

What did Russians Mean When They Called Themselves “Slaves of the Tsar?”*

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The Germans criticize the fact that here people of all ranks call themselves the ‘sovereign’s slaves.’ But they do not consider that among them people call themselves ‘vassals,’ and this word is not Latin, but German, and means ‘orphan,’ and so all Germans once called themselves in their language. Similarly, the title ‘knecht’ was once dignified, and even today Scotsmen call their dignified cavaliers ‘knechts,’ that is ‘slaves.’¹

Iurii Krizhanich, 1663-66

The analysis of ritual plays an important role in efforts to reconstruct medieval mentalities. Often mute and always cryptic, medieval cultures rarely provide historians with the rich programmatic texts that facilitate the study of political ideas. In response to this relative dearth of treatises and manifestoes, scholars have turned to various forms of symbolic behavior for clues as to the character of the medieval mind. Students of Muscovy are certainly no exception. Recognizing that Old Russia was particularly “silent” (as George Florovsky put it²), historians of late have turned their attention to the iconography of Russian life in an attempt to divine the nature of Muscovite ideology, and particularly political ideology.³ Though much has been learned from recent studies of Muscovite rites, it must be said that most investigations in this vein have focused rather narrowly on what might be called “high ceremonies” — coronations, royal weddings, official banquets, ambassadorial receptions, mass religious rituals, and so on.⁴ Certainly there is good reason for the concentration on grand spectacles: insofar as they were the product of much official planning, they may be said to represent precisely the kind of complex, deliberate political expression that is so notably lacking in the corpus of surviving Muscovite texts. Yet the focus on high political ceremonies has evident limitations. Muscovite high rituals were often not created by the political elite who acted in them, but rather by a variety of (sometimes foreign) ideological consultants; therefore, it is no easy task to decide exactly who held the principles implied by particular ceremonies. Moreover, Muscovite spectacles (like all spectacles) were extraordinary, contrived displays designed to represent high ideals rather than mundane reality; thus, grand ceremonies are at best a problematic source for the reconstruction of everyday political consciousness.

If, however, one turns from high rites to quotidian forms of ritual interaction, more can be learned about the political consciousness of common Muscovites. A case in point is the Muscovite regalian salutation *tsariu, gosudariu i velikomu kniazju* . . . [Name] *b’et chelom, kholop tvoi* (“To the Tsar, Sovereign, and Grand Prince . . . [Name], your slave, makes obeisance”), the standard written formula used by Russian servitors to address superiors in all manner of documents throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To be sure, like high ceremonies, the regalian salutation was invented by ritual specialists and seemingly expressed lofty ideals. In contrast to extraordinary court rituals, however, the salutation was neither an obscure rite understood only by elites nor a vehicle for the expression of obscure, other-worldly principles. Nearly every Muscovite knew the formula, for protocol demanded that it be used when servitors addressed officials. Petitions, reports, letters — any document issued to a superior within the government — bore the regalian address. Moreover, nearly every Muscovite could understand its language, for the lexicon of the address was part of everyday life in Muscovy. In a strictly hierarchical society such as Old Russia, everyone, regardless of station, had a

gosudar', or “lord”; as Orthodox Christians and subjects of the tsar, all Russians were familiar with the common practice of *bit' chelom*, “to strike one’s head” in humble submission; and, finally, actual *kbolopy*, or “slaves,” were common in Muscovy, as any subject would have known. It seems reasonable to conclude on the basis of the widespread knowledge of the salutation and its seemingly simple language that, if any pre-Petrine ritual may be said to reflect popular political mentalities, it is this one.

In an attempt to elucidate the history and nature of Muscovite political mentalities, this essay will investigate three rather specific questions about the regalian salutation. First, when and why was it introduced? Many scholars have argued that Ivan III adopted the formula in an attempt to propagate a patrimonial conception of kingship, one in which the grand prince was figured as a seignior, his realm as an estate, and his servitors as slaves. In support of this thesis, advocates of the “patrimonial” view, as we will call it, point out that in the salutation the grand prince is referred to as “master” (*gosudar'*) while his subjects, prostrating themselves before him (*bit' chelom*), demeaned themselves as “slaves” (*kbolopy*). The origins of the regalian salutation indeed have something to do with patrimonialism as a system of ideas, but its roots may also be traced to Ivan III’s campaign to win international prestige. As Muscovy rose to prominence, Ivan III developed a vocabulary of address that reflected both his status as the “master” (*gosudar'*) of his Rus’ian “patrimony” (*votchina*) and as the “sovereign” (*gosudar'*) of a great, independent principality. The second question turns from the origins of the salutation to its significance after the era of Ivan III: What did the regalian salutation and its terms mean for Muscovites in everyday life? Advocates of the patrimonial interpretation suggest that Muscovites believed in some sense that the tsar was in fact “master” of “slave”-subjects. To some extent this is born out by the evidence. Nevertheless, it is clear that servitors using the salutation did not conceive of themselves literally as “slaves” to the tsar. They knew the difference between the ceremonial “slavery” implied by the language of the salutation and the actual slavery that existed everywhere in Muscovy. Moreover, as the salutation entered everyday administrative and social discourse in the sixteenth century, its terms lost much of their explicitly patrimonial sense and became polite mechanisms for addressing respected figures. The third and final question addressed in this essay is this: if the salutation cannot be read literally as an expression of slavery, did it have any deeper meaning for Muscovite officials and servitors? It did: in ceremonial contexts, the terms of the address symbolically elevated the status of the tsar, provided his servitors with a respectful way in which to make claims on the government, and helped resolve tension within the governing class.

The Origins of the Regalian Salutation: Patrimonialism and International Prestige

In its fully articulated sixteenth- and seventeenth-century form, the regalian salutation contained three symbolically-laden terms drawn, seemingly, from Muscovite colloquial speech — a designation for the grand prince, *gosudar'*; a term indicating the supplicant addressing the grand prince, *kbolop*, if the supplicant were a royal servitor; and a phrase signifying some kind of obeisance, *bit' chelom*.⁵ When and why did these terms enter the Old Russian regalian salutation? The word *gospodar'*, meaning “lord,” “master,” or “owner,” is common Slavic.⁶ It appears in Slavic texts for the first time in the eleventh century.⁷ Documentary sources are for all practical purposes non-existent for northeastern Rus' before the fourteenth century, so any attempt to reconstruct the meaning of *gospodar'* (or *gosudar'*, its northeastern variant⁸) in official discourse must be speculative. The best evidence of the meaning of the term is provided by legal codes that suggest norms and uses. An examination of these codes indicates that *gospodar'* and *gosudar'* in general designated “lord,” and in more specific contexts meant “master” of slaves, “employer” of laborers, and “owner” of inanimate objects.⁹

Gospodar' was first used with reference to the grand prince of Moscow *circa* 1450.¹⁰ *Gosudar'* was first employed in this way at about the same time.¹¹ Early examples from the 1450s and 1460s are scattered, a fact that suggests the terms were not sanctioned in official communications. Most researchers believe that *gospodar' / gosudar'* probably became a part of the grand prince's title in the 1470s.¹² It is difficult to tell exactly when *gosudar'* entered Muscovite administrative discourse, because no serial records survive before the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Beginning in 1474, however, diplomatic records appear in which *gosudar'* is indeed attested.¹³ In that year, ambassadors to the Crimean Tatar Khan Megli Gerei were instructed to refer to Ivan III as *gosudar' moi* ("my Lord"), a practice followed thereafter in the diplomatic protocols.¹⁴ *Velikii ospodar' Russkii zemli* ("Grand Lord of the Rus'ian land") is found in a royal writ of 1484.¹⁵ And the term appears in what must have been a standard administrative missive ("*gramota*") among diplomatic documents dating from 1489. It reads:

September, 98. The *namestnik* Feodor Khovanskii sent this document concerning the Nogai envoy from Murom. "To the *gosudar'*, Grand Prince Ivan Vasil'evich of all Rus', your slave, Feodorets Khovanskoi offers his humble greetings. . . ."¹⁶

The salutation "To the *gosudar'*. . ." is found in each subsequent *gramota* inscribed in the Crimean diplomatic documents.¹⁷ *Gosudar'* is also used with reference to the grand prince in a variety of other administrative charters in the last quarter of the century.¹⁸ The title is ubiquitous in sources of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was a mandated element in the salutations of *chelobitnye* (petitions) and *otpiski* (official dispatches).¹⁹

Why was *gosudar'* added to the grand prince's title and made part of the regalian salutation in the last quarter of the fifteenth century? According to the logic of the patrimonial interpretation, *gosudar'* was included to reflect the grand prince's pretention to be patrimonial lord of the Rus'ian lands. After about 1475, the Muscovite grand prince proclaimed himself to be both ruler and master of an expanded Muscovite realm, and the adoption of *gosudar'* was, according to the patrimonial interpretation, an expression of this fact. The late Imperial legal historian Mikhail Diakonov gave a characteristic account of the way in which the *velikii kniaz'* came to be *gosudar'*. Once the Muscovite grand prince had incorporated, at least in theory, "all Rus'" into his patrimony, "private, domestic service could not be separated from state service, for there was no [conceptual] distinction between the two." "Therefore," Diakonov concluded, "free servants and even service princes [of Muscovy] began to call the sovereign princes they served '*gosudar'*' and '*gospodar'*'."²⁰ Diakonov is probably correct that there was no well-developed distinction in early Muscovite law between the grand prince's authority and the powers of an abstract state. It is true that terms implying such a difference — *zemlia* ("land"), *kniazhenie* ("principality"), *gospodarstvo* ("state" or "authority") — are well attested in the period.²¹ But no known Muscovite author of the era used one of these terms as the basis for a conceptual distinction between the office of the prince and the officeholder. Thus it was difficult within contemporary Muscovite categories to serve "the state"; one could only serve the *gosudar'* — "master" — in his realm. Moreover, the impression that *gosudar'* was understood in the sense of patrimonial lord by the men who introduced the term into the regalian salutation is strengthened by two other usages characteristic of political discourse *circa* 1500. First, as we will see in greater detail in a moment, the grand prince's servitors were beginning to call themselves *khobolopy*, or "slaves," in the reign of Ivan III. If the grand prince's men were *khobolopy*, then their prince could only logically be *gosudar'*, the standard term for "slaveholder" in contemporary Muscovite

legal terminology.²² Second, Muscovite documents of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth century often refer to the realm as the grand prince's *otchina* or *votchina*, meaning "patrimony" or, in a more specific legal context, an "allodial estate."²³ Though the technical word for the owner of a *votchina* in Muscovite legal terminology was *votchinnik*, *gosudar'* was doubtless the way in which those employed on allodial estates deferentially referred to their master.²⁴

Though the patrimonial interpretation of the introduction of *gosudar'* into the regalian salutation is persuasive, a closer examination of the international context suggests additional reasons why Ivan III and his councilors might have adopted the term. At the time *gosudar'* became part of the grand prince's title, the term was being used in the sense "sovereign" by a variety of powers closely connected with Muscovy: it had been part of the title of the rulers of Lithuania (*gospodar'*) and Moldavia (*bospodar'*) since the fourteenth century²⁵; it was used in the title of Novgorod²⁶; and it was the Slavic translation of a part of the title of the Byzantine title, *despotes*.²⁷ Given Ivan III's well-known desire for international recognition — and specifically titular recognition²⁸ — it seems only logical to look to the international arena for an explanation of the adoption of *gosudar'* in the sense "sovereign." This context certainly offered him motive: the *gospodar'* of Lithuania was his chief competitor for rule over "all Rus"; *gosudar'* (or *gospodin'*) Novgorod was subdued by the Muscovites in 1478; and Ivan's court was filled with Italo-Greeks (members of Sophia's entourage) who could tell him he was the new *despotes*, Slavonicized as *gosudar'*. Seen in this light, it seems evident that in adopting *gosudar'* Ivan III wanted to be "sovereign" of a great principality as well as "master" of his subjects. This gloss is confirmed by the appearance of the modifier *gosudarev* in the royal salutation. In documents of the 1490s the phrase *kholop tvoi gosudarev* appears.²⁹ This cannot mean "the master's slave," for this would be a kind of redundancy: every slave had a master. It must mean something akin to "the sovereign's slave," for not every slave directly served the grand prince.³⁰

The phrase *bit' chelom* first appears in Russian sources in the early fourteenth century.³¹ A corresponding noun, *chelobit'e*, appeared shortly thereafter.³² *Bit' chelom* was probably borrowed from the Mongol administrative lexicon. The phrase is a calque of the Turkic *bas ur-*, which in turn is a derivative of the Chinese *k'ou t'ou*, both of which mean, literally, "to hit the head," and, figuratively, "to make obeisance."³³ In the two centuries that followed the phrase's passage into Russian, it took on two basic meanings.³⁴ The first is "to humbly greet." The phrase is used in this sense in Muscovite diplomatic exchanges beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century: the Muscovites generally insisted that inferior powers (Novgorod, Pskov, Prussia, Livonia) use the phrase when addressing the tsar.³⁵ Due to a lack of sources it is difficult to tell exactly when *bit' chelom* became a part of the official salutation used by Muscovites themselves. The first official missive with *bit' chelom* in the sense "to humbly greet" is the 1489 *gramota* from Feodor Khovanskii cited above.³⁶ The phrase appears in every subsequent *gramota* in the diplomatic protocols and was a standard element of administrative communications throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The second sense is "to request" or "to bring a complaint against." It is found in this meaning in the first surviving administrative charters from northeastern Rus' around 1400.³⁷ In the fifteenth century the phrase is found frequently in the preambles to a variety of documents meaning "to humbly approach someone with a complaint or request."³⁸

Why was *bit' chelom* included in the regalian salutation? Unlike *gosudar'*, the phrase cannot have been adopted in connection with the rise of Muscovy, for it had been borrowed from the Mongols long before the triumphant era of Ivan III and was already a common expression used by inferiors to address superiors in Rus' in the fourteenth century. Nevertheless, its continued use by the Muscovites in the later fifteenth century and its inclusion as a formal element in the regalian salutation may have been related to the propagation of a patrimonial conception of kingship. If the grand

prince was to play the role of patrimonial “master” — *gosudar'* — and his servitors were to be his “slaves” — *kbolopy* — then it was perhaps understood to be only fitting that his men address him with the ritual submission appropriate to the relation between master and slave. Indeed those who formulated the salutation had other terms at their disposal that could have been used to signify the idea of a “humble greeting” or “request” (*prositi* (“to request”), *moliti* (“to entreat”), and *poklonitisia* (“to bow”)), but these terms were not chosen for inclusion in the official formula.³⁹ Clearly, *biti chelom* was considered more dignified than other terms. But the reason for its selection probably had less to do with patrimonialism than international conventions of address. When the salutation was standardized in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the Muscovites’ primary frame of reference for imperial style was distinctly eastern, as can be seen in their adoption of the titles *khan* and *tsar'*.⁴⁰ As we have seen, the Rurikid probably translated the Turkic phrase *bas ur-* as *bit' chelom*. They also followed their eastern neighbors in making *bit' chelom* the standard form of address to a superior by an inferior.⁴¹ It seems reasonable to suggest that Ivan III simply transferred this usage into the domestic administrative lexicon: his subjects were inferiors, therefore they must “strike their heads” before him.

The word *kbolop* is common Slavic.⁴² It appears for the first time in the eleventh century and occurs regularly thereafter.⁴³ From the earliest time *kbolop* was an official term for “slave” and continued to be used in this capacity in Muscovite law well into the seventeenth century.⁴⁴ Gustav Alef suggests *kbolop tvoi* had become a sanctioned part of the regalian salutation by the late 1480s.⁴⁵ Due to a lack of documentation, it is impossible to determine exactly when the phrase gained widespread currency among Muscovite servitors. It does not appear as a self-address in administrative documents directed toward the grand prince until 1489.⁴⁶ Thereafter it is very commonly found in Muscovite administrative discourse: *kbolop tvoi* is universal in dispatches and petitions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries addressed to the grand prince.

Many scholars have suggested that *kbolop tvoi*, like *gosudar'* and *bit' chelom*, was introduced into the regalian salutation as part of a court-sponsored campaign to promote the idea that Ivan III was the patrimonial lord of Rus'. Alef, for example, argues that once the Muscovite magnates had lost the “right of exit,” they were in effect the grand prince’s bondsmen.⁴⁷ Thus, as Ivan III’s status rose, that of his men fell — Ivan became “master” and his servitors became “slaves.”

Ceremonial address emphasized the political distance between lord and even the most distinguished servant. By the late 1480s even privileged court members joined the ordinary courtiers in a common form of address. They identified themselves as “*kbolopy*” to their sovereign. In the parlance of that time *kbolop* meant slave.⁴⁸

The patrimonial interpretation of the entry of *kbolop tvoi* into Muscovite administrative discourse is supported by the absence of the idea of an independent “state,” the adoption of *gosudar'* as a royal title, and the use of *votchina* as a term for the realm. All these facts suggest that the court sought to model political relations on patrimonial relations. Nonetheless, this explanation of the introduction of *kbolop* in the formula is incomplete, for it ignores the international context of Muscovite regalia. The use of “slave” as a designation for elite servitors was well-established in the Tatar-Turkic world, an environment the Muscovites knew well.⁴⁹ But it is more likely that *kbolop tvoi* was borrowed from Byzantine diplomatics.⁵⁰ Long before *kbolop tvoi* is attested, an analogous term of self-identification — “slave of God” (*rab bozhii*) — is found in Muscovite charters: “In the name of the father, son and holy spirit, lo I, evil, sinful slave of God, Ivan, . .

..”⁵¹ This biblical trope was taken from Greek practice.⁵² In late Byzantine terminology, subjects were called “slaves” of the emperor (*doulos tes basileias*), a phrase that was apparently understood to signify humility and fidelity, not servility.⁵³ Hence the title was considered honorable among Byzantine elites, a symbol of their status as servitors of the most powerful ruler in the world.⁵⁴ It is not far-fetched to believe that the same Italo-Greeks who may have placed *gosudar’* in Ivan III’s title also suggested that his servitors should address him with the gesture *kbolop’ tvoi*.

In sum, the scattered and incomplete record suggests that the Muscovite regalian salutation was standardized in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, though this is by no means certain. The specific terms of the salutation were chosen in relation to two agendas, one internal and the other international. It seems reasonably sure that the men who composed the salutation wanted to project the image of the Muscovite grand prince as a patrimonial lord, at least in a metaphorical sense. To them, the authority of the Muscovite monarch was like that of a master over slaves. Thus they mandated that servitors call him *gosudar’* and themselves *kbolopy*. Further, they stipulated that supplicants should approach the grand prince with what they understood to be appropriate humility in the form of a “head striking” bow, *bit’ chelom*. But patrimonialism was not the only context the court had in mind when it contrived the salutation. Ivan III was aware that the rulers of the great kingdoms on his borders were referred to as “masters,” that their subjects called themselves “slaves,” and that they prostrated themselves before their princes. Given Ivan’s pretensions to imperial grandeur, it was only natural for him and his confidants to mimic these trappings of princely power. If the Lithuanian ruler was “master,” he would be as well; if the subjects of the Byzantine emperor called themselves “slaves,” his subjects would too; and if Tatar servitors bowed low before their khan, his men would “strike their heads” before him.

The Meaning of the Regalian Salutation: from Patrimonialism to Politeness

Historians have paid much more attention to the meaning of the regalian salutation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than to the logic behind its assembly in the reign of Ivan III. Indeed, since the early part of the sixteenth century, commentators have wondered about the peculiarly submissive fashion in which even high-born Muscovite courtiers addressed their prince. Generally speaking, most have interpreted the terms of the regalian salutation to be a reflex of a patrimonial mentality, that is, a belief that the tsar was the “master” of “slaves.” The Imperial ambassador Sigismund von Herberstein may properly be called the founder of this view. In *Rerum moscoviticarum* (Vienna, 1549), he offered the first extended analysis of Muscovite institutions in terms of patrimonial authority. “The grand prince,” he wrote, “holds unlimited control over the lives and property of all his subjects”⁵⁵ Herberstein was also the first to cite the regalian salutation as evidence of the grand prince’s power. He told his confederates that “all confess themselves to be the *chlopos*, that is, slaves of the prince.”⁵⁶ In the decades following the publication of *Rerum moscoviticarum*, Herberstein’s depiction of Russian society and his gloss of the regalian salutation spread.⁵⁷ The English ambassador Giles Fletcher argued in *Of the Russe Commonwealth* (London, 1591) that the Russians’ humble form of self-address reflected an equally humble reality. Fletcher wrote that Ivan IV made the Muscovite elite “not onely his vassals, but his *Kolophey*, that is his very villians or bondsmen.” He continued:

For they so terme and write themselves in anie publike instrument or private petition which they make to the Emperour. So that nowe they hold their authority, landes, lives and all at the Emperours pleasure, as the rest do.⁵⁸

By the mid-seventeenth century, Herberstein's vision had become commonplace in European *Moscovitica*, as can be seen in Adam Olearius' famous description. The Holstian scholar wrote: "In addressing the tsar the magnates must unashamedly not only write their names in the diminutive form, but also call themselves slaves, and they are treated as such."⁵⁹

The eighteenth century saw further elaboration of the patrimonial approach. Montesquieu may be taken as the great modern proponent of the theory that "despotism" constitutes a distinct type of political culture.⁶⁰ Following Aristotle, he depicted despotism as a regime in which a single master rules over the lives and property of all his fearful, servile subjects.⁶¹ Herberstein and many who followed him described Muscovy in exactly these terms.⁶² As is evidenced by the numerous references to Russia in *The Spirit of the Laws*, descriptions of Muscovy must have played some role in Montesquieu's formulation of the concept of despotism.⁶³ His primary source on Russia seems to have been John Perry's *The state of Russia under the present Czar* (London, 1716), a book heavily dependent on the Herbersteinian tradition.⁶⁴ There the French theorist read that "all the Subjects of Russia, as well the highest Lords as the meanest Peasants in all Petitions and Business of Law, or otherwise . . . write themselves *Golups* or Slaves to the *Czar*."⁶⁵ This was good evidence for Montesquieu's contention that Muscovy was a despotism. Montesquieu's figuration of Muscovy was hardly unique among eighteenth-century social philosophers.⁶⁶

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Russian historians investigating, *inter alia*, the regalian salutation advanced a full-blown "patrimonial theory" of Muscovite society. The patrimonial theory holds that in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Muscovite rulers succeeded in imposing seigniorial authority on independent appanage principalities and city-states, effectively making the grand prince "master" (*gosudar*) and all his subjects "slaves" (*kholopy*). Elements of this interpretation are common in "state-school" historiography, with its schema of social evolution from "a patriarchal tribal system [*rodovoi byt*] to a modern state system."⁶⁷ Boris N. Chicherin, for example, emphasized that the appanage princes claimed Rus' as their patrimony (*votchina*) and called themselves its patrimonial lords (*votchinniki*).⁶⁸ Because of the patrimonial understanding of political authority, the "principle of private law," as Chicherin put it, dominated all Russian governmental relations prior to the mid-sixteenth century.⁶⁹ Chicherin flatly states that "in Russia, Eastern despotism served as a model" for government.⁷⁰ The most artful and influential renditions of the patrimonial theory were drafted by Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii and Aleksandr E. Presniakov. The two late Imperial historians understood the formation of Muscovite autocracy differently: Kliuchevskii described it as the spread of Muscovite seigniorial authority over other Rurikid principalities; Presniakov viewed it as the concentration of Rurikid seigniorial power within the Muscovite principality. In either case the result was the same: the creation of a "patrimonial autocracy" (*votchinnoe samoderzhanie*). In support of this thesis both cited the fact that in communications with the sovereign, servitors referred to themselves explicitly as "slaves."⁷¹

A great many contemporary historians of Muscovy have, like their predecessors, seen the regalian salutation as a reflex of some sort of patrimonial political mentality.⁷² They generally offer glosses of the crucial terms in the salutation to bolster their view. Though it is usually understood to mean "sovereign," modern advocates of the patrimonial approach note that *gosudar*' could also indicate "master" or "owner," particularly of slaves. For example, Richard Pipes describes the grand prince as "a counterpart of the Greek *despotes*, the Roman *dominus*, and the Russian *gosudar*,' that is lord, master, outright owner of all things."⁷³ Similarly, modern historians have advanced the view that the phrase *bit' chelom* is evidence of ingrained servility towards tsarist authority. They point out that *bit' chelom* meant "to petition," but

literally (and more significantly) “to strike one’s forehead [on the ground].”⁷⁴ On this gloss, *chelobitnye* were “petitions,” but also (as one commentator puts it) “forehead-knocking charters.”⁷⁵ *Bit’ chelom* was “a demeaning, slavish ritual” the symbolism of which is clear — untrammled submission to the grand prince-seignior.⁷⁶ The Muscovite self-ascription *kholop tvoi* is the strongest linguistic evidence adduced by supporters of the patrimonial interpretation. Citing the use of the term by Muscovite servitors, Michael Cherniavsky concluded that Vasili III believed that all his subjects were “slaves.”⁷⁷ Pipes argues that the crown used *kholop* to “humiliate anyone who by virtue of ancestry, office or wealth may have been inclined to become self-important,” thereby strengthening patrimonial power.⁷⁸

The patrimonial gloss of the social terminology of the regalian salutation is in many respects convincing. For most of the Muscovite period, *gosudar’* was the official term for “slaveholder.”⁷⁹ Similarly, until the later seventeenth century, the institution of slavery flourished in Muscovy and slaves were indeed called *kholopy*.⁸⁰ Finally, as foreign visitors commonly reported, slaves and serfs often prostrated themselves before their masters in a gesture called *bit’ chelom*.⁸¹ Thus, in a strictly linguistic sense it is possible that Muscovites conceived of the tsar as a seignior and themselves as humble slaves, as the patrimonial interpretation suggests. Yet, on closer inspection, this seems unlikely for the simple reason that the tsar and his servitors undoubtedly realized the difference between the “slavery” implied by the regalian salutation and actual slavery, an institution they knew well. Unlike actual slaves, Russian servitors were in many instances quite rich and powerful, particularly in the case of courtiers. Unlike slaves, such men often enjoyed very high social status in the court and country. And finally, unlike actual slaves, they worked in institutions (the court, chancelleries, provincial offices, and the army) governed by conventions that *de facto* limited the tsar’s authority. Russian elites and common servitors indeed believed that their prince was extremely powerful and that they were dependent on him for their lives and livelihoods. The point is rather that they did not use the native Muscovite concepts of literal “lordship” or “slavery” to capture this relationship. Rather, they understood the language of salutation to be a metaphorical representation of their condition vis-à-vis the crown.⁸²

This fact is reflected in the evolution of the meanings of the terms in the regalian salutation over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the reign of Ivan III, *gosudar’* may have suggested patrimonial lordship to the once free servitors who sought quarter at the grand prince’s court. But it is difficult to agree with Pipes, for example, that it continued to be understood predominately in the sense of *dominus* in thereafter.⁸³ Rather, the evidence suggests that it came to mean simply “sovereign” or “lord” in a generic sense having little to do with ownership of slaves. First, in written correspondence addressed to the grand prince *gosudar’* was always accompanied by *tsar’* and *velikiĭ kniaz’*. Thus *tsariu gosudariu i velikomu kniazĭu* (“To the Tsar, Sovereign, and Grand Prince”) was a semantic unit designating the grand prince and the grand prince alone.⁸⁴ In this context, *gosudar’* was probably understood, first, in the sense of “sovereign” and only by metaphorical association “slaveholder” or “patrimonial lord.” Second, “slaveholder” was not the only meaning of *gosudar’* in Muscovite parlance. In the seventeenth century, the term also functioned as a polite form of address indicating little about the addressee’s legal or social status. For example, in a letter of the late seventeenth century, Fed’ka Belin employed a common convention in addressing his brother as *gosudar’*.⁸⁵ Finally, perhaps due to the use of *gosudar’* as a decorous address, the official term for “slaveholder” — which had been *gosudar’* for centuries — was replaced by *boiarin*. *Boiarin*, in fact, is the standard word for “slaveholder” in the *Ulozhenie* of 1649.⁸⁶ Given all this, it seems likely that a Muscovite writing the regalian salutation would have at least recognized the difference between

gosudar'-slaveholder and *gosudar'*-sovereign, though the metaphorical link uniting these two senses would have perhaps been registered.

Similarly, *bit' chelom* may have reminded servitors *circa* 1500 of their recent submission to the Muscovite grand prince *cum* patrimonial lord. But by the mid sixteenth century (and probably much earlier), the phrase and the act it designated do not seem to have indicated anything particularly servile or patrimonial. If bowing was a conventional form of respectful greeting throughout Muscovite society, its use would not have denoted anything out of the ordinary to Russians. Indeed, this seems to have been the case. Exaggerating somewhat, Jacques Margeret claimed that, aside from bowing, the Muscovites knew “no other signs of respect.”⁸⁷ As the foreign visitors pointed out, the Muscovites used different sorts of bows depending on the degree of deference they wanted to show. “They regard striking the forehead,” Herberstein wrote, “as expressive of salutation, rendering thanks, and everything of that kind.”

For whenever anyone makes a petition, or offers thanks, it is the custom to bow the head; if he wishes to do so in a very marked manner, he bends himself so low as to touch the ground with his hand; but if he desires to offer his thanks to the grand duke for any great favor, or to beg anything of him he then bows himself so low as to touch the ground with his forehead.⁸⁸

The final, most deferential gesture described by Herberstein was called *bit' chelom*, and it shocked many foreigners. Olearius, for example, was surprised that Russian notables were required to “appear daily at court, and beat their heads to the tsar.”⁸⁹ But one should not confuse the European perspective and the values that informed it with the Muscovite understanding of deep bows. The visitors were unaccustomed to prostration, particularly by magnates, and interpreted it as a sign of servility. For the Muscovites, deep bowing was simply the most respectful way in which one could greet any superior. They had no wider perspective in which to evaluate the act. Moreover, both of the original meanings of the phrase (as opposed to the act) *bit' chelom* — “to humbly greet” and “to request” — underwent further development in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that blanded them of explicitly patrimonial connotations. *Bit' chelom* became the standard polite mode for written greetings, not only for the grand prince, but for people of any rank.⁹⁰ This is clear in seventeenth-century letters (*gramotki*). To return to our example, Fed'ka Belin *bil chelom* to his brother.⁹¹ The evolution of *bit' chelom* in the sense of “request” was stimulated by the formation of the Petition Chancellery (*chelobitnyi prikaz*) in the 1550s.⁹² At about that time, the phrase came to mean “an official request or complaint addressed to the tsar.” It is used in this sense in post-1549 Muscovite legal codes.⁹³ Following this signification, the terms *chelobitnaia* (“a petition”) and *chelobitchik* (“a petitioner”) entered the Muscovite legal lexicon.⁹⁴ In short, Muscovites using *bit' chelom* in the regalian salutation did not understand it to mean “to strike one’s forehead in servile submission.” The phrase simply meant “to humbly greet” or “petition.” In everyday usage, the phrase *bit' chelom* in address to the tsar was not necessarily a token of patrimonial servility — it was simply what decorum and the law required.

Finally, it seems sensible to suggest that the term *kbolop*, when used in reference to formerly free princes of Ivan III’s era carried with it demeaning connotations derived from its patrimonial associations. But once the term is placed within the context of the mature Muscovite petitionary hierarchy, it seems clear that *kbolop* did not retain its explicitly patrimonial sense. In fact, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *kbolop tvoi* was the official petitionary designation for the highest rung of Russian society. According to Muscovite protocol, service people addressing the

grand prince were to use “your slave” (*kholop tvoi*), tax-payers “your orphan” (*sirota tvoia*), and clerics “your pilgrim” (*bogomolets*).⁹⁵ All this is described in some detail by Grigorii Kotoshikhin and, interestingly, by the Imperial diplomat Augustin Meyerberg.⁹⁶ Seen in this context, *kholop tvoi* designated both submission and *relative* honor. Iurii Krizhanich, an astute observer of Muscovite affairs, made this explicit. He understood the Bible to say that all subjects, and especially military servitors, are “slaves” of their prince.⁹⁷ He distinguished this sort of political dependence from economic bondage, which he condemned.⁹⁸ Of political slavery he wrote: “To be tsar is to serve God, but to be the slave of the tsar of one’s own people, this is honorable and is actually a kind of freedom.”⁹⁹ This honorable sense of *kholop* is reflected in the passage of the term into epistolary discourse, where it seems to have been used by inferiors of any sort writing to their superiors.¹⁰⁰ It is true that Krizhanich called on well-born Muscovites to stop calling themselves “slaves,” but this was part of his effort to raise the image of Russians in the eyes of Europeans.¹⁰¹ He knew the foreigners would not understand the more subtle, honorable sense of “slave,” and in this he was right.¹⁰²

In conclusion, a careful analysis of the semantics of the mature regalian salutation suggests that the patrimonial interpretation neglects both the social context and historical evolution of its key terms. Because actual bondage existed in Muscovy, servitors could easily distinguish their “slavery” from the “slavery” of literal human chattel. For this reason, they must have perceived that they were “slaves” only in a ceremonial sense. This understanding developed over time. When the address was first introduced in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, servitors would have recognized that the novel usages represented in the salutation were drawn, at least in part, from the lexicon of actual patrimonial relations. They could recall a time when their prince was not “master,” they were not “slaves,” and prostration was not required when addressing the crown. However as Ivan III’s innovations became a routine part of the Russian administrative and social intercourse, the patrimonial meanings of *gosudar’*, *kholop*, and *bit’ chelom* were joined and perhaps even supplanted by more polite significations used by respectable people throughout Muscovite society — “lord,” “servant,” and “humble greetings.” What had once been the vocabulary of patrimonialism had become the lexicon of dignified deference in both administrative and social discourse.

The Function of the Regalian Salutation: Royal Status, Reciprocity, and Order

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that the evocative language of the salutation was without deeper meaning. For its social terms operated on two levels after the era of Ivan III: a “surface” level in which the terms were understood as conventional forms and a metaphorical level in which the terms designated symbolic social roles. This can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1: the Dual Meanings of the Social Terminology of the Regalian Salutation

<i>Term</i>	<i>Surface Meaning</i>	<i>Metaphorical Meaning</i>
<i>gosudar’</i>	“lord” or “sovereign”	“master”
<i>kholop</i>	“humble servant”	“slave”
<i>bit’ chelom</i>	“to humbly greet”	“to strike one’s head in submission”

What is interesting about the roles assigned on the deeper, older level of meaning is that they were, as we have seen, plainly fictional. The tsar realized he was not a patrimonial “master” and Muscovite servitors knew they were not literally

“slaves.” One is forced to conclude, then, that the court and its servitors were knowingly participating in a kind of political theatre, a play in which the tsar acted out the role of “master” and they acted out the role of “slaves.”¹⁰³

Interestingly, the master-slave drama was not confined to the formula of the salutation, but was in fact performed on a daily basis at court. Striking evidence of this is found in the accounts of foreigners. To begin with, foreigners frequently noted that important Muscovite magnates seemed to go out of their way to demonstrate their submission to the grand prince. “It is their custom and manner,” Olearius observed, “to be servile and to make a show of their slavish disposition.”¹⁰⁴ The most obvious signs of this enthusiasm were of course the use the self-ascription “slave” and the habit of ritual prostration, items the foreigners almost never failed to record. Even more suggestively, the foreigners often noted that Muscovite elites routinely claimed that they, like slaves in a household, owed both their lives and properties to the grand prince. The Englishman Richard Chancellor, writing in 1553, was the first to record such a statement. A Muscovite, he reported, will “say, that he hath nothing, but it is Gods and the Dukes Graces.”¹⁰⁵ Later commentators transcribed many similar sayings. In 1558, Alessandro Guagnini reported that Muscovites “confess that they are the most abject and vilest slaves of the grand prince, and they say that all their movable and immovable property is not theirs but rather the grand prince’s.”¹⁰⁶ In the same year, the Imperial legate Daniel Printz noted that Muscovites claimed that their property belonged to the grand prince.¹⁰⁷ In 1586, Antonio Possevino heard the same thing: “They incessantly declare that they owe their lives, their health, and all their worldly possessions to him and convey the impression that they attribute everything to the grace of God and the mercy of the great tsar.”¹⁰⁸ Moreover, such statements were not confined to the reign of Ivan IV. Olearius heard them in the mid-seventeenth century. “To demonstrate their humility and sense of duty,” he noted, “they say that everything they have belongs not so much to them as to God and the grand prince.”¹⁰⁹ Later in the seventeenth century, Augustin Meyerberg, Jacob Reutenfels, and Johan Georg Korb all recorded that Muscovites swore all they possessed belonged to the grand prince.¹¹⁰ Some of the travelers learned of these statements by reading the accounts of their predecessors.¹¹¹ But given the number of foreigners who independently reported them, it seems clear that Muscovite courtiers indeed said that the grand prince owned their property. Of course they knew this to be literally false: Muscovite law described a kind of private property, even if it was not very well protected.¹¹²

Why did the court insist on maintaining the fiction that the tsar was the “master” of “slaves?” The most powerful reason had to do with the logic of the Muscovite status hierarchy. More than most pre-modern states, Muscovy was a strictly hierarchical society. Rank (*chin*) and honor (*chest*) were strictly regulated by the government, as is born out by the numerous ranked lists of high officers and the ample legislation protecting the honor of every social class in the hierarchy.¹¹³ At the apex of the status pyramid stood the tsar and his family. Naturally the court took every measure possible to ensure that the tsar’s exalted status was maintained and projected. From the court’s point of view, the requirement that the top rung of the Muscovite social order call themselves, paradoxically, “slaves” when addressing the tsar did just this. For if even powerful magnates were “slaves” to the grand princely “master,” then his honor must be immeasurably greater than any other member of the hierarchy. In short, from the court’s perspective, the status of the tsar was inversely proportional to the status of his elite servitors — his honor rose as theirs fell. Judging by the accounts of foreigners, this ceremonial distancing mechanism was quite effective. Visiting Europeans were, as we have seen, amazed that nobles called themselves the tsar’s “slaves” and, having observed this fact, often drew the conclusion that the tsar’s authority was overwhelming. Margeret’s argument is typical of many foreigners, and, one might imagine, many

Muscovites as well: “I consider him to be one of the most absolute princes in existence, for everyone in the land, whether noble or commoner, even the brothers of the emperor, call themselves *keholopy gosudaria*, which means ‘slaves of the emperor.’”¹¹⁴

A second force impelling the court to maintain the master-slave fiction had to do with the symbolic function of slave holding in Muscovite society. Muscovite slaves were for the most part domestics; they served as household lackeys rather than as field hands producing goods for exchange.¹¹⁵ Moreover, though slaves were not terribly expensive in Muscovy, they seem to have been purchased predominantly by well-established magnates, merchants, and servitors.¹¹⁶ Given these two considerations, it seems sensible to agree with Richard Hellie that the value of slaves in Muscovy was rather symbolic than economic. They were a visible luxury used by men of means to demonstrate their wealth and status to the world.¹¹⁷ The observations of foreigners confirm that Muscovites viewed slaves as status symbols. According to Margeret “the wealth of one and all [in Muscovy] is measured by the number of men and women servants that one has and not by the money that one possesses.”¹¹⁸ So that his reader would not be confused, Margeret made clear that these “servants” were in fact heritable “slaves.”¹¹⁹ In 1611, the Polish officer Samuel Maskiewicz corroborated Margeret’s observation, writing that the number of slaves held by a man was “proportional to [his] honor.”¹²⁰ In the mid-seventeenth century, Paul of Aleppo noted that in Muscovy “every rich man” kept numerous Tatar slaves in his house.¹²¹ Olearius agreed: “The slaves and servants of the magnates and other lords are countless.”¹²² Paul, Olearius, and other commentators of the second half of the seventeenth century remarked that Russian magnates and their wives often appeared in public with large groups of domestic slaves.¹²³ If the number of slaves one held was directly proportional to one’s status, then it stood to reason that the tsar would have the most slaves. And indeed this was the case, for according to the ceremonial conventions of the regalian salutation the entire Muscovite service class — numbering hundreds of thousands — was held in bondage to the grand prince. Again, judging by the impressions of foreigners, this technique for elevating the dignity of the tsar proved effective. The foreigners, and particularly foreign ambassadors, were shocked by the fawning behavior of the hordes of courtier-“slaves” who constantly surrounded the tsar. “The majesty of the tsar’s office,” Meyerberg wrote, “is sumptuously displayed by innumerable quantities of courtiers, among them many famous for their notable lineages. All the boyars are required to appear at court before noon daily to honor him. They gather there like ants to an anthill.”¹²⁴

Paradoxically, the service elite also derived benefit from the ceremonial humiliation that seemingly (especially in the eyes of foreigners) dishonored them. In order to comprehend how this could be the case, one must place the ceremonial “slavery” of the service class into the context of actual Muscovite slavery. One of the distinguishing features of Muscovite slavery was the requirement that masters care for their bondsmen. Russian masters were legally obliged to feed their slaves. If they did not, the slaves could petition the government for redress and, if the owner proved recalcitrant, the slaves would be freed.¹²⁵ More generally, slave holders were under a moral obligation not to mistreat their slaves and to provide for them, as may be seen in the admonitions of the *Domostroi*.¹²⁶ In sum, while it would be a mistake to see the relation of master to slave in Muscovy as one of hard and fast reciprocal rights, slaves could expect that they would be protected by their owners. In this sense, the ceremonial proclamation that one was the tsar’s “slave” carried with it distinct implications for the tsar. He, like an actual slaveholder, was obliged to protect his charges from injury.¹²⁷ Though a small number of programmatic texts stress this obligation¹²⁸, perhaps the best evidence that Muscovite custom required the tsar to care for his men is found in the constant hum of complaints that were registered

literally daily in thousands of petitions for relief from servitors throughout Russia. Each of these documents, interestingly, begins with the proclamation that the servitor was the tsar's "slave." What follows this self-effacing gesture seems to be the pleadings of a humiliated subject. The underlying rhetoric of the petitions, however, was not that of servility but rather of entitlement.¹²⁹ The petitioners were in essence saying "We have suffered as required for you, now, if you please, do your part and protect us." The tsar was, of course, not legally obliged to do anything of the sort: Muscovite political culture was not contractarian.¹³⁰ But in the course of everyday affairs it was to be expected that the "master" would show mercy, if not because God's commandments and custom required it, then because from the point of view of imperial administrators, it seemed both equitable and efficient to keep one's "slaves" satisfied.

More generally, the master-slave metaphor can be said to have served the collective interests of both the tsar and his men by helping to pacify the political order.¹³¹ Every successful early modern kingdom, Muscovy included, was beset by competing interests within the governing class: the crown and royal family fought to secure its place among elite clans and gain legitimacy among commoners; magnates fought among themselves for preferment at court; and provincial nobles and servitors struggled to avoid onerous state service, gain control of the peasantry, and ensconce themselves in the provinces. Naturally, if they hoped to govern effectively, the elites who ruled these societies had to forge strategies to diffuse dangerous infighting and get on with the business of government. In a generic sense, the basic Muscovite political strategy could properly be called "absolutist." With ruthless consistency, the court insisted that the tsar, standing far above any particular interest, held all power in the state. The master-slave metaphor functioned to reinforce this notion. In the scenario implied by the salutation, the tsar was imagined — metaphorically, of course — as the merciful "master" of elite "slaves." He ruled and they obeyed. Though this scenario was fictitious, it served as a ceremonial representation of the ideal of absolute sovereignty, an imaginary space in which political conflict as such was impossible. What well-treated "slave" would question the will of his "master?"

Conclusion

The Muscovite regalian salutation was born in the last quarter of the fifteenth century of a court-sponsored effort to increase the domestic and international prestige of the Muscovite grand prince. The men who formulated the salutation at this time wanted to project the image of the tsar as a patrimonial lord (*gosudar'* as "master" or "slaveholder") and great territorial monarch (*gosudar'* as "sovereign"). In keeping with this new persona, the tsar's servitors were identified as "slaves" (*kholopy*) and they were directed to greet the grand prince with a humble bow (*bit' chelom*). As the sixteenth century wore on, these usages became standard elements in the evolving Muscovite administrative lexicon and they also entered non-governmental (private) discourse. As the terms were routinized, they lost much of their explicit connection with the patrimonial image of kingship that, in part, gave rise to them. In mature Muscovite administrative and social discourse, *gosudar'* came to mean "sovereign" or "lord," *kholop* came to mean "servant," and *bit' chelom* came to mean "to humbly greet" or "to request." The ideologically-laden language of the salutation was transformed into a means of polite social intercourse, not necessarily restricted to the sphere of the court. Yet the older, patrimonial meanings did not disappear entirely. They remained as metaphors for the relation between the tsar and his servitors. In Muscovite ceremonial speech, the tsar was figured as benevolent "slaveholder" and his men as humble, supine "slaves." The preservation of this fiction served the interests of both the tsar and his servitors: it elevated the status of the former and provided a mechanism by which the latter could respectfully request the grand prince's aid. In addition, the master-slave

metaphor served the common interests of both the tsar and his men in that it helped to suppress wasteful political infighting by fostering the notion of an absolute ruler.

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¹Turii Krizhanich, *Politika*, trans. Aleksandr L. Gol'dberg (Moscow, 1965), 545-46.

²George Florovsky, "The Problem of Old Russian Culture," *Slavic Review* 21 (1962): 1-15.

³Certainly there are older studies, for example, Georg Ostrogorsky, "Zum Stratordienst des Herrschers in der Byzantinisch-Slavischen Welt," *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 7 (1935): 187-204. Nonetheless, the bulk of studies using ritual as evidence of political ideology have been written in the last two decades, most by American scholars. See, for example, David Miller, "The Coronation of Ivan IV of Moscow," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 15 (1967): 559-74; Ann Kleimola, "The Muscovite Autocracy at Work: The Use of Disgrace as an Instrument of Control," *Russian Law: Historical and Political Perspectives*, ed. Walter Butler (Leiden, 1977): 29-50; George Majeska, "The Moscow Coronation of 1498 Reconsidered," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 26 (1978): 353-61; Robert M. Croskey, "The Diplomatic Forms of Ivan III's Relationship with the Crimean Khan," *Slavic Review* 43 (1984): 257-69; Robert O. Crummey, "Court Spectacles in Seventeenth Century Russia," in *Essays in Honor of A. A. Zimin*, ed. Daniel C. Waugh (Columbus, 1985): 130-58; Nancy S. Kollmann, "Ritual and Social Drama at the Muscovite Court," *Slavic Review* 45 (1986): 486-502; Daniel Kaiser, "Symbol and Ritual in the Marriages of Ivan IV," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 14 (1987): 247-62; Leonik A. Iusefovich, *Kak v posol'skikh obychaiakh vedetsia* (Moscow, 1988); Paul Bushkovitch, "The Epiphany Ceremony of the Russian Court in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Russian Review* 49 (1990): 1-18; Nancy S. Kollmann, "Honor and Dishonor in Early Modern Russia," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 46 (1992): 131-46; Michael Flier, "The Iconology of Royal Ritual in Sixteenth-Century Muscovy," in *Byzantine Studies: Essays on Slavic World and the Eleventh Century*, ed. Speros Vryonis, Jr. (New Rochelle, 1992): 53-76; *idem*, "The Iconography of Royal Procession: Ivan the Terrible and the Muscovite Palm Sunday Ritual," in *European Monarchy: Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Heinz Duchhardt, et al. (Stuttgart, 1992): 109-25; *idem*, "Tsar' kak mifotvoret. Ivan Groznyi i Obriad v Nedeliu Vaii," in *Rossika*, ed. Claudio Ingerflom, et al. (Moscow, 1992); Precilla Hunt, "Ivan IV's Personal Mythology of Kingship," *Slavic Review* 52 (1993): 769-809; David Miller, "Creating Legitimacy: Ritual, Ideology, and Power in Sixteenth-Century Russia," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 21 (1994): 289-315; Michael Flier, "Breaking the Code: The Image of the Tsar in the Muscovite Palm Sunday Ritual," in *Medieval Russian Culture II*, ed. Micheal S. Flier and Daniel Rowland (Berkeley, 1996); Russell Martin, "Dynastic Marriage in Muscovy 1500-1725" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1996).

⁴Two exceptions are Horace Dewey and Ann Kleimola, "Promise and Perfidy in Old Russian Cross-Kissing," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 3 (1968): 327-41 and *idem*, "Coercion by Righter ('Pravezib') in Old Russian Administration," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 9 (1975): 156-67.

⁵The terms *tsar'* and *velikii kniaz* ("grand prince") have been excluded from consideration because they were traditional designations for political rulers in the East Slavic world. Unlike *gosudar'*, they denoted only those holding political power and could not be used sensibly in any other context.

⁶Maks Fasmer, *Etimologicheskii slovar' Russkogo iazyka*, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1987), 1: 446.

⁷Rubin I. Avanesov, ed., *Slovar' drevnerusskogo iazyka (XI-XIV vv.)* (Moscow, 1988-) (Hereafter "SDRIA XI-XIV"), 2: 366; Stepan G. Barkhudarov, ed. et al., *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XI-XVII vv.*, 17 vols. to date (Moscow, 1974-) (Hereafter "SRIA XI-XVII"), 4: 100; Izmail I. Sreznevskii, *Materialy dlia slovaria drevne-russkogo iazyka*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1958) (Hereafter "Sreznevskii"), 1: 563.

⁸SDRIA XI-XIV 2: 373; SRIA XI-XVII 4: 100; Sreznevskii 1: 563.

⁹See the many references to *gospodar'* and *gosudar'* in the indexes and legal texts in Daniel H. Kaiser, trans. and ed., *The Laws of Rus' — Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries* (Salt Lake City, 1992); Boris D. Grekov, ed., *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1952); and Richard Hellie, trans. and ed., *The Muscovite Law Code (Ulozhenie) of 1649* (Irvine, 1988).

¹⁰SRIA XI-XVII 4: 100; Sreznevskii 1: 563; Gunter Stökl, "Die Begriffe Reich, Herrschaft und Staat bei den orthodoxen Slawen," *Saeculum* 5 (1954): 115; Marc Szeftel, "The Title of the Muscovite Monarch up to the End of the Seventeenth Century," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 13 (1979): 62; Gustav Alef, "The Political Significance of the Inscriptions on Muscovite Coinage in the Reign of Vasili II," *Speculum* 34 (1959): 11; *idem*, "The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 39 (1986): 77; Robert M. Croskey, *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice in the Reign of Ivan III* (New York, 1987), 214.

¹¹Szeftel, "The Title of the Muscovite Monarch," 64; Stökl, "Die Begriffe Reich," 115.

¹²Sreznevskii 1: 571; Stökl, "Die Begriffe Reich," 114; Szeftel, "The Title of the Muscovite Monarch," 63; Joel Raba, "The Authority of the Muscovite Ruler at the Dawn of the Modern Era," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 24 (1976): 322.

¹³Gennadii F. Karpov, ed., "Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii Moskovskogo gosudarstva s Krimskogo i Nagaiskoiu ordami i s Turtsiei," *Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva* 41 (1885). (Hereafter "PDS (Crimea)").

¹⁴PDS (Crimea), no. 1: 3.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, no. 10: 41.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, no. 23: 81.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, nos. 29: 110 (1491); 31: 118 (1491); 31: 118 (1491); 33: 133 (1491); 35: 148 (1492) and so on.

¹⁸See the documents in Lev V. Cherepnin, ed., *Akty sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi istorii severo-vostochnoi Rusi kontsa XIV - nachala XVI v.*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1952-64) (Hereafter "ASEI"). Also see the numerous references in Georgii E. Kochin, *Materialy dlia terminologicheskogo slovaria Drevnei Rossii* (Moscow, 1937), 69.

¹⁹Mikhail N. Tikhomirov, "Prikaznoe deloproizvodstvo v XVIIv.," in *idem*, *Rossiiskoe gosudarstvo XV-XVII vekov* (Moscow, 1973): 364-65 (*otpiski*) and 369 (*chelobitnye*).

²⁰Mikhail Diakonov, *Ocherki obshestvennago i gosudarstvennago stroia drevnei Rusi*, 3rd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1910), 421. Also see Alef, "The Political Significance of the Inscriptions," 13; Raba, "The Authority of the Muscovite Ruler," 322; Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (New York, 1974), 21, 78; and Robert O. Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy, 1304-1613* (London-New York, 1989), 77.

²¹On *zemlia*, see Sreznevskii 1: 972-76 and SRIa XI-XVII 5: 376-77. On *kniazhenie*, see Sreznevskii 1: 1397-98 and SRIa XI-XVII 7: 204-205. On *gospodarstvo*, see SRIa XI-XVII 4: 100.

²²For examples in Muscovite law, see the many references to *gosudar'* in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus'* and Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*.

²³For example, Ivan III called the grand principality his *otchina* in his testament and willed it to his oldest son, Vasili. See Robert C. Howes, ed. and trans, *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow* (Ithaca, 1967), 143. On the early meaning of *votchina* to designate "allodial estate," see the many references in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus'* and Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*. Also see Sreznevskii 1: 308 and SRIa XI-XVII 3: 74.

²⁴For examples in Muscovite law, see the references to *votchinnik* in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus'*; Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*; and Hellie, *The Muscovite Law Code*. On early uses of *votchinnik*, see SRIa XI-XVII 3: 75.

²⁵Stöckl, "Die Begriffe Reich," 114-15; Croskey, *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice*, 214.

²⁶Sreznevskii 1: 571-72 and SRIa XI-XVII 4: 109.

²⁷Szeftel, "The Title of the Muscovite Monarch," 63. See "Despotas," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr P. Kazhdan, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1991), 1: 614.

²⁸See Alef, "The Origins of Autocracy," 77ff.

²⁹PDS (Crimea), no. 35: 148.

³⁰SRIa XI-XVII 4: 107-108; Sreznevskii 1: 571.

³¹SRIa XI-XVII 1: 188; Sreznevskii 3: 1488; Sviatoslav S. Volkov, "Iz istorii russkoi leksiki. II. Chelobitnaia," in *Russkaia istoricheskaia leksikologija i leksikografija*, ed. Sviatoslav S. Volkov (Leningrad, 1972), 48; Sviatoslav S. Volkov, *Leksika russkikh chelobitnykh XVII veka. Formulari, traditsionnye etiketnye i stilye sredstva* (Leningrad, 1974), 36; Horace Dewey, "Russia's Debt to the Mongols in Suretyship and Collective Responsibility," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1980): 268.

³²Sreznevskii 3: 1490; Volkov, "Iz istorii russkoi leksiki," 49.

³³Peter B. Golden, "Turkic Calques in Medieval Eastern Slavic," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 8 (1984): 109-10. Also see Donald Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins of Muscovite Political Institutions," *Slavic Review* 49 (1990): 534. For the use of *bit' chelom* in Mongol-Turkic diplomatics, see Mirksym A. Usmanov, *Zhalovannye akty Dzhuchieva Ulusa XIV-XVI vv.* (Kazan', 1979), 194-95.

³⁴Sreznevskii 3: 1490; SRIa XI-XVII 1: 188.

³⁵Usmanov, *Zhalovannye akty*, 196; Croskey, "The Diplomatic Forms," 257-59; Croskey, *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice*, 117ff.

³⁶PDS (Crimea), no. 23: 81.

³⁷ASEI 3: no. 5 (1391), no. 6 (1392 or 1404), no. 7 (1397).

³⁸ASEI 3: nos. 18 (1474), 37 (1451-61), 38 (1453-54), 109 (1487), and so on. Also see the numerous citations in Kochin, *Materialy dlia terminologicheskogo slovaria*, 28.

³⁹On *prostiti*, see Sreznevskii 2: 1567-68 and SRIa XI-XVII 20: 217-18. On *moliti*, see Sreznevskii 2: 167-68 and SRIa XI-XVII 9: 246. On *poklonitisia*, see Sreznevskii 2: 1107-108 and SRIa XI-XVII 16: 159-60.

⁴⁰Michael Cherniavsky, "Khan or Basileus?: An Aspect of Russian Mediaeval Political Thought," *The Structure of Russian History*, ed. Michael Cherniavsky (New York, 1970), *passim*.

⁴¹Usmanov, *Zhalovannye akty*, 196; Croskey, "The Diplomatic Forms," 257-59; Croskey, *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice*, 117ff.

⁴²Fasmer, *Etimologicheskii slovar' Russkogo iazyka*, 1: 446.

⁴³Sreznevskii 3: 1384.

⁴⁴See the many references in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus' — Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries*; Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*; and Hellie, *The Muscovite Law Code*.

⁴⁵Alef, "The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy," 75.

⁴⁶PDS (Crimea), no. 23: 81.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 73ff. Also see Jaroslav Pelenski, "State and Society in Muscovite Russia and the Mongol-Turkic System in the Sixteenth Century," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 27 (1980): 167; *idem*, "Muscovite Russia and Poland Lithuania, 1450-1600," in *State*

and *Society in Europe from the Fifteenth-Eighteenth Century*, ed. Jaroslav Pelenski (Warsaw, 1980), 118; and John Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia, 1462-1874* (Oxford, 1985), 3.

⁴⁸Alef, "The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy," 75.

⁴⁹"*Kul*," in *Encyclopedia of Islam. New Edition*. (Leiden, 1954-), 5: 359 and "*Ghulam*," in *Encyclopedia of Islam 2*: 1079-91.

⁵⁰Alef, "The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy," 89; Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 537, note 52.

⁵¹Lev V. Cherepnin, ed., *Dukhovnye i dogovornye gramoty velikikh i udel'nykh kniazhei XIV-XVI vv.* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), nos. 1, 3, 4, and so on.

⁵²Aleksandr P. Kazhdan, "The Concept of Freedom (*eleutheria*) and Slavery (*douleia*) in Byzantium," in *La notion de liberté au Moyen âge* (Paris, 1985), 219.

⁵³"*Doulos*," in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 1: 659. Also see Kazhdan, "The Concept of Freedom," 219-20 and Helga Köpstein, *Zur Slaverie im ausgehenden Byzanz* (Berlin, 1966), 33ff.

⁵⁴Kazhdan, "The Concept of Freedom," 219-20; Köpstein, *Zur Slaverie im ausgehenden Byzanz*, 33ff.

⁵⁵Sigismund von Herberstein, *Notes upon Russia* [1517-49], trans. R. H. Major, 2 vols. (London, 1851-52; reprint, New York, 1963?), 1: 32.

⁵⁶Herberstein, *Notes upon Russia*, 1: 95. Major rendered "*servos*" as "serf." "Slave" would seem to be a more accurate translation. For the original, see Sigismund von Herberstein, *Rerum moscoviticarum commentarii* (Frankfurt a. M., 1964), 49.

⁵⁷Samuel H. Baron, "Herberstein's Image of Russia and Its Transmission through Later Writers," in *idem, Explorations in Muscovite History* (Hampshire, GB, 1991), essay XIII; Marshall T. Poe, "Russian Despotism: The Origins and Dissemination of an Early Modern Commonplace" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1993).

⁵⁸Giles Fletcher, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, in *The English Works of Giles Fletcher, the Elder*, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (Madison, 1964), 199.

⁵⁹Adam Olearius, *The Travels of Olearius in Seventeenth Century Russia* [1656], trans. and ed. Samuel Baron (Stanford, 1967), 173.

⁶⁰Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Law*, trans. and eds. Ann M. Cohler et al. (Cambridge, 1989), books 2 and 3.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 10, 22, 26, and 28.

⁶²Olearius, *The Travels*, 173, where Aristotle's concept of despotism is applied to Muscovy. For a general treatment, see Poe, "Russian Despotism," 393-447.

⁶³Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, 60, 62, 92, 111, 137, 147, 154, 216, 221, 233, 251, 279, 280, 287, 315, 316, 416, 417, and 517.

⁶⁴Muriel Dodds, *Les Recits de voyages: sources de L'Esprit des lois de Montesquieu* (Paris, 1929).

⁶⁵John Perry, *The state of Russia under the present Czar* (London, 1716), 236-37.

⁶⁶Franco Venturi, "Was Russia a Feudal Country? An Eighteenth-Century Debate," in *idem, Studies in Free Russia*, trans. Fausta S. Walsby and Margaret O'Dell (Chicago, 1982): 1-25; Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization and the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 1994): 53, 62-63, 82, 85-86, 231, and 267.

⁶⁷Jeremy L. Black, "The 'State School' Interpretation of Russian History: a Re-Appraisal of Its Genetic Origins," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 21 (1973): 510.

⁶⁸Boris N. Chicherin, *Opyty po istorii russkogo prava* (Moscow, 1858), 9.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 365-75.

⁷⁰Boris N. Chicherin, *O narodnom predstavitel'stve* (Moscow, 1899), 531.

⁷¹Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii, *Istoriia soslavii v Rossii*, in *Sochineniia v deviat' tomakh* (Moscow, 1988), 6: 307; Aleksandr E. Presniakov, *Moskovskoe tsarstvo* (Petrograd, 1918), 44.

⁷²Cherniavsky, "Khan or Basileus," 73; Aleksandr A. Zimin, *Rossia na poroge novogo vremeni* (Moscow, 1972), 64, 402-4; Ann Kleimola, "Up Through Servitude: The Changing Condition of the Muscovite Elite in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 6 (1979): 223; Pelenski, "Muscovite Russia and Poland Lithuania," 98; *idem*, "State and Society in Muscovite Russia," 156-67; Robert O. Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613-1689* (Princeton, 1983), 169; Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, 3; Alef, "The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy," 75-77; Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy*, 77; Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 537; Richard S. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power. Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy. Volume One: From Peter the Great to the Death of Nicholas I* (Princeton, 1995), 34; Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, *The Slave Soul of Russia. Moral Masochism and the Cult of Suffering* (New York, 1995), 11.

⁷³Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, 21.

⁷⁴Kollmann, "Ritual and Social Drama," 498.

⁷⁵Horace Dewey and Ann Kleimola, "The Petition (*chelobitnaia*) as an Old Russian Literary Genre," *Slavonic and East European Journal* 14 (1970): 284. Also see Rancour-Laferriere, *The Slave Soul of Russia*, 12.

⁷⁶Dewey, "Russia's Debt to the Mongols," 267. Also see Rancour-Laferriere, *The Slave Soul of Russia*, 12 and Robert Hingley, *The Russian Mind* (New York, 1977), 194.

⁷⁷Cherniavsky, “Khan or Basileus,” 73.

⁷⁸Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, 180.

⁷⁹See the references in *gosudar’* in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus’* and Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*.

⁸⁰On Muscovite slavery, see Richard Hellie, *Slavery in Russia, 1540-1725* (Chicago-London, 1982). For the use of *kholop* in legal contexts, see the references to the term in Kaiser, *The Laws of Rus’*; Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*, and Hellie, *The Muscovite Law Code*.

⁸¹See, for example, Jacob Reutenfels, “Skazanie sviatileishemu gertsogu toskanskomu Koz’me Tret’emu o Moskovii [1671],” *Chteniiia v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* (hereafter “CbO IDR”) (1905), kn. 3: 86: “When the tsar goes past, then all bow to him, falling down and touching their heads to the very ground: this is called in their language ‘*bit’ chelom*.” For other examples in which ritual prostration is identified as *bit’ chelom*, see: Daniel Printz von Buchau, “Nachalo i Vozvyshenie Moscovii [1578],” *CbO IDR* (1876), kn. 3: 53; Paul of Aleppo, *The Travels of Macarius Patriarch of Antioch. Written by his Attendant Archdeacon, Paul of Aleppo, in Arabic* [1653], trans. Francis C. Belfour, 2 vols. (London, 1829-36), 1: 263; and Augustin Meyerberg, “Puteshestvie v Moskoviiu Barona Avgustina Maierberga [1661],” trans. A. N. Shemiakin and intro. O. M. Podoiskii, *CbO IDR* (1873), kn. 4: 65.

⁸²Kollmann, “Ritual and Social Drama,” 493; *idem*, “Concepts of Society and Social Identity in Early Modern Russia,” in *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine*, ed. Samuel H. Baron and Nancy S. Kollmann (DeKalb, 1997), 34-51.

⁸³Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, 127.

⁸⁴For many examples, see Sergei I. Kotkov, ed., *Pamiatniki delovoi pis’mennosti XVII veka. Vladimirskaia kraia*. (Moscow, 1984), 149-220.

⁸⁵Kotkov, *Pamiatniki delovoi pis’mennosti XVII veka*, 249. Also see the numerous examples in Sergei I. Kotkov, ed., *Gramotki XVII-nachala XVIII v.* (Moscow, 1969). The editors of SRIa XI-XVII 4: 109 note this usage.

⁸⁶See Hellie, *The Muscovite Law Code*, chapter 10, article 134 and many others. On this usage, see Vladimir I. Sergeevich, *Drevnosti russkago prava*, 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1903-09), 1: 437 and SRIa XI-XVII 1: 308.

⁸⁷Jacques Margeret, *The Russian Empire and the Grand Duchy of Muscovy* [1607], trans. and ed. Chester S. L. Dunning (Pittsburgh, 1983), 33. The French mercenary was not quite correct: many foreigners reported kissing the tsar’s hand, but, they wrote, this rite was reserved almost exclusively for the grand prince and was only performed during audiences.

⁸⁸Herberstein, *Notes upon Russia*, 2: 125. For similar treatments of this hierarchy of bows, see Raffaele Barberino, “Puteshestvie v Moskoviiu Rafaelia Berberini [1565],” edited and translated by Vasili I. Liubich-Romanovich. *Syn otechestva* (1842), no. no. 7: 12; Printz, “Nachalo i Vozvyshenie Moscovii,” 53; Margeret, *The Russian Empire*, 33; and Augustin Meyerberg, *Al’bom Meierberga. Vidy i bytovyia kartiny Rossii XVII veka* [1661], ed. Friedrich von Adelung and A. M. Loviagin (St. Petersburg, 1903), 148-49 and figure 84.

⁸⁹Olearius, *The Travels*, 220.

⁹⁰Volkov, *Leksika russkikh chelobitnykh XVII veka*, 36.

⁹¹Kotkov, *Pamiatniki delovoi pis’mennosti*, 249.

⁹²Segurt O. Shmidt, “Chelobitennyi prikaz v seredine XVI stoletia,” *Izvestia Akademii nauk S.S.S.R. Seria istorii i filosofii* 8, no. 5 (1950): 445-58.

⁹³*Sudebnik* of 1550, articles 7, 8, 24, 70, 72, 78, 79, 85, and 100 in Grekov, *Sudebniki XV - XVI vekov*.

⁹⁴Volkov, “Iz istorii russkoi leksiki,” 53 and 57.

⁹⁵Kotkov, *Pamiatniki delovoi pis’mennosti XVII veka*, 149-220.

⁹⁶Grigorii Kotoshikhin, *O Rossii v tsarstvanie Alekseia Mikhailovicha*, ed. Ann E. Pennington (Oxford, 1980), fols. 186-88; Meyerberg, *Al’bom Meierberga*, 148-49 and figure 84.

⁹⁷Lev M. Mordukhovich, “Iz rukopisnogo nasledstva Iu. Krizhanicha,” *Istoricheskaia arkhiv* (1958), no. 1: 185.

⁹⁸*Idem*, “Iurii Krizhanich o ‘rabstve,’” *Trudy Odela drevnerusskoi literatury* 33 (1979): 142-55.

⁹⁹*Idem*, “Iz rukopisnogo nasledstva Iu. Krizhanicha,” 185.

¹⁰⁰Many examples are reprinted in Kotkov, *Pamiatniki delovoi pis’mennosti XVII veka*; Kotkov, *Gramotki XVII-nachala XVIII veka*; and Aleksei I. Iakovlev, ed., *Akty khoziaistva Boiarina B. I. Morozov*, 2 vols. (Moscow-Leningrad, 1940-45).

¹⁰¹Krizhanich, *Politika*, 603.

¹⁰²Krizhanich mentioned that Europeans singled out the use of “the sovereign’s slaves” for particular censure. See Krizhanich, *Politika*, 546-47.

¹⁰³The idea that Muscovite courtiers were in essence co-conspirators in a kind of political charade is developed at some length by Edward Keenan, “Muscovite Political Folkways,” *Russian Review* 45 (1986): 115-181 and Nancy S. Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics: The Making of the Muscovite Political System, 1345-1547* (Stanford, 1987), 146-51.

¹⁰⁴Olearius, *The Travels*, 147.

¹⁰⁵Richard Chancellor, “The Booke of the Great and Mighty Emperor of Russia, the Duke of Moscovia, and of the Dominions, Orders, and Commodities Thereunto Belonging: drawn by Richard Chancelour [1553],” in *The Principal navigations, voyages, traffiques and discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. Richard Hakluyt, 12 vols (Glasgow, 1903-1905; reprint: New York, 1969), 2: 232.

¹⁰⁶Alessandro Guagnini, “Omnium regionum Moschoviae descriptio [1578],” in *Historiae Ruthenicae Scriptores Exteri Saeculi XVI*, ed. Wojciech Starczewski, 2 vols. (Berlin-St. Petersburg, 1841-42), 1: 24.

¹⁰⁷Printz, “Nachalo i Vozvyshenie Moscovii,” kn. 3: 29-30.

¹⁰⁸Antonio Possevino, *The Moscovia of Antonio Possivino, S.J.* [1586], trans. Hugh Graham (Pittsburgh, 1977), 11.

¹⁰⁹Olearius, *The Travels*, 174. Also see Olearius, *The Travels*, 147.

¹¹⁰Meyerberg, “Puteshestvie v Moskoviiu,” kn. 4: 116-17; Reutenfels, “Skazanie,” kn. 3: 101; and Johann Georg Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation at the Court of Czar Peter the Great* [1700], trans. and ed. Count MacDonnell, 2 vols. (London, 1863; reprint, London, 1968), 2: 155.

¹¹¹On the custom of “borrowing” in European Moscovitica, see Walter Leitsch, “Herberstein’s Impact on the Reports about Muscovy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Some Observations on the Technique of Borrowing,” *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 24 (1978), 163-77; Baron, “Herberstein’s Image of Russia and Its Transmission”; Poe, “Russian Despotism’.”

¹¹²See on Muscovite property law, see George G. Weickhardt, “Due Process and Equal Justice in Muscovite Law.” *Russian Review* 51 (1992): 463-80 and *idem*, “The Pre-Petrine Law of Property,” *Slavic Review* 52 (1993): 663-79. It should be noted that Weickhardt’s survey is based entirely on Russian statutes which may not have been followed in practice. Moreover, the statutes certainly did not reflect what might be called the everyday “ethos” or “spirit” of Russian property relations, something that is perhaps better registered in the popular proverbs about the tsar’s power recorded by European visitors.

¹¹³On ranked lists, see Marshall Poe, “Elite Service Registry in Muscovy,” *passim*. On the maintenance of status, see Kollmann, “Honor and Dishonor in Early Modern Russia,” 131-46.

¹¹⁴Margeret, *The Russian Empire*, 28.

¹¹⁵See Hellie, *Slavery in Russia*, 20 and 490-95.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 591 and 612.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 352-53, 417, 603, 690-91.

¹¹⁸Margeret, *The Russian Empire*, 32.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 32.

¹²⁰Samuel Maskiewicz, “Dnevnik Maskevicha [1611],” in *Skazaniia sovremennikov o Dmitrii Samozvantsse*, ed. and trans. Nikolai G. Ustrialov, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1859), 2: 52-53.

¹²¹Paul of Aleppo, *The Travels*, 1: 274 and 1: 286.

¹²²Olearius, *The Travels*, 14.

¹²³Aleppo, *The Travels*, 1: 399; Olearius, *The Travels*, 169, 220; Meyerberg, “Puteshestvie v Moskoviiu,” 84; Reutenfels, “Skazanie,” 152-53; Bernard Tanner, “Opisanie puteshestvia pol’skogo posol’stva v Moskvu v 1678 g.,” *ChO IDR* (1891), kn. 3: 101; Neuville, *A Curious and New Account of Muscovy in the Year 1689*, ed. and intro. Lindsey Hughes, trans. J. A. Cutshall (London, 1994), 58.

¹²⁴Meyerberg, “Puteshestvie v Moskoviiu,” 171-72.

¹²⁵Hellie, *Slavery in Russia*, 126-29.

¹²⁶Vladimir V. Kolesov, ed. *Domostroi* (Moscow, 1990), chapter 28.

¹²⁷The obligations of the tsar to protect his charge, both spiritually and physically, has been widely discussed in recent works on Muscovite political thought. See, for example, Daniel Rowland, “The Problem of Advice in Muscovite Tales about the Time of Troubles,” *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 6 (1979): 271-72; Daniel Rowland, “Did Muscovite Literary Ideology Place Any Limits on the Power of the Tsar?,” *Russian Review* 49 (1990): 125-56; and Valerie A. Kivelson, “The Devil Stole His Mind: The Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising,” *American Historical Review* 98 (1993): 733-56.

¹²⁸See, for example, Metropolitan Makarii’s benediction performed at Ivan IV’s coronation on January 16, 1547, where Makarii counsils Ivan to preserve the realm and keep his flock unharmed. Elpidifor V. Barsov, ed. “Drevne-russkie pamiatniki sviashchennogo venchaniia tsarei na tsarstvo,” *ChO IDR* 124 (1883), kn. 1: 58. Makarii borrowed this admonition from the sixth-century Byzantine Deacon Agapetus’s benediction to Emperor Justinian. For an analysis, see Miller, “The Coronation of Ivan IV,” 559-74. On the origin of the text in Agapetus, see Ihor Shevchenko, “A Neglected Byzantine Source of Muscovite Political Ideology,” *Harvard Slavic Studies* 2 (1954): 141-79. For a similar statement, again borrowed from Agapetus, see *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* (St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1846-), vol. 21, ch. 2 (*Stepennaia kniga*), 609-11.

¹²⁹For a similar argument, see Valerie A. Kivelson, “Merciful Father, Impersonal State: Russian Autocracy in Comparative Perspective,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1997): 652.

¹³⁰George Weickhardt has argued that Muscovites (particularly the framers of the *Ulozhenie* of 1649, Kotoshikhin, Simeon Polotskoi, and Krizhanich) believed that “the ruler and the laws derived their legitimacy from a contract or from popular consent.” He even sees similarities between these “Russian” ideas and the thought of Locke. See George G. Weickhardt, “Political Thought in Seventeenth-Century Russia,” *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 21 (1994), 337. Leaving aside the question as to whether Kotoshikhin,

Simeon, and Krizhanich could be considered representative of *Muscovite* political thought, it seems that Weichardt's thesis overreaches the evidence. There was certainly some sense in which all Muscovites believed the ruler was beholden to the people. But to speak of a "contract" is to ignore the informal framework of Muscovite political culture and, more importantly, the indisputable fact that no *Muscovite* ever composed a contractarian political philosophy that explicitly bound the activities of the tsar to the will of the people.

¹³¹Kollmann, "Ritual and Social Drama," 493 and *idem*, "Concepts of Society and Social Identity," 34-51.