), No. 1, pp. 64-5.

Can recurrent themes be discerned in the changes besetting the main elements of the Muscovite population after 1547? We have emphasised repeatedly that Muscovy's strategic circumstances and diplomatic relations at mid-century and the contemporaneous changes in government were presaged to a considerable extent in the reigns of Ivan III and Vasily III. Can any similar unifying perspective be chosen from which the changes affecting the population can be viewed? It should be noted that to stress the antecedents from the reigns of Tsar Ivan's two predecessors is not an entirely satisfactory approach: the degree to which the changes apparent after 1547 were anticipated under previous rulers varied according to the element of the population considered. In our view, it is more appropriate to refer to the growing burdens, direct and indirect alike, which Ivan IV's wars of conquest imposed upon the Muscovite population.

It is eminently justifiable to initiate coverage of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite population with the Muscovite Church: the Church simultaneously stood apart from the remaining population and yet influenced pervasively the very fabric of Muscovite life. Muscovites defined themselves more frequently as Orthodox than as Russians, and profession of Orthodoxy was the criterion for "belonging" in Muscovy.¹ The Church was generally honoured as the authentic purveyor of Christ's gospel; nevertheless, the commitment of most Muscovites to Orthodoxy was based largely upon visual symbols and rituals rather than an understanding of theology, and vestiges of paganism persisted.² How deeply Orthodoxy affected the daily habits of its adherents is best documented for the apex of the population, and on present evidence participation in its rites was apparently the norm. Apparently Tsar Ivan worshipped regularly and made numerous pilgrimages to monasteries. For courtiers to maintain

¹ Hellie, *Slavery*, pp. 392-3. For example, Ivan IV seemingly considered the 1552 Kazan' campaign primarily a defence of Orthodoxy. *Perepiska Ivana Groznogo*, p. 32.

² Hellie, *Slavery*, p. 17. The attempts Makary made while archbishop of Novgorod to uproot paganism are treated in E.E. Golubinsky, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi*, 2 vols, Moscow, 1900-11, II, Pt 1, p. 755.

close and abiding links with individual monasteries was not uncommon;¹ according to Grigory Kotoshikhin, in the seventeenth century certain boyars maintained private churches.² Ivan also set an example of munificence to the monasteries: during his reign he awarded them over 25,000 rubles, a staggering sum by contemporary standards.³ Various princes, boyars, and wealthy merchants willingly followed his lead and made generous donations of money and land to the monasteries, especially when the monks agreed to pray for the donors' dead relatives. Such donations of land helped considerably to concentrate the Church's overall wealth in monastic estates. The Church played a prominent role in Muscovite letters and icon painting; furthermore, it is particularly relevant to our enquiry to remark that ecclesiastical writers influenced heavily the views concerning the origins and the proper extent of grand princely authority expressed in Muscovy during the first half of the sixteenth century. These instances where the Church affected powerfully the laity's attitudes and practices are hardly exceptional.

Nothing comparable to the religious upheavals triggered further west by the Protestant Reformation was apparent in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy, but contemporary Muscovite church history was scarcely uneventful. The Church was in flux, and the changes sometimes paralleled those befalling Muscovy and its government. For instance, it was decreed at the church councils of 1547 and 1549 that divers saints acknowledged locally were henceforth to be venerated throughout Muscovy;⁴ it was

¹ For instance, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins and later the Romanov boyars maintained links with the Moscow Znamenskiy Monastery. See I.M. Snegirev, Znamenskiy monastyr' i palata boyar Romanovykh, Moscow, 1861, passim.

² G. Kotošixin, O Rossii v carstvovanie Alekseja Mixajloviča, ed A.E. Pennington, Oxford, 1980, p. 159.

³ N.K. Nikol'sky, Kirillo-Belozerskiy monastyr' i ego ustroystvo do vtoroy chetverti XVII veka (1397-1625), 2 vyp., SPb, 1897-1910, vyp. 1, pp. 158-9, n. 1.

⁴ The church councils of 1547 and 1549 are treated in E.E. Golubinsky, Istoriya kanonizatsii svyatykh v russkoy tserkvi, Moscow, 1903, pp. 92-109.

belatedly recognised that the Muscovite Church had to consider the practices of the Orthodox faithful of the Russian polities subdued by Ivan III and Vasily III. Moreover, the regulations adopted at the Stoglav Council represented an attempt legally to regulate the Church and its interaction with the laity; thus, whatever emphasis upon the authority of law was implicit in the 1550 Sudebnik and other legislation of the mid-sixteenth century seemingly found resonance within the Church.

The Church's wealth and privileges were especially likely to elicit conflicts with mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite laymen. In ad hoc situations laymen sometimes showed themselves impatient when confronted with monastic privileges and land claims. In 1542, for instance, I.S. Vorontsov, namestnik of Beloozero and a future boyar, was enjoined to respect various judicial immunities granted the Ferapontov Monastery.¹ In the 1550s the villagers of the surrounding countryside were prepared to oppose vehemently certain land claims advanced by the Suzdal' Spaso-Evfim'ev Monastery.² Ivan IV himself had to resolve the most pressing disputes surrounding monastic privileges and lands. He appears to have esteemed the Church too greatly to have contemplated a massive secularisation of monastic estates such as Henry VIII executed in England. Nevertheless, it is striking that Ivan, the monasteries' most generous benefactor in the sixteenth century, strove in the early fifties to prune moderately the privileges, especially the financial immunities, sundry monasteries enjoyed in respect of their estates. In effect, the Church was asked to share the costs imposed by Tsar Ivan's ambitious wars.

A fundamental ambivalence is also evident in the views Joseph of Volokolamsk expounded concerning the rights and the responsibilities of the clergy vis-à-vis the ruler's authority; these views or a substantial part thereof were exceptionally influential

¹ RIB XXXII, No. 145, cols 258-9.

² AGR I, No. 67, p. 134. The mid-sixteenth-century conflicts between the peasants and the monasteries are treated further in I.U. Budovnits, Monastyri na Rusi i bor'ba s nimi krest'yan v XIV-XVI vekakh (po "zhitiyam svyatykh"), Moscow, 1966, pp. 259-356 passim.

in the mid-sixteenth century. On the one hand, Joseph emphasised in Discourse No. 16 of his Prosvetitel' and elsewhere that in body the ruler may resemble all men, but that in power he approximates God Himself;¹ hence the ruler was generally entitled to unquestioning obedience, even from the prelates. How submissively the prelates were expected to conduct themselves towards him was expressed concretely in the account of the oecumenical councils of the early Church included in one of Joseph's missives: according to Joseph, the prelates addressed the ruler only after permission was granted, and they did not challenge him.² On the other hand, Joseph opined in Discourse No. 7 of the Prosvetitel' that only a just ruler could require total subjugation; to disobey an evil ruler was entirely appropriate.³ If an underlying consistency in Joseph's views is assumed, then how can the theories expressed in Discourses Nos 7 and 16 be reconciled? This query is not clarified. Joseph failed to specify who should decide whether a ruler was good or evil; nor did he indicate the political implications of the right to disobey an evil ruler which he postulated.⁴ This apparently held far-reaching consequences for the relations Ivan IV and other Muscovite rulers maintained with the Church. True, the image of evil ruler endured in Muscovite thought into the seventeenth century, and Metropolitan Makary and other clergymen whose writings

¹ Iosif Volotsky, Prosvetitel' 4th ed., Kazan', 1903, p. 547; A.A. Zimin and Ya.S. Lur'e, eds, Poslaniya Iosifa Volotskogo, Moscow and Leningrad, 1959, p. 184. This passage was anticipated in the writings of the sixth-century Byzantine deacon Agapetus; see V. Val'denberg, "Nastavlenie pisatelya VI v. Agapita v russkot pis'mennosti", VV XXIV (1923-6), p. 31. Other instances where Agapetus apparently influenced Joseph's writings are discussed in I. Ševčenko, "A Neglected Byzantine Source of Muscovite Political Ideology", HSS II (1954), pp. 156-9.

² Poslaniya Iosifa Volotskogo, p. 193.

³ Iosif Volotsky, Prosvetitel', pp. 287-8.

⁴ M. Raeff, "An Early Theorist of Absolutism: Joseph of Volokolamsk", ASEER 8 (April 1949), pp. 84-5, 87.

betray Joseph's influence felt free to remonstrate with Ivan.¹ But the concrete examples of submission by the clergy to the ruler which Joseph cited sounded the dominant note; Patriarch Nikon is the only Muscovite church head known to have raised claims analogous to those advanced by Pope Boniface VIII in his bull Unam sanctam, where he elevated the authority of the Roman pontiffs above that of temporal rulers.² Certainly Ivan IV and other Muscovite rulers seeking to rule autocratically did not need to fear greatly opposition from the Church.

No discussion of the nature of the authority Tsar Ivan wielded during the 1547-1564 period can discount the laity and the degree to which laymen consciously considered themselves entitled to participate in Muscovy's most fundamental political processes. In the remainder of this chapter the lay population and the changes it underwent at mid-century will be examined: a particular goal is to assess the probable level of political consciousness typical of different elements of the populace.

Least esteemed of all Muscovites were the slaves, who constituted perhaps ten percent of the population, a proportion unmatched in other European countries.³ Slaves were considered their owner's chattels, and their preferences were normally subject to his. How strongly they were popularly considered an extension of their owner was illustrated especially dramatically during the Moscow uprising of June 1547, when divers slaves belonging to Prince Yu.V. Glinsky were murdered along with him.⁴ This

¹ In our view, D'yakonov emphasises unduly the harmony between the leading clergymen and the rulers which Joseph's views concerning the nature and the proper exercise of monarchical authority allegedly fostered; see D'yakonov, Vlast', p. 132. Ivan IV and Makary were both significantly influenced by Joseph's views, but their relations, while broadly harmonious, were not completely devoid of conflict.

² V. Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya o predelakh tsarskoy vlasti, Pg, 1916, reprinted The Hague, 1966, pp. 373-97 passim; H. Zimmerman, Das Papsttum im Mittelalter, Stuttgart, 1981, pp. 172-5.

³ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 678-89. Our discussion of the mid-sixteenth century slaves relies heavily upon Hellie's monograph, easily the most comprehensive coverage of Muscovite slavery. See his notes and bibliography for works on Muscovite slavery by A.I. Yakovlev, V.M. Paneyakh, E.I. Kolycheva, and other Soviet scholars.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 446-7; PSRL XIII, pp. 455-6.

popular attitude was recognized formally in Muscovite slave law: sundry provisions of the 1649 Ulozhenie and other seventeenth-century legislation concerning the role of slaves in judicial proceedings afford particularly compelling examples.¹ Slaves were usually although not invariably excluded from the tax rolls;² this, too, supports the view that the slaves lacked an independent legal personality.

The mid-sixteenth-century sources represent the slaves as pursuing varied occupations; these occupations, however, were by and large unskilled, and this further substantiates the view that the slaves counted among the lowest elements of the population.³ During the Oprichnina it was remarked how frequently household servants were slaves, and in fact, contemporary Muscovite slaves were mostly the personal attendants of their owners;⁴ they anticipated the house serfs of the imperial era. A lesser share of the slaves was engaged in agriculture. True, it cannot be contended that slaves produced much if any of the grain marketed in Muscovy, but a significant and growing role for slaves in cultivating the demesne arable of pomeshchiki is evident at mid-century: for instance, as the fifteenth century ended, slaves farmed about one-fifth of such demesne in the Bezhetskaya pyatina, but fifty years later they farmed two-thirds of it.⁵ A relatively small share of the slaves constituted a slave élite; their importance was, with exceptions, waning by mid-century. Prior to Ivan III's reign slaves largely staffed the grand princely household through which the grand principality of Moscow was administered, but from the mid-fifteenth century onwards the part slaves played in the government agencies in Moscow declined drastically.⁶ Slaves

¹ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 135-8, 213-4.

² Ibid., p. 62. Some slaves engaged in agriculture, however, paid taxes. Ibid.

³ Ibid., pp. 358, 361.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 490-1.

⁵ A.L. Shapiro et al., Agramaya istoriya severo-zapada Rossii XVI veka, Leningrad, 1974, p. 228.

⁶ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 462-4.

assisted the namestniki in administering the uezdy until 1555-1556, when the kormlenie system was abolished virtually throughout Muscovy.¹ The stewards of votchiny had traditionally been slaves, but the 1550 Sudebnik stipulated enslavement only by consent for rural stewards and no slavery for urban stewards.² But a noteworthy counter-example to the generally diminishing role in the Muscovite order occupied by élite slaves is provided by the inclusion of slaves within the Muscovite army. The 1555-1556 Service Code prescribed a fixed relationship between the amount of land pomeshchiki and lay votchinniki held and the number of cavalymen they were to outfit and dispatch.³ Most landholders probably preferred to contribute slaves rather than other residents of their estates, from whom theoretically rent could be expected; a shortage of slave cavalymen may have arisen, provoking a competition for those persons willing to enter slavery.⁴ In fact, the 1577 review of the army at Kolomna suggests that slaves comprised one-third of the assembled forces;⁵ this instance illustrates that the slaves were powerfully affected by Ivan IV's wars.

Eight kinds of slavery were known to Muscovite law between the mid-fifteenth and the early eighteenth centuries. These differed according to the circumstances under which slavery was entered and according to the enslavement period's length; the sources fail to make entirely clear how greatly the de facto situation of these kinds of slaves varied.⁶ Four kinds of slavery were prevalent in the mid-sixteenth century.

¹ Ibid., pp. 462, 464.

² Ibid., pp. 37-8; Sudebniki, p. 168.

³ PSRL XIII, pp. 268-9. When the known slaveowners are analysed prosopographically, the preponderant majority appear as servitors of the tsar, chiefly lifelong cavalymen and officials of the central government agencies. Hellie, Slavery, p. 588-678 passim.

⁴ Keep, Soldiers, p. 58.

⁵ V.N. Storozhev, ed., "Desyatni i tysyachnaya kniga XVI v.", ODB 8 (1891), otd. 3, pp. 1-51; Hellie, Slavery, p. 468.

⁶ As Hellie has observed, one might conjecture a priori that the daily life of an élite estate-managing slave was considerably more comfortable than that of household slaves, but solid documentary evidence of this is wanting. Hellie, Slavery, p. 34.

Hereditary slavery (starinnoe kholopstvo) was, generally speaking, the status of someone whose parents had been slaves; according to the 1550 Sudebnik, hereditary slavery was proved by a will or other documents.¹ The hereditary slaves are most noteworthy for their numbers: they constituted perhaps one-half of all slaves.² Registered slavery (dokladnoe kholopstvo) deserves attention since it was usually reserved for élite slaves.³ But the struggle between full slavery (polnoe kholopstvo) and limited service contract slavery (kabal'noe kholopstvo) and particularly, the last-mentioned's rise reveal especially clearly the needs felt by the central government, the slaveowners, and the slaves after mid-century. The Russkaya Pravda knew three channels of entry into full slavery, but by the Muscovite period it resulted almost exclusively from self-sale into perpetual bondage: self-sale was the sole context of full slavery mentioned in the 1550 Sudebnik.⁴ But full slavery was declining. The last extant full slavery document is dated 1554, although whether full slavery existed afterwards in reality is unknown;⁵ it was replaced increasingly by limited service contract slavery. Limited service contract slavery depended upon a kabala, a written contract: the free initiated the contract by obtaining a year's loan, agreeing to serve as slaves for the interest and to repay the principal when the year terminated.⁶ They became full slaves in case of default. The rise of limited service contract slavery was doubtless widely acceptable: the Kazna officials could rejoice because slaves were no

¹ Ibid., p. 46; Sudebniki, p. 169.

² Hellie, Slavery, p. 47.

³ Ibid., pp. 36-7.

⁴ Ibid., p. 48; Sudebniki, p. 168.

⁵ Hellie, Slavery, p. 48. In asserting that full slavery persisted into the sixteenth century, perhaps even the seventeenth century, Hellie opposes Grekov's view that full slavery expired easily and quickly after the sixteenth century began. Cf. B.D. Grekov, Krest'yane na Rusi s drevneyshikh vremen do XVII veka, 2 vols, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1952-4, II, pp. 33-5.

⁶ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 49-51.

longer lost forever to the tax rolls, which was important when Muscovy was frequently at war; the slaveowners obtained labourers; and the slaves received sustenance.¹

These observations concerning the occupations of slaves and the routes whereby they entered slavery provide a background for discussion of their role in the Muscovite political order. We have mentioned instances in the mid-sixteenth century where slaves were attested in different capacities in various parts of the realm, and geographical dispersion rendered political organisation more difficult; in fact, the slaves certainly lacked any political organisation. Moreover, most slaves stemmed from the population's dregs: perhaps one-half of all slaves were born into slavery, and those undergoing enslavement were usually in humble circumstances. The peasants and especially the bobyli, the hired labourers (naemniki), the beggars, and those who had already experienced household service were particularly frequent sources of slaves.² It seems scarcely possible that Muscovites so lowly situated could conceive of joining the tsar to debate major policy initiatives. But occasionally slaves could be considered "well-born". For example, in a seventeenth-century collection of genealogies of over 500 genealogically distinguished lineages, cases where "well-born" Muscovites entered limited contract service slavery in 1553 and 1557 are recorded.³ Such cases have been explained through inability of those enslaved to tolerate the growing service demands Ivan IV and other Muscovite sovereigns imposed.⁴ It is especially relevant to our enquiry to observe that the poorly motivated, however distinguished their birth was,

¹ Ibid., p. 62. Little if any official provision for poor relief existed in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy.

² For a thoughtful attempt to characterise the bobyli of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, see A.L. Shapiro, "Bobyli'stvo v Rossii v XVI-XVII vv.", IS 1960, No. 3, pp. 49-66 passim.

³ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 358-9; Yu.V. Tatishchev, "Mestnicheskiy spravochnik XVII veka", LIRQ 6 (1910), Nos 2-3 (22-23), p. 11.

⁴ Hellie, Slavery, pp. 360-1.

would not be expected to jockey for influence at the highest levels. In sum, the slaves are an unpromising source of members of the ruling oligarchy.

The peasants and the serfs, who taken together constituted the bulk of the Muscovite population, stood slightly higher than the slaves. A few terminological remarks are appropriate before we delve too deeply into the peasantry and its enserfment. The terms "peasant" and "serf" are only approximate. A serf might be defined as a peasant who is:

- (i) legally bound to a plot of land, or
- (ii) legally bound to his lord's person and who continues to pay taxes, or
- (iii) subject in a meaningful, especially a debasing manner to his lord's administrative and judicial authority rather than the Crown's.¹

Within the peasantry the serfs were most sharply contrasted with the "black peasants", who were directly subject to Tsar Ivan as ruler of the realm rather than as an individual lord and who could purchase, sell, and bequeath their land. Between the "black peasants" and the serfs lay numerous intermediate categories of peasants.²

That the Muscovite peasants were indeed serfs after the Ulozhenie of 1649 is clear: it bound the peasants to the land and prescribed that fugitive peasants could be returned to their recognised domicile without time limit.³ An attempt will be made to assess the extent to which the 1547-1564 period furthered the enserfment of the Muscovite peasantry. As a preliminary step, however, we need to pinpoint factors which might have contributed to enserfment.

The relevance of serf law to any examination of the enserfment process requires no demonstration, but the law alone gives a misleading impression of the pace at which

¹ This definition of serfdom rests upon the discussion in Hellie, Enserfment, p. 15.

² Smith, Peasant farming, pp. 2, 100. We employ the term "peasant" in the broad economic sense of someone who gains his living directly from the land.

³ Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 136-7.

enservment advanced in the mid-sixteenth century. True, numerous landholders, ecclesiastical and lay alike, had been permitted to exercise judicial authority over the residents of their estates, save in the gravest offences. But this is hardly proof of enservment: until the peasants were bound to the land and efficacious means of enforcement added, no lord would dare abuse his peasants excessively, for victims could and probably would flee.¹ Furthermore, according to the famous St George's Day rule, first introduced throughout Muscovy in Ivan III's 1497 Sudebnik, peasants could depart from their lord's estate during a period commencing a week before St George's Day, 26 November, and terminating two weeks later, provided that all obligations to their lord were fulfilled; the provisions of 1497 were reiterated and indeed supplemented in the 1550 Sudebnik.² The St George's Day rule, however, was not an entirely accurate measure of how free peasants actually were to leave their lord. In the following paragraphs we shall examine possible contributory factors other than legislation.

"Long-time residency" (starozhil'stvo) has been presented as a cause of enservment: peasants long remaining in one abode were by custom viewed as belonging there, and the de facto situation was subsequently recognised legally.³ "Long-time residents" (starozhil'tsy) are attested in the fifteenth century, and the sources confirm that their freedom of departure was indeed being eroded.⁴ But the extant charters

¹ Ibid., p. 91.

² Sudebniki, pp. 27, 172-3.

³ Hellie, Enservment, p. 4. The "long-time residency" theory of enservment was first advanced by Vladimirsky-Budanov; see Vladimirsky-Budanov, Obzor, pp. 142-3. According to Blum, the length of the period constituting "long-time residency" was agreed upon by the lord and the newly arrived peasant, and usually extended from five to fifteen years. J. Blum, Lord and Peasant in Russia, Princeton, 1961, p. 98.

⁴ Grekov, Krest'yane, II, p. 92.

prohibiting the departure of "long-time residents" were granted mainly to influential monasteries, and to infer that such a prohibition was general would be rash.¹

One might conjecture that peasants seeking to leave their lord's estate would be required first to discharge all outstanding obligations to him. What kinds of obligations might be envisaged? The view that indebtedness effectively bound numerous peasants to their lord has a lengthy historiographical tradition.² In this view, the mid-sixteenth century was a critical moment in the spread of serfdom because the Muscovite economy then began to falter; the realm's mounting economic woes impelled many peasants, particularly in central Muscovy, to borrow from their lord in order to continue their agricultural pursuits; and by the century's end, perhaps earlier, their inability to repay the loans bound them to him. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the status of the indebted peasant and that of the limited contract service slave merged, and the ensuing legislation merely legalised the reality of enserfment.³ But however plausible the indebtedness theory might appear, it contains weaknesses. It has been observed that any striking increase in peasant indebtedness during the second half of the sixteenth century remains to be grounded in solid documentary evidence.⁴ Moreover, certain Novgorod birchbark documents affirm that indebted peasants could move throughout the year.⁵ In our view, sundry peasants may practically have become serfs by 1564 because of debts they could not repay, but further evidence concerning peasant indebtedness in the second half of the sixteenth century is necessary to establish the

1 Hellie, Enserfment, p. 4.

2 The indebtedness theory of enserfment can be traced to Klyuchevsky; see V.O. Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, 8 vols, Moscow, 1956-9, VII, pp. 238-317. D'yakonov strove to synthesise the "long-time residency" and the indebtedness theories; see M.A. D'yakonov, Ocherki iz istorii sel'skago naseleniya v Moskovskom gosudarstve (XVI-XVII vv.), SPb, 1898, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, pp. 48, 74, 76-7, 111 et al.

3 Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, VII, pp. 316-7.

4 Hellie, Enserfment, p. 5.

5 Ibid.

case convincingly. For departing peasants to pay a rent-fee to their lord was clearly required; the amounts were specified in the 1550 Sudebnik.¹ As a case of 1555 reveals, some lords were ready to impose rent-fees exceeding the legally prescribed sums.² Moreover, the lord cited in this document allegedly beat, tortured, and chained his peasants to prevent them from leaving.³ This doubtless indicates how reluctantly the lords suffered the loss of working hands for their estates.

The mid-sixteenth century was an exceptionally trying moment for Muscovite peasants and serfs. Not only was the peasant's right of departure infringed in practice; both peasants and serfs laboured under the heightened taxes which Ivan IV's wars necessitated. Taxes grew rapidly after 1550. During the Oprichnina Taube and Kruze remarked: "The poor peasant had to pay in one year as much as he had (earlier) to pay in the course of ten years".⁴ This estimate is surely exaggerated, but it confirms that contemporaries appreciated well enough that tax burdens were mounting.⁵ In fact, taxes began not to be paid: in 1563-1564, for instance, unpaid taxes exceeding 4000 rubles had to be collected from the residents of divers pogosty in the Bezhetskaya pyatina.⁶ What is more, order was evidently breaking down in the countryside as the rural population vented its frustrations. The Tver' register of inquisition of 1548-1549 documents raids on estates executed by brigands, incidents of arson, and murders of pomeshchiki.⁷ Furthermore, various charters from the 1550s concerning local

1 Sudebniki, pp. 172-3.

2 DAI I, No. 56, p. 120.

3 Ibid.

4 M.G. Roginsky, ed., "Poslanie Ioganna Taube i Elerta Kruse", RIZh 8 (1922), p. 36.

5 Koretsky has calculated that peasant obligations tripled from the 1550s to the 1580s; see V.I. Koretsky, "Pravaya gramota ot 30 noyabrya 1618 g. Troitse-Sergievu monastyryu (Iz istorii monastyrskogo zemlevladieniya XIV-XVI vv.)", ZOR GPB 21 (1959), pp. 195-6, 206-12.

6 RIB XXII, col. 841.

7 PKMG II, pp. 143-4, 189, 211, 215, 218, 225 et al.

government depict divers namestniki and volosteli as complaining that the maintenance payments due to them from the local population were unpaid and that they were sometimes beaten.¹ It could be conjectured that such disturbances played a major role in motivating the virtual abolition of the kormlenie system of local government in 1555-1556. From the early 1560s, however, numerous peasants and other elements of the population protested their lot particularly dramatically by abandoning their domicile and fleeing to the steppe borderlands; such land abandonments were especially common in central and northwestern Muscovy.² Not only was the orderly flow of tax revenues to the Kazna undermined; the payments of rent and other obligations to the middle-ranking servitors in the affected parts of Muscovy were interfered with. But as the spectre of poverty loomed ever larger before them, they would become decreasingly able to render their military service obligations. The most productive solution to the dilemmas which peasant flight introduced was clearly to bind the remaining peasants to the land. From this perspective the foremost contribution of the 1547-1564 period to the enserfment of the peasants might be formulated as follows. From the early 1560s the mounting taxes needed to finance the Livonian War spurred peasants and members of other elements of the population, particularly in central and northeastern Muscovy, to flee their abode. This had such injurious consequences, especially for the fighting capacity of the army, that whereas at mid-century serf law lagged the reality of the countryside, in the 1580s and the 1590s legislation was promulgated binding the peasants to the land, although completely effective sanctions against flight had to await the 1649 Ulozhenie.³

¹ V.I. Koretsky, Zakreposhchenie krest'yan i klassovaya bor'ba v Rossii vo vtoroy polovine XVI v., Moscow, 1970, p. 241.

² Nevertheless, the incidence of land abandonments should not be overestimated. "Empty" in the registers of inquisition implies that the land in question was not fully viable and therefore was not classified as tax-liable; it does not necessarily prove land abandonment in the full sense. True, precise quantitative measures are obtained with difficulty, but it seems improbable that 90 percent or more of Moscow uezd settlements were abandoned in the late sixteenth century; perhaps half or more suffered sufficient economic setbacks to be considered tax-exempt. Smith, Peasant farming, p. 128.

³ For discussion of the legislation of the 1580s and the 1590s, see Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 93-107.

Yet for our enquiry it is most important to remark that however numerous the peasants and the serfs were and however greatly their expressions of discontent elicited attention in Moscow, they participated at most marginally in the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political order. The arguments adduced to support this view parallel closely those whereby we have denied a prominent political role to the slaves. The peasants and the serfs, too, were geographically dispersed and very often distant from the centre of the Muscovite political order in Moscow. Also, they were politically unorganised, and the gulf separating them and the tsar was so great that almost certainly they could not have envisaged themselves discussing fundamental questions of policy with him. Even those peasants who obtained judicial powers under the zemstvo reform of the mid-fifties exercised power only locally and were closely scrutinised by Moscow. In conclusion, the peasants and the serfs, together constituting the lion's share of the population, are an unpromising source of possible members of the ruling oligarchy which this dissertation attempts to reconstruct.

Taken together, the peasants and the serfs dwarfed numerically the townsmen, who comprised perhaps two percent of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite population.¹ Any attempt to characterise the townsmen forces us as a preliminary to discuss the nature of Muscovite towns. We begin by pointing out that up to 160 towns dotted the contemporary Muscovite landscape and that new sites of continuous settlement – arguably towns – were arising: Sviyazhsk, Shatsk, and Dedilov are several examples.² What, one might enquire, were the common features of Muscovite towns? This question is handled with difficulty because what might be considered a town varied substantially throughout the realm. A particularly thorny issue has been: to what extent

¹ Idem, "The Stratification of Muscovite Society: The Townsmen", RH 5, Pt 2 (1978), p. 120.

² A.A. Zimin, "Sostav russkikh gorodov XVI v.", Iz 52 (1955), pp. 337-43.

were towns inherently centres of trade and such industries as existed?¹ In Novgorod, for instance, various craft industries were plied, and especially before regular trade with western Europe via the White Sea was initiated, a sizeable share of Muscovite trade with traders and trading groups based further west was conducted there.² By contrast, the raison d'être of various outposts along the southern and the southeastern borders was to support Muscovy's frontier defences, although trade and industries were not entirely excluded. Sviyazhsk, for example, was constructed primarily to expedite the Muscovite conquest of Kazan', and even after Kazan' had fallen, members of the armed forces constituted possibly one-third of the Sviyazhsk population; however, churches and monasteries were built, and trade and particularly craft industries are evidenced.³ But while Novgorod and Sviyazhsk differed in age, size, and their role in Muscovy's economy and defensive network, these are not the only criteria whereby towns might be characterised; an alternative approach is to describe their physical layout. Inasmuch as we can refer to a typical Muscovite town, it consisted of a fortress, manned by a garrison and frequently including a church, and a surrounding posad, where trade and divers industries were plied.⁴ The posad dwellers included the basic urban tax-paying population, embracing merchants, traders, craftsmen, artisans, apprentices, and so forth, and these are the most usual townsmen.⁵ It must be mentioned, however, that even in typical Muscovite towns, such townsmen were not necessarily the preponderant

¹ Still useful is the recapitulation of the early debates surrounding the nature of the Muscovite towns presented in N.D. Chechulin, Goroda Moskovskago gosudarstva v XVI veke, SPb, 1889, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, pp. 1-13.

² N.I. Kostomarov, Sobranie sochineniy N.I. Kostomarova, 8 vols, SPb, 1903-6, reprinted The Hague, 1967-8, VIII, p. 234.

³ Chechulin, Goroda, pp. 200-54 passim, 348.

⁴ Hellie, "The Stratification", pp. 122-3. Interestingly, however, posady without fortresses are attested on private votchiny. P.P. Smirnov, Goroda Moskovskago gosudarstva v pervoy polovine XVII veka, Vol. 1, Kiev, 1917-9, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, vyp. 1, p. 100.

⁵ Hellie, "The Stratification", pp. 122-3.

majority. "Settlements" (slobody) housing numerous strel'tsy, artillerymen, and service Cossacks were frequently encountered in Muscovite towns, as were tax-exempt "settlements" held by churches, monasteries, and upper-ranking servitors of the tsar.¹

Mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite towns reveal shared features which distinguish them from contemporary western European towns. The guild associations known in western European towns were at best weakly developed in Muscovite towns.² Moreover, in western Europe towns were sharply differentiated from the countryside, whereas this was not true in Muscovy. It is therefore scarcely surprising that the towns appear not greatly to have interested disgruntled Muscovite peasants as a possible refuge when the great migrations began in the early 1560s.³ In fact, the townsmen, also labouring under the burdensome taxes needed to finance Ivan IV's wars, themselves joined the flight: the first inkling of sizeable migrations of townsmen is found in an entry under 1560-1561 in the Lebedev Chronicle asserting that townsmen from Mozhaysk and Volok fled to Ryazan' and Meshchera and even as far east as Nizhniy Novgorod.⁴ Yet if town and countryside were not clearly delineated, nor were they completely indistinguishable. From the end of fifteenth century sundry regulations established for divers posady the exclusive right to maintain markets;⁵ markets in the surrounding uezdy were thereby forbidden. Furthermore, the 1550 Sudebnik strikingly stipulated that while a gost' whose honour had been injured should receive fifty rubles in compensation and an ordinary merchant five rubles, an ordinary peasant should

¹ Ibid., p. 153; Keep, Soldiers, p. 76. During the sixteenth century most Muscovite towns were situated on land belonging to the rulers of Moscow, who could authorise "settlements" or bestow votchiny upon various ecclesiastical landholders or upper-ranking servitors. P.P. Smirnov, Posadskie lyudi i ikh klassovaya bor'ba do serediny XVII veka, 2 vols, Moscow and Leningrad, 1947-8, I, p. 4. Pomest'ya were a landholding form proper to uezdy rather than towns. Idem, Goroda, vyp. 1, p. 75.

² Keep, Soldiers, p. 76.

³ Hellie, "The Stratification", p. 121.

⁴ PSRL XXIX, p. 291.

⁵ P.P. Smirnov, Posadskie lyudi, I, p. 99.

obtain only one ruble;¹ this substantiates our view that the peasants were not an especially highly esteemed element of the Muscovite population.

Of all townsmen the merchants and the entrepreneurs were apparently most intimately involved with Tsar Ivan and the central government agencies. The Stroganovs are a noteworthy case in point. They were Muscovy's entrepreneurs par excellence during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, and they remained prominent among Russian financiers until 1917.² From the 1520s various Stroganovs acquired shares in the Sol' Vychegda salt industry, and by 1550 they had ten salt works.³ At mid-century, moreover, their operations expanded in scope: Anik Stroganov received a votchina near Perm' in 1558.⁴ What is more, in 1552, 1556, and 1560 he was ordered to make purchases for Tsar Ivan.⁵ The important role played by the merchants in forwarding taxes to Moscow should also be noted, and the taxes levied on salt and alcohol are especially noteworthy examples. Salt taxes included a rent for the brine used together with transit and associated dues: the Dvina customs charter of 1560, for instance specified the charges to which boats carrying salt were liable.⁶ The taxes on the alcohol sold in the taverns were another significant source of revenue; as a charter of 25 February 1553 to three volostj in the Northern Dvina vicinity indicates, no competition with the officially authorised sales was countenanced.⁷

¹ Sudebniki, p. 148. The instances of physical assault, verbal abuse, and so forth constituting injury to honour are explored in H.W. Dewey, "Old Muscovite Concepts of Injured Honor (Beschestie)", SR 27 (1968), No. 4, pp. 594-603.

² A.A. Vvedensky, Dom Stroganovykh v XVI-XVII vekakh, Moscow, 1962, p. 3.

³ Ibid., p. 20-2.

⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

⁶ Cited in R.E.F. Smith and D. Christian, Bread and salt: A social and economic history of food and drink in Russia, Cambridge, England, 1984, p. 65.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 90-1; PRP IV, pp. 194-5.

Tsar Ivan's attitudes towards the merchants were in very many regards ambiguous; indeed, the ambiguity in his attitudes, arguably in his personality overall, is a major theme of this dissertation. He was one of Muscovy's greatest merchants, and gosti and English merchants traded on his behalf.¹ Moreover, some of the wealthiest merchants and traders of Moscow and Smolensk numbered among those Muscovites whom he consulted in 1566 to ascertain what support existed in his realm for prolonging the Livonian War.² But we should remain chary of regarding the merchants and other townsmen as possible members of the ruling oligarchy. Even the leading merchants lacked a tradition of vigorous dialogue with the rulers of Moscow concerning fundamental questions of policy. Ivan encouraged them only spasmodically to believe that such dialogue was proper for them; he affirmed with inexorable candour that in his view, the legitimate interests of the merchants and his interests were clearly divided, and that his interests were primary. In 1571 he told Anthony Jenkinson: "We know that merchants' affairs are to be heard, for that they are the stay of our princely treasures. But princes' affairs are to be established, and then merchants".³ He displayed a similar attitude shortly before Muscovy entered the Livonian War: as conflict approached, he hoped for English aid, and since the Muscovy Company evidently sought exclusive control over Muscovite trade with England, he did not advocate strongly the trading privileges for Muscovite traders in England which were agreed upon in 1557.⁴ On balance, his attitudes towards Muscovy's merchants and traders encouraged them at most modestly to believe that he attached importance to their aspirations; nor were they profoundly stimulated to develop a conscious awareness that

¹ Baron, "Ivan the Terrible", p. 567.

² SGGD I, No. 192, pp. 553-4.

³ Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations III, p. 174.

⁴ S.H. Baron, "Osip Nepea and the Opening of Anglo-Russian Commercial Relations", OSP N.S. XI (1978), pp. 58-63. In fact, the growing English commercial penetration of Muscovy was not paralleled by a Muscovite commercial penetration of England.

dialogue with him concerning fundamental policy decisions was their prerogative. It is not necessary to dwell upon the merchants, traders, and other townsmen as a possible recruiting ground for members of the ruling oligarchy.

Ivan IV's servitors stood apart from the remaining lay population in privileges and responsibilities; furthermore, the higher-ranking servitors were unusually favourably situated to wield influence within the Muscovite political order. In the following treatment it is planned to outline the broad categories existing among the servitors and to identify the ranks included within these categories. This lays the groundwork for deeper enquiry into the servitors. We need to know what changes the mid-sixteenth century brought them and what elements of continuity persisted. In the context of the present dissertation, however, it is especially important to assess in general terms which servitors were most likely to amass substantial political influence and what contributory factors might have helped them to become prominent. The answers to these queries illuminate the political behaviour of the most influential servitors, a topic which will also be discussed in general terms.

Let us firstly consider what might be called the lower-ranking servitors.¹ In describing how the Muscovite army was modified in the mid-sixteenth century, we pointed out that the service Cossacks, the artillerymen and the strel'tsy became regular, incorporated elements. We can go a step further and remark that they crystallised into a new category of servitors, the lower-ranking servitors; this affords a noteworthy example of the impact military-related change exerted upon the servitors. The lower-ranking servitors persisted into the seventeenth century; the ranks of service Cossack, artilleryman, and strelets were supplemented only with the military reforms promul-

¹ Our treatment of the servitors' ranks and how these ranks should be grouped relies substantially upon Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 22-5. For an older presentation of the service ranks, see Sh., "Dvoryanstvo v Rossii: Istoricheskiy i obshchestvennyy ocherk", VEv 22 (1887), No. 2, p. 269, No. 3, pp. 422-3.

gated between the 1630s and the 1650s.¹ The lower-ranking servitors were particularly clearly distinguished from other servitors inasmuch as they lacked private landholdings and were expressly forbidden to employ peasant labour: the urban "settlements" where they resided were collective land grants, although individual gardens were permitted.² They were maintained foremost by annual salaries from the Kazna.³

Above the lower-ranking servitors stood the middle-ranking servitors, who numbered perhaps 17,000 in the mid-sixteenth century.⁴ The middle-rankers, in contrast to the lower-rankers, held pomest'ya, from which their livelihood was mainly derived, and were allowed to use peasant labour.⁵ They included the dvoryane, the local deti boyarskie (deti boyarskie gorodovye), the court deti boyarskie (deti boyarskie dvorovye), and the vybornye.⁶ The dvoryane and the deti boyarskie, who comprised the bulk of the middle-ranking servitors, were based in the uezdy. How they should be demarcated is not entirely apparent, but clearly their relative ranking was changing at mid-century: hitherto the deti boyarskie ranked above the dvoryane, but by the mid-sixties the dvoryane were given precedence.⁷ The dvoryane continued to rise in esteem until during the imperial era the term dvoryane denoted the "privileged gentry".⁸ We have mentioned the influx of provincial middle-ranking servitors into Moscow as characteristic of the mid-sixteenth century, and the ranks of court syn boyarskiy and

¹ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 25.

² Ibid., pp. 24-5.

³ Ibid., p. 24. Such salaries presaged the annual payments made to infantrymen and cavalymen alike as the "new-model army" was constituted in the seventeenth century. Keep, Soldiers, p. 84.

⁴ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 28.

⁵ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶ Ibid.; Keep, Soldiers, p. 22.

⁷ N.P. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, Gosudarevy sluzhilye lyudi, 2nd ed., SPb, 1901, reprinted The Hague, 1966, p. 89.

⁸ Keep, Soldiers, p. 28, n. 52.

vybornyy expressed this trend; indeed, while the court deti boyarskie were known during the first half of the sixteenth century, the term vybornye was seemingly first employed to denote the highest-ranking of the middle-ranking servitors in conjunction with the great transfer of men from the uezdy to the Moscow vicinity which Ivan IV envisaged in 1550.¹ The court deti boyarskie and the vybornye are most strikingly distinguished inasmuch as those vybornye who upon arriving in Moscow impressed favourably Tsar Ivan and influential advisers were permitted to enter the upper-ranking servitors; the court deti boyarskie apparently lacked this mobility.²

The upper-ranking servitors were characterized by geographic concentration in Moscow and an income obtained largely from hereditary estates and service landholding. They may be conveniently divided into two subcategories: the lower upper-ranking servitors and the upper upper-ranking servitors. The lower upper-ranking servitors held the following ranks: zhilets, Moscow dvoryanin, spal'nik, stryapchiy, stol'nik, lovchiy, oruzheynichiy, konyushiy, and pechatnik.³ The zhil'tsy and the Moscow dvoryane should be singled out since they served in Moscow but not at court: this distinction is significant because the court, with its 3,000 to 4,500 courtiers, was the focal point of the Muscovite political and military order.⁴ The rank of zhilets was new at mid-century, and lasted until Peter the Great abolished it.⁵ It was a gateway whereby admission to the upper service ranks could be gained: once in Moscow all vyborne became zhil'tsy, and only later was any higher rank conferred.⁶

¹ Ibid., p. 33.

² Ibid.

³ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 23.

⁴ Nosov, Stanovlenie, p. 412; A.A. Zimin, "K izucheniyu reform 'izbrannoy rady'", IS 1976, No. 4, p. 156.

⁵ V.N. Storozhev, "Zhil'tsy", ESBE XII, p. 6.

⁶ Keep, Soldiers, p. 33.

The highest ranks among the upper-ranking servitors were those of boyar and okol'nichiy; prior to the mid-sixteenth century the boyars and the okol'nichie were the sole servitors who could justifiably be considered upper upper-ranking servitors, but at mid-century new ranks were added to the uppermost subcategory of servitors. The ranks of dumnyy d'yak and dumnyy dvoryanin apparently originated within the 1547-1564 period. The first-mentioned rank acknowledged outstanding administrative talent; moreover, for I.M. Viskovaty, as head of the Posol'skiy prikaz, to become a dumnyy d'yak, established a precedent which endured through the seventeenth century.¹ During the second half of the sixteenth century and during the seventeenth century the rank of dumnyy dvoryanin was bestowed upon court favourites whom it was not usually intended further to promote.² We emphasize that the okol'nichie and the boyars were set apart from the dumnye d'yaki and the dumnye dvoryane: only seldom was a dumnyy d'yak or a dumnyy dvoryanin named okol'nichiy or boyar. In fact, Aleksey Adashev provides the only instance known during the 1547-1564 period where this gulf was bridged. Formerly a dumnyy dvoryanin, he became an okol'nichiy by the summer of 1553;³ this probably reflects the extraordinary influence he wielded vis-à-vis Tsar Ivan from the late 1540s. The okol'nichie and the boyars were distinguished from other upper-ranking servitors in the duties they discharged for the tsar. For example, Article 1 of the 1550 Sudebnik stipulated that they should participate together with the dvoretskie, the kaznachei, and the d'yaki in administering the tsar's justice.⁴ The heads

¹ The testimony indicating Viskovaty as a dumnyy d'yak by 1553-4 is presented in Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 229. Cf. R.O. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors: the Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613-1689, Princeton, 1983, pp. 22, 39.

² Aleksey Adashev was effectively a dumnyy dvoryanin by March 1553. PSRL XIII, p. 523. For the subsequent evolution of this rank until five dumnye dvoryane are attested in March 1564, see N.P. Likhachev, "Dumnoe dvoryanstvo v boyarskoy dume XVI v.", SAI VI (1898), otd. 1, p. 10. See also Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 23.

³ A.A. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy v XV-XVI vekakh", in AE za 1957 god, Moscow, 1958, p. 66.

⁴ Sudebniki, p. 141; Muscovite Judicial Texts, p. 47.

of the prikaz-like agencies and the prikazy were not infrequently chosen from the boyars and the okol'niche. Before the kormlenie system was abolished virtually throughout Muscovy in 1555-1556, the Muscovite sense of hierarchy required that the namestniki of historically important towns – Moscow, Vladimir, Novgorod, Pskov, and Smolensk, to name several – be boyars. Furthermore, not only did various boyars and okol'niche journey abroad as Muscovite envoys; they also collaborated in receiving foreign envoys who arrived in Moscow for important negotiations, because the aforesaid sense of hierarchy demanded that envoys dispatched by foreign rulers to discuss weighty matters should be received by high-ranking courtiers.

Should we enquire what factors impelled courtiers to be named okol'niche and boyars, we would conclude that genealogy was the foremost if not the exclusive consideration. If the role of genealogy is more precisely to be defined, however, we must first ascertain how greatly and in what regards genealogical considerations influenced the mentality of mid-sixteenth-century Moscow courtiers. In attempting to answer these queries it is necessary to refer regularly to the patrilineally defined lineages into which the courtiers are conveniently grouped.¹ This usage reflects how keenly courtiers appreciated that they belonged to one lineage or another. Sundry lineages were recorded in the Gosudarev rodoslovets, completed in 1555, and in his History Kurbsky alludes several times to lineages.² The mestnichestvo system, which we have mentioned, gave courtiers particularly powerful impetus to know their genealogies: otherwise, how could they argue persuasively that their genealogies were more elevated than their opponents' if mestnichestvo litigation erupted? Indeed, litigants are

1 A lineage is defined as a unilineal descent group whose members descend from a known ancestor and are aware of that ancestor and their genealogical links. See R.M. Keesing, Kin Groups and Social Structure, New York et al., 1975, p. 31. We employ the term "family" to denote the nuclear family consisting of the married couple and their children.

2 E.g. Kurbsky, History, pp. 2, 10, 12, 36, 48.

sometimes documented as knowing the genealogies of other courtiers in addition to their own.¹

Which genealogies were regarded as distinguished? The reply to this question pinpoints those Muscovites who could be considered "well-born": the prime example is the ruling house of Moscow, which was descended from Aleksandr Nevsky's son Daniil. Other princes descended from Rurik were considered "well-born"; by the mid-sixteenth century they were classified according to the principality or the grand principality which their forbears had ruled. Sundry members of princely lineages in Poland-Lithuania had emigrated to Muscovy where they gained acceptance as "well-born" provided that they adhered to Orthodoxy. The Glinskys, from whom Tsar Ivan's mother stemmed, represent a significant example; another is supplied by the Bulgakovs – descendants of Gedimyn, grand prince of Lithuania – who became especially influential in the second half of the 1550s.² Such cases are noteworthy because they show that the "well-born" were not a closed grouping. Further evidence supporting this view came in the fifties as Muscovy conquered the Kazan' and the Astrakhan' khanates: those Moslem princes descended from Genghis Khan were acknowledged as "well-born" if they were converted to Orthodoxy. The "well-born" mentioned heretofore were all titled; they were supplemented, however, by various untitled elements. Those courtiers whose forbears had achieved the boyar's rank not later than Dmitry Donskoy's reign were doubtless the best-established category within the untitled "well-born". As the grand principality of Moscow swallowed various Russian principalities and grand principalities in the fifteenth century and the opening decades of the sixteenth century, the boyars who accompanied their former rulers to Moscow were

¹ Ivanov, "Mestnichestvo", p. 5; A.I. Markevich, Istoriya mestnichestva v moskovskom gosudarstve v XV-XVII v., Odessa, 1888, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1970, p. 453.

² W. Pocięcha, "Gliński, Michał", PSB 8, pp. 65-9; P. Maykov, "Bulgakov, knyaz' Yuriy Mikhaylovich", RBS III, p. 468.

considered "well-born". Through an informal consensus the descendants of various émigrés to Muscovy from central or eastern Europe became regarded as "well-born".

How did membership to the "well-born" affect courtiers? Three especially topical consequences deserve mention. Firstly, with certain exceptions the "well-born" occupied a relative standing under the mestnichestvo system. Moreover, they tended to marry among themselves: a conspicuously inferior marriage could have unfortunate repercussions if mestnichestvo suits arose. When a member of the family of a boyar or other high-ranking courtier married, the resulting union was above all a union of families rather than a personal union of the participating parties.¹ One might enquire whether the distinction between the titled and the untitled affected greatly who would be regarded a suitable spouse. The question is best answered within the broader context of the changing role which this difference played during the sixteenth century. As the fifteenth century concluded, the gap separating the princes and the untitled "well-born" mattered greatly, but a century later it had become negligible.² In the mid-sixteenth century the barrier was coming down, although it was not removed altogether. The instances where the titled and the untitled intermarried afford particularly cogent evidence showing that the gulf was narrowing: Tsar Ivan himself set the example in February 1547 when he married Anastasia Romanovna, whose father Roman Yur'evich Zakhar'in belonged to an untitled lineage of "well-born" courtiers. The contrast between the titled and the untitled "well-born" is a scarcely reliable barometer of their political influence. True, sundry princes grew exceptionally influential at mid-century, and are, in fact, admissible members of the ruling oligarchy. But this also holds for various untitled courtiers, and indeed certain untitled "well-born" courtiers acquired an influence surpassing that wielded by most princes: the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, Ivan's in-

¹ Cf. Kotoshikhin's account of the negotiations preceding the marriages of boyars, their children, their brothers and sisters, and their nephews and nieces. Kotosixin, Q Rossii, pp. 160-3.

² Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 13.

laws through his first marriage, are an especially important example. Finally, to return to the enquiry raised above, princes descended from Rurik or whose forbears had emigrated from Poland-Lithuania to the grand principality of Moscow were strongly represented among the boyars; furthermore, various "well-born" courtiers stemming from untitled lineages were named okol'nichie and boyars. One noteworthy difference between the princes and the untitled which persisted at mid-century was that the latter had to serve as okol'nichie before being named boyars whereas this preliminary step was not generally required of princes.¹ When the background of the okol'nichie and the boyars appointed during the sixteenth century is examined further, we perceive broad patterns which aid greatly in comprehending the part genealogy played in such appointments. These ranks were very often hereditary within certain princely lineages and sundry untitled lineages, and moreover, within specific branches of these lineages.² Those untitled lineages which from generation to generation contributed okol'nichie and boyars will be referred to as "boyar lineages".

When the okol'nichie and the boyars Ivan IV named during the 1547-1564 period are scrutinised, several conclusions may be drawn. Almost all boyars were "well-born"; in fact, most frequently they were chosen from the princely and the boyar lineages which traditionally supplied them. But sometimes princes whose forbears had not been boyars achieved this rank: Ivan seemingly sought more closely to integrate them into the Muscovite political order. The okol'nichie, too, were predominantly "well-born"; however, the tsar allowed himself freer rein in these appointments, and various okol'nichie were apparently not "well-born".³ The substantially hereditary

¹ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki politicheskoy istorii russkogo gosudarstva 30-50-kh godov XVI veka, Moscow and Leningrad, 1958, p. 189. According to Smirnov, the Kurlyatevs, a branch of the Obolensky princes, and the Paletskys, a branch of the Starodub princes, were sometimes required during the sixteenth century to serve as okol'nichie before being named boyars. *Ibid.* As is indicated in Chapter 5, several Yaroslavl' princes became okol'nichie in the second half of the 1550s. V. infra, p. 251-2.

² S.B. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, Moscow, 1969, p. 259. In Muscovy unlike western Europe, ecclesiastical careers seldom enticed the "well-born".

³ This is substantiated in Chapters 4 and 5.

nature of appointments to the two highest service ranks certainly had political implications. There existed a lengthy tradition whereby various boyars and okol'niche counted among the intimate advisers of the rulers of Moscow, and courtiers holding these ranks at mid-century had doubtless watched their fathers or other kinsmen perform such a part and could therefore become convinced that a similar role was appropriate for them. This, too, helped to set the boyars and the okol'niche apart from the remaining servitors; indeed, it marks them as an unusually promising source of possible members of the ruling oligarchy.

One could counter that even the middle-ranking servitors of the uezdy were not totally distinct from the boyars and okol'niche. After all, the boyars and the okol'niche also participated frequently in military campaigns; in fact, of 95 courtiers holding these ranks between 1520 and 1550, 68 served as regimental commanders.¹ Furthermore, whatever differences in service obligations might have earlier separated the boyars and okol'niche from the middle-ranking servitors were ironed out by the Service Code of 1555-1556; this illustrates the moderate convergence in responsibilities and opportunities which the middle-ranking and upper-ranking servitors underwent at mid-century. Various boyars and okol'niche held sizeable votchiny and thus were affected by the Service Code's requirement that henceforth all lay votchinniki discharge precisely the same military service obligations as the pomeshchiki;² previously the lay votchinniki had the honour rather than the obligation of serving. The consequences of the Service Code should, however, be expressed more strongly. For Muscovite laymen to hold land effectively became contingent upon their commitment to render the tsar military service, and this circumstance was not paralleled elsewhere in Europe.³

¹ A.M. Kleimola, "Military Service and Elite Status in Muscovy in the Second Quarter of the Sixteenth Century", RH 7, Pts 1-2 (1980), p. 52.

² PSRL XIII, p. 269.

³ Pipes, Russia, p. 89.

Additional evidence indicating that the boundaries setting the boyars and okol'nichie apart from the middle-ranking servitors were not always definite is afforded by the upward mobility experienced by certain middle-ranking servitors who journeyed to Moscow. Not only was entry into the upper service ranks possible; indeed, occasionally they became okol'nichie and, though rarely, boyars. Such cases reveal that the mid-sixteenth-century boyars and okol'nichie constituted no aristocracy of birth;¹ this almost certainly impeded them from evolving into an estate on western European lines. But for perspective's sake it must be emphasised that in certain senses the boyars and the okol'nichie remained sharply differentiated from the mass of provincial middle-ranking servitors. The differences of birth were substantial. If virtually all boyars and most okol'nichie were "well-born", most provincial middle-ranking servitors were not. Moreover, the estates of the boyars and the okol'nichie were usually bigger than those of the provincial middle-ranking servitors; in fact, certain boyars and okol'nichie counted among Muscovy's largest lay votchinniki.²

Finally, it is especially important within the confines of this dissertation to observe that the boyars and the okol'nichie played a divergent role from the provincial middle-ranking servitors in the Muscovite political order. For the last-mentioned to keep au courant with the struggles for influence in Moscow was extremely difficult since communication between the capital and the outlying uezdy was slow. We might conjecture that the tasks of managing their estates and discharging their service obligations mattered most to them, and inasmuch as they became embroiled in the court fray, they were implicated by elements amidst the highest-ranking courtiers. The boyars and the okol'nichie were, by contrast, exceptionally well situated to acquire

¹ The senses in which the term "aristocracy" is employed are treated in L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, Oxford, 1965, pp. 7-15.

² E.g. S.V. Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloie zemlevladienie v Moskovskom gosudarstve XVI v., SPb, 1897, pp. 217-25.

influence and thereby to exercise power within the central government, to promote their standing at court, and to protect and to augment their wealth.¹

The boyars and the okol'niche, together with the dumnye d'yaki and the dumnye dvoryane as these appeared, have been depicted as members of a proto-parliamentary institution, the Boyar Duma.² This view is misleading, even though it has continued to carry weight.³ There were most likely no precise rules specifying how often these upper upper-ranking servitors were to meet with the tsar, and whatever commitment Ivan had to consulting with them before promulgating important regulations was wavering even prior to the 1560s, when his rule assumed more evidently aristocratic features. True, he launched the reforms of the late 1540s and the 1550s at the council of February-March 1549, where the boyars were represented, and numerous boyars attended the festivities held on 8-10 November 1552 where he proclaimed his intention to reward those veterans of the last Kazan' campaign who had rendered distinguished service.⁴ But on occasion he promulgated notable regulations on his own initiative.⁵ Moreover, the questions the boyars were to deliberate were seemingly unclearly defined. In conclusion, if the Boyar Duma actually existed as a quasi-parliamentary institution, it existed as such only inchoately.

Ivan IV generally conferred with his boyars and okol'niche on an ad hoc basis. Precisely whom he consulted will have depended upon who was available and whom he favoured. It must be stressed that not all boyars and okol'niche were in practice outstandingly influential; hence the boyars and the okol'niche cannot be considered an

¹ Klyuchevsky's view that the sixteenth-century boyars harboured little taste for power seems scarcely applicable to those of the mid-sixteenth century. Cf. V.O. Klyuchevsky, Boyarskaya дума древней Руси, 4th ed., Moscow, 1909, p. 293.

² Ibid., pp. 219-31, 261-9.

³ Crummey, "The Reconstitution", p. 187, n. 4.

⁴ PRSL XIII, p. 228.

⁵ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 389-90.

aristocracy of influence. Since this conclusion might appear unexpected, a supporting example is adduced.¹ Those boyars and okol'niche whose service assignments took them away from Moscow for lengthy intervals were effectively precluded from wielding influence there, however honourable such assignments might be. For instance, the boyar Prince A.P. Gorbaty Shuysky, chosen to oversee the pacification and the colonisation of the former Kazan' khanate after it fell, was sufficiently ill-informed concerning court gossip that he felt obliged to write to the priest Sil'vestr of the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral enquiring how Ivan and the boyars in Moscow viewed his efforts.² As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, prolonged provincial service was not the exclusive reason why sundry boyars and okol'niche might not have enjoyed outstanding influence with the tsar.

The capacity of even the leading boyars and okol'niche to exert sustained pressure upon Tsar Ivan was sorely limited, and the mestnichestvo system must be assigned a major contributory role. Certainly mestnichestvo considerations were topical in the mid-sixteenth century: regulations stipulating how the voevodstva of the cavalry regiments of the army should be compared in relative standing were issued in November-December 1549 and July 1550.³ In fact, the July 1550 regulation long remained normative, and it was expressly reaffirmed in 1620.⁴ The regulations of 1549 and 1550 were doubtless prompted by the distressing propensity which divers courtiers serving as regimental voevody revealed to engage in mestnichestvo quarrels as a Kazan' expedition was initiated in late 1549.⁵ Such quarrels were evidently an obstacle to

¹ This finding is paralleled in other periods. For example, Crummey observes for the seventeenth century that "a list of the Duma's members does not match the 'power elite' of Muscovy precisely." Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 5.

² D.P. Golokhvastov and Archimandrite Leonid, "Blagoveshchenskiy ierey Sil'vestr i ego pisaniya", Chteniya 1874, I, otd. 1, p. 88.

³ The regulations are cited in Nosov, Stanovlenie, p. 41 and RK, pp. 125-6.

⁴ Keep, Soldiers, p. 27.

⁵ RK, pp. 121-2.

military efficiency, and we might enquire why Ivan, harbouring strongly autocratic leanings, refrained from abolishing outright the mestnichestvo system.¹ He most probably appreciated that it maintained the boyars, the okol'nichie, and other courtiers subject to it in constant watchfulness and rivalry. From his vantage point, it engendered a desirable insecurity, for no litigant could foretell the outcome of a complaint.² In fact, such an insecurity might sometimes have provided an impetus to greater diligence in discharging service assignments.³ The endemic suspicions and conflicts which the mestnichestvo system fostered help to explain why the leading princes and boyars offered no sustained, organised resistance when Ivan's rule acquired autocratic features during the 1560s.⁴

Probably the mid-sixteenth century was an exceptionally trying moment for the boyars and the okol'nichie. Two particularly significant contributory factors should be mentioned. Firstly, whatever certainties previous patterns of appointment to these ranks had afforded, they were diminished after 1547, and the nominees were increasingly marked as Ivan IV's personal favourites. It is difficult to discern any cursus honorum consistently evident when the careers of boyars and okol'nichie are compared. Furthermore, not only were appointments made from lineages previously unrepresented among the holders of these ranks; the received rules of precedence were sometimes flouted even when the well-established princely and boyar lineages were tapped. Certain branches of these lineages had hitherto been bypassed when boyars

¹ Keep, Soldiers, p. 26.

² A.M. Kleimola, "Up Through Servitude: the Changing Condition of the Muscovite Elite in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", RH 6, Pt 2 (1979), p. 215; cf. idem, "The Changing Face of the Muscovite Aristocracy: the Sixteenth Century: Sources of Weakness", JGOE N.F. 25 (1977), p. 486.

³ When the mestnichestvo system first operated, genealogical distinction was probably weighted most heavily, but certainly by the 1570s the service record of litigants and their forbears was paramount when conflicting mestnichestvo claims were resolved. S.O. Shmidt, "Mestnichestvo i absolyutizm (postanovka voprosa)", in N.M. Druzhinin et al., eds, Absolyutizm v Rossii (XVII-XVIII vv.), Moscow, 1964, p. 183.

⁴ Keep, Soldiers, p. 27.

and okol'niche were named; now they became sources of such appointments.¹ On occasion the seniority within families was disregarded in Ivan's choices.² In concluding we remark that his failure invariably to respect the time-honoured rules governing standing within the well-established princely and boyar lineages found resonance within these lineages themselves by the mid-sixties, when divers members failed to display an expected solicitude for their kinsmen.³ Secondly, numerous boyars and okol'niche experienced economic hardship at mid-century. True, various boyars and okol'niche held substantial votchiny; nevertheless, their disposable income fluctuated greatly. Clearly the boyars and the okol'niche were no aristocracy of wealth. True, the boyar I.V. Bol'shoy Sheremetev could pay 500 rubles in 1554 to purchase a votchina;⁴ nevertheless, in 1547 Ivan summoned the wife of the boyar Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky to Moscow, and she replied that she could not come because her husband had pawned her clothing, seemingly to defray the costs of military service.⁵ Not all courtiers were equally indigent, but the economic prospects of many,

¹ For example, the Kurlyatevs were a branch of the Obolensky princes from which boyars were not appointed before the mid-sixteenth century, G. Alef, "Aristocratic Politics and Royal Policy in Muscovy in the Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries", FOEG 27 (1980), p. 97.

² For instance, Prince D.I. Kurlyatev was appointed boyar in March 1549 whereas his older brother Prince K.I. Kurlyatev became a boyar in the following autumn. See Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61; A.A. Novosel'sky and L.N. Pushkarev, eds, Redkie istochniki po istorii Rossii, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1977, II, pp. 20, 115.

³ This is explored further in Chapter 5.

⁴ SGGD I, No. 170, pp. 468-9.

⁵ AI I, No. 146, pp. 210-1.

even of the highest-ranking courtiers, were bleak.¹ Wealth was apparently no prerequisite for boyars and okol'niche; however, attempts were doubtless made to wrest material advantages from the tsar.

We conclude our survey of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite population with Ivan IV himself. It is intended to define his role in the Muscovite political order after 1547 and thereby to demonstrate the uncertainties bedeviling the nature of his authority and their implications. These considerations seem most fundamental in comprehending contemporary Muscovite politics and in assessing how the 1547-1564 period contributed to Russia's history overall; detailed treatment of Ivan's political behaviour is deferred until Chapter 4.

Certainly Tsar Ivan was the central actor in the Muscovite political order after 1547. His role embodied the attitude that not only his private estates but his entire realm constituted his private votchina, an attitude grounded in long-standing precedents. Before the grand principality of Moscow was substantially expanded under Ivan III, it was administered as the ruler's private domain through his household. This undoubtedly influenced Ivan III's attitudes even after his dominions became too large to be administered through his household, and Vasily III's rule expressed a similar mentality.

Inasmuch as a "typical votchinnik" existed, how might we compare his rule over his votchina with Ivan IV's over mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy? Several particularly important points deserve mention. Firstly, his attitudes towards the

¹ When upper-ranking courtiers became impoverished, not only were poor soil conditions on their lands, lack of knowhow, and the costs of rendering military service possible causes; the rules surrounding the inheritance of votchiny not infrequently were a further consideration. When a votchinnik deceased and after his widow and any unmarried daughters were provided for, his property was divided approximately equally among his sons; after several generations the share in his estate of any one descendant could easily be small. The rules of inheritance are exposed in Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, pp. 62-78 and S.B. Veselovsky, Feodal'noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoy Rusi, Vol. 1, Moscow and Leningrad, 1947, I, pp. 40-55. Muscovite servitors seldom held estates in the Western sense of clearly delimited, perhaps even enclosed, lands readily workable as independent agricultural units; a patchwork arrangement of small plots was usual. Keep, Soldiers, p. 44.

economic potential of his lands found resonance in Ivan's thinking. He probably viewed them in the first instance as income-producing property, and this attitude was perhaps reinforced after the 1555-1556 Service Code imposed military service obligations on lay votchinniki. Similarly, Ivan believed himself entitled to place increasing tax and military service obligations upon his subjects in furtherance of his ambitions of military conquest. In fact, the hefty tax increases under which Muscovite taxpayers groaned after mid-century suggest that he was prepared more aggressively than his father and his grandfather to tap Muscovy's economic resources. However, he seemingly lacked any strongly developed sense of reciprocal obligation to Muscovite taxpayers: according to Giles Fletcher, he observed that his people, like his beard, like sheep, required frequent clipping to grow.¹ Additional parallels between the "typical votchinnik" and Ivan are evident in the manner of administration and of dispensing justice. The tsar's officials aside, the "typical votchinnik" enjoyed preeminent administrative and judicial authority within his votchina, and, it must be emphasised, exercised direct, personal authority or delegated his authority to officials closely identified with him.² Ivan's role in Muscovite administration and justice was similarly preeminent. Charters concerning a sweeping range of questions were issued in his name, and he supervised personally important administrative tasks: for instance, he sometimes sought to maintain surveillance when votchiny changed hands.³ His was the highest judgment in Muscovy: although, for example, he was exempt from, nay, above the mestnichestvo system, and entrusted the less serious mestnichestvo disputes to boyar commissions, nevertheless he reserved the right to adjudicate graver cases

¹ L.E. Berry and R.O. Crummey, eds, Rude and Barbarous Kingdom: Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth-Century English Voyagers, Madison, Milwaukee, London, 1968, p. 164.

² For example, Prince I.F. Mstislavsky exercised virtually untrammelled authority over his votchina situated between Ryazan' and Tula. M.N. Tikhomirov, Rossiia v XVI stoletii, Moscow, 1962, pp. 51-2.

³ AAE I, No, 227, pp. 218-9.

himself.¹ Moreover, just as the "typical votchinnik" was almost certainly guided by custom in resolving numerous ad hoc situations, so Ivan on divers occasions expressed his intention to issue regulations "based on ancient tradition" (po starine);² yet he was hardly consistent in revering established precedents, and he readily broke with time-honoured traditions when he wished. Finally, the high-ranking servitors and intimate advisers he chose whose birth his father and grandfather would have deemed unsuitable were closely linked with him: they owed their prominence directly to his favour. Aleksey Adashev and I.M. Viskovaty, for instance, probably long remained outstandingly influential although they were not "well-born" because he found them exceptionally capable and utterly trustworthy.³

Yet if in certain contexts the personal nature of Tsar Ivan's authority was accentuated after 1547, in other respects it was reduced. This countervailing trend also had precedents. The prikaz-like agencies and the prikazy which were formed from Ivan III's reign onwards and which continued to be supplemented at mid-century are an important example: we have remarked that their heads were characteristically empowered to judge cases falling within their competence, and have documented this earlier in the present chapter. As written legislation became an increasingly important alternative source of legal authority, Ivan's personal authority was further diluted. The 1497 Sudebnik represented a modest beginning, and the numerous legislative enactments introduced after 1547 greatly accelerated the trend. The council of February-March 1549, the first Zemsky sobor, afforded especially cogent evidence showing that Ivan did not consistently rule Muscovy as his private votchina.⁴ Among

¹ RK, p. 183.

² This is documented in Chapter 7.

³ The careers of Adashev and Viskovaty are treated in Chapter 4.

⁴ Why might the February-March 1549 council be considered a Zemsky sobor? The question is further complicated by the absence of the term zemskiy sobor in sixteenth-century sources. Zimin, Oprichnina, p. 166. Hence one must reconstruct a "typical Zemsky sobor" and assess how closely the February-March 1549 council and other evidenced councils resemble it. Zemskie sobory were typically

its chief goals was to lessen the mounting disorder in the countryside, and in convening it he tacitly conceded himself unable to resolve exceptionally grave crises alone or with a small band of intimate advisers.¹

The nature of Ivan IV's authority after 1547 therefore included conflicting strains, and these ambiguities and their consequences affected Muscovite politics profoundly. Perhaps he tolerated them in the late forties and the fifties, but in the early sixties he launched a wave of persecutions against divers courtiers who had incurred his displeasure;² he showed less tolerance towards any opposition to his wishes. He revealed strong aversion to any dilution of the personal nature of his authority in his first missive to Kurbsky, written as the Oprichnina approached. He asserts, with dubious historical accuracy: "But as for the Russian autocracy, they themselves (i.e., the autocrats) from the beginning have ruled all the(ir) dominions, and not the boyars and not the grandees."³ This statement was made to buttress his claims autocratically to rule; curiously, he strove to justify himself by appealing to tradition when he was actually deviating from it. Autocracy probably impressed him as admirably suited to removing the ambiguities afflicting the nature of his authority. Were he an autocrat, his personal authority would be virtually reconstituted even when Muscovy became too

summoned in the second half of the sixteenth century when questions affecting fundamentally Muscovy's peace, order, and good government were pressing. Moreover, the participants in a "typical Zemsky sobor" included the upper upper-ranking servitors – the Boyar Duma in Klyuchevsky's misleading term, the prikaz heads, sundry d'yaki, various provincial servitors, gosti and other prominent merchants, and the highest-ranking clergymen. Cf. V.O. Klyuchevsky, Opyty i issledovaniya, Pg, 1918, pp. 429-32. Certainly Ivan IV's concern for Muscovy's internal order prompted the February-March 1549 council, and its composition approximated substantially if incompletely a "typical Zemsky sobor"s Pavlenko asserts that this council was on balance a Zemsky sobor; however, its operational procedures differed somewhat from those of later zemskie sobory. N.I. Pavlenko, "K istorii zemskikh soborov XVI v.", VI 1968, No. 5, p. 88, n. 31. Cf. also L.V. Cherepnin, Zemskie sobory russkogo gosudarstva v XVI-XVII vv., Moscow, 1978, pp. 68-78. The last Zemsky sobor was convened in 1653; see J.L.H. Keep, "The Decline of the Zemsky Sobor", SEER 36 (1957-8), pp. 117-8.

¹ For the proceedings, see Shmidt, "Prodolzhenie", pp. 295-6.

² The persecutions are described in Kurbsky, History, pp. 177-83.

³ J.L.I. Fennell, ed. and trans., The Correspondence between Prince A.M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia, 1564-1579, Cambridge, England, 1963, p. 27.

large to be ruled as his private votchina. He could, as previously, requisition Muscovy's economic resources for his purposes and choose administrative officials and intimate advisers closely linked to him. As an autocrat, however, he would encounter a sufficiently submissive attitude among all elements of the population, from the princes to the slaves, that to disobey him would become unthinkable. His wishes would become the unchallenged font of legal authority. He could respect customary law should he choose, but could disregard it at will. He could enact legislation if Muscovy could thereby be administered and justice dispensed more efficiently, but he could revoke it as seemed appropriate.

If by 1564 Tsar Ivan favoured converting his rule to autocracy, circumstances were propitious. In surveying the contemporary Muscovite population we have argued that his attempts to realise this goal most likely would not have encountered effective opposition. In fact, autocratic rule did commence in Russia during the winter of 1564-1665. As the Oprichnina began, Ivan withdrew from Moscow to the Aleksandrova sloboda and affirmed his intention to abdicate.¹ This was merely a ploy, but it provoked great confusion in Moscow. Since he and his predecessors had long played a central part in Muscovy's political order, the absence of his guiding hand was unthinkable; indeed, it was considered indicative of his wrath.² The Moscow population manifested a newly submissive attitude towards him, and he could press successfully his claims to total authority. The gosti, the merchants, and all the Moscow townsmen asserted that they themselves would destroy all enemies and traitors to him.³ Pimen, archbishop of Novgorod, and Levky, archimandrite of the Moscow Chudov

¹ That the winter of 1564-5 witnessed the beginning of autocratic rule in Muscovy is demonstrated in D.N. Al'shits, "Nachal'nyy etap istorii samodержaviya", VI 1985, No. 9, pp. 53-6. For documentation, see G. Vernadsky et al., eds, A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917, 3 vols, New Haven and London, 1972, I, pp. 142-3.

² A Source Book I, pp. 143-4.

³ Ibid., p. 144.

Monastery, journeyed to the Aleksandrova sloboda and admonished him to rule his dominions as he pleased; they even allowed him authority of life or death over all who betrayed or otherwise wrought evil to him or his realm.¹ He consented to resume ruling upon the condition that he would cast into disgrace those who had betrayed him or disobeyed him in any matter, and would punish other malfeasants and sequester their possessions and property.² Autocratic rule was thus initiated; it had been strengthened considerably by the close of the Muscovite period,³ and theoretically Russian rulers remained autocrats until 1917. The introduction of autocracy was probably the Oprichnina's weightiest legacy, and as the initiator of autocratic rule Ivan IV, like Ivan III, Peter the Great, and Catherine the Great, counts among those rulers whose reigns affected decisively Russia's history. From this perspective, the 1547-1564 period can be considered a prelude to autocracy.

Our final task in this chapter is generally to define the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite ruling oligarchy. We depart from the common-sense principle that it consisted of those Muscovites who influenced significantly fundamental policy decisions. Ivan IV's central role in decision-making renders him an obvious candidate for the ruling oligarchy, and in effect the remaining members are those Muscovites known or who could be assumed to have engaged in meaningful dialogue with him concerning important policy questions. But this definition requires substantial clarification. We begin by specifying the issues critical enough to make those who participated in resolving them as members of the ruling oligarchy.

Foreign relations doubtless absorbed considerable attention at court after 1547. Where Muscovy could most advantageously seek territorial aggrandisement was

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ The strengthening of autocracy in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries is traced in H. Neubauer, Car und Selbstherrscher: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Autokratie in Russland, Wiesbaden, 1964, pp. 20-198.

sometimes hotly debated. True, the conquest of the Kazan' khanate was widely supported. But Ivan's decision to initiate hostilities in Livonia provoked controversy at court, and those who earnestly debated with him whether Muscovy should expand in Livonia or to the south can probably be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. Even after Muscovite military goals had been established, Ivan sometimes sought advice before launching his campaigns, and those with whom he consulted most likely counted among the oligarchs. Those Muscovites who engaged him in dialogue to promote the growth of Muscovy's diplomatic and commercial relations or who interceded with him to modify his intentions vis-à-vis other countries are also likely members of the ruling oligarchy.

After 1547 numerous reforms within Muscovy were proposed or indeed implemented, sometimes to promote the realm's order and good government, sometimes to further the tsar's plans of territorial conquest. Of these reforms the following are most important:

- (i) the 1550 Sudebnik;
- (ii) "the tsar's questions", twelve reform proposals drafted as the 1550s began;¹
- (iii) those provisions of the 1551 Stoglav Council indicating when the tsar's officials could exercise judicial authority over the clergy and how justice should be dispensed on ecclesiastical estates;
- (iv) those proposals or regulations anticipating or modifying those mentioned in (i) or (iii);
- (v) the decree of 3 October 1550 stipulating that slightly over 1000 deti boyarskie not holding a pomest'e near Moscow should receive one within 60 to 70 versty in the Moscow uezd or the contiguous uezdy;²
- (vi) the regulation of 18 January 1555 against brigandage;

¹ PRP IV, pp. 576-80.

² TKDT, pp. 53-4.

- (vii) the Service Code of 1555-1556;
- (viii) the extension of the frontier defence system;
- (ix) the introduction of new units and technology within the army;
- (x) the 1549 and 1550 mestnichestvo regulations defining the relative standing of the voevodstva within the cavalry regiments;
- (xi) the introduction of new prikaz-like agencies and prikazy;
- (xii) the envisaged changes in the methods of tax assessment, the addition of new taxes, and the substantial increase in taxation levels;
- (xiii) the regulations specifying at least relatively generally when lands could be acquired and alienated and how landholders were allowed to extract income from their lands; also, the preparation of registers of inquisition;
- (xiv) the attempted standardisation of weights and measures throughout Muscovy.¹

Whenever the sources illustrate Ivan in dialogue with other Muscovites concerning these reforms, his interlocutors can be included within the ruling oligarchy; so too can courtiers who impelled him to introduce the Oprichnina.

We now identify those elements of the population which probably supplied Tsar Ivan's most intimate advisers. In examining the clergy we remarked that Metropolitan Makary and other Josephite clergymen felt free to remonstrate with him; this should be strengthened. A lengthy tradition existed whereby prominent clergymen and not only the Moscow metropolitans wielded considerable influence vis-à-vis the grand princes, and we might expect influential clergymen amidst the ruling oligarchy. By contrast, the slaves, the serfs, the peasants, and the townsmen – indeed, most Muscovites – almost certainly lacked the political consciousness necessary to engage in politics at the highest level. Of all laymen the boyars and the okol'niche seem the most obvious source of intimate advisers to the tsar. Furthermore, we might predict that some of the middle-ranking servitors entering Moscow would be sufficiently gifted and ambitious to reach

¹ Cf. DAI I, No. 45, pp. 62-3.

the ruling oligarchy; the extant evidence bears this out. Unfortunately, the sources elucidate thinly the relations obtaining among the clergymen, rising middle-ranking servitors, and boyars and okol'nichie who belonged to the ruling oligarchy.

How the oligarchs apart from Ivan IV might be identified depends upon the evidence. Sometimes the sources are exceptionally helpful, identifying clearly his closest advisers and indicating with whom he discussed fundamental policy questions. Otherwise we can only infer his most intimate counsellors from the tasks they discharged. Those boyars, okol'nichie, and d'yaki who headed the prikazy were surely members of the ruling oligarchy: they were natural candidates for consultation when major policy issues were deliberated. The same almost certainly holds for the heads of the prikaz-like agencies, albeit with exceptions.¹ It seems inconceivable that the boyars, or okol'nichie, and heads of central government agencies left in Moscow to superintend the realm in Ivan's absence did not discuss fundamental policy questions with him. Those boyars appointed to judge mestnichestvo cases evidently enjoyed his confidence and probably qualified for the ruling oligarchy. Of foreign rulers he apparently esteemed most highly the Holy Roman emperors and the Polish kings together with the Crimean khans and the Ottoman sultans, and those courtiers he permitted prominently to figure in negotiations with their envoys were probably exceptionally close to him. Those Muscovites whom foreign envoys admonished to intercede with him to modify his foreign policy are similarly marked as belonging to the ruling oligarchy: they were seemingly known to contemporaries even outside Muscovy as his intimate advisers. Finally, Muscovites chosen to serve as regents should he decease were evidently highly trusted and might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy.

Can we learn anything about the ruling oligarchy from those sources indicating who accompanied Tsar Ivan on the campaigns he commanded? In our view, one

¹ Certain regional dvortsy were not usually headed by boyars or okol'nichie; in our view, those courtiers heading such dvortsy were probably insufficiently distinguished for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy.

cannot assume that courtiers who repeatedly joined him on campaign perforce counted among his most intimate advisers in default of corroborating evidence. True, military expeditions afforded his courtiers an opportunity to advocate their causes; yet courtiers may have escorted him primarily because he enjoyed their society and not because he wished to consult with them concerning policies. Nevertheless, those courtiers already marked as outstandingly influential – members of the ruling oligarchy – who accompanied him on successive campaigns were probably especially close.

Corresponding remarks may be made concerning the baptisms, weddings, and burials in Ivan IV's family, as well as his pilgrimages to monasteries. The references to those who joined him do not qualify them as members of the ruling oligarchy, but can substantiate further the testimony of alternative sources indicating that they were. The same holds for those courtiers who guarded his wife or his children in his absence.

Finally, it must be observed that Tsar Ivan and his intimate advisers as recognized by the criteria proposed constitute, in fact, a ruling oligarchy: they numbered twenty-odd or thirty-odd at any moment.

In this dissertation we focus, as our title suggests, upon the Muscovite ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564: its composition, political behaviour, and attitudes toward reform. Before our version is presented, however, the pertinent scholarship, past and present, is surveyed.

2

**Past and Present Scholarship:
Tatishchev to Skrynnikov**

The primary aim of the present chapter is to ascertain to what extent and where our attempts to resolve the three enquiries concerning the Muscovite ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 raised in the title of this dissertation have been anticipated by previous commentators on mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy. The body of pertinent literature is vast, especially when the popular literature is reckoned together with the scholarly, and this exploration of the historiography of the three enquiries cannot be considered exhaustive. How this survey should be conducted needs further to be defined. For each enquiry we seek to establish the concrete queries which have been raised, the answers supplied, and when appropriate the ensuing scholarly disputes. We are mainly concerned with the questions posed and the solutions proposed by historians, prerevolutionary and Soviet, inside and outside Russia, who are widely acclaimed as specialists in Russian history, or who, while less well-known, have contributed significantly to the scholarship surrounding the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite ruling oligarchy.¹

Historians from V.N. Tatishchev onwards have recognised that Muscovite politics after 1547 cannot be understood without reference to Ivan IV's role. Few have been indifferent to him,² but the nature of his rule has evoked a vigorous debate. This debate reflects not only the introduction of new evidence and the impact of changing political circumstances upon historians, but also the methodological difficulties of studying him. To choose an approach from which a unified portrait of him might be painted is no trivial task, and a comparison of N.M. Karamzin's and S.M. Solov'ev's

¹ In seeking to justify his praise of Ivan Grozny, the nineteenth-century historian Belov asserted that Ivan, aided by the *Oprichnina*, spared Russia the evils of oligarchic rule; see E.A. Belov, "Ob istoricheskom znachenii russkago boyarstva do kontsa XVII veka", *ZhMNP* CCXLIII (February 1886), pp. 234, 255. Whether Muscovy's ruling elements prior to the winter of 1564-5 governed wisely is debatable, but clearly they constituted an oligarchy.

² Ivan IV's personality has fascinated very many historians; yet not all have viewed it as the central issue of his reign. Kizevetter, for instance, considered the shocks the Muscovite population sustained at least as important. See A.A. Kizevetter, *Ivan Groznyy i ego opponenty*, Moscow, 1898, pp. 9-10. Certainly Ivan was mentally unbalanced, but we refrain from detailed judgments concerning his psychological history since such can easily become speculative.

treatments illustrates cogently how different approaches to him and his rule yield results of questionable consistency.

Karamzin's psychological approach afforded insights which subsequent historians could not discount. Ivan IV was viewed in the first instance from a moral perspective. During his youth he fell into depravity, but after 1547 he experienced the priest Sil'vestr's good influence, and Muscovy flourished.¹ The year 1560 was a watershed in his reign: his mental condition deteriorated after Tsaritsa Anastasia died, and a dark chapter in Russia's history began.²

Solov'ev, by contrast, was less preoccupied with Tsar Ivan's psychological makeup and rather more concerned with his part in Muscovy's foreign policy and in building the Muscovite State;³ this approach has proved equally productive. In Solov'ev's view, an especially noteworthy service Ivan rendered the evolving State was to end various vestigial privileges enjoyed by sundry princes and boyars which impeded the attempts of the central government to exert ever closer control over the realm. These privileges, Solov'ev asserted, had already been eroded during the sixteenth century, and the Oprichnina marked the final assault upon them.⁴ Ivan emerged victorious: the princes and boyars were deprived of all ambitions seriously to oppose him on political questions.⁵

In emphasising Ivan IV's part in strengthening the Muscovite central government, Solov'ev identified an important element of his reign. But how compatible is this view of him with Karamzin's psychological approach? Could a tsar

¹ N.M. Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, 12 vols, SPb, 1892 ed., reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, VIII, pp. 63-4.

² Ibid., pp. 194-5; ibid., IX, p. 3.

³ But Solov'ev appreciated well enough Ivan's personality disturbances, speaking of "the frightening state of his soul" as the Oprichnina approached. Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, p. 553.

⁴ Idem, Istoriya otnosheniy mezhdru knyaz'yami Ryurikova doma, Moscow, 1847, pp. 596-9.

⁵ Idem, Istoriya Rossii, V, p. 258.

burdened with mental disturbances have contributed significantly to the growth of the Muscovite State? A successful synthesis of Solov'ev's and Karamzin's approaches was not immediately forthcoming, even though specific questions connected with Ivan's rule after 1547 received further elucidation in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.¹

A balanced appraisal of Tsar Ivan and his legacy came only with S.F. Platonov's 1924 biography Ivan Groznyi. Platonov claimed that while his miserable boyhood predisposed him to psychological disorders, they did not gravely impair his political judgments.² If anything, Platonov continued, the reforms of the late forties and the fifties were bold and therefore reveal him as dynamic.³ We stress, however, that while major reforms had to obtain his backing to acquire legal force, nevertheless it cannot generally be established on present evidence whether individual reforms were initially conceived by him or by other members of the ruling oligarchy. But this aside, Platonov's synthetic method doubtless represents the most skilful attempt at a unified portrait of Ivan IV and his rule after 1547.

Platonov's biography appeared as the Stalin era approached, and after Stalin gained power, particularly during the Second World War, his moderate assessment was replaced by more uncritical admiration. In the third edition of R.Yu. Vipper's biography, published in 1944, the praise for Ivan reached its apogee: he is depicted as the greatest diplomat and leader of his age.⁴ Yet such hyperbole became passé after

¹ The extent of Byzantine influence, as transmitted by Sofia Palaeologa, upon the exercise of authority by Muscovite rulers is a noteworthy example. Solov'ev asserted that she inspired Ivan III to demand unconditional obedience of his retainers and severely to punish disobedience. Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, p. 58. In this view, she contributed significantly to the rise of autocratic rule in Muscovy. Yet D'yakonov showed in 1894 that Ivan IV looked not to Byzantium but to Kievan Rus' for examples of autocratic rulers. D'yakonov, Vlast', p. 139. Vernadsky later claimed that the practices of Mongol administration established precedents upon which Muscovite autocracy could develop. Vernadsky, A History, III, p. 390.

² Platonov, Ivan Groznyi, p. 19.

³ Ibid., pp. 16-20.

⁴ R.Yu. Vipper, Ivan Groznyi, 3rd ed, Moscow, 1944, p. 109.

Stalin died, and it was recognized that Grozny's personality and reign needed to be examined more reservedly. In fact, S.B. Veselovsky went to the opposite extreme and averred that at least until 1560 he was merely a cipher in the hands of his closest advisers.¹ Nevertheless, B. Nørretranders has provided cogent counter-arguments showing that he was the central actor in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics.²

Nørretranders' theory provides powerful impetus to delve into the manner, as distinguished from the results, of Ivan IV's exercise of authority after 1547. This view of his rule has interested historians from V.N. Tatishchev onwards, but again agreement has proved difficult to reach. The view that Tsar Ivan harboured strong autocratic proclivities has evidently the lengthiest antecedents. In his Istoriya Rossiyskaya, annalistic an account as it is, V.N. Tatishchev was not greatly concerned to make detailed judgments regarding Ivan's personality and political behaviour, but he considered Ivan an autocrat and, seemingly for this reason, admired him.³ Karamzin, too, appreciated Ivan's autocratic leanings, and affirmed that from the early 1560s he degenerated into a tyrant.⁴ His autocratic preferences and his contributions to the emergence of autocratic rule in Muscovy resurfaced intermittently in nineteenth-century historiography.⁵ But V.O. Klyuchevsky emphasised that the exercise of authority by Muscovite rulers, Ivan IV among them, until the "Time of Troubles" resembled most closely that of a "typical votchinnik" over his estate, and this view was apparently

1 S.B. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, Moscow, 1963, p. 240.

2 B. Nørretranders, The Shaping of Czardom under Ivan Groznyj, Copenhagen, 1964, *passim*.

3 V.N. Tatishchev, Istoriya Rossiyskaya, VI, pp. 170, 184. Tatishchev's support for monarchical authority doubtless influenced his view of Ivan's autocratic leanings. However, Tatishchev at least twice displayed sympathy for the view that the absolute authority of the tsars should be tempered by consultation with advisers. See S.L. Pestich, Russkaya istoriografiya XVIII veka, 3 parts, Leningrad, 1961-71, Pt 2, pp. 127-30.

4 Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, IX, p. 4.

5 E.g. Kostomarov, Sobranie sochineniy, V, pp. 84-8.

influential in late imperial historiography.¹ The Soviets lost sight of it, but R. Pipes has revived it, asserting that Muscovy continued to be ruled as the tsar's votchina longer than Klyuchevsky suggested, well into the seventeenth century.² The emphasis on Ivan's autocratic propensities encountered in eighteenth-century historiography has also found renewed favour among postwar historians, Soviet and western. In 1967, for example, R.G. Skrynnikov, currently the leading Soviet specialist on the Oprichnina, wrote: "The Oprichnina was an important stage in the process of the establishment of autocracy in Russia in the sixteenth century. It is not accidental that certain investigators have begun the history of Russian autocracy with the Oprichnina."³ But the view that Ivan Grozny's reign, particularly the Oprichnina, witnessed a strengthening of autocracy has not won universal acceptance among Soviet scholars after 1945. Amidst the debate of the late 1940s and the early 1950s surrounding the zemskie sobory and their implications for the proper periodisation of Russian history, S.V. Yushkov asserted that Ivan's exercise of authority was bounded from the mid-sixteenth century.⁴ Our view that ambiguities bedevilled the nature of the authority he wielded after 1547 takes into account the assessments of Pipes, Skrynnikov, and Yushkov.

In Chapter 4, an attempt is made to show that Aleksey Adashev, the priest Sil'vestr, Metropolitan Makary, Prince A.M. Kurbsky, and I.M. Viskovaty were, like Ivan, admissible members of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite ruling oligarchy.

¹ Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, III, pp. 15-7, 51-3, 66-9; Markevich, Istoriya mestnichestva, p. 138; E.D. Stashevsky, "Ekonomicheskaya politika Moskovskogo gosudarstva v XVI-XVII vv.", in M.V. Dovnar-Zapol'sky, ed., Russkaya istoriya v ocherkakh i stat'yakh, 3 vols, Moscow and Kiev, 1909-12, III, pp. 342-6.

² Pipes, Russia, p. 70.

³ R.G. Skrynnikov, "Samoderzhavie i oprichnina", in N.E. Nosov et al., eds, Vnutrennyaya politika tsarizma (seredina XVI-nachalo XX v.), Leningrad, 1967, p. 69.

⁴ S.V. Yushkov, "K voprosu o politicheskikh formakh russkogo feodal'nogo gosudarstva do XIX veka", VI 1950, No. 1, pp. 85-6. In Yushkov's view, Ivan's exercise of authority was restricted by the zemskie sobory and the so-called Boyar Duma. We believe that this definition of the agents bounding Ivan's exercise of authority requires qualification and extension.

They, too, have long received particular attention from historians. How has their political influence been estimated, and how have a few especially important aspects of their political behaviour been treated?

The view that Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr were Ivan IV's most intimate advisers from the late 1540s until 1560 was first advanced by Karamzin,¹ and it has been virtually unanimously accepted by subsequent scholars. Other queries connected with the careers of the "chosen pair", as Karamzin dubbed them, have proved more controversial. One could legitimately ask what base of support they enjoyed at court which permitted them long to remain influential. Karamzin affirmed that they were the foremost members of the so-called "holy union", a body of experienced men utterly committed to Muscovy's weal, while in Solov'ev's view, they headed an exceptionally influential court clique: the link binding them and their adherents was now accounted political rather than moral.² The reforms of the late 1540s and the 1550s help to explain why Adashev and Sil'vestr won backing, in Solov'ev's estimation: he believed that the reforms reveal them as a screen for the princes.³ Well into the twentieth century historians followed Solov'ev in equating the *izbrannaya rada* to which Kurbsky alluded with the court clique led by Adashev and Sil'vestr;⁴ in 1945, however, still another interpretation of Kurbsky's expression was offered. S.V. Bakhrushin argued that it denoted not an informal clique but a continually operating privy council with an essentially constant membership among which Adashev and Sil'vestr were preeminent.⁵ This view was later condemned, most effectively by A. Grobovsky.

¹ Karamzin, *Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago*, VIII, pp. 63-4, IX, pp. 7-10.

² *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 66; Solov'ev, *Istoriya Rossii*, III, pp. 538-43.

³ Solov'ev, *Istoriya Rossii*, III, p. 525.

⁴ K.N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, *Russkaya istoriya*, 2 vols, SPb, 1872-85, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, vyp. 1, pp. 213-5, 257; M.V. Dovnar-Zapol'sky, "Vremya tsarya Ivana Groznago", in *Russkaya istoriya v ocherkakh i stat'yakh*, II, pp. 173-9; Platonov, *Ivan Groznyy*, pp. 44-50.

⁵ S.V. Bakhrushin, "Izbrannaya rada' Ivana Groznogo", *IZ* 15 (1945), pp. 29-56 *passim*.

Whether the izbrannaya rada be regarded as a court clique or a privy council, its content is considered political, and, as Grobovsky has observed, that this interpretation corresponds to Kurbsky's intent needs to be proved.¹ In fact, Grobovsky has argued persuasively that the contexts where the izbrannaya rada is mentioned together with Kurbsky's imagery and vocabulary all reveal it as a moral abstraction closely resembling the "holy union" to which Karamzin referred.² We do not deny that Adashev and Sil'vestr actually were Ivan's closest counsellors from the late 1540s until 1560: this view is amply buttressed by his testimony and Kurbsky's. Nor do we question that the "chosen pair" had to enjoy powerful support at court to become and remain highly influential: in particular, they had perforce to obtain and retain the tsar's confidence. In accepting Grobovsky's arguments, we would suggest only that Adashev and Sil'vestr together with those courtiers whose political leaders they were should not be identified with Kurbsky's izbrannaya rada.

Even though Adashev and Sil'vestr were long Ivan IV's chief advisers at mid-century, the exact extent of their influence may have fluctuated. Ivan's illness of March 1553 has sometimes been regarded as a landmark in their careers. As he lay seriously ill, his first cousin, Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa, was touted as a possible successor in preference to Tsarevich Dmitry. How frontally was the tsar's authority challenged by the mumblings among the courtiers concerning the succession? Solov'ev considered the events of March 1553 a major turning point in Muscovite political history with further-reaching consequences than the changes in 1560, and his view long remained influential.³ But in the late 1950s it was disputed: D.N. Al'shits, in particular, pointed out that after he recovered, Ivan made various responsible

¹ A.N. Grobovsky, The "Chosen Council" of Ivan IV: A Reinterpretation, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1969, p. 102.

² Ibid., pp. 95-144.

³ Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, pp. 523-30; Platonov, Ivan Groznyy, pp. 75-9; Bakhrushin, "Izbrannaya rada", pp. 51-4; Zimin, Reformy, pp. 407-14; Nørretranders, The Shaping, p. 29.

appointments which were unlikely had the Staritsa prince's throne candidature loomed large in March 1553.¹ This is exemplified by his decision that should he decease, Prince Vladimir Andreevich should join Metropolitan Makary as regents for the tsarevich.² Those historians who have considered Ivan's sickness a signal event in Muscovy's political history have felt obliged to assess the implications for the careers of Adashev and Sil'vestr. Did either or both support Prince Vladimir Andreevich? If so, then how were their political fortunes affected after Ivan rallied? Agreement on these issues has proven difficult to reach,³ and certain other queries in the career biographies of Adashev and Sil'vestr are also vexed.

The shifting assessments of Metropolitan Makary's role in mid-sixteenth-century politics reflect unusually strongly the effects of changing political circumstances upon historians. Certainly he emerges from the sources as exceptionally close to Ivan, and among prerevolutionary scholars K. Zaustsinsky and Klyuchevsky realised what an influential adviser he was.⁴ In 1923 M. Khudyakov went a step further and asserted that he was Muscovy's real ruler after 1547.⁵ This theory cannot be considered typical of Soviet historians, who predictably enough have gauged his role more conservatively:

¹ D.N. Al'shits, "Krestotseloval'nye zapisi Vladimira Andreevicha Staritskogo i nedoshedshee zaveshchanie Ivana Groznogo", *IS* 1959, No. 4, pp. 147-55.

² *Ibid.*, p. 155; *SGGD* I, No. 168, pp. 463-4.

³ The role played by Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr in the "succession crisis" of March 1553 exemplifies how difficult it can be to reconstruct the political history of Ivan IV's reign. I.I. Smirnov has asserted that both opposed Tsarevich Dmitry's throne candidature; see I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, pp. 270-1. Solov'ev believed that Sil'vestr opposed the tsarevich whereas Adashev, without great enthusiasm, swore to support him. Solov'ev, *Istoriya Rossii*, III, pp. 525-9. Veselovsky claimed that the Adashevs did not compromise themselves in March 1553 and considered suspect the evidence depicting Sil'vestr as sympathetic to Prince Vladimir Andreevich's candidature. Veselovsky, *Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny*, pp. 284-5.

⁴ K. Zaustsinsky, "Makariy mitropolit vseya Rossii", *ZhMNP* CCXVII (October 1881), pp. 238, 241, 250, CCXVIII (November 1881), pp. 1, 4-5; Klyuchevsky, *Sochineniya*, II, p. 172. Even before 1917, however, not all historians considered him especially influential. Golubinsky granted him the initiative in Ivan's 1547 coronation but otherwise ascribed to him little political clout. Golubinsky, *Istoriya russkoy tserkvi*, II, Pt 1, pp. 765-71.

⁵ M. Khudyakov, *Ocherki po istorii Kazanskogo khanstva*, Kazan', 1923, p. 119.

A.A. Zimin, particularly, has warned against overestimating his influence vis-à-vis Ivan.¹

Ideological considerations have influenced less evidently the attempts made to measure Kurbsky's and Viskovaty's significance in mid-sixteenth-century court politics. The view that Kurbsky wielded exceptional influence inasmuch as he was a confederate of Adashev and Sil'vestr has been expressed by diverse historians, prerevolutionary and Soviet.² Similarly, Solov'ev and sundry later scholars up to Skrynnikov have opined that Viskovaty, bearing heavy responsibilities for the conduct of Muscovite foreign policy, was favourably situated to practise suasion upon Ivan.³

In devoting considerable attention to the boyars and the okol'niche as possible members of the ruling oligarchy after 1547, we build upon a lengthy tradition of historical research, and this is especially true of our efforts to identify the mid-sixteenth-century boyars and okol'niche. In the late eighteenth century N.I. Novikov published the so-called Sheremetev list, where, inter alia, numerous boyars and okol'niche attested between 1462 and 1676 were recorded.⁴ In 1833 V.N. Berkh tabulated the boyars and the okol'niche from 1468 until these ranks were abolished, together with the known dumnye dvoryane when appropriate.⁵ However, modern historians examining the upper upper-ranking servitors, in the terminology of Chapter 1, of the

¹ Zimin, Reformy, p. 320.

² Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, IX, p. 38; Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, p. 530; Dovnar-Zapol'sky, "Vremya", p. 173; Platonov, Ivan Groznyy, pp. 48-9; Bakhrushin, "Izbrannaya rada", p. 38; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 214.

³ Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, pp. 521, 583; N.E. Andreev, "O 'dele d'yaka Viskovatago", Seminarium Kondakovianum V (1932), p. 203; Bakhrushin, "Izbrannaya rada", p. 45; Ocherki istorii SSSR, p. 419; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 257-63; Zimin, Reformy, p. 472; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 75.

⁴ DRV XX, pp. 1-131. The Sheremetev list is considered faulty today.

⁵ V.N. Berkh, Sistematicheskie spiski boyaram, okol'nichim i dumnym dvoryanam s 1468 goda do unichtozheniya sikh chinov, SPb, 1833.

late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries customarily consult the list Zimin presented in 1957.¹

Any attempt to identify mid-sixteenth-century princes and boyars with reference to the lineages to which they belonged is accompanied by historiographical controversy. Solov'ev asserted that the importance of kinship ties among the members of princely lineages fell in the second half of the thirteenth century and continued falling.² B.N. Chicherin affirmed that these ties were weakened even when the druzhina of the Kievan rulers was constituted and were subsequently diluted.³ Both historians would doubtless have agreed that kinship ties mattered little to mid-sixteenth-century princes and boyars. Yet a strong current opposing the views of Solov'ev and Chicherin was apparent in nineteenth-century historiography. Klyuchevsky stated explicitly that Muscovite princes and boyars remained keenly aware of their connexions and that kinship ties affected fundamentally court politics.⁴ This theory found application in A.I. Markevich's comprehensive coverage of the mestnichestvo system from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, even today the standard treatment of its

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy".

² Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, II, p. 192. We refrain from referring to the princes and other "well-born" Muscovites as "aristocrats" or "an aristocracy", particularly to avoid suggesting that they constituted an estate. In prerevolutionary historiography the view that the Muscovite population could be decomposed into estates was widely accepted. See, for example, the celebrated essay "Istoriya sosloviy v Rossii" in Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, VI, pp. 276-466. In attempting to show that feudalism was long evident in Old Russia, Pavlov-Sil'vansky laid the foundations for discussion of whether the "well-born" formed an estate like western European aristocracies. See N.P. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, Feodalizm v drevney Rusi, SPb, 1909, reprinted Vaduz, Liechtenstein, 1966. But Russia conspicuously lacked feudalism, and Stökl has averred that the query of whether Russia ever experienced feudalism does little to further comparative study of Old Russia and mediaeval western Europe. G. Stökl, "Gab es im Moskauer Staat Stände?", JGOE N.F. 11 (1963), pp. 322-3. In fact, Philipp denies that an aristocracy or indeed any estates existed in Old Russia. See W. Philipp, "Zur Existenz altrussischer Stände", FOEG 27 (1980), pp. 66, 74.

³ B.N. Chicherin, Opyty po istorii russkago prava, Moscow, 1858, pp. 292-337.

⁴ Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, II, pp. 139-56 passim. Yet the view that kinship ties mattered to Old Russian princes hardly originated with Klyuchevsky: it underlies the treatment of the seniority relations among the Ryurikovichi before the Mongol invasion in M.P. Pogodin, Drevnyaya russkaya istoriya do mongol'skago iga, 3 vols, Moscow, 1871, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1971, III, otd. 2, pp. 41-4.

subject.¹ Klyuchevsky's view also underlay Veselovsky's generally admirable collection of essays dedicated to specific princely and boyar lineages evidenced between the thirteenth and the late seventeenth centuries.² During the Stalin era Veselovsky's was virtually a lone voice: Soviet historians largely discounted personal bonds as factors in Muscovite politics. After Stalin died, however, enquiry into the princely and the boyar lineages became more respectable: while the language of class struggle remained present in I.I. Smirnov's and Zimin's overviews of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics,³ certain more specialised works have revealed Veselovsky's influence. For instance, Zimin and V.L. Yanin have conducted valuable investigations of the Kolychevs and the Morozovs respectively.⁴

During the past quarter-century divers western historians have skilfully exploited the examinations of individual princely and boyar lineages to yield integrated treatments of court politics. Nancy Kollman has demonstrated that the fundamental political events befalling the grand principality of Moscow from Dmitry Donskoy's reign through Ivan III's death are most productively analysed with reference to the kinship and the marriage ties of princes and boyars.⁵ Similarly, R. Crummey has shown that such ties influenced significantly the political behaviour of boyars between 1613 and 1689.⁶

¹ Markevich, Istoriya mestnichestva. In particular, this account remains standard even though Shmidt and Kleimola have made valuable supplementary observations.

² Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev.

³ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki; Zimin, Reformy.

⁴ A.A. Zimin, "Kolychevy i russkoe boyarstvo XIV-XVI vv.", in AE za 1963 god, Moscow, 1964; V.L. Yanin, "K voprosu o proiskhozhdenii Morozovykh", in B.A. Rybakov, V.L. Yanin, et al., eds, Istoriya i genealogiya: S.B. Veselovskiy i problemy istoriko-genealogicheskikh issledovaniy, Moscow, 1977.

⁵ N.S. Kollman, "Kinship and Politics: The Origins and Evolution of the Muscovite Boyar Elite in the Fifteenth Century", Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1980.

⁶ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 65-106.

The view that the boyars and the okol'nichie might be characterised as the highest-ranking members of a distinct element within the population, the servitors, has antecedents within prerevolutionary and recent scholarship. Well before 1917 several historians spoke of a "service estate" equipped with ranks, and portrayed the boyars and the okol'nichie as its highest-ranking members.¹ Soviet historians, especially during the Stalin era and its immediate aftermath, long obfuscated all questions surrounding the political role the boyars played by depicting them as a class, and indeed a class sometimes described as "reactionary".² Most western researchers find this analytical approach unduly influenced by the Marxist notion of class conflicts as the stuff of history, and R. Hellie has revived the view of the boyars and the okol'nichie as the highest-ranking servitors;³ however, he has considerably surpassed the prerevolutionary historians in attempting a comprehensive treatment of the servitors, probing the privileges and responsibilities differentiating them from the remaining population, their economic circumstances, and so forth.

We might enquire what considerations prompted Ivan IV to name courtiers boyars and okol'nichie. The methods of collective career biography pioneered most notably by Sir Lewis Namier and Sir Ronald Syme are usually best suited to the available evidence.⁴ These methods have furnished valuable insights into the appointments of boyars and okol'nichie made at other intervals in Muscovy's history. G. Alef has concluded that the career biographies of the boyars and the okol'nichie Ivan III named display a cursus honorum; moreover, Vasily III continued his father's

¹ Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, II, pp. 201-7; N.P. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, Gosudarevy sluzhilye lyudi, pp. 34-127; E.D. Stashevsky, "Sluzhiloe soslovie", in Russkaya istoriya v ocherkakh i stat'yakh, III, pp. 1-33.

² E.g. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 75-6.

³ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 22.

⁴ Sir L. Namier, The Structure of politics at the accession of George III, 2nd ed., London, 1957; R. Syme, The Roman Revolution, Oxford, 1939. The intellectual currents favouring the use of collective career biography in the 1920s and the 1930s are treated in Stone, "Prosopography", pp. 52-7.

practices.¹ But Crummey's examination of the boyars and the okol'nichie chosen between 1613 and 1689 evidently represents the most successful application of collective career biography within the Muscovite context. He has explored the contributions kinship and marriage ties, wealth, and service of various kinds to the tsars apparently made when boyars and okol'nichie were appointed; no investigation of the boyars and the okol'nichie of other periods can ignore his telling questions.²

Before we discuss the assignments Ivan IV's boyars and okol'nichie discharged for him, we must consider their attitudes towards their service. Did they serve him willingly or were they ultimately hostile to him? This query has been debated by postwar scholars. I.I. Smirnov claimed that the policies successive boyar regimes pursued between Elena Glinskaya's death in April 1538 and Ivan's coronation as tsar in January 1547 indicate significant support amidst the boyars for restoring the udel principalities previously incorporated within Muscovy,³ but this view finds little support today for want of substantiating evidence. In fact, H. Rüss has argued that the boyars and the Moscow grand princes cooperated extensively between 1380 and 1547,⁴ and in our view, this cooperation substantially persisted until the early 1560s. As Ivan's autocratic propensities became increasingly manifest, however, a new note entered whatever collusion between him and his courtiers was hitherto apparent: in his first letter to Kurbsky, he indicated that he expected compliance with his wishes in a submissive rather than a cooperative spirit.⁵

¹ G. Alef, "Reflections on the Boyar Duma in the Reign of Ivan III", SEER 45 (1967), p. 108; idem, "Aristocratic Politics", p. 86.

² Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 34-64. He has concluded that at least until the last quarter of the seventeenth century the careers of the boyars display a rough cursus honorum. Ibid., p. 37.

³ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 75-120.

⁴ H. Rüss, Adel und Adelsoppositionen im Moskauer Staat, Wiesbaden, 1975, pp. 3-6.

⁵ Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 14.

If the boyars and the okol'niche were indeed, generally speaking, ready to execute tasks on Ivan's behalf after 1547, we might ask how previous historians have described their role in rendering him service. In the following paragraphs the treatments scholars have accorded their part in the army and the central government agencies and in local government will be surveyed.¹

The Muscovite army elicited historians' attention in the nineteenth century, but until relatively recently the combatants were treated primarily with reference to their role in military operations.² In particular, whatever connexions existed between military service and political clout remained unexplored. Hellie's treatment of the servitors has represented a major scholarly advance inasmuch as he has sought to define the level of political consciousness and the role in Muscovite politics during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries of different categories of servitors; the boyars and the okol'niche, as upper upper-ranking servitors, are duly considered.³ Also instructive is A. Kleimola's specialised examination of the political implications of the service which various courtiers, particularly boyars and okol'niche, rendered as regimental commanders during the second quarter of the sixteenth century.⁴

Even before the Revolution, by contrast, detailed exploration of the sixteenth-century central government agencies was proceeding apace, and the foundations were being laid for discussion of the administrative role the boyars, the okol'niche, and the

¹ Nazarov attempts to ascertain for several lower upper service ranks how frequently their holders later became boyars. See V.D. Nazarov, "O strukture 'gosudareva dvora' v seredine XVI v.", in N.M. Druzhinin, D.S. Likhachev, et al., eds, Obshchestvo i gosudarstvo feodal'noy Rossii: Sbornik statey posvyashchenny 70-letiyu akademika L'va Vladimirovicha Cherepnina, Moscow, 1975. The political consequences for courtiers of holding lower upper service ranks require further elucidation. There exists no monographic treatment of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite diplomacy; the part the boyars and the okol'niche played is touched upon in Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 136-52 passim.

² This emphasis comes through in L.G. Beskrovny, Ocherki voennoy istoriografii Rossii, Moscow, 1962.

³ Hellie, Enserfment, passim, esp. pp. 22-4, 48-74.

⁴ Kleimola, "Military Service", pp. 49-57.

d'yaki occupied at mid-century. Karamzin and Solov'ev knew of the prikazy,¹ and Klyuchevsky provided valuable insights into their characteristic structure and functioning. He grasped that they were inherently agencies operating continuously rather than specific personal commissions and that cases falling within their competence were judged by their heads.² Furthermore, in his opinion prikazy were formed by the late fifteenth century;³ this view was widely accepted in prerevolutionary historiography. Klyuchevsky's general discussion of the prikazy was followed by several monographs⁴ devoted to individual prikazy operating during the sixteenth century. These works remain valuable, but after 1917 scholarly interest in the prikazy waned, and no pertinent Soviet monograph appeared before P.A. Sadikov's 1950 treatment of Muscovite administration during the Oprichnina and its aftermath until the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁵ The early prikazy have doubtless been handled most successfully in A.K. Leont'ev's superb 1961 monograph.⁶ His delineation of their structure and functioning recalls Klyuchevsky's, and he has concluded that prikaz-like agencies existed by the late fifteenth century. Yet he has characterised the prikazy in considerably greater detail than Klyuchevsky, and his depiction of the role various boyars, okol'nichie, and d'yaki played in the prikaz-like agencies and the prikazy is invaluable for our enquiry into the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy.

¹ Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, IX, p. 277; Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, IV, pp. 284-5.

² Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, II, pp. 338-43.

³ Ibid., p. 339.

⁴ I.Ya. Gurlyand, Yamskaya gon'ba v Moskovskom gosudarstve do kontsa XVII veka, Yaroslavl', 1900; S.A. Belokurov, O Posol'skom prikaze, Moscow, 1906; S.A. Shumakov, Ekskursy po istorii Pomestnago prikaza, Moscow, 1910; V.I. Savva, O Posol'skom prikaze XVI v., vyp. 1, Khar'kov, 1917.

⁵ Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 212-417.

⁶ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie. Peter Brown is presently preparing a new exploration of the prikazy based upon his "Early Modern Russian Bureaucracy: The Evolution of the Chancellery System from Ivan III to Peter the Great, 1478-1717", Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1978.

Our knowledge of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite local government and the part therein of various elements of the population has also advanced dramatically during the postwar era. True, Klyuchevsky raised relevant queries, and M.A. D'yakonov's examination of the gorodovye prikazchiki of the first half of the sixteenth century also deserves mention;¹ yet local government has received greatest attention from the 1950s onward. In 1957 Zimin presented a list of the namestniki of Muscovite towns who were attested during the sixteenth century.² This was a prelude to N.E. Nosov's two monographs representing the changes befalling Muscovite local government from the beginning of the sixteenth century through mid-century.³ He has examined the archival and the printed sources with exemplary care, and his monographs are unlikely to be surpassed without a significant infusion of new evidence. He has demonstrated that the virtual demise of the kormlenie system in 1555-1556 was merely the culmination of blows evident not later than the early sixteenth century – possibly earlier – to the powers of the kormlenshchiki, and has pinpointed whom the reforms of local government favoured. He has shown that a certain levelling amidst the servitors occurred in 1555-1556: various court deti boyarskie profited at the expense of those boyars, okol'nichie,⁴ and court deti boyarskie represented among the kormlenshchiki.

¹ Klyuchevsky, Opyty, pp. 445, 456, 462, 465; M.A. D'yakonov, "Gorodovye prikashchiki (sic)", ZhMNP CCCXXVII (January 1900), pp. 55-87.

² Zimin, "Spisok namestnikov".

³ Nosov, Ocherki; idem, Stanovlenie.

⁴ Before leaving the boyars and the okol'nichie, we mention several instances of their political behaviour which have elicited comment from historians. Markevich observed that the rules whereby seniority was transmitted within other Ryurikide lineages and within boyar lineages diverged from the succession practices which arose within the ruling house of Moscow; this difference contributed to the "succession crisis" of March 1553, he asserted. Markevich, Istoriya mestnichestva, pp. 126-7. Furthermore, Backus has observed that Kurbsky's flight to Lithuania expressed the attitude – which Ivan III and Vasily III sought to discourage – that disgruntled boyars were entitled to transfer their allegiance to another ruler. O.P. Backus, "Treason as a Concept and Defections from Moscow to Lithuania in the Sixteenth Century", FOEG 15 (1970), p. 136. Finally, E. Keenan and N. Kollman have clarified the part women played in Muscovite court politics, pointing out that although women did not generally participate directly in the fray, after they were married they embodied a link between lineages; thus, they played an important indirect role in politics. See E.L. Keenan, "Ivan the Terrible and his women: I – the grammar of politics in the Kremlin", and idem, "Ivan the Terrible: II –

This raises more broadly the question of the part the local deti boyarskie and dvoryane occupied in the mid-sixteenth-century political order. Historians have long appreciated that the deti boyarskie and dvoryane constituted significant elements within the Muscovite population and the army,¹ but few works have been devoted specifically to them. The view that after 1547 Tsar Ivan sought support amidst elements of the population other than the princes and the boyars can be traced at least to Solov'ev,² but precisely where Ivan hoped to win backing needed more sharply to be defined. In his classic 1915 study V.I. Novitsky pointed out that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a limited number of local deti boyarskie and dvoryane were summoned to Moscow where they were most advantageously situated to further their careers.³ Whether or not they became sufficiently influential to justify inclusion within the ruling oligarchy is another query. Leont'ev and Shmidt have shown that during the 1540s and beyond sundry prominent dvoryane and divers Muscovites not stemming from the "well-born" performed weighty administrative tasks, as d'yaki or in other capacities;⁴ several might legitimately be assigned to the ruling oligarchy.

What of the scholarship preceding our attempt to discern the attitudes towards reform evident amidst the ruling oligarchy after 1547? Such an attempt is grounded in an historiographical tradition originating only shortly before the Revolution.⁵ In

Dowagers, nannies, and brides", unpublished manuscripts, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981; N.S. Kollman, "The Seclusion of Elite Muscovite Women", RH 10, Pt 2 (1983), pp. 170-87.

¹ M.T. Yablochkov, Istoriya dvoryanskogo sosloviya v Rossii, SPb, 1876, pp. 154-6; Sh., "Dvoryanstvo", VEv 22 (1887), No. 2, pp. 559-61.

² Solov'ev, Istoriya Rossii, III, pp. 523-5.

³ V.I. Novitsky, Vybornoe i bol'shoe dvoryanstvo XVI-XVII vekov, Kiev, 1915.

⁴ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 146; Shmidt, "O d'yachestve", pp. 186-8. Cf. also the comments concerning the origins of the d'yaki of the Razryad in N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki, pp. 135-66.

⁵ See the observations concerning the reforms in M.N. Pokrovsky, Russkaya istoriya s drevneyshikh vremen, 4 vols, Moscow, 1933-4 ed., I, p. 193; G.V. Plekhanov, Istoriya russkoy obshchestvennoy mysli, 3 vols, 2nd ed., Moscow and Leningrad, 1925, I, p. 139.

treating the reforms, Soviet historians have striven to identify winners and losers, and the debate, as typified in the monographs of I.I. Smirnov and Zimin, has been couched in terms of whether the reforms were intended to profit the boyars or the dvoryane, the underlying premise being that they were discrete groupings within the population and therefore that both could not be satisfied simultaneously.¹ However, it has been recognized that the language of the debate needs to be recast. This in its turn reflects the growing realisation that while the boyars and the dvoryane were almost certainly not at one, nor can they be opposed completely, and C. Halperin has referred to the alleged opposition between the boyars and the dvoryane as "an outdated historiographical cliché".² In Chapter 7 we go a step further and explore whether the attempt to locate winners and losers from the reforms amidst the population is in itself necessarily a productive approach to apprehending the attitudes towards reform current among the ruling oligarchy and to probing the political behaviour of its members.

Before the attitudes of the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 towards reform can be ascertained or indeed any of the analytical questions posed in this dissertation resolved, the contemporary political history needs to be reconstructed. The problems of mid-sixteenth-century political history have on occasion been disputed just as fervently as the broader issues they underly. Take, for example, the councils held at mid-century. How many councils were there, when were they summoned, and what was their role in the introduction of the reforms? Various answers to these queries have been suggested. In his address to the Stoglav Council, Ivan IV alluded to a "council of reconciliation" (sobor primireniya) held "in the preceding year" (v preidushchee leto).³ Nosov

¹ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 289-308; Zimin, Reformy, pp. 316-479 passim.

² C.J. Halperin, "A Heretical View of Sixteenth-Century Muscovy. Edward L. Keenan: The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha", JGOE N.F. 21 (1974), p. 184. This view finds resonance in current Soviet scholarship; see V.B. Kobrin, Vlast' i sobstvennost' v srednevekovoy Rossii (XV-XVI vv.), Moscow, 1985, pp. 199-218.

³ D.E. Kozhanchikov, ed., Stoglav, SPb, 1863, reprinted Vaduz, Liechtenstein, 1969, pp. 38-9.

believes that one such council was convened and identifies it with the council of February-March 1549, whereas Shmidt has affirmed that there were, in fact, three councils of reconciliation: these, he contends, met in 1547, 1549, and 1550.¹ Moreover, while our view that the February-March 1549 council was the first Zemsky sobor finds significant support among postwar scholars,² it is not universally accepted. I.I. Smirnov, for instance, declines to qualify this council as a Zemsky sobor.³

Why, one might ask, have historians been unable to agree on how mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political history should be construed? If the sheer bulk of the relevant sources which are known determined how sure scholars could be of their facts, then the political events of Ivan IV's reign would be relatively easily established. Furthermore, most of the sources which are regularly consulted are familiar. Many of the main ones were already known in Karamzin's day, and researchers of the 1980s have but a slight advantage over Klyuchevsky and Platonov. Where historians can differ is in the approaches they employ. Solov'ev, for example, probably felt impelled to study the zemskie sobory because, as an exponent of the "statist" school of historiography, he believed that the history of the Russian people was expressed through the State and its institutions.⁴ If Soviet scholars are to be reproached for underestimating how fluid the Muscovite population actually was, this reflects, to a considerable extent, their predilection as Marxists for viewing historical events as resulting from the clashes of well-defined categories within the population. But if the political history of the mid-sixteenth century has been disputed, researchers and their

¹ Nosov, Stanovlenie, pp. 18-23; S.O. Shmidt, "Sobory serediny XVI veka", IS 1960, No. 4, p. 73.

² Pavlenko, "K istorii", pp. 82-7; Hellie, Enserfment, p. 34; Cherepnin, Zemskie sobory, p. 68; J. Pelenski, "State and Society in Muscovite Russia and the Mongol-Turkic System in the Sixteenth Century", FOEG 27 (1980), pp. 160-1.

³ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 289-300.

⁴ Solov'ev's views on historical processes are treated at greater length in N.L. Rubinshteyn, Russkaya istoriografiya, Moscow, 1941, pp. 312-42.

biases are not the only culprits. The nature of the sources themselves is a further complication. It is difficult to assign an author to several of them or to establish when and where they were written. Very few are unsullied by tendentious editing. The Kurbsky-Grozny correspondence and Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV, for instance, have long been reckoned the basic sources for Ivan's reign, and yet they exemplify the problems which confront historians seeking reliable evidence. The writings of the tsar and the prince illustrate how essential it is as a preliminary to establish the reliability of the sources; only then can worthwhile historical questions be handled.

3

**The Sources:
A Critical Appraisal**

In this chapter, an attempt is made critically to appraise those sources upon which the main conclusions of this dissertation depend. Sources referred to only in passing are not treated. The critical appraisal of the sources discussed in this chapter has a twofold purpose. The historical questions upon which their evidence bears most directly must be defined. Moreover, their reliability as source material must be determined. Before these goals can be realised, several preliminary questions must be posed for each source. When and where was it written? Who was its author? Upon what events and personalities does he concentrate? Is there evidence suggesting that his methods of exposition or his selection of facts to be included was influenced by literary works familiar when he wrote? What is his general tone? What political circumstances attended the time of writing, and do they appear to have shaped the author's attitude towards the events he describes? To what extent is his evidence confirmed by that of other sources? These questions, needless to say, are often difficult to answer.

The extant manuscript copies are the basis for the study of any source. Yet they are only part, albeit an important part, of the overall history of a source from its composition and circulation to its analysis by modern scholars. When the extant manuscript copies were made can be determined only approximately in many cases. This determination relies heavily upon the methods of filigranology and paleography. These methods also help to establish where the manuscript copies were made. The study of the textual relations among the copies permits the copies to be grouped into redactions. When the text of one copy and that of another show significant common features, the copies are considered to belong to the same redaction. However, it is not always easy to decide whether a given manuscript copy is most appropriately assigned to one redaction or another; a copy can show important characteristics of more than one redaction. The task of determining which redaction most closely approximates the original text can be very arduous indeed. It cannot be concluded that a source is only as old as its oldest known manuscript copies. The date of initial writing is specified for

some sources within their text; this date on occasion precedes the earliest extant copies. Earlier manuscript copies may have been destroyed or deposited within archives and not discovered by scholars. When the original time of writing is not indicated within a source's text, the determination of this time can become a weighty undertaking.

The problems of ascribing a time of writing and of assigning an author to a source are often inseparably linked. If the author is not specified in the text, then the assignment of an author can also become a difficult task. Some conclusions concerning the authorship can be drawn from the vocabulary and the literary style of the text as it is conveyed by those manuscript copies believed most closely to approximate the original text. It is natural to assume that an author who describes events in detail could not have written long after they occurred. The author's choice of facts and his attitude towards them also reveal his identity. However, it is not always easy to determine precisely which facts the author meant to include. The references to events and personalities in some sources are couched in vague language. The terminological and orthographical inconsistencies are an additional complication. What constitutes the author's main message can easily become a subjective assessment, and several possibilities have been raised for some sources. Scholars are not always able to agree on the most probable author of a source. Generally accepted characterisations of sources must sometimes be revised as new manuscript copies come to light.

It should be pointed out that the foregoing discussion provides only guidelines for the study of sources. A more detailed methodology of study must be defined for each source. While many of the sources for the history of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy have been explored in considerable detail, others have received less attention. The analysis of certain sources has advanced little in the past century, and scholars appear uninterested even in determining suitable approaches to their study let alone in examining them exhaustively.

A. The Correspondence between Prince A.M. Kurbsky and Ivan IV

Of all the sources discussed in this chapter, the correspondence between Prince A.M. Kurbsky and Ivan IV has probably been studied most thoroughly.

The correspondence consists of five letters, and it has traditionally been believed that they were written between 1564 and 1579 and that the correspondents were Kurbsky and Ivan. The correspondence was initiated by Kurbsky after he fled to Lithuania on 30 April 1564. In his first letter to Ivan the fugitive boyar attempts to justify his flight. His tone is polemical as he avers that he and other voevody of the Muscovite army made great conquests for Ivan and in return were persecuted.¹ Ivan's answer, dated 5 July 1564, is the lengthiest letter of the correspondence. He denounces Kurbsky scathingly as a traitor to him and to Orthodox Christianity.² He is also concerned to show that Kurbsky's flight was merely the latest in a long series of treacherous acts committed by divers courtiers after the death of Vasily III. Ivan rails at the indignities he claims he suffered in his childhood from the boyars and at the consequences for Muscovy of boyar misgovernment during his minority.³ He affirms that even after he became tsar, he ruled only nominally, because, he asserts, his authority was usurped by a court clique headed by Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr to which Kurbsky belonged.⁴ He also complains that Kurbsky and other voevody were less than diligent in discharging their assigned tasks.⁵ The intemperate tone of Kurbsky's first letter is matched in Ivan's reply; the tsar's first letter is most obviously distinguished from the prince's by the greater detail of its account of mid-

¹ Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 7.

² Ibid., p. 34.

³ Ibid., pp. 27-9.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 16, 30-3.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 36-8.

sixteenth-century Muscovite politics and by its numerous references to the Bible and to Byzantine and early Russian history and literature. The themes raised in these letters recur in the remainder of the correspondence.

Literary historians attempting to reconstruct the circumstances of the writing and of the circulation of the correspondence have had to grapple with many thorny questions. The authorship is a particularly cogent example. It is generally believed that Kurbsky personally wrote those letters ascribed to him. But it is debatable whether the other letters were written by Ivan personally or by his subordinates at his command. The question is particularly relevant for Ivan's first letter. It was probably written during the course of two months, and perhaps as the Oprichnina approached, he may have lacked the time personally to draft a letter so lengthy and learned. The case for his personal authorship of those letters attributed to him would be strengthened considerably if significant stylistic similarities could be demonstrated in works known to have been composed by him. Unfortunately, it is very difficult if not impossible to verify that Ivan himself wrote any of those works traditionally ascribed to him, and hence to compare them with the letters is not especially fruitful.¹

The addressee of Tsar Ivan's first letter has been debated during the past thirty-five years. In 1951 Ya.S. Lur'e published two previously unknown manuscript copies of this epistle; one is prefaced with a heading suggesting that the letter was intended to be circulated throughout Muscovy.² However, Lur'e himself recognised this copy as

¹ Many letters addressed to foreign and domestic dignitaries bear Ivan Grozny's signature. But even though there are no grounds for questioning the authenticity of these documents, their authorship remains unclear. Were they composed or dictated by Ivan? Or were they drafted by his officials? It could be conjectured that he wanted to compose letters to foreign rulers himself. Nevertheless, the evidence is inconclusive.

² D.S. Likhachev, Ya.S. Lur'e, V.P. Adrianova-Peretts, eds, Poslaniya Ivan Groznogo, Moscow and Leningrad, 1951, pp. 540-53.

defective, and Skrynnikov has questioned his arguments to the effect that Ivan wanted his first epistle to Kurbsky widely to be read.¹

If one could demonstrate that this epistle was intended to be read throughout Muscovy, then the dispute between Ivan and Kurbsky would be cast in an essentially different light. Even a cursory reading of the correspondence reveals considerable antagonism between them. Moreover, Kurbsky's protests against Ivan's increasingly arbitrary exercise of authority and the tsar's lament at the attempts he ascribes to Kurbsky and other courtiers to infringe upon his prerogatives have been viewed as expressing conflicting beliefs regarding the proper relations between the ruler and his advisers. What actually was uppermost in the minds of the correspondents as they wrote? Karamzin believed that their exchanges resulted solely from personal animosity.² But several prominent historians have depicted differing political attitudes as fundamental: Kurbsky advocated regular consultation between the tsars and their advisers whereas Ivan favoured autocracy.³ If the tsar's first letter was intended widely to be read, then divergent views on how Muscovy should be ruled seem more probable than personal rancour as the root of the correspondents' discords.

All previous scholarly debates surrounding the correspondence were eclipsed by the controversy unleashed in 1971 when Edward Keenan published his monograph The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha. Keenan argued that the letters were composed by various seventeenth-century authors rather than Ivan IV and Kurbsky. No discussion of the modern scholarship of the correspondence would be complete without reference to this challenge to its authenticity.⁴ The views advanced by Keenan and his

¹ Ya.S. Lur'e, "Novye spiski 'Tsareva gosudareva poslaniya, vo vse ego Rossiyskoe tsarstvo'", TODRL X (1954), p. 306; R.G. Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, Leningrad, 1973, pp. 79-81.

² Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, IX, pp. 38-43 passim.

³ E.g. Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, pp. 309-21, 335-56; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 220-1.

⁴ Keenan is not the first to question Ivan's authorship of the letters traditionally attributed to him. In 1956 S.M. Dubrovsky pointed out that it cannot be established whether they were written by Ivan

adversaries are not discussed exhaustively here. However, a study of some of the arguments adduced by both sides helps to clarify the nature of the debate and reveals the methods employed by modern literary historians as they attempt to answer the questions raised in the introduction to this chapter.

Kurbsky's first letter clearly antedated the other letters he and Ivan allegedly wrote. Hence one of Keenan's most basic tasks is to show that this letter was composed in the seventeenth century. His attempts to substantiate this conclusion depend heavily upon his views regarding the sources of this letter, but his efforts have been criticised severely by influential scholars.

Both Keenan and his critics agree that the text of Kurbsky's first letter and that of the "Complaint" written by the sixteenth-century Ukrainian monk Isaiah display significant parallels. Keenan claims that the "Complaint" coincides over slightly more than half of its total length with Kurbsky's first letter.¹ But was one text a source for the other and if so, then which text was primary? Or did both texts have a common source? Keenan argues that the "Complaint" was a source of Kurbsky's first letter and that the "Complaint" was written in 1566.² Hence the letter could not have been composed in the spring of 1564.

personally or by members of his entourage: see Dubrovsky, "Protiv idealizatsii deyatel'nosti Ivana IV", *VI* 1956, No. 8, p. 123. However, Dubrovsky's observation touched off nothing like the controversy which has surrounded Keenan's theories. Charles J. Halperin has provided two thoughtful, objective surveys of the arguments advanced by Keenan and his opponents; see Halperin, "A Heretical View", pp. 161-86, and *idem*, "Keenan's Heresy Revisited", *JGOE* N.F. 28 (1980), pp. 481-99. The debate does not appear to be over. In 1980 Niels Rossing and Birgit Ronne published their assessment of the Keenan controversy Apocryphal – Not Apocryphal?: a critical analysis of the discussion concerning the correspondence between Tsar Ivan IV Groznyi and Prince Andrej Kurbskij, Copenhagen, 1980. The Danish scholars recapitulate the case of both sides and more importantly introduce new arguments against Keenan. In his review of the monograph, Keenan admits that some of the views he put forward in 1971 were hastily formulated and that his reasoning was on occasion not particularly persuasive. On the other hand, he sticks to at least some of his guns. See E.L. Keenan, "Apocryphal – Not Apocryphal? – Apocryphal!", *C-A SS* 16, No. 1 (Spring 1982), pp. 95-112.

¹ E.L. Keenan, The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha. The Seventeenth-Century Genesis of the "Correspondence" Attributed to Prince A.M. Kurbskii and Tsar Ivan IV, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p. 23.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 23-6. When the arguments for and against Keenan's theory are discussed, the expressions "Kurbsky's first letter" and "Ivan's first letter" are used to denote the first letters traditionally ascribed to

The "Complaint" is accompanied in its extant manuscript copies by another of Isaiah's works, the "Lament"; the latter text bears the date 1566.¹ The "Lament" and Kurbsky's first letter show discernible textual similarities, and Keenan claims that the "Lament" influenced the letter.²

Much more important for Keenan's theory, however, are the parallels between Kurbsky's first letter and the text "To the Reader" written by I.A. Khvorostinin around 1620. All of the similarities to Khvorostinin's preface are strikingly found in the Kurbsky letter between the two parts of the text which resemble Isaiah's "Complaint".³ On this basis Keenan rejects the possibility that the Kurbsky letter could have influenced the Khvorostinin text. Otherwise, he argues, it would have to be assumed that Khvorostinin had Kurbsky's text at hand and adopted for his own use precisely the words found between the lengthy passages from the "Complaint" and particularly that he consulted Isaiah's work.⁴ But it seems unlikely that Khvorostinin had either the "Complaint" or the "Lament" before him since they are rare texts.⁵ Borrowing apparently took place between Khvorostinin's "To the Reader" and Kurbsky's first letter, in Keenan's view, and the former text was probably the source of the latter.⁶ He deduces that the letter could not have been written before the 1620s.

Keenan's conclusions regarding the sources of Kurbsky's first letter have aroused considerable opposition among researchers inside and outside the Soviet

the prince and the tsar. This practice is compatible with our conclusion that Keenan has made a number of interesting observations regarding the correspondence without, however, proving his point.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 197 n. 16.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁵ *Ibid.*,

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

Union. R.G. Skrynnikov wrote the most detailed critique of his textological arguments. However, Skrynnikov's attempts to refute Keenan, thorough and erudite as they often are, fail to provide a convincing alternative to the American scholar's theories.

Skrynnikov dismisses the similarities between Kurbsky's first letter and Isaiah's "Lament" as "the coincidence of a single theological cliché".¹ This is a gross oversimplification. True, the relevant passages were influenced by Matt. 10, 41-2, but they are certainly not a direct quotation.² The phrasing of these passages is sometimes peculiar, and the almost identical repetition in both the letter and the "Lament" of these unusual phrases could not have been coincidental.³ This supports Keenan's view that one text must have influenced the other.

Skrynnikov accepts unquestioningly Keenan's contention that Isaiah's "Complaint" was a source of Kurbsky's first letter.⁴ However, he marshals considerable evidence to show that the "Complaint" was not written in 1566, as Keenan claims, but in the second half of 1562.⁵ His counter-arguments are imaginative but inconclusive. Even if the "Complaint" was written by 1562, he has not demonstrated that it was not embellished at a later date by a scribe who had access to Kurbsky's first letter.⁶

Skrynnikov's explanation of the textual similarities between the "Complaint" and Khvorostinin's preface "To the Reader" is equally unsatisfying. He considers

¹ Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, p. 13.

² J.L.I. Fennell, review of Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, RM II (1975), p. 191.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, pp. 11-9.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 17-9.

⁶ Fennell, review of Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, p. 193.

Kurbsky's first letter a source for the Khvorostinin text.¹ In his view, Isaiah's "Complaint" was a source for Kurbsky's letter and therefore an indirect source of Khvorostinin's foreword. The letter appears to have preceded Isaiah's "Lament"; if intelligibility is an indication of primacy as it is in most textological comparisons of similar texts, then Kurbsky's version is clearly primary.² But Skrynnikov's arguments imply that Kurbsky borrowed from Isaiah for his letter to Ivan and that Isaiah subsequently borrowed from Kurbsky's letter. Such a sequence of borrowings is highly improbable, to say the least.

Fennell has proposed a rather more plausible model of the textual interrelationships among the Kurbsky, the Isaiah, and the Khvorostinin texts. As was pointed out in the preceding paragraph, Kurbsky's letter was probably a source for Isaiah's "Lament". Moreover, a comparison of the readings of similar passages in the letter and in Isaiah's "Complaint" supports the view that the monk used fragments of the letter to pad out his invective against Metropolitan Ioasaf.³ Elements of both the "Lament" and the "Complaint" as well as of Kurbsky's first letter are contained in Khvorostinin's text "To the Reader".⁴ If it is unlikely that Khvorostinin had access to the "Lament" and the "Complaint", it seems even more unlikely that both Khvorostinin and the author of the letter had these texts at hand.⁵ Fennell asserts that Isaiah and Khvorostinin both used the letter as a source and that this explains the similarities between the Isaiah texts and Khvorostinin's preface.⁶ In particular, Fennell's theory is consistent with the view that the letter was written between 30 April and 5 July 1564 by Kurbsky.

¹ Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, pp. 19-23.

² Fennell, review of Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, pp. 191-2.

³ Ibid., pp. 192-3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 194.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 195.

Keenan has attempted to buttress his attack on this view by referring to patterns evident in the extant manuscript copies of the correspondence. His discussion of these copies relies heavily upon the *de visu* examination carried out in 1968-1969 in the Moscow and the Leningrad archives by Daniel Clarke Waugh. Waugh classified the copies according to their physical characteristics – changes in the hand and the paper, watermarks, and paginations; he has admitted that his analysis of the handwriting was incomplete.¹ He has concluded that the oldest manuscript copies of the correspondence were made during the 1620s or the 1630s; a somewhat later group of copies can be traced to the 1630s and the 1640s, and the remaining seventeenth-century copies date from the 1670s and the 1680s.² It is significant that the five earliest copies to contain any part of the correspondence include only Kurbsky's first letter to Tsar Ivan and that they can be dated ca 1625-1635.³ According to Keenan, this dating of the earliest copies supports his view that the letter was probably written between 1620 and 1632.⁴

Keenan's argument rests upon the assumption that the correspondence began to be written approximately when the oldest known manuscript copies were prepared.⁵ This premise is not impregnable. True, D.S. Likhachev's objections are not particularly cogent either. He has sought to cast doubt on Keenan's postulate by pointing out that numerous works of Old Russian literature are considered authentic even though their earliest manuscript copies have been lost.⁶ This argument is known to hold for various works traced to Kievan Rus', but its general applicability to Muscovite literature has not been verified. Keenan's premise can be challenged more

¹ Keenan, *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha*, pp. 103-4.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 104-42.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁶ D.S. Likhachev, "Kurbskiy i Groznyy-byli li oni pisatelyami?", *RL* 1972, No. 4, pp. 204-5.

convincingly in view of near-contemporary evidence confirming that Ivan received an insulting letter from Kurbsky.¹ It has not been proved that this letter can be identified with any of those missives believed by most scholars to have been sent by the fugitive prince to the tsar in the 1560s and 1570s. Nevertheless, Kurbsky and Ivan were not regular correspondents, and such an identification can probably be made.

Even if the possible references to the correspondence which antedate the earliest known manuscript copies are accepted as bona fide, Keenan's remarks upon the patterns of manuscript loss may well warrant further exploration. What was the ultimate fate of the early copies? Why are the preserved copies arranged in the chronological clusters which Waugh describes?² If the traditional view of the provenance of the letters is to be completely persuasive, the patterns of manuscript loss and preservation must be explained.³

Keenan's treatment of Muscovite linguistic and cultural norms is one of the weakest links in his argument. He asserts that a deep rift divided ecclesiastical and

¹ Skrynnikov has reminded us that by November 1569 the tsar's archives included a missive from Kurbsky; see Skrynnikov, Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo, pp. 88-94. The instructions Ivan Grozny gave his envoy to the Rzeczpospolita in 1581 mention a rude epistle from Kurbsky; see B.N. Florya, "Novoe o Groznom i Kurbskom", IS 1974, No. 3, pp. 142-5.

² Soviet scholars have diligently examined the archives in order to find previously unknown manuscript copies of the correspondence; if such copies could be found, then Keenan's Soviet critics could claim that his theory was based upon an incomplete familiarity with the extant manuscripts. However, we know of no manuscripts discovered since Keenan's monograph was published which would require Waugh's classification of the copies fundamentally to be revised.

³ The first step in reconstructing how the epistles of the correspondence circulated is to determine how Kurbsky's first letter reached Tsar Ivan.. The seventeenth-century Latukhinskaya stepennaya kniga tells us that this letter was brought to the tsar by Kurbsky's retainer, Vasily Shibanov. Yet no reference to Shibanov's role in forwarding the letter is made either in the continuation of the Nikon Chronicle or in Grozny's first letter to Kurbsky, even though he is mentioned in both sources. Which version is correct? Zimin has pointed out that one of the oldest manuscript copies of Kurbsky's first letter contains an allusion to Shibanov's part in relaying the letter to Ivan. This copy can be traced to the 1620s or the 1630s and antedates the Latukhinskaya stepennaya kniga. Inasmuch as this copy was made within the lifetime of contemporaries of the Oprichnina, its evidence can be believed. Zimin justifies the silence of the Nikon Chronicle by claiming that the chronicler preferred to leave his readers ignorant of the correspondence: allusion to the correspondence could distract some readers from the fact of Kurbsky's treachery. The version of the Latukhinskaya stepennaya kniga is more likely, Zimin argues. This conclusion in its turn lends support to the received view of the provenance of the correspondence. See A.A. Zimin, "Pervoe poslanie Kurbskogo Groznomu i Vasiliy Shibanov", in V.G. Bazanov et al., eds, Kul'turnoe nasledie drevney Rusi, Moscow, 1976.

secular learning in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy and that very little interchange took place between the two traditions of learning.¹ He also claims that in the absence of any documentary evidence regarding Ivan's and Kurbsky's education, it must be assumed that both had a secular education and that if they were literate, they would have used the language of secular culture when they wrote.² Both Kurbsky's first letter and Grozny's first letter are written in an ornate Slavonic which Keenan considers more typical of the religious culture, and he concludes that these letters must be assigned to other authors.³ However, he fails to demonstrate that the religious and the secular cultures of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy were as clearly delineated as he suggests.⁴ And his insistence that Ivan IV was ignorant of the language of ecclesiastical literature flies in the face of considerable evidence to the contrary. The sixteenth-century sources depict him as a devout Orthodox Christian who prayed frequently and therefore had ample opportunity to familiarise himself with the liturgical language.⁵

We have spent appreciable time discussing the arguments for and against Keenan's conclusions, and it might be asked what importance the controversy has for the historian. At first glance, it would seem that if Keenan's theory could be proved correct, then many received views concerning Muscovite politics in the middle of the sixteenth century would have to be revised fundamentally. The correspondence has long been considered a basic source for Muscovy's general political history from the death of Vasily III until the Oprichnina. It has on occasion been cited by historians depicting contemporary ideas of the nature and the origins of the ruler's authority. Yet

¹ Keenan, The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha, pp. 53-4.

² Ibid., p. 54.

³ Ibid., pp. 54-5.

⁴ D.S. Likhachev has condemned as unfounded Keenan's view that a great gulf divided the religious and the secular cultures of sixteenth-century Muscovy. D.S. Likhachev, "Kurbskiy i Groznyy", pp. 207-8.

⁵ See, for example, the references in the Nikon Chronicle, too numerous to cite here, to Ivan's frequent visits to monasteries and his participation in religious services.

it presents manifold frustrations to scholars seeking carefully conceived, clearly articulated statements concerning the proper division of power between the tsar and his advisers. Kurbsky complains against Ivan's increasingly tyrannical rule but otherwise never makes clear what he believes in.¹ Ivan plumes himself as an autocrat, but generally seeks to justify his actions on personal and historical grounds rather than by any consistent theoretical programme.² Furthermore, the evidence of the correspondence concerning mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics must be approached in a highly critical spirit. Even if the traditional view of the provenance of the correspondence is accepted, these letters were not written contemporaneously with the events they describe; the numerous hyperbolic statements and the vague allusions found in them may result partly from this time lag. Yet many eminent historians failed to grasp that the testimony of Kurbsky and Ivan must be compared carefully with that of other, less problematic sources. Had they relied less uncritically upon the correspondence, their views regarding Muscovite politics in the mid-sixteenth century would have been better founded, and Keenan's theory less shocking.

B. Prince A.M. Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV

Like his correspondence with Tsar Ivan, Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV has been frequently consulted by historians as a source for Muscovy's political history between 1533 and the early 1570s. The History represents the first attempt at an historical monograph written in Russian.³ Kurbsky identifies various of Ivan's intimate advisers at mid-century: for example, the accepted view that Aleksey Adashev

¹ Keenan, The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha, p. 60.

² Ibid.

³ Fennell characterises the History thus in the introduction to his edition. See Kurbsky, History, p. vii.

and the priest Sil'vestr were his closest counsellors from the late 1540s relies heavily upon the evidence of the History. Kurbsky also provides fairly detailed accounts of the conquest of Kazan' in 1552 and the Livonian campaigns of the late fifties. The History refers to the persecutions which Ivan inflicted upon his former advisers during the early 1560s and to the atrocities he committed after the Oprichnina was introduced.

The evidence contained in the History must be approached with exceptional caution. True, Kurbsky's testimony concerning the Kazan' and the Livonian campaigns in which he participated personally is rather more credible. But since he was frequently absent from Moscow on campaign during the 1550s and the early 1560s, his evidence concerning court politics is not invariably that of a firsthand witness, fully au courant with every detail. The Oprichnina was established in the winter of 1564-1565, after he had fled to Lithuania, and his discussion of Ivan's role in the Oprichnina, important though it is, will have depended substantially upon hearsay.

In fact, the language and the imagery surrounding Kurbsky's account of certain events have identifiable antecedents, although it would be imprudent summarily to dismiss his testimony. For instance, his narration of the proceedings of the 1560 trial at which Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr were supposedly condemned in absentia on trumped-up charges bears similarities to the heresy trials of the mid-fifties.¹

The facts Kurbsky introduces and his attitude towards them are critically important in determining when the History was written: the text itself contains no explicit indications of this date. The time of writing of the History was and remains a subject of debate. Dates from the early 1570s to the early 1580s have been proposed, but the most widely accepted date is the spring-summer of 1573.² Zimin has pointed

¹ S.O. Shmidt, Stanovlenie rossiyskogo samoderzhavstva, Moscow, 1973, p. 42.

² Zhdanov believed that the History was written in 1572-3; see I.N. Zhdanov, Sochineniya, 2 vols, SPb, 1904-7, I, p. 158. Yasinsky dated it 1576-8; see A.N. Yasinsky, Sochineniya knyazya Kurbskago kak istoricheskiy material, Kiev, 1889, pp. 105-6. Inge Auerbach has recently traced it to the early 1580s; see I. Auerbach, "Gedanken zur Entstehung von A.M. Kurbskijs 'Istorija o velikom knjaze Moskovskom'", C-A SS 13, Nos 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1979), pp. 166-71.

out that both Kurbsky's records of the murders of divers princes and his accounts of the executions of sundry boyars end by referring to assassinations which occurred in the summer of 1573.¹ However, Fennell has warned that convincing as Zimin's arguments are, Kurbsky mentions two incidents which took place after 1573 – the execution of Archbishop Leonid in 1575 and the murder of the former boyar I.I. Khabarov in 1581.² Nevertheless, the spring-summer of 1573 is tentatively accepted in this dissertation as the date of the writing of the History.

The History, like the Kurbsky-Grozny correspondence, is known in manuscript copies which are traced to the seventeenth century or later. Archives in the Soviet Union and France contain at least seventy-odd copies of the History dating from the second half of the seventeenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century.³ Keenan has exploited the lack of early manuscript copies in his attempt to show that it was not written before the last years of the reign of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich.⁴ True, Keenan makes some interesting observations regarding its language and literary genre. But his starting point is the premise that a literary work cannot antedate significantly its oldest copies, and as was remarked when his attack upon the authenticity of the Kurbsky-Grozny correspondence was discussed, this presumption is hardly invulnerable.⁵ Inasmuch as Keenan's views concerning the History have evoked a Soviet reaction, it has been predictably negative. It has been argued that the History's author reveals a remarkably detailed knowledge of the career of the little-known monk

¹ A.A. Zimin, "Kogda Kurbskiy napisal 'Istoriyu o velikom knyaze Moskovskom'?", TODRL XVII (1962), pp. 166-71.

² Kurbsky, History, p. vii, n. 1.

³ Yu.D. Rykov, "Spiski 'Istorii o velikom knyaze Moskovskom' knyazya A.M. Kurbskogo v fondakh otdela rukopisey", ZOR GPB 34 (1973), pp. 107-8.

⁴ E.L. Keenan, "Putting Kurbskii in His Place or: Observations and Suggestions Concerning the Place of the History of the Grand Prince of Muscovy in the History of Muscovite Literary Culture", FOEG 24 (1978), pp. 131-61.

⁵ Ibid., p. 145; v. supra, p. 119-20.

Feodorit, who was Kurbsky's spiritual father, and that only a contemporary could have displayed such familiarity with Feodorit's life.¹ But Keenan's approaches to the study of Muscovite texts have already been debated by scholars with reference to the correspondence, and his attempt to reassign the History to the seventeenth century has touched off a much less heated controversy. In any case, the latter work is also a highly problematic source, and its evidence should be compared carefully with that of alternative sources.

C. The Chronicles

The Nikon Chronicle and related chronicles are the most detailed chronicle accounts of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy. The evidence of these chronicles concerning Muscovy's diplomatic contacts with other realms and the campaigns of the Muscovite army is useful background information for this dissertation. The Nikon Chronicle together with the L'vov and the Lebedev Chronicles include the text of the Service Code of 1555-1556.² The detailed accounts of Ivan IV's activities help us to understand what kind of man he was and what his relations with his courtiers were like. The references to the tasks his courtiers discharged are valuable in tracing their rise and fall in his favour.

Historians from V.N. Tatishchev onwards have recognised that the rich detail of the chronicle accounts marks them as a source of fundamental importance. The Nikon Chronicle was introduced to scholars by Tatishchev, who believed that it was composed in the seventeenth century under the supervision of Patriarch Nikon.³ Tatishchev

¹ A.I. Gladky, "K voprosu o podlinnosti 'Istorii o velikom knyaze Moskovskom' A.M. Kurbskogo (Zhitie Feodorita)", TODRL XXXI (1981), pp. 239-41.

² PSRL XIII, pp. 267-9; PSRL XX, pp. 569-71; PSRL XXIX, pp. 245-6.

³ V.N. Tatishchev, Istoriya Rossiyskaya, I, pp. 124-5.

named his manuscript copy after Nikon, and the entire chronicle came to be designated by the same title. The Nikon Chronicle was first published in 1767-1792 by A.L. Schlözer and S. Bashilov on the basis of Tatishchev's copy.¹ However, the edition consulted by modern historians is that of the Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisey, which was reprinted in 1965; this edition depended upon manuscript copies unknown in the eighteenth century. The Nikon Chronicle occupies five tomes in the Polnoe sobranie. It traces the history of Rus' from Kievan times up to 1558; this narrative is supplemented by an account of the 1571 attack on Moscow by the Crimean khan Devlet Girey, by genealogies of the Beleutovs and the Anichkovs, and by fragmentary records for the years 1563, 1558, 1572, and 1577.² Detailed coverage of the years from 1558 to 1567 is also appended to the basic text of the chronicle.

Equally graphic accounts of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics are found in other chronicles included in the Polnoe sobranie. This is true of the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva" as well as the L'vov, the Aleksandr Nevsky, and the Lebedev Chronicles. Furthermore, the text of these chronicles and that of the Nikon Chronicle for corresponding years resemble one another closely. The text of the Nikon Chronicle also finds significant parallels in the last two volumes of the Litsevoy svod, the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga. Scholars know of unpublished manuscripts of the Typographical-Academic, the Rumyantsev, and the Archival Chronicles which contain annals of Ivan's reign prior to the Oprichnina;³ these chronicles, too, resemble the Nikon Chronicle closely enough for them to be considered related. The Nikon

¹ A.L. Schlözer and S. Bashilov, eds, Russkaya letopis' po Nikonovu spisku, izdannaya pod smotreniem Imperatorskoy akademii nauk, 8 vols in 4, SPb, 1767-92.

² PSRL XIII, pp. 300-2.

³ The edition of the Typographical Chronicle published in Volume XXIV of the Polnoe sobranie is based upon a defective manuscript copy in which the narration is broken off at "the year 7004 (1495-1496)".

Chronicle was central to the chronicle accounts of Ivan IV's reign, and one goal of our discussion is more deeply to probe its relationship to its relatives.

The manuscript copies of the Nikon Chronicle made during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries suggest the interest it held for contemporary chroniclers. Literary historians agreed long ago that the so-called Patriarchal and Obolensky copies reproduce most faithfully the original text of the Nikon Chronicle and that the other copies are derivatives of these two. The relation between the Patriarchal and the Obolensky copies has been rather more controversial. A.F. Bychkov, who in the previous century edited the text of the Nikon Chronicle included in the ninth and tenth volumes of the Polnoe sobranie, believed that the Patriarchal copy was written in the second half of the sixteenth century and that the Obolensky copy could be traced to the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹ Bychkov's view that the Patriarchal copy antedated the Obolensky was further developed by A.A. Shakhmatov, who pioneered the approaches used by modern scholars to analyse the Old Russian chronicles. In Shakhmatov's opinion, not only was the Patriarchal copy written earlier; it resembled more closely the original text of the chronicle.²

N.P. Likhachev deepened considerably our understanding of the complexities of the Patriarchal and the Obolensky copies. Likhachev's conclusions regarding the Obolensky copy differed strikingly from those of Bychkov and Shakhmatov. Likhachev denied that it could be traced to the seventeenth century and argued on the basis of its paper and handwriting that it was made in the sixteenth century in four stages.³ Likhachev asserted that the Obolensky copy began to be made around 1542 after the Voskresensky Chronicle, one of its sources, was completed. The narration of

¹ PSRL IX, pp. v, vii.

² A.A. Shakhmatov, review of the "Obozrenie letopisnykh svodov Rusi severo-vostochnoy" by I.A. Tikhomirov, Zapiski imperatorskoy Akademii nauk po istoriko-filologicheskomu otdeleniyu IV (1899), No. 2, otd. III. pp. 171-6.

³ N.P. Likhachev, Paleograficheskoe znachenie bumazhnykh vodyanykh znakov, SPb, 1899, p. 327.

the copy was interrupted at the year 1520 and was not, in Likhachev's view, continued until about 1553. The annals arising from these two stages of writing go up to 1556. The third part of the copy is written on different paper and in another handwriting; Likhachev believed that Aleksey Adashev was the author of this extension of the chronicle to 1558. He is thought to have supplemented further the chronicle text during the Livonian campaign of 1560. Likhachev argued that the Patriarchal copy resulted from editing of the first two parts of the Obolensky copy effected between 1556 and 1560.¹

Likhachev's breakdown of the Obolensky copy into four parts has been accepted by subsequent scholars. The first part will not be considered in the following discussion. The circumstances of writing of the annals of the 1540s and the 1550s found in the remaining parts will be emphasised.

Likhachev's views were challenged even in his lifetime. S.F. Platonov's paleographical examination of the Obolensky copy led him to conclude that the Patriarchal copy included the original text of its second part.² However, both historians neglected to compare the text of the two copies with that of other chronicle accounts, and hence neither's arguments are entirely satisfying. In fact, N.F. Lavrov's collation of the text of the copies with that of other mid-sixteenth-century chronicles enabled him to propose a somewhat different model of the relation of the copies. He was convinced that the compilers of the copies, working independently of one another, based their accounts on the Voskresensky Chronicle. The latter chronicle, he argued, influenced the narration of both copies from the "the year 7029 (1520-1521)" in the case of the Patriarchal copy up to "7041 (1532-1533)" and in the case of the Obolensky copy for

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. CXLIV-V.

² S.F. Platonov, "K voprosu o Nikonovskom svode", *IORYaS* VII (1902), No. 3, p. 32.

eight more years.¹ He considered the Patriarchal copy the original of the Obolensky copy for "the years 7050 (1541-1542) to 7064 (1555-1556)".²

Lavrov's attempts to explore the relation between the two basic copies led him to question A.A. Shakhmatov's views concerning the role of the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva" in the preparation of the Nikon Chronicle. Shakhmatov observed that from "the year 7042 (1533-1534)" the text of the Patriarchal copy follows that of a redaction of the "Letopisets", the narration of which ends in 1556.³ The Obolensky copy depended heavily, he believed, on a 1558 redaction.⁴ Extended to 1560, the text of the "Letopisets" was also a source for the L'vov Chronicle, and supplemented to 1567, it influenced the text of the Litsevoy svod.⁵ But Shakhmatov's conclusions had to be revised after Lavrov discovered manuscript copies of the "Letopisets" in which the exposition was taken only up to 1553. Lavrov theorised that the "Letopisets" was composed between 1553 and 1555 amidst the entourage of Metropolitan Makary and that the Patriarchal and the Obolensky copies of the Nikon Chronicle as well as the copies of the L'vov Chronicle were influenced by this redaction; the narration of all of these copies was carried beyond 1553 on the basis of documents from the tsar's archives.⁶ In fact, Lavrov claimed that the Obolensky copy and the L'vov Chronicle were derived from the Patriarchal copy.⁷

These conclusions have been challenged recently by B.M. Kloss. He faults Lavrov for having failed to demonstrate that the Patriarchal copy actually was the source

¹ N.F. Lavrov, "Zametki o Nikonovskoy letopisi", LZAK XXXIV (1927), pp. 71-3.

² Ibid., pp. 73, 90.

³ Ibid., p. 89.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

of the Obolensky copy and the L'vov Chronicle. The only evidence adduced to support the primacy of the Patriarchal copy is that one phrase which was written in its margins lacked in the initial redaction of the "Letopisets" but was incorporated into the text of the Obolensky copy and of the L'vov Chronicle.¹ However, Kloss points out that this permits us only to infer that the Patriarchal copy is somewhat closer than the Obolensky copy and the L'vov Chronicle to the common protograph.² There are equally good grounds for considering the two latter texts primary. They as well as the initial redaction of the "Letopisets" contain passages omitted in the Patriarchal copy.³ Is it even possible to establish any relationship of primacy and dependence between the text of the Patriarchal and the Obolensky copies for "the years from 7050 (1541-1542) to 7064 (1555-1556)"? Kloss thinks not. He asserts that these copies were made by scribes working independently of one another on the basis that redaction of the "Letopisets" in which the narration is taken up to 1556.⁴ Moreover, he accepts Lavrov's conclusion that the annals of the Obolensky copy for "the years 7029 (1520-1521) to 7049 (1540-1541)" were drawn directly from the Voskresensky Chronicle.⁵ Only in its very beginning does the second copy of the copy show signs of having been copied from the Patriarchal copy.⁶

It is less difficult to reconstruct how the third part of the Obolensky copy was added. The third part with its exposition of events from 1556 to 1558 was appended somewhat after the second part was completed. It included the text of the Service Code of 1555-1556 as well as one version of the reforms of the mestnichestvo system which

¹ Ibid.

² B.M. Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod i russkie letopisi XVI-XVII vekov, Moscow, 1980, p. 196.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

were introduced by Tsar Ivan in 1549-1550.¹ Kloss questions whether the third part can be ascribed with certainty to Aleksey Adashev, as Likhachev believed.² The lack of authenticated specimens of Adashev's signature makes it imprudent to assert that the handwriting is clearly his; a further complication is that the handwriting varies sufficiently for it to be traced to two scribes.³ Kloss finds sounder Likhachev's view that Adashev added to the text of the Obolensky copy during the Livonian campaign of 1560.⁴ He contends that these additions modified or supplemented its second part; in his opinion, Likhachev erred in believing that Adashev extended the coverage beyond 1556.⁵ Kloss's theory, however, depends partially upon the premise that Adashev was the author of the "Letopisets". Kloss deduces that the okol'nichiy's familiarity with the "Letopisets" enabled him almost precisely to quote it when gaps in the text of the Obolensky copy had to be filled.⁶ But the authorship of the "Letopisets" has not been resolved, and this in its turn weakens somewhat the argument.⁷

Kloss traces the writing of the fourth part of the Obolensky copy to the 1570s when, in his view, it was decided to extend the narration of the chronicle.⁸ Somehow or another, he claims, this intention was not realised; the first sheets contain only a few

¹ Ibid.

² V. supra, p. 128.

³ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 197.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 197-8; v. supra, p. 128.

⁵ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, pp. 197-8; v. supra, p. 128.

⁶ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 198.

⁷ Zimin has contended that the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva" was composed or at least edited by Aleksey Adashev; see A.A. Zimin, I.S. Peresvetov i ego sovremenniki, Moscow, 1958, pp. 30-2. This view has been challenged by O.I. Podobedova, who emphasises that Metropolitan Makary played an influential role in drafting the "Letopisets". She observes that the assessment of the conquest of Kazan', both in political and religious terms, found in the "Letopisets" is mirrored in the letter Makary wrote while Kazan' was besieged by Muscovite forces. See O.I. Podobedova, Miniatyury russkikh istoricheskikh rukopisey: K istorii russkogo litsevogo letopisaniya, Moscow, 1965, pp. 128-9, n. 109. The authorship of the "Letopisets" probably cannot be resolved without new evidence.

⁸ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 196.

records of the 1570s, and genealogies of the Beleutovs and the Anichkovs were included.¹ He asserts that these additions were made in the Razryad, ostensibly on the basis of documents kept there.²

Kloss adduces evidence showing that the Obolensky and the Patriarchal copies were exploited as a source by the chroniclers of the 1560s. He has compared their text with that of the Stepennaya kniga, which was probably drafted between 1560 and 1563 at Metropolitan Makary's behest by Afanasy, a monk of the Moscow Chudov Monastery.³ His conclusion is that the representation in the Stepennaya kniga of Tsar Ivan's genealogy borrowed on occasion from the Patriarchal copy.⁴ The Obolensky copy, he claims, was the source of the annals of the Typographical-Academic Chronicle from 1493-1558; the additions to this copy made in the 1570s were not included in the chronicle.⁵ The relationship between the copy and the chronicle can be expressed more concretely. The chronicle is known in three manuscript copies: the Academic and the Tolstovsky copies and a defective copy. Kloss has compared the annals of the first two copies for "the years from 7001 (1492-1493) to 7004 (1495-1496)" with the corresponding records in the Obolensky copy and has concluded that the Tolstovsky copy was derived from the Obolensky copy and that the latter text and the Academic copy can be traced to a common protograph.⁶ By exploring further the Academic copy, Nasonov showed that the Typographical-Academic Chronicle was composed under the

¹ Ibid., pp. 196-7.

² Ibid.

³ The view that the Stepennaya kniga was composed between 1560 and 1563 by the monk Afanasy was persuasively argued by P.G. Vasenko, 'Kniga Stepennaya tsarskago rodosloviya' i ee znachenie v drevnerusskoy istoricheskoy pis'mennosti, Pt 1, SPb, 1904, pp. 168-217. It has been accepted by Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 192.

⁴ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, pp. 192-3.

⁵ Ibid., p. 199.

⁶ Ibid., p. 198.

supervision of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery.¹ The basic text of both the Academic and the Obolensky copies is followed by entries which clearly originated in this monastery and by two accounts of the capture of Kazan' which arose similarly.² If the Typographical-Academic Chronicle was, in fact, drafted by monks of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery, then a most probable date can be assigned to it. Among its sources were certain interrelated Rostov chronicles of the late fifteenth century, and in all likelihood, these were transmitted to the monastery between 1561 and 1566 when Nikandr, a former abbot, was archbishop of Rostov.³

The Chronicle of 1560 was roughly contemporaneous with the Typographical-Academic Chronicle. The two best-known manuscript copies of the former chronicle are the Rumyantsev, in which the narration extends from "the year 6897 (1388-1389) to the year 7066 (1557-1558)", and the Archival, where the period covered in the Rumyantsev copy is prolonged by two years.⁴ Kloss has shown that the annals of the Chronicle of 1560 from 1533 onwards depended upon the 1558 redaction of the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva", continued to 1560.⁵ The Obolensky copy of the Nikon Chronicle cannot be considered a source: its numerous gaps and the additions Kloss has ascribed to Adashev are not found in the Chronicle of 1560.⁶

When was the Chronicle of 1560 composed? A preliminary observation is that it can be dated the 1560s. It was incorporated into the L'vov Chronicle, which is attested in a manuscript copy of that decade.⁷ The time when the Chronicle of 1560

¹ A.N. Nasonov, *Istoriya russkogo letopisaniya XI-nachala XVIII v.*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 402-7.

² Kloss, *Nikonovskiy svod*, p. 198.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201, n. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

was written can be specified more precisely. Prince A.M. Kurbsky is included by the Nikon Chronicle among the voevody who on 6 July 1558 sent envoys to advise Tsar Ivan of Russian successes in the Livonian conflict, but he is not mentioned in the corresponding account of the Chronicle of 1560.¹ This indicates that the latter was probably composed after 30 April 1564 when Kurbsky fled to Lithuania and thereby incurred Ivan's wrath. But the repeated references to the Kolychevs in the additions to the chronicle text were presumably made before 1568 when Metropolitan Filipp Kolychev condemned the Oprichnina and brought Ivan Grozny's anger upon his kinsmen.²

The time of preparation of the Litsevoy svod (Illuminated Chronicle) has been most controversial, and the dates proposed vary considerably. Scholarly interest in this and other questions connected with the Litsevoy svod has doubtless been heightened by its prominence among sixteenth-century Muscovite chronicles. Its survey begins with the creation of the world and embraces the biblical civilisations, ancient Greece and Rome, and Byzantium. The chroniclers initiate detailed coverage of the history of Rus' in "the year 6622 (1113-1114)", and this remains their focus until "the year 7075 (1566-1567)".³ The breadth of the historical erudition revealed in the Litsevoy svod is great enough for A.E. Presnyakov to dub it "the historical encyclopedia of the sixteenth century".⁴ It has long fascinated historians: its pages are decorated with over 16,000 miniatures.⁵ Its last two volumes, the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga,

¹ PSRL XIII, p. 303, Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 203.

² Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 203.

³ Ibid., p. 207.

⁴ A.E. Presnyakov, "Moskovskaya istoricheskaya entsiklopediya XVI veka", IORYaS V (1900), No. 3, p. 824.

⁵ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 206.

contain accounts of Ivan IV's reign, and political historians have spilled much ink in attempting to determine the circumstances of their writing.

When the Litsevoy svod began to be studied in the eighteenth century, the view was advanced that it originated in the seventeenth century.¹ This view finds no support in modern scholarship. The recent debates have been influenced much more strongly by N.P. Likhachev's observations concerning the watermarks of the manuscript of the Litsevoy svod. He argued convincingly that they are most typical of Muscovite watermarks from the middle of the 1560s until the early 1580s.² Furthermore, he compared them with the watermarks of the manuscripts of the records of Muscovy's diplomatic contacts with the Rzeczpospolita for 1575-1579 and ascertained that the same paper was used when the manuscript of the Litsevoy svod and the latter manuscripts were made. Since the paper of the manuscripts of the records of Muscovy's dealings with the Rzeczpospolita from 1569 to 1571 is different, Likhachev claimed that paper was purchased for the Litsevoy svod around 1575.³ He deduced that the chronicle was composed in the second half of the 1570s. S.O. Shmidt, E.S. Sizov, and A.A. Amosov among modern scholars have all attempted to strengthen his arguments for this dating.⁴ A fundamentally different approach was adopted by D.N. Al'shits. He examined the interpolation in the Tsarstvennaya kniga concerning Ivan IV's illness of March 1553 and found that Ivan Viskovaty was portrayed positively. Al'shits believed that the tsar himself had composed this interpolation and concluded that it was drafted before July 1570 when Viskovaty was executed on charges of

¹ Ibid., p. 207.

² N.P. Likhachev, Paleograficheskoe znachenie, p. CLXXV.

³ Ibid., p. CLXXVI.

⁴ S.O. Shmidt, "Kogda i pochemu redaktirovalis' litsevye letopisi", SA 1966, No. 2, pp. 46-51; E.S. Sizov, "K voprosu o datirovke Shumilovskogo toma Litsevogo letopisnogo svoda XVI v.", in A.D. Lublinskaya et al., eds, Problemy paleografii i kodikologii v SSSR, Moscow, 1974; A.A. Amosov, "K voprosu o vremeni proiskhozhdeniya Litsevogo svoda Ivana Groznogo", in M.V. Kukushkina, ed., Materialy i soobshcheniya po fondam otdela rukopisnoy i redkoy knigi, Leningrad, 1978.

treason.¹ This view has been accepted by N.E. Andreyev, O.I. Podobedova, A.A. Zimin, and R.G. Skrynnikov.² But Al'shits and his adherents have been unable to agree on when the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga were finished. Al'shits dated their completion 1563 and 1567-1568, Andreyev to 1568-1570, Zimin to 1568 and 1569-1570, and Skrynnikov to 1563-1564.³ Podobedova affirmed that the Tsarstvennaya kniga was completed before 1568.⁴

Both Likhachev and Al'shits have made important observations concerning the Litsevoy svod which cannot be ignored if it is to be dated convincingly. Yet neither Likhachev's nor Al'shits's arguments are unexceptionable. Likhachev's dating depends upon his comparison of the watermarks of its manuscript with those of various contemporary documents, and one could argue that his dating of the former failed sufficiently to take into account their individual characteristics.⁵ Likhachev's view that paper was purchased for the Litsevoy svod around 1575 can also be queried. Al'shits has commented that its paper was probably procured specially and that only paper remaining after it was completed would have been used for diplomatic documents. Thus, the paper for the Litsevoy svod could have been purchased several years before 1575.⁶ Yet the accounts of boyar misdeeds included in the interpolations in the last two

¹ D.N. Al'shits, "Proiskhozhdenie i osobennosti istochnikov, povestvuyushchikh o boyarskom myatezhe 1553 g.", IZ 25 (1948), pp. 285-6.

² N.E. Andreev, "Ob avtore pripisok v litsevykh svodakh Groznogo", TODRL XVIII (1962), p. 139; Podobedova, Miniatyury, p. 130; Zimin, Oprichnina, pp. 67-72; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 25-33.

³ D.N. Al'shits, "Ivan Groznyy i pripiski k litsevym svodam ego vremeni", IZ 23 (1947), pp. 266, 282-3; Andreev, "Ob avtore pripisok", pp. 138-48; Zimin, Oprichnina, p. 72; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 32.

⁴ Podobedova, Miniatyury, p. 130.

⁵ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 215.

⁶ Al'shits, "Ivan Groznyy i pripiski", pp. 287-8.

volumes appear to be rooted in events which occurred after 1570.¹ This in its turn casts doubt on Al'shits's view that the chronicle was composed before July 1570.

If the theories of Likhachev and Al'shits are to be supplanted, then correct dating of the watermarks of the Litsevoy svod is imperative. Kloss's meticulous examination of them has indicated that they are most correctly dated the 1560s or the 1570s or possibly the 1580s.² His analysis of the paper of the manuscript reinforces this dating. He has found that the paper of the first layer of the manuscript of the first volume of the chronicle is identical to that used when parts of a new Minei Chet'i were written in the Aleksandrova sloboda in 1568-1569.³ The view that work on the Litsevoy svod began around 1568 is supported by a consideration of its sources. The Russian annals can be regarded as a special redaction of the Nikon Chronicle. When they are compared with the text of the two oldest redactions of the latter, clearly they often resemble the narration of the Obolensky copy. Kloss has gone a step further and argued that this copy was an immediate source of the Litsevoy svod.⁴ The annals of the Obolensky copy were, however, supplemented in the Litsevoy svod by borrowings from the Voskresensky Chronicle, the Novgorod Chronicle (svod) of 1539, the Stepennaya kniga, and the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva".⁵ The inventories of the tsar's archives indicate that the "Letopisets" in a redaction covering his reign up to 1560 as well as chronicle records extending the coverage to 1568 were sent at his command to the Aleksandrova sloboda in August 1568.⁶ When did work on the Litsevoy svod end? Again the paper of the chronicle manuscript contains the key to the puzzle. Kloss has

¹ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, pp. 257-61.

² Ibid., pp. 215-24.

³ Ibid., p. 245.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 209-14.

⁵ Ibid., p. 209.

⁶ Ibid., p. 245.

compared its latest watermarks with those of the Psalter published in the Aleksandrova sloboda between 20 June 1576 and 31 January 1577 and has determined that they are most probably dated 1576.¹

If the Litsevoy svod was indeed composed between 1568 and 1576, then it should be possible to show that the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga and particularly their interpolations can be dated this period. A preliminary step is to explore the relationship between the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga. The original text of the Sinodal Chronicle, which is written on the same paper as most of the Litsevoy svod, covers Ivan IV's reign from "7042 (1533-1534)" to "7075 (1566-1567)", and the years from "7042 (1533-1534)" to "7061 (1552-1553)" are surveyed in the Tsarstvennaya kniga.² Kloss claims that the latter resulted when the Sinodal Chronicle, corrected and revised on the basis of the "Letopisets", was copied on different paper; what is more, the narration in the Tsarstvennaya kniga for "the years from 7050 (1541-1542) to 7061 (1552-1553)" was culled directly from the Sinodal Chronicle.³ It should be noted that the watermarks of the paper of the copies are dated the 1560s and the 1570s;⁴ this is compatible with the theory that the Litsevoy svod was composed between 1568 and 1576. But when were the interpolations in the Sinodal Chronicle and the Tsarstvennaya kniga made? This question holds considerable interest for the historian, as these additions include evidence which if authentic is fundamentally important for the political history of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy. It can be answered by considering that the copies made from the Sinodal Chronicle which are the basis of the Tsarstvennaya kniga were made in 1576; the same paper was used for the

¹ Ibid., pp. 246-9.

² Ibid., p. 253.

³ Ibid., p. 225.

⁴ Ibid., p. 226.

edition of the Psalter prepared in the Aleksandrova sloboda in 1576-1577.¹ The interpolations therefore were probably made at the time of the completion of the Litsevoy svod, as they were made in the same scriptorium and by the same scribes; tentatively, they can be dated 1575-1576.²

The authorship of the interpolations is a vexed question. Clearly they were intended to portray certain boyars as factious and as less than respectful towards the ruler's authority. This remark applied to the accounts of the overthrow of the Glinskys in 1547, of the refusal of various boyars to support the throne candidature of the tsarevich when Ivan lay near death in March 1553, and of the conspiracy to disrupt Muscovy's relations with Lithuania allegedly launched by Prince S.V. Lobanov Rostovsky in 1553-1554. Al'shits has pointed out that the complaints in the interpolations against the perfidy of the boyars during Ivan's minority and after 1547 are echoed in his first letter to Kurbsky.³ However, his invective against his courtiers is not invariably reproduced in the interpolations without modification. Andreyev correctly emphasised that the role of Aleksey Adashev in the events of March 1553 is represented differently in the interpolation and the letter.⁴ Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr are depicted in the tsar's missive as the leaders of the court faction which during his illness supported the throne candidature of Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa rather than his son's.⁵ Yet Adashev is portrayed in the interpolation as a loyal supporter of the tsarevich's candidature.⁶ This conflict between the chronicle interpolations and Ivan's letters is not an isolated instance. According to another

¹ Ibid., p. 247.

² Ibid., pp. 252-3.

³ Al'shits, "Ivan Groznyy i pripiski", pp. 251-66.

⁴ Andreev, "Ob avtore pripisok", pp. 121-4.

⁵ Perepiska Ivan Groznogo, p. 32.

⁶ PSRL, XIII, pp. 522-6.

interpolation, Prince Vladimir Andreevich and his mother were released from prison in the winter of 1540-1541 at Sil'vestr's urging, whereas the tsar, in his second letter to Kurbsky, claims that the initiative was his.¹ The vocabulary of the interpolations reveals significant differences from that of any letter which could be ascribed to Ivan IV.² It seems unlikely that the authors of the interpolations drafted any of his epistles.

An important clue to the authorship not only of the interpolations but of the Litsevoy svod as a whole is that the latter had as one of its sources a manuscript copy of the Stepennaya kniga which can be traced to the protograph of the copy which belonged to the Moscow Chudov Monastery.³ The archpriest Andrey, the tsar's former confessor and the author of the Stepennaya kniga, belonged to this monastery between 1562 and 1564 and again after 1566; his monastic name, Afanasy, is cited in an entry in the Litsevoy svod for "the year 6999 (1490-1491)" drawn from the former work.⁴ The citation is absent in all known manuscript copies of the Stepennaya kniga and was probably inserted in the text of the copy used by the authors of the Litsevoy svod or immediately in the Litsevoy svod.⁵ P.G. Vasenko believed that the wording of this passage indicates that it was added by Afanasy himself.⁶ The interpolation for "the year 7061 (1552-1553)" may also have been drafted by Afanasy: its author, when describing the celebrations which followed the conquest of Kazan', relates warmly to the archpriest and emphasises his closeness to Ivan.⁷ Afanasy could have played a role

¹ Ibid., p. 524; Perepiska Ivan Groznogo, p. 104.

² Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 257.

³ Ibid., pp. 261-3.

⁴ V. supra, p. 132; Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 261.

⁵ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 263.

⁶ Vasenko, 'Kniga Stepennaya tsarskago rodosloviya', p. 204.

⁷ Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 263.

at least when the Litsevoy svod began to be composed inasmuch as he was alive in 1567.¹

Whether or not Afanasy himself had a hand in drafting the Litsevoy svod, there are grounds for connecting it with the monks of the Chudov Monastery. Kloss has shown that various personalities mentioned in the interpolations were subjected to Ivan's torments during the 1570s and particularly, during the autumn of 1575.² The Chudov Monastery was also subjected to harsh measures in 1575, and in the autumn the archimandrite was executed.³ If the monks did, in fact, compose the Litsevoy svod, then their wish to draw attention to the plight of their fellow-sufferers becomes understandable.

A knowledge of the circumstances in which the Litsevoy svod was written is useful background to a study of the Aleksandr Nevsky and the Lebedev Chronicles. Both are sources for that part of Tsar Ivan's reign considered in this thesis: the Aleksandr Nevsky Chronicle covers "the years between 7042 (1533-1534) and 7061 (1552-1553)" and between "7071 (1562-1563) and 7075 (1566-1567)" and the Lebedev Chronicle includes annals of "the years from 7061 (1552-1553) to 7071 (1562-1563)". The continuation of the Nikon Chronicle from 1558 to 1567 was prepared on the basis of these chronicles and the Sinodal Chronicle. The Lebedev and the Aleksandr Nevsky Chronicles are parts of a manuscript of the mid-seventeenth century subdivided into five books, each of which is a copy of a corresponding part of the Litsevoy svod: the former chronicle embraces the first four books, and the latter chronicle, the fifth.⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid., pp. 257-61, 264. The account in the chronicle interpolations of the "succession crisis" of March 1553 must be treated with particular caution as it is replete with anachronisms betraying the influence of later events. Ibid., pp. 258-60.

³ Ibid., p. 264.

⁴ Ibid., p. 227.

The place of these chronicles among the tomes of the Litsevoy svod long remained unresolved. Presnyakov conjectured that the text of the chronicles contains "some kind of transitional redaction" between the Sinodal and the Tsarstvennaya kniga.¹ Kloss has brought the riddle significantly closer to solution by showing that in the mid-seventeenth century, the coverage of Ivan's reign after 1553 in the Litsevoy svod was not subdivided into the two last-named volumes and that these annals are most correctly considered simply the last part of the chronicle.² His attempt to reconstruct the basic text of this part has led him to conclude that the basic text of the Aleksandr Nevsky and the Lebedev Chronicles followed it closely. Similarly, Kloss has proposed that the variant readings of the two chronicles are drawn from copies of the last part of the Litsevoy svod.³

The Nikon Chronicle clearly occupies a central position among the chronicle accounts covering Ivan IV's reign up to the Oprichnina, and in the following chapters the Nikon Chronicle rather than its relatives will usually be cited. A few remarks should be made regarding its reliability as historical evidence. It is less prone than the correspondence between Ivan and Kurbsky or Kurbsky's History to degenerate into polemic, and its accounts are ordinarily more detailed. But detailed though it and related chronicles are, however, they fail fully to answer various important questions connected with the mid-sixteenth-century courtiers. Who were the tsar's most influential advisers? What was their economic situation? The replies to these and other pertinent enquiries are found largely in other sources. The limited scope is not the only drawback of the Nikon Chronicle. The picture it paints of the relations between the tsar and his courtiers is highly idealised. Judging by the Nikon Chronicle alone, we might infer that the frictions among the courtiers were at most minor, which is highly

¹ A.E. Presnyakov, Tsarstvennaya kniga, ee sostav i proiskhozhdenie, SPb, 1893, pp. 29-30.

² Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, p. 231.

³ Ibid.

improbable, to say the least. In fact, the history of the Oprichnina reveals that the rifts within the ruling oligarchy were very deep, even though they were previously less clearly displayed. The historian who seeks convincingly to analyse mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite court politics must compare the evidence of the Nikon Chronicle with that of alternative sources.

D. The Genealogical Records

The evidence of the genealogies of the Muscovite princely and boyar lineages, like that of the chronicles, is of considerable value in resolving questions relating to Muscovite court politics. A goal of this dissertation is to ascertain what consequences blood and marital ties held for the political behaviour of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite courtiers, and the relevance of genealogical records requires no elaboration.

When genealogical lists were prepared in the first half of the sixteenth century, their purpose was most likely more practical. Even though their references to remote generations not infrequently included gaps, their evidence could help the grand prince's officials to settle disputes. Conflicting claims to votchinny were raised when the litigants argued that their forbears had held the land in dispute, and the genealogical lists could be used to verify the suitors' statements and to determine whose claim was stronger. If during mestnichestvo hearings one litigant sought to buttress his claims by affirming that his genealogy was more distinguished than his adversary's, his statement could be more easily checked with reference to genealogical lists.

The genealogical lists preceded the more extensive genealogies which began to be prepared in the 1540s.¹ The Chronicle redaction, which can be traced to that decade, counts among the earliest redactions of these genealogies. It is known in three

¹ M.E. Bychkova, Rodoslovnyye knigi XVI-XVII vv., Moscow, 1975, p. 4.

manuscript copies made in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.¹ All the copies include lists of prominent princely and boyar lineages, although these lists are not exhaustive: unified genealogies of the Lithuanian princes, for example, are strangely absent.² However, the number of chapters in the copies ranges from 23 to 30: one copy, for instance, does not contain lists of the Tver' princes, of several boyar lineages, or of the Crimean khans.³ This copy is accompanied in the archives by other genealogical documents together with a seventeenth-century manuscript of the Tsyachnaya kniga.⁴ The other two copies are somewhat older and are found in collections of chronicles.⁵ It should be pointed out, moreover, that the legends concerning the origins of the Yaroslavl princes found in one of the earlier copies of the Chronicle redaction resemble closely an insertion in the account of "the year 6785 (1276-1277)" in the Ermolinsky Chronicle.⁶ M.E., Bychkova believes that the legend was composed on the basis of chronicle fragments and that the insertion in the Ermolinsky Chronicle was influenced by the legend.⁷

This example foreshadowed the borrowing which took place between the chronicles and the genealogies in the second half of the sixteenth century. When the early redactions of the genealogies were prepared, however, the chronicles played a less evident role. In the later redactions the lists of the princely lineages were often preceded by a foreword drawn from the chronicles.⁸ But the lists included in the Chronicle

¹ Ibid., pp. 19-31.

² Ibid., p. 19.

³ Ibid., pp. 19-22.

⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 19-22.

⁶ Ibid., p. 157.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 151-3.

redaction do not begin with such a preface; their first reference is to the princes considered to have founded the lineages.¹ The same holds for the lists of princely lineages found in the Gosudarev rodoslovets, which was completed in 1555 in the Razryad.²

Of all the redactions close to the Gosudarev rodoslovets, the earliest is the Rumyantsev. It is known in two manuscript copies: the earlier is dated the 1560s and the later the end of the sixteenth century.³ Even though the copies were made at different times and show differences in the number and the arrangement of the chapters, their texts are similar enough for them to be considered to derive from a common protograph.⁴

Early though the Rumyantsev redaction is, it does not necessarily reproduce most faithfully the original text of the Gosudarev rodoslovets. In fact, N.P. Likhachev believed that the original text was represented by a redaction characterised by copies with about 43 chapters.⁵ This redaction is historically noteworthy, for its copies include the Barkhatnaya kniga, the official genealogy of the end of the seventeenth century.⁶ Another redaction which is probably close to the Gosudarev rodoslovets is characterised by copies with 43 chapters of basic text supplemented by interpolations; the number of chapters added in the extant copies ranges from 17 to 38. Likhachev showed that the Gosudarev rodoslovets was the direct source of this redaction.⁷ The copies of still another redaction which approximates the Gosudarev rodoslovets include

¹ Ibid., p. 151.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., pp. 33-8.

⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

⁵ N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki, p. 414.

⁶ Bychkova, Rodoslovnye knigi, pp. 38-45.

⁷ N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki, pp. 365-74.

about 81 chapters.¹ All known copies of the three last-mentioned redactions can be traced to the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.²

The copies of the redactions of the Gosudarev rodoslovets symbolise the interest Muscovites had in genealogical records. The same interest was evidenced when other redactions of the genealogies of Ivan Grozny's reign were compiled. These include the Patriarchal and the Military Service redactions, the redaction of the beginning of the seventeenth century, and the Compilatory redaction.³

Scholarly interest in the genealogies began in the eighteenth century. They began to be printed in 1787 when N.I. Novikov published the Barkhatnaya kniga and several other genealogical documents.⁴ In 1851 three previously unknown manuscript copies of the genealogies were published.⁵ V.V. Rummel' and V.V. Golubtsov issued their genealogy of the dvoryanstvo lineages in 1886-1887.⁶ Other genealogical records were published in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. As recently as 1977 the sixteenth-century genealogies were published according to the Chronicle redaction and according to the Rummyantsev redaction of the Gosudarev rodoslovets.⁷ The genealogical documents began to be published well before they were studied scientifically. In

¹ Bychkova, Rodoslovnye knigi, p. 58.

² Ibid., pp. 38-45, 48-61.

³ Ibid., pp. 65-121.

⁴ N.I. Novikov, ed., Rodoslovnaya kniga knyazey i dvoryan rossiyskikh i vyezshikh, Moscow, 1787.

⁵ "Rodoslovnaya kniga", Vremennik 10 (1851), pp. 1-286. Another late copy of the Patriarchal redaction was published in 1913. See "Rodoslovnaya kniga svyateyshego gosudarya Filareta Nikiticha patriarkha vseya Rossii", in Yubileynyy sbornik S.-Peterburgskago Arkheograficheskago instituta, SPb, 1913.

⁶ V.V. Rummel' and V.V. Golubtsov, Rodoslovnnyy sbornik russkikh dvoryanskikh familiy, 2 vols, SPb, 1886-7. Unfortunately, Rummel' and Golubtsov did not approach their sources critically enough, and their genealogies therefore contain references considered erroneous by modern scholars. For example, they alluded from time to time to a Muscovite campaign against the Swedes in 1549, but today it is thought unlikely that such a campaign took place. Their genealogies must be treated with caution.

⁷ Redkie istochniki II. We cite this edition in the dissertation.

the last two decades of the nineteenth century N.P. Likhachev articulated the methods of studying the genealogies which have been employed by subsequent scholars.¹ Likhachev proposed that the manuscript copies could be grouped into redactions and the number and the arrangement of the chapters are important criteria for assigning copies to redactions, and he exploited the redactions to reconstruct the circumstances of compilation of the genealogies. After he completed his pioneering studies, the scientific study of the genealogies made little progress until S.B. Veselovsky subjected them to renewed scrutiny. Veselovsky was the first historian who sought to determine whether the references in the genealogies to the earliest forbears of Muscovite courtiers are credible.² He also took a practical interest in the genealogies, using them to sketch the careers of individual courtiers and the history of the lineages. The works of several Soviet Muscovite specialists of the postwar era have been influenced by his approach to the study of the genealogies.³

On the whole, Veselovsky considered the genealogies a valuable source. True, he grasped that they have their drawbacks, and indeed he emphasised that the legends surrounding the origins of princely and dvoryanstvo lineages must be approached cautiously.⁴ It has been recognised that the sixteenth-century legends were all intended to support the claims advanced by sundry courtiers to the effect that they and their forefathers had long served the grand princes of Moscow or the rulers of Tver', Chernigov, or Ryazan', and that these legends should not be accepted without being compared with other evidence. However, several legends have, in fact, been shown

¹ N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki, pp. 339-440.

² E.g. S.B. Veselovsky, "Iz istorii drevnerusskogo zemlevladieniya. Rod Dmitriya Aleksandrovicha Zernova (Saburovy, Godunovy i Vel'yaminy-Zernovy)", IZ 18 (1946), pp. 57-8.

³ E.g. A.I. Kopanev, Istoriya zemlevladieniya Belozerskogo kraya XV-XVI vv., Moscow and Leningrad, 1951; V.B. Kobrin, "Sostav Oprichnogo dvora Ivana Groznogo", in AE za 1959 god, Moscow, 1960; A.A. Zimin, "O sostave dvortsovykh uchrezhdeniy russkogo gosudarstva kontsa XV-XVI v.", IZ 63 (1958), pp. 180-205.

⁴ Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 32-3.

consistent with the evidence of alternative sources.¹ The inclusion of the Adashevs in the Gosudarev rodoslovets is a noteworthy instance of the use of genealogical records to bolster the prestige of certain courtiers. The Adashevs were not "well-born", and it was a coup for them to be included along with various princely and established boyar lineages.² This surely reflects the prominence among the tsar's entourage of F.G. Adashev and his son Aleksey as well as the latter's role in overseeing the compilation of the Gosudarev rodoslovets.³ Distortions of the genealogies need not have resulted from conscious attempts at falsification. The genealogies probably depended partly on traditions perpetuated within the lineages, and as these were handed down from generation to generation, errors could have crept in. The genealogies are also marked as an unsatisfying source because their coverage contains lacunae. Only the Chronicle redaction and the Gosudarev rodoslovets make anything like regular reference to the service which Muscovite courtiers had formerly rendered the udel princes; this point is raised at best only sporadically in other redactions.⁴ Furthermore, the distaff side is thinly represented in most genealogies.

E. The Military Service Registers

The references to Muscovite courtiers in the genealogies are not infrequently confirmed by the military service registers. The latter list the campaigns on which the Muscovite army was dispatched from the last quarter of the fifteenth century into the first half of the seventeenth century together with the names of the leaders of the

¹ Bychkova, Rodoslovnye knigi, pp. 143-4. See ibid., pp. 136-43, for a few examples of how the veracity of the legends is checked.

² Ibid., p. 178.

³ N.P. Likhachev, "'Gosudarev rodoslovets' i rod Adashevnykh", LZAK XI, (1903), otd. 1, pp. 47-9.

⁴ Bychkova, Rodoslovnye knigi, p. 160.

expeditions, of their subordinates who performed distinguished tasks, and of some of the rank-and-file. The registers also contain brief accounts of the mestnichestvo quarrels which erupted during certain campaigns as courtiers on campaign mounted conflicting claims to prestigious army posts. Records of the weddings of the grand princes and sundry especially eminent courtiers between 1500 and 1555 are appended, tabulating those who attended and where they sat.

The military service registers of the mid-sixteenth century have the added advantage of completeness. Regular records of the campaigns of the Muscovite army were kept, and extensive lists of the participants were drawn up. Unfortunately, the Muscovite military service registers were not always so detailed. The leading Soviet scholar in this field, V.I. Buganov, believes that they were first compiled in the last quarter of the fifteenth century; however, until the 1540s their evidence is fragmentary.¹ Perhaps they began to be kept more regularly because it was realised that through records of military service, like detailed genealogies, were helpful when mestnichestvo disputes had to be resolved. In fact, Buganov affirms that when Ivan and his advisers decided that the redaction of the military services embodied in the Gosudarev razryad of 1556 should be compiled, they probably sought to ensure the orderly implementation of the decrees of 1549-1550 concerning mestnichestvo.²

The Gosudarev razryad was the first major sixteenth-century redaction of the military records. The Razryad housed records prepared contemporaneously with the events they portrayed. While these incidents remained fresh in the minds of the scribes, the contemporary records were employed to prepare rudimentary military service registers. The latter had important weaknesses. Their entries were never systematised. Their coverage of military operations was on occasion scanty.³ On the other hand,

¹ Buganov, Razryadnye knigi, pp. 5, 7.

² Ibid., pp. 166-8.

³ Ibid., pp. 115-6.

these rudimentary military service registers were used along with the contemporary records as sources for the Gosudarev razryad, and as a rule the accounts of the army expeditions found in the primary registers are evidently more detailed than their counterparts in the Gosudarev razryad. In fact, no reference is made in the Gosudarev razryad to several weddings which are depicted in the rudimentary registers, probably because Tsar Ivan and his advisers deemed their inclusion inexpedient. The Gosudarev razryad came about when the text of the rudimentary registers was condensed, reworded, and sometimes corrected.¹

The primary registers continued to be compiled in the second half of the sixteenth century and in the early seventeenth century. From about 1580 they began to include detailed accounts of court ceremonies.² When the envoys of foreign rulers came to the tsar's palace, the courtiers meeting them were recorded. The names of the courtiers who attended important dinners and parades were entered. The scope of the primary registers was expanded under Tsars Fedor Ivanovich and Boris Godunov most likely to facilitate the settlement of the mestnichestvo disputes.³ Abridged, emended versions of the rudimentary registers akin to the Gosudarev razryad of 1556 also continued to be compiled in the remainder of the sixteenth century and in the first half of the seventeenth century. Redactions were drafted in 1584, 1585, 1598, 1604, and 1636.⁴ The military service registers, primary and redacted alike, held considerable interest for scribes. In 1962 Buganov knew of 173 copies dating from the end of the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century; this figure included copies of both kinds of register.⁵

¹ Ibid., pp. 141-6.

² Ibid., p. 122.

³ Ibid.

⁴ RK, p. 3.

⁵ Buganov, Razryadnye knigi, pp. 23-98.

Scholarly interest in the military service records began while their copies continued to be made. V.N. Tatishchev consulted the registers when he covered the reigns of Ivan III, Vasily III, and Ivan Grozny, and they were used by other eighteenth-century historians.¹ They were first published in 1787 when Novikov included records from 1556 to 1585 in the Drevnyaya rossiyskaya vivliofika.² His lead was followed by several other scholars in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In 1844 D.A. Valuev published military service registers from 1559 to 1605.³ The timespan of the printed registers was next significantly expanded in 1902 when P.N. Milyukov published records from 1475 to 1565.⁴ Although his edition retains its interest, however, it can be faulted on several accounts.⁵ He knew of manuscripts which would have enabled him to print military records which appeared after 1565 but failed to exploit the opportunity. Moreover, his text often contains errors. Yet over sixty years had to elapse before an improved edition was published by Buganov. His edition includes military service registers from 1475 to 1598. The official redaction of 1598 supplements the evidence of other sources, not so much, it is true, for the period considered in this thesis, as for the 1580s and the 1590s.⁶ It is this version which is cited in the dissertation. Editions of the registers from 1475 to 1605 and from 1550 to 1636 have been published more recently under Buganov's supervision.⁷ He has also

¹ Buganov has shown that V.N. Tatishchev, Shcherbatov, and Karamzin all consulted manuscripts of the military service registers. Ibid., pp. 8-10.

² DRV XIII, pp. 247-459, XIV, pp. 292-496.

³ D.A. Valuev, ed., Sinbirskiy sbornik, Moscow, 1844, Section 1, pp. 1-154.

⁴ P.N. Milyukov, ed., Drevneyshaya razryadnaya kniga ofitsial'noy redaktsii (po 1565 g.), Moscow, 1902.

⁵ Buganov, Razryadnye knigi, pp. 16-7.

⁶ RK, p. 5.

⁷ V.I. Buganov, ed., Razryadnaya kniga 1475-1605 gg., 2 vols to date, Moscow, 1977-; idem, ed., Razryadnaya kniga 1550-1636 gg., 2 vols to date, Moscow, 1975-.

overseen the compilation of a new text of the records from 1559 to 1605 which takes into consideration three manuscripts unknown to Valuev.¹ Buganov's role in compiling editions of the registers is complemented by his researches into the circumstances in which the registers were drawn up.²

If historians from Tatishchev to Buganov have rated the military service registers an important source of Muscovite history, it should be asked how reliable is their evidence. If this query is to be answered, their origins must be considered. The military service registers were intended to convey the content of authentic records of the Muscovite army, but the compilers of the registers had ample opportunity to introduce distortions. In the Gosudarev razryad as in the Gosudarev rodoslovets, divers Adashevs are featured more prominently than was strictly warranted.³ Perhaps at the behest of his son Aleksey, F.G. Adashev is mentioned first among the boyars who accompanied Ivan to Kolomna in the summer of 1553.⁴ However, even though the authentic records may have been doctored somewhat when military service registers were compiled, the latter count among the most trustworthy sources for this dissertation. Their evidence for the middle of the sixteenth century is detailed and objective and seldom must be doubted.

F. The Registers of Inquisition

The registers of inquisition compiled for divers parts of Muscovy during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries were anticipated as the fifteenth century

¹ Idem, ed., Razryadnaya kniga 1559-1605 gg., 2 vols to date, Moscow, 1974, pp. 3-4.

² In particular, Buganov attacks the theories advanced by I.D. Belyaev and P.N. Milyukov concerning the process of compiling the military service registers. See Buganov, Razryadnye knigi, pp. 12-7.

³ Ibid., p. 168.

⁴ Ibid.

concluded: an attempt was made, which persisted into the mid-sixteenth century, to document the economic resources available in Muscovy's acquisitions in the Novgorod vicinity.¹ In fact, the archivist S.A. Shumakov found documentary evidence confirming that surveys and inquisitions were conducted in various places in the realm during the 1550s and the first half of the 1560s;² however, not all known registers of inquisition of this period have been published. It is especially regrettable for us that no registers dated the mid-sixteenth century are known for Muscovy's most centrally situated parts, particularly the Moscow uezd.³ Inasmuch as landholders and estates directly concerning us are mentioned in attested registers of inquisition, they crop up in the registers, or rather the parts of registers, compiled in the last decades of the sixteenth century from the 1570s onwards and published in the 1870s by N.P. Kalachov. Alas, Kalachov's edition is lamentably executed;⁴ for all its faults, nonetheless, historians cite it in a manner suggesting that its evidence is tentatively accepted.

In seeking to define those questions illuminated in Kalachov's edition, we concentrate foremost if not exclusively upon his version of the registers for the Moscow uezd. True, the last-mentioned registers are relatively dull documents, lacking the fascinating glimpses provided by the Tver' registers compiled in the mid-sixteenth

¹ Novgorodskiya pistsovyya knigi, izdannyya Arkheograficheskoyu komissieyu, 6 vols, SPb, 1895-1915.

² E.g. S.A. Shumakov, "Gramoty Kollegii Ekonomii. Vyp. 1-y. Obzor Bezhetskikh (1300-1767 gg.) i Alatyrskikh (1607-1761 gg.) aktov", Chteniya 1899, III, otd. 1, p. 69; *idem*, "Obzor gramot Kollegii Ekonomii. Vyp. 2-oy. Teksty i obzor Belozerskikh aktov (1395-1758 gg.)", Chteniya 1900, III, otd. 1, pp. 120-3.

³ Smith, Peasant farming, p. 104.

⁴ For example, Smith observes that Kalachov's edition of the Moscow uezd registers is so poorly effected that even a meaningful summary table cannot be compiled. *Ibid.*, p. 115. It is encouraging that at least one Soviet scholar has apparently grasped that new critical editions of the registers of inquisition must be prepared: see V.B. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, "K istorii istochnikovedcheskogo izucheniya pistsovykh knig Moskovskogo uezda XVI v.", in AE za 1975 god, Moscow, 1976.

century. But their tedium aside, they possess the advantage of having been accorded exceptionally detailed scholarly investigation, most notably by E.D. Stashevsky.¹

We begin discussing the Moscow uezd registers with a few preliminary remarks concerning the territory they cover and the purpose of their compilation. The very expression "Moscow uezd" is imprecise: Stashevsky pointed out that during the second half of the sixteenth century the boundaries assigned to the uezd fluctuated.² Moreover, Kalachov's edition embraces only 18 stany and 2 volosti out of 43 stany and 17 1/3 volosti evidenced for the sixteenth century; he omitted the boundaries delineating individual stany and volosti.³ Nor do the frustrations researchers experience end here. The primary goal of the inquisition was fiscal, and the officers of inquisition were most concerned to describe property rather than to portray the resident population;⁴ fortunately, however, the population is not entirely ignored in those parts of the Moscow uezd registers Kalachov published.

These registers are probably most relevant to this dissertation insofar as they indicate somewhat the landholders of the Moscow vicinity and the kinds of land they held, juridically speaking; sometimes the landholders thus identified include Tsar Ivan himself and courtiers admissible for the ruling oligarchy. We must observe, nevertheless, that Kalachov's edition alludes only to pomest'ya, lay and monastic votchiny, and a small number of tsarist estates – other kinds of landholding are neglected – and that even these kinds of landholding are not all represented simultan-

¹ E.D. Stashevsky, Opyty izucheniya pistsovykh knig Moskovskago gosudarstva XVI veka, vyp. 1, Moskovskiy uezd, Kiev, 1907.

² Ibid., pp. 16-9. Yet Stashevsky apparently believed that the uncertainties surrounding the boundaries of the uezd were not sufficient to render meaningless the phrase "the Moscow uezd". In fact, he thought that the boundaries of the stany were unclearer still. Ibid., p. 19.

³ Ibid., pp. 18-9, 25.

⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

ously in every register.¹ The register of 1576-1578, for instance, refers only to pomest'ya.²

Estates may evidently be considered production units, and for completeness sake we convey something of the testimony the Moscow uezd registers provide regarding how estates were worked, even though this task falls most appropriately to agrarian and economic historians rather than to prosopographers. One might conjecture that the references to land areas might supply a valuable point of departure for exploring the estates. Unfortunately, the entries concerning land area in the registers were notional measurements of wealth and cannot be considered exact.³ The three-field notation was customarily employed by sixteenth-century officers of inquisition in making their estimates of service lands; this raises the questions of what fields were actually like and what the three-field notation implied in reality.⁴ True, from the late fifteenth century a three-field layout had become sufficiently common in central Muscovy and on wealthier and better-regulated estates; probably a three-field notation was often soundly based.⁵ Yet this notation does not prove a precise, fully-developed field system with compulsory rotations even at the estate level. Stashevsky remarked, for example, that the registers not seldom mention cases where one field was ploughed and the remaining two lay fallow.⁶

How informative the registers are for enquiries into the resident population depends on the register and the enquiry under consideration. We cite several instances.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Smith, Peasant farming, p. 109.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 26-7, 123.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 109-10.

⁶ Stashevsky, Opyty izucheniya, vyp. 1, p. 30.

The registers for 1573-1574 and 1576 neglect the households and their dwellers;¹ this is remedied only in the later registers. The registers are not conspicuously helpful in specifying the rents payable in money and kind by divers residents of the estates; yet the 1584-1585 register shows that the barshchina was relatively encountered in the Moscow uezd, especially on monastic estates.²

G. The Tsyachnaya kniga and the Dvorovaya tetrad'

There are several grounds for discussing the Tsyachnaya kniga and the Dvorovaya tetrad' together. Both originated in the early 1550s. Furthermore, manuscript copies of the Dvorovaya tetrad' are sometimes found in the collections of military service registers and genealogical records which contain most known copies of the Tsyachnaya kniga.

On 3 October 1550 Ivan IV decreed that more than one thousand servitors not holding a pomest'e in the Moscow neighbourhood should be granted one within 60 to 70 versty of the capital in the Moscow uezd or the neighbouring uezdy.³ They were intended to constitute a corps of reliable servitors who could be called upon quickly to discharge tasks. They are listed in the Tsyachnaya kniga together with the amount of land they were to receive.

¹ Ibid., p. II.

² Ibid., p. 42; Smith, Peasant farming, p. 141. Smith points out that the increase in labour rents occurred mainly in the 1570s and the 1580s when they perhaps became more important than other peasant obligations in the Moscow uezd. Ibid., p. 130.

³ TKDT, pp. 53-4. It was long believed that the granting of pomest'ya envisaged in Ivan's regulation was realised. However, from the 1950s onwards Zimin argued that the regulation was not implemented. See A.A. Zimin, "K istorii voennykh reform 50-kh godov XVI v.", Iz 55 (1956), pp. 348-51; idem, Reformy, pp. 366-71; idem, "K izucheniyu reform", pp. 154-9. The evidence is inconclusive.

Unfortunately, the Tsyachnaya kniga is not known in any near-contemporary copies.¹ It was first published by N.I. Novikov, and he based his edition upon a copy of the end of the seventeenth century.² The subsequent editions published in the nineteenth century and early in this century can all be traced to this copy.³ However, the text usually consulted by modern scholars was printed in 1950 by A.A. Zimin, who took into consideration six copies unknown to his predecessors, including one made in the first half of the seventeenth century.⁴ Even though earlier copies have not yet been discovered, there are few if any grounds for challenging the authenticity of the Tsyachnaya kniga.

When the names recorded in the Tsyachnaya kniga are compared with the recipients of important government posts, grants from the Kazna and other favours, it becomes apparent that the tsyachniki often profited from the largesse of the ruling oligarchy. The same holds for the courtiers entered in the Dvorovaya tetrad' in 1551-1552.⁵ It tabulates the boyars, the okol'nicie, and other court functionaries, as well as the mass of court deti boyarskie in attendance. The known text most likely contains omission. It seems unlikely that the lists found in any of the known copies are complete, and how many courtiers were not entered is debatable.⁶ Deti boyarskie from divers parts of the realm attended the court, but no reference is made to deti boyarskie from Novgorod or Pskov. But it is difficult to believe that the deti boyarskie of Novgorod and Pskov were, in fact, unrepresented among Tsar Ivan's entourage.

¹ TKDT, p. 20-49.

² DRV VIII, pp. 1-34.

³ TKDT, pp. 8-9.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁵ For Zimin's arguments to the effect that the Dvorovaya tetrad' was, in fact, originally compiled in 1551-2, see ibid., p. 17.

⁶ B.N. Florya, "Neskol'ko zamechaniy o 'dvorovoy tetradi' kak istoricheskom istochnike", in AE za 1973 god, Moscow, 1974.

Moreover, the Dvorovaya tetrad' does not indicate which courtiers belonged to the ruling oligarchy. Still another drawback is that changes in the tsar's retinue during the 1550s are neglected. These shortcomings all render the Dvorovaya tetrad' a less valuable source.

The Dvorovaya tetrad' is not as familiar to scholars as the Tsyachnaya kniga. Its manuscript copies became known only in the 1880s, and its first edition was not published until the beginning of this century.¹ Furthermore, the copies first discovered suffer from serious defects. The protograph to which they can be traced is incorrectly dated "the year 7045 (1536-1537)".² They omit about one-third of the attested text of the Dvorovaya tetrad'.³ Fortunately, these and other deficiencies of those copies were exposed when Zimin found the Nikiforov copy in 1948; this discovery paved the way for a new improved edition.⁴

H. The Diplomatic Documents

Three collections of diplomatic documents are especially useful for this dissertation. The first covers Muscovy's relations with Poland-Lithuania between 1533 and 1560, and the second extends this coverage to 1571. The third recounts Muscovite contacts with Sweden between 1556 and 1586. These documents were discovered in the nineteenth century in the archives of the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs and were included in the Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago istoricheskago obshchestva.⁵

¹ TKDT, p. 11. The first edition was published by Milyukov; see P.N. Milyukov, ed., "Tetrad' dvorovaya", Zapiski russkago arkheologicheskago obshchestva XII, vyp. I-II, Novaya seriya, Trudy otdeleniya slavyanskoy i russkoy arkheologii V (1901), pp. 1-54.

² TKDT, p. 12.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 12-3.

⁵ SIRIQ LIX, LXXI, CXXIX.

They provide useful background information concerning Muscovy's foreign relations during the period considered in this thesis. In fact, they are of considerable help in tracing the career biographies of Ivan IV's courtiers, for they refer to the posts which the latter held at various times. The detailed accounts of the meetings between foreign envoys and the Muscovite courtiers furnish further insights into the careers of the latter.

Yet the diplomatic records do not clarify the rise and the fall of Muscovite courtiers as much as might be hoped. On several occasions their year-by-year coverage is interrupted and is resumed only after a lengthy interlude. But it seems unlikely that contacts with the kings of Poland and Sweden were suspended during these gaps. For example, the published records of Muscovy's dealings with Poland-Lithuania are discontinued after September 1544 and do not begin again until January 1549, but at least one of the known manuscript copies contains an interpolation to the effect that diplomatic ties between Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania were maintained during the interregnum and moreover, that records of these links were kept.¹ However, these records have never been located.

If the archives were diligently combed, the discontinuities in the extant documents could perhaps be filled. But modern Soviet scholars have not displayed great interest even in subjecting these documents to be renewed study let alone in unearthing new ones. In the edition of the *Sbornik*, it is pointed out that the published documents can be dated the sixteenth century on the basis of their watermarks and handwriting.² In fact, it is claimed that the hand of the documents detailing Muscovite relations with Poland-Lithuania in the 1560s and with Sweden from 1556 to 1562 mark them as contemporary.³ While this conclusion reassures us that the documents are *bona fide*, however, the dating could be checked with modern methods of analysing

¹ *Ibid.*, LIX, Nos 17, 18, pp. 263-4.

² *Ibid.*, editor's forward; *ibid.* LXXI, No. 1, p. 1; *ibid.* CXXIX, No. 1, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.* LXXI, No. 1, p. 1, *ibid.* CXXIX, No. 1, p. 1.

manuscripts. Their place among the diplomatic records of Ivan Grozny's reign could be defined more precisely if new manuscripts were found. Further archival research would also pave the way for exhaustive editions of the documents detailing Muscovite relations in the mid-sixteenth century with the Ottoman Porte, the Crimean khan, and the Holy Roman Emperor.¹

I. The Sureties

Several times from the late 1540s to the mid-1560s Ivan IV was about to subject one or another of his courtiers to his opala, but relented when the metropolitan and prominent courtiers appealed for clemency and when sureties were organised to guarantee the good behaviour of the threatened courtier. The membership of the sureties is especially important for this dissertation, as the sureties are virtually our only detailed lists of courtiers who unite politically in ad hoc situations. Hence they help to illuminate the ties which animated political cooperation among courtiers.

The sureties are included in the first volume of the Sobranie gosudarstvennykh gramot i dogovorov. The editors indicate that the documents from which they were published were housed in the Moscow archives of the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but say little about the manuscripts.² It is essential for us to know whether the lists of courtiers who were included in the sureties are completely accurate. One could imagine that when the lists were recorded, they might have been supplemented or truncated by scribes who strongly supported or opposed the courtiers on whose behalf the sureties were organised. To determine how likely it was that the lists were

¹ In 1978 a team of French scholars published a series of documents found in the Turkish archives which concern the Crimean khanate; see A. Bennigsen et al., eds, Le Khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapi, The Hague and Paris, 1978. Hopefully, when the Turkish archives are explored further, detailed accounts of the relations with Muscovy will come to light.

² SGGD I, pp. I-VI.

doctored, it would be necessary to know precisely when the documents were compiled, who the scribes were, and under whose auspices they worked. V.N. Shumilov has shown that the lists of the members of the sureties arranged between 1547 and the winter of 1564-1565 are authentic documents.¹ Several documents have, in fact, been well preserved, and paleographical and other methods of analysis can be applied with particular advantage.² Scholars who have cited the sureties apparently consider them reliable testimony, and it will be assumed in this dissertation that they are; if their manuscripts were studied more thoroughly, nevertheless, it would become clearer whether their evidence can be trusted.

J. Miscellaneous Documents

Various documents bearing upon mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political history and the reforms are discussed in this section.

(i) The Sudebnik of 1550

The original document of the 1550 Sudebnik has been lost, but one copy was familiar to V.N. Tatishchev, and others have been discovered by later scholars.³ The edition usually consulted by modern historians was published in 1952 under the editorship of B.D. Grekov and was based upon forty copies in the archives of Moscow and Leningrad.⁴ Thirteen can be traced to the second half of the sixteenth century,

¹ V.N. Shumilov, Gosudarstvennoe drevlekhranilishche khartiy i rukopisey, Moscow, 1971, pp. 100, 104-8.

² Ibid.

³ Sudebniki, pp. 111-2.

⁴ Ibid., p. 114.

twenty-one to the seventeenth century, and the remainder to the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries; these forty copies reveal no major differences.¹ There are few if any grounds for challenging the authenticity of the Sudebnik.

(ii) The Stoglav Council of 1551

The records of the Stoglav Council are familiar to scholars; they were apparently unknown to V.N. Tatishchev, but Karamzin and subsequent historians have cited them when discussing Ivan IV's domestic policies during the 1550s.² Seven editions have been published in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries; it is the 1863 edition of D.E. Kozhanchikov which is quoted in this dissertation.³

One hundred and twenty-five copies of the Stoglav were known by 1978;⁴ this suggests that the 1551 council held considerable interest for scribes before it drew the attention of historians. Seventeen copies date from the sixteenth century and forty-six from the seventeenth century; the others can be traced to the eighteenth or the nineteenth centuries.⁵ In fact, one copy is dated the early 1550s, although it cannot be deduced that this manuscript reproduces most faithfully the original text.⁶ Jack Kollmann has provided detailed arguments showing that the Stoglav Council and its text can be considered legitimate.⁷

¹ Ibid.

² V.N. Tatishchev, Istoriya Rossiyskaya, VI, pp. 168-78; Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, VIII, pp. 69-70.

³ For a list of these editions, see J.E. Kollmann, "The Moscow Stoglav ('Hundred Chapters') Church Council of 1551", 2 vols, Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1978, I, pp. 7-8.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 5-67.

⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁷ Ibid., II, pp. 580-91.

The authorship is a particularly vexed question. Some scholars have contended that a single person wrote most or all of the Stoglav. Metropolitan Makary has been suggested as author or at least editor.¹ The priest Sil'vestr has also been proposed as author.² However, Kollmann has observed that the grounds for ascribing a major part to either Makary or Sil'vestr are at best shaky.³ If anything, the stylistic variations throughout the Stoglav are so great that it probably cannot be attributed to any single author.⁴ The identity of the compiler of the constituent texts cannot be established on present evidence.⁵ But whoever he was, he appears to have left the council's protocols and rulings largely intact. Kollmann argues that the linguistic variations, the thematic clustering of the chapters, and the variety of causes defended all suggest that the Stoglav reproduces the proceedings of separate conclaves of council members without major amendment.⁶

(iii) Some Standard Collections of Documents

While the sources hitherto mentioned are essential for any attempt to identify members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy and to ascertain how they obtained, retained, and where appropriate forfeited their outstanding political influence, further insights can be won from sundry documents published in prerevolutionary collections of source materials, in several of the leading historical journals of tsarist

¹ E.g. Zaustinsky, "Makariy", ZhMNP CCXVII (October 1881), pp. 5-6.

² H. Poukka, "O sootvetstviyakh v Domostroe, Stoglave i knige Mikolaya Reya Żywot człowieka poczciwego", Scando-Slavica 16 (1970), pp. 181-8.

³ J.E. Kollmann, "The Moscow Stoglav Church Council", I, pp. 208-11.

⁴ Ibid., p. 207.

⁵ Ibid., p. 214.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 214-5.

times, and in Soviet compilations. Such documents sometimes enable us to sketch the careers of courtiers in greater detail; they can also further our knowledge of landholding by courtiers. These are merely a few questions upon which miscellaneous documents bear. Are these documents trustworthy? True, earlier editions of some documents are now considered faulty.¹ But historians work on the assumption that the documents are reliable evidence unless there are grounds for doubt. This is not as risky a step as it might seem: in particular, the Soviets have shown that various of the manuscripts they have printed are original documents.

K. The Accounts of Foreign Visitors to Muscovy

The accounts bequeathed to us by Englishmen who visited Muscovy from 1553 onwards are a fertile source for numerous questions of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite history. When the Muscovy Company was constituted in 1555, its officers were exhorted to acquire "perfect knowledge of the people of Russia" and of other locations, and particularly to know "their dispositions, maners, customes, uses, tolles, cariages, coines, weights, numbers, measures, wares, merchandises, commodities, and incommodities, the one to be accepted and imbraced, the other to be rejected and utterly abandoned".² And observe such Englishmen as Richard Chancellor, John Hasse, George Killingsworth, Henry Lane, and Anthony Jenkinson did. Their accounts are but several of the most important English reports familiar today which bear upon mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy; various English accounts, we can conjecture, were

¹ Some documents concerning the mid-sixteenth century were published by Vladimirsky-Budanov. See M.F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *Khrestomatiya po istorii prava*, 3 vols, Yaroslavl', 1871-5. Myuller has pointed to shortcomings in Vladimirsky-Budanov's edition. See R.B. Myuller, "Nekotorye zamechaniya ob izdanii zakonodatel'nykh aktov poloviny XVI v.", *PI IX* (1961), pp. 333-40.

² Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations II*, p. 288.

destroyed along with the bulk of the Muscovy Company's records in the Great Fire of London in 1666.¹

We mention briefly that the English accounts are not the only reports of foreign travellers in Muscovy cited in this dissertation. The account of von Herberstein is a rich source for many explorations into Muscovite history, and we refer to it periodically even though his observations pertain to Vasily III's Muscovy.² Furthermore, we sometimes refer to the accounts of Englishmen and Germans who visited Muscovy during and after the Oprichnina. Nevertheless, the reports of Chancellor, Jenkinson, and other Englishmen who travelled within Muscovy prior to the Oprichnina have the undeniable advantage of being first-hand descriptions of the period treated.

The English accounts should not be approached uncritically. On the contrary, the pitfalls of the accounts of foreign visitors to Muscovy are familiar to scholars. The foreigners not infrequently had an inadequate opportunity to observe Muscovy in depth, and, what is worse still, sometimes generalised their erroneous impressions of specific episodes, applying them to the entire realm. Moreover, not a few visitors felt strongly about Muscovy and its rulers, and their bias is evident on occasion. Yet the English accounts of the 1550s and the first half of the 1560s appear in a relatively favourable light, especially when they are compared with sundry other sixteenth-century travel records, and not only because they are fairly detailed; their generally moderate, factual tone further elevates their value as historical evidence.³

The range of questions illuminated in the English accounts of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy suggests that Englishmen belonging to the Muscovy Company heeded the admonition of 1555 broadly to familiarize themselves with the Muscovite

¹ Baron, "Ivan the Terrible", p. 565.

² Von Herberstein, Beschreibung.

³ This virtue becomes conspicuous when these accounts are compared with the accounts of certain foreigners who visited Muscovy during the Oprichnina. Taube and Kruse, for instance, used flowery language and strove to paint Ivan black; however, their testimony can be substantially accepted. Roginsky, "Poslanie Ioganna Taube i Elerta Kruze", pp. 8-28.

population and its practices. Testimony is included concerning Muscovy's towns together with their size and their role in the national economy, the coinage, weights and measures, the administration of justice, church rituals, and the foods and drinks consumed within Muscovy; this list is scarcely exhaustive. Within the context of this dissertation, however, it is particularly important that Englishmen made diverse observations pertaining to the Moscow court and its ceremonies; the English accounts supplement the evidence of alternative sources which depict the procedures followed when foreigners were received in Moscow and the seating arrangements adhered to at festal banquets. Moreover, Chancellor, Jenkinson, and other compatriots made valuable remarks regarding Tsar Ivan and such prominent figures as Metropolitan Makary and I.M. Viskovaty.

4

Some Leading Protagonists

In Chapters 1-3 we have sought to lay foundations for our enquiries into the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564, but in this chapter we begin to present detailed conclusions concerning its composition and political behaviour. It seems eminently defensible to devote particular attention to the role in Muscovite politics Ivan IV, Aleksey Adashev, the priest Sil'vestr, Metropolitan Makary, Prince A.M. Kurbsky, and I.M. Viskovaty occupied from the late 1540s onwards. All played a part outstanding even for members of the ruling oligarchy; moreover, Ivan and Kurbsky, and to a lesser extent Makary and Sil'vestr, bequeathed writings which afford insights into the mentalities which animated their political behaviour. Our examination of the political roles these six protagonists played at mid-century enables us to draw inferences concerning the Muscovite political order – its assumptions and its dynamics – and especially, the elements of continuity and change it revealed between 1547 and 1564. Particularly fateful for Muscovy were the autocratic propensities Ivan displayed in the early 1560s, since they presaged the beginning of autocratic rule as the Oprichnina commenced in the winter of 1564-1565 and the corresponding waning of oligarchic rule. Thus, as we explore the political behaviour and the underlying attitudes the six above-mentioned dramatis personae manifested after 1547, a recurrent theme is our attempt to assess what historical precedents and theoretical justifications for autocracy existed, and to measure how and where it diverged from the political order hitherto obtaining.

A. Ivan IV

In Chapter 1 we defined criteria whereby members of the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 might be identified concretely, and our definition reflects the overriding reality of the mid-sixteenth-century political order: Ivan IV was the central actor in

Muscovite politics.¹ The sources illuminate his political behaviour and his relevant attitudes in unusual detail, but implied principles in his words and deeds are not necessarily discerned more easily. He was frequently animated by contradictory impulses. The changing political circumstances he faced were doubtless a contributory factor, for he was a past master at sacrificing his avowed beliefs as political expediency required. His mental imbalance was probably another consideration. In fact, the oscillations manifested in his political behaviour and his related attitudes were on occasion great enough to support Prince M.M. Shcherbatov's verdict that he "often does not appear one man."² Especially striking are the numerous fictions he employed to render his authority even more awe-inspiring.³ Yet however preposterous the fantasies he expounded to bolster his authority might impress modern historians, however ambiguous, nay, contradictory his exercise of authority might seem, a healthy dose of realism was often discernible in his political calculations.⁴ But when whatever grasp on political reality he retained was coupled with the penchant for ruthless deeds he displayed, most notably from the early 1560s, he became a dread adversary, opposed at great risk. This was intimately intertwined with the onset of autocracy.

Ivan IV's conception of autocratic rule illustrates cogently the nature of his contribution to Muscovy's political vocabulary. The term samoderzhets, an exact parallel to the Greek avtokrator and customarily translated as "autocrat", gained currency from the late fifteenth century, when it was used for Ivan III.⁵ By the mid-

¹ V. supra, pp. 83-7.

² Prince M.M. Shcherbatov, Istoriya Rossiyskaya ot drevneyshikh vremen, 7 vols, SPb, 1771-94, V, Pt 3, p. 217.

³ Fictions are frequently encountered in Russian political and administrative history. Keep, Soldiers, p. 42.

⁴ While Ivan's judgment could be dangerously unrealistic with unfortunate consequences for Muscovy, a sufficiently strong realistic note persisted in his political calculations for us to find too strong Hellie's characterisation of him as "insane". Hellie, Enserfment, p. 283, n. 5.

⁵ D'yakonov, Vlast', p. 135. Ivan III is not known to have styled himself samoderzhets.

sixteenth century Ivan IV was not infrequently dubbed samoderzhets.¹ The term is repeatedly applied to him in the coronation rite of 1547, and Makary and Sil'vestr described him thus in their writings.² Most importantly, however, the possibility that he would consult with advisers was not thereby excluded. On the contrary, when the proceedings of the Stoglav Council were recorded, it was not considered incongruous to style him samoderzhets even though he would confer with Makary and all the bishops.³ But in his first letter to Kurbsky, Ivan employs the term in another sense. He writes: "How, pray, can a man be called autocrat (samoderzhets) if he himself does not govern?"⁴ What "governing" meant to Ivan is clarified when he emphasises that a tsar who governed should be obeyed submissively.⁵ Thus, the term samoderzhets seemingly denoted a ruler who exercised undivided authority and who therefore approximated to the modern autocrat;⁶ such a ruler was probably not considered obligated to consult with advisers before taking important steps. The conception of autocracy Ivan apparently espoused did not pass beyond total authority for the ruler; the

¹ However, he did not consistently employ this appellation as a component part of his title. In fact, the tsars were regularly entitled thus in Muscovite diplomatic documents only from 1589 and in charters issued to Muscovite addresses not before 1654. R. Binner, "Zur Datierung des ‚Samoderžec‘ in der russischen Herrschertitular", Saeculum 20 (1969), pp. 57-67 passim.

² E.V. Barsov, Drevne-russkie pamyatniki svyashchennago venchaniya tsarey na tsarstvo v svyazi s grecheskimi ikh originalami, Moscow, 1883, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1969, pp. 67-90 passim; PSRL XIII, p. 192; Golokhvastov and Archimandrite Leonid, "Blagoveshchenskiy ierey Sil'vestr", p. 88.

³ Stoglav, p. 19.

⁴ The Correspondence, pp. 13, 15.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 19, 21.

⁶ Cassinelli characterises an autocracy as a polity where a single governor – the autocrat – possesses or claims unlimited power. C.W. Cassinelli, "Autocracy", in International Encyclopedia of the Social Science 1, p. 478. We refrain from using the terms "autocracy" and "absolutism" interchangeably, even though, as Torke points out, Lenin equated the two and thereby exerted a noteworthy impact on the terminology of Soviet historiography. H.-J. Torke, "Die Entwicklung des Absolutismus-Problems in der sowjetischen Historiographie seit 1917", JGOE N.F. 21 (1973), pp. 495, 507. Cassinelli remarks ("Autocracy", pp. 478-9) that absolutist governments are evidenced consisting of a multiplicity of men all mutually dependent for power, but this scarcely resembles the political order Ivan sought by 1564.

broader political and administrative implications were ignored, and a form of government was not defined.¹ Yet however crudely conceived his understanding of autocracy might appear, his ultimate goal was undoubted, and inasmuch as he was wont to slant familiar terminology and imagery surrounding the authority of Russian rulers to justify his claims to absolute authority, his use of the term samoderzhets was typical.²

In his first letter to Kurbsky, Ivan affirms that Russian autocracy originated with Vladimir I and was upheld by Vladimir Monomach, Aleksandr Nevsky, Dmitry Donskoy, and subsequent rulers down to him.³ This claim was evidently fictitious,⁴ but it indicates something of his mentality. He is revealed exploiting his genealogy, well-known in itself, to legitimise his aspiration autocratically to rule. His interest in genealogy was normal for contemporary "well-born" Muscovites, but much more important, it reflected his attitude that heredity marked him as eligible to exercise authority: he described himself as "born to rule".⁵ He evidently believed himself divinely elevated to rule, writing: "So have we grown up and ascended the throne by

¹ Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, II, pp. 196-7. We emphasise that where known, the political attitudes of the personalities who are treated in this chapter do not reveal them as profoundly original or systematic thinkers; nor can we be surprised if they sometimes contradict themselves.

² Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, pp. 335-7.

³ The Correspondence, pp. 13, 15.

⁴ How little Vladimir Monomach could ignore his subjects' wishes was amply demonstrated even when he became prince of Kiev. He was initially reluctant to succeed Svyatopolk Izyaslavich, but widespread support for his throne candidature amidst the population of Kiev forced him to overcome his hesitation. V.P. Adrianova-Peretts, ed., Povest' vremennykh let, 2 vols, Moscow and Leningrad, 1950, I, pp. 196-7.

⁵ The Correspondence, p. 15. How deeply sixteenth-century Muscovites were convinced that future rulers were marked by birth is demonstrated especially cogently when Tsar Fedor Ivanovich died without issue in 1598: those who exhorted Boris Godunov to ascend the throne implored him not to leave them orphans. I. Timofeev, Vremennik, ed V.P. Adrianova-Peretts, Moscow and Leningrad, 1951, p. 53.

the bidding of God".¹ Indeed, he even attributed to God's will the autocracy he claimed for his forbears back to Kievan times.²

That Ivan IV was descended from Vladimir I seems unexceptionable, but one of the most curious fictions receiving official sanction in the mid-sixteenth century surrounded the last-mentioned's origins. In the early sixteenth-century "Letter of Spiridon Savva", an extended genealogy of the Muscovite ruling house was advanced which connected Ryurik, from whom Vladimir Svyatoslavich was descended, with the Roman emperor Augustus Caesar,³ and this spurious genealogy, which connected Muscovite rulers with an historical giant of unchallenged legitimacy, gained currency as the century advanced. In the Stepennaya kniga, composed between 1560 and 1563, Ryurik was traced to Prus, a fictitious brother of Augustus Caesar, who allegedly imparted his name to Prussia.⁴ This theory probably enjoyed Ivan's backing, for he affirmed himself a kinsman of Augustus Caesar in a 1573 letter to the Swedish king Johan III.⁵ At one point he even adopted the extreme position that he was a German, and referred disparagingly to Russians as thieves;⁶ how he could nevertheless allude proudly to his Russian forbears remains unclear.

Of earlier Russian rulers, Vladimir Monomach loomed especially large at mid-century. In both the "Letter of Spiridon Savva" and the later "Tale of the Vladimir Princes", it was asserted that he received a crown and sundry insignia of royalty from the eleventh-century Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachus and thereupon

¹ The Correspondence, p. 15.

² Ibid., p. 13.

³ R.P. Dmitrieva, Skazanie o knyaz'yakh vladimirskikh, Moscow and Leningrad, 1955, pp. 81, 162.

⁴ V. supra, p. 132; PSRL XXI, p. 7.

⁵ Poslaniya Ivana Groznogo, p. 158.

⁶ Rude and Barbarous Kingdom, p. 127.

adopted the title of tsar.¹ True, chronology reveals this tale as fictitious: Constantine IX Monomachus deceased in 1055, whereas Vladimir Monomach was born in 1052 and ruled as prince of Kiev from 1113 until 1125.² But it became officially an article of faith in the mid-sixteenth century, since it implicitly justified Ivan's coronation as tsar. It found resonance in the rite of his coronation.³ Furthermore, seemingly with his backing,⁴ it acquired a prominent role in Muscovite diplomacy. From the late 1540s onward Muscovy's diplomats strove to induce other European rulers to accept his title of tsar, and this fiction was repeatedly advanced in support.⁵

We might conjecture that Ivan IV indulged in fantasies which aggrandised divers of his forbears partially in response to the constraints imposed by the Muscovite political order he inherited. It was long a fundamental assumption that the preferences of the most influential courtiers and the leading clergymen should be considered when

¹ Dmitrieva, *Skazanie*, pp. 164-5, 176.

² S.M. Seredonin, "Ioann IV Vasil'evich", *RBS* VIII, p. 237. This fiction was evidently of Russian rather than Byzantine provenance: for an eleventh-century Byzantine emperor to send insignia of royalty to Rus' would have run counter to the claims to world domination Byzantium's rulers customarily advanced until the Fourth Crusade. G. Olšr, "Gli ultimi Rurikidi e le basi ideologiche della sovranità dello Stato russo", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* XII (1946), pp. 345-6.

³ Barsov, *Drevne-russkie pamyatniki*, p. 75. Ivan's title of tsar was, strikingly enough, not justified with reference to his grandmother, Sofia Palaeologa, and the links with the Byzantine emperors she provided him. This helps us to understand what role in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political calculations the theory of "Moscow the third Rome" played. This theory, which was expounded most notably in several letters written by the Pskov monk Filofey during the first decades of the sixteenth century, affirmed that after Rome fell, the centre of true Christianity moved to Constantinople, the second Rome, and when Constantinople was conquered in 1453, to Moscow, the third Rome; a fourth Rome, it was asserted, could not be. N. Andreyev, "Filofey and his Epistle to Ivan Vasil'yevich", *SEER* 38 (1959-60), pp. 1-31. A political counterpart to the theory would have been advanced had Ivan's tsarist title been supported with allusion to the Byzantine emperors from whom he was descended through Sofia. That this was apparently not done supports Obolensky's view that the political implications of the theory of "Moscow the third Rome" were not taken terribly seriously in sixteenth-century Muscovy. D. Obolensky, "Russia's Byzantine Heritage", *QSP* 1 (1950), pp. 46-7.

⁴ Presumably Ivan refers to this fiction when in his first letter to Kurbsky, he mentions "the great tsar Vladimir Monomach who received the supreme honour from the Greeks." *The Correspondence*, p. 13.

⁵ The struggles Muscovite diplomats waged in the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century to induce other European rulers to recognise Muscovy's rulers as tsars culminated only in Peter the Great's reign when the papacy, the last hold-out, acknowledged the title. Savva, *Moskovskie tsari*, pp. 285-400.

major policy decisions were taken,¹ and in respecting this tradition, Ivan III and Vasily III did much to elicit a broadly if not invariably cooperative attitude. Their legacy evoked mixed reactions within Ivan IV between 1547 and 1564. During the late forties and the fifties he regularly sought advice before important initiatives were undertaken, and conversely prominent courtiers and clergymen felt free to make representations to him. But from 1560 Ivan's autocratic leanings rendered increasingly unworkable the traditions of rule by cooperation he inherited from his father and his grandfather; hence 1560 marked a turning point in the political history of this reign and indeed of Muscovy.²

How greatly Ivan's conception of the proper Muscovite political order had changed by 1564 becomes especially clear when we consider how willing he showed himself earlier in his reign as tsar to join forces with the leading clergymen for Muscovy's weal. A broad symphony between the rulers and church representatives was an ideal expressed by divers Russian churchmen back to the eleventh-century Kievan metropolitan Ilarion,³ and Ivan indicated at the Stoglav Council that he considered it a desideratum. He informed the council that he would help to defend Orthodoxy – his loyalty to Orthodoxy never wavered throughout his reign – and he raised questions concerning the implications of Orthodox teaching for icon painting, the proper conduct of church services, and other matters of primarily ecclesiastical content.⁴ These queries, far from being rejected as unjustified intrusion, were

¹ Rüss asserts that even before Dmitry Donskoy's reign instances are known where Russian rulers considered cooperation with their leading courtiers a desideratum. Rüss, Adel und Adelsoppositionen, pp. 3-6.

² The view – traceable to Karamzin (Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, VIII, pp. 194-5) – that 1560 rather than 1553 was the turning point in Muscovite politics during the 1547-64 period is accepted here.

³ Ilarion, through his celebrated "Treatise on Law and Grace", did more than any other early Russian writer to win support within Russia for the Byzantine ideal of collaboration between the monarch and the leading ecclesiastics. F. Dvornik, "Byzantine Political Ideas in Kievan Russia", DOP Nos 9-10 (1956), pp. 102-6.

⁴ Stoglav, pp. 41-57. It reveals how strongly Ivan was committed to Orthodoxy that when Pope Gregory XIII's envoy Antonio Possevino arrived in Muscovy in 1581 and offered him blandishments of

welcomed; in fact, he was assigned a central role in combating heresy, vestiges of paganism, and other abuses.¹ But much more strikingly, he informed the assembled clergymen that he would consult with them in all affairs, provided that their counsels conformed to God's laws; apparently the questions he was ready to discuss with them were not exclusively ecclesiastical.² Furthermore, in a 1552 letter to Makary, he described his tsardom as "commissioned by God to you and me";³ the metropolitan was seemingly conceded an exceptionally prominent role in ruling Muscovy. This attitude contrasts sharply with the evident distaste for any participation by the clergy in governing he manifested in his first letter to Kurbsky. He adduces examples of biblical polities which, he claims, suffered dire misfortunes because they were ruled by priests; Byzantium's fall is explained similarly.⁴ As the Oprichnina approached, he was evidently disinclined to share his political authority with the Church.

By 1564 Ivan was similarly indisposed to allow his courtiers, even his boyars, any say in ruling Muscovy.⁵ This doubtless evoked astonishment at court, for not only had he cooperated extensively with the courtiers in the late forties and fifties; at times he even showed himself willing to reach compromises with them. What is more, prior to the beginning of the 1560s a meek attitude towards Ivan's authority was conspicuously absent in divers courtiers, who felt free to express disagreement with him on policy issues. The following paragraphs enumerate several kinds of situations in which he found his resolves opposed and had sometimes to make concessions.

titles and territorial gains if he should embrace the Church of Rome, he asserted himself unable to accept Roman Catholicism. PDS X, pp. 301-2.

¹ Stoglav, pp. 139-41.

² Ibid., pp. 39-40.

³ PSRL XIII, p. 198.

⁴ The Correspondence, pp. 44, 46, 48.

⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

When Ivan III curtailed the hitherto accepted right of boyars of the Moscow grand princes to transfer their allegiance to another ruler, the practice arose whereby sureties were organised to ensure that boyars suspected of intending to flee would remain within Muscovy,¹ and on divers occasions in the mid-sixteenth century such sureties frustrated Ivan IV's plans. When Prince I.I. Turuntay Pronskey was apprehended in November 1547 as he attempted to flee to Lithuania, Ivan sought to impose disgrace (opala) upon him, but was forced to relent when a surety was arranged guaranteeing that he would not depart.² In 1561 Prince V.M. Glinsky and in 1562 Prince I.D. Bel'sky were threatened with disgrace for allegedly planning flight to Lithuania, but the tsar again failed to proceed when sureties were organised for them.³ These and subsequent sureties arranged as the Oprichnina approached presumably left him in a quandary: to accede probably galled his autocratic leanings, but on balance he deemed it politically wiser to accept the pledges offered.⁴

How easily Ivan could be swayed by concerted opposition from prominent courtiers when questions of domestic policy were being considered is illustrated cogently by the proceedings of the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549. The Zemsky sobor marked the first attempts he made to defuse the disorders growing in the countryside at mid-century, and on 27 February 1549 he adopted a menacing tone towards the assembled boyars, okol'niche, dvoretskie, and kaznachei, upbraiding them for the injustices he claimed they and their subordinates had committed against the deti

¹ Around the same time individual boyars began to give pledges of their loyalty to the ruler. The affirmation Prince D.D. Kholm'sky made in 1474 is the first known pledge of this kind. M. Szeftel, "The History of Suretyship in Old Russian Law", RSJB 29 (1971), p. 857.

² SGGD I, No. 166, pp. 458-9. The penalties whereby "disgrace" was expressed practically are difficult to categorise.

³ Ibid., No. 172, pp. 470-3, No. 176, pp. 477-83.

⁴ The known sureties organised between 1560 and the beginning of the Oprichnina are cited in Shumilov, Gosudarstvennoe drevlekhranilishche, pp. 104-8.

boyarskie and the peasants.¹ The boyars were evidently not cowed: they replied that whatever complaints various deti boyarskie and peasants had against them should be settled by litigation.² The following day Ivan found it prudent to maintain an outright conciliatory tone, assuring the boyars that he would not impose disgrace upon them if they heeded his charge not to commit further iniquities.³

Nor were Ivan's foreign policy initiatives invariably accepted submissively. An especially important example is afforded by the struggles waged at court before Muscovy entered the Livonian War in 1558. The tsar sought territorial gains in Livonia, whereas Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr questioned this resolve,⁴ apparently believing that Muscovy should expand to the south and the east. Certainly they assessed Muscovy's strategic circumstances more realistically than Ivan: the Livonians posed no military threat, whereas new territories which would cushion Muscovy against the incursions the Crimean Tatars frequently planned during the fifties were eminently desirable.⁵ Nevertheless, Ivan was so determined to gain his way that whatever objections Adashev, Sil'vestr, and sundry courtiers raised were brushed aside.⁶

¹ Shmidt, "Prodolzhenie", p. 295.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., pp. 295-6. This contrasts especially stridently with the adamant refusal Ivan makes in his first letter to Kurbsky to countenance any part for the boyars in governing the realm. Cf. The Correspondence, p. 26. In fact, he reveals in this letter little understanding that by 1564 the tasks of ruling Muscovy and conducting its foreign relations had become too complex to feel his authority at every point.

⁴ The Correspondence, pp. 96, 118.

⁵ Cf. RK, pp. 127-8, 130, 153, 158, 160-2, 167.

⁶ The Swedish historian Hjärne even claimed that Ivan remained steadfast in his resolve to invade Livonia to prove himself independent of influential advisers, such as Adashev and Sil'vestr, who disapproved of his plan. H. Hjärne, Svensk-ryska förhandlingar 1564-72, Uppsala, 1897, pp. 25-6. Raymond Aron has observed that a realm cannot prosper if its ruling elements fail to maintain unity of opinion and action. R. Aron, "Social Structure and the Ruling Class", British Journal of Sociology I (1950), p. 129. The differences of view within the Muscovite ruling oligarchy over the Livonian War, which brought Muscovy numerous injurious consequences in the second half of the sixteenth century, illustrate his point especially cogently.

By 1564, however, the frustration he experienced in attempting to win their support loomed large in his mind and he related with distaste that he was reproached strongly.¹

Even when the succession within the Muscovite ruling house became a topical question during Ivan's near-fatal illness of March 1553, his revealed preference of successor encountered resistance at court. The succession within the Muscovite ruling house was not regulated by universally recognised principles, and we cannot be surprised if it provoked debates among courtiers. The two candidates to become tsar should Ivan decease were his eldest son and favoured successor, Tsarevich Dmitry, and his first cousin, Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa, and supporters of each could adduce precedents established by Rurikide rulers. The grand princes of Moscow from Dmitry Donskoy named their eldest living son as successor – Ivan IV succeeded his father thus in 1533 – and had Tsarevich Dmitry become tsar, the practice would have been upheld. Yet Prince Vladimir Andreevich's backers could point to an even more venerable tradition, evidently operative during the Kievan era. When a grand prince of Kiev died, the throne remained in the first instance within his generation, passing successively from his eldest surviving brother to younger brothers, and only when his brothers had all deceased were his sons, ranked in seniority according to age, eligible to ascend the throne.² In light of this tradition, the advocates of the Staritsa prince could portray him as approximating to a brother of the tsar, especially since the last-mentioned's only brother, Prince Yury Vasil'evich, was feeble-minded and therefore an utterly unsuitable throne candidate.³ True, whatever conversations the supporters of Tsarevich Dmitry and those of Prince Vladimir Andreevich entertained during Ivan's illness failed to spark a major political crisis,⁴ and the succession question blew over

¹ The Correspondence, pp. 96, 118.

² Markevich, Istoriya mestnichestva, pp. 52-96.

³ Ibid., p. 127.

⁴ We accept the arguments Al'shits has advanced to show that the events surrounding Ivan's illness did not greatly affect Muscovite politics at the moment. Al'shits, "Krestotseval'nye zapisi", pp. 147-55.

after he recovered. But by 1564 he appeared highly embittered as he accused those courtiers who failed to support Tsarevich Dmitry's throne candidature in March 1553 of having broken their oath of allegiance to him and his father, Vasily III.¹

If Ivan's initiatives were sometimes frustrated at mid-century by political traditions retaining currency, he nevertheless possessed powerful weapons enabling him to exert leverage vis-à-vis his courtiers. The weapons he employed between 1547 and 1564 were non-violent and violent alike. It should be emphasised that until 1560 the tenor of court politics was non-violent: it was long characteristic of the Muscovite political order that only those princes and boyars who committed the gravest offences should be executed or maimed. But while Ivan continued to exploit his non-violent weapons even after 1560, violence became an increasingly important dynamic of Muscovite politics. Before we treat the brutalities he perpetrated during the early 1560s and their political implications, three non-violent avenues whereby he could assert his authority among his courtiers will be discussed.²

Firstly, the ambiguous attitude Ivan maintained towards the mestnichestvo system allowed him significant scope for manoeuvre. On the one hand, many a "well-born" courtier occupying a high relative standing under the mestnichestvo system must have seethed when he entrusted distinguished service assignments to talented parvenus – Aleksey Adashev, I.M. Viskovaty, and so forth.³ On the other hand, in continuing the struggles his father and his grandfather waged to deter dissatisfied boyars from quitting Muscovy, he sought to exploit the concern "well-born" Muscovites had for

¹ The Correspondence, pp. 92, 94.

² Ivan's appointments to the ranks of boyar and okol'nichiy between 1547 and 1564 are treated in Chapter 5. V. infra, pp. 213-59.

³ In entrusting exceptionally weighty assignments to Aleksey Adashev and I.M. Viskovaty, who never became boyars, Ivan broke with a fundamental premise of Muscovite politics: it was long assumed that the greatest responsibilities should fall to those servitors of highest rank.

their relative standing. After Kurbsky's celebrated flight of April 1564 to Lithuania, he lowered drastically the relative standing of the fugitive prince's kinsmen, probably hoping that henceforth the relatives of disgruntled boyars would admonish them against fleeing.¹

Furthermore, from 1560 Ivan revealed himself ready to appropriate the estates of vexatious courtiers and forcibly to resettle them in distant parts of the realm where their erstwhile local supporters could provide little assistance and new loyalties would be forged slowly.² The first harbinger came in the autumn of 1560, after Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr had lost his confidence and were distanced from the ruling oligarchy: the Adashevs' votchiny in the Kostroma and the Pereyaslavl' uezdy were confiscated, and Aleksey and Daniil Adashev received a pomest'e in the Bezhetskaya pyatina.³ This tactic was employed repeatedly during the Oprichnina.⁴

¹ Shmidt, "Mestnichestvo", p. 180.

² Ivan's forced resettlements of courtiers he found particularly irksome reflected the fact that ruling Muscovy substantially as his private votchina, he was free to allocate lands as he wished. He himself sometimes employed the term votchina for divers of his territories. For instance, he refers in his testament (DDG No. 104, p. 438) to the former grand principality of Tver' as his otchina; he exercised authority there by inheritance from his father. Nevertheless, the "Letopisets nachala tsarstva" relates that when Kazan' had fallen, the inhabitants of the city greeted Ivan in his "God-given" otchina. PSRL XXIX, p. 109. Hence the Divine Will was affirmed as an alternative source of political authority, and this was particularly appropriate for territories which the Muscovite rulers acquired by conquest, that is, in the language of Muscovite writers, the Divine favour. W. Vodoff, "Contribution à l'histoire du vocabulaire politique de la Russie moscovite (remarques sur l'emploi du terme otčina/votčina)", FOEG 24 (1978), pp. 36-8.

³ V.I. Koretsky, "O zemel'nykh vladeniyakh Adashevykh", IA 1962 (2nd series), No. 6, p. 120. Joint holdings of pomest'ya was not uncommon in the Novgorod vicinity.

⁴ In 1565 votchiny began to be confiscated, and their previous holders received pomest'ya elsewhere. These early confiscations are surveyed in Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 271-307 passim. Even Prince Vladimir Andreevich's udel of Staritsa was expropriated in 1566, and he received a new udel centred on Dmitrov. SGGD I, No. 187, pp. 526-9. This incident helps to illuminate Ivan's attitude towards the remaining udely. That Prince Vladimir Andreevich should hold an udel was seemingly not questioned; indeed, the Dmitrov udel was arguably more prestigious than the Staritsa udel because Ivan III had awarded the former to his second son and the latter to his fifth son. Zimin's view that the episode marked a step in a campaign the tsar allegedly waged during the Oprichnina to eliminate the last udely seems scarcely accurate. Zimin, Oprichnina, p. 477. Ivan's goal was probably to break Prince Vladimir Andreevich's links with his retainers in the Staritsa udel, and the attempt was successful: most entered the tsarist service. Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 300.

Finally, a time-honoured device whereby especially troublesome "well-born" Muscovites were rendered politically impotent was forced entry into a monastery or a nunnery;¹ the practice remained alive within the 1547-1564 period. In 1562 Prince D.I. Kurlyatev, an Obolensky prince, was compelled to take monastic vows together with his wife and children.² The following year Princess Evfrosin'ya of Staritsa, Prince Vladimir Andreevich's mother, was obliged to become a nun after she was denounced as conspiring against the tsar; she was subsequently dispatched to a remote northern convent.³

But while the non-violent weapons Ivan used to assert his authority among his courtiers should not be overlooked, the savageries he instigated against some of them from the early 1560s have contributed much more heavily to his reputation as a groznyy tsar.⁴ We begin by asking: can any regularities be discerned amidst the persecutions and the executions he unleashed? True, certain lineages represented at court – the Obolensky princes are a salient example – included an exceptionally high share of his known victims. However, he apparently never sought to exterminate all living members of any one lineage, and indeed, the careers of the Obolenskys during the first half of the sixties reveal him as perfectly capable of executing some members of a lineage while almost simultaneously honouring others. If Princes Yu.I. Kashin Obolensky, M.P. Repnin Obolensky, and D.V. Ovchina Obolensky were murdered in

¹ The evidenced instances where "well-born" Muscovites were forcibly tonsured during Ivan IV's reign are surveyed in N.Ya. Aristov, "Nevol'noe i neokhotnoe postrizhenie v monashestvo u nashikh predkov (do nachala XVII stoletiya)", DNR IV (1878), No. 2, pp. 220-8.

² PRSL XIII, p. 344.

³ Ibid., p. 368.

⁴ Certainly from the early 1560s Ivan suffered from suspicions, brutal impulses, and fantasies. But rigorously to define the psychological changes which befell him is difficult on present evidence. Nor are the causes altogether clear. Karamzin plausibly asserted that the foremost reason was the intense grief he felt when Tsaritsa Anastasia died in August 1560. Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, VIII, p. 195. The brutalities he committed during the early 1560s are the main evidence for his autocratic propensities. He almost certainly did not consult his victims before proceeding against them, and they evidently lacked any opportunity for appeal!

1564, Prince F.M. Obolensky had become a boyar by the winter of 1562-1563.¹ Individual animosities and loyalties were most likely paramount in dictating which courtiers Ivan persecuted and which he favoured. Strikingly, the families of courtiers in disfavour sometimes suffered together with the paterfamilias. For instance, Daniil Adashev was executed in 1563 along with his wife and son Torkh.² Moreover, the grounds which seemingly prompted Ivan to order tortures and executions were varied and could be downright petty; most importantly, though, previous grand princes almost certainly would not have deemed them deserving of extreme penalties. Princes Yu.I. Kashin Obolensky and M.P. Repnin Obolensky were probably murdered because the army they joined in commanding was disastrously defeated by the Lithuanians on the Ula River in January 1564.³ But if we can believe court gossip, Prince D.V. Ovchina Obolensky was executed for having expressed too candidly his opinions concerning Ivan's sexual habits.⁴ Finally, those deeds eliciting the tsarist wrath might be punished soon afterwards or considerably later. If Princes Yu.I. Kashin Obolensky and M.P. Repnin Obolensky were executed less than a week after their army was overwhelmed, the boyar L.A. Saltykov, arrested in 1565 on charges of having conducted divers military operations inefficiently in the autumn of 1564, was released subsequently in 1565, having taken a vow of loyalty; he was murdered only in 1571.⁵ No pattern can

¹ Zimin, *Oprichnina*, pp. 108-9; *RK*, pp. 198-9.

² Kurbsky, *History*, p. 178. Kurbsky asserts that Daniil Adashev's father-in-law, Petr Turov, was killed together with him. *Ibid.* Apparently Ivan's anger against individual courtiers could spill across marriage ties; however, he was inconsistent on this point.

³ Zimin, *Oprichnina*, pp. 107-10.

⁴ Albert Shlikhting, *Novoe izvestie o Rossii vremeni Ivan Groznogo*, ed and trans. A.I. Malein, 3rd ed., Leningrad, 1934, pp. 16-7.

⁵ Zimin, *Oprichnina*, pp. 108-9; *idem*, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 72; Kurbsky, *History*, p. 221, n. 6.

be discerned amidst the known executions of the early 1560s.¹ Their counterparts of the Oprichnina similarly display no underlying order.² Yet it seems misleading to characterise Ivan's brutalities as "senseless".³ On the contrary, their very randomness must have introduced fear as a dynamic of Muscovite politics on an unprecedented scale, and must have engendered a strongly submissive attitude towards him conducive to the introduction of autocratic rule.⁴ Courtiers who were especially alarmed could, like Kurbsky, flee, but it was most inadvisable for those remaining to oppose him. His use of fear during the early sixties almost certainly helps to explain why during the negotiations of the winter of 1564-1565 surrounding his return from Aleksandrova sloboda, he could press successfully his claims to total authority.⁵ The intense fear he generated during the Oprichnina surely enabled him to strengthen the autocratic nature of his rule.⁶

B. Aleksey Adashev and the Priest Sil'vestr

From the late 1540s until 1560 Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr were Tsar Ivan's closest advisers and evidently belonged to the ruling oligarchy. These

¹ Grobovsky, The "Chosen Council", p. 106.

² This view was anticipated by Klyuchevsky, who emphasised that the victims of the Oprichnina were chosen on a purely personal basis. Klyuchevsky, Sochineniya, II, p. 183. Cf. also the remarks in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, p. 478.

³ This term is employed in Hellie, Enserfment, p. 283, n. 5.

⁴ Cassinelli asserts that an autocrat must behave unpredictably: any regularity in his actions suggests that his exercise of authority is restricted. Cassinelli, "Autocracy", p. 479.

⁵ V. supra, pp. 82-3.

⁶ Cherniavsky correctly points out that diverse sixteenth-century western European rulers also inspired widespread awe and fear among their subjects. Unfortunately, he misses the point in failing to consider adequately the likelihood that the brutal deeds which would engender fear occupied a different role in Muscovy's political traditions than in those of western European realms. We emerge with little insight into why the Oprichnina was a peculiarly traumatic moment in Russia's history. M. Cherniavsky, "Ivan the Terrible as Renaissance Prince", SR 27 (1968), No. 2, pp. 195-211.

considerations alone would justify us in probing their role in Kremlin politics; moreover, the dynamics of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political order can be further elucidated with reference to their careers. Above all the story of Adashev and Sil'vestr shows that Ivan's confidence was crucial for political preferment, and this theme recurs in the careers of divers other members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy.¹

The Kurbsky-Grozny writings are the fundamental sources indicating how and when Adashev and Sil'vestr entered the ruling oligarchy. We rely heavily upon Kurbsky's *History*, where these queries are treated at greatest length, but Ivan's testimony supplements its information on certain points. Kurbsky's evidence is particularly more helpful in treating questions of chronology. For example, the prince avers that Sil'vestr began to exert leverage over Ivan in the aftermath of the great Moscow fire of June 1547.² When the rumour circulated through the capital that the conflagration arose through witchcraft committed by his grandmother, Anna Glinskaya,³ the mob sought vengeance from the Glinskys. His uncle, Prince Yu.V. Glinsky, was slain, and elements of the rabble came to Vorob'evo outside Moscow where he was staying, and demanded that he surrender Anna and her son Mikhail, whom they believed he was concealing.⁴ Although the rebellion was successfully quashed,⁵ Ivan was almost certainly badly shaken and exceptionally vulnerable to suasion. Kurbsky asserts that Sil'vestr approached him then, admonishing him sternly

¹ Furthermore, the careers of Adashev and Sil'vestr from the late 1540s onwards exemplify how crucial personal relations were in Kremlin politics at mid-century.

² Kurbsky, *History*, pp. 14, 16. Sil'vestr's career before 1547 is little known. That he hailed from Novgorod seems unexceptionable, but the milieu into which he was born is uncertain. He probably moved from Novgorod to Moscow with Makary in 1542 when the last-mentioned, formerly archbishop of Novgorod, became metropolitan, or shortly afterwards. Zimin adduces archival evidence showing that by 1545-6 he was a priest of the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral. Zimin, *I.S. Peresvetov*, p. 44, n. 133.

³ *PRSL* XIII, p. 456.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 456-7.

⁵ The events of the rebellion are analysed at greater length in I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, pp. 121-36.

to abandon sinful ways, and that Ivan proceeded to become renowned for his piety.¹ Indeed, Ivan himself intimates that he initially sought moral guidance from Sil'vestr, relating that "for the sake of spiritual counsel and the salvation of my soul, I took [into my service] the priest Sylvester (sic)".² But even though the authority Sil'vestr acquired in the tsar's eyes somewhat after June 1547 was primarily moral, political implications lurked just around the corner. This will have been true especially inasmuch as Ivan frequently construed politics in moral terms, considering his adherents "good" and his foes "evil". Sil'vestr's entry into the ruling oligarchy might be tentatively dated 1547.³ Kurbsky's evidence helps to establish that Adashev qualified for inclusion roughly contemporaneously. When writing about the upshot of the June 1547 fire, the prince affirms: "Now this Aleksey at that time enjoyed the favours of the tsar and was in concord with him".⁴ Probably by the second half of 1547 Adashev was sufficiently close to Ivan to be reckoned within the ruling oligarchy.⁵ Ivan's own testimony explains how he could reach the inner circle without being "well-born". The tsar relates: "But we, having seen such treachery on the part of our grandees, thus took him from the dung-heap and placed him together with the grandees, hoping for faithful service from him."⁶ Finally, Adashev and Sil'vestr might legitimately be lumped together when their political fortunes from around 1547 are

¹ Kurbsky, History, p. 16.

² The Correspondence, p. 85.

³ This view is mirrored in A. Borozdin, "Sil'vestr, svyashchennik moskovskago Blagoveshchenskago sobora, politicheskiy i literaturnyy deyatel' XVI v.", RBS XVIII, p. 430, and in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 136.

⁴ Kurbsky, History, p. 19.

⁵ This view finds support in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 136. Adashev's career before 1547 is also relatively unfamiliar. We know only that he accompanied his father F.G. Adashev on a mission to Constantinople in 1538-9. S.O. Shmidt, "Pravitel'stvennaya deyatel'nost' A.F. Adasheva", UZ MGU 167 (1954), p. 29.

⁶ The Correspondence, p. 85.

discussed, since Kurbsky affirms that they joined in association while the priest was leading Ivan to moral regeneration.¹ Henceforth they would rise and fall in concert.²

Adashev and Sil'vestr were Ivan's foremost advisers amidst the ruling oligarchy from the late 1540s until 1560. We say "from the late 1540s" advisedly, because the relevant chronology in the Kurbsky-Grozny writings is vague, and the moment when they became outstandingly close to him has been a subject of scholarly debate;³ nevertheless, historians agree that they were his most intimate counsellors as the 1540s ended. He depicts them as overweeningly influential, writing: "And so neither in external affairs or in internal affairs, nor in the smallest and pettiest things (and [I refer to such things as] footwear and sleeping) – was anything according to my will; but everything was done according to their desire, while we remained, as it were, a child."⁴ True, his language is surely hyperbolic, for it discounts his own central role in the Muscovite political order; however, one can believe his testimony indicating that Adashev and Sil'vestr had acquired a political clout other Kremlin denizens would have found difficult to match. Sil'vestr in all likelihood remained influential because he continued to exert moral authority over Ivan, and Kurbsky indicates how he perhaps retained his moral force, referring to him as the tsar's confessor.⁵ As for Adashev, his career from the late 1540s until 1560 suggests that whatever hopes of reliable service

¹ Kurbsky, History, pp. 16, 18.

² It seems especially regrettable that the mutual relations Adashev and Sil'vestr maintained are thinly illuminated in the sources.

³ For instance, I.I. Smirnov – correctly, in our view – affirms that Adashev and Sil'vestr, together with Metropolitan Makary and the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, the tsar's in-laws, were foremost among Ivan's advisers after the great Moscow fire of June 1547. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 136. Zimin, however, claims that the famous pair exerted a decisive influence on Ivan's policies only from early 1549. Zimin, Reformy, pp. 313, 316-8.

⁴ The Correspondence, p. 91. At one level, the aspiration to rule autocratically which Ivan affirmed explicitly in 1564 perhaps constituted a reaction against whatever constraints upon his exercise of authority Adashev and Sil'vestr imposed in practice.

⁵ Kurbsky, History, p. 132. Strictly speaking, the archpriests of the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral held the appointment of confessor to the tsar, and Sil'vestr is evidenced only as a priest. Yet Kurbsky's testimony implies that his responsibilities should not be defined too narrowly.

Ivan initially pinned upon him were justified. He discharged numerous and varied tasks, and he was evidently accounted an exceptionally gifted administrator and diplomat;¹ his case shows that when Ivan recognised a courtier as talented and trustworthy, political advancement could follow. Kurbsky's chronology implies that Adashev and Sil'vestr retained their influence until the summer of 1560.²

While the political fortunes of Adashev and Sil'vestr depended most basically upon Ivan's attitude, the relations they maintained with his courtiers were an important contributory factor, although a double-edged sword. On the one hand, through advice and active political support their adherents at court probably helped them long to remain outstandingly influential.³ Several of their backers are known: Ivan identifies thus Kurbsky and Prince D.I. Kurlyatev.⁴ On the other hand, when Sil'vestr and certain of his followers fell out with Tsaritsa Anastasia, seemingly over a trivial incident inflated beyond proportion,⁵ he and Adashev made further enemies, and their fall from favour illustrates especially cogently that court gossip could be an important dynamic of politics. Adashev journeyed to Livonia in May 1560 as third-in-command of the "Great Regiment", and his foes, chief among whom were Anastasia's brothers, began to whisper discrediting rumours to Ivan.⁶ After she died on 7 August 1560, Adashev and

¹ Ivan would scarcely have shown him such preferment, all the more remarkable to a courtier not "well-born", were he anything other than outstandingly capable.

² Kurbsky, *History*, pp. 18-158.

³ Ivan writes: "Not one position did they neglect in which they did not appoint their favourites, and so in all things did they achieve their desire." *The Correspondence*, p. 91. Alas, this alleged patronage network is not explored further.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 94, 96.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 98.

⁶ *RK*, p. 189. Kurbsky, *History*, p. 152. Adashev's participation in this campaign cannot be considered proof that the tsar's favour was already waning, as Zimin suggests (*Reformy*, p. 475). He left Moscow voluntarily. N.P. Likhachev, "Adashev, Aleksey Fedorovich", *RBS I*, p. 66.

Sil'vestr were blamed by their adversaries, who claimed that they had bewitched her.¹ Once Tsar Ivan was persuaded, their political fate was sealed.

From a different perspective, Ivan's role in the fall of Adashev and Sil'vestr from the ruling oligarchy is revealing of his political manoeuvres. Firstly, their opponents succeeded in convincing him that should he admit them to his presence, they would bewitch him, and in fact he refused to allow them to present their case,² which suggests that superstition sometimes played a part in his calculations. Furthermore, he showed himself concerned to maintain a semblance of legality when he convened a council attended by divers laymen and clergymen, where the charges against Adashev and Sil'vestr could be stated and discussed; however, his commitment ran only skin-deep, for they were condemned in absentia on false accusations.³ Finally, their subsequent lot typifies the non-violent means he employed customarily before 1560 and on occasion afterwards to render politically impotent those whom he considered opponents. Adashev was clearly in disgrace by September 1560 when he and his brother Daniil were stationed as voevody in Fellin; he later contracted fever and died in Dorpat at the beginning of 1561.⁴ Sil'vestr was tonsured and entered the Kirillo-Belozerskiy Monastery; he was subsequently confined within the Solovetskiy Monastery.⁵

An examination of the individual careers of Adashev and Sil'vestr helps to reveal more deeply their political behaviour from the late 1540s through 1560. Adashev frequently stood at Ivan's side and ipso facto could influence policy resolves: for

¹ Kurbsky, History, p. 152.

² Ibid., p. 154.

³ Ibid., pp. 156, 158. Cherepnin affirms convincingly that this council cannot be considered a zemsky sobor. Cherepnin, Zemskie sobory, p. 90.

⁴ N.P. Likhachev, "Adashev, Aleksey", p. 67.

⁵ Borozdin, "Sil'vestr", p. 430; Kurbsky, History, p. 158. The date of Sil'vestr's death is unknown.

example, he regularly accompanied the tsar on campaign from 1547 through 1559.¹ Not only did the tasks he discharged express a high level of trust; they also provided a platform upon which Ivan might seek his advice. In 1551, as the Kazan' khanate was soon to fall, Adashev participated in meetings with envoys from Kazan', and in 1551-1552 he was sent three times as a messenger from Moscow to Shah Ali, the commander of the Muscovite army in the Kazan' vicinity.² From 1554 until early 1560 he joined in negotiations with delegates from the Nogay horde, Livonia, Sweden, Lithuania, and Denmark.³ Nor was diplomacy exclusively his sphere. Questions of local government, of the privileges sundry landholders should enjoy in respect of their estates and so forth are touched upon in seven known charters to Muscovite addressees issued at his bidding or signed by him.⁴ In fact, the assignments he undertook were exceptionally varied and show him as Ivan's personal nominee to handle pressing matters rather than a central government agency official having a moderately specialised competence.⁵ How supportive of the tsar's projects he could be was manifested especially clearly in 1559 during negotiations with Danish envoys: even though he initially opposed the Livonian War, he apparently counted among the first Muscovite diplomats to put forward the position – which gained official acceptance – that Livonia

¹ RK, pp. 111, 113, 127, 141, 150, 156-7, 163.

² I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 219-20.

³ Ibid., p. 219.

⁴ Six are listed ibid., pp. 218-9; a seventh is presented in V.A. Kuchkin, "Zhalovannaya gramota Tverskomu Afanas'evskomu monastyryu 1555 g.", IA 1960 (2nd series), No. 1, pp. 220-4.

⁵ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 218-9, 230-1. In particular, he apparently did not become long and deeply involved with any central government agency operative at mid-century. Shmidt has asserted that from 1550 Adashev headed a so-called Chelobitennyy prikaz where petitions to the tsar could be submitted and processed. S.O. Shmidt, "Chelobitennyy prikaz v seredine XVI stoletiya", Izvestiya AN SSSR (ser. istorii i filosofii) VII (1950), No. 6, pp. 445-58 passim. However, Veselovsky has ably demonstrated that such a claim depends upon dubious evidence. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, pp. 238-54.

was long the votchina of Russian rulers.¹ The episode lends support to our view that substantial cooperation between tsar and courtiers was evident before the early 1560s.

From the late 1540s Aleksey Adashev, despite his humble origins, could behave substantially as a "well-born" courtier in matters affecting the prestige and the record of service he, his father F.G. Adashev, and his brother Daniil enjoyed, and his political influence was doubtless an extremely important contributory factor. How strongly he desired to be considered "well-born" was manifested when he arranged for the Adashevs to be included alongside sundry princely and boyar lineages in the Gosudarev rodoslovets, which was completed in 1555.² But well before 1555 attitudes towards kinship ties characteristic of "well-born" courtiers had entered his calculations. As will be shown in Chapter 5, when the "well-born" joined the ruling oligarchy, their kinsmen were not infrequently promoted in service rank;³ the lineage thereby became more reputed, and the relative standing of its members under the mestnichestvo system was raised. Sometimes the heads of central government agencies were probably appointed through the intervention of the "seniors" within their lineages.⁴ Certainly Aleksey Adashev showed himself solicitous for the careers of his father and his brother. In November 1548 F.G. Adashev was the dvoretskiy of Uglich and Kostroma, and by the beginning of 1550 he had become an okol'nichiy.⁵ By February 1559 Daniil Adashev

¹ Yu.N. Shcherbatov, "Dva posol'stva pri Ioanne IV Vasil'eviche", RV 190 (July 1887), p. 101.

² V. supra, p. 148. N.P. Likhachev documented that the Adashevs arose as a branch within the Ol'govs, who were votchinniki of the Kostroma vicinity; their surname was derived from the Turkic nickname "adash", which F.G. Adashev's father Grigory had borne. N.P. Likhachev, "Proiskhozhdenie A.F. Adasheva, lyubimtsa Ivana Groznago", IV XL (May 1890), pp. 385-92.

³ V. infra, pp. 220-1.

⁴ V. infra, pp. 234, 245.

⁵ AGR I, No. 62, pp. 114-5; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63. F.G. Adashev most likely became an okol'nichiy in connexion with his post of dvoretskiy of Uglich and Kostroma, and we assert that he belonged to the ruling oligarchy as the 1540s ended. V. supra, p. 86. As Aleksey Adashev's father, he was favourably situated to remain within the ruling oligarchy in the early and the mid-1550s; he died in 1557.

had obtained that rank.¹ What is more, Aleksey Adashev himself became an okol'nichiy only shortly after his father had become a boyar in June 1553.² Ivan was prepared to respect F.G. Adashev's seniority of birth, even though his son wielded greater political clout. By 1560 Aleksey Adashev was vulnerable to mestnichestvo disputes: O.V. Men'shikov Polev, stationed at Fellin with the Adashev brothers in the autumn of 1560, petitioned the tsar that for him to serve beneath Aleksey was incommensurable with his relative standing, and Ivan resolved that conflict by dispatching the disgraced favourite to Dorpat.³ This episode suggests that he held a relative standing under the mestnichestvo system by 1560.

The careers of Adashev and Sil'vestr at mid-century expressed differing sides of the contemporary Muscovite political order. Adashev's role captured to a significant extent the changes it was undergoing. Sil'vestr's part, by contrast, embodied the traditions of broad symphony between the rulers and prominent ecclesiastics: clergymen long counted among the closest counsellors of Russian rulers. Unfortunately, few specific incidents are known enabling us to gauge his influence over Ivan and the ends to which he deployed it. Nevertheless, the known facts permit two important conclusions. Firstly, mid-sixteenth-century Muscovites other than Ivan and Kurbsky appreciated that Sil'vestr had access to the innermost recesses of authority; this supports our view that Sil'vestr might be included within the contemporary ruling oligarchy. Maksim Grek recognised him as exceptionally influential, beseeching him to intercede with Ivan on behalf of the children of one deceased Nikita Borisovich, who were allegedly in great need.⁴ When Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky, appointed in October 1552 to oversee the pacification and the colonisation of the former Kazan' khanate,

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 69.

² Ibid., p. 66.

³ N.P. Likhachev, "Adashev, Aleksey", pp. 66-7.

⁴ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 244.

wrote to Sil'vestr enquiring how his attempts were rated,¹ he conceded that the priest was close enough to the tsar and the leading courtiers to know their views. This expectation was justified by the reply Sil'vestr composed in early 1553; he affirmed that they assessed Gorbaty Shuysky's efforts favourably.² Secondly, Sil'vestr displayed noteworthy staying powers amidst the vicissitudes of the early-mid 1550s. Whatever role he played in the discussions concerning the succession which accompanied Ivan's illness of March 1553,³ he apparently emerged with his influence intact, minor fluctuations aside, and an important example of political continuity before and after March 1553 is afforded. Some months later, during the heresy trials of 1553-1554, his career was temporarily clouded, for in claiming that divers icons painted in the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral and the tsar's palace after the Moscow fire of June 1547 under his supervision were uncanonical, I.M. Viskovaty implicitly accused him of deviating from strict Orthodoxy; moreover, Viskovaty averred that Matvey Bashkin and the monk Artemy, convicted heretics, induced him to approve the offending icons.⁴ Had Viskovaty's charges been found valid, his political fortunes would probably have

¹ Ibid., p. 243.

² Golokhvastov and Archimandrite Leonid, "Blagoveshchenskiy ierey Sil'vestr", p. 88.

³ Sil'vestr's career between 1554 and the summer of 1560 is virtually unknown, and Miller has even asserted that no evidence depicts him as wielding influence after 1554. D.B. Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair of 1553-54: Official Art, the Emergence of Autocracy, and the Disintegration of Medieval Russian Culture", RH 9, Pt 3 (1981), p. 304. If Miller's view were accepted, Sil'vestr's fall from favour might be connected with his alleged support of Prince Vladimir Andreevich's throne candidature in March 1553; this support is affirmed in Ivan's first letter to Kurbsky and in one interpolation in the Tsarstvennaya kniga. The Correspondence. pp. 92, 94. PSRL XIII, p. 524. But Miller has failed to consider adequately Kurbsky's testimony indicating that Sil'vestr preserved his influence until the summer of 1560. V. supra, p. 187. Furthermore, while the sources depicting him as favouring Prince Vladimir Andreevich's throne candidature in March 1553 are of debatable reliability, Veselovsky sensibly observed that Ivan would hardly have retained him as a close adviser for over seven years more had his conduct aroused sufficient mistrust. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, p. 284. Aleksey Adashev's career in the second half of the fifties is, by contrast, better documented, and he evidently continued to enjoy Ivan's trust. Hence he and his father presumably did not compromise themselves greatly in March 1553.

⁴ Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair", pp. 300-2. The documentary record of the investigation of Viskovaty's charges is included in O. Bodyansky, "Rozysk o bogokhul'nykh strokakh i o somnenii svyatykh chestnykh ikon, Diaka Ivana Mikhaylova syna Viskovatago", Chteniya 1858, II, otd. 3, pp. 1-42.

been adversely affected; yet Ivan and Metropolitan Makary defended the icons in question, and Viskovaty, rather than Sil'vestr, was censured.¹ Again the priest could exercise his former influence essentially unimpaired.

On present evidence, however, those questions about Sil'vestr's career biography which can be treated convincingly are disappointingly few. His relations with other members of the ruling oligarchy after 1547 are hardly depicted in adequate detail, and various of the most topical questions surrounding his political role from the late forties through 1560 can be answered only with conjectures.² In conclusion, as influential as he was in Kremlin politics at mid-century, he remains a shadowy figure.

C. Metropolitan Makary

The part in Kremlin politics Metropolitan Makary played from 1547 until he died in 1563 offers an exceptionally productive perspective from which further to analyse the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political order. He belonged to the ruling oligarchy, and in fact, counted, along with Adashev and Sil'vestr, among Tsar Ivan's closest advisers at mid-century. Furthermore, his career is rather better documented

¹ Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair", p. 302.

² What role, for instance, did Sil'vestr play when the decision to convene the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549 was taken? As a preliminary step in treating this question, we observe that according to nineteenth-century Slavophile historians, the Muscovite zemsky sobor was anticipated by the Old Russian vech'e, the assembly of townsmen which met when such important questions as war and peace, the summoning and removal of princes, and so forth were decided; from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries the vech'e was encountered in towns throughout Russia, and in Novgorod it persisted until Ivan III disbanded it. This view of the origins of the zemskie sobory is represented in K.S. Aksakov, Polnoe sobranie sochineniy K.S. Aksakova, 3 vols, Moscow, 1861-80, I, pp. 291-306 passim. It was strongly opposed in prerevolutionary historiography: to Solov'ev, for example, the Muscovite zemsky sobor recalled the meetings Kievan rulers had with their druzhinniki. S.M. Solov'ev, "Shletser i anti-istoricheskoe napravlenie", RV 8 (March-April 1857), p. 444. Nevertheless, the Slavophiles' position was not abandoned immediately, and it found expression in Bishop Sergey's assessment of Sil'vestr's role in the decision to convene a zemsky sobor at mid-century: he claimed that the initiative most likely belonged to Sil'vestr, who had been exposed to lingering memories of the Novgorod vech'e. Bishop Sergey (Sokolov), "Moskovskiy Blagoveshchenskiy svyashchennik Sil'vestr, kak gosudarstvennyy deyatel'", Chteniya 1893, I, otd. 4, pp. 12-4. This view is plausible, but detailed evidence is lacking.

than Sil'vestr's, and offers correspondingly deeper insights into what forms cooperation between the ruler and the leading clergymen might assume. Finally, his views concerning the origins, the proper exercise, and the limits of tsarist authority are sufficiently familiar to provide an important instance of what relations a high-ranking clergyman believed should obtain between the Church and the ruler.

To verify that Makary was, in fact, a member of the ruling oligarchy from 1547 onwards is relatively straightforward. The tsar consulted with him in the autumn of 1547 before initiating a Kazan' campaign in late 1547 and on embarking for Kazan', ordered Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa and those boyars who would remain in Moscow to superintend the realm during the campaign to confer with him in all matters;¹ clearly he was a highly trusted adviser in the months following the great Moscow fire of June 1547. Ivan similarly sought his counsel before launching the Kazan' campaign of late 1549; moreover, his advice was obtained before the regulation of July 1550 concerning the relative standing of the voevodstva of the cavalry regiments within the army.² In 1552 envoys from Lithuania approached him among others, urging him to admonish Ivan to maintain peace between the two countries; in 1555 the same appeal was made to him by another delegate from Lithuania.³ In November 1562 Ivan conferred with him before initiating a major campaign against Sigismund Augustus.⁴

While the incidents mentioned suffice to prove that Makary belonged to the ruling oligarchy long after 1547, additional evidence shows that he was exceptionally close to Ivan. He crowned him tsar on 16 January 1547.⁵ He officiated when the tsar

¹ RK, p. 115.

² Ibid., p. 125.

³ SIRIQ LIX, No. 24, pp. 362-4, No. 31, pp. 467-8.

⁴ PSRL XIII, p. 345.

⁵ Ibid., p. 150. We might justifiably enquire on whose initiative the coronation occurred. Zaustsinsky asserted that the initiative was Ivan's. Zaustsinsky, "Makary", ZhMNP CCXVII (October

married Anastasia Romanovna on 3 February 1547, and was present at her burial in August 1560; he presided when Ivan remarried in August 1561.¹ In April 1554 he officiated when Tsarevich Ivan was baptised.² After Kazan' was conquered in October 1552 and after the Muscovite army won a spectacular victory at Polotsk in February 1563, Ivan included him among those to be informed speedily.³

Makary could wield sufficient influence in Kremlin politics from 1547 to be included within the ruling oligarchy most likely because, like Sil'vestr, he long enjoyed moral authority in Ivan's eyes. In sundry speeches and missives composed during the 1550s and the 1560s, the tsar alluded to the metropolitan sometimes as his "father", sometimes as his "father and intercessor" before God.⁴ In 1563 he even professed to honour Makary as greatly as a brother.⁵

As for Makary's relations with Ivan's courtiers, they may appropriately be treated at two levels. On the one hand, the sources fail to indicate whether or not Makary allied himself with any one court clique.⁶ We conjecture that he may, in fact, have eschewed deliberately close linkages with court cliques: his two predecessors, Metropolitans Daniil and Ioasaf, were removed in 1539 and 1542 respectively for

1881), pp. 233-4. D'yakonov countered that Makary was the instigator: Ivan was too young to propose such a momentous step, and of his experienced counsellors, the metropolitan was the most probable initiator. D'yakonov, *Vlast'*, p. 109. The deliberations preceding the decision that Ivan should be crowned tsar are traced in greatest detail in the *Tsarstvennaya kniga*, and its testimony on this point is inconclusive. *PSRL* XIII, pp. 450-1.

¹ *PSRL* XIII, pp. 151-2, 328, 333.

² *Ibid.*, p. 239.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 188, 197, 223-5; *The Correspondence*, p. 87.

⁵ Zaustsinsky, "Makariy", *ZhMNP* CCXVII (October 1881), p. 249.

⁶ Yet Makary became metropolitan in 1542 at the behest of the Shuysky princes, who then headed the dominant court clique. I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, pp. 95-7.

having maintained political liaisons found unacceptable by those exercising power.¹ If this conjecture is correct, then probably Makary's moral stature was enhanced through the absence of intimate associations with court cliques, and Ivan most likely trusted him even more. On the other hand, Makary evidently felt free to implore the tsar to practise clemency towards individual "well-born" Muscovites he was about to punish,² and such representations proved on occasion a noteworthy dynamic of mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics. Makary's appeals for mercy were one reason why Princes M.V. Glinsky and I.I. Turuntay Pronsky, apprehended in November 1547 as they sought to flee to Lithuania, were not subjected to penalties.³ When Prince S.V. Lobanov Rostovsky was condemned in 1554 on the charge of having entertained clandestine contacts with envoys from Lithuania in order to damage Muscovy's relations with that polity, Ivan initially intended to impose the death penalty, but Makary, together with sundry prelates and archimandrites, dissuaded him; Lobanov Rostovsky was imprisoned in Beloozero.⁴ These cases where Makary interceded for "well-born" Muscovites who had incurred Ivan's ire were not isolated, and reflected a tradition extending back to the udel period whereby prominent ecclesiastics had often mediated among feuding princes.⁵ They also reflected Makary's conviction that the tsar should practise mercy towards his retainers. No previous writer save Maksim Grek

¹ Ibid., pp. 82-3, 96.

² Makary was not alone among sixteenth-century Muscovites in maintaining the attitude that the Church was entitled to intervene with the secular authorities. In February 1525 I.N. Bersen' Beklemishev, a prominent diplomat under Ivan III and Vasily III, faulted Metropolitan Daniil for not having made such interventions. AAE I, No. 172, p. 141. In his letter of early 1553 to Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky, Sil'vestr portrayed them as proper for the clergy. Golokhvastov and Archimandrite Leonid, "Blagoveshchenskiy ierey Sil'vestr", p. 96.

³ Shmidt, "Prodolzhenie", p. 293.

⁴ PSRL XIII, pp. 237-8.

⁵ Rüss, Adel und Adelsoppositionen, pp. 79-80.

expressed this attitude as forthrightly as did the metropolitan in the "Instruction" he issued at the coronation of January 1547.¹

Makary's attitudes concerning the rights and the responsibilities which the Church and the tsar should hold vis-à-vis one another are more familiar. The extant evidence does not permit us to characterise them exhaustively, and they are depicted here primarily inasmuch as they elucidate admissible instances of the metropolitan's political behaviour or offer comparisons and contrasts with the corresponding attitudes Ivan evinced. In fact, they find important parallels in the tsar's speeches of the early 1550s, particularly at the Stoglav Council of early 1551, and in his contemporary deeds: these similarities are great enough to render plausible the view that Makary counted among his teachers.² In a 1526 missive to Vasily III, Makary emphasised that to support Orthodoxy was equally incumbent upon the ruler and the prelates, and this message was suggested in the "Instruction" he issued at the royal wedding of February 1547;³ the readiness to defend Orthodoxy Ivan displayed at the Stoglav Council was evidently consonant with this charge. What "defending Orthodoxy" could mean in practice to the tsar became manifest at the heresy trials of 1553-1554 when he pressed for exploration of the complaints I.M. Viskovaty made that sundry icons painted in the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral and the tsarist palace had been influenced by convicted heretics and were uncanonical.⁴ But his commitment to "supporting Orthodoxy" ran much further. At the Stoglav Council he affirmed as a general principle

¹ Barsov, Drevne-russkie pamyatniki, p. 82; Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, p. 277.

² The attitudes concerning the proper exercise and the limits of monarchical authority which Makary evinced and those held by Joseph of Volokolamsk resembled one another substantially although incompletely, and this supports the view that Makary should be assigned to the Josephite wing of the Muscovite Church. Joseph's influence on Makary's political attitudes is explored further in Zimin, I.S. Peresvetov, pp. 71-102 passim. If Makary numbered among Ivan's teachers, it become understandable that his exercise of authority was frequently if not invariably consistent with Joseph's teachings; indeed, he praised warmly Joseph's Prosvetitel'. Karamzin, Istoriya gosudarstva Rossiyskago, VIII, p. 51, n. 394.

³ DAI I, No. 25, p. 23, No. 40, p. 54.

⁴ Miller, "The Viskovatyi Affair", p. 298.

that Orthodox precepts and God's laws should guide his actions.¹ This accorded well with Makary's attitude that because he had taken the momentous step of adopting the title of tsar, he bore a correspondingly greater obligation to observe the divine ordinances punctiliously.² He presumably found reassuring Makary's conviction that if his rule mirrored God's revealed will, he should indeed be obeyed.³ Yet like Joseph of Volokolamsk, Makary granted rulers no right to unconditional obedience: he believed that the prelates could resist a ruler's "unlawful" commands.⁴ Joseph doubtless would have viewed approvingly the vehement – and seemingly, successful – protests Makary launched against the plans Ivan harboured as the 1550s began to secularise the votchiny in the Moscow uezd held by the metropolitanate.⁵ Ivan, for his part, indicated at the Stoglav Council that far from regarding such remonstrations as an intolerable affront to his authority, he positively welcomed them: he recognised that he could deviate from strict Orthodoxy, and thus encouraged the assembled clergymen to return him to the true Orthodox way in such cases.⁶ Yet however vital the traditions of broad symphony between the ruler and the foremost clergymen seemed in the early 1550s, it broke down after Makary's death in 1563; Ivan's autocratic leanings were becoming manifest as the Oprichnina approached.

¹ Stoglav, pp. 34-5.

² I.N. Subbotin, "K materialam dlya istorii Stoglava", Letopisi russkoy literatury i drevnosti, izdavaemyya Nikolaem Tikhonravovym V (1863), otd. III, p. 134; Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, p. 289.

³ PSRL XIII, p. 194; Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, p. 290.

⁴ When Makary spoke of the right of disobedience to an "unjust" ruler, however, he mentioned only the prelates; the right was not extended to the population at large. Subbotin, "K materialam", p. 136. Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, p. 290. His conception of the right of resistance was therefore more restricted than Joseph's; apparently he did not follow Josephite teaching absolutely consistently.

⁵ Ivan's plans and their historical context are treated in A.S. Pavlov, Istoricheskiy ocherk sekulyarizatsii tserkovnykh zemel' v Rossii, Vol 1, Odessa, 1871, I, pp. 109-11. Makary's response is presented in Subbotin, "K materialam", pp. 129-36.

⁶ Stoglav, pp. 34-5.

D. Prince A.M. Kurbsky

We begin our treatment of Prince A.M. Kurbsky by pointing out that he played a noteworthy role in mid-sixteenth-century court politics inasmuch as he belonged to the court clique headed by Adashev and Sil'vestr during their ascendancy among Tsar Ivan's advisers.¹ It was probably through his links to the famous pair that as the Livonian War drew nigh, he had become sufficiently influential to number among those who attempted to impress upon Ivan how foolhardy the venture would be.² This marks him as a member of the ruling oligarchy, but on present evidence the full period of membership is difficult to ascertain.

In fact, it is less the details of Kurbsky's role in court politics than the attitudes expressed in his writings towards the origins, the nature, and the proper discharge of monarchical authority which detain us presently,³ and his attitudes on these three points are especially advantageously compared and contrasted with Ivan's. True, common ground was not lacking. The attempts Ivan made to gild the tsarist authority by referring to illustrious ancestors, especially of the Kievan period, and the precedents they supposedly would have been comprehensible to Kurbsky, who relates proudly that his forbears, the Yaroslavl' princes, were descended from "the same glorious and blessed Vladimir Monomach".⁴ Moreover, before the early 1560s Kurbsky was

¹ The Correspondence, pp. 28, 84, 94, 96, 140, 194.

² Ibid., pp. 96, 118.

³ The best known instance of Kurbsky's political behaviour is doubtless his flight to Lithuania in April 1564. During the heyday of the udel principalities it was recognised that a boyar dissatisfied with his ruler was entitled to transfer his allegiance to another ruler, and Kurbsky's case shows that the mentality of the udel period continued to have currency among "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century. Further evidence of how lively the udel traditions remained then comes from the Tver' uezd: the bishops of Tver' and Ryazan', divers Tver' princes, and sundry boyars resembled udel princes inasmuch as they had their own servitors. I.I. Lappo, "Tverskoy uezd v XVI stoletii", Chteniya 1894, IV, otd. 1, pp. 228-31.

⁴ Kurbsky, History, p. 191.

scarcely inclined to disappoint whatever hopes the tsar cherished of faithful service from him. On the contrary, he describes with evident satisfaction his part in the capture of Kazan.¹ Despite his initial misgivings about a Livonian conflict, he served as regimental voevoda in divers campaigns once the war had erupted.² This is consistent with our view that until the early sixties the highest-ranking servitors – and he was a boyar from 1556³ – were substantially willing to cooperate with the tsar in divers undertakings. But by 1564 he evidently felt unable to maintain even a semblance of collaboration. He seemed downright embittered when shortly after fleeing to Lithuania in 1564, he asserted in self-justification that he had participated repeatedly in military enterprises for the tsarist glory, only to be repaid with persecutions.⁴ Ivan's reply revealed little understanding of the fugitive's prince's sense of grievance: he denies the charges of unjust persecutions and asserts that Kurbsky was punished only mildly for the offences actually committed.⁵ More generally, he believed that a tsar should be a dispenser of justice, rewarding the good with mercy and gentleness, and visiting fierceness and torment upon the evil.⁶ This attitude itself might seem a natural consequence of tsarist authority, but he failed egregiously to grasp how disturbing Kurbsky found its practical application in the early 1560s. The prince's language is doubtless excessive, but he appreciated well enough that Ivan's persecutions constituted a sinister innovation, writing: "Soon after the death of Aleksey (Adashev) and the banishment of Sil'vestr a great persecution flared up and a fire of ferocity blazed in the

¹ Ibid., pp. 24-71 passim.

² RK, pp. 171, 173-4, 189-92, 198.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

⁴ The Correspondence, pp. 2-7.

⁵ Ibid., p. 133.

⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

Russian land; and indeed there had never before been such unheard-of persecution, not only in the Russian land but even at the time of the ancient pagan tsars".¹ Ivan, too, considered the fall of Adashev and Sil'vestr a signal political event of his reign, but his reasoning was rather different. He regarded them as usurpers of his authority, and indeed usurpers whose loyalty to him was highly suspect; hence he felt much freer to wield personal authority after they forfeited their influence.² Kurbsky agreed that once they fell, his exercise of authority was less constrained;³ however, the implications for Muscovite politics are assessed otherwise. According to Kurbsky, he proceeded to surround himself with mere sycophants and thereby broke with his previous practice of retaining intelligent, responsible advisers and with the example set by his grandfather, Ivan III, who was helped greatly by wise counsellors in ending the last vestiges of Russian subordination to the Golden Horde and in expanding Muscovy's boundaries.⁴ In sum, whereas Ivan expressed openly in 1564 his aspiration to rule autocratically, Kurbsky probably believed that he should govern through an oligarchy.⁵

We conclude our examination of Kurbsky's attitudes surrounding monarchical authority by asking: how characteristic were they of mid-sixteenth-century courtiers? We hasten to emphasise that our answer is perforce couched in broad terms: quantitative measurements are evidently impossible, and even to identify specific courtiers who were undoubtedly like-minded is most difficult. Nevertheless, a few pertinent

¹ Kurbsky, *History*, p. 177.

² *The Correspondence*, pp. 98, 100.

³ Kurbsky, *History*, pp. 158, 160, 162, 164.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁵ While we find sincere Kurbsky's objections to the autocratic propensities Ivan manifested from the early 1560s, we observe for balance sake that the motives impelling his flight to Lithuania have provoked controversy among historians. The scholarly debate, which is summarised in O.P. Backus, "A.M. Kurbsky in the Polish-Lithuanian State (1564-1583)", *Acta Baltico-Slavica* VI (1969), pp. 36-40, has concentrated upon the following query: was he mainly an idealist or an opportunist who betrayed his tsar and country in search of reward? Detailed enquiry into the proportions in which these differing motives were represented in his decision to flee lies outside the scope of this dissertation.

comments might be made. On the one hand, the attitudes in this matter he expressed from the relative safety of Lithuania, and from 1569, the Rzeczpospolita, were hardly those of a "typical" former courtier: he combined the perspectives of a former boyar¹ and member of the ruling oligarchy, a Rurikide prince whose forbears had long served the rulers of Moscow,² and a contemporary of Ivan.³ To assume that by 1564 the courtiers typically held his views and in the same intensity seems unfounded: in particular, the vast majority of courtiers, whatever their reasons were, remained within Muscovy as Ivan's autocratic leanings became ever more evident in the early 1560s and autocracy was introduced during the Oprichnina. On the other hand, the sureties organised after 1560 on behalf of sundry "well-born" courtiers to guarantee that they would not depart from Muscovy suggest that Kurbsky was not alone in contemplating flight, and perhaps those who considered emigrating were animated by a similar aversion to Ivan's autocratic propensities. We conjecture that those "well-born" courtiers who were particularly strongly attached to the Muscovite political order as it existed before 1560 would probably have been most sympathetic to Kurbsky's expressions of dislike for the changes the tsar's manner of ruling underwent from the early 1560s.

E. I.M. Viskovaty

I.M. Viskovaty is doubtless most familiar as the foremost Muscovite diplomat of the mid-sixteenth century, as Muscovy forged new diplomatic ties and those already

¹ Kurbsky forfeited his boyar's rank upon quitting Muscovy. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 72.

² From Dmitry Donskoy's reign the Yaroslavl' princes were substantially subordinate in practice to the Moscow grand princes, and after the Yaroslavl' principality fell to Ivan III in 1463, the Yaroslavl' princes were regularly represented among his servitors. Fennell, Ivan the Great, p. 5.

³ Ivan was born in 1530, and Kurbsky in 1528. Seredonin, "Ioann IV", p. 228; V. Korsakova, "Kurbskiy, kn. Andrey Mikhaylovich", RBS IX, p. 285.

operative were pursued actively. He is first attested as participating in Muscovite diplomacy in 1542: Lithuanian envoys to Moscow and Muscovite negotiators resolved to maintain peace, and he, then a pod'vachiy, drafted the formal agreement.¹ In January 1549 he was appointed head of the newly constituted Posol'skiy prikaz,² and in this capacity became responsible for conducting Muscovy's day-to-day foreign relations, even though Ivan continued to establish generally the goals of Muscovite policy abroad. He discharged this responsibility for the remainder of the 1547-1564 period and therefore might be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy; indeed, he participated frequently with discussions with envoys from abroad virtually until he was executed in July 1570.³

While Viskovaty's role in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite diplomacy alone would justify his inclusion within the ruling oligarchy, in truth he was exceptionally close to Ivan. In the early 1550s the task of carrying out an inventory of the tsarist archives was entrusted to him.⁴ This was a stepping stone whereupon around 1553 he could begin serving as Ivan's pechatnik, even though he received this rank formally only in 1561.⁵ As acting pechatnik, he maintained general custody of the tsarist archives and became keeper of the Great Seal of the realm.⁶ In 1554 he was named to

¹ SIRIQ LIX, No. 9, p. 166.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 145. He was approximately simultaneously named d'yak.

³ Grobovsky, The "Chosen Council", pp. 48-9. Even when Viskovaty was assisted in conducting negotiations with foreign envoys, he remained the dominant Muscovite negotiator. In 1559, for example, Aleksey Adashev joined him in meeting with a Danish delegation; yet the envoys testified that he advanced the Muscovite position. Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 149, n. 29.

⁴ S.O. Shmidt, "K istorii tsarskogo arkhiva serediny XVI v.", TMGIAI XI (1958), pp. 397-8. This marks Viskovaty as especially close to Ivan inasmuch as the nucleus of the sixteenth-century tsarist archive was the private archive of the Moscow grand princes – Ivan's forbears. Ibid., p. 366.

⁵ Ibid., p. 394. Viskovaty was also a dumnyy d'yak by 1553-4. V. supra, p. 67, n. 1. The combination was a harbinger of the future: from the mid-seventeenth century the pechatnik's duties were normally discharged by a dumnyy d'yak. "Pechatnik", ESBE XXIII A, p. 522.

⁶ Shmidt, "K istorii tsarskogo arkhiva", p. 393. Viskovaty was a natural candidate for pechatnik since the Great Seal was normally affixed to the most important documents pertaining to Muscovite foreign relations. Ibid., p. 397. It was also affixed to various important internal regulations.

the commission which investigated the charge that Prince S.V. Lobanov Rostovsky and sundry accomplices had attempted to damage Muscovy's relations with Lithuania.¹ Furthermore, he accompanied Tsar Ivan on campaign several times: from Nizhniy Novgorod to Kazan' in January 1550, from Moscow to Serpukhov in June 1556, and from Moscow to Kolomna in July 1557.²

In entering and ensconcing himself within the ruling oligarchy at mid-century, Viskovaty affords a final example of how crucial Ivan's regard was in winning political preferment. He was not "well-born" – we reiterate that he stemmed from dvoryane of the Pereyasavl' vicinity³ – and most likely caught the tsar's attention because of sterling abilities; he probably received responsible assignments because he was expected to discharge them faithfully. Certainly he revealed himself a loyal servitor in the mid-sixteenth century. His political behaviour is little known; nevertheless, he is documented as having supported the throne candidature of Tsarevich Dmitry when the succession was discussed at court during Ivan's illness of March 1553.⁴ The positions he espoused during negotiations with envoys from abroad were almost certainly those the tsar wanted him to advance. In 1549, for example, while envoys dispatched by Sigismund Augustus were in Moscow, he affirmed that Ivan should be recognised as tsar because Vladimir Monomach had employed that title.⁵ His talents and his loyalty most likely contributed significantly to the strong affection Ivan apparently felt for him.⁶ This, too, will have helped him to retain trust not only at mid-century but even after the Oprichnina began and autocratic rule was introduced.

¹ PSRL XIII, pp. 237-8.

² RK, pp. 122, 157, 163.

³ V. supra, p. 43.

⁴ PSRL XIII, p. 523.

⁵ SIRIO LIX, No. 18, p. 287.

⁶ "Poslanie Ioganna Taube i Elerta Kruze", p. 51.

5

The Princely and the Boyar Lineages

In this chapter we explore further the composition and the political behaviour of the Muscovite ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 with reference to sundry "well-born" Muscovites stemming from the princely and the established boyar lineages. These "well-born" Muscovites are most suitably divided into two categories. The first category consists of the members through birth or marriage of the ruling house of Moscow. Certain previous grand princes recruited some of their closest advisers from this source, and Ivan IV continued this practice after 1547. The counsellors in question might probably be assigned to the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy, and we attempt to identify the contexts in which they may have influenced the tsar's resolves. The second category consists of the "well-born" boyars and okol'niche.¹ The treatment of them occupies the lion's share of the chapter, and we mention en passant the three issues upon which our discussion is concentrated. We begin by identifying the factors apparently determining which courtiers received the two highest service ranks at mid-century. An attempt is made, moreover, to ascertain the extent to which these ranks brought increased political clout, even entry into the ruling oligarchy, to their holders. Finally, we consider the cases of specific boyars and okol'niche appointed from the princely and the established boyar lineages between 1547 and 1564, particularly in order to identify individual members of the contemporary ruling oligarchy.

The treatment of the two aforesaid categories of "well-born" Muscovites forms a unified whole. The attempts made in this chapter to delineate members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy rely almost completely upon methods of collective career biography: the political roles of candidates for inclusion, whichever category they belonged to, are seldom depicted in the testimony of sixteenth-century witnesses.²

¹ We repeat for emphasis that almost all of the boyars and the preponderant majority of the okol'niche appointed in the mid-sixteenth century belonged to princely or boyar lineages.

² In fact, apart from Ivan IV and Prince A.M. Kurbsky, no "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century are known to have written anything, and we are impeded accordingly in grasping the mentality and the mores animating contemporary "well-born" Muscovites in their political behaviour. Certainly our evidence is insufficient to achieve a counterpart to the detailed enquiry into the mentality

Furthermore, should a theme recurring throughout the chapter be defined, we would affirm the conclusion advanced in Chapter 4: personal relations of one kind or another – kinship ties, marriage bonds, and individual loyalties and antagonisms – remained critically important dynamics of court politics at mid-century.¹ In particular, kinship and marriage ties to Tsar Ivan were almost certainly the surest routes whereby "well-born" Muscovites could win political preferment after 1547.

Take, for example, Ivan's brother Prince Yury Vasil'evich. His career from 1547 onwards marks him as belonging formally to the ruling oligarchy. The tsar is known to have consulted his brother when crucial decisions were taken. Prince Yury Vasil'evich numbered among those whose advice he sought before launching the Kazan' campaign of the winter of 1549-1550 and before initiating hostilities against Sigismund Augustus in 1562-1563.² On several occasions in the second half of the 1550s he included his brother among those commissioned to ensure that Muscovy was ruled in an orderly fashion while he was absent from Moscow on campaign.³ Not only might Prince Yury Vasil'evich be assigned to the ruling oligarchy at mid-century; further evidence can be adduced showing him as exceptionally close to the tsar. After he married Iyuliana, the daughter of Prince D.F. Paletsky, in September 1547, the newly-weds were ordered by Ivan to assume residence at the tsarist court within the Kremlin where they remained until 1560, when they were assigned an abode of their own in the Kremlin.⁴ Furthermore, Prince Yury Vasil'evich accompanied the tsar on his expedition to Vladimir in late November 1549 and was summoned to his regiment in

of eighteenth-century Breton noblemen undertaken by Jean Meyer. See J. Meyer, La Noblesse bretonne au XVIIIe siècle, 2 vols, Paris, 1966, II, pp. 1053-1134.

¹ V. supra, pp. 184, 187, 195, 196, 204.

² PSRL XIII, pp. 158, 345.

³ RK, pp. 141, 151, 159, 163, 182.

⁴ PSRL XIII, pp. 154, 331.

the early summer of 1552 during the final Kazan' campaign.¹ Finally, it is not surprising that Prince Yury Vasil'evich attended when Ivan married in 1547 and 1561.²

Since Prince Yury Vasil'evich counted among Tsar Ivan's intimates at mid-century, his political attitudes are eminently deserving of examination, and we could surmise that the manner whereby he ruled his lands would afford insight into them. Vasily III stipulated before he died that a sizeable udel principality centred on Uglich should pass to his younger son.³ Yet this principality was constituted only in August 1560; the territory was administered by the Uglich dvorets.⁴ After August 1560 Prince Yury Vasil'evich's domain became a full-fledged udel principality replete with boyars, deti boyarskie, and d'yaki as well as other officials.⁵ Unfortunately, the history of this udel reveals little of him. He held it only for slightly over three years, until he died on 24 November 1563.⁶ Since he was, like his nephew, the future Tsar Fedor Ivanovich, a pietist who preferred visiting monasteries to ruling his dominions, the administrative burdens of his principality were shouldered by Princes I.A. Kurakin Bulgakov, D.S. Shestunov, and A.I. Prozorovsky.⁷ The causes he favoured remain an enigma.

Like Prince Yury Vasil'evich, Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa counted among Ivan's more intimate associates at mid-century and might justifiably be included within the ruling oligarchy. The tsar conferred with his first cousin before he began the Kazan' campaigns of the winter of 1549-1550 and the summer of 1552 and before he

¹ RK, p. 121; PSRL XIII, p. 187.

² RK, p. 10; PSRL XIII, p. 333.

³ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 150.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 150-1.

⁶ PSRL XIII, p. 372.

⁷ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 150-1.

dispatched troops to Polotsk in the winter of 1562-1563.¹ Moreover, at least twice during the late 1540s he included the Staritsa prince among those left in Moscow to rule the realm as he advanced towards Kazan'.² Additional evidence supports the view that Prince Vladimir Andreevich was close to him. The prince maintained his own court within the Moscow Kremlin along with his court in Staritsa.³ Furthermore, he accompanied the tsar on various military expeditions: in particular to Kazan' in the early summer of 1552, to Serpukhov in 1556, and to Polotsk in 1562-1563.⁴ Finally, both were married twice within the chronological boundaries of this dissertation, and they attended one another's weddings.⁵

The administrative history of the Staritsa udel is rather better documented than that of the Uglich udel nominally headed by Prince Yury Vasil'evich, and Prince Vladimir Andreevich emerges as preoccupied with much the same questions as Ivan, who may therefore have been motivated to consult him when reforms were contemplated. For example, the Staritsa prince shared the concern the tsar displayed, especially at the beginning of the 1550s, for the Church's wealth and privileges, and his attitudes reveal a similar ambiguity.⁶ He was ready to thwart what he considered excessive land hunger on the monasteries' part, waging a struggle in the spring of 1565 with the Iosifo-Volokolamskiy Monastery over the holding of sundry votchiny located

¹ PSRL XIII, pp. 158, 177, 345.

² RK, pp. 112, 115. When Prince Vladimir Andreevich was included among those remaining in Moscow to oversee the realm while Tsar Ivan was on campaign, the assumption was evidently that even though he was an udel prince rather than a servitor, he would nevertheless execute faithfully his first cousin's instructions. This attitude had lengthy antecedents: the grand princes of Moscow from Dmitry Donskoy had attempted to assert their authority over udel princes whose lands lay inside their realm.

³ S.V. Bakhrushin et al., eds, Istoriya Moskvyy, 6 vols, Moscow, 1952-9, I, pp. 185-6.

⁴ RK, pp. 136, 156, 197-8.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 10, 14-5; PSRL XIII, p. 333.

⁶ V. supra, p. 47.

in the Staritsa udel.¹ He sought by times to exploit the monastic estates as a source of revenues for his treasury: on 11 November 1546, for instance, he decreed that quitrent was to be levied on a village held by the Moscow Simonov Monastery.² On the other hand, he granted divers monasteries immunity privileges in respect of certain of their estates. His charters of 1 January 1548 released the peasants residing on certain holdings of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery from the jurisdiction of his namestniki – like Prince Yury Vasil'evich after 1560, he was surrounded by a phalanx of officials whose service ranks and titles paralleled closely those of the tsar's subordinates – and similar provisions are evident in a charter he granted around 1566 to the Iosifo-Volokolamskiy Monastery.³

Yet the regulations Prince Vladimir Andreevich issued for the Staritsa udel need not long detain us: his role as the rallying point for all Moscow courtiers who were dissatisfied with Tsar Ivan's rule provides a more productive perspective from which to analyse his political behaviour at mid-century. Ivan almost certainly realised the potential danger his first cousin represented. In 1537 Prince Vladimir Andreevich's father, Prince Andrey Ivanovich of Staritsa, had mounted an insurrection against the regency of Elena Glinskaya, and even after his rising was quelled and he was imprisoned, it was deemed prudent to confiscate his udel.⁴ Only in 1541 was his former principality returned to his family.⁵ But Prince Vladimir Andreevich appears to have harboured modest political ambitions, and paradoxically this probably helped him

¹ P.A. Mukhanov, ed., Sbornik Mukhanova, 2nd ed., SPb, 1866, No. 302, pp. 585-6.

² A.A. Zimin, "Novye dokumenty po istorii mestnogo upravleniya v Rossii pervoy poloviny XVI v.", in AE za 1965 god, Moscow, 1966, No. 6, p. 348.

³ S.M. Kashtanov, "Khronologicheskiy perechen' immunitetnykh gramot XVI veka" (Chast' 1-ya), in AE za 1957 god, Moscow, 1958, Nos 567, 568, p. 373; AFZKh II, No. 317, pp. 335-6.

⁴ Prince Andrey Ivanovich's rising of 1537 is treated in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 53-74. He died in 1537 shortly after he was incarcerated.

⁵ Ibid., p. 107, n. 25.

to remain within the ruling oligarchy after his throne candidature was proposed at court during Ivan's grave illness of March 1553: the tsar realised that it was not he but members of his entourage who promoted his cause most actively. Foremost among his backers was his mother, and hence in the spring of 1554 he was exhorted to indict her should it be known that she was conspiring against Ivan,¹ towards whom she seemingly felt especially strong antipathy. He remained within the ruling oligarchy until 1563 when he was denounced as conspiring against the tsar, who apparently attached credence to the accusation and subjected him to disgrace.² Even amidst the vicissitudes of the Oprichnina, however, he and his family were executed only in 1569.³

Tsaritsa Anastasia, by contrast, evoked unreserved sentiments of affection in Ivan. He refers lovingly to her in his letters to Kurbsky, and in his second letter he describes her death as a hard blow.⁴ His love for her was surely the basis for the substantial influence which Horsey testifies she wielded vis-à-vis him.⁵ We include her within the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy.⁶ This conclusion is rendered believable inasmuch as she was frequently at her husband's side. When he led the Muscovite army towards Kazan' in the winter of 1547-1548, she accompanied him to Vladimir, and when the Kazan' khanate finally fell in October 1552, one of his first

¹ SGGD I, No. 168, pp. 463-4.

² PSRL XIII, p. 368.

³ The execution of Prince Vladimir Andreevich and his family in 1569 is described in Skrynnikov, Oprichnyy terror, pp. 21-5.

⁴ Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 104.

⁵ Rude and Barbarous Kingdom, pp. 264-5.

⁶ We stress, however, that Anastasia's influence was almost certainly exerted behind the scenes. "Well-born" women in sixteenth-century Muscovy were not normally given administrative or diplomatic assignments, let alone such assignments as would have marked them as members of the ruling oligarchy.

reactions was to send word to her among others.¹ She joined him on various occasions when he visited monasteries and attended church consecrations.²

Alas, Anastasia's role in Muscovite politics between her marriage to Ivan in February 1547 and her death in August 1560 is difficult to characterise concretely. We have observed that enmity arose between her, on the one hand, and the priest Sil'vestr and certain of his confederates, on the other hand;³ however, this is the only known instance of her political behaviour. Detailed evidence indicating that she attempted to influence her husband's relations with Sil'vestr or other advisers are wanting in the extant sources. Her attitudes concerning the origins and the proper exercise of tsarist authority are similarly undocumented.

Ivan's second wife, Maria Magdalena, is even less familiar than Anastasia. She was born a Moslem Circassian princess, and one could suspect that she felt lonely at the Moscow court, for not all courtiers welcomed enthusiastically the prospect of a tsaritsa of non-Orthodox background even though she was converted to Orthodoxy before she and Ivan were married in August 1561.⁴ Like Anastasia, she accompanied him regularly as he visited monasteries and participated in religious rites; moreover, he strove to inform her promptly when the Muscovite army conquered Polotsk in February 1563.⁵ But it is unclear on present evidence whether she enjoyed sufficient influence vis-à-vis him to qualify for the ruling oligarchy. Similarly, we know little of her role in politics when the Oprichnina was introduced and autocratic rule began.

¹ RK, pp. 112-5; PSRL XIII, p. 221.

² PSRL XIII, pp. 231, 273-4, 276.

³ V. supra, pp. 187-8.

⁴ Grobovsky has conjectured that Prince V.M. Glinsky was temporarily disgraced in July 1561 for having expressed too candidly his distaste for a tsaritsa of non-Orthodox background. Grobovsky, The "Chosen Council", pp. 103, 106.

⁵ PSRL XIII, pp. 333, 339, 360, 367, 383.

This concludes the discussion of those members of the ruling house of Moscow by birth or marriage – the aforesaid first category of "well-born" Muscovites considered in this chapter – who were the most likely members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy.¹ In the remainder of this chapter the composition and the political behaviour of the ruling oligarchy is explored with reference to the second aforementioned category of "well-born" Muscovites, the boyars and the okol'niche chosen from the princely and the boyar lineages. An attempt is made in the following paragraphs to pinpoint three factors which more or less frequently played a noteworthy role when appointments to the two highest service ranks were made from these lineages.

Membership of a lineage from which boyars and okol'niche had previously been named, while not obligatory, counted heavily when Ivan made his nominations from 1547 onwards. In fact, the lion's share of the untitled boyars and okol'niche chosen during the 1547-1564 period stemmed from genealogically distinguished lineages represented among the boyars of the Moscow grand princes before Dmitry Donskoy's death. Two of these lineages deserve particular attention. They included the progeny of A.I. Kobyla, a boyar of the mid-fourteenth-century grand prince Semen Ivanovich, and the descendants of I.S. Moroz, who served the Moscow rulers of the mid-fourteenth century and whose son Mikhail was a boyar of Dmitry Donskoy.² The

¹ Prince Yury Vasil'evich's wife, Princess Iyuliana, and Prince Vladimir Andreevich's two wives, the princesses Evdot'ya, are little known, and compelling grounds for including any of these women within the ruling oligarchy are lacking. Such children of Tsar Ivan, Prince Yury Vasil'evich, and Prince Vladimir Andreevich as survived infancy were all too young to participate in the ruling oligarchy. For instance, Tsarevich Ivan, the tsar's eldest living son, was only ten when the Oprichnina began. Cf. N. de Baumgarten, "Généalogies des branches régnantes de Rurikides du XIIIe au XVIe siècle", Orientalia Christiana Analecta 94 (June 1934), p. 19.

² A.I. Kobyla's career is portrayed in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 141; genealogies of his descendants are found in Redkie istochniki II, pp. 45-8, 150-4. The careers of I.S. Moroz and his son Mikhail are summarised in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 197-8; the descendants of I.S. Moroz are represented in Redkie istochniki II, pp. 59-65, 120-3. The mid-sixteenth-century scribes considered him a descendant of Mikhail Prushanin, an émigré from Prussia who entered Aleksandr Nevsky's service; Veselovsky accepted their testimony. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 196. However, Yanin has pointed out that Moroz's antecedents cannot be established with certainty. Yanin, "K voprosu", pp. 189-96.

first-mentioned lineage embraced the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, the Yakovlevs, the Sheremetevs, the Kolychevs, and the Bezzubtsevs, and the second-mentioned lineage included the Morozovs, the Sheins, the Saltykovs, the Tuchkovs, the Skryabins, and other less prominent kinsmen. Later in this chapter it is shown that these two lineages were unusually well represented among the boyars and the okol'nichie named at mid-century. Divers Ryurikide princely lineages whose members began to serve the grand princes of Moscow during the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries provided an alternative source of boyars and okol'nichie. Among these lineages were the Obolensky princes together with the princes of Suzdal', Yaroslavl', Rostov, Zvenigorod, Tver', Vorotynsk, and Ryazan'.¹ In the fifteenth century and the opening decades of the sixteenth century sundry Lithuanian princes emigrated to Muscovy, and the descendants of certain of them counted among Tsar Ivan's boyars at mid-century: the Bel'sky, Bulgakov, Glinsky, and Mstislavsky princes are examples.²

Furthermore, some courtiers belonging to princely or boyar lineages almost certainly became boyars or okol'nichie because of close kinship ties to someone who married into the ruling house of Moscow. The example par excellence is the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins: around the time when Anastasia Romanovna married Tsar Ivan in February 1547, her brother D.R. Yur'ev became an okol'nichiy and her first cousin I.M.

¹ Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 434-7, 446; N.S. Kollmann, "Kinship and Politics", pp. 325-6, 358, 415, 466-7, 475; Fennell, Ivan the Great, pp. 133, 136-8, 141, 143, 249.

² Fennell, Ivan the Great, p. 85; A.A. Zimin, Rossiia na poroge novogo vremeni, Moscow, 1972, pp. 85-91, 148-9, 154, 164-6, 305. Princes with Lithuanian antecedents were well-represented at mid-century among the so-called "service princes" (sluzhilye knyaz'ya): Princes I.D. Bel'sky and V.M. Glinsky together with various Trubetskoy princes were given this title in the Dvorovaya tetrad'. TKDT, pp. 117-8. The "service princes" occupied an intermediate position between the udel princes and the preponderant majority of the princely servitors of the Moscow rulers. Unlike the udel princes, the "service princes" could participate formally in the Muscovite service hierarchy and become boyars. Moreover, their lands, unlike udely, were customarily transmitted to succeeding generations through inheritance, and military service requirements were present. On the other hand, unlike most princely servitors, they were obliged to serve in the Muscovite army only when the well-being of their lands was directly at issue, and they were free to select themselves the voevody for the forces they contributed. Zimin, Rossiia na poroge, pp. 402-3.

Bol'shoy Yur'ev became a boyar.¹ Prince D.F. Paletsky, a Starodub prince, most likely was appointed boyar in July 1547 in connexion with the impending marriage of his daughter Iyuliana to Prince Yury Vasil'evich.² M.Ya. Nagoy, who stemmed from a lineage which had supplied the rulers of Tver' with boyars before the grand principality fell to Ivan III in 1485, was probably named boyar in September 1549 because Prince Vladimir Andreevich married E.A. Nagaya.³

Thirdly, the heads of various, although not all, central government agencies were considered to hold a sufficiently distinguished appointment for them to be customarily recruited at mid-century from princely or boyar lineages: either they were already boyars or okol'nichie when they were appointed or they subsequently received one of these ranks.⁴ The superiors of most prikaz-like agencies were regarded as occupying such an esteemed position. Take, for instance, the Bol'shoy Dvoretz. D.R. Yur'ev was named Bol'shoy dvoretskiy shortly after he became an okol'nichiy in February 1547; he became a boyar in March 1548.⁵ In the second half of the 1550s the okol'nichiy L.A. Saltykov acted as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy; he was appointed boyar in

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 59.

² Ibid., p. 60.

³ Klyuchevsky, Boyarskaya дума, p. 235; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61; RK, p. 14.

⁴ Whether or not the kaznachei, who headed the Kazna, would obtain the two highest service ranks at mid-century was especially uncertain. Some kaznachei were "well-born"; they were not usually boyars or okol'nichie when they were appointed, but they would often receive these ranks later. Other kaznachei were not "well-born", and most of these are never evidenced as boyars or okol'nichie; occasionally, however, a kaznachey who was not "well-born" became a boyar. We might ask: to what degree did the lower upper-ranking servitors become boyars? The question cannot be answered definitively without further research, but on present evidence the extent of correlation depends upon the rank under consideration. A sizeable share of the stol'niki attested at mid-century became boyars, but relatively few stryapchie achieved this promotion. Nazarov, "O strukture", pp. 49-51.

⁵ RK, pp. 10, 110-3; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61. Without impugning Yur'ev's administrative abilities, we conjecture that he was helped greatly in becoming the Bol'shoy dvoretskiy by his sister's recent marriage to Tsar Ivan; his case illustrates that merit was not the only or even necessarily the most important criterion determining who received responsible appointments at mid-century. V. supra, p. 43.

June 1561.¹ The dvoretskie of Tver', Ryazan', Dmitrov, and Uglich normally were boyars or okol'nicie, or would later obtain one of these ranks. V.M. Yur'ev, for example, was the Tver' dvoretskiy by July 1547 and became an okol'nicliy in January 1549.² The dvoretskie of Moscow and Kazan' and of Kazan' and Nizhniy Novgorod evidenced after the early fifties were already boyars when they were nominated or became boyars.³ Yet we observe that not all regional dvoretskie became okol'nicie or boyars quickly or indeed at all. A.G. Kolychev, the Mtsensk dvoretskiy in "the year 7068 (1559-1560)", is not attested as an okol'nicliy within the 1547-1564 period.⁴ Mtsensk was by no means as prestigious a plum as Moscow, Tver', or various other towns, and we cannot be surprised if its dvoretskiy was not considered an obvious candidate to become an okol'nicliy. The konyushie held an especially honoured position,⁵ and either they were boyars or okol'nicie when they were nominated or they were later granted one of these ranks. For instance, I.I. Umny Kolychev, evidenced as konyushiy in December 1547, was named okol'nicliy by January 1549.⁶ As for the prikazy, we observe that the attested heads of certain prikazy were not generally if ever chosen from the princely or boyar lineages. However, the courtiers heading the Razboynnyy prikaz in the mid-1550s belonged to such lineages, and the record of their service appointments exhibits a familiar pattern. In May 1555 the heads were Prince D.I. Kurlyatev, an Obolensky prince, and I.M. Vorontsov, a descendant of P.F.

¹ V.D. Nazarov, "Iz istorii tsentral'nykh gosudarstvennykh uchrezhdeniy Rossii serediny XVI veka (K metodike izucheniya voprosa)", IS 1976, No. 3, p. 84; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70.

² RK, pp. 110-1; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63.

³ This is documented later in the present chapter.

⁴ RK, p. 186. Yet A.G. Kolychev was alive in 1566 when he was a guarantor in a surety organised on behalf of Prince M.I. Vorotynsky. SGGD I, No. 191, p. 539.

⁵ Grigory Kotoshikhin observed that whoever held the appointment of konyushiy was the most honoured boyar. Kotoshikhin, O Rossii, p. 94.

⁶ RK, p. 115; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63.

Vel'yaminov, who was foremost among Ivan Kalita's boyars, holding the title of ttsyatskiy; Kurlyatev and Vorontsov were already boyars when they were appointed.¹ In November 1555 Prince I.A. Kurakin Bulgakov, who was not a boyar, was named head of the prikaz; he became a boyar in 1556.²

Three considerations which to one extent or another helped a noteworthy number of courtiers belonging to princely or boyar lineages to become boyars or okol'niche have been discussed. Yet the possible contributory factors are hardly exhausted. One might conjecture that in an era when Muscovy was developing an increasingly complex and far-flung network of diplomatic relations with foreign realms, courtiers would perhaps be named to the two highest service ranks in reward for noteworthy services to Muscovite diplomacy. But however plausible this view might appear, it finds little support in the career biographies of the boyars Tsar Ivan appointed at mid-century: D.R. Yur'ev and divers other boyars were elevated well before they are known to have played a role in Muscovy's foreign relations.³ Nor was outstanding generalship a quick, sure road to boyardom. Prince A.M. Kurbsky proved himself an able voevoda during the first half of the 1550s, and this, together with his links to Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr, helped him to become a boyar in 1556.⁴ But Prince M.I. Vorotynsky, also an exceptionally capable commander, became a boyar only in 1565, after rendering Ivan military service for over twenty years.⁵ And even in an age when Muscovy was very frequently at war, an illustrious record in the army was

¹ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 162; Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemle-
vladel'tsev, pp. 212-25.

² Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 162.

³ Nazarov has remarked that D.R. Yur'ev played no role in Muscovite diplomacy before December 1552. Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 82.

⁴ RK, pp. 132, 135, 137, 143-4; v. supra, p. 199.; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 73. The first reference to Vorotynsky in the military service register shows him at Belev in June 1543. RK, pp. 104-5.

no prerequisite for the boyar's rank. G.Yu. Zakhar'in, for example, became a boyar by July 1547 although he had commanded a regiment only once before – in June 1543;¹ this appointment was almost certainly made because Zakhar'in was an uncle of Tsaritsa Anastasia. An appointment as namestnik of a town was not necessarily the passport to boyardom. While the namestniki of the historically most important towns were usually chosen from among the boyars, other towns were less likely to have a boyar as namestnik, and it is difficult to generalise as to whether those namestniki who later became boyars did so because they were considered to have demonstrated their administrative abilities. Prince F.I. Kashin Obolensky was the namestnik of Putivl' in June 1552 and was named boyar in 1555 when the memories of how he conducted himself in office may have affected the tsar's choice.² On the other hand, Prince A.I. Vorotynsky served as Ryazan' namestnik from April 1550 until the end of 1551 but became a boyar only in 1560 when more recent considerations were probably foremost in Ivan's mind.³

Even yet the considerations impelling Tsar Ivan from 1547 onwards to appoint boyars and okol'nichie from princely and boyar lineages have not been pinpointed fully. In particular, we need to explain one of the most arresting features of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political landscape – the marked increase in the number of boyars and okol'nichie. A few statistics will suffice to indicate how great this increase actually was. From 1533 when Ivan had succeeded his father as grand prince until he was crowned tsar, the number of boyars had fluctuated between 11 and 15, and the number of okol'nichie varied from 1 to 3.⁴ But in 1547 10 boyars and 5 okol'nichie

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 60. Zakhar'in served as the second voevoda of the "Great Regiment" at Vladimir in June 1543. RK, p. 105.

² Zimin, "Spisok namestnikov", p. 38; idem, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

³ Idem, "Spisok namestnikov", p. 39; idem, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70.

⁴ Idem, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 82.

were named, and in 1549 12 boyars and 8 okol'nichie were appointed; by the end of 1549 there were 32 boyars and 9 okol'nichie.¹ During the 1550s the number of boyars grew gradually, nudging up towards 40 as the decade ended, while the number of okol'nichie approximately doubled.² In the early 1560s there were over 40 boyars, although the number of okol'nichie began to fall; after 1564 the numbers of boyars also diminished, and by the end of 1583, scant months before Ivan died, 12 boyars and 6 okol'nichie were evidenced.³ From one perspective, he almost certainly increased dramatically the number of boyars and okol'nichie during the late forties, allowing it to reach unprecedented levels during the fifties and the early sixties, in an attempt to hinder any one boyar clique from becoming overweeningly influential. He achieved moderate success: the rise and the fall of boyar cliques dominated Muscovite court politics during his minority, but this situation ended in 1547. Another useful perspective is gained if we observe, leaving aside the chaos of the "Time of Troubles", that the numbers of boyars and okol'nichie which were observed during the fifties and the early sixties did not recur until well into the seventeenth century. Specifically, there was a similar number of okol'nichie only in the mid-seventeenth century, and a like number of boyars was not repeated until the late 1670s.⁴ It is scarcely accidental that inflations of honours took place both in the mid-sixteenth century and in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, for the attendant political circumstances were not dissimilar. Ivan's self-confidence was probably shaken by the humiliations he suffered during his

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid. The numbers of boyars and okol'nichie Zimin indicates for the late 1550s and the early 1560s are probably too low: several boyars and okol'nichie seemingly unknown to him are evidenced in unpublished archival materials or in sources published since he compiled his survey. A new overview of the upper upper-ranking servitors of the sixteenth century is surely a desideratum.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 175-7.

minority,¹ and he was not yet seventeen when he was crowned tsar. Hence he was most likely eager from 1547 to reward his supporters among the princely and the boyar lineages by naming them boyars and okol'niche and to win new adherents similarly.² The unstable and short-lived régimes which followed Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich's death in 1676 doubtless pursued the same goals as they presided over an even greater proliferation of boyars and okol'niche: 61 boyars and 33 okol'niche were known by 1683.³ The inflation of honours evident in the late seventeenth century evoked strong distaste in Peter the Great, who with characteristic ruthlessness, abolished the upper upper service ranks in 1711 and established the Senate.⁴ During the Oprichnina and its aftermath, however, Ivan remained content to permit the numbers of boyars and okol'niche to fall to levels unknown since the 1540s.

The inflation of honours apparent in the mid-sixteenth century, which entailed a break with long-standing conventions regulating the appointment of boyars and okol'niche, probably evoked confusion at court; yet it could hardly have been altogether unwelcome. Certainly contemporary "well-born" Muscovites were keenly concerned to enhance the esteem attached to their lineage and to improve their relative standing under the mestnichestvo system,⁵ and if a lineage were strongly represented among the boyars and the okol'niche, its members would be aided considerably in attaining these goals. In fact, we might conjecture that "well-born" boyars and okol'niche, especially if they qualified for the ruling oligarchy, exerted pressure upon

¹ For example, Ivan relates in his first letter to Kurbsky that he suffered indignities from various Shuysky princes after his mother died. Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, pp. 27-8. Yet he repeatedly showed trust in divers other Shuysky princes from 1547: they were evidently not tarred by their kinship ties.

² In fact, Ivan may well have pursued both goals simultaneously in various appointments of boyars and okol'niche, seeking new backers among candidates favoured by already influential courtiers whom he wished to favour.

³ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 177.

⁴ Ibid., p. 33.

⁵ V. supra, pp. 68-9.

the tsar to name their kinsmen to these ranks. This theory would explain satisfactorily the observable fact that after one or two members of a princely or a boyar lineage were appointed boyars or okol'niche, sundry kinsmen were similarly promoted.¹ The descendants of A.I. Kobyla constitute the most salient example. After Anastasia Romanovna married Tsar Ivan in February 1547, several Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins became boyars or okol'niche and, as will be shown later, ensconced themselves within the ruling oligarchy; their kinsmen became exceptionally strongly represented among the boyars and the okol'niche from 1547 onwards,² and this influx alone helped considerably to swell the number of holders of the two highest service ranks at mid-century.

The rapid changes in the political fortunes of the boyar cliques dominating court politics during Ivan's minority gave the boyars and the okol'niche appointed from 1547 powerful impetus to arrange patronage networks. The boyar cliques did not always establish a clientèle upon which they could depend for loyal support, and their shaky power base was most likely an important reason why they held sway only temporarily. This was apparently a particularly significant contributory factor when the Glinsky princes forfeited Ivan's favour after the great Moscow fire of June 1547.³ One should note, however, that kinship ties were scarcely the only factor determining whom courtiers pursuing political goals would seek as allies.

Another manifestation of the concern "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century had for their relative standing under the mestnichestvo system and for the prestige of their lineage was the practice whereby the junior branches of princely and boyar lineages which were represented among Tsar Ivan's servitors supplied Prince

¹ True, detailed documentary evidence of such patronage networks at the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite court is lacking, but this scarcely proves their absence: they probably received little attention from contemporary commentators, Russian and foreign alike, because they were taken for granted. Cf. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 107. A useful treatment, couched largely in general terms, of patronage networks written from a sociologist's perspective is found in V. Burkolter-Trachsel, Zur Theorie sozialer Macht, Bern and Stuttgart, 1981, pp. 201-15.

² This is documented later in the present chapter.

³ I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 113.

Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa with servitors on occasion. Amidst the competition for high service ranks and distinguished court posts which was waged in Moscow, sundry members of these junior branches probably believed that they could better assemble in Staritsa a service record which would benefit their relative standing and the reputation of their lineage; they could serve later in Moscow should the prospective rewards appear greater. The Kolychevs were long represented among the servitors of the Staritsa rulers, and I.I. Umny Kolychev became the dvoretskiy of Prince Vladimir Andreevich's father before he entered Ivan's service.¹ Prince Yu.A. Men'shoy Peninsky Obolensky was a boyar of the Staritsa prince by April 1552.² Somewhat later Prince V.I. Temkin Rostovsky was similarly honoured.³

In contexts where the members of princely and boyar lineages were most likely concerned in their political behaviour to increase the prestige of their lineage and the relative standing of its members, even distant relatives were accepted as kinsmen. However, we cannot generalise and assert that kinship ties invariably mattered greatly to "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century. In the following paragraphs evidence is produced showing that in certain contexts only close relatives, sometimes only family members, were recognised as kinsmen, and that in still other contexts kinsmen, however closely related, were accorded little heed.

In ad hoc situations kinship ties played a modest role in determining whom courtiers enlisted as allies. This is surely best illustrated with reference to the sureties organised on behalf of boyars suspected of seeking to flee from Muscovy. Let us consider the surety arranged in December 1547 for Prince I.I. Turuntay Pronsky, a

¹ A.A. Zimin, "Udel'nye knyaz'ya i ikh dvory vo vtoroy polovine XV i pervoy polovine XVI v.", in Istoriya i genealogiya, p. 183.

² RK, pp. 134-5.

³ Zimin, "Udel'nye knyaz'ya", p. 182. However, few Rostov princes served the rulers of Staritsa, and Prince V.I. Temkin Rostovsky was therefore an exception. The Pronsk princes regularly held responsible appointments within the Staritsa principality. Ibid., pp. 182-3.

Ryazan' prince and a boyar.¹ The leaders were apparently Prince F.I. Skopin Shuysky and D.R. Yur'ev.² It seems likely that Skopin Shuysky, a Suzdal' prince and another boyar,³ knew Turuntay Pronskey. The Ryazan' prince was already close to the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins by February 1547: he was a "friend" or "witness" (v drushkakh) of Anastasia Romanovna when she married the tsar.⁴ Other guarantors were probably familiar as present or forthcoming okol'nichie to Turuntay Pronskey or his chief supporters: this holds for such signatories as F.M. Nagoy and F.G. Adashev.⁵ The central government agencies were exploited somewhat as a recruiting ground: the kaznachey F.I. Sukin was a guarantor, as were F.V. Ogarev, a d'yak of the grand prince in 1546-1547, and D.F. Gorin and M.V. Kozodavlev, who were also d'yaki.⁶ The connexions between Turuntay Pronskey and his most eminent backers, on the one hand, and some signatories, on the other hand, were more tenuous. A.Z. Satin's support was sought perhaps because F.G. Adashev's son Aleksey married a Satina.⁷ M.G. Dyatel Moshkov, another signatory, was perhaps a cousin, possibly even a brother of the d'yak A.G. Dyatel Moshkov.⁸ Still other guarantors were dark horses:

¹ The sureties organised on behalf of several boyars during the early 1560s included so many guarantors that the methods whereby guarantors were recruited cannot be analysed briefly. In March 1562, for instance, over one hundred courtiers were prepared to guarantee that Prince I.D. Bel'sky would not flee to Lithuania. SGGD I, Nos 175, 176, pp. 475-83. Why the number of guarantors participating in sureties grew so remarkably is unknown, but Ivan must have felt alarmed that so many courtiers would unite to oppose him. Veselovsky even affirmed that in instituting the Oprichnina he strove inter alia to resolve this dilemma in which the sureties placed him; strikingly, he forbade his oprichniki to act as guarantors in sureties for Muscovites outside the oprichnina. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, pp. 124-5.

² SGGD I, No. 166, p. 458.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 57.

⁴ RK, p. 10.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 60-1.

⁶ SGGD I, No. 166, p. 458; RK, pp. 100-3; S.B. Veselovsky, D'yaki i pod'yachie XV-XVII vv., Moscow, 1975, pp. 125, 249, 381.

⁷ Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 461.

⁸ Idem, D'yaki i pod'yachie, p. 349.

it is well-nigh impossible to demonstrate that Turuntay Pronsky had links of any kind with such backers as I.T. Khludenev, M.M. Starogo, M.F. and T.L. Glebov, and V.B. Kabakov.¹ Turuntay Pronsky's fate probably mattered little to them, and they were presumably conscripted by his most prominent supporters to bolster his cause.

Moreover, most "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century probably would have denied that their lineage's best interests were significantly compromised when they alienated lands they held. Many of them included in their testaments provisions indicating who was authorised to redeem lands they had alienated, and such authorisation was usually granted to only a few very close kinsfolk; the privilege was not given to more distant kinsmen.² For example, in "the year 7071 (1562-1563)" Prince D.I. Nemoy Obolensky, a boyar, stipulated in his testament that should he have children, they would be permitted to ransom a yotchina which he had donated to the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery; the same authorisation was not accorded his wife, his brother, or other kinsmen.³

Finally, we observe that amidst the hammer blows Ivan inflicted upon divers courtiers from the early 1560s onwards as he manifested his autocratic propensities, a number of "well-born" Muscovites showed themselves relatively unconcerned for their kinsmen in contexts where such attention would have been expected. The tsar served notice that reprisals against the kinsmen of fugitive boyars were eminently possible when the relative standing under the mestnichestvo system of Kurbsky's kinsmen was lowered substantially after he fled to Lithuania in April 1564.⁴ Hence it seems especially striking that during the Oprichnina at least seven members of princely or

¹ SGGD I, No. 166, p. 458.

² Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, pp. 108-9.

³ Ibid., p. 108.

⁴ V. supra, p. 180.

boyar lineages apparently contemplated quitting Muscovy.¹ We emphasise for balance sake, however, that most "well-born" Muscovites remained keenly concerned for the reputation of their lineages and the relative standing of its members even in the seventeenth century.²

Having digressed to explore the extent to which kinship ties were sociologically meaningful to "well-born" Muscovites of the mid-sixteenth century, we return to the inflation of honours evident after 1547, pointing out that it required Tsar Ivan to break with conventions hitherto regulating the appointment of boyars and okol'nichie. We have observed that he made nominations from branches of the princely and the boyar lineages within which the two highest service ranks were previously unrepresented; furthermore, the sequence of his appointments on occasion contravened seniority relations within families.³ These practices helped him to violate an established convention whereby the number of boyars and okol'nichie named from any one lineage was sharply limited.⁴ Moreover, whereas his father and his grandfather had ordinarily expected ten to fifteen years of service from courtiers before the okol'nichiy's rank was conferred, and twenty-five to thirty years of service before they could become boyars,⁵ he was ready to honour courtiers with much briefer service records. Kurbsky, for instance, was appointed boyar when he was approximately twenty-eight.⁶ And no lengthy wait was necessarily required before okol'nichie could become boyars. I.V.

1 The sureties organised for seven courtiers who contemplated fleeing from Muscovy during the Oprichnina are listed in Shumilov, Gosudarstvennoe drevlekhranilishche, pp. 108-16 passim. Other contemporary sureties are mentioned in archival inventories. H.W. Dewey and A.M. Kleimola, "Suretyship and Collective Responsibility in pre-Petrine Russia", JGOE N.F. 18 (1970), p. 351.

2 Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 65-81 passim.

3 V. supra, p. 76-7.

4 Cf. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 30.

5 Alef, "Reflections", p. 108; idem, "Aristocratic Politics", p. 86.

6 Idem, "Reflections", p. 108. Unfortunately, we seldom know precisely the ages of mid-sixteenth-century boyars and okol'nichie at their appointment: their birth dates are little known, although their death dates are more familiar.

Bol'shoy Sheremetev, for example, was named okol'nichiy by February 1549 and boyar later in the year.¹ In sum, the very meaning of the two highest service ranks changed significantly at mid-century. Under Ivan III and Vasily III they were honours granted sparingly to members of particular branches of princely and boyar lineages who had assembled lengthy service records, in the process following a cursus honorum;² after 1547 they became primarily personal favours from Tsar Ivan.

The marriage ties forged by the boyars and the okol'nichie appointed from 1547 on occasion provide a useful barometer of their political influence. If a courtier who, while "well-born", lacked an especially distinguished genealogy were to marry a woman whose genealogy was evidently more illustrious, he had to offer alternative inducements; otherwise, her kinsmen would not permit the marriage to proceed because it would seem injurious to their lineage's reputation.³ In the cases attested at mid-century where "well-born" courtiers married women of conspicuously more elevated birth, it was probably their influence vis-à-vis Ivan and their resulting capacity to obtain distinguished service appointments which rendered them acceptable to the kin of their brides: in particular, political clout could compensate for deficiencies of birth.⁴ The Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins are again the foremost example. Their genealogy, for "well-born" courtiers, was not especially renowned. In fact, when Ivan married Anastasia Romanovna in February 1547, one Rostov prince asserted that he had, in effect, married one of his slaves.⁵ Furthermore, the Kolychevs, while "well-born", hardly

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

² Alef, "Reflections", p. 108; *idem*, "Aristocratic Politics", p. 86.

³ *V. supra*, p. 70.

⁴ Crummey has conjectured that in the seventeenth century "well-born" Muscovite men whose birth was especially exalted often married women who while presumably "well-born", had a less distinguished genealogy but that the reverse situation infrequently arose. R.O. Crummey, "Reflections on Mestnichestvo in the 17th Century", *FOEG* 27 (1980), p. 275, n. 25. If Crummey is correct, then seventeenth-century "well-born" Muscovite men had less opportunity than their counterparts of the mid-sixteenth century to marry significantly above themselves.

⁵ Veselovsky, *Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny*, p. 132.

possessed a remarkably distinguished genealogy; yet in 1562 V.I. Umny Kolychev felt sufficiently confident of himself to initiate a mestnichestvo suit against D.R. Yur'ev.¹ Nonetheless, several Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins other than Anastasia Romanovna found spouses in the most prominent princely lineages. N.R. Yur'ev's second wife was a daughter of Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky.² V.M. Yur'ev married a sister of Prince I.D. Bel'sky.³ What is more, he thereby became a brother-in-law of M.Ya. Morozov, since Morozov married another sister of Bel'sky;⁴ thus, marriage ties bound the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and those of I.S. Moroz. When certain Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins made highly prestigious marriages, they were most likely regarded at court as showing themselves conspicuously, even flamboyantly successful, and this will have engendered resentment among various courtiers.⁵ When Ivan lay gravely ill in March 1553 and the throne succession was discussed at court, F.G. Adashev suggested with evident distaste that the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins would become Muscovy's real masters should he de cease and be succeeded by Tsarevich Dmitry.⁶ In fact, we might conjecture that Ivan allowed D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev to be eclipsed from the early-mid 1550s until the decade's end because they were regarded in influential quarters at court

¹ L.V. Cherepnin, ed., Gosudarstvennyy arkhiv Rossii XVI stoletiya: Opyt rekonstruktsii, 3 vols, Moscow, 1978, II, pp. 403-4.

² Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 155.

³ Ibid., p. 154.

⁴ Ibid., p. 201. It shows how easily M.Ya. Morozov circulated among "well-born" Muscovites of especially distinguished genealogy that when Princess M.P. Gorbataya Shuyskaya drafted her testament in 1551, he and Princes D.F. Paletsky and P.I. Shuysky were named executors. N.P. Likhachev, ed., Sbornik aktov sobrannykh v arkhivakh i bibliotekakh, 2 vyp., SPb, 1895, vyp. 1, No. VII, p. 23.

⁵ A similar inflation of honours occurred in England under James I and Charles I, and unlike the ranks of boyar and okol'nichiy in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy, peerages, knighthoods, and baronetcies were even sold. Stone, The Crisis, pp. 65-128. On present evidence, however, it is difficult to compare precisely the resentments evoked by the inflations of honours in Muscovy from 1547 and in early Stuart England: the pertinent sources for the Muscovite case are extremely scanty.

⁶ PSRL XIII, p. 530.

as having acquired excessive political clout.¹ But V.M. Yur'ev's political fortunes were reviving as the fifties ended, and this found expression when his daughter married Prince M.T. Cherkassky, as Tsaritsa Maria Magdalena's brother was known after he embraced Orthodoxy.²

In treating the political significance of the marriages contracted at mid-century by boyars and okol'niche together with members of their families, we raise implicitly the broader question of what influence in court politics was wielded by Tsar Ivan's nominees to these ranks. Only a general answer can be attempted here, the primary aim being to ascertain what relationship existed between conferment of the two highest service ranks and membership of the ruling oligarchy. The relationship cannot be described simply, for it varied substantially according to circumstances, but pertinent observations are nevertheless possible.

What were the implications of the great increase in the number of boyars and okol'niche from 1547? As the boyars and the okol'niche became considerably more numerous – reckoned together they numbered forty-odd or fifty-odd at mid-century³ – it became less feasible for them to operate as a college of exceptionally intimate advisers to Ivan on major questions of foreign and domestic policy; this lends support to the view that the boyars and the okol'niche constituted no aristocracy of influence. On the average, perhaps ten or fifteen boyars and okol'niche recruited from the princely and the boyar lineages belonged simultaneously to the ruling oligarchy; this figure corresponds approximately to the combined number of boyars and okol'niche before

¹ V. infra, p. 244.

² Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii oprichniny, p. 297. Veselovsky believed that this marriage probably came about in 1559. Ibid., pp. 297-8. Cherkassky's subsequent career shows what a boon close marriage ties to Ivan IV could be: he became sufficiently esteemed that in a diplomatic document of May 1570 he is mentioned before the oprichnina boyars. SIRIO LXXI, No. 24, p. 666.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 82.

the inflation of honours which began in 1547.¹ Moreover, if we affirm that the ruling oligarchy included twenty-odd or thirty-odd members at mid-century,² the boyars and the okol'nicie emerge as an especially frequent source of participants. But these service ranks are no easy guide to the political fortunes of their holders. Sometimes they imparted additional lustre to courtiers who had already entered the ruling oligarchy. In other cases they were awarded to courtiers not belonging to the ruling oligarchy, and the length of wait required before admission was gained fluctuated considerably; indeed, various nominees to these ranks seemingly never qualified. Still other boyars and okol'nicie, having found favour with Ivan and having entered the ruling oligarchy, subsequently forfeited his confidence and ceased to belong.

We can make useful generalisations as to which princely and boyar lineages contributed most heavily to the ruling oligarchy of the 1547-1564 period. An especially frequent source of members was those boyar lineages represented among the servitors of the Moscow grand princes before the reign of Dmitry Donskoy.³ The descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz are the most salient examples. Those boyar lineages first represented among the servitors of the Moscow rulers during Dmitry Donskoy's reign or afterwards only seldom supplied members of the ruling oligarchy. One such lineage which provided participants, however, was the Golovins, who were descended from Greeks who settled in Moscow as the fourteenth century ended.⁴ The Bel'sky, Bulgakov, Glinsky, and Mstislavsky princes, descendants of Lithuanian émigrés, all achieved representation within the ruling oligarchy for some part of the 1547-1564 period: in admitting them to his confidence, Ivan was probably concerned inter alia to

¹ Ibid.

² V. supra, p. 87.

³ In fact, Veselovsky affirmed that those boyar lineages provided exceptionally influential courtiers throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Veselovsky, Feodal'noe zemlevladienie, I, p. 85.

⁴ The Golovins are treated in idem, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 442-9 passim.

integrate them as fully as possible into the Muscovite political order.¹ Of the Rurikide princes, it was surely the Obolenskys and the Shuyskys who were most adept at maintaining representation within the ruling oligarchy at mid-century: its members frequently included Obolensky princes, and various Shuysky princes participated prominently before the early 1560s. The Yaroslavl' princes were well represented during the second half of the 1550s and the early 1560s. The Tver', the Ryazan', the Rostov, the Starodub, the Vorotynsk, and the Zvenigorod princes were included within the ruling oligarchy only briefly if at all. We emphasise that entry into the ruling oligarchy depended above all on Ivan's favour: detailed checking shows that those "well-born" courtiers closely related to Tsar Ivan through marriage ties were particularly successful at obtaining and retaining his confidence,² and the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins are not the only example.

In the remainder of this chapter, Tsar Ivan's appointments of boyars and okol'nichie from the princely and the boyar lineages between 1547 and 1564 will be surveyed. True, not all boyars and okol'nichie entered the ruling oligarchy. But it is important to identify those who did, and at least approximately to indicate the time of their membership; in the process, sundry courtiers already mentioned in the present chapter are shown to have belonged for some part of the 1547-1564 period. Furthermore, inasmuch as the extant evidence permits, an attempt will be made to identify the contexts where boyars and okol'nichie included within the ruling oligarchy most likely deployed their influence. Above all, however, this survey affords numerous examples revealing how crucial personal relations of one kind or another remained as dynamics of court politics at mid-century.

The importance of these relationships is exemplified by Anastasia Romanovna's marriage to Ivan IV in February 1547, which held weighty consequences for Muscovite

¹ Cf. Keep, Soldiers, p. 26.

² This is verified subsequently in the present chapter.

political history in the immediate and the more distant future alike. When the Muscovite throne lay vacant in 1613, her marriage into the Daniilovichi doubtless helped her grand-nephew Mikhail Romanov to be elected tsar; moreover, a foundation was laid in 1547 upon which fictions connecting the Romanov dynasty with the Daniilovichi could be built under the first Romanov tsars.¹ Yet from another perspective, the record of the courtiers attending the wedding ceremony clarifies considerably who was becoming exceptionally close to Ivan. The courtiers who attended were not numerous, and it is striking that D.R. Yur'ev and his first cousins V.M., I.M. Bol'shoy, and I.M. Men'shoy Yur'ev were all present.² Of the descendants of I.S. Moroz, M.Ya. Morozov and several Saltykovs were also in attendance.³ Further evidence of which way the wind was blowing came in February 1547 when D.R. Yur'ev was named okol'nichiy, and I.M. Bol'shoy Yur'ev a boyar.⁴ The former Yur'ev soon followed up this success by obtaining the post of Bol'shoy dvoretskiy;⁵ he might therefore be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. By the summer of 1547 V.M. Yur'ev had become the Tver' dvoretskiy,⁶ and hence might also be included within the ruling oligarchy. What is more, both Yur'evs had the opportunity to win backers within central government agencies.

In the first half of 1547, however, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins held no monopoly on the tsar's favour. His maternal uncles, Princes M.V. and Yu.V. Glinsky, were also marked as court favourites. They had maintained a fairly low profile among the

¹ Torke, Die staatsbedingte Gesellschaft, pp. 14-5. The attitude that a truly legitimate tsar had to arise from the Daniilovichi died hard. In a 1648 petition submitted by 600 strel'tsy to Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich, he was referred to fictitiously as Tsar Fedor Ivanovich's grandson. Ibid., p. 15.

² RK, pp. 10-1.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 59.

⁵ RK, pp. 110-1.

⁶ Ibid.

courtiers who jockeyed for power after their sister Elena died in April 1538, and it is difficult to establish precisely when they became especially close to Ivan. Platonov claimed that they were his most intimate counsellors between 1544 and 1546, but I.I. Smirnov correctly counters that they remained on the sidelines in the mid-forties.¹ Prince M.V. Glinsky was appointed boyar in January 1547, and when he was named konyushiy shortly afterwards, his membership of the ruling oligarchy was clear.² Prince Yu.V. Glinsky also became a boyar, perhaps at the beginning of 1547;³ he, too, may well have joined the ruling oligarchy, although the extant evidence on this point is inconclusive. When Ivan married Anastasia Romanovna, Prince Yu.V. Glinsky and his wife together with Prince M.V. Glinsky's wife were bedside attendants.⁴ Yet the Glinsky princes remained prominent only until the great Moscow fire of June 1547: Prince Yu.V. Glinsky was killed, and his brother fell from the ruling oligarchy.⁵ The stage was set for new actors.

The most ambitious descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz lost no time in consolidating their position. G.Yu. Zakhar'in, the tsaritsa's uncle, was named boyar by July 1547, and he remained in the capital with Prince Yury Vasil'evich as Ivan IV advanced towards Kolomna that summer;⁶ he might be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. I.G. Morozov, one of the most experienced administrators among the boyars, and I.I. Rudak Kolychev were also chosen to assist the tsar's brother and

¹ Platonov, Ivan Groznyy, p. 35; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 107.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 59; PSRL XIII, p. 451.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 59.

⁴ RK, p. 10.

⁵ The most graphic account of the overthrow of the Glinskys is found in an interpolation in the Tsarstvennaya kniga. PSRL XIII, pp. 455-7. But Kloss has remarked that the evidence of the interpolation must be approached with great caution because various of the alleged conspirators of June 1547 were probably mentioned to vilify them for their supposed misdeeds of the 1560s and the 1570s. Kloss, Nikonovskiy svod, pp. 254-6, 260-1.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 60; RK, p. 112.

therefore qualified for membership of the ruling oligarchy.¹ In fact, members of one or the other of the aforementioned lineages comprised half of the courtiers left in Moscow to oversee the realm during the summer of 1547.² This set a precedent for the remainder of 1540s and the 1550s inasmuch as the progeny of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz were frequently well represented among the courtiers who stayed in Moscow to govern the realm while Tsar Ivan was on campaign.³ Throughout the 1547-1564 period members of one or both lineages often accompanied him when he embarked on military expeditions, and this, too, was evident as early as July 1547 when of the nineteen courtiers known to have escorted him as he proceeded from Moscow towards Kolomna, five were descendants of A.I. Kobyla: these were D.R., N.R., and V.M. Yur'ev, together with S.V. and I.P. Yakovlev.⁴ When Prince Yury Vasil'evich married Iyuliana, daughter of Prince D.F. Paletsky, in September 1547, members of both lineages figured prominently among those courtiers who attended. I.G. Morozov was a "friend" or "witness" of Prince Yury Vasil'evich, and S.I. Morozov played a similar role vis-à-vis his bride.⁵ V.M. Yur'ev was a bedside attendant, as were the

¹ RK, p. 112.

² Ibid.

³ For example, when Ivan IV launched his Kazan' expedition of the winter of 1547-8, he left behind in Moscow with Prince Vladimir Andreevich the following members of these two lineages: I.G. Morozov, G.Yu. Zakhar'in, I.D. Shein, and I.I. Rudak Kolychev. Ibid., p. 115. Similarly, the courtiers left in the capital during the Kazan' campaign of the winter of 1549-50 included G.Yu. Zakhar'in, V.D. and I.D. Shein, Ya.A. Saltykov, and I.I. Rudak Kolychev. Ibid., p. 124. When Ivan advanced towards Kolomna in the summer of 1553, G.Yu. Zakhar'in remained in Moscow, and V.V. Morozov was left in Moscow during the campaign of the summer of 1555. Ibid., pp. 151-2. We stress that these courtiers all qualified for membership of the ruling oligarchy during those campaigns when they remained in Moscow to help in overseeing the realm.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 110-1.

⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

tsaritsa's mother and the wives of her brothers Daniil and Nikita.¹ F.I. Umny Kolychev, V.P. Yakovlev, and S.S. Morozov were also active participants.²

As the year 1547 ended and the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549 drew closer, the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz continued to receive marks of the tsar's favour. By December 1547 I.I. Umny Kolychev had replaced Prince M.V. Glinsky as konyushiy,³ and qualified for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy. Kolychev became an okol'nichiy in January 1549.⁴ D.R. Yur'ev was appointed boyar by March 1548, and V.M. Yur'ev was similarly honoured within a year.⁵ P.V. Morozov served as Ryazan' dvoretskiy from 1548 to 1550,⁶ and might accordingly be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. M.Ya. Morozov was an okol'nichiy from January 1549 until July 1549 when he was named boyar.⁷ L.A. Saltykov became Ivan's oruzhnichey in "the year 7057 (1548-1549)".⁸

Several of these courtiers began likewise to participate in Muscovite diplomacy as the 1540s ended. When envoys from Poland-Lithuania arrived in Moscow in January 1549 to discuss how best to maintain peace, V.M. Yur'ev and P.V. Morozov counted among the courtiers chosen to conduct negotiations on the Muscovite side.⁹ In

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid., pp. 11-2.

³ Ibid., p. 115.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63. The Kolychevs were well represented at mid-century amidst the boyars and the okol'nichie, and Veselovsky correctly affirmed that an important contributory factor was their sheer numbers. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 144.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 61, 63.

⁶ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", pp. 88-9.

⁷ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63.

⁸ Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 203.

⁹ SIRIQ LIX, No. 18, pp. 264-306 passim.

July 1549 P.V. Morozov along with M.Ya. Morozov and the d'yak I.M. Bakaka Karacharov were sent to confer with Sigismund Augustus concerning peace.¹

During the late 1540s, however, the influence which the most prominent progeny of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz wielded was diluted by sundry Ryurikide princes. The Suzdal' princes came somewhat out of the shadows, although they would become more influential during the 1550s. Prince F.I. Skopin Shuysky was included among the courtiers left in Moscow during the Kazan' campaign of the winter of 1547-1548² and hence qualified for the contemporary ruling oligarchy. Prince I.M. Shuysky, who had long participated in court politics, was at Ivan's side for much of that expedition.³ There were signs indicating that in the future, the Obolensky princes would have to be reckoned with. Prince F.I. Kashin Obolensky, for instance, was invited to Prince Yury Vasil'evich's wedding in September 1547.⁴ Nevertheless, the Obolenskys, too, came into their own only during the 1550s. Two other princes deserve particular mention. Prince M.I. Kubensky, a Yaroslavl' prince, was briefly eminent before he died in 1548.⁵ He remained in Moscow to help administer the realm while the tsar advanced towards Kolomna in the summer of 1547 and towards Kazan' in the winter of 1547-1548;⁶ he evidently belonged to the ruling oligarchy. Prince D.F. Paletsky, as Prince Yury Vasil'evich's father-in-law from September 1547,⁷ was

¹ Ibid., No. 19, pp. 307-32 passim. The delegation's task was probably sufficiently weighty for M.Ya. Morozov to be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy.

² RK, p. 115.

³ Ibid., pp. 113-4.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 11-2.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

⁶ RK, pp. 112, 115.

⁷ Paletsky's stock had evidently shot up considerably since October 1545 when he and sundry other courtiers were disgraced. The events of October 1545 are depicted in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 103-7.

favourably situated to enter the ruling oligarchy; alas, on present evidence it cannot be determined whether he did or did not.

It is clear, by contrast, that from 1547 various members of boyar lineages other than the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz were coming to the fore. The Karpovs, who were descended from the Fominsky princes,¹ are a noteworthy example. D.F. Karpov was the dvoretskiy of Dmitrov and Zvenigorod between 1547 and 1550² and might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. He was named an okol'nichiy in August 1550, the last Karpov to receive this rank.³ He attended the ceremonies surrounding Ivan IV's first wedding, Prince Yury Vasil'evich's wedding, and both of Prince Vladimir Andreevich's weddings.⁴ Other Karpovs were also present at these weddings, which lends support to the view that they were personae gratae at court without, it is true, showing them as members of the ruling oligarchy. V.S. Karpov was a "friend" or "witness" when Prince Yury Vasil'evich was married, and I.F. Karpov attended when Ivan married Anastasia Romanovna and when Prince Vladimir Andreevich wedded for the first time.⁵ The Staritsa prince's first wife was E.A. Nagaya, and the Nagoys were becoming prominent courtiers in the late 1540s, although it is questionable whether they entered the ruling oligarchy. In September 1549 M.Ya. Nagoy was named boyar,⁶ but it was the star of his son, F.M. Nagoy, which was most clearly in the ascendant. He was designated okol'nichiy between May and August 1547

¹ The descent of the Karpovs from the Fominsky princes, Smolensk princes represented among Ivan Kalita's servitors, is traced in Redkie istochniki II, pp. 40-1, 165-6. See also Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 359-67.

² Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 87.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64; Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 366.

⁴ RK, pp. 10-1, 14-5.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

and participated in receiving the aforementioned envoys from Poland-Lithuania in January 1549.¹ He accompanied the tsar on several military expeditions in the late 1540s and the early 1550s and sat near the bride at Prince Vladimir Andreevich's first wedding ceremony.² A.M. and B.M. Nagoy attended the festivities accompanying the tsar's first wedding and his brother's marriage.³ I.P. Fedorov, whose forbears were included among Ivan Kalita's servitors,⁴ had a more obviously distinguished court career in the late 1540s. He was implicated in the intrigues of Ivan's minority and was banished from Moscow in July 1546.⁵ However, he recouped his fortunes sufficiently to be named boyar between May and August 1547, and in 1549 he was appointed konyushiy,⁶ thereby gaining admission to the ruling oligarchy. I.P. Foma Golovin also deserves mention. He served as kaznachey in the late 1540s and the early 1550s,⁷ thus qualifying for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy. Furthermore, he attended Prince Vladimir Andreevich's first wedding.⁸ Yet he became an okol'nichiy only in the spring of 1555.⁹

Golovin's case illustrates that not all courtiers who might have influenced Ivan's foremost policy decisions were boyars or okol'nichie. Conversely, not all okol'nichie and boyars named in the late 1540s joined the ruling oligarchy quickly or at all. For

¹ Ibid., p. 60; SIRIO LIX, No. 18, pp. 266-7, 289, 298; v. supra, p. 234.

² RK, pp. 14, 110-2, 114-5, 127, 140-1.

³ Ibid., pp. 10-1.

⁴ Fedorov's forbears and their service record are represented in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 50-74.

⁵ Fedorov's role in the court intrigues of Ivan Grozny's minority is discussed in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 110-1, 116.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 60; RK, pp. 112-3, 122.

⁷ RK, pp. 122, 127, 138.

⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

⁹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

example, two princes of Pronsk, Princes I.I. Turuntay Pronsky and D.D. Pronsky, were among Tsar Ivan's first nominees as boyars after he was crowned: both became boyars in February 1549.¹ Prince I.I. Turuntay Pronsky was a "friend" or "witness" of Anastasia Romanovna at her wedding and of Prince Vladimir Andreevich at his second wedding; moreover, when Tsar Semen Kasaevich was married in November 1553, Turuntay Pronsky attended the celebrations.² He accompanied Ivan IV on several military expeditions.³ But he was not a leading participant in Muscovite diplomacy, even though he had a hand in receiving envoys from Poland-Lithuania in January 1563.⁴ True, he belonged to the ruling oligarchy in the mid-fifties – he signed the regulation of 18 January 1555 against brigandage – and in the early sixties – he numbered among Ivan's closest advisers in June 1563;⁵ otherwise, it is difficult convincingly to demonstrate that he belonged to the ruling oligarchy. Prince D.D. Pronsky seemingly never achieved membership. In fact, our information concerning his career reveals him primarily as a soldier: he participated in the Kazan' campaign of the winter of 1547-1548 and served as Smolensk namestnik between August 1549 and June 1550.⁶ While he is mentioned specifically among the boyars who attended the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549,⁷ his role cannot be established on present evidence. He died by the end of 1551.⁸ The career of I.I. Khabarov, a third boyar

¹ Ibid., p. 59.

² RK, pp. 10, 12-3, 15.

³ He was a voevoda who joined the tsar at Kolomna in June 1552 and June 1553. Ibid., pp. 135, 140-1.

⁴ SIRIO LXXI, No. 8, p. 139.

⁵ PRP IV, pp. 356-60; SIRIO LXXI, No. 8, pp. 148-9.

⁶ RK, pp. 112-4; Zimin, "Spisok namestnikov", p. 40.

⁷ Shmidt, "Prodolzhenie", p. 295.

⁸ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64.

appointed in 1547, is thinly depicted in the extant sources, and the available evidence allows us to include him within the ruling oligarchy only around the summer of 1555, when Tsar Ivan proceeded from Moscow to Kolomna: he numbered among the courtiers remaining in Moscow with Prince Yury Vasil'evich.¹ However, his membership of the ruling oligarchy proved relatively short-lived, for he apparently took the tonsure in 1556.²

Nor do the careers of the okol'nichie and the boyars appointed in 1549 mark them all as exceptionally influential in court politics. Prince Yu.I. Temkin Rostovsky, who became a boyar in April 1549,³ is a noteworthy example. He was a namestnik of Pskov in January 1548 and the namestnik of Smolensk from February until December 1558.⁴ Prestigious as these appointments were, however, he is not thereby shown as belonging to the ruling oligarchy, and in fact, he appears largely to have remained distant when important policy decisions were taken. His career indicates how weak the princes of Rostov were during the 1550s.⁵ Prince I.V. Pronsky was another boyar named in 1549 whose subsequent career was relatively unremarkable.⁶ True, he attended the royal wedding of February 1547 and joined the tsar at Vladimir during the Kazan' campaign of 1547-1548; moreover he was Ryazan' namestnik in May 1548.⁷ But even after he became a boyar in September 1549,⁸ he apparently did not enter the

¹ RK, pp. 151-2. The Khabarovs stemmed from the Dobrynsky boyar lineage, which was first represented among the Moscow boyars under Vasily I. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 291.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

³ Ibid., p. 61.

⁴ Idem, "Spisok namestnikov", pp. 37, 40.

⁵ R.G. Skrynnikov, "Oprichnaya zemel'naya reforma Groznogo 1565 g.", Iz 70 (1961), p. 243.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

⁷ RK, pp. 10-1, 112-3; Zimin, "Spisok namestnikov", p. 39.

⁸ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

ruling oligarchy, This also holds true for S.K. Zabolotsky, who became an okol'nichiy by the beginning of 1550.¹ While he proceeded to become a boyar in April 1552 and accompanied the tsar on several military campaigns in the mid-fifties,² his career, on balance, does not reveal him as wielding outstanding political clout.

Most of the boyars and the okol'nichie designated in 1549, however, were marked by their careers as coming to the fore. No fewer than three Obolensky princes were named boyars: Prince V.S. Serebryany Obolensky together with Princes D.I. and K.I. Kurlyatev.³ Serebryany Obolensky was probably honoured in conjunction with his service as Uglich dvoretskiy;⁴ certainly he might be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. That he was invited to Prince Vladimir Andreevich's first wedding is additional evidence suggesting that he was highly regarded at court.⁵ Prince D.I. Kurlyatev, a boyar since March 1549, also attended this wedding.⁶ Perhaps he already belonged to the ruling oligarchy;⁷ he clearly held membership later. Prince K.I. Kurlyatev died by 1551,⁸ and his career was accordingly cut short. Nevertheless, he could be included within the ruling oligarchy as the forties ended: he counted among

¹ Ibid., p. 63. The Zabolotskys were descended from the fourteenth-century prince Aleksandr Glebovich of Bryansk, whose sons numbered among Dmitry Donskoy's servitors. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 331-2.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63. Zabolotsky's career is recapitulated briefly in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 355.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

⁴ RK, pp. 120-1.

⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ It is tempting to explain Kurlyatev's appointment as boyar by asserting that he had already entered the ruling oligarchy as a confederate of Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr. We would add, however, that the chronology of Ivan Grozny's testimony connecting him with the famous pair is vague, and precisely when he made common cause with them is unknown. Cf. Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 31.

⁸ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64.

the courtiers left in Moscow when Tsar Ivan advanced towards Kazan' in late 1549.¹ These courtiers were by no means the only new boyars whose political fortunes were rising.² Prince I.F. Mstislavsky was honoured when his wife attended Prince Yury Vasil'evich's wedding, and he was favoured even more greatly when he was appointed boyar in November 1549;³ nevertheless, he entered the ruling oligarchy only rather later. A.A. Kvashnin, an okol'nichiy appointed in 1549, had already been in favour in February 1547, when he was invited to Ivan IV's first wedding; he also attended Prince Vladimir Andreevich's first wedding.⁴ He was an abiding member of the ruling oligarchy during the 1550s.

However greatly the tsar honoured the members of other lineages as the 1540s ended, the capacity of the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz to win favour was unimpaired. Both lineages continued to supply new okol'nichie and boyars. By January 1550 Ya.A. Saltykov had become an okol'nichiy, although his career in the early and the mid-fifties was unremarkable;⁵ he is not known to have penetrated the ruling oligarchy. P.V. Morozov became an okol'nichiy by August 1550, almost certainly in recognition of his services as Ryazan' dvoretskiy.⁶ V.V. Morozov was

¹ RK, p. 124.

² Prince P.M. Shchenyatev, a kinsman of the Bulgakovs, staged a comeback by the late forties. He had been embroiled in the court conflicts of Ivan IV's minority and was banished to Yaroslavl' after the Bel'sky clique lost power in 1542. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 93-4. He was again persona grata by September 1549: he was a "friend" or "witness" of Prince Vladimir Andreevich at the latter's first wedding. RK, p. 14. Moreover, he became a boyar in January 1550. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 62.

³ RK, pp. 11-2; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61. Mstislavsky was almost certainly helped to win favour inasmuch as his mother, like Ivan IV, was a grandchild of Ivan III, that is, he was a first cousin once removed of the tsar. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 192, n. 37.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63; RK, pp. 10-4. The Kvashnins were descended from I.R. Kvashnya, a boyar of Dmitry Donskoy. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 263.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63. Saltykov's career is summarized in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 202.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64.

similarly honoured in the summer of 1551, although his contemporary career does not reveal him as belonging to the ruling oligarchy.¹ Morozov's kinsman I.M. Veshnyakov was Ivan IV's gentleman-of-the-bedchamber from "the year 7060 (1551-1552)" to "the year 7069 (1560-1561)".² He was strategically positioned to influence the tsar's decisions, and since he was a signatory to the regulation of 18 January 1555 against brigandage,³ he could be included within the ruling oligarchy of the mid-fifties. I.V. Bol'shoy Sheremetev was named okol'nichiy by January 1549 and boyar later in the year.⁴ He subsequently played an evident role in the central government. For instance, when envoys from the Kazan' khanate petitioned Tsar Ivan in October 1551 that Muscovy's eastern border be readjusted, he ordered Sheremetev along with Aleksey Adashev and I.M. Viskovaty to draft a refusal.⁵ In April 1551 Sheremetev's kinsman Z.P. Yakovlev was also designated boyar, although he is yet another nominee whose career was seemingly otherwise undistinguished.⁶

In fact, while boyars longer engaged in court politics continued to discharge important tasks,⁷ the influence apparently exerted by the foremost Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins peaked during the first half of the 1550s. D.R. Yur'ev, as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy, was particularly favourably situated to influence the revision of the judicial and the fiscal

¹ Ibid., Morozov's career is treated in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 201.

² Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 197.

³ PRP IV, pp. 356-60.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 61.

⁵ PSRL XIII, p. 172.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64. Yakovlev's career is depicted in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 153-4.

⁷ For instance, Prince A.D. Rostovsky, a boyar since 1542, was among those courtiers left in Moscow to oversee the realm when Ivan IV advanced towards Kazan' in the late autumn of 1549; he is therefore assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 57; RK, p. 124. I.P. Fedorov was chosen to conduct negotiations with Derbysh Ali, the Astrakhan' khan, in October 1551. SGGD II, No. 39, pp. 47-50.

immunities enjoyed by sundry monasteries in respect of various of their estates which was conducted in May 1551.¹ Confirmation that Yur'ev remained within the ruling oligarchy – and that Prince I.M. Shuysky had entered it – came in December 1552 when a Lithuanian envoy embarking for Muscovy was exhorted to confer with these two courtiers and Metropolitan Makary in the hope that they could be persuaded to exert pressure upon the tsar to maintain peace with Sigismund Augustus.² D.R. Yur'ev is shown as dvoretskiy of Moscow and Kazan' between January and March 1553.³ At the same time, when Ivan sent an envoy to Poland-Lithuania, the accompanying documents were drafted by Yur'ev and Prince I.M. Shuysky.⁴ When a mestnichestvo dispute erupted between Ivan Plev and B.I. Saltykov in 1554, Yur'ev and Shuysky were summoned to adjudicate.⁵ V.M. Yur'ev played a prominent role in Muscovite diplomacy consistent with his eminent standing within the ruling oligarchy. In August 1553 he was sent together with the okol'nichiy I.M. Vorontsov, the kaznachey F.I. Sukin, and the d'yak Ishak Bukharin to meet with the envoys of Sigismund Augustus, and in January 1554 he was dispatched to Poland-Lithuania in an attempt to resolve

¹ But Yur'ev's role in the revision has evoked scholarly debate. Sadikov claimed that he participated directly; this conclusion, while challenged by I.I. Smirnov, has been accepted by Nosov. Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 264-5; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 208-11; Nosov, Stanovlenie, Chapter II passim, especially pp. 211, 227-31. But Nazarov has claimed more recently that Yur'ev absented himself from Moscow for much of 1551 and that paleographical analysis of the charters issued as the revision was conducted also suggests other authors. Nazarov, "Iz istorii", pp. 80-1. Yet even if Nazarov's arguments are accepted, we should not deduce either that Yur'ev was indifferent to the privileges of ecclesiastical landholders or that Ivan was ignorant of his attitudes. On present evidence Yur'ev's part in the revision remains unclear.

² SIRIO LIX, No. 24, p. 364.

³ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 82.

⁴ SIRIO LIX, No. 25, p. 370.

⁵ Ivanov, "Mestnichestvo", p. 88.

amicably the differences between the two realms; he remained dvoretskiy of Tver' when he embarked on the last-mentioned mission.¹

Yet by 1554 D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev had passed the zenith of their influence. The last extant legislative act where D.R. Yur'ev is mentioned as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy is dated 30 April 1554.² He is cited with this title for some time afterwards in the military service registers, but in practice he had ceased to be Ivan's majordomo.³ In fact, three immunity charters were issued in the first half of 1555 at Aleksey Adashev's behest, although it would be injudicious to conclude that he had, in effect, succeeded Yur'ev as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy.⁴ While V.M. Yur'ev signed the regulation of 18 January 1555 to combat brigandage and might therefore be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy, his base of support, like his first cousin's, was being eroded: by November 1554 N.A. Funikov Kurtsev had replaced him as Tver' dvoretskiy.⁵ Both of the leading Yur'evs also began to play a considerably reduced role in Muscovite diplomacy. The Muscovite boyars did not mention D.R. Yur'ev in correspondence they dispatched to Lithuania in 1555, and military assignments took him away from Moscow at least three times.⁶ V.M. Yur'ev was in the former Kazan' khanate from 1556 until 1558.⁷ Certainly both of the leading Yur'evs fell from the ruling oligarchy after the mid-fifties.

¹ SIRIQ LIX, No. 27, p. 390, No. 28, pp. 420-4. The tasks discharged by D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev during the first half of the 1550s, while less varied than those Aleksey Adashev undertook throughout his career, also reveal a lack of specialisation.

² Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 83.

³ RK, pp. 147, 150, 153; Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 83.

⁴ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", pp. 83-4. Two of these charters number among those mentioned supra, p. 189, n. 4.

⁵ PRP IV, pp. 356-60; Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 87.

⁶ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 83.

⁷ Ibid., p. 86.

It seems doubtful whether the decline in the political fortunes of D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev can be considered typical of the descendants of A.I. Kobyla. Shortly before the star of the two Yur'evs waned, their kinsmen played an active role at court and in the central government. In February 1552 F.I. Umny Kolychev participated in receiving a delegation sent to Moscow by Sigismund Augustus, and by the following summer he attained the rank of stol'nik.¹ In 1553 G.Yu. Zakhar'in belonged to a curia of seven boyars charged with ruling Moscow.² Around the same time I.V. Bol'shoy Sheremetev performed the tasks of the Tver' dvoretskiy even though he is not entered in the list of dvoretskie;³ he is thus included within the ruling oligarchy. He signed the regulation of 18 January 1555 against brigandage;⁴ he clearly qualified for membership. What is more, during the second half of the 1550s the kinsmen of D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev continued to receive signs of Ivan IV's favour.

The descendants of I.S. Moroz were also represented among the courtiers to whom the tsar showed preference during the early-mid 1550s. True, M.Ya. Morozov was less prominent than he had been previously: in particular, he failed to qualify for membership of the ruling oligarchy. He was not especially active in either diplomacy or the central government agencies during the early 1550s.⁵ Indeed, only in the early 1560s did he once more continuously discharge responsible tasks for Ivan, and even then he was effectively distanced from the struggles at court.⁶ Several of his kinsmen

¹ SIRIO LIX, No. 23, p. 355; PSRL XIII, p. 198.

² Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 114, n. 2.

³ Florya, "Neskol'ko zamechaniy", p. 56.

⁴ PRP IV, pp. 356-60.

⁵ Morozov joined the high table at the feast accompanying Tsar Semen Kasaevich's wedding in November 1553. RK, pp. 12-3. But this invitation, while distinguished, does not reveal him as one of Ivan's trusted lieutenants.

⁶ Morozov served as voevoda of Smolensk in the early 1560s and as namestnik of Yur'ev and its environs for a stint after the spring of 1564, and Grobovsky justifiably observes that these responsible posts mark him as enjoying Ivan's trust. Grobovsky, The "Chosen Council", pp. 89-91.

were more obviously coming to the fore during the first half of the 1550s and afterwards. L.A. Saltykov discharged the duties of the Dmitrov dvoretskiy in the spring and the summer of 1553, and probably in this connexion he was named okol'nichiy in June 1553;¹ he thus belonged to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. He might again be assigned membership by early 1556 when he acted as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy, and he continued to serve in that capacity until 1564; in no extant source is D.R. Yur'ev alluded to as Bol'shoy dvoretskiy after 1557.² In June 1553 P.V. Morozov was named boyar,³ although he does not appear subsequently to have joined the ruling oligarchy.

The Suzdal' princes also became increasingly conspicuous during the first half of the 1550s. We have already observed that by December 1552 Prince I.M. Shuysky qualified for inclusion,⁴ and he counted among the tsar's most trusted advisers until 1560. Prince P.I. Shuysky, who had been implicated in the court conflicts of the mid-forties and was subjected briefly to disgrace in October 1545, nevertheless recouped himself sufficiently to be named boyar in July 1550.⁵ This was merely one in a lengthy series of illustrious appointments he received; however, his assignments frequently took him away from Moscow, and membership of the ruling oligarchy is difficult to justify. For instance, in the autumn of 1552 he and his kinsman Prince A.B. Gorbaty

Nevertheless, while he was hardly in disgrace, he was precluded from participating regularly in the policy debates of the capital.

¹ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 88; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 66.

² Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 84.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 66.

⁴ V. supra, p. 243. After I.G. Morozov died in 1554, Shuysky, appointed in October 1538, became the senior boyar. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 55. Shuysky's career and in particular, his involvement with the court conflicts of Tsar Ivan's minority are touched upon in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 28, 30, 91, 94-5, 98, 102, 151-2, 173-4, 181, 184, 189, 197, 200, 205, 272.

⁵ Prince Petr Ivanovich's part in the court struggles of the mid-forties is discussed in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 103; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 63.

Shuysky were named governors of the newly-conquered Kazan' khanate.¹ Prince F.I. Skopin Shuysky numbered among the courtiers remaining in Moscow to oversee the realm while the tsar led expeditions to Kolomna in the summers of 1553 and 1555;² he evidently belonged to the ruling oligarchy.

The Obolensky princes were also represented within the ruling oligarchy during the first half of the 1550s. Prince D.I. Nemoy Obolensky, a boyar from the summer of 1552, was the dvoretskiy of Dmitrov in October 1553 and therefore qualified for inclusion.³ So, too, did Princes D.I. Kurlyatev and V.S. Serebryany Obolensky, who signed the regulation of 18 January 1555 to combat brigandage.⁴

Certain courtiers belonging to still other princely or boyar lineages occupied a noteworthy role in the central government agencies and diplomacy during the first half of the 1550s. I.M. Vorontsov clearly enjoyed Tsar Ivan's favour when he was named okol'nichiy by the summer of 1552 and boyar in 1554.⁵ He is marked as belonging to the ruling oligarchy of the mid-fifties: he was a signatory to the regulation of 18 January 1555 against brigandage, and in May 1555 he joined Prince D.I. Kurlyatev in leading the incipient Razboynnyy prikaz.⁶ In the summer of 1553 he and A.D. Basmanov Pleshcheev met with envoys from Sigismund Augustus.⁷ Basmanov Pleshcheev, too, was shown Ivan's favour in the first half of the 1550s; he was an

¹ PRSL XIII, pp. 221-2.

² RK, pp. 141, 151-2. Skopin Shuysky had been a boyar since 1543 and participated in the court conflicts of the tsar's minority. Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 57; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 98-9, 103, 106.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 64; Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 88.

⁴ PRP IV, pp. 356-60.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 64, 67. Vorontsov was another survivor of the court clashes of the mid-1540s. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 110, 112-3, 116.

⁶ PRP IV, pp. 356-60; Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 162.

⁷ SIRIQ LIX, No. 27, pp. 381-420 passim.

okol'nichiy in September 1552 and became a boyar in 1555.¹ However, he entered the ruling oligarchy only later. The Bulgakov princes were well represented in the ruling oligarchy from the early-mid 1550s. Princes F.A. Kurakin Bulgakov and M.I. Golitsa Bulgakov were marked as members in the summer of 1553 inasmuch as they were boyars who remained in Moscow to help in governing Muscovy when Tsar Ivan proceeded towards Kolomna.² Prince Yu.M. Bulgakov qualified for membership when he signed the regulation of 18 January 1555 to combat brigandage.³ In November 1555 Prince I.A. Kurakin Bulgakov took charge of the Razboynyy prikaz and might therefore be included within the ruling oligarchy; in 1556 he became a boyar.⁴ A.A. Kvashnin entered the ruling oligarchy by the summer of 1553 when he, too, was left in Moscow to assist in governing the realm during Ivan's Kolomna campaign.⁵ Furthermore, he retained his membership during the middle of the decade when he was the Dmitrov dvoretskiy.⁶ I.P. Fedorov remained Ivan's konyushi in the summer of 1553;⁷ he is thus marked as enjoying continuing membership of the ruling oligarchy.

The list of invitees to Prince Vladimir Andreevich's second wedding in April 1555 affords further insights into which lineages and courtiers enjoyed favour in the mid-fifties. Several observations are appropriate. The descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz were represented: in fact, M.V. Yakovlev, who had recently become an

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 64, 67.

² RK, p. 141.

³ PRP IV, pp. 356-60.

⁴ Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 162; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

⁵ RK, pp. 141-2.

⁶ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 88.

⁷ RK, p. 141.

okol'nichiy, was a "friend" or "witness" of the bride.¹ But strikingly, however, neither D.R. nor V.M. Yur'ev appears to have attended: this presumably reflects the decline in their political fortunes. Of recent or present members of the ruling oligarchy, Princes F.I. Skopin Shuysky, D.I. Nemoy Obolensky, and Yu.M. Bulgakov together with I.M. Vorontsov were all present; so, too, was Yu.M. Vorontsov, who had lately become a boyar.² Prince I.F. Mstislavsky was another invitee,³ even though he probably did not belong to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. Still another participant was Prince I.D. Bel'sky's wife.⁴ This presaged Bel'sky's rapid rise to favour in the early 1560s when he counted among the foremost members of the ruling oligarchy. But on present evidence it is difficult to ascertain what role Bel'sky played when important policy decisions were taken in the second half of the 1550s.

As the 1550s wore on, Ivan IV repeatedly expressed trust in the Suzdal' princes, and they were visibly represented within the ruling oligarchy. When he conducted his celebrated review of the Muscovite army at Serpukhov in June 1556, Princes I.M. Shuysky, F.I. Skopin Shuysky, and A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky remained in Moscow to help in overseeing the realm.⁵ When the tsar went to Kolomna in the summer of 1557, Princes I.M. Shuysky and A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky were again chosen to remain in Moscow, and it was intended that they should assist Prince Yury Vasil'evich in governing Moscow during the campaign to the southern borderlands

¹ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67; RK, pp. 15-6.

² RK, p. 15; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 67.

³ RK, p. 15.

⁴ Ibid. Prince I.D. Bel'sky was the son of Prince D.F. Bel'sky, a long-time boyar who had been close to the court warfare of Ivan IV's minority and who died by the end of 1551; the last-mentioned Bel'sky's career is traced in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 34-5, 37-9, 43-4, 102, 157, 170-3, 175, 186. Prince I.D. Bel'sky apparently distinguished himself during the second half of the 1550s primarily as a military commander. His military undertakings of that time are indicated in RK, pp. 150, 153, 156, 162-3, 167, 178, 180, 183.

⁵ RK, p. 159.

which was planned for the summer of 1559 although not executed.¹ But during the second half of the 1550s the Suzdal' princes seemingly did not hold distinguished posts within the central government agencies; nor did they play an eminent role in diplomacy.

By 1559 there were signs indicating that the fortunes of the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz were mending. The list of courtiers who were to remain in Moscow with Prince Yury Vasil'evich that summer in Ivan's absence included V.M. Yur'ev, V.P. Yakovlev, and V.V. Morozov, who might all be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy; neither lineage was apparently represented among the courtiers left in Moscow during the tsar's expeditions of 1556 and 1557.² But even earlier the progeny of A.I. Kobyla were remarkably successful in obtaining the ranks of okol'nichiy and boyar. S.V. Sheremetev is attested as Novgorod dvoretskiy in 1555, and we include him within the ruling oligarchy; he became an okol'nichiy in 1556-1557.³ S.V. Yakovlev was named okol'nichiy in January 1557.⁴ N.V. Sheremetev and I.P. Yakovlev were appointed okol'nichie in 1557 and boyars in 1558.⁵ N.R. Yur'ev, the tsar's brother-in-law, was a stol'nik in June 1556 and an okol'nichiy in 1559.⁶ Grigory Kolychev was also a stol'nik in June 1558.⁷ F.I. Umny Kolychev became an okol'nichiy in January 1558, as did I.V. Men'shoy Sheremetev in the following summer; the last-mentioned became a boyar at the end of 1558.⁸ The descendants of I.S. Moroz were less successful in obtaining the two highest service

¹ Ibid., pp. 163, 182.

² Ibid., pp. 159, 163.

³ DAI I, No. 67, p. 127; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 68.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 68.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ RK, p. 158; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 69.

⁷ PSRL XIII, p. 299.

⁸ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 68.

ranks in the late fifties. In fact, the only known appointee from them was Ya.A. Saltykov, who became a boyar in 1558.¹ Yet even after he was elevated, he apparently remained a shadowy figure.

Several Obolensky princes evidently attracted Tsar Ivan's attention during the second half of the fifties. Prince I.V. Gorensky Obolensky became a boyar in 1555 and remained in Moscow to share in overseeing the realm as Ivan went to Kolomna during the summer of 1557;² the Obolensky prince might therefore be included within the contemporary ruling oligarchy. Prince M.P. Repnin Obolensky is evidenced as a stol'nik in June 1556, and became a boyar in March 1559, possibly because of notable military service.³

The Yaroslavl' princes were even more conspicuous recipients of Ivan IV's favour from the mid-fifties. We have already remarked that Prince A.M. Kurbsky, the most celebrated of the contemporary Yaroslavl' princes, was named boyar in 1556 and that he belonged to the ruling oligarchy when the wisdom of a Livonian war was debated at court, perhaps earlier.⁴ Moreover, Prince I.M. Troekurov became a boyar, possibly in 1554, and he subsequently qualified for inclusion within the ruling oligarchy inasmuch as he numbered among the courtiers chosen to remain in Moscow during several of the tsar's expeditions to the southern borderlands.⁵ Prince D.S. Shestunov became an okol'nichiy in 1557, and Prince I.V. Penkov became a boyar approximately simultaneously.⁶ Prince V.A. Sitsky became an okol'nichiy in March

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid., p. 67; RK, p. 163.

³ RK, p. 158; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 68-9. Repnin Obolensky's military service before he became a stol'nik is portrayed in RK, pp. 123, 128, 142, 148.

⁴ V. supra, p. 199.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 66-7; RK, pp. 159, 163, 182.

⁶ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 68; Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 113, n. 1.

1559, probably in reward for his services as Ryazan' dvoretskiy;¹ he might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. By the decade's end Prince V.A. Bol'shoy Velikogo-Gagin had also become an okol'nichiy.²

Still other courtiers were marked as ascendant stars by the favours they received from the tsar during the second half of the fifties. Prince V.M. Glinsky is attested as a stol'nik in June 1556;³ he became prominent during the early 1560s. M.I. Voronoy Volynsky had become the dvoretskiy of Kazan' and Nizhniy Novgorod by "the year 7066 (1557-1558)".⁴ He became a boyar by February 1561,⁵ and we include him within the ruling oligarchy of the late fifties and the early sixties. Prince D.I. Khilkov Starodubsky was apparently another regional dvoretskiy in the second half of the fifties, although the extant evidence does not indicate clearly which regional dvorets he headed.⁶ Probably in this connexion he was appointed boyar in 1558;⁷ he might tentatively be included within the ruling oligarchy of the late fifties. He was the only Starodub prince among the boyars of the early 1560s.⁸

Certain courtiers are noteworthy not so much because they were entering the limelight as because they continued to be prominent. The Bulgakov princes are an important illustrating example. Princes Yu.M. Bulgakov and F.A. Kurakin Bulgakov maintained themselves within the ruling oligarchy: the first-mentioned stayed in

¹ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 113, n. 1. Prince V.A. Sitsky was Ivan's brother-in-law inasmuch as he married Tsaritsa Anastasia's sister Anna. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 130.

² Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 113, n. 1.

³ RK, p. 158.

⁴ Ibid., p. 170.

⁵ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70.

⁶ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 88.

⁷ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 113, n. 1.

⁸ Ibid., p. 197.

Moscow with Prince Yury Vasil'evich while Ivan journeyed to Serpukhov in June 1556, and the second-mentioned remained in the capital during the campaign of the summer of 1557.¹ The tsar showed further preferment to the Bulgakovs when he named Princes D.A. Kurakin Bulgakov and P.A. Kurakin Bulgakov boyars in the summer of 1559.² A.A. Kvashnin was repeatedly among the courtiers left in Moscow during the second half of the 1550s when Ivan was absent and might therefore be assigned to the ruling oligarchy.³ I.M. Vorontsov continued to participate in Muscovite diplomacy: in 1556 he, together with the kaznachey F.I. Sukin and the d'yak Boris Shchekin, was ordered to convey Ivan's assent to an armistice in the war with Sweden which had begun in 1554.⁴ And A.D. Basmanov Pleshcheev was active in the negotiations which ended this war in 1557;⁵ he entered the ruling oligarchy, however, only in the 1560s.

It has been pointed out that 1560 constituted a watershed in Muscovite political history inasmuch as Ivan IV underwent complex psychological changes which rendered him considerably more suspicious of his courtiers and much readier to inflict savageries upon them and inasmuch as Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr, his foremost advisers since the late 1540s, fell from favour.⁶ We might justifiably enquire: were changes similarly evident in his appointments of boyars and okol'nichie from the princely and the boyar lineages and in the contributions these lineages made to the composition of the ruling oligarchy? In answer to the first query, we note that sundry boyars and okol'nichie were selected from lineages already supplying them at mid-

¹ RK, pp. 159, 163.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 68-9.

³ RK, pp. 159, 163.

⁴ PSRL XIII, p. 272.

⁵ SIRIQ CXXIX, No. 2, pp. 23-49 passim.

⁶ V. supra, pp. 181, n. 4, 188.

century; certain appointees, however, were chosen from branches within these lineages which were unrepresented before 1560 within the two highest service ranks. Still other nominees were recruited from lineages not previously supplying boyars and okol'niche from 1547 onwards. But more strikingly, Ivan showed himself rather less willing than before 1560 to appoint a large number of boyars and okol'niche from any one lineage: this hindered the growth of powerful blocs amidst the highest-ranking servitors which could offer him opposition. As for the second query, detailed consideration of which lineages and courtiers were included within the ruling oligarchy of the early 1560s will be attempted shortly; a broader perspective relating to the most fundamental theme of this dissertation, the ambiguities surrounding the nature of Ivan's authority at mid-century and his attempts to resolve them, will be adopted. Amidst the inflation of honours which occurred from 1547 onwards, the boyars and the okol'niche Ivan nominated were, like the officials of a "typical votchinnik" on his estate, primarily personal appointments.¹ In fact, the tsar trusted various appointees sufficiently to delegate significant authority to them, and they are included within the ruling oligarchy. Such delegations of authority continued after 1560; yet they contrasted stridently with the yearning to exercise the undivided authority of an autocrat Ivan expressed in his letter of 5 July 1564 to Kurbsky.² In sum, the existence of a ruling oligarchy during the early 1560s, as Tsar Ivan displayed his autocratic propensities, threw into relief the ambiguities bedeviling the nature of his authority; furthermore, the oligarchic traditions of Muscovite court politics were strong enough for the contradiction not to be removed easily.

The descendants of A.I. Kobyla and in particular, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins afford salient examples of courtiers Ivan IV apparently believed he could entrust with weighty assignments during the early 1560s. Of the eight members of the regency council

¹ V. supra, p. 80.

² Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 16.

established around 1562 to rule for Tsarevich Ivan should he succeed his father, no fewer than four were descendants of A.I. Kobyla: D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev, I.P. Yakovlev, and F.I. Umny Kolychev;¹ these all might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy. D.R. Yur'ev was approximately simultaneously Tver dvoretskiy.² When the tsar led an expedition to Mozhaysk in May 1562, he entrusted his children to D.R., N.R., and V.M. Yur'ev, V.P. Yakovlev, and Prince V.I. Sitsky.³ Both D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev participated actively in the negotiations of the early sixties with envoys from Poland-Lithuania when attempts were made to terminate the Livonian conflict.⁴ Nor were the two leading Yur'evs the only members of their lineage to play a noteworthy role in Muscovite diplomacy. I.P. Yakovlev, for instance, participated in receiving envoys from Poland in November 1562 and February 1563, and F.I. Umny Kolychev had a hand in receiving the latter delegation.⁵ If, as is claimed in the Piskarev Chronicle, V.M. Yur'ev was one of the two courtiers who persuaded Ivan to introduce the Oprichnina, then he might be included within the ruling oligarchy as the Oprichnina drew nigh.⁶

Yet the court favourite of the early 1560s was not a Yur'ev-Zakhar'in but rather Prince I.D. Bel'sky, who became a boyar in 1560.⁷ Of all Ivan's courtiers, he surely participated most regularly in receiving envoys from Poland-Lithuania during the first

¹ SGGD I, No. 174, pp. 474-5.

² SIRIO LXXI, No. 5, p. 71.

³ PSRL XIII, p. 341.

⁴ SIRIO LXXI, No. 3, pp. 33-4, No. 5, p. 74, No. 6, pp. 89-91, 94, 102, No. 7, p. 121, No. 8, pp. 138-9, No. 12, pp. 197, 199, 201, 274.

⁵ Ibid., No. 6, pp. 89-94 passim, No. 7, pp. 121-31 passim.

⁶ PSRL XXXIV, p. 190. But the Piskarev Chronicle's testimony concerning mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics must be approached reservedly. The chronicle was written at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and its account of Ivan Grozny's reign depends upon oral traditions and other sources equally difficult to identify. M.N. Tikhomirov, "Piskarevskiy letopisets kak istoricheskiy istochnik o sobytiyakh XVI-nachala XVII v.", IS 1957, No. 3, pp. 112, 114.

⁷ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70.

half of the 1560s.¹ His name was usually the first mentioned when lists of boyars active in the negotiations were drawn up, and more than once he was sought out by delegations from Poland-Lithuania;² he is therefore marked as belonging to the ruling oligarchy. He proceeded to have a distinguished career during the Oprichnina.

Prince V.M. Glinsky was another courtier whose star was in the ascendant, although he rose to prominence less rapidly than did his father in the first half of 1547;³ nor did he become Ivan IV's chief counsellor. Glinsky became a boyar around the beginning of 1562, and he is specifically mentioned among the tsar's most intimate advisers of February 1563;⁴ we therefore include him among the ruling oligarchy. He played a noteworthy part in Muscovite diplomacy during the early sixties: for example, in November 1562 he helped to receive emissaries from Poland, and in December 1563 he participated in negotiations with a Lithuanian delegation.⁵

While Princes I.D. Bel'sky and V.M. Glinsky together with D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev were conspicuously successful in currying Tsar Ivan's favour, the political fortunes of the Suzdal' princes were ebbing.⁶ Prince I.M. Shuysky ceased to hold the boyar's rank in 1560.⁷ Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky was eclipsed during the early

¹ SIRIO LXXI, No. 3, p. 26, No. 5, p. 74, No. 6, pp. 89-90, 94, No. 7, p. 121, No. 8, p. 139, No. 12, p. 197.

² E.g. ibid., No. 6, p. 89, No. 8, pp. 138-9.

³ V. supra, p. 232. Glinsky was Ivan IV's first cousin – his father, Prince M.V. Glinsky, was, we repeat, the tsar's uncle – and this probably helped him to win favour in the early sixties.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 71; SIRIO LXXI, No. 7, p. 125.

⁵ SIRIO LXXI, No. 7, pp. 86-120 passim, No. 12, pp. 187-302 passim.

⁶ Yet even in 1559 (Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 274) or 1560 (Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70) Prince A.I. Nogtev Suzdal'sky became a boyar; his branch of the Suzdal' princes was hitherto not especially influential.

⁷ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 69. But he did not die: he is mentioned in a document of 1562-3 as donating land to the Suzdal' Spaso-Efim'ev Monastery. A.A. Zimin, "Khronologicheskiy perechen' aktov arkhiva suzdal'skogo Spaso-Evfim'eva monastyrya (1506-1612 gg.)", in AE za 1962 god, Moscow, 1963, No. 145, p. 380.

1560s.¹ Prince P.I. Shuysky, respected administrator and general though he was, passed too much time away from Moscow continuously to be engaged in court politics: after the Muscovite army conquered Polotsk in February 1563, for instance, he was appointed one of the voevody of the newly-won territory.² As the Oprichnina approached, the Shuyskys were eliminated from the ruling oligarchy and were, in fact, a spent force.³

We have observed that the Obolenskys were dealt several hard blows during the first half of the 1560s;⁴ nevertheless, over the shorter run they were more adroit than the Shuyskys at obtaining marks of preferment from Tsar Ivan. In 1562, for example, Prince P.I. Gorensky Obolensky was named to the regency council which would rule if he died;⁵ Gorensky Obolensky thus qualified for membership of the ruling oligarchy.

The Yaroslavl' princes, on the other hand, continued to be influential without suffering the calamities which befell the Obolenskys. Two of the three courtiers charged with administering Prince Yury Vasil'evich's udel after April 1560 – Princes A.I. Prozorovsky and D.S. Shestunov – were Yaroslavl' princes; we include them within the ruling oligarchy.⁶ In the early sixties Prince V.I. Sitsky belonged to a

¹ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 149.

² PSRL XIII, p. 363.

³ Thus, by 1564 the Bel'skys, represented by Prince I.D. Bel'sky, had, in effect, emerged victorious from the old struggles for influence the Bel'skys and the Shuyskys waged during Ivan IV's minority. Why the Shuyskys lost favour during the early sixties is unknown.

⁴ V. supra, p. 181.

⁵ Strictly speaking, Gorensky Obolensky should not be mentioned here because he was neither boyar nor okol'nichiy during the 1547-64 period. Nevertheless, we refer to him to achieve a balanced treatment of the Obolenskys' political fortunes during the early sixties. He was a dumnyy dvoryanin in March 1564. N.P. Likhachev, "Dumnoe dvoryanstvo", p. 10. The dumnye dvoryane are discussed infra pp. 265-6.

⁶ Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, p. 151. The third courtier in question was Prince I.A. Kurakin Bulgakov. Ibid. We include all three within the ruling oligarchy since they succeeded, in effect, the Uglich dvoretские, who were admissible members.

committee of courtiers whose task was to supervise the tsarevichi.¹ Prince I.M. Khvorostinin became an okol'nichiy in 1562.²

A few other princes should be accorded special attention. Prince I.F. Mstislavsky was named to the regency council in 1562 and might therefore be assigned to the ruling oligarchy.³ In 1561 Prince P.I. Telyatevsky was named boyar, representing the Tver' princes within the highest service ranks.⁴ Prince I.P. Zvenigorodsky was briefly a boyar in 1562, the first Zvenigorod prince thus honoured within the 1547-1564 period.⁵

Finally, various courtiers belonging to boyar lineages should be mentioned. Two descendants of I.S. Moroz other than L.A. Saltykov enjoyed the tsar's favour in early 1560s: M.M. Tuchkov became an okol'nichiy in 1561, and V.V. Morozov became a boyar around the beginning of 1562.⁶ M.P. Bol'shoy Golovin became an okol'nichiy in 1560, as did P.P. Golovin, the Dmitrov dvoretskiy;⁷ the last-mentioned Golovin might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy of the beginning of the sixties. M.I. Voronoy Volynsky continued to play an evident if not leading role: in early 1561 he

¹ Ibid., p. 152.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 71.

³ SGGD I, No. 174, pp. 474-5.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70. In this sense Telyatevsky replaced Prince S.I. Mikulinsky, another Tver' prince, who was a boyar from 1550 to 1560. Ibid., pp. 62, 69.

⁵ Ibid., p. 71.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 70-1.

⁷ Ibid., p. 70; RK p. 184. The Golovins' case requires a few remarks concerning the phrase "boyar lineage". While almost all boyar lineages mentioned in this chapter had long supplied the Moscow rulers with boyars and okol'nichie, the Golovins could hardly be reckoned an established lineage: no Golovin had held either rank before mid-century. However, the Golovins were an incipient boyar lineage: of P.P. Golovin's sons, two became boyars and one became an okol'nichiy, and succeeding generations provided boyars and okol'nichie during the seventeenth century. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 449. Fortunately, such cases of emergent boyar lineages were sufficiently rare at mid-century that whatever ambiguity is included within the phrase "boyar lineage" need not trouble us greatly.

participated in negotiations with envoys from Poland-Lithuania.¹ A.D. Basmanov Pleshcheev occupied a moderately important role in Muscovite diplomacy in the first half of the 1560s: when Swedish envoys came to Moscow in July 1561, expressing the hope that peace between the two realms could be maintained, Basmanov Pleshcheev was chosen to convey the response, and he joined in receiving Lithuanian envoys in December 1563.² The Piskarev Chronicle names along him with V.M. Yur'ev as the courtiers who persuaded Ivan Grozny to introduce the Oprichnina,³ and if this is correct, then Basmanov Pleshcheev surely belonged to the ruling oligarchy as the Oprichnina approached.

¹ SIRIO LXXI, No. 3, pp. 23-46 passim.

² Ibid. CXXIX, No. 9, pp. 89-105 passim; ibid. LXXI, No. 12, p. 279.

³ PSRL XXXIV, p. 190.

6

**Upper-Ranking
and
Middle-Ranking Servitors**

The treatment accorded the upper-ranking and the middle-ranking servitors in this chapter is focussed upon three subjects of enquiry. Firstly, by again using methods of collective career biography, an attempt is made to identify the remaining lay Muscovites who might be included within the ruling oligarchy for some part of the 1547-1564 period, to trace briefly their political fortunes, and to present the contexts where their influence might have been deployed.¹ A sizeable share of the members thus pinpointed either held upper service ranks at entry into the ruling oligarchy or would subsequently receive them. The middle-ranking servitors are our second subject of enquiry. We explore the origins of the middle service ranks and the kinds of service to Ivan IV which their holders most typically rendered. Most importantly, however, instances are documented where middle-ranking servitors came to attend the Moscow court, where they were in greatest proximity to the ruling oligarchy and were most advantageously situated to win promotions within the service hierarchy or even to enter the ruling oligarchy themselves. Thirdly, we attempt to show that in certain important senses the relations between the ruling oligarchy and the middle-ranking servitors from 1547 onwards might be characterised appropriately as symbiotic.

As we strive to identify additional lay Muscovites who belonged to the ruling oligarchy at mid-century, four possible sources of members seem especially promising, and we consider the contributions made by each. When the careers of the members thus identified are examined, a familiar theme becomes apparent: Tsar Ivan's favour, whether it was obtained through personal affection, outstanding merit and trustworthiness, or the recommendations of advisers already enjoying substantial influence, was a critically important dynamic of political advancement. The personal nature of his exercise of authority in choosing his intimate advisers is again affirmed.

¹ Unfortunately, on present evidence few specific instances of their political behaviour can be presented.

The cases of V.Yu. Trakhaniotov and F.I. Sukin deserve particular attention: neither belonged to a princely or a boyar lineage, but both became boyars and were long-time members of the ruling oligarchy. While the Trakhaniotovs, descendants of Greeks who had accompanied Sofia Palaeologa from Rome to Moscow in 1472, were accounted "well-born" – they were included within the Gosudarev rodoslevets of 1555 – no Trakhaniotov was either boyar or okol'nichiy before V.Yu.Trakhaniotov became a boyar in August 1550.¹ He is marked repeatedly during the 1550s as belonging to the ruling oligarchy, although membership is difficult to justify for the early 1560s. He was Dmitrov dvoretskiy for about one and one-half years from August 1550;² he was perhaps named boyar in this connexion. He remained in Moscow to help oversee the realm during Ivan IV's campaigns of the summers of 1553, 1555, and 1556; furthermore, he was chosen to assist Prince Yury Vasil'evich in Moscow during the tsar's planned campaign of the summer of 1559.³ Unlike Trakhaniotov, F.I. Sukin was not "well-born"; yet he, too, long remained within the ruling oligarchy, for he was named kaznachey by October 1546 and occupied this post until August 1560.⁴ In fact, he numbered among Ivan's closer and more trusted advisers from the late 1540s until the beginning of the 1560s. He joined the tsar on several campaigns; moreover, he remained in Moscow to help manage the realm during Ivan's campaign of the summer of 1553.⁵ He was a bedside attendant when the tsar was married in February 1547 and

¹ Fennell, Ivan the Great, pp. 122, 321. The most noteworthy Trakhaniotov before the mid-sixteenth century was Yu.D. Trakhaniotov, who as kaznachey long wielded exceptional influence during the opening decades of the sixteenth century; his career is traced in Zimin, Rossiia na poroge, pp. 67, 111, 190, 244, 255, 259, 293, 297, 341, 408, 410, 419, 420. V.Yu. Trakhaniotov cannot be considered to have founded a boyar lineage: the only Trakhaniotov subsequently attested as holding either of the two highest service ranks was P.T. Trakhaniotov, who became an okol'nichiy in March 1646 and died in June 1648. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 187.

² Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 91.

³ RK, pp. 141, 152, 159, 182.

⁴ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", pp. 92-3.

⁵ RK, pp. 111, 113, 142, 150, 163.

when Prince Yury Vasil'evich was married in September 1547, and he was a "friend" or "witness" of M.A. Kutuzova Kleopina when she married Tsar Semen Kasaevich in November 1553.¹ How highly esteemed he was became especially clear after Tsaritsa Anastasia died in August 1560: he was dispatched to Poland-Lithuania to ascertain whether a marriage could be arranged between Ivan and Sigismund Augustus's sister Catherine and to explore how an armistice might be reached in the Livonian War.² He was named okol'nichiy shortly before he departed,³ probably because the tsar wished to emphasise how important this mission was. Indeed, he was appointed boyar in 1561,⁴ although the extant evidence does not show him within the ruling oligarchy of the early 1560s.

When Aleksey Adashev served as a dumnyy dvoryanin in 1553, notice was given that this emerging service rank might be granted to stalwarts of the ruling oligarchy,⁵ and its subsequent history would bear out this expectation. Of five dumnye dvoryane evidenced in March 1564,⁶ no fewer than three had recently been

¹ Ibid., pp. 10-2.

² SIRIO LXXI, No. 1, pp. 1-10. But Sukin's mission ultimately bore little fruit. Not only did the Livonian War continue; the proposed marriage between Ivan and Catherine failed to materialise.

³ Ibid., p. 1; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70.

⁴ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 70. Sukin's daughter married I.P. Yakovlev, a kinsman of the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 177, n. 54. This union illustrates both how highly Sukin was esteemed at court, perhaps because of outstanding talent for financial management, and how extensive a network of marriage ties the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins and their kinsmen established.

⁵ V. supra, p. 67. "Deti boyarskie, kotorye zhivut v dume" were evidenced during the first half of the sixteenth century: in 1536, for example, such deti boyarskie joined divers boyars, okol'nichie, and dvoretskie in attending Ivan IV when Polish envoys were presented to him. SIRIO LIX, No. 5, p. 43. The rank of dumnyy dvoryanin formalised the status of the "deti boyarskie, kotorye zhivut v dume". The origins and the early history of this rank are discussed in Klyuchevsky, Boyarskaya дума, pp. 261-6.

⁶ N.P. Likhachev, "Dumnoe dvoryanstvo", p. 10. The number of dumnye dvoryane was never greatly inflated during the second half of the sixteenth century, as were the numbers of boyars and okol'nichie at mid-century. Five dumnye dvoryane were attested in 1570, and three in 1583 and 1586. Ibid., pp. 12-4. The number of dumnye dvoryane remained modest until the mid-seventeenth century when it began to increase dramatically; 41 dumnye dvoryane are known in 1689. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 175-7.

indicated as members. We have already observed that Prince P.I. Gorensky Obolensky was revealed thus in 1562 when he was appointed to the regency council which would rule for Tsarevich Ivan should Ivan IV de cease.¹ Prince A.P. Telyatevsky, another dumnyy dvoryanin and a son of the boyar Prince P.I. Telyatevsky, was also named to the regency council in 1562 and might therefore be included within the ruling oligarchy.² A third dumnyy dvoryanin of March 1564, P.V. Zaytsev, who belonged to an utterly insignificant branch of the Dobrynsky boyar lineage, was directly identified as one of Ivan's closest advisers in 1563 and therefore qualified for membership of the ruling oligarchy.³ Furthermore, when he and his family accompanied the tsar to the Aleksandrova sloboda in December 1564, an important example of links between the dumnye dvoryane and the oprichnina court is provided.⁴

The dumnye d'yaki, ranking immediately below the dumnye dvoryane, were still a further source of members of the ruling oligarchy at mid-century.⁵ Of three dumnye d'yaki attested within the 1547-1564 period, two qualified for inclusion during some interval: I.M. Viskovaty, whose career was treated in Chapter 4, and I.E. Tsyplyatev.⁶ The Tsyplyatevs stemmed from the Monastyrevs, who were descended from the Smolensk princes; moreover, I.E. Tsyplyatev's father, E.I. Tsyplyatev, was a

¹ V. supra, p. 257.

² N.P. Likhachev, "Dumnoe dvoryanstvo", p. 10; SGGD I, No. 174, pp. 474-5. The tsar also showed trust in Telyatevsky by commissioning him to conduct an enquiry into Aleksey Adashev's death. Kobrin, "Sostav Oprichnogo dvora", p. 76.

³ N.P. Likhachev, "Dumnoe dvoryanstvo", p. 10. Zaytsev's antecedents and career are traced in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 89, 302-3, 314, 316-7.

⁴ Kobrin, "Sostav Oprichnogo dvora", pp. 38-9; Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 111, n. 1.

⁵ The forerunners of the dumnye d'yaki can be traced at least to the late fifteenth century, perhaps earlier. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 12. The number of dumnye d'yaki, was small during the second half of the sixteenth century, and this continued to hold for much of the seventeenth century, perhaps because the requisite skills were rare in Muscovy. The maximum known number of dumnye d'yaki is eleven, reached in 1678, 1679, and 1682. Ibid., p. 177.

⁶ The third dumnyy d'yak attested at mid-century was A. Vasil'ev, styled thus in November 1562. SIRIO LXXI, No. 6, p. 91. On present evidence Vasil'ev cannot be included within the ruling oligarchy for any part of the 1547-1564 period.

long-time d'yak "v razryade".¹ I.E. Tsyplyatev is attested as a dumnyy d'yak "v razryade" in 1555-1556; in fact, he headed the Razryad from 1549 at least until 1556 and hence is assigned to the ruling oligarchy.² The impression that he was exceptionally close to Ivan is reinforced by the military service registers: he accompanied the tsar on various campaigns of the late 1540s and the 1550s.³

The remaining members of the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 identified in this chapter were distinguished primarily as the heads of central government agencies.⁴ We begin with the kaznachei. I.I. Tret'yakov became a kaznachey shortly after Elena Glinskaya died and occupied this post until 1549;⁵ hence he is assigned to the ruling oligarchy of the late 1540s. Although he was "well-born" – he was a kinsman of I.P. Foma Golovin, who replaced him⁶ – he is not evidenced either as a boyar or an okol'nichiy. Foma Golovin in his turn was followed by Kh.Yu. Tyutin, who was a kaznachey from the autumn of 1554 until the Oprichnina began and thus qualified for inclusion within the contemporary ruling oligarchy.⁷ In fact, he occupied the post of zemskiy kaznachey when he was murdered in 1568.⁸ N.A. Funikov Kurtsev became a

¹ The Tsyplyatevs' antecedents are treated in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 374, 381-2, 389-90. E.I. Tsyplyatev's career is outlined in idem, D'yaki i pod'yachie, p. 559.

² N.P. Likhachev, Razryadnye d'yaki, pp. 278-9, 284; Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, pp. 101, 105, 115. I.E. Tsyplyatev's case indicates that by the mid-sixteenth century the post of d'yak was on occasion transmitted from father to son.

³ RK, pp. 111, 113, 141, 150, 157.

⁴ We refrain from naming heads of the Pomestnyy prikaz because as Leont'ev observes (Obrazovanie, p. 122), the available evidence bearing upon this matter is extremely meagre.

⁵ Zimin, "O sostave dvortsovykh uchrezhdeniy", pp. 191, 194.

⁶ Ibid., p. 194. The kinship ties between Tret'yakov and Foma Golovin are exposed in Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, pp. 446-9.

⁷ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 93. The priest Sil'vestr possibly helped Tyutin become a kaznachey: Tyutin, who stemmed from Moscow gosti, was a partner in commerce of Sil'vestr's son Anfim. Ibid.

⁸ Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 208.

kaznachey in February 1561, replacing F.I. Sukin, and might be assigned to the ruling oligarchy of the early sixties.¹ He was already revealed as belonging to the ruling oligarchy in 1554 when he succeeded V.M. Yur'ev as Tver' dvoretskiy; unfortunately, his actions in this post are poorly illuminated in the sources, and precisely how long he occupied it is unclear.² I.G. Vyrodkov was a d'yak before he became the Uglich dvoretskiy not earlier than the second half of 1557; he was the dvoretskiy of Uglich and Kaluga in March 1558, but had ceased to occupy this post by the spring of 1558.³ He thus belonged briefly to the ruling oligarchy. Finally, we mention the heads of the Bol'shoy Prikhod. The d'yak U.L. Pivov led this agency from 1553-1554 until the beginning of the 1560s and hence qualified for membership of the contemporary ruling oligarchy.⁴ Furthermore, he remained in Moscow to help Prince Yury Vasil'evich manage the realm during Ivan IV's campaign of the summer of 1557.⁵ When he ceased to head the Bol'shoy Prikhod, he was – perhaps in recognition of his services – awarded the lower upper service rank of pechatnik and became a subordinate to I.M. Viskovaty.⁶ By the spring of 1563 the d'yaki Men'shoy Melent'ev and I.B. Korenev had succeeded Pivov jointly as heads of the Bol'shoy Prikhod;⁷ both could therefore be included within the ruling oligarchy as the Oprichnina approached.

¹ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 92.

² Ibid., p. 87. Funikov Kurtsev's career is outlined in Veselovsky, D'yaki i pod'yachie, p. 282.

³ Nazarov, "Iz istorii", p. 90. The appointments of Funikov Kurtsev and Vyrodkov as regional dvoretskie were exceptional inasmuch as neither was "well-born"; both presumably enjoyed particular favour, however gained, in Ivan IV's eyes.

⁴ Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 268. 278-9. Pivov's career is treated in Veselovsky, D'yaki i pod'yachie, p. 308.

⁵ RK, p. 163.

⁶ Sadikov, Ocherki, p. 239.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 278-9. The careers of Melent'ev and Korenev are presented in Veselovsky, D'yaki i pod'yachie, pp. 71, 328.

After this attempt systematically to identify members of the ruling oligarchy, it is proposed to survey the middle-ranking servitors, particularly with a view to pinpointing hitherto unspecified instances where middle-ranking servitors began to attend the Moscow court, entered the upper-ranking servitors, and became influential, perhaps even entering the ruling oligarchy.

Firstly, the dvoryane. By the mid-sixteenth century they had a lengthy history: they are mentioned even in those Vladimir chronicles of the 1170s and the 1180s which depict the murder of Andrey Bogolyubsky in 1175.¹ The primary meaning of the term dvoryanin is accessible through its etymology. It derives from the word dvor, denoting a princely court, and various retainers of the rulers of Russian principalities and grand principalities are designated dvoryane.² Not all dvoryane were normally resident in Moscow, but nevertheless, the dvoryane continued first of all to signify members of the ruler's immediate retinue. Those dvoryane evidenced in the mid-sixteenth century included Muscovites who were "well-born" and others who were not, and their origins are not easily classified; an additional complication is that the deti boyarskie (see below) and the dvoryane are not always sharply differentiated in the sources. The tasks which the dvoryane discharged for Tsar Ivan were varied: for example, divers unnamed dvoryane belonged to the delegation he sent to Khan Derbysh of Astrakhan' in the winter of 1553-1554.³ When he journeyed to Mozhaysk in May 1562, numerous dvoryane were to remain with the tsarevichi.⁴ As central government agencies were articulated from the late fifteenth century onwards, various dvoryane were found among

1 V.D. Nazarov, "'Dvor i 'dvoryane' po dannym novgorodskogo i severo-vostochnogo letopisaniya (XII-XIV vv.)" in L.V. Cherepnin et al., eds, Vostochnaya Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekov'e, Moscow, 1978, p. 114.

2 The early applications of the term dvoryanin are treated in U. Halbach, Der russische Fürstenhof vor dem 16. Jahrhundert, Stuttgart, 1985, pp. 198-209.

3 PSRL XIII, p. 236.

4 Ibid., p. 341.

their staff: for instance, the yasel'niche, who were included in the personnel of the Konyushennaya izba, were frequently chosen from the petty dvoryanstvo.¹ B.I. Sukin's case is especially revealing, however, inasmuch as it demonstrates clearly that on occasion dvoryane could rise into the upper service ranks and could win Ivan's trust. In 1543-1544 Sukin, a blizhniy dvoryanin, headed a Muscovite delegation to Sigismund Augustus² and could probably be assigned to the contemporary ruling oligarchy. While a further role for him within the ruling oligarchy is difficult to justify, he received various marks of royal favour. When Tsar Ivan advanced towards Kazan' in the late autumn of 1547, he remained in Vladimir with Tsaritsa Anastasia; moreover, he held the rank of pechatnik in 1547-1548.³ In 1563 together with F.I. Umny Kolychev and the d'yak Rakhman Zhitkovo he was chosen to escort Princess Evfrosin'ya of Staritsa to the distant northern nunnery where she was banished for allegedly conspiring against the tsar.⁴

The deti boyarskie are first evidenced in the extant sources in 1428,⁵ that is, rather later than the dvoryane; yet their early history is obscure, and recent scholarship in this matter has not advanced greatly. Important questions concerning the first deti boyarskie were raised in prerevolutionary historiography, and the answers supplied retain their interest. According to Vladimirsky-Budanov, the first deti boyarskie were impoverished members of boyar lineages and were most apparently distinguished from the boyars in the size of their landholdings: the boyars, it is claimed, held larger estates

¹ Zimin, "O sostave dvortsovykh uchrezhdeniy", p. 182.

² SIRIO LIX, No. 15, pp. 221-33.

³ RK, p. 115; Leont'ev, Obrazovanie, p. 97, n. 82.

⁴ PSRL XIII, p. 368. Sukin was further marked as esteemed at court when his daughter was permitted to marry Prince D.B. Priimkov Rostovsky. N.P. Likhachev, "Rodstvennye svyazi knyazheskikh familiy s sem'yami d'yakov", IRGO I (1900), p. 117. Sukin's son Vasily was a dumnyy dvoryanin in September 1610. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 116.

⁵ G. Alef, "The Crisis of the Muscovite Aristocracy: A Factor in the Growth of Monarchical Power", FOEG 15 (1970), p. 45.

than the deti boyarskie.¹ Sergeevich asserted, by contrast, that the original deti boyarskie were the sons of boyars, but that by the late fifteenth century they were servitors ranking immediately below the boyars.² It has been affirmed that the Ryapolovsky and the Obolensky princes were among the first Ryurikovichi to enter the deti boyarskie as the dynastic crisis of the mid-fifteenth century ended,³ and other Ryurikovichi followed suit as the remaining Russian principalities and grand principalities succumbed to Muscovite domination. Other deti boyarskie were recruited from boyar lineages, and others still were not "well-born". During the first half of the sixteenth century the deti boyarskie, now clearly servitors of the Muscovite rulers, were divided into court and local deti boyarskie.⁴

The court deti boyarskie recorded in the Dvorovaya tetrad' were a motley crew. If some court deti boyarskie had humble antecedents, others sprang from princely or boyar lineages. The Obolensky princes were represented among the court deti boyarskie, as were the princes of Suzdal', Rostov, Yaroslavl', and Starodub;⁵ this list of the princes included amidst the court deti boyarskie is not exhaustive. A.I. and M.Yu. Shein, descendants of I.S. Moroz, and A.G. and M.G. Kolychev, descendants of A.I. Kobyla, also held this service rank.⁶ Those court deti boyarskie who stemmed from the leading princely or boyar lineages tended to be drawn from junior branches of their lineage or were themselves young and relatively unknown or less than out-

¹ Vladimirsky-Budanov, Obzor, p. 115.

² V.I. Sergeevich, Drevnosti russkago prava, 3 vols, Vols 1 and 2, 3rd ed., SPb, 1908-9, Vol. 3, SPb, 1903, I, p. 395.

³ Alef, "The Crisis", p. 47.

⁴ V.I. Novitsky, Vybornoe i bol'shoe dvoryanstvo, p. 7. For instance, an entry under 1541 in the Voskresensky Chronicle speaks of "many people chosen from all regiments, court and local" (mnogikh lyudey vybrav izo vsekh polkov dvorovykh i gorodovykh). PSRL VIII, p. 300.

⁵ TKDT, pp. 118-23.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 124-5.

standingly able; otherwise, they would have become boyars or okol'niche. When local deti boyarskie who somehow or another attracted attention within the ruling oligarchy were summoned to the court, they were, in effect, promoted within the service hierarchy, but such promotions were exceptional: for example, the list of the servitors (desyatnya) in the Kashira neighbourhood compiled in 1556 mentioned 57 court and 345 local deti boyarskie.¹ Fewer yet but nonetheless important are the documented instances where various court deti boyarskie belonged to princely or boyar lineages entered the upper upper-ranking servitors, sometimes even the ruling oligarchy. Prince P.I. Gorensky Obolensky is attested as a court syn boyarskiy before the early 1560s when he joined the ruling oligarchy and became a dumnyy dvoryanin;² indeed, the court deti boyarskie were often a source of dumnye dvoryane in the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century. Prince V.A. Sitsky was a court syn boyarskiy before he entered the ruling oligarchy of the late 1550s and became an okol'nicliy in March 1559.³ Furthermore, the document which recounts the mission of envoys sent to Moscow by Sigismund Augustus in the first months of 1542 indicate that deti boyarskie from Moscow, Yur'ev, Pereyaslavl', Vyaz'ma, and other centres who frequented the court attended the grand prince when he conferred with the envoys on 6 March 1542: two of the deti boyarskie cited in this list, M.Ya. Morozov and Prince I.A. Kurakin Bulgakov, became boyars during the 1547-1564 period and belonged for a stint to the ruling oligarchy.⁴

A massive transference of local deti boyarskie to the environs of Moscow was envisaged in Ivan IV's celebrated regulation of 3 October 1550 which stipulated that

¹ V.I. Novitsky, Vybornoe i bol'shoe dvoryanstvo, pp. 8-9. Veselovsky claimed that 403 deti boyarskie were included in the Kashira list. Veselovsky, Feodal'noe zemlevladienie, I, p. 318.

² TKDT, p. 118.

³ Ibid., p. 121; v. supra, pp. 251-2.

⁴ SIRIQ LIX, No. 9, pp. 147-8; v. supra, pp. 234, 235, n. 1, 248, 257, n. 6.

slightly over 1000 deti boyarskie who lacked a pomest'e in the Moscow vicinity should be granted one within 60 to 70 versty of Moscow in the Moscow uezdy or the contiguous uezdy.¹ This regulation is noteworthy in two connexions. Firstly, it expressed an attempt to standardise the size of the pomest'ya awarded in the Moscow neighbourhood: the deti boyarskie in question were divided into three categories, and the size of pomest'e they were to receive depended upon the category to which they were assigned.² The same attempt to standardise the size of pomest'e allocations underlay Tsar Fedor Ivanovich's regulation of 1587 providing that henceforth all pomest'ya granted in the Moscow neighbourhood to Moscow dvoryane were to be 150 desyatiny in size.³ Secondly, the regulation of 3 October 1550, whether or not it was implemented, was probably meant to accompany a migration of local deti boyarskie to the court, and the leading elements within the ruling oligarchy most likely sought to dilute the influence wielded by competing court cliques by flooding the court with outsiders.⁴

Even though the local deti boyarskie were distant from the court and the ruling oligarchy, their sheer numbers render them deserving of consideration in their own right. True, they included sundry representatives of princely and boyar lineages, but they were predominately not "well-born". They were likely to hold small estates and to suffer poverty. They were subject to the excesses of the namestniki before almost all namestnichestva were abolished though the Service Code of 1555-1556, and Ivan Peresvetov surely had their frustrations in mind when he advocated reforms of Muscovite local government.⁵ The tasks they discharged were by and large

¹ TKDT, pp. 53-4.

² Ibid.

³ N.P. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, Gosudarevy sluzhilye lyudi, p. 95.

⁴ Alef, "Aristocratic Politics", pp. 97-8.

⁵ A.A. Zimin, ed., Sochineniya I. Peresvetova, Moscow and Leningrad, 1958, pp. 173-4.

unremarkable. They constituted a basic recruiting ground for the regiments and the smaller companies within the Muscovite army. Sometimes they were dispatched as messengers by regimental commanders or by administrative officials in Moscow or the uezdy: on 25 December 1552, for instance, Prince A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky sent the syn boyarskiy N.G. Kazarinov from Kazan' to Moscow to advise the tsar that elements of the Kazan' population remained restive.¹ Inasmuch as we can speak of a "typical syn boyarskiy", probably the local deti boyarskie approximated him most closely.

In conclusion it must be observed that before the mid-sixteenth century the dvoryane ranked beneath the local deti boyarskie and the court deti boyarskie, but that this relative ranking was now breaking down. Prince Yu.M. Meshchersky's case suggests that the terminology in the contemporary sources admitted of confusion. He was one of fifteen court deti boyarskie from the Kashira neighbourhood evidenced in 1556 as selected (vybornye) for admission to the upper service ranks, most likely via the rank of zhilets; yet in a boyar register of 1556 he is cited among "the dvoryane serving by selection".² The record of the 1566 Zemsky sobor is more striking: when on 2 July 1566 various boyars and other courtiers along with representatives of the clergy and of the Moscow merchants expressed themselves willing to continue the war with Sigismund Augustus, the assenting dvoryane were indicated before the deti boyarskie.³

It has been asserted that in certain important senses the relationship between the ruling oligarchy and the middle-ranking servitors which obtained in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy might be aptly characterised as symbiotic,⁴ and the final goal pursued

¹ PSRL XIII, p. 229.

² TKDT, p. 162; V.I. Novitsky, Vybornoe i bol'shoe dvoryanstvo, pp. 10, 13-4.

³ SGGD I, No. 192, p. 545. At the record's end, however, the deti boyarskie were once more placed before the dvoryane. Ibid., p. 554. Even in 1566 the deti boyarskie and the dvoryane were not always clearly distinguished in the sources.

⁴ This conclusion is anticipated in Hellie, Enserfment, p. 33.

in this chapter is to identify the forms which such a symbiosis could assume. Certain forms are already familiar. Various middle-ranking servitors were granted upper service ranks and even provided the ruling oligarchy with new blood from 1547 onwards: those who were "well-born" probably rose within the service hierarchy through the backing of their kinsmen, and the remainder most likely won favour by impressing Tsar Ivan as talented and trustworthy.¹ The ruling oligarchy for its part permitted the middle-ranking servitors to profit from the reforms of Muscovite local government effected at mid-century, particularly the virtual abolition of the kormleniya under the Service Code of 1555-1556: the attested "district elders" of the second half of the 1550s and the 1560s were very often chosen from the court deti boyarskie.² Divers regulations of the 1550s concerning the financial circumstances and the military service obligations of the service landholders indicate that in this context, too, mutual help between the ruling oligarchy and the middle-ranking servitors was envisaged. Numerous pomeshchiki suffered impoverishment at mid-century, which could impede them in discharging their military service obligations; this could scarcely be tolerated when the leading elements of the ruling oligarchy almost continuously involved Muscovy in war. Hence regulations were issued seemingly to ease the financial situation of the pomeshchiki, but accompanying efforts were exerted to ensure that all military service obligations were faithfully discharged. In the remainder of this chapter these regulations and their historical background are examined.

From Ivan III's reign onwards pomest'ya, hewn from the grand princely estates proper, the "black lands", estates confiscated from disgraced boyars, and so forth were granted in numerous parts of Muscovy,³ and reckoned over the realm as a whole, the

¹ These findings are consistent with the results advanced in Chapters 4 and 5 concerning possible ways to preferment within the service hierarchy.

² V. supra, p. 40.

³ Hellie, Enserfment, p. 27. The Byzantine pronoia, touched upon in Ostrogorsky, Geschichte, pp. 273, 306, 324, 397, is the earliest historical precursor of the Muscovite pomest'e, but conscious emulation by Ivan III and his advisers is difficult to prove. See also F.I. Uspensky, "Znachenie

pomest'e had become the dominant form of land tenure by the second half of the sixteenth century. The pomest'e doubtless won support within the ruling oligarchy prior to the mid-sixteenth century not only as a method of expanding the Muscovite army; financial considerations were also pertinent. From the inception of the pomest'e system the central government exercised close control over the income pomeshchiki were to derive from their pomest'ya: in particular, the amount could be regulated to ensure that the pomeshchiki had sufficient revenues to meet their military service obligations.¹ In fact, the income a pomeshchik was to obtain from each land parcel and from each village or part thereof was entered in the registers of inquisition and was collected for him by grand princely officials; he could not interfere in the lives of those peasants assigned to him.² During the Oprichnina Ivan IV disrupted the customary relations long obtaining between pomeshchik and peasant: various pomeshchiki were permitted to establish the levels of the quitrent (obrok) themselves, and the middle-ranking servitors in general were allowed to collect it personally.³ These measures raised the pomeshchik's status closer to the votchinnik's and probably helped the middle-ranking servitors to gain in prestige. But even before the Oprichnina the prerogatives and the responsibilities of the pomeshchiki and those of the votchinniki

vizantiyskoy i yugoslavyanskoy pronii", in Sbornik statey po slavyanovedeniyu sostavlennyy i izdannyy uchenikami V.I. Lamanskago po sluchayu 25-letiya ego uchenoy i professorskoy deyatel'nosti, SPb, 1883, pp. 21-7. Pelenski has affirmed that significant parallels to Muscovite service landholding were found in the Kazan' khanate and that the pomest'e as it was defined in the Service Code of 1555-6 was based upon the corresponding Kazan' unit. Pelenski, "State and Society", pp. 156-67. For lack of supporting evidence, however, Pelenski's theory must remain an intriguing conjecture. Veselovsky denied that the pomest'e depended upon foreign models. Veselovsky, Feodal'noe zemlevladienie, I, p. 282.

¹ Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 27-8.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 45. The pomeshchiki were thereby afforded the opportunity to plunder their pomest'ya, and many middle-ranking servitors did; the attempts to punish servitors who devastated their villages were not especially successful. The pomeshchiki curtailed their predatory conduct when the pomest'ya became legally heritable property, but the last-mentioned change was first introduced only during the "Time of Troubles". Ibid., pp. 45-6.

were converging. True, the ruler was entitled to bestow a deceased pomeshchik's pomest'e upon whomever he wished, and indeed he did not invariably reassign pomest'ya and their associated military service obligations, even though the strength of the Muscovite army was presumably lowered thereby.¹ During the second half of the sixteenth century, however, it became customary for a deceased pomeshchik's sons to retain their father's pomest'e within their joint holdings.² Furthermore, the inhabitants of various pomest'ya, like those of various votchiny, were released from the jurisdiction of the tsar's courts in most cases.³ In establishing uniform military service requirements for pomeshchiki and lay votchinniki alike, the Service Code of 1555-1556 conformed to the pattern.⁴

If the pomest'e had become the dominant form of land tenure by the second half of the sixteenth century, it is necessary to pinpoint those parts of Muscovy where the pomest'e system had spread by the mid-sixteenth century from its beginnings in the Novgorod vicinity.⁵ The upper upper-ranking servitors, frequently encountered among the ruling oligarchy of the 1547-1564 period, were strongly represented amidst the pomeshchiki of the Moscow uezd: various boyars held pomest'ya there, and as the rank of dumnyy d'yak became better established during the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, sundry dumnye d'yaki were especially great

¹ Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, p. 211.

² Ibid., p. 299; Hellie, Enserfment, p. 57.

³ Akty Yushkova No. 144, pp. 123-4, No. 154, pp. 132-3, No. 173, pp. 148-50.

⁴ PSRL XIII, pp. 267-8. Yet only in 1731 were all pomeshchiki granted the privileges which the votchinniki enjoyed in relation to their lands. Hellie, Enserfment, p. 58.

⁵ How soon were pomest'ya evidenced outside the Novgorod neighbourhood? Alekseev and Kopanev have claimed that pomest'ya were found only in the Novgorod neighbourhood as the sixteenth century began. Yu.G. Alekseev and A.I. Kopanev, "Razvitie pomestnoy sistemy v XVI v.", in N.I. Pavlenko et al., eds, Dvoryanstvo i krepostnoy stroy Rossii XVI-XVIII vv.: Sbornik statey posvyashchenny pamyati A.A. Novosel'skogo, Moscow, 1975, p. 58. But Veselovsky and Kobrin have convincingly argued that pomest'ya were attested elsewhere by then. Veselovsky, Feodal'noe zemlevladienie, I, pp. 321-2; V.B. Kobrin, "Stanovlenie pomestnoy sistemy", IZ 105 (1980), pp. 161-6.

landholders near the capital.¹ Numerous d'yaki and pod'yachie held pomest'ya in the Moscow uezd, and certain kinds of service landholders unknown elsewhere are attested there: the Moscow dvoryane are an example.² In the Kolomna uezd divers gubnye starosty and gorodovye prikazchiki are evidenced as pomeshchiki.³ The pomeshchiki of the Tver' uezd were seemingly exceptionally varied in their offices and service ranks; yet this impression may not be altogether accurate since the registers of inquisition for the Tver' neighbourhood have been particularly well preserved.⁴ Very many pomest'ya were granted south of the Oka River to impoverished members of princely lineages and to members of princely lineages amidst which indigence was general at mid-century, but the boyars were thinly represented there.⁵ In fact, the registers of inquisition of the second half of the sixteenth century indicate that the boyars did not hold pomest'ya in several uezdy along the southern frontier.⁶ In the western borderlands the service landholders were primarily mildly prosperous pomeshchiki: some were "well-born", and others were lower prikaz and court officials, and still others participated in several special military projects.⁷ In the Novgorod neighbourhood numerous "black lands" had been awarded as pomest'ya, and by mid-century pomest'ya were common save in

¹ Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, p. 233.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 234.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 235.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 236-7.

the Obonezhskaya pyatina.¹ On the other hand, service landholding was in its infancy in the Beloozero uezd, and there were virtually no pomest'ya in the Kargopol' uezd.²

The circumstances prompting Tsar Ivan to award pomest'ya varied substantially. Sometimes he sought primarily to show his partiality towards the recipients: in the autumn of 1552, for example, he proposed to grant pomest'ya to veterans of the final Kazan' campaign who had rendered distinguished service.³ In other cases he expressed not so much admiration for the beneficiary as respect for the last-mentioned's office. In 1555, for instance, one Ivan Borzunov was assigned a pomest'e to acknowledge his service as a starosta in the Novgorod neighbourhood.⁴ But sometimes service landholders found their pomest'ya reduced when they assumed certain offices.⁵ In still other cases pomest'ya were granted to servitors who discharged their existing military service obligations only nominally, probably to spur them to more faithful service.⁶ Pomest'ya were on occasion used as an instrument to expedite the colonisation of conquered territories: after the Muscovite army subdued parts of Livonia in the late 1550s, for example, pomest'ya were awarded there to various Muscovites.⁷ Finally, it should be noted that from time to time foreigners who came under Muscovite domination received pomest'ya: Heinrich von Staden, for example, arrived in Muscovy after May 1564 and was granted a pomest'e.⁸

¹ Nosov, Ocherki, p. 215.

² Ibid., pp. 237-8. The pomest'e system never became strongly developed in northern Muscovy, which was far from the usual combat zones: sending troops annually to the front from such a distance was impracticable. Hellie, Enserfment, p. 27.

³ PSRL XIII, p. 228.

⁴ DAI I, No. 86, pp. 139-40.

⁵ E.g. ibid., No. 52/III, pp. 87-8.

⁶ Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, p. 264.

⁷ G.A. Novitsky, "Novye dannye o russkom feodal'nom zemlevladienii v Pribaltike v period Livonskoy voyny (1558-1582)", VI 1956, No. 4, pp. 134-8.

⁸ Zimin, Oprichnina, p. 78.

We emphasise that certain pomeshchiki stemmed from princely and boyar lineages, held the ranks of okol'nichiy or boyar at mid-century, and perhaps even belonged to the ruling oligarchy for some share of the 1547-1564 period. The Suzdal' princes were represented among the service landholders: Princes I.M. Shuysky and A.B. Gorbaty Shuysky are attested as holding pomest'ya.¹ So is Prince D.F. Paletsky, Prince Yury Vasil'evich's father-in-law.² Princes P.A. Kurakin Bulgakov and Yu.M. Bulgakov as well as L.A. Saltykov, G.V. Morozov, F.M. Nagoy, and A.A. Kvashnin are also evidenced as pomeshchiki.³ The Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins held extensive votchiny and pomest'ya scattered throughout various uezdy.⁴ Certainly we may assume that several of Ivan IV's closest advisers appreciated – and not only from petitions dispatched from the uezdy to Moscow, but moreover, from personal experience – what issues confronted service landholders in the mid-sixteenth century.

Numerous servitors, especially middle-ranking servitors in the uezdy, suffered impoverishment at mid-century – particularly, as the costs of the military service requirements imposed by the Service Code of 1555-1556 began to be felt;⁵ and regulations of 25 December 1557 and 11 January 1558 reveal a realisation within the ruling oligarchy that loans were frequently necessary and that the standard conditions of repayment were onerous. The regulation of 25 December 1557 was intended to specify how the debts of money and grain which many servitors had incurred should be repaid

¹ PKMG II, pp. 133, 177.

² Ibid., pp. 28, 236.

³ Ibid., p. 22; ibid. II, pp. 103, 108, 115, 135; Kobrin, "Sostav Oprichnogo dvora", p. 72.

⁴ Rozhdestvensky, Sluzhiloe zemlevladienie, p. 219.

⁵ V. supra, pp. 32-3, 77-8. Even before the Service Code of 1555-6 was promulgated, some servitors found their disposable incomes inadequate and hence took out loans. For example, the testament of the widow of the okol'nichiy F.I. Bezzubtsev, dated 24 June 1546, refers to a kabala debt of five rubles to be repaid by the boyar Prince I.M. Shuysky, who belonged to the ruling oligarchy for much of the 1550s. AFZKh II, No. 191, p. 192.

during a five-year period extending from 25 December 1557 to 25 December 1562. Considerable relief was offered on existing debts: all interest charges were cancelled, and no more than one-fifth of a loan of grain was to be refunded annually.¹ Furthermore, the interest levied during this period on new obligations was to be only one-half of the going rate.² By and large the second part of the regulation extended the concessions of the first part to all Muscovites legally entitled to assume debts; yet the terms in which the regulation was couched indicate that it arose primarily from the needs of the servitors.³ Its provisions were extended by the regulation of 11 January 1558 to votchiny which had been mortgaged: debtors would discharge their obligations without paying interest until 25 December 1562 and were allowed to repay in instalments over five years.⁴ Moreover, when one-fifth of the loan had been repaid, the mortgagor was entitled to repossess his votchina.⁵ An attempt was evidently made to lighten the heavy indebtedness under which various servitors holding votchiny laboured.

Nevertheless, in striving to mitigate the financial miseries of the servitors, the leading elements of the ruling oligarchy were probably not guided by purely altruistic sentiments; several provisions of the 1550 Sudebnik along with Tsar Ivan's regulation of 1 September 1558 reveal a concern to remove impediments hindering the discharge of military service obligations. Take, for instance, Article 78 of the 1550 Sudebnik. We might enquire: why were the kabala debts incurred by free men, who would serve their creditors as slaves for the interest, not to exceed fifteen rubles.⁶ A plausible

¹ PRP IV, pp. 487-8, 546-8.

² Ibid., pp. 487-8.

³ Ibid.; N.P. Pavlov-Sil'vansky, Gosudarevy sluzhilye lyudi, p. 121.

⁴ PRP IV, p. 525.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Sudebniki, p. 169.

answer is obtained by examining the available evidence concerning the income of pomeshchiki: this sum was what the average pomeshchiki who contracted kabala obligations to moderately wealthy servitors could afford to pay.¹ Had the ceiling been higher, some of the less affluent pomeshchiki could not have fulfilled their obligations and would have become full slaves; then they would no longer have been required to pay taxes or perform military service on the tsar's command.² Article 78 was probably intended to reinforce the provision of Article 81 to the effect that the children of deti boyarskie might not become slaves without Ivan's express permission: it has been convincingly demonstrated that such children were particularly likely to incur a kabala debt of precisely fifteen rubles.³ The regulation of 1 September 1558 was apparently designed more fully to bring out the implications of Article 81. In that regulation, as in Article 81, an attempt was made to prevent the sons of deti boyarskie from being encumbered with sizeable kabala debts as they approached their majority and therefore from being impeded in assuming military service obligations.⁴ In fact, Article 81 and the regulation of 1 September 1558 are most correctly considered military-related measures: both revealed indifference to the financial woes of these deti boyarskie who were unfit for service, even if they were forced to contract kabala debts.⁵

¹ This point is ably demonstrated by B.A. Romanov, "K voprosu o 15-rublevom maksimume v sluzhilykh kabalakh XVI v.", *IZ* 52 (1955), pp. 330-5.

² V. supra, p. 52.

³ Romanov, "K voprosu", p. 333.

⁴ PRP IV, p. 515; Sudebniki, p. 170.

⁵ V.M. Paneyakh, "Sluzhilye kabaly na detey boyarskikh po ukazu 1558 goda", in A.L. Shapiro et al., eds, Problemy istorii feodal'noy Rossii: Sbornik statey k 60-letiyu professora V.V. Mavrodina, Leningrad, 1971, pp. 123-5.

7

**The Muscovite Ruling Oligarchy
and
its Attitudes towards Reform**

The penultimate chapter of this dissertation is devoted to the third enquiry surrounding the Muscovite ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 raised in our title – the oligarchy's attitudes towards reform; as a preliminary, however, the focus of this enquiry needs to be defined. The basic aim is to discern the attitudes which individual Muscovites who belonged to the ruling oligarchy for some part of the 1547-1564 period manifested towards the main reforms contemplated at mid-century: in their writings, in their recorded speeches, and in their deeds.¹ Attitudes towards reform are ascribed to particular members of the ruling oligarchy but not to the ruling oligarchy collectively: we attempt to avoid obscuring the demonstrable fact that genuine differences of opinion accompanied various proposed reforms. On present evidence those members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy whose attitudes towards any of the main reforms can be established more or less certainly are relatively few. Ivan IV, ruling Muscovy at mid-century substantially as his private votchina, had to assent to any major reform,² and it is scarcely surprising that his attitudes towards the reforms are best documented. Less numerous are those reforms towards which the attitudes of Metropolitan Makary, Aleksey Adashev, the priest Sil'vestr, Prince A.M. Kurbsky, Prince Yury Vasil'evich, and Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Staritsa are revealed; nevertheless, their attitudes towards certain reforms are indicated. Very seldom if ever can attitudes towards the reforms be convincingly assigned to other members of the contemporary ruling oligarchy, and it seems especially regrettable that this applies to those heads of central government agencies who were qualified as members in Chapters 5 and 6: they were

¹ The reforms in question are those listed above on pp. 84-5, which seem the most fundamental changes introduced or proposed during the 1547-64 period; yet we refrain from exploring exhaustively the attitudes underlying all of these reforms. The probable aims motivating certain reforms have already been treated at least partially. The goals inspiring sundry other reforms are difficult to assign meaningfully, and the 1550 Sudebnik is the prime example. The extant sources fail to illuminate the conversations within the ruling oligarchy which doubtless preceded the Sudebnik, and any attempt to speak even generally of the aims of very many articles is complicated by the historiographical controversies these aims have generated.

² V. supra, p. 78.

obvious candidates for providing Ivan with advice concerning envisaged reforms affecting in some sense the operations of their agencies.¹

While the attitudes towards the main reforms held by individual members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy constitute our overriding concern, the focus of the chapter must be clarified further and moreover, clarified so that the chapter is integrated adequately with the remainder of the dissertation. In fact, two particular goals are pursued in this chapter. Firstly, we verify that the known attitudes towards the reforms maintained by members of the ruling oligarchy constitute an important example of the oscillations between continuity and change Muscovy experienced between 1547 and the Oprichnina.² Sundry members are documented as feeling great reverence for "ancient tradition" (starina), and indeed the precedents established by earlier legislation were on occasion invoked as arguments for or against contemplated reforms. At the same time various members supported reforms advocated by Ivan Peresvetov, Ermolay Erazm, and other Muscovites who called for decisive change,³ and even sought certain reforms so forward-looking that they were implemented only in the mid-seventeenth century or later. The second goal is to familiarise ourselves more deeply with the individual members of the ruling oligarchy and their political behaviour. Inasmuch as the extant evidence permits, an attempt is made to capture the mentality of

¹ I.M. Viskovaty's case suggests that the reforms concerning which Ivan consulted with prikaz heads possibly transcended the sphere of the agencies they supervised. From the mid-fifties until the beginning of the sixties Viskovaty, head of the Posol'skiy prikaz, doubled as kormlenyy d'yak for the Kargopol' land: inter alia he gathered monies which the local population dispatched to Moscow instead of the maintenance payments the kormlenshchiki received before the Service Code of 1555-6. Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 228-30. Hence Ivan perhaps conferred with Viskovaty concerning the implementation of the Service Code; since Viskovaty numbered among the more prominent members of the ruling oligarchy at mid-century, however, it seems especially regrettable that his attitudes towards the Service Code and other reforms are unknown.

² In probing the backward-looking and the forward-looking strains in the attitudes of members of the ruling oligarchy towards the reforms, we employ a long-term perspective. The reforms' immediate historical context and their short-range consequences are of marginal interest.

³ However, we should not infer that the attitudes members of the ruling oligarchy held towards reform were necessarily influenced by proponents of change outside the ruling oligarchy. Probably some members were far-sighted enough to conceive substantial reforms themselves.

members favouring this or that reform. When the sources depict the stages whereby envisaged reforms were debated within the ruling oligarchy and regulations agreed upon, we can demonstrate that those dynamics of court politics which were identified in previous chapters could play an important role in determining the precise shape which reforms would assume. Both goals can be pursued most advantageously by examination of Ivan IV's attitudes towards the main reforms, and these attitudes are explored in the following paragraphs.

Tsar Ivan combined strikingly backward-looking and innovative strains in his attitudes towards the main reforms. Sometimes he expressly affirmed himself determined to be guided by precedent when legislation was drafted or reviewed. At the Stoglav Council of early 1551 he indicated that he considered "ancient tradition" a basis for amending the recent Sudebnik.¹ In the noteworthy regulation of 11 May 1551, prepared under his auspices and intended in the first instance to clarify the conditions under which monasteries and princes might legitimately acquire and alienate lands, the norms which had obtained under his father and his grandfather were repeatedly reaffirmed; his only change was to append penalties for violations.² In other contexts he built upon the legacy his father and his grandfather bequeathed, but the reforms he envisaged or indeed implemented significantly exceeded anything they had done. His role in the development of a modern State in Muscovy is an especially important example. The roots of a Muscovite State might be traced to Ivan III's reign when the first prikaz-like agencies appeared, but the building of the State advanced particularly rapidly in the mid-sixteenth century as divers new prikazy and prikaz-like agencies were constituted.³ Certainly Ivan IV was prepared to tolerate the central government agencies emerging after 1547; perhaps he numbered among the members of the ruling

¹ Stoglav, p. 39.

² AAE I, No. 227, pp. 218-9.

³ V. supra, pp. 16, 33-7.

oligarchy enthusiastically advocating their establishment.¹ Thus, he personally permitted – possibly encouraged – the further building of the State, although on balance "the Muscovite State" existed only from the mid-seventeenth century.² Furthermore, whereas his father and grandfather had subdued all other Orthodox Russian polities, he strove after 1547 to lessen somewhat the regional divisions which remained strong in sixteenth-century Muscovy. In a charter of 21 December 1550, for instance, he spoke of instituting uniform measures in his dominions,³ and this resolve was known to contemporaries. Heinrich von Staden doubtless captured ably his intentions in averring that he "achieved, throughout Russia, throughout his realm, one faith, one weight, one measure", even though in reality uniformity of measures was obtained but slowly: in the seventeenth century weights and measures different from those employed in Moscow were attested in sundry parts of the realm.⁴

Amidst the reforms which Tsar Ivan contemplated or effected in the mid-sixteenth century, those intended more or less directly to render the Muscovite army better able to attain his military goals should be singled out for special mention and not only because of their sheer numbers. Their consistency of purpose was unusual for him, and this suggests that the army and its fighting capacities figured particularly prominently in his plans. Moreover, they were especially sound, common-sense measures and could be implemented readily.⁵

¹ The extant evidence fails to indicate precisely how actively Ivan fought within the ruling oligarchy for new prikazy.

² Pipes, Russia, p. 70. Even after the mid-seventeenth century many vestiges of the previous political and administrative order persisted.

³ DAI I, No. 45, p. 63.

⁴ Von Staden, Aufzeichnungen, p. 81; Smith, Peasant farming, p. 227.

⁵ Should we attempt value-laden statements concerning Ivan's rule at mid-century, his attitudes towards reform provide a possible point of departure. The characterisation of his army-related reforms given in the above paragraph suggests that he was capable of impressive contributions to his realm, and the attitudes probably animating sundry other reforms might also be reckoned as reflecting favourably upon him. But this potential was less apparent in still other reforms he sponsored, and on balance his reforms held mixed consequences for Muscovy's weal.

In his mestnichestvo regulations of November-December 1549 and July 1550 Ivan IV sought to prevent army discipline from being weakened through mestnichestvo disputes, and these attempts are a noteworthy example of pragmatism in the army reforms.¹ The regulation of November-December 1549 was meant primarily as an interim measure to quell the numerous mestnichestvo conflicts which, as Ivan himself testified in a "question" of February 1550 to Makary, erupted during the Kazan' campaign of late 1549, threatening to throw the expedition into chaos.² The regulation of July 1550, to which Princes Yury Vasil'evich and Vladimir Andreevich assented,³ was composed of two parts. The first constituted an attempt to lessen the scope for mestnichestvo disputes amidst the regimental voevody inasmuch as it defined explicitly the relative standing of the voevodstva.⁴ The second was intended to avert mestnichestvo conflicts between the princes, the bol'shie dvoryane, and the deti boyarskie, on the one hand, and the voevody on the other hand. Ivan decreed that princes, bol'shie dvoryane, and deti boyarskie should serve alongside boyars and voevody without considerations of precedence (bez mest).⁵ He proceeded more fully to bring out the implications of this provision, stipulating that whatever seniority bol'shie dvoryane and

¹ How many mestnichestvo regulations were promulgated at mid-century? Zimin has convincingly argued (Reformy, pp. 342-5) that two mestnichestvo regulations were promulgated – in December 1549 and July 1550, and Nosov (Stanovlenie, pp. 37-43) has strengthened his arguments. Yet I.I. Smirnov and Milyukov have both asserted that only one mestnichestvo regulation was promulgated; Smirnov dates it December 1549, and Milyukov July 1550. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 399-406; Drevneyshaya razryadnaya kniga, pp. 140-3. The course whereby reforms were promulgated and implemented can evidently be as controversial as the contemporary political history.

² PRP IV, pp. 576-7. The view that the "tsar's questions" – which Ivan helped to draft and which were addressed to Makary and other prelates together with sundry princes and boyars – were composed in February 1550 is successfully demonstrated in Shmidt, "Pravitel'stvennaya deyatel'nost'", p. 28; Zimin, Reformy, pp. 336-8. Nosov considers (Stanovlenie, pp. 31-43) that the "questions" were drafted between March and July 1550. Zhdanov and I.I. Smirnov thought that they were composed in conjunction with the Stoglav Council. Zhdanov, Sochineniya, I, pp. 171-88 passim; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 486-8.

³ RK, p. 125.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 125-6.

⁵ Ibid. Thus, the regulation stressed the commanding role of the voevody. Zimin, Reformy, p. 344.

deti boyarskie enjoyed under the mestnichestvo system could be disregarded when they were chosen to serve beneath particular voevody, but that their relative standing would not thereby be lowered.¹ In the second part of the regulation he attempted, in effect, to balance two timely goals. He strove to allay any fears which "well-born" bol'shie dvoryane and deti boyarskie felt for their mestnichestvo standing, but sought simultaneously to prevent their anxieties from restricting him in allocating military assignments or from disrupting military operations.² Since the regulation remained legally binding into the seventeenth century,³ he and subsequent rulers presumably found it at least moderately successful in preventing mestnichestvo disputes during campaigns.

A noteworthy instance of continuity in Tsar Ivan's plans for the army is evidenced when the military service obligations he imposed in the Service Code of 1555-1556 are compared with several proposals he made in his "questions" of February 1550 to Metropolitan Makary.⁴ In one "question" he recommended enquiry into who held which votchiny and pomest'ya and what service record these landholders, both votchinniki and pomeshchiki, had amassed,⁵ and this proposal foreshadowed that provision of the Service Code which stipulated that henceforth lay votchinniki would

¹ RK, p. 126.

² Hence Ivan attempted not to abolish the mestnichestvo system outright, but more modestly, to prevent mestnichestvo disputes from impeding military efficiency.

³ V. supra, p. 75.

⁴ The historiographical debates surrounding the text of the 1555-6 Service Code situated in the Obolensky copy of the Nikon Chronicle should be mentioned. Zimin, believing that the virtual abolition of the kormlenie system throughout Muscovy occurred over several years, has denied that the text reflects a specific legislative enactment; he asserts that it represents a compilation based upon numerous regulations issued between 1551 and 1555-6. A.A. Zimin, "'Prigovor' 1555-56 g. i likvidatsiya sistemy kormleniy v Russkom gosudarstve", IS 1958, No. 1, pp. 178-82. Shmidt has ably refuted his arguments, emphasising that the text mirrors an actual regulation. S.O. Shmidt, "K istorii zemskoy reformy (Sobor 1555/56)", in N.M. Druzhinin et al., eds, Goroda feodal'noy Rossii: Sbornik statey pamyati N.V. Ustyugova, Moscow, 1966, pp. 125-32. Shmidt claims that the 1555-6 Service Code was adopted at a Zemsky sobor or some other assembly, but Pavlenko persuasively argues that this theory depends upon dubious evidence. Pavlenko, "K istorii", pp. 90-1.

⁵ PRP IV, p. 577.

have exactly the same military service obligations as the pomeshchiki. Furthermore, the Service Code, in prescribing a fixed relationship between the amount of land a lay landholder held and the number of cavalymen he should outfit and dispatch, presupposed that the holding of pomest'ya and votchiny would be regulated closely, and in several other "questions" the tsar indicated what he considered proper goals of surveillance: he advocated that the pomest'ya servitors held should conform to the specifications made in the charters of conferment, and that votchina registers should be compiled documenting purchases, sales, and sundry other kinds of transactions where votchiny changed hands.¹ Even as the 1550s began, he apparently grasped some of the practical measures needed to implement most effectively the approaching Service Code.

On several occasions Ivan showed himself willing to extend the privileges enjoyed by the middle-ranking servitors. They won a major victory at the expense of the prerogatives of established administrative officials when he decreed at the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549, in anticipation of Article 64 of the 1550 Sudebnik, that all deti boyarskie should have access to his court, remaining subject to the jurisdiction of his namestniki only in a few exceptionally grave cases.² Moreover, in one "question" to Metropolitan Makary he broached the possibility of extending the privileges which pomeshchiki enjoyed vis-à-vis their land,³ and this found expression in the direct control over their pomest'ya which middle-ranking servitors were

¹ Ibid., p. 578. Ivan's regulation of 11 January 1558 concerning the mortgaging and the sale of votchiny indicates that votchina registers were indeed compiled. AI I, No. 154/IX, p. 262. Votchina registers would have complemented the proposal of a survey of all Muscovite lands he made in another "question". PRP IV, pp. 579-80. True, surveys were undertaken in 37 uezdy and other territorial units during the 1550s. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 432-3. Nevertheless, no comprehensive survey of Russian lands was undertaken until the late eighteenth century. Keep, Soldiers, p. 45.

² Shmidt, "Prodolzhenie", p. 296; v. supra, p. 39. While Ivan introduced individual reforms evidently favouring the middle-ranking servitors, I.I. Smirnov and I.I. Polosin err in asserting that the reforms were by and large intended to benefit them. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, pp. 289-474 passim; I.I. Polosin, Sotsial'no-politicheskaya istoriya Rossii XVI-nachala XVII v., Moscow, 1963, p. 53. Most reforms were probably designed to help build the State and to render the army more effective, and this casts doubt upon the validity of detailed attempts to pinpoint within the population winners and losers from the reforms. V. supra, p. 106.

³ PRP IV, p. 578; I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 393.

substantially granted during the Oprichnina. In fact, the concessions he granted the middle-ranking servitors were an important stage they passed as they evolved into a "privileged gentry"; however, the transformation became relatively complete only during the eighteenth century.¹

If occasionally Ivan sought to favour the middle-ranking servitors, his attitudes towards local government were less consistently maintained and indeed, sometimes revealed contradictory strains. If Article 68 of the 1550 Sudebnik stipulated that "district elders" and tseloval'niki should be installed in volosti which previously lacked them, he indicated his backing for this provision at the Stoglav Council, affirming that he instituted "district elders", tseloval'niki, and sundry other local officials throughout his realm.² In fact, in several charters bearing upon local government issued in 1551 and 1552 he seemed ready to exceed the prescriptions of the Sudebnik. While the provisions of the Sudebnik concerning local government had inter alia permitted the "district elders" and the tseloval'niki to share authority with the kormlenshchiki in certain contexts, the outright abolition of the kormlenie system was presaged in the tsar's regulation of 28 February 1551 pertaining to the Plesskaya volost' of the Vladimir uezd: the maintenance payments to the kormlenshchiki which were formerly required should be replaced by payments to the Kazna, and cases of brigandage and theft should be resolved by a special starosta together with tseloval'niki, all chosen by the local population.³ Yet whatever steps Ivan took in 1551 and the opening months of 1552 towards liquidating the kormleniya were abruptly overridden: during the festivities

¹ Hellie emphasises unduly the extent to which the middle-ranking servitors evolved towards a "privileged gentry" during the second half of the seventeenth century. Hellie, Enserfment, pp. 240, 243-4. The Muscovite population lacked estates, and the term dvoryanstvo began to connote an estate only during the second half of the eighteenth century. See A.V. Romanovich-Slavatinsky, Dvoryanstvo v Rossii ot nachala XVIII veka do otmeny krepostnago prava, 2nd ed., Kiev, 1912, p. 4.

² Stoglav, p. 39.

³ M.A. D'yakonov, "Dopol'nitel'nyya svedeniya o moskovskikh reformakh poloviny XVI v.", ZhMNP CCXCII (April 1894), p. 190, n. 2.

of 8-10 November 1552 held to celebrate the conquest of Kazan' khanate, he awarded kormleniya throughout the realm.¹ Only in 1555-1556, as the conflicts between the kormlenshchiki and the population over which they were to preside continued to blaze, was the kormlenie system ended almost throughout Muscovy.²

When kormleniya were granted on 8-10 November 1552 to veterans of the final Kazan' campaign, in effect Ivan affirmed a linkage between his domestic policies and his victory. This was not the only instance where his diplomatic and military objectives, aspired to or realised, shaped his reforming impulses. At other times his proposals were apparently designed to address the implications of the growing network of commercial ties with foreign lands which Muscovy was forging in the mid-sixteenth century. Consider the "question" he directed to Metropolitan Makary in which he advocated that Nogay merchants and envoys journeying to Muscovy be assured of safe passage under threat of severe penalties to anyone who harmed them.³ This was doubtless meant to cultivate good relations with the Nogay horde, as Muscovy prepared in 1550-1551 for a new assault on the Kazan' khanate, which was allied with the Crimean khanate.⁴ Furthermore, Muscovite trade with the Nogay horde was already

¹ PSRL XIII, p. 228. When Ivan awarded kormleniya to various participants of the final Kazan' campaign, he followed the example of the Moscow grand princes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, who customarily rewarded their boyars according to service rendered; indeed, Veselovsky connected the pomest'ya granted from the late fifteenth century onwards with this tradition. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 472. The druzhinniki of the Kievan era depended upon their ruler for material sustenance: some obtained money from him, and other received maintenance from the population in return for discharging his administrative and judicial commissions. I.Ya. Froyanov, Kievskaya Rus': Ocherki sotsial'no-politicheskoy istorii, 2 parts, Leningrad, 1974-80, Pt 2, pp. 74-6, 137-49. Hence Ivan's relations with his entourage sometimes resembled those between Kievan rulers and their druzhinniki.

² We could enquire how the sufferings of the kormlenshchiki which the Service Code mentions and the miseries which divers contemporary charters of local government depict the kormlenshchiki as inflicting upon the population became known within the ruling oligarchy and how the attitudes of members towards abolition of the kormlenie system were shaped. Unfortunately, the sources fail to indicate the relative role of the experience some members had as namestniki, of the petitions dispatched from the uezdy to Moscow, and so forth.

³ PRP IV, p. 579.

⁴ Nosov, Stanovlenie, pp. 27-8.

significant,¹ and the tsar almost certainly hoped to expand it. He touched upon issues surrounding Muscovite trade in yet another "question": he advised that fortified barriers be established "along the Lithuanian and the German and the Tatar borders" in order that the proceeds of various duties could be kept safely and that surveillance could be maintained over fugitives and forbidden wares.²

In order to investigate Tsar Ivan's policies towards Muscovite trade, external and internal alike, it is necessary to examine his fiscal goals; nevertheless, his attitudes towards reform of Muscovy's financial underpinnings reflect varying, even on occasion conflicting motives, and must therefore be characterised with great caution. The reform of tax assessment procedures which he promulgated evinced an evidently "rationalising" spirit. He attempted – however imperfectly his efforts may have succeeded – to break with the practice evidenced in numerous documents of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries according to which the peasants paid tribute and certain other main taxes according to their capacity to pay (po sile); he sought to make tax assessments throughout Muscovy dependent upon one land unit, the sokha.³ When he introduced new taxes or increased the levels of the existing taxes, he pursued the eminently defensible goal of placing Muscovy's sustained military endeavours on a

¹ Muscovy imported from the Nogay horde large numbers of horses – 80,000 in 1530-1 alone – and bows and arrows. Zimin, Reformy, p. 138. Muscovy exported to the horde inter alia paper, sundry iron products, armour, and coats of sable and squirrel. M.V. Fekhner, Torgovlya Russkogo gosudarstva so stranami Vostoka v XVI v., 2nd ed., Moscow, 1956, pp. 54-5.

² PRP IV, p. 578. Kurbsky probably disapproved of this proposal: in his third letter to Ivan he censured the tsar for having shut up Muscovy "as in a fortress of hell" and for executing would-be fugitives as traitors. Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 110.

³ Smith, Peasant farming, p. 30; v. supra, p. 28, n. 2. Muscovite rulers not infrequently laid the foundations for reforms embracing the entire country by introducing them – perhaps in preliminary form – in some particular part of the realm, and the sokha was introduced at least theoretically as Muscovy's unit of tax assessment according to this pattern: the "big sokha", which equalled the aforesaid sokha, was employed as a unit of land measurement on the grand princely estates proper during the mid-1540s. AFZKh II, No. 178, pp. 174-8.

sound financial footing.¹ In one "question" addressed to Makary, for instance, he proposed that the myt, a duty traders transporting their goods paid for authorisation to travel on roads, should no longer be exacted save in border localities and that the tamga, a duty levied on goods as they were sold, should be raised sufficiently to yield a growth in revenues equalling the fall in myt collections.² Since a significant part of the myt had hitherto enriched private landholders, the envisaged change would increase the receipts entering the Kazna.³ Nevertheless, when the known charters the tsar issued after 1547 conferring immunities from taxes and trade duties – almost exclusively to monasteries in respect of various of their estates – are surveyed, he emerges as scarcely consistent in striving to maximise the revenues reaching Moscow. On present evidence, however, the causes of the oscillations in his attitudes concerning financial immunities are not especially clear. True, the financial immunities he awarded various monasteries after 1547 were relatively liberal;⁴ yet when he supervised the May 1551 review of charters conferring financial and judicial immunities upon monasteries, those financial privileges most advantageous to their holders were removed from many charters.⁵ During the

¹ Zlotnik has computed the share military-related obligations formed of the total tax burden imposed upon a sokha: this share was 62% in 1550 and rose to 73% by 1561 and to 84% by 1584. M.D. Zlotnik, "Muscovite Fiscal Policy: 1462-1584", RH 6, Pt 2 (1979), p. 253.

² PRP IV, p. 578.

³ Nevertheless, the myt continued to be collected, and a 1596 regulation was even issued to curb various abuses perpetrated by myt collectors. Zhdanov, Sochineniya, I, p. 181, n. 1 (continued). The myt was abolished definitively only in 1653. Yu.A. Tikhanov, "Tamozhennaya politika Russkogo gosudarstva s serediny XVI v. do 60-kh godov XVII v.", IZ 53 (1955), p. 289.

⁴ Zlotnik, "Muscovite Fiscal Policy", p. 256. While this and other broad statements characterising the granting of financial immunities in mid-century are useful generalisations, it must be emphasised that then as earlier, the immediately attendant political circumstances influenced significantly the exact provisions of the immunity charters granted.

⁵ Ibid., p. 257. Nevertheless, in May 1551 Ivan dealt slightly more leniently with the charters bestowing immunities upon monasteries than Article 43 of the 1550 Sudebnik would have required: the aforesaid charters qualified as tarkhan charters, and Article 43 stipulated that all tarkhan charters should become invalid. Sudebniki, p. 152; Muscovite Judicial Texts, p. 56. A brief but useful introduction to tarkhan charters is provided in V.N. Storozhev and V.E. Rudakov, "Gramota", ESBE IXA, p. 536.

remainder of the 1550s he awarded few new financial immunities, and even those bestowed contained only minor exemptions;¹ however, the extent to which charters issued from the early sixties to the end of his reign released their recipients from the customary remittances was unmatched since the early sixteenth century.² Finally, his generosity in victory to members of his army paradoxically could substantially disrupt his efforts to expand the resources of the Kazna: at the celebrations of 8-10 November 1552 marking the conquest of the Kazan' khanate, he disbursed the immense sum of 48,000 rubles to sundry participants of the final Kazan' khanate.³

Tsar Ivan's intentions vis-à-vis Muscovy's taverns also included contradictory strains. In one "question" addressed to Metropolitan Makary he averred that the taverns which had long been granted in towns and volosti harmed the peasants greatly and wrought destruction to their souls, and proposed that taverns should no longer be maintained.⁴ In this resolve he was most likely animated by concern for his subjects' moral welfare.⁵ Yet to eliminate Muscovy's taverns was implicitly to cast aside the revenues they generated, and when he was confronted with this prospect, his reforming ardour cooled rapidly. We have already pointed out that his charter of 25 February 1552 to three volosti of the Northern Dvina vicinity revealed him as unwilling to countenance competition by privately-held taverns with the officially sponsored sales of

¹ Zlotnik, "Muscovite Fiscal Policy", pp. 256-7.

² Ibid., pp. 257-8. How heavily political considerations influenced the granting of financial immunities as the Oprichnina approached is illustrated by the case of Afanasy, a former archpriest of the Kremlin Blagoveshchenskiy Cathedral who succeeded Makary as metropolitan in February 1564: to win his support, Ivan shortly afterwards granted the metropolitanate wide-ranging financial and judicial immunities vis-à-vis its votchiny. Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 205-6.

³ PSRL XIII, pp. 227-8. Thus, Ivan's attitudes towards wealth varied. While he almost certainly appreciated its most specifically "practical" purposes, in sundry contexts, such as the festivities of 8-10 November 1552, it was primarily a means whereby he could enhance his prestige and cement loyalties.

⁴ PRP, pp. 577-8.

⁵ Drunkenness was a serious problem afflicting the Muscovite population. In a missive dispatched at mid-century to Ivan, Feodosy, archbishop of Novgorod, condemned the ruinous consequences he ascribed to taverns. DAI I, No. 41, p. 55.

alcohol,¹ and alternative evidence marks him as ready to exploit the proceeds of alcohol sales. Anthony Jenkinson, reaching Muscovy for the first time in 1557, observed: "In every good town there is a drunken tavern called a korchma, which the emperor sometimes letteth out to farm and sometimes bestoweth for a year or two on some duke or gentleman in recompense of his service; and for that time he is lord of all the town, robbing and spoiling and doing what pleaseth him."²

Even if Ivan failed to maintain the moral concern which surely impelled him to contemplate rooting out Muscovy's taverns, contemporaries nevertheless directed to him arguments couched in moral or specifically religious terms when other reforms were under consideration. A noteworthy example is afforded by the representation Metropolitan Makary made to him on 15 September 1550 concerning the ecclesiastically-held urban "settlements" (slobody);³ Makary's representation provides one of the few instances where the conversations within the ruling oligarchy regarding particular reforms are captured in the extant sources. The pertinent legislation of the recent past provides a platform for comprehending Makary's proposals. In a regulation probably issued at the 1549 church council, Ivan had ordered that all financial and judicial privileges ecclesiastical landholders enjoyed vis-à-vis their "new" "settlements" be cancelled; however, by September 1550 a second regulation was issued, abrogating only the financial privileges.⁴ Yet Makary remained dissatisfied. He complained that divers namestniki and volosteli sought to exercise jurisdiction over the population of

¹ V. supra, p. 62. But Ivan's moral and religious convictions did not invariably weaken before the prospect of increased revenues for the Kazna. He refused to allow Jews to trade in Muscovy, even though the trading duties they would have paid were thereby forfeited; in August 1550 an envoy of Sigismund Augustus enquired why Lithuanian Jewish traders were excluded from Muscovy, and Ivan replied that he wished to witness no evil in his dominions. SIRIO LIX, No. 20, p. 338, No. 21, pp. 341-2.

² Rude and Barbarous Kingdom, p. 57.

³ The privileges and the obligations of private landholders vis-à-vis their "settlements" in towns were not regulated definitively before the 1649 Ulozhenie. Zimin, Reformy, p. 377.

⁴ PRP IV, p. 580; Nosov, Stanovlenie, p. 106.

"new" "settlements", that is, failed to heed the second regulation.¹ In order to end all confusion surrounding the ecclesiastically-held urban "settlements", Makary attempted to define their legal situation in five proposals he presented to Ivan.² To treat these proposals exhaustively is not our goal; nevertheless, the criterion he advocated whereby "old" and "new" "settlements" might be differentiated retains our interest,³ for he attempted to win its acceptance by appealing to Ivan's conscience. He affirmed that "settlements" should be accounted "old" if they were mentioned in authorised descriptive registers, whenever these were compiled, and "new" otherwise.⁴ Under this definition chances were good that the "white" "settlements" which various ecclesiastical landholders acquired during Ivan's minority could be reckoned "old", for scribes were dispatched to various uezdy in the mid-1540s.⁵ Makary sought to gain approval of his definition by hinting that Ivan would offend God by liquidating these "white" "settlements".⁶

¹ PRP IV, p. 580.

² These proposals are summarised in I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 371. P.P. Smirnov claimed (Posadskie lyudi, I, pp. 115-9 passim) that they were legally sanctioned in a special regulation, but this is challenged in Nosov, Stanovlenie, p. 108. The evidence is inconclusive.

³ The distinction between "old" and "new" "settlements" was fundamental to Makary's scheme. He proposed that the metropolitan, the archbishops, the bishops, and the monasteries should hold "old" "settlements" "according to ancient tradition" (po starine) whereas "new" "settlements" would be subject to restrictions. In a compromising spirit he proposed that no further "settlements" be established. PRP IV, pp. 580-1.

⁴ Ibid., p. 580.

⁵ F.G. Adashev, Aleksey Adashev's father and a future member of the ruling oligarchy, helped supervise the compilation of registers of inquisition for the Moscow uezd in the mid-forties. I.I. Smirnov, Ocherki, p. 215.

⁶ True, Kurbsky speaks politely enough of Makary in his known writings, but he relates most unfavourably to monks – presumably of Josephite leanings – who sought to increase the Church's wealth: "But they are always zealously on the watch for what might be pleasing to the tsar and to the powers, in other words how they might wheedle out of them estates or great wealth for the monasteries and how they might live in foul lusts, feeding like swine, to say nothing of wallowing in filth." Kurbsky, History, p. 79. When regulations were proposed to prune ecclesiastical wealth and privileges, we might conjecture that sundry members of the ruling oligarchy were animated in part by a revulsion like Kurbsky's for the greed numerous clergymen displayed and the reprobate lifestyle various contemporary observers noted in the monasteries.

Another sample of the attempts Makary made to repulse attacks upon the Church's wealth and privileges is afforded by the letter he drafted in which he protested against the plans Ivan harboured as the 1550s began to secularise the votchiny in the Moscow uezd held by the metropolitanate.¹ The theme recurring most evidently in the letter might be formulated as follows: Makary revered "ancient tradition" (starina), based his arguments substantially upon it, and expected Ivan also to find it an authoritative guide. He justified his intervention by asserting that no previous Russian metropolitan had permitted encroachment upon Church property.² Adopting a different perspective, he exhorted Ivan to follow the example of Byzantine emperors from Constantine the Great onwards and of previous Russian rulers back to Vladimir I, who, he asserted, refrained from confiscating ecclesiastically-held properties; furthermore, he repeated mutatis mutandis those resolutions of the 1503 Council which affirmed the inviolability of Church properties.³ He also appealed to Ivan's Christian commitment: pointing out that sundry Tatar khans had issued yarlyki safeguarding Church properties against infringement, he averred that an Orthodox tsar should maintain an even more protective attitude.⁴

If Joseph of Volokolamsk doubtless would have encouraged Makary steadfastly to defend the Church's wealth and privileges when both were challenged as the 1550s began, Makary's attempts were probably opposed by Sil'vestr. In all likelihood Sil'vestr sympathised with the "Non-possessors": this was particularly apparent in

¹ Budovmits plausibly asserted that the metropolitanate's votchiny in the Moscow uezd were to be secularised to provide land for deti boyarskie who were to be resettled on pomest'ya near Moscow according to Ivan's regulation of 3 October 1550. I.U. Budovmits, Russkaya publitsistika XVI v., Moscow and Leningrad, 1947, reprinted The Hague and Paris, 1970, p. 196.

² Subbotin, "K materialam", p. 135; Budovmits, Russkaya publitsistika, p. 197.

³ Subbotin, "K materialam", pp. 129-34; Pavlov, Istoricheskiy ocherk sekulyarizatsii, I, p. 109.

⁴ Subbotin, "K materialam", p. 133; Pavlov, Istoricheskiy ocherk sekulyarizatsii, I, p. 109. While Ivan invariably spoke respectfully of Makary in his attested speeches and writings, by 1564 attempts such as Makary's to modify his reforming intentions probably struck him as challenging his authority and strengthened his resolve to rule autocratically.

May 1551 when he helped the avowed "Non-possessor" Artemy to become abbot of the Troitse-Sergiev Monastery.¹ Unfortunately, on present evidence we cannot establish to what extent and in what respects he wished to curb the Church's wealth and privileges. Nor are his attitudes towards other reforms contemplated at mid-century especially clear.²

Aleksey Adashev's attitudes towards reform are as little-known as Sil'vestr's. Indeed, the regulation of 18 January 1555 to combat brigandage is the only reform towards which his attitude is manifest: he signed the regulation, along with Princes Yu.M. Bulgakov and D.I. Kurlyatev, V.M.Yur'ev, Prince I.I. Turuntay Pronsky, I.M. Vorontsov, Prince V.S. Serebryany Obolensky, I.V. Bol'shoy Sheremetev, and I.M. Veshnyakov.³ The fact that the known sources so little illustrate Aleksey Adashev's and Sil'vestr's attitudes towards reform show how difficult it is to determine the causes which Ivan IV's fellow members of the ruling oligarchy favoured.

¹ I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, p. 242; Skrynnikov, *Nachalo oprichniny*, p. 88.

² Sil'vestr is celebrated in Russian literary history as the compiler of the *Domostroy*, the sixteenth-century guide indicating how the household of a prosperous townsman should be managed, and in the concluding part, where he makes divers admonitions to his son Anfim, he expressed support for the manumission of the slaves. A.S. Orlov, compiler, *Domostroy po Konshinskomu spisku i podobnym*, Moscow, 1908, reprinted The Hague, 1967, p. 66. Whether Sil'vestr favoured general abolition of slavery is unclear; if he did, his preference was considerably more radical than the pertinent provisions of the *Sudebnik* (v. *supra*, pp. 51-2) and became effective only in 1723. Hellie, *Slavery*, pp. 698-9.

³ PRP IV, pp. 356-60.

8**Conclusions**

The aim of the final chapter is to expound the main conclusions of the dissertation. These conclusions are formulated as answers to three fundamental enquiries: the first concerns the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political order, its premises and its dynamics, and is treated with reference to the political behaviour Ivan and other members of the ruling oligarchy revealed. The second concerns the ruling oligarchy's composition: the sources of recruitment and the long-range effect of the 1547-1564 period upon the lineages included are examined together with the capability of the members of the ruling oligarchy to cooperate politically. The third concerns Ivan himself: by considering how and to what ends he ruled at mid-century, we seek to paint a balanced portrait of him and his mentality, assessing in the process how successfully he presided over the age.

Ivan's rule is most advantageously analysed within the wider context of the mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite political order, and this enquiry is handled first. The continuities and the changes contemporary politics evinced are identified, as are the authors of such changes as were evident. In the following paragraphs conclusions regarding Muscovy's political order at mid-century are presented.

The Muscovite political order was markedly centralised by 1547: the Moscow court was the focal point of the political and military order, and neither the remaining udel principalities nor the realm's largest and historically most important territories could be expected to mount serious opposition to Moscow's initiatives. Well into the sixteenth century the udel principalities had on occasion been centres from which intrigues complicating Muscovite politics were launched,¹ but by the mid-century only two udely remained: the Staritsa udel, held by Ivan IV's first cousin, Vladimir Andreevich, and the Uglich udel, held from 1560 until 1563 by his brother, Yury

¹ By and large, however, the udel princes were increasingly subjected to the Moscow rulers. Cf. Fennell, *Ivan the Great*, pp. 306-15; Zimin, *Rossiia na poroge*, pp. 94-111, 367-8, 397-401; I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, pp. 53-74.

Vasil'evich.¹ Neither prince was a forceful personality likely to exploit his udel as a base for conspiracy against the tsar;² both princes were substantially integrated into the political order centred upon the Moscow court, and both belonged to the Muscovite ruling oligarchy for almost all of the 1547-1564 period. Moreover, whereas in sundry western European countries certain provinces remained potentially dangerous sites of resistance to the rulers long after the mid-sixteenth century,³ this situation found little resonance in Muscovy. From Ivan III's reign onwards more and more of the realm's largest and historically most important territories became linked administratively with the capital, and these territories were accordingly hindered in developing a sense of shared political identity – this might have emerged were they grouped together administratively – let alone in uniting to oppose policies conceived in Moscow. In sum, as Ivan's autocratic propensities grew manifest during the early 1560s, he had little need to fear resistance originating from the udel principalities or from local centres, save, perhaps, Novgorod.

After 1547 Ivan IV, no longer the figurehead ruler he was during his minority, became the central actor in the Muscovite political order, and this reflects the underlying premise which continued substantially to shape his political behaviour – that Muscovy's rulers should preside over their dominions much as a "typical votchinnik" ruled his estate; this premise continued to affect the manner whereby Muscovite tsars ruled until the mid-seventeenth century.⁴ Ivan's rule over mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy might

¹ Throughout his reign Ivan refrained from abolishing Muscovy's udely. Indeed, after marrying Anna Koltovskaya in 1572, he stipulated that any son born to her should receive an udel; were she widowed, she would be provided for similarly. The last udel, Uglich, was liquidated only after its holder, Tsarevich Dmitry, perished in mysterious circumstances in May 1592. S.B. Veselovsky, "Poslednie udely v severo-vostochnoy Rusi", *Iz* 22 (1947), pp. 111-3.

² If Prince Yury Vasil'evich was feeble-minded, Prince Vladimir Andreevich was irresolute: when a conspiracy to make him tsar was uncovered in 1567, he attempted to avert Ivan's anger by confessing all he knew. Skrynnikov, *Oprichnyy terror*, p. 7.

³ That regional loyalties played contrasting roles in Russian and western European history is persuasively argued in D. Gerhard, "Regionalismus und ständisches Wesen als ein Grundthema europäischer Geschichte", *HZ* 174 (1952), pp. 329-33.

⁴ Pipes, *Russia*, p. 70.

be compared concretely with a "typical votchinnik"s over his votchina in three important senses. Firstly, the "typical votchinnik" probably viewed his lands above all as income-producing property, and after 1547 Ivan IV displayed this attitude more strongly than had Ivan III and Vasily III, increasing taxes steeply as he sought to defray the costs his wars of conquest imposed. Yet he lacked any strongly developed sense of reciprocal obligation to Muscovite tax-payers, and any notion of "the common good" was conspicuously absent from his calculations.¹ Secondly, the preeminent administrative and judicial authority the "typical votchinnik" enjoyed within his votchina – tsarist officials aside – was paralleled in Ivan's dominant part in Muscovite administration and justice. The tsar was fully entitled to resolve all administrative questions, great or trivial, whatever their object; furthermore, his was the highest judgment in the realm, to which all Muscovites, however exalted their service rank or distinguished their genealogy, had to defer. His roles as ultimate arbiter of Muscovy's foreign policy and principal actor within the Muscovite military order were analogous. Certainly it is scarcely surprising that his initiatives and the attempts made directly or indirectly to influence them constituted the stuff of politics at mid-century. Thirdly, Ivan, like a "typical votchinnik", wielded a predominantly direct and personal authority or delegated his authority to subordinates closely identified with him. Among his subordinates, moreover, were high-ranking servitors and intimate advisers whose birth his father and grandfather would have considered insufficiently distinguished; they owed their high rank or political clout directly to his favour and hence were unusually closely linked with him.

¹ Notions of "the common good" penetrated slowly the mentality of Russian rulers, and such notions should not be ascribed too readily. For example, Stashevsky claimed that the policies Patriarch Filaret pursued between 1619 and 1633 represented a "dictatorship of the common good". E.D. Stashevsky, Ocherki po istorii tsarstvovaniya Mikhaila Fedorovicha, Ch. 1-ya, Kiev, 1913, p. 203. However, Keep has convincingly countered that a wide gulf divided Filaret's principles and actions. J.L.H. Keep, "The Régime of Filaret (1619-1633)", SEER 38 (1959-60), pp. 346-60.

To affirm that Ivan IV ruled Muscovy substantially as his private votchina need not imply that he exercised the unlimited authority of an autocrat. On the contrary, until the early 1560s he respected the long-standing premise whereby the Moscow grand princes cooperated closely with the boyars and the foremost ecclesiastics; this premise provided a foundation for oligarchic rule in Muscovy. By Dmitry Donskoy's reign if not earlier the grand prince and his boyars collaborated substantially in various contexts,¹ and the tradition remained operative after 1547. Between 1550 and 1562 several regulations supplementing the 1550 Sudebnik were decreed by Ivan "together with (all) the boyars" (so (vsemi) boyary),² and he delegated his authority to sundry boyars, giving them responsible assignments in the army and the central government agencies and in Muscovite diplomacy; moreover, the case of Prince A.M. Kurbsky, who related proudly his part in the final Kazan' campaign,³ suggests that the boyars discharged their assignments enthusiastically. Furthermore, Russian rulers had long counted prominent ecclesiastics among their most intimate advisers: this was consistent with the ideal of close cooperation between the monarch and the leading ecclesiastics advanced by the eleventh-century Kievan metropolitan Ilarion and reaffirmed in the sixteenth century by Maksim Grek.⁴ This ideal found particular application after 1547 inasmuch as the priest Sil'vestr and Metropolitan Makary were long numbered among Ivan's closest advisers within the ruling oligarchy. In his first letter to Kurbsky, written but months before the Oprichnina began and oligarchic rule gave way to autocracy, the tsar refused to grant either ecclesiastics or boyars any share in ruling the

¹ Rüss, Adel und Adelsoppositionen, pp. 4-6.

² AI I, No. 154/I, III-VI, XIII-XIV, XVIII, pp. 251-4, 257-8, 264-5, 268.

³ Kurbsky, History, pp. 24-71 passim.

⁴ Val'denberg, Drevnerusskiya ucheniya, pp. 257, 286.

realm, proposing as an alternative premise that he should wield undivided personal authority.¹

The personal nature of Ivan IV's authority was emphasised even in the late 1540s insofar as he failed to respect various conventions his father and his grandfather observed when they nominated boyars and okol'nichie and in fact he converted these ranks into personal favours. The boyars and the okol'nichie he appointed thus became intimately identified with him, as the officials managing a votchiny typically were linked closely with the votchinnik. True, almost all the boyars and the preponderant majority of the okol'nichie chosen after 1547 belonged to boyar or princely lineages represented within these ranks from generation to generation. But whereas Ivan III and Vasily III named boyars and okol'nichie sparingly, recruiting them from the members of particular branches of boyar or princely lineages who had amassed lengthy service records – in the process following a cursus honorum – after 1547 Ivan IV was unconstrained by this example. Firstly, between 1547 and the early 1560s boyars and okol'nichie were appointed in unprecedented numbers, numbers unequalled until the second half of the seventeenth century.² A few statistics indicate how great this inflation of honours actually was: during Ivan's minority the number of boyars fluctuated between 11 and 15 and the number of okol'nichie between 1 and 3, but 32 boyars and 9 okol'nichie were known as 1549 ended, and by 1560 the combined number of boyars and okol'nichie was approaching 60.³ In increasing dramatically the numbers of boyars and okol'nichie from 1547, Ivan pursued two potentially contradictory goals. Recalling the court conflicts of his minority, he sought to name enough boyars and okol'nichie so that no clique could easily dominate these ranks.

¹ Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 16.

² N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics: The Making of the Muscovite Political System, 1345-1547, Stanford, 1987, pp. 29, 33, 76; Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", pp. 44-53, 82; Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 175-7.

³ Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 82.

Moreover, as a young tsar – he was seventeen when crowned – whose confidence was probably shaken by humiliations suffered during his youth, he was eager to reward supporters within the princely and the boyar lineages and to win new backers. He showed especial preferment to a relatively restricted number of lineages, repeatedly recruiting boyars and/or okol'nichie from them. These lineages were: the Obolensky, the Suzdal', and the Bulgakov princes together with the descendants of the fourteenth-century boyar A.I. Kobyla, embracing the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, the Yakovlevs, the Sheremetevs, and the Kolychevs, and the descendants of the fourteenth century servitor I.S. Moroz, including the Morozovs, the Sheins, the Saltykovs, and sundry other kinsmen.¹ That these lineages were so frequently encountered among the new boyars and okol'nichie must have engendered envy and resentment among the members of lineages which were less favoured,² and the descendants of A.I. Kobyla, in particular, must have impressed many contemporaries as honoured indecently often. Inasmuch as the inflation of honours at mid-century helped to render Ivan's courtiers mutually antagonistic, it hindered them from uniting against him, particularly when he revealed his autocratic propensities during the early 1560s. Secondly, sundry boyars and okol'nichie were appointed from 1547 onwards whose birth would have disqualified them under his father and his grandfather. Boyars rarely and okol'nichie sometimes were chosen from outside Muscovy's "well-born";³ nor did he disdain to recruit boyars from lineages which, while genealogically distinguished, had never previously contributed them. Even when he chose boyars and okol'nichie from lineages long

¹ Our discussion is supported substantially in A.M. Kleimola, "Kto kogo: Patterns of Duma Recruitment, 1547-1564", FOEG 38 (1986), pp. 212-3. Banal as the observation might appear, these lineages could supply boyars and okol'nichie because they had not died out; the Obolensky princes together with the descendants of A.I. Kobyla and of I.S. Moroz were especially fortunate since accidents of fertility rendered them numerous at mid-century.

² Ibid., pp. 213-4.

³ From the fourteenth century through the mid-sixteenth century the boyars and the okol'nichie were selected from the "well-born". N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 45-6.

supplying them, his preferences remained critically important: he made appointments from branches formerly unrepresented within these ranks, and on occasion the sequence of his choices contravened seniority relations within families. Thirdly, after 1547 no specific kind of service record was consistently demanded as a prerequisite for the ranks of boyar and okol'nichiy. Ivan required nothing like the ten to fifteen years of service his father and his grandfather expected of aspiring okol'nichie or the twenty-five to thirty years of service they insisted upon before naming a courtier boyar; the okol'nichie and the boyars he appointed frequently had much shorter service records, and probably his appointees were on balance younger than theirs.¹ Moreover, the service records his boyars and okol'nichie assembled before they were nominated reveal few patterns, let alone a cursus honorum: an eminent role in Muscovite diplomacy was no precondition; before almost all namestnichestva and other kormleniya were abolished under the Service Code of 1555-1556, the namestniki of the historically most important towns were customarily chosen from the boyars, but whether the namestniki of lesser towns would subsequently become boyars was very uncertain; and even though Muscovy was usually at war from 1549, an illustrious army career was not compulsory.² A partial counter-example is afforded insofar as the heads of various, although not all, central government agencies were regarded as holding such distinguished posts that they were usually chosen from princely or boyar lineages and that either they were already boyars or okol'nichie when appointed or they would later receive one of these ranks.³ Furthermore, when individual boyars and okol'nichie

¹ Kleimola, "Kto kogo", pp. 211-2.

² Nevertheless, boyars and okol'nichie lacking army experience when they were named became increasingly rare at mid-century: more and more boyars and okol'nichie had such experience before they obtained their ranks, and most continued participating in campaigns after they were appointed. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

³ A few examples suffice to indicate that the primary considerations animating Ivan in choosing heads of central government agencies were variable: sometimes he rewarded conspicuous talent; at other times he showed favour to his relatives by marriage; and on occasion he sought to involve his appointees more closely in Muscovy's political and administrative order.

were named heads of central government agencies, the barrier separating the boyars and the okol'niche, reckoned together, from the d'yaki was evidently coming down, and the trend persisted into the seventeenth century.¹ Inasmuch as Ivan avoided imposing well-defined and indeed rigorous prerequisites of birth and service when appointing boyars and okol'niche after 1547, he rendered these ranks personal favours and thereby encouraged his courtiers to compete intensely for his regard; the ensuing rivalries helped further to divide the court and to impede the courtiers in resisting effectively the attempts he made to introduce autocratic rule when the Oprichnina began.

The personal favour of Ivan IV's authority was affirmed at mid-century when he allowed various favoured boyars and okol'niche to enter the ruling oligarchy; weighty implications for the Muscovite political order lurked around the corner. While the Moscow grand princes were long advised by an "inner circle" of especially prominent boyars, it was a basic premise that all boyars should enjoy some noteworthy political clout.² This premise was infringed after 1547 even though the boyars and the okol'niche, particularly those recruited from princely or boyar lineages, contributed a sizeable share of the ruling oligarchy's members. Numerous boyars and okol'niche seemingly never gained Ivan's favour sufficiently to enter the ruling oligarchy; in fact, sundry boyars and okol'niche are revealed as virtual nonentities when their career biographies are surveyed comprehensively. This, like the aforementioned inflation of honours at mid-century, probably rendered the two highest service ranks less prestigious.³

The personal nature of Ivan IV's authority was displayed especially strikingly after 1547 when he permitted Kremlin favourites outside the boyars and the okol'niche to become influential enough to qualify for membership of the ruling oligarchy. On

¹ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 54-8.

² N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 45, 151.

³ Cf. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 31.

occasion he disregarded the long-standing premise that the boyars were the only courtiers who might join the ruler in taking major decisions of foreign and domestic policy.¹ Several important examples of influential favourites are adduced. As the tsar's foremost advisers from the late 1540s until 1560, Aleksey Adashev and the priest Sil'vestr enjoyed considerable weight within the ruling oligarchy; yet Adashev became an okol'nichiy only in June 1553,² and Sil'vestr held no service rank. Moreover, as new service ranks emerged at mid-century and the resulting ladder resembled more closely that which Peter the Great abolished, the upper upper service ranks of dumnyy dvoryanin and dumnyy d'yak appeared beneath the ranks of boyar and okol'nichiy; most dumnye dvoryane were court favourites not promoted further within the service hierarchy, and a goodly part of the early dumnye dvoryane had some stint in the ruling oligarchy. Finally, when d'yaki of humble antecedents were selected to head regional dvortsy usually led by "well-born" courtiers, these d'yaki were marked not only as belonging to the ruling oligarchy but also as exceptionally favoured even though they failed subsequently to attain the two highest service ranks. Such instances of favourites outside the boyars and the okol'nichie who joined the ruling oligarchy indicate that Muscovite court politics was growing less exclusive.

True, on balance Ivan IV ruled mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy substantially as his private votchina and in certain contexts the direct, personal nature of his authority was stressed after 1547. However, in sundry other respects his manner of ruling diverged increasingly from the "typical votchinnik"s. Three such respects require particular attention. Firstly, recorded legislation played a greatly increased role in determining how justice should be dispensed and the realm administered: the 1550 Sudebnik – Muscovy's basic law code until the 1649 Ulozhenie – and the numerous other regulations promulgated at mid-century, taken together, represented a barrage of

¹ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 46-54.

² Zimin, "Sostav Boyarskoy dumy", p. 66.

legislation unprecedented in the grand principality's history and unequalled before Peter the Great's reforms.¹ Secondly, the central government was becoming noticeably more "rationalised" at mid-century:² specifically, four new prikazy - the Posol'skiy, the Pomestnyy, and the Razboynyy prikazy and the Bol'shoy Prikhod – and several new prikaz-like agencies, mainly regional dvortsy, were articulated, and these all revealed moderate specialisation in their tasks.³ In their spheres their heads customarily exercised jurisdiction over all cases, and Tsar Ivan's opportunities for handling everyday questions of justice and administration were significantly lessened. Thirdly, when he summoned the Zemsky sobor of February-March 1549 – the first of the zemskie sobory convened at moments of exceptional crisis through 1653 – to provide an arena where he could move against the growing disorders in the countryside, he tacitly conceded that he could not resolve himself, or with a few close advisers, the weightiest questions affecting his realm;⁴ ordinarily no "typical votchinnik" would make an analogous admission vis-à-vis his votchina.

The ambiguities, nay, the paradoxes afflicting Ivan IV's exercise of authority after 1547 had roots in his grandfather's reign, and by 1564, as the Oprichnina

¹ True, recorded legislation hardly eclipsed Ivan's direct, personal authority at mid-century; however, it was becoming so important an alternative source of authority that Meehan-Waters probably errs in asserting that "the tension between personalisation and regularisation of sovereign power" began under Peter the Great. B. Meehan-Waters, Autocracy and Aristocracy: The Russian Service Elite of 1730, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1981, p. 64.

² Military-related exigencies provided powerful impetus to administrative "rationalisation" in Muscovy as elsewhere in Europe.

³ Yet we must not overrate the degree of specialisation the Muscovite prikazy achieved at mid-century. Even in the seventeenth century the prikazy remained fairly uncomplicated: Kotoshikhin, a mere pod'yachiy of the Posol'skiy prikaz, could familiarize himself with the other prikazy sufficiently to bequeath a valuable portrait of the contemporary central government. Kotoshikhin, O Rossii, pp. 97-137.

⁴ Western European rulers made an analogous admission long before the mid-sixteenth century. In the mid-thirteenth century Louis IX instituted the Parlement of Paris: it was originally a court of final instance where cases originating throughout France could be resolved in the king's name. The Parlement of Paris and the other mediaeval French parlements are treated comprehensively in F. Lot and R. Fawtier, Histoire des institutions françaises au Moyen Age, 3 vols to date, Paris, 1957-, II, pp. 332-71, 393-508. Well before the thirteenth century ended, the English Parliament dispensed the highest justice in the realm and instituted administrative and legal reforms. H.G. Richardson, "The Origins of Parliament", TRHS Fourth Series, XI (1928), pp. 165-6.

approached, he sought to remove these conflicting strains and to rule autocratically. While Ivan III, too, on balance governed Muscovy as his private votchina, nevertheless the countervailing trend evident in the mid-sixteenth century was anticipated before the fifteenth century ended. As he waged wars of conquest against neighbouring Russian polities and as Muscovy grew territorially, the tasks of justice and administration became too numerous and complex for any one man, and this had two important results. Firstly, a modest start was made, most conspicuously through the 1497 Sudebnik, in affirming that law should determine the judicial and the administrative procedures to be followed in sundry contexts; the modern Weberian State began – belatedly by comparison with western European countries¹ – to be erected. Furthermore, prikaz-like agencies which in their staff structure and manner of operating resembled the mid-sixteenth-century prikazy and prikaz-like agencies began emerging from Ivan III's household in the late fifteenth century, and he delegated substantial authority to their heads. But however expedient Tsar Ivan might have found it after 1547 to build upon his grandfather's legacy, introducing numerous new laws and "rationalising" further Muscovy's central government, it is questionable whether he accepted willingly the constraints upon his personal authority which were thereby imposed, especially as his autocratic propensities became manifest during the early 1560s. Whatever frustrations he felt even before 1560 will have been heightened inasmuch as attempts were made from the 1470s onwards – which he certainly supported – to render the grand princes and their authority vastly more awe-inspiring than the basic legitimacy they enjoyed as Daniilovichi alone would imply.² Two such

¹ According to Näf, a modern State began emerging in western European countries during the thirteenth century. W. Näf, "Frühformen des 'Modernen Staates' im Spätmittelalter", HZ 171 (1951), pp. 225, 240-3.

² The attitude encountered in sixteenth-century Muscovy that a truly legitimate ruler had to stem from the Daniilovichi found little resonance in western and central Europe where an extinct dynasty could be replaced relatively painlessly. How outlandish Muscovites found elected rulers emerges from Ivan's relations with Stefan Bathory, chosen king of Poland in 1576 after the Jagiellonians died out: the tsar regularly styled Sigismund Augustus, Bathory's predecessor, "brother", but applied reluctantly this title to Bathory. D'yakonov, Vlast', pp. 153-8.

attempts seem particularly noteworthy. If Ivan III unofficially used the tsar's title in diplomacy and in effect asserted himself the equal of the Holy Roman Emperors and other leading crowned heads of Europe, and if Vasily III styled himself tsar even more often,¹ in January 1547 Ivan IV formally adopted the tsar's title Russian rulers bore until the Revolution; indeed, it was widely believed in Muscovy that he was crowned by God Himself. Moreover, in the early sixteenth century a spurious genealogy of the Daniilovichi was concocted according to which their forbear Ryurik was descended from Prus, a fictitious brother of Augustus Caesar; Ivan IV, who like Kurbsky,² like "well-born" Muscovites in general, was keenly interested in genealogies, gladly proclaimed himself a kinsman of the illustrious Roman emperor in a 1571 letter to the Swedish king.³ Indeed, the aura surrounding the sixteenth-century and the seventeenth-century Moscow rulers was so great that even prominent subjects would style themselves "slaves" in petitions.⁴ It therefore seems an especially striking paradox that not only was Ivan decreasingly able to wield direct, personal authority in resolving judicial and administrative questions, but also his initiatives at times elicited determined resistance at court and particularly within the ruling oligarchy. When he refrained from imposing disgrace upon boyars suspected of seeking to flee from Muscovy because influential boyars organised sureties on their behalf, he acknowl-

¹ Ibid., pp. 134-6.

² Although Kurbsky esteemed his genealogy, he praised Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr – who were decidedly not "well-born" – as having contributed positively to Ivan's and Muscovy's weal. Kurbsky, History, pp. 16, 18, 20, 22. That two potentially conflicting strains could exist simultaneously amidst Kurbsky's thoughts suggests, as Hexter has observed in another context, that we must not assume a "law of conservation of historical energy". J.H. Hexter, Reappraisals in History, 2nd ed., Chicago and London, 1979, p. 42.

³ Poslaniya Ivan Groznogo, p. 158.

⁴ Prince I.M. Vorotynsky dubbed himself "slave" in a 1525 petition to Vasily III. V.D. Nazarov, "Taynaya chelobitnaya Ivana Vorotynskogo", VI 1969, No. 1, p. 211. See Giles Fletcher's observations on this point in Rude and Barbarous Kingdom, p. 138. Cf. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 138.

edged implicitly that he needed general assent at court before taking so drastic a step.¹ When Metropolitan Makary remonstrated with him, hoping to persuade him to abandon plans to curtail the Church's wealth and privileges, the underlying assumption was that legislation affecting the Church and its prerogatives and obligations vis-à-vis the lay population and the government required the prior consent of the leading ecclesiastics. Such instances where his initiatives were resisted reflected a long-standing premise of the grand principality's political order whereby the rulers should reach agreement with the foremost boyars and ecclesiastics before adopting important measures,² and until the early 1560s he respected this premise substantially if not invariably. After 1560, however, he underwent complex and poorly understood psychological changes which rendered him increasingly prone to fantasies, suspicions, and brutal impulses; he became disposed to punish harshly all who aroused his wrath in whatever manner. In fact, during the early sixties he arranged that his erstwhile favourite Aleksey Adashev's brother, sister-in-law, and nephew together with several Obolensky princes were murdered; such slayings along with the persecutions instigated approximately contemporaneously were almost certainly conducted at his bidding without wide backing at court, and they indicate that consensus was ceasing to sound the dominant note in Muscovite politics. He displayed his autocratic proclivities most evidently through them before he indicated his concern to rule autocratically in his letter of 5 July 1564 to Kurbsky, where he revealed something of his understanding of autocracy. His conception was unsophisticated: he, like other members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy whose political attitudes are known, was no profoundly original or

¹ N.S. Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, pp. 152-4.

² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 50-3, 151-3.

systematic thinker.¹ In his view, the autocrat most characteristically exercised undivided personal authority and granted neither boyars nor clergy any share in ruling the realm.² This image of the autocrat doubtless appealed greatly to him: if he could rule as an autocrat, a reassuring certitude would replace the ambiguities surrounding his exercise of authority. As previously, he could harness Muscovy's economic resources to his goals, military or other, and could use his discretion in choosing high-ranking servitors and intimate advisers. Furthermore, his wishes would become the sole source of legal authority: he could introduce legislation if accordingly Muscovy would be better administered and justice dispensed more efficiently, and could abrogate it if his purposes were impeded. From one perspective, the predominantly direct, personal authority a "typical votchinnik" wielded in his votchina would be reaffirmed strongly even as Muscovy expanded. From another perspective, however, although the tsar's conception of autocratic rule arose from the tradition whereby the Moscow grand princes treated their realm substantially as their private votchina,³ he claimed an absolute authority no predecessor had asserted, and proposed, in effect, a new basic premise of Muscovite politics; certainly he would have denied adamantly any obligation to follow his advisers' recommendations let alone to reach agreement with them before adopting important measures. Yet he neglected to consider precisely what his aspiration to undivided personal authority would entail practically and whether this ambition could be realised within Muscovy's political and administrative order. As will shortly be shown, most likely he could not attain his goal.

¹ Certainly Ivan's political attitudes cannot be characterised as "ideology": they were neither explicitly enough formulated nor sufficiently well integrated. See E. Shils and H.W. Johnson, "Ideology", in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 7, pp. 66, 68. A similar result obtains for the known political attitudes of other members of the contemporary ruling oligarchy.

² Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, pp. 16-21.

³ This encouraged Ivan and his successors to regard Muscovy substantially as their private votchina long after autocratic rule began in 1564-5.

During the Oprichnina Tsar Ivan strove to remove the ambiguities afflicting his exercise of authority during the 1547-1564 period by introducing autocratic rule; nevertheless, the resulting autocracy was scarcely monolithic, and indeed, no Russian ruler of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries achieved the literal autocracy which he sought to institute by 1564. True, in 1576 Daniel Prinz, an envoy to Muscovy of the Emperors Maximilian II and Rudolf II, remarked that Muscovites obeyed the tsar without reservation, averring that they responded readily to his summons because numerous incidents had taught them greatly to fear him.¹ Although Prinz's generally formulated observations would suggest that Muscovites displayed towards Ivan a stolid, submissive attitude entirely appropriate towards an autocrat, in reality those premises of the pre-Oprichnina political order which were poorly reconciled with autocracy retained significant vitality. Muscovite rulers still needed a modus vivendi with the foremost clergy, and conversely the Church continued to profit from the tsar's backing. This symbiotic relationship was revealed especially clearly during the attempts made in 1588-1589 to establish a Moscow patriarchate. In 1561 Ivan IV was recognised as tsar and protector of the Orthodox everywhere by the Patriarch of Constantinople, and numerous influential Muscovites began to think that by analogy with the Byzantine emperors, he should be supported by a patriarch of Moscow; moreover, the establishment of a Moscow patriarchate would probably render the Russian Church more prestigious among Orthodox Christians.² However, a suitable opportunity for raising the issue of a Moscow patriarchate with the Greek hierarchs – whose assent was necessary – failed to arise; hence Tsar Fedor Ivanovich, Boris Godunov, and other leading Muscovites doubtless rejoiced when Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople visited Muscovy in 1588, seeking alms.³ When Jeremiah indicated

¹ "Nachalo i vozvyshenie Moskovii. Sochinenie Daniila Printsia iz Bukhova. Perevod s latinskago I.A. Tikhomirova. Glavy I i II", Chteniya 1876, III, otd. IV, p. 29.

² S.F. Platonov, Boris Godunov, Prague, 1924, p. 110.

³ Ibid., p. 112.

himself ready to install a Moscow patriarch but insisted that a patriarch had to be selected by a church council, such a council was convened in January 1589, and candidates for the patriarchate and the newly-instituted metropolitanates of Novgorod and Rostov were chosen; Patriarch Iov was solemnly consecrated on 26 January 1589.¹ Patriarch Nikon's case illustrates that the tradition of symphony between the ruler and the leading clergy persisted even in the late Muscovite period. On the one hand, he headed the government when Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich was on campaign in 1654 and 1655.² Yet when he informed the 1666-1667 church council that a bishop's authority outstripped a tsar's, the assembled clergy, unconvinced, reaffirmed the time-honoured relationship between Church and tsar.³ Similarly, the tradition whereby the boyars cooperated substantially with the Moscow rulers in governing the realm and in pursuing Muscovy's diplomatic and military goals remained strong. The phrases "the boyars decreed" (boyare prigovorili) and "the sovereign ordered and the boyars decreed" (gosudar' ukazal i boyare prigovorili) are encountered in seventeenth century legislation,⁴ suggesting that the boyars retained a noteworthy role in drafting new laws. And even a cursory examination of the career biographies of the boyars and the okol'nichie who were attested between the late sixteenth century and Peter the Great's reign shows them as well represented among the diplomats, the army commanders, the voevody of the leading towns, and the prikaz heads.⁵ It is emphasised, furthermore, that administrative realities forced even Ivan IV to continue delegating authority to

¹ Ibid., pp. 117-8.

² Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 98.

³ Pipes, Russia, pp. 235-6.

⁴ PRP V, pp. 201-7, 217-20, 237, 390-1. The second-mentioned phrase evidently distanced the tsar from the boyars.

⁵ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 34-64.

prikaz superiors after 1564: certainly his realm, increasingly far-flung and inhabited by ethnically and religiously diverse peoples, was still less amenable than his grandfather's to one man's undivided authority. In fact, the first of Muscovy's cheti, the Kargopol' chet', evolved into a prikaz during the Oprichnina,¹ and subsequent cheti and other prikazy arose from the last decades of the sixteenth century onwards.² In stressing that sundry political and administrative circumstances which favoured rule by oligarchy during the 1547-1564 period found considerable application after the Oprichnina and the "Time of Troubles", we attempt to render plausible the view that oligarchic strains persisted within Muscovy's developing autocracy. True, the autocracy of seventeenth-century tsars was not limited formally, and Grigory Kotoshikhin could write of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich: "He rules his realm according to his will."³ Yet in practice, the ruler, especially if he were weak or inexperienced, would gather around himself favourites, who, enjoying his confidence, could influence fundamental decisions of domestic and foreign policy. Under Aleksey Mikhaylovich, for example, such favourites as the boyars B.I. Morozov, A.L. Ordin-Nashchokin, and A.S. Mateev all wielded considerable clout while they retained his loyalty; Ordin-Nashchokin and

¹ The Kargopol' chet' arose in 1561 when I.M. Viskovaty, formerly kormlenyy d'yak for the Kargopol' land, became pechatnik. The chet' was initially intended to gather the payments which local taxpayers made replacing those made earlier to the namestniki and to maintain surveillance over administration and justice; yet it became primarily a centre of tax collection. How it emerged within the central government is treated in Sadikov, Ocherki, pp. 227-32. After 1564-5 the chet' evolved into a full-fledged prikaz within the oprichnina; similarly, the oprichnina had its own Dvorets, Kazna, and Razryad, and the Bol'shoy Prikhod operated in the oprichnina and the zemshchina alike. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-5, 315-7. Administrative realities within the oprichnina prevented Ivan from dispensing with prikazy and delegating authority to their heads, even though in establishing the oprichnina, he probably attempted foremost to carve out a private estate where he could exercise the direct, personal authority of the "typical votchinnik". Initially the oprichnina was small enough substantially to feel his direct, personal authority; its boundaries are described in Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 252-6. Moreover, it embraced various northern uezdy including divers wealthy trading towns, Kargopol' among them, and could support materially his ventures. From this perspective, the oprichnina represented a reaction against those reforms introduced at mid-century which rendered him diminishingly able to rule Muscovy as his private votchina.

² All attested cheti are surveyed in Brown, "Muscovite Government Bureaus", pp. 297-8, 300, 302, 328. Each chet' normally operated within some particular part of Muscovy; this helped further to link administratively the realm's territories with Moscow.

³ Kotosixin, O Rossii, p. 139.

Mateev each headed the Posol'skiy prikaz for a stint and were therefore particularly favourably situated to influence Muscovy's diplomatic relations.¹ Even such formidable rulers as Peter the Great and Catherine the Great could not achieve the undivided personal authority Ivan IV sought in 1564. Peter, establishing the Senate in 1711, strove to create an institution to manage his realm during his frequent absences from his capital; moreover, he emphasised in the pertinent regulation that under threat of severe punishment, the Senate's resolves should be equally binding with his own.² And Catherine, supposedly all-powerful, relied substantially upon influential cliques within the central administration for information and the articulation of her decisions, and they could often paralyse her initiatives.³

The tactics Ivan IV employed during the 1547-1564 period to strengthen his bonds to his servitors, to prevent courtiers from becoming inordinately troublesome, and above all to assert his authority in court politics were on the whole used by other pre-Petrine rulers; his weapons reflect the premise that personal relationships were the channel through which Muscovite politics flowed.⁴ When on 8-10 November 1552 he gave a largesse to sundry veterans of the final Kazan' campaign, probably seeking to heighten their loyalty to him, he followed a venerable tradition: the Kievan rulers similarly favoured their druzhinniki after successful military enterprises.⁵ The prerogative of making appointments to the service ranks, for whatever opportunities

¹ The careers of Ordin-Nashchokin and Mateev are traced in Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 28, 38, 42-3, 52-4, 56, 58, 61, 87, 89, 92, 97-8, 100-2, 140, 193, 197.

² Meehan-Waters, Autocracy and Aristocracy, pp. 60-1.

³ D.L. Ransel, The Politics of Catherinian Russia: The Panin Party, New Haven and London, 1975, p. 247.

⁴ The language of class struggle affords few insights into mid-sixteenth-century Muscovite politics. Hexter offers a somewhat similar conclusion with reference to sixteenth-century England, writing that "historical researches ... have revealed the sixteenth century to be an era during which the lines of class interest and national interest were traversed and frequently – perhaps more frequently than not – dominated by other lines of allegiance and action." Hexter, Reappraisals, p. 32.

⁵ Froyanov, Kievskaya Rus', Pt 2, pp. 74-6, 137-49.

and obligations alike such appointments conveyed, was exercised by Russian rulers long before him and was retained by subsequent tsars through Peter the Great; furthermore, we have observed that his nominations of boyars and okol'nichie from 1547 onwards were primarily personal favours. The disgrace (opala) he sought to impose upon various courtiers who had elicited his strong displeasure had long-standing precedents and was applied especially vigorously during the Oprichnina.¹ Russian rulers had long rendered politically impotent particularly irksome "well-born" subjects by forcing them to enter monasteries, and Ivan adhered to this practice in requiring Prince D.I. Kurlyatev to take monastic vows in 1562 together with his wife and children and in compelling Princess Evfrosin'ya of Staritsa to become a nun in 1563.² When during the autumn of 1560 Ivan confiscated the votchiny Aleksey and Daniil Adashev held in the Kostroma and the Pereyaslavl' uezdy and granted them jointly a pomest'e in the Bezhetskaya pyatina, where their former local supporters could provide little assistance and new loyalties would be forged slowly, he followed the example his grandfather set after Novgorod fell to Muscovy in 1478: several times during the 1480s Ivan III ordered various prominent Novgorodians to be resettled on

¹ The disgraces imposed during the Oprichnina helped considerably to render Muscovy's atmosphere tense and fearful. Disgrace was no longer restricted to "well-born" high-ranking servitors but also fell upon d'yaki of modest antecedents and church prelates. Disgrace was frequently triggered by denunciations: networks of informers reporting to Ivan were instituted, and zemshchina residents might well be imprisoned and suffer the confiscation of their property if they were denounced by oprichniki. True, disgrace was sometimes imposed publicly with due process; on occasion, however, no trial was held and the alleged offence remained unstated. Yet paradoxically disgrace became less effective as a weapon of political control because it was employed so freely during the Oprichnina. It could not retain the solemn significance it enjoyed before the sixteenth century when it was applied sparingly and to notorious traitors. Furthermore, in disregarding frequently the time-honoured customary hearings and procedures, Ivan provoked adverse reactions. In fact, disgrace was seldom imposed during the seventeenth century. A.M. Kleimola, "The Muscovite Autocracy at Work: The Use of Disgrace as an Instrument of Control", in W.E. Butler, ed., Russian Law: Historical and Political Perspectives, Leyden, 1977, pp. 38-47.

² Kurbsky, History, p. 182; PSRL XIII, p. 368. Even in 1601 Boris Godunov forced F.N. Romanov, the future Patriarch Filaret, to take monastic vows together with his wife Ksenia. Platonov, Boris Godunov, pp. 244-50. During the seventeenth century forcible tonsuring virtually died out. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 152.

pomest'ya far from Novgorod.¹ Ivan IV maintained an ambivalent attitude towards the mestnichestvo system, under which most "well-born" Muscovites received places within a precedence hierarchy,² and he was thereby helped to gain a further means of political control. True, his regulation of July 1550 concerning the relative ranking of the voevodstva of the army regiments shows him as striving to minimise the opportunities for "well-born" servitors to weaken army discipline by complaining that they were unjustly required to serve beneath superiors whose mestnichestvo standing was lower. Yet he refrained from abolishing the mestnichestvo system outright, probably inter alia because he realised that it fostered suspicions and rivalries among the "well-born" and hence kept them disunited:³ certainly it had precisely such an impact later in the sixteenth century.⁴ It should also be observed that Ivan contributed most characteristically to the dynamics of Muscovite politics by engendering fear from the early 1560s onwards. The persecutions and the murders he perpetrated after 1560 were doubtless the foremost cause, especially since it was long a premise of the Muscovite political order that only those princes and boyars who committed extremely heinous offences should be tortured or executed; vastly more frightening, however, were the persecutions and the murders unleashed during the Oprichnina, which in their numbers and ferocity were unmatched in Russian history until Stalin's purges and which created a climate where the evolving autocracy could be reinforced.

¹ Koretsky, "O zemel'nykh vladeniya", p. 120; Fennell, Ivan the Great, pp. 58-60.

² The mestnichestvo system, we reiterate, was distinct from the service hierarchy. A "well-born" Muscovite's mestnichestvo standing depended basically upon his genealogy together with his and his forbears' record of service to the Moscow grand princes and other Russian rulers.

³ The mestnichestvo system was first manipulated for political ends at mid-century. In a 1562-3 suit, for instance, Ivan's rising favourite, A.D. Basmanov Pleshcheev was adjudged "two places higher" than I.V. Bol'shoy Sheremetev, formerly belonging to the ruling oligarchy, even though Basmanov Pleshcheev had served beneath Sheremetev on numerous occasions. Skrynnikov, Nachalo oprichniny, pp. 199-200.

⁴ This impact is confirmed by Horsey and Fletcher. See Rude and Barbarous Kingdom, pp. 139, 279.

The forms of political behaviour which Ivan IV's fellow members of the mid-sixteenth ruling oligarchy displayed were largely familiar, and many were deeply enough rooted for them to survive substantially even the Oprichnina and the "Time of Troubles". The clergy together with the boyars and the okol'nichie – particularly those stemming from princely or boyar lineages – are the advisers within the ruling oligarchy whose political behaviour is most accessible, and we concentrate accordingly upon them. Metropolitan Makary is the ecclesiastic whose political behaviour is best documented, and two manifestations deserve especial attention. Firstly, he interceded repeatedly with Ivan on behalf of various "well-born" Muscovites about to be punished; such appeals for clemency were made by fifteenth-century metropolitans and were expected of their sixteenth-century counterparts.¹ Furthermore, inspired by Joseph of Volokolamsk, who taught that a ruler's "unjust" commands could be resisted, he strenuously opposed the plans Ivan adopted as the 1550s began to restrict the Church's wealth and privileges.² Even though Aleksey Adashev and Sil'vestr were the tsar's chief counsellors from the late 1540s until 1560, the priest's political behaviour is strangely unknown, and Muscovy's entry into the Livonian War is the only concrete policy question towards which his attitude is known: he, along with Adashev and Kurbsky, urged against it, thereby incurring Ivan's ire.³ Nevertheless, the political behaviour Sil'vestr revealed indicates important dynamics of Muscovite politics. He and Adashev established a patronage network; prominent participants in court politics long sought supporters through such networks, and they remained part of Russian politics into the imperial era.⁴ Yet the favoured position the pair enjoyed within the

¹ Rüss, Adel und Adelsoppositionen, pp. 79-80. When the Oprichnina began, Ivan forced the clergy to cease interceding for the disgraced; Metropolitan Filipp was later executed for condemning the Oprichnina's excesses. Kleimola, "The Muscovite Autocracy", p. 37.

² V. supra, pp. 294-6.

³ Perepiska Ivan Groznogo, p. 38.

⁴ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 6, 41, 77, 80, 113-4, 161, 165, 167; Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 10, 82, 103-6, 167; Meehan-Waters, Autocracy and Aristocracy, pp. 67-

ruling oligarchy was scarcely invulnerable, especially as the priest somehow elicited the enmity of Tsaritsa Anastasia and her kinsmen, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins; after she died in 1560, Adashev's and Sil'vestr's adversaries, chief among whom were the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, persuaded Ivan that they had bewitched her, and their fate was sealed. Intrigues were a familiar dynamic of court politics,¹ and remained thus even in the eighteenth century.² The prominent role the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins played in inciting Ivan against Adashev and Sil'vestr also requires explanation; the dissertation investigates the political behaviour the boyars and the okol'niche within the ruling oligarchy displayed, and allusion is repeatedly made to the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins since their career biographies show especially clearly how courtiers' political fortunes were shaped. They counted among Ivan's closest advisers within the ruling oligarchy for much of the mid-sixteenth century because they were his in-laws from his marriage in 1547 to Anastasia Romanovna, and this reflected a lengthy and abiding tradition. The Moscow grand princes long chose intimates from lineages related to the Daniilovichi through fairly recent marriages – their in-laws from their own marriages were usually the foremost examples of this³ – and how strongly this tradition persisted was revealed in the late seventeenth century when Peter the Great surprised contemporaries by refusing to associate closely with the Lopukhins, his in-laws from his first marriage.⁴ After 1547 numerous "well-born" boyars and okol'niche, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins among them, probably exerted pressure upon Ivan to name their kinsmen boyars and okol'niche: the lineages honoured would become more prestigious, and the mestnichestvo standing of

70, 146-7, 162-3; Ransel, The Politics, pp. 1-2, 23, 100, 115, 137-8, 247, 278-82. Patronage networks almost certainly existed before the sixteenth century but are difficult to document.

¹ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 133, 140, 161-80 passim.

² Meehan-Waters, Autocracy and Aristocracy, p. 146; Ransel, The Politics, pp. 61-70.

³ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 78-81.

⁴ Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, p. 78.

their members would rise. This theory explains most convincingly the fact that after a few members of princely or boyar lineages became boyars or okol'niche, particularly if they belonged to the ruling oligarchy, various kinsmen subsequently obtained these ranks. Instances where "well-born" boyars assisted kinsmen in becoming boyars or okol'niche are attested before the mid-sixteenth century,¹ although the opportunities were fewer than amidst the inflation of honours occurring from 1547; such a "helping hand" was certainly extended during the seventeenth century when almost half of the upper upper-ranking servitors had a close kinsman already holding one of these ranks when they were appointed.² After 1547 the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins and their kinsmen established a complex web of marriage ties, and these served a twofold purpose. Even if the resulting relatives by marriage failed loyally to back the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins during political crises – in such moments marriage ties were no guarantee of support³ – at least they might refrain from overt opposition. Moreover, the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins and their kinsmen, attempting to gain in prestige, arranged sundry marriages into especially reputed lineages.⁴ Analogous considerations animated various marriages arranged from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries for members of lineages represented

¹ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 128-40.

² Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 69-70.

³ In ad hoc situations "well-born" courtiers might or might not ally themselves with their kinsmen or their in-laws, and pertinent generalisations are difficult to make.

⁴ Prestige and possible political advantage were probably the foremost considerations when marriages were arranged between "well-born" Muscovites; neither lengthy prior knowledge nor romantic attraction was required of prospective partners. While the potential economic gains were doubtless important when matches were made, we might conjecture that they were not crucial. Since "well-born" Muscovites customarily held lands scattered throughout the realm and might well spend considerable time at court, they probably would not marry their sons to the daughters of local landholders in order to round out estates through dowries. Moreover, a wife's dowry not infrequently passed to a monastery in return for prayers for her soul. If we are correct, then the marriages arranged in mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy differed from those arranged in early modern England where property exchange was the foremost consideration. L. Stone, "The Rise of the Nuclear Family in Early Modern England: The Patriarchal Stage", in C.E. Rosenberg, ed., The Family in History, Philadelphia, 1975, p. 48.

among the grand princes' closest advisers.¹ In fact, the prime danger confronting the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins after 1547 was that they would impress other prominent courtiers, particularly with the ruling oligarchy, as having garnered altogether too much political clout and prestige: it was a premise of Muscovite politics well before the mid-sixteenth century that no boyar clique should grow inordinately influential.² D.R. and V.M. Yur'ev, the leading Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, probably fell from the ruling oligarchy after 1554 because they struck sundry prominent courtiers as having violated this premise; they resumed membership only as the decade ended. If the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins' case illustrates especially cogently that after 1547 time-honoured and abiding political traditions determined the fortunes of boyars and okol'niche within the ruling oligarchy and shaped their attempts to neutralise potential adversaries and to render their lineages more prestigious, their political behaviour in still other contexts had lengthy antecedents. Take, for instance, the sureties organised to prevent Ivan's disgrace from falling upon boyars suspected of intending to flee from Muscovy. Sureties were arranged on behalf of such boyars from the final quarter of the fifteenth century and continued to be organised into the Oprichnina.³ Moreover, those boyars contemplating flight at mid-century – they included various members of the ruling oligarchy – reaffirmed, in effect, the right to change allegiance from one ruler to another which boyars enjoyed during the udel period and which Ivan together with his father and his grandfather sought to abrogate.⁴

¹ N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 127, 131-9 passim; Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 76-81 passim.

² N.S. Kollmann, Kinship and Politics, pp. 139-45.

³ Sureties arranged for boyars suspected of contemplating flight are unknown after the Oprichnina.

⁴ Interestingly, a vestige of the right of departure persisted even in the 1649 Ulozhenie: such offences as attacking the tsar, raising troops against him, and so forth entailed both execution and confiscation of property whereas attempted flight entailed only property confiscation. Backus, "Treason", pp. 140, 144.

Not only did the forms of political behaviour evinced by Muscovite boyars and okol'niche show substantial long-range continuity; as middle-ranking servitors migrated from the uezdy to Moscow in the mid-sixteenth century, sometimes even entering the ruling oligarchy, they adopted similar mores. The case of Aleksey Adashev, who stemmed from Kostroma dvoryane, is particularly important since it shows that outstanding political influence could enable Muscovites of humble antecedents partially to enter the "well-born".¹ When the Gosudarev rodoslovets was compiled in 1555, he arranged that the Adashevs, depicted as a lineage descended from his father, were included alongside genealogically distinguished lineages. He revealed concern for the service ranks of his kinsmen just as "well-born" boyars and okol'niche, especially if they belonged to the ruling oligarchy, were solicitous for the service ranks of their kin. Probably through his intercession with Ivan, his father was named okol'nichiy and subsequently boyar, and his brother became an okol'nichiy; he himself also became an okol'nichiy. Furthermore, by 1560 he occupied a relative standing within the mestnichestvo system. Certainly his career biography suggests that the most capable and ambitious elements of the new blood entering Moscow sought rewards obtainable under the existing political order; they most likely made little attempt to inject fundamentally new notes into Muscovite politics.²

The second enquiry concerns the composition of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy. The emphasis here is not upon Ivan IV himself but upon his advisers: their birth, their disposable wealth, the ways whereby they gained admission to the ruling oligarchy, and, inasmuch as the fragmentary evidence allows, their attitudes

¹ More generally, the boundaries dividing the elements of Muscovy's population were relatively fluid in the mid-sixteenth century; they were much more rigid a century later. Hellie, Enserfment, p. 242.

² In all likelihood the most ambitious middle-ranking servitors from the uezdy gladly migrated to Moscow, realising that the greatest opportunity for rewards lay there. If this is correct, then they differed from the French noblemen of Louis XIV's reign, who had to be forced to reside at Versailles. Crummey, Aristocrats and Servitors, pp. 62, 170-2.

towards one another. Scope for friction existed within the ruling oligarchy, and sundry patterns evident in its membership in all likelihood engendered intense resentments among courtiers remaining outside. At the same time the political implications, particularly for the introduction of autocratic rule in 1564-1565, are explored. In the following paragraphs conclusions concerning the composition of the ruling oligarchy of 1547-1564 are presented.

Ivan IV's fellow members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy were most evidently united inasmuch as they all wielded some noteworthy influence over him, that is, they constituted an aristocracy of influence; in no other sense, however, might they be reckoned an aristocracy. While a sizeable share of them belonged to princely or boyar lineages, Aleksey Adashev, Sil'vestr, I.M. Viskovaty, and others provide counter-examples indicating that being "well-born" was no prerequisite. Nor were they all an aristocracy of wealth: they included sundry boyars and okol'niche holding vast estates which supplied large disposable revenues and other high-ranking servitors whose incomes were inadequate, especially to fulfil the military service obligations imposed by the Service Code of 1555-1556. Furthermore, a few instances reveal how varied were the considerations prompting Ivan's choice of intimates. Tsaritsa Anastasia could wield influence over him because he loved her. Sil'vestr and Makary could win favour according to the tradition whereby Russian rulers included the foremost clergy among their closest advisers; the moral authority both enjoyed vis-à-vis Ivan was surely another contributory factor. He repeatedly showed regard for the Glinsky, the Bel'sky, the Mstislavsky, and the Bulgakov princes – descendants of Lithuanian émigrés – in order to integrate them more fully into the Muscovite political order. Since his fellow members of the mid-sixteenth-century ruling oligarchy were a relatively motley crew, they failed to develop any sense of collective identity, and this presumably impeded them in cooperating politically – particularly in repulsing the autocratic leanings he manifested from the early 1560s.

Even before the early 1560s the rifts dividing the ruling oligarchy were deep, and consensus was probably difficult although not impossible to achieve. Various questions of domestic and foreign policy were in all likelihood fervently debated before decisions were taken and regulations issued. The Church's wealth and privileges were doubtless debated hotly as the 1550s began: Makary, the foremost "Josephite", strove zealously to prevent encroachment, whereas Sil'vestr, the most influential "Non-possessor", clearly favoured a significant pruning. When Ivan sought to embroil Muscovy in a Livonian conflict, he was opposed strenuously by Aleksey Adashev, Sil'vestr, Kurbsky, and other courtiers: they believed that Muscovy should expand southward and eastward and thereby gain protection against the Tatars, who represented a far graver danger than the Livonians. Yet disagreements over policy questions and specific political crises were not the only reasons for discord within the ruling oligarchy. More important causes were simultaneously operative, and by illustrating this point, something of the attitudes Ivan's fellow members of the ruling oligarchy maintained towards one another can be conveyed. Various "well-born" members must have been resentful when relative upstarts became highly influential: Muscovites were offended when men seemed greatly to rise above their station.¹ That Aleksey Adashev, who was not even "well-born", could nevertheless ensconce himself among Ivan's closest advisers from the late 1540s until 1560 probably galled many courtiers inside and outside the ruling oligarchy.² The Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins, who became and remained exceptionally close to the tsar for much of the mid-sixteenth century, most likely evoked similar sentiments: true, they were "well-born", but their genealogy was not highly distinguished. If Kurbsky was dismayed that d'yaki were chosen from priests' sons and the rank-and-file population,³ in all probability he was outraged when

¹ Ibid., p. 31.

² Grobovsky observes (The "Chosen Council", p. 82) that Prince D.I. Kurlyatev, a court ally of Aleksey Adashev, probably considered him an inferior.

³ Kurbsky, History, p. 96.

d'yaki of modest antecedents won Ivan's confidence sufficiently for them to be included within the ruling oligarchy. These last-mentioned d'yaki most likely gained membership through outstanding merit, and we might conjecture that they scorned various boyars and okol'niche as lacking in expertise: the assignments which boyars and okol'niche within the ruling oligarchy discharged were too diverse to encourage even moderately specialised knowledge of any one central government agency and its tasks.¹ Finally, the ruling oligarchy grew even more fragmented after 1560 as the onset of autocratic rule approached: fewer members of any one princely or boyar lineage gained membership.

A fundamental imbalance pervaded the recruitments from the princely and the boyar lineages to the ruling oligarchy, particularly before 1560, inasmuch as sundry lineages were represented frequently while others were virtually excluded; this, too, probably carried important political consequences. Of the Ryurikovichi, the Obolenskys and the Shuyskys were most adept at maintaining representation within the ruling oligarchy;² divers Yaroslavl' princes were encountered as members during the second half of the 1550s and the early 1560s. It has already been remarked that those princes descended from Lithuanian émigrés were successful in gaining membership. Of the boyar lineages, those first represented among the servitors of the Moscow grand

¹ Kotoshikhin commented somewhat unkindly (Q Rossii, p. 38) that various contemporary boyars were too ignorant or incompetent to share in ruling the realm, and his observation probably applied to divers mid-sixteenth-century boyars. In 1566, for instance, the zemshchina boyars I.V. Men'shoy Sheremetev and I.Ya. Chebotov were revealed as illiterate, and even such former members of the ruling oligarchy as Princes I.F. Mstislavsky and V.S. Serebryany Obolensky wrote with difficulty. A.A. Zimin, "Zemskiy sobor 1566 g.", IZ 71 (1962), p. 200, n. 25.

² Nevertheless, the Obolenskys were the princely lineage most severely afflicted by the persecutions and the murders Ivan unleashed from the early sixties; by 1584 the Telepnev, Repnin, Serebryany, Shchepin, and Kashin branches were destroyed. Yet the Shcherbatovs, a junior branch, began gaining favour during the Oprichnina, and the Dolgorukovs, another junior branch, subsequently won preferment. Veselovsky, Issledovaniya po istorii klassa sluzhilykh zemlevladel'tsev, p. 97. When Ivan disgraced Aleksey Adashev and ordered the murder of his brother and his nephew, his hopes of initiating a boyar lineage were effectively dashed; this was the strongest action Ivan took at mid-century against any boyar lineage, established or potential.

princes before Dmitry Donskoy's reign were especially strongly represented within the ruling oligarchy from 1547: the descendants of A.I. Kobyla, embracing the Yur'ev-Zakhar'ins and their kinsmen,¹ and the progeny of I.S. Moroz, including the Morozovs, the Saltykovs, and so forth, are the most salient examples. On the other hand, the princes of Tver', Ryazan', Rostov, Starodub, Vorotynsky, and Zvenigorod seldom gained membership. Those boyar lineages whose members first began serving the Moscow grand princes during Dmitry Donskoy's reign or afterwards contributed few members of the ruling oligarchy after 1547; indeed, certain boyar lineages whose members had served Dmitry Donskoy's predecessors were poorly represented in the ruling oligarchy. The members of princely and boyar lineages which were virtually barred from the ruling oligarchy almost certainly felt profound jealousy of their fellow courtiers who gained admission more easily,² and the rifts among Ivan's courtiers were widened accordingly, leaving the court divided as he displayed his autocratic propensities from the early 1560s.

Ivan IV himself is the subject of the third and final enquiry of this chapter. The main aim is to capture the mentality underlying his deeds as ruler between 1547 and 1564; however, detailed judgments regarding his psychological history are eschewed since the extant evidence is meagre. The mentality he revealed helps us to assess how effectively he presided over mid-sixteenth-century Muscovy, and broader value-laden statements might be made. In the following paragraphs conclusions concerning him and his rule at mid-century are presented.

¹ The descendants of A.I. Kobyla, who later embraced Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, were the outstanding example of a boyar lineage including members whose political fortunes were rising at mid-century. Of the princes whose star was similarly in the ascendant, the Cherkasskys, Ivan's relatives through his second marriage, deserve particular mention. They emigrated to Muscovy during the 1550s and the 1560s and upon accepting Orthodoxy, were accounted "well-born"; indeed, they became a boyar lineage and supplied sundry boyars during the seventeenth century. Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors*, pp. 182, 185-6, 192, 200, 203.

² Cf. Kleimola, "Kto kogo", pp. 213-4.

The conflicting impulses animating Ivan IV after 1547 were probably the most arresting feature of his mentality, and this ambiguity was expressed basically in the general tenor of his rule at mid-century. On balance the late 1540s and the first half of the 1550s number among the promising beginnings encountered in Russia's history,¹ and his receptivity to change – alien to the sluggish Muscovite mentality with its reverence for "ancient tradition" (*starina*) – was impressive. The reforms he sponsored were timely, inasmuch as directly or indirectly they dovetailed with his ambitions of territorial aggrandisement: either they helped render the Muscovite army more capable of conquests or they facilitated effective, orderly administration and dispensation of justice within his expanding dominions. The building of the modern Weberian State, the army reforms, the attempts to standardise tax assessment procedures, and divers other changes over which he presided during his early years as tsar were valuable contributions which might have gained him a niche amidst Russia's more distinguished rulers, and it was his tragedy and Muscovy's that this momentum was not maintained. The poor judgment which counted among the recurring strains in his mentality enabled him from 1558 to entangle Muscovy in the Livonian War primarily for prestige: the Muscovite economy, relatively prosperous during the first half of the sixteenth century, was destabilised, and the realm entered a general crisis which continued through the remainder of the century. Moreover, the murders and the persecutions he perpetrated from the early 1560s, as his cruel impulses won freer rein,² have fostered the view, sometimes expressed, that his moral fibre was dangerously weak; indeed, his positive legacy is easily overlooked.

¹ Cf. Keep, "Bandits", p. 222.

² Ivan possibly harboured brutal impulses before 1560: in 1546, for example, Prince I.I. Kubensky together with F.S. and V.M. Vorontsov were executed at his instigation. I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki*, pp. 106-10. But before 1560, whatever brutal impulses he contained were seldom vented.

Even before the early 1560s, however, Ivan's rule probably did not qualify him as "great",¹ and indeed he revealed three noteworthy weaknesses rendering him less effective as a ruler. On occasion he threw together haphazardly his policy resolves, considering insufficiently carefully the probable implications. This point is illustrated by his policies concerning local government, the immunities from taxes and trade duties various landholders enjoyed vis-à-vis certain of their estates, and Muscovy's taverns. His policies on these matters varied considerably, lacking any consciously articulated and consistently pursued goals; his resolves in the first two matters were sometimes shaped primarily by the immediate political circumstances. Furthermore, he could not always accept the consequences of his actions. The reactions he and Peter the Great evinced towards the inflations of honours occurring in the mid-sixteenth and the last quarter of the seventeenth century show how different the two tsars were. Peter confidently abolished all Muscovite service ranks, whereas Ivan, less bold in this regard, after the early 1560s merely allowed the numbers of boyars and okol'nichie to fall to levels unknown since the 1540s. Finally, from 1547 he sometimes experienced formidable difficulties in synchronising his goals and expectations with Muscovy's changing realities. In the "questions" he addressed to Metropolitan Makary in February 1550, he proposed sundry reforms so forward-looking that they were implemented only in the seventeenth century or even the eighteenth century. Yet however forward-looking he revealed himself on certain issues, he showed himself backward-looking on others. The attitude that Muscovy was its ruler's private votchina and therefore he could exploit its economically productive resources for his purposes encouraged Ivan to allow hefty tax increases from mid-century, especially after the Livonian War began. But when after 1560 numerous townsmen and peasants, particularly in central and northwestern Muscovy, migrated to remote parts of Muscovy where taxes, rents, and

¹ Even when timely reforms were instituted, we cannot affirm on present evidence who conceived them. Indeed, since Ivan surrounded himself during his early years as tsar with sundry unusually capable advisers, they may have given powerful impetus to reform, reducing him to the channel through which reforms flowed.

other obligations were difficult to collect, they affirmed, however unwittingly, that their willingness to support this attitude was limited.¹

After 1560 Ivan experienced complex psychological changes – possibly prompted by profound grief at Tsaritsa Anastasia's death – which carried fateful consequences for Muscovy; three changes are singled out for attention. Firstly, since he was the central actor in Muscovite politics,² it seems particularly regrettable that he suffered increasingly from mental unbalance. This was evidenced in the oscillations he underwent between isolation from actuality, sometimes even fantasy, on the one hand, and realism on the other hand. His reply to Kurbsky's first letter depicts him as too self-centred to comprehend the fugitive prince's sense of grievance over the changes Muscovite politics experienced during the early sixties. Yet inasmuch as his dread-inspiring tactics helped him to introduce autocratic rule in 1564-1564 and subsequently to strengthen it, he revealed himself keenly aware that fear was a powerful weapon whereby he could enforce compliance with his wishes. Secondly, his mental unbalance was manifested in the gulf frequently dividing his avowed intentions and his actions. Take, for example, his conception of the goals rulers should pursue when dispensing justice: he advocated mercy for the good and torments for the evil.³ If his recommendation seems unexceptionable, he is more easily condemned for its application from the early 1560s, as numerous Muscovites, chosen without evident underlying pattern, were persecuted or murdered. Finally, two related strains in his thoughts encouraged him in brutality. He grew highly suspicious of all who intruded upon his horizons, and even trivial incidents could elicit his wrath and retributions.⁴

¹ This marked the first time when demands a Muscovite ruler made acting as a "typical votchinnik" encountered such widespread resistance among the population.

² Ivan's role became still more central after 1560 as various exceptional personalities – for instance, Aleksey Adashev, Sil'vestr, and Makary – passed from the scene and were not replaced by men of comparable calibre.

³ Perepiska Ivana Groznogo, p. 19.

⁴ Any patterns amidst the persecutions and the executions he perpetrated are therefore impossible to detect.

And whatever inhibitions, moral or other,¹ he once felt concerning murder and violence were lowered. Since his reign as tsar began promisingly, it seems especially tragic that by 1564 he was afflicted by grave psychological disturbances and that the Muscovite political order allowed him in that frame of mind to inflict trauma upon Muscovy during the Oprichnina.

¹ One might enquire how Ivan could attempt to justify himself in his first letter to Kurbsky by referring repeatedly to the Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers and yet commit numerous savage deeds. Nørretranders has perceptively observed (The Shaping, pp. 26-8) that in this letter he distinguished the demands politics imposed from those of religion and gave his political goals preference when the two conflicted. In fact, he became so preoccupied with politics after 1560 that he probably accorded too little attention to the problems confronting his realm.

Muscovy ca 1550



Legend: — · — · — · — · — Muscovy's borders
 - - - - - Internal boundaries

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