



Iowa Research Online  
The University of Iowa's Institutional Repository

---

Department of History Publications

---

1-1-1997

# Muscovite Personnel Records, 1475-1550: New Light on the Early Evolution of Russian Bureaucracy

Marshall Poe  
*University of Iowa*

---

Copyright © Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, Stuttgart, 1997. Posted by permission.

*Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 45:3 (1997): 361-78.

Hosted by Iowa Research Online. For more information please contact: [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

## Muscovite Personnel Records, 1475-1550: New Light on the Early Evolution of Russian Bureaucracy\*

Marshall Poe

Draft: Not for Citation

Since the nineteenth century, historians have described the development of the Muscovite central administration in terms of a transition between the seigniorial and *prikaz* (“chancellery”) system.<sup>1</sup> The seigniorial apparatus, as the name implies, evolved out of the management of the grand princely estate. Seigniorial administration was marked by intimacy (staff members, at least on the highest levels, were courtiers), limited specialization (administrators were generally not experts), and few formal divisions between duties (*dvoretskie* [“major-domos”], *kaznachei* [“treasurers”] and so on were officers of the court rather than offices in the court).<sup>2</sup> The picture is one of the grand prince informally managing his household *cum* realm with the aid of a few trusted clans and their dependents. The chancellery system of the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was quite different. It represented a conscious re-figuration of the grand princely scriptorium for the purposes of managing an enterprise that had out-stripped the capacities of the older seigniorial apparatus. The chancellery system was distinguished by social distance (professional administrators drawn from outside the political elite), functional differentiation (scribes specialized in particular sorts of affairs), and institutional division (distinct offices with special sub-divisions).<sup>3</sup> Here the image is one of a bureaucratic endeavor, a “state” in the contemporary sense of the word.

---

\* I would like to thank E. Keenan, V. Kivelson, O. Kosheleva, R. Martin, B. Morozov and W. Rodkiewicz for their generous assistance. All of the Russian terms in the text are attested in Muscovite sources. After the first appearance of each term an English translation in quotation marks is provided. In most cases the translations are used thereafter. A glossary of Muscovite documentary terms and corresponding translations is provided in an appendix below.

<sup>1</sup>The master narrative of the state school is built on this transition, described by nineteenth-century historians as the movement from a *rodovoi* (“patriarchal-kin”) principle of rule to a *gosudarstvennyi* (“state”) principle. See J. L. Black *The ‘State School’ Interpretation of Russian History: a Re-Appraisal of Its Genetic Origins*, in: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 21 (1973), pp. 509-30, here p. 510. Later Russian historians adopted variants of this schema. Presniakov, for example, describes the transition between a “*votchinnoe gosudarstvo*” and a “*prikazno-biurokraticeskii stroi*.” See A. E. Presniakov *Moskovskoe tsarstvo*. Petrograd 1918, pp. 28 and 112. Kliuchevskii preferred slightly different terms: “*udel’noe upravlenie*” and “*prikaznaia administratsiia*.” See V. O. Kliuchevskii *Kurs russkoi istorii*, in: *Sochineniia v deviati tomakh*. Moskva 1988, vol. 2, lecture 38.

<sup>2</sup>The general structure of the administration is described in S. B. Veselovskii *Feodal’noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoi Rusi*. Moskva and Leningrad 1947 and N. S. Kollmann *Kinship and Politics: the Making of the Muscovite Political System, 1375-1547*. Stanford 1987, pp. 24-36. On the court administration itself, see A. A. Zimin *O sostave dvortsovykh uchrezhdenii Russkogo gosudarstva kontsa XV-XVI v.*, in: *Istoricheskie zapiski* 68 (1958), pp. 180-205 and U. Halbach *Der russische Fürstenhof vor dem 16. Jahrhundert*. (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa, Bd. 23. Stuttgart 1985).

<sup>3</sup>For general descriptions of the character and functions of the *prikazy*, see: I. I. Verner *O vremeni i prichinakh obrazovaniia Moskovskikh prikazov*. Moskva 1907; P. B. Brown *Early Modern Russian Bureaucracy: the Evolution of the Chancellery System from Ivan III to Peter the Great, 1478-1717*. Ph.D. diss. University of Chicago 1978; and P. B. Brown *Muscovite Government Bureaus*, in: *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 10 (1983), pp. 269-330. On the chancellery staffs, see: N. F. Demidova *Biurokratizatsiia gosudarstvennogo apparata absolutizma v XVII-XVIII vv.*, in: *Absolutizm v Rossii*. Eds.: N. M. Druzhinin et al. Moskva 1964, pp. 206-42; B. Plavsic “Seventeenth-Century Chanceries and their Staffs,” in: *Russian Officialdom: The Bureaucratization of Russian Society from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*. Eds.: D. K. Rowney and W. M. Pintner. Chapel Hill 1980, pp. 19-45; N. F. Demidova *Gosudarstvennyi apparat Rossii XVII v.*, in: *Istoricheskie zapiski* 108 (1982), pp. 109-54; and especially N. F. Demidova *Sluzhilaia biurokratiia v Rossii XVII v. i ee rol’ v formirovaniia absolutizma*. Moskva 1987.

A review of the literature indicates that while the seigniorial and chancellery administrations as such are reasonably well understood, the transition between the two in the period 1475 to 1550 is not.<sup>4</sup> This is primarily due to a paucity of sources. For the earlier period, documentary evidence is scarce, but this is accounted for by the probable simplicity (and particularly, illiteracy) of the seigniorial apparatus.<sup>5</sup> For the later period, particularly after about 1580, there is an abundance of material detailing the operation of a well-developed set of chancelleries.<sup>6</sup> If, under the pressure of an increasing administrative burden, the traditional court was evolving into fully-literate chancellery system between 1475 and 1550, then one would expect to find a complex of transitional documents and institutions. But the record appears to contain little evidence of such a complex: the number and variety of documents produced in the grand princely scriptorium between 1475 and 1550 remained steady and small;<sup>7</sup> and in surviving documents there is little indication of the elaboration of independent bureaucratic organs, the predecessors of the *prikazy* of the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Thus scholars attempting to chart the evolution of the state in the era of Ivan III, Vasili III and Ivan IV are confronted with a central paradox: circumstances point to a transition from seigniorialism to bureaucracy, however *prima facie* evidence of new state structures is not found in the record before the second half of the sixteenth century. This contradiction is important because it raises the question of the character of the early sixteenth-century state. Was the court, as the circumstantial evidence suggests, an institution on the road to chancellery-style administration? Or was it rather, as the lack of direct evidence implies, just the opposite — a relatively simple affair firmly rooted in seigniorial folkways that was brought to an abrupt end in the reforms of the 1550s?

---

<sup>4</sup>The best early work on the subject of the early development of chancellery administration is N. P. Likhachev *Razriadnye d'iaki XVI veka*. S-Peterburg 1888. Modern treatments include A. A. Zimin *O slozhenii prikaznoi sistemy na Rusi*, in: *Doklady i soobshcheniia instituta istorii Akademii Nauk SSSR*, fasc. 3. Moskva 1945, pp. 164-76; A. Leont'ev *Obrazovanie prikaznoi sistemy upravleniia v russkom gosudarstve*. Moskva 1961; A. V. Chernov *O zarozhdenii prikaznogo upravleniia v protsesse obrazovaniia Russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva*, in: *Trudy Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi istoriko-arkhivnogo instituta* 19 (1965), pp. 275-93.

<sup>5</sup>The most complete description and analysis of early Muscovite records remains L. V. Cherepnin *Russkie feodal'nye arkhivy XIV-XV vekov*. 2 vols. Moskva and Leningrad 1948.

<sup>6</sup>For a brief characterization, see M. N. Tikhomirov *Istochnikovedenie istorii SSSR*. Uchebnoe posobie, vyp. 1 (do kontsa XVIII veka). Moskva 1962 and S. O. Shmidt and S. E. Kniaz'kov *Dokumenty deloproizvodstva pravitel'stvennykh uchrezhdenii Rossii XVI-XVII vv*. Moskva 1985.

<sup>7</sup>The following types of records were kept by the grand princely scriptorium *circa* 1500: elite service registers (*razriadnye knigi*; see V. I. Buganov *Razriadnye knigi poslednei chetverti XV-nachala XVII v*. Moskva 1962; land registers (*pistsovye knigi*; see H. L. Eaton *Cadastrs and Censuses of Muscovy*, in: *Slavic Review* 26 (1967), pp. 54-69 and V. B. Pavlov-Sil'vanskii *Pistsovye knigi Rossii XVI v*. *Problemy istochnikovedeniia i rekonstruktsii tekstov*. Moskva 1991; laws codes (*sudebniki*; see D. H. Kaiser *The Growth of the Law in Medieval Russia*. Princeton 1980; local regulations (*kormlennye gramoty*, *zhalovannye gramoty*; see S. M. Kashtanov *Khronologicheskii perechen' immunitnykh gramot XVI veka*, in: *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1957* (Moskva 1958), pp. 302-76 and S. M. Kashtanov *Khronologicheskii perechen' immunitnykh gramot XVI veka*, Ch. 2, in: *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1960* (Moskva 1962), pp. 129-200); judicial records (*pravnye gramoty*, see A. Kleimola *Justice in Medieval Russia: Muscovite Judgement Charters (Pravnye Gramoty) of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 65, pt. 6 (1975)); diplomatic records (*dogovory*, *stateinye spiski*; see R. M. Croskey *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice in the Reign of Ivan III*. New York 1987). Though no unified index of surviving documents exist, I would estimate that no more than one thousand centrally-produced, independent administrative texts pre-date 1550.

<sup>8</sup>Though there were no distinct institutions, there does seem to have been limited functional differentiation among state-scribes, as is evidenced by terms such as "*kazennyi d'iak*" (1447-53), "*iamskoi d'iak*" (1490), "*koniusbennyi d'iak*" (1496). See Zimin *O slozhenii prikaznoi sistemy*, pp. 164-66. Zimin urges caution in attempting to trace the origins of the first chancelleries to these specialized scribes: "In the first half of the sixteenth century state scribes were still wholly members of the treasury staff *cum* grand princely scriptorium. The separate branches of treasury administration were not distinguished one from the other; and there were as yet no distinct groups dedicated to the execution of [the functions] of each [branch] (p. 166)." According to Zimin, the first functionally differentiated institutions (the so-called *izby*) do not appear until 1548. See pp. 167ff.

This essay represents an attempt to shed new light on the shift from court to chancellery administration in the first half of the sixteenth century. It will demonstrate that faint remnants of a transitional administrative system, or at least the remnants of documents produced by it, can be seen in surviving sources of the period. This analysis will focus on a single important sphere of court activities — military affairs. The first section below, on the history of the bureaucratization of the Muscovite military, recapitulates the fundamental paradox of sixteenth-century Muscovite state-building: circumstantial evidence indicates bureaucratization, while direct evidence of administrative reform before the later sixteenth century is lacking. Thus the military may fairly be said to represent the experience of the central administration as a whole. The second section revisits the sources and outlines a new method for their investigation based on a hypothetical model of service registration, the central mission of the Muscovite military administration. This method will unite scattered pieces of evidence into a single coherent picture. Section three uses a hypothetical method to reconstruct the stages and types of military registration characteristic of the Muscovite military in the first half of the sixteenth century. This essay concludes that the presence of personnel registration in the military sphere suggests that the court administration, while not yet divided into functionally specific institutions, was growing more complex in ways consistent with the transition between the seigniorial and chancellery systems.

### **The Muscovite Military, 1475-1550: Transitional or Traditional?**

Though the lack of good evidence of a transition to chancellery administration is in general troublesome, it is most so in the sphere of military affairs. Fighting was arguably the central activity of the elite *circa* 1500. The court was in large measure a collection of warriors, and the army was essentially a mustering of courtiers and their dependents.<sup>9</sup> As the court/army grew — an undocumented inference, but a good one nonetheless<sup>10</sup> — it seems reasonable to suggest that administration must have become progressively more bureaucratic, a process which culminated in the emergence of the *razriadnyi prikaz* (“Military Service Chancellery”).<sup>11</sup> And indeed the first (and throughout the seventeenth century, most important) chancellery was the Military Service Chancellery.<sup>12</sup> Yet there is little evidence before the second half of the sixteenth century of innovation in the administration of the enlarged army. Indeed, the grand princely scriptorium seems

---

<sup>9</sup>In fifteenth-century Muscovy, *dvor* (“court”) was a term alternately designating “the seat of the grand prince” and (sometimes) “the grand prince’s army.” On the military use of the *dvor* in the reign of Ivan III, see G. Alef *The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy*, in: *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 39 (1986), pp. 225ff. and G. Alef *Muscovite Military Reforms in the Second-Half of the Fifteenth Century*, in: *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 18 (1973), pp. 76ff. On the *dvor* in northeastern Rus’ military terminology, see F. P. Sorokoletov *Istoriia voennoi leksiki v russkom iazyke*. Leningrad 1970, pp. 157-58. “*Dvoriane*” is of course the Muscovite equivalent of “courtier”, but it did not designate a gentleman in the circle of the king as in the West. Instead, it meant “military dependent” or simply “warrior.” See Sorokoletov *Istoriia voennoi leksiki*, pp. 158 and 200-201. Also see V. D. Nazarov ‘Dvor’ i ‘dvoriane’ po dannym novgorodskogo i severo-vostochnogo letopisaniia (XII-XIV vv.), in: *Vostochnaia Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekov’e: Sbornik statei*. Moskva 1987, pp. 104-23.

<sup>10</sup>Undocumented precisely because no lists of courtiers/military servitors survive before the second half of the century. Without such documentation, estimating the size of the court/army is largely a matter of guesswork before the end of the sixteenth century. See Alef *The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy*, pp. 139ff.; A. V. Chernov *Vooruzhennye sily Russkogo gosudarstva v XV-XVII vv.* Moskva 1954, pp. 33 and 94-95; R. Hellie *Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy*. Chicago 1972, appendix 1; and D. L. Smith *Muscovite Logistics, 1462-1598*, in: *Slavonic and East European Review* 71 (1993), pp. 38-39.

<sup>11</sup>This argument is taken up by: Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki XVI veka*, p. 79; Verner *O vremeni i prichinakh*, pp. 57-58 and 66; Chernov *Vooruzhennye sily*, p. 40; G. Alef *Reflections on the Boyar Duma in the Reign of Ivan III*, in: *Slavonic and East European Review* 45 (1967), pp. 76-77; Alef *Muscovite Military Reforms*, pp. 82 and 107; Alef *The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy*, pp. 221, 237, and 249.

<sup>12</sup>See Brown *Muscovite Government Bureaus*, p. 323. No specialized study of this fundamental institution exists.

to have had no special arm dedicated to military affairs until quite late. While some sources suggest that scribes were charged with the maintenance of military records in the first quarter of the century,<sup>13</sup> the first unassailable indication of such specialization does not appear until later.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, there is very little evidence of the emergence of a distinct military office within the court. Though some have argued that the Military Service Chancellery was founded in the mid-1530s,<sup>15</sup> the first definite indications of its existence as a distinct institution are from 1566 and 1571.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most vexing lacuna in the evidence is the lack of written military records from the period. A large military administration would have likely produced an extensive body of documents. Many scholars of the period argue that military records were kept both in the center and provinces beginning in the reign of Ivan III.<sup>17</sup> But surviving Muscovite sources from the first half of the sixteenth century do not reflect extensive record-keeping.<sup>18</sup> The only administrative documents of the period that might be called military are the *razriadnye knigi* (“deployment books”), registers which recorded past military and non-military services by courtiers.<sup>19</sup> The deployment books played an important role in Muscovite military affairs. The court distributed offices of all types on the basis of two factors — familial status and personal service history. The *rodoslovnye knigi* (“genealogical books”) were official registers of the former, while the deployment books recorded the latter.<sup>20</sup> These registers were presumably used in tandem to make assignments and to resolve *mestnichestvo* disputes. However the deployment books reflect a very limited range of record-keeping activity. They focused narrowly on the court elite, providing no detailed information on the *dvoriane* and *deti boiarskie* who made up the bulk of the large cavalry host. Moreover they registered only what had been done, offering the court no indication of the availability, number, and disposition of active forces. What is missing from the deployment

---

<sup>13</sup>Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 110, cites secretaries on campaign with the grand prince as evidence of specialization; A. A. Zimin (ed.) *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossii XVI stoletia: opyt rekonstruktsii*. 3 vols. Moskva 1978, vol. 1, p. 72 (box 160) and the commentary in vol. 2, p. 368 argues that early personnel registers were kept in the tsar’s archive, an institution managed by state secretaries; Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, pp. 120-21, cites a reference to state secretaries working with what may be a muster list.

<sup>14</sup>The first firm indication of a core group of state secretaries keeping what may be personnel registers comes from a *posol’skaia kniga* (“diplomatic book”) under 1537. See G. F. Karpov (ed.) *Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii Moskovskogo gosudarstva s Pol’sko-Litovskim, 1533-59 gg.*, in: *Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva* (hereafter “SIRIO”) 59 (1887), p. 65. Hereafter “Polish-Lithuanian Relations, 1533-59.” Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 83, and Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 111, cite this document as evidence of personnel registry by specialized state secretaries, however it does not mention the Military Service Chancellery as such. The earliest occurrence of the term “*razriadnyi d’iak*” is in 1563. See Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 458 and Zimin *O slozhenii*, p. 169-70.

<sup>15</sup>Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 111. Also see Verner *O vremeni i prichinakh*, pp. 55-56; Brown *Muscovite Government Bureaus*, p. 324; Zimin *O slozhenii*, p. 169; and Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 80.

<sup>16</sup>Zimin *O slozhenii*, p. 169, writes “1556.” But this must be an error. He cites Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 458, where a mention of *razriadnaia izba* is found in a diplomatic book under 1566. Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 462 and Zimin *O slozhenii*, pp. 169-70, cite 1571 as the first instance of “*razriadnyi prikaz*.”

<sup>17</sup>See Likhachev *Razriadnye d’iaki*, p. 315; Verner *O vremeni i prichinakh*, p. 57; Chernov *Vooruzhennye sily*, p. 35; Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 5; Alef *The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy*, p. 273; Alef *Muscovite Military Reforms*, p. 107; and Helle *Enserfment and Military Change*, p. 26.

<sup>18</sup>See J. Keep *Soldiers of the Tsar. Army and Society in Russia, 1462-1874*. Oxford 1985, p. 28; A. V. Chernov *TsGADA kak istochnik po voennoi istorii Russkogo gosudarstva XVIII v.*, in: *Trudy istoriko-arkhivnogo instituta* 4 (1948), p. 26; V. D. Nazarov *K istochnikovedeniiu Dvorovoi Tetradi*, in: *Rossia na putiakh tsentralizatsii*. Ed.: V. T. Pashuto. Moskva 1982, p. 166; and Alef *Muscovite Military Reforms*, p. 83.

<sup>19</sup>For a general analysis, see Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*.

<sup>20</sup>On the genealogical books, see M. E. Bychkova *Rodoslovnye knigi XVI-XVII vv.* Moskva 1975.

books and is in fact absent in the entire corpus of Muscovite sources before the 1550s is the very bedrock of military record-keeping — muster rolls of the line troops obligated to serve in future conflicts.

How is the deficit of military records of this kind before the second half of the century to be explained? Two obvious possibilities present themselves, each suggesting a different picture of the army and the staff that managed it. On the one hand, it may be that military records were kept and then lost. That such was the case is suggested by two pieces of evidence, one circumstantial and the other direct, though problematic. First, since the court had been using documentation regularly in other spheres (especially diplomacy) for some time, it surely would have seen the advantages of record-keeping in military affairs. Second, three foreign accounts explicitly mention military registration by state officials in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.<sup>21</sup> It is relatively easy to explain why the military records would not come down to us: the court probably had little incentive to keep “old news” about troops and, even if it did, Muscovite archives were notoriously subject to various sorts of degradation. If records were kept in the first half of the sixteenth century, this suggests the military was moving from the traditional, court-centered cavalry horde to a more complex form of organization. On the other hand, it may be the case that few or even no military records were maintained. Though it seems sensible to premise that the utility of documentation increases with the size of an army, there is no law dictating that military forces over a certain size must be administered by document-producing bureaus. Besides, as was noted above, the number of warriors in cavalry host during the period in question is quite unclear. In this scenario the army remained a largely seigniorial affair until the 1550s — an occasional mustering of warriors and their dependents. The grand princely scriptorium neither recorded the names of servitors, nor took a major part in their maintenance (outside the granting of estates, another murky practice<sup>22</sup>).

---

<sup>21</sup>Albert Campensé *Lettera d'Alberto Campense* . . . Venice 1543. (Drafted approx. 1523-24.) See *Biblioteka inostrannykh pisatelei o Rossii*, otd. 1. S-Peterburg 1836, p. 23. Paolo Giovio *Pauli Iovii Novocomensis libellus de legatione Basilij magni principis Moscoviae* . . . Rome 1525. (Drafted approx. 1525.) See *Biblioteka inostrannykh pisatelei o Rossii*, otd. 1, p. 55. Sigismund Herberstein *Rerum Muscoviticarum commentarii*. Vienna 1549. (Drafted 1517-49.) See *Moscovia der Hauptstadt* . . . Ed.: F. Berger. Weimar 1975, p. 26. Neither Campensé nor Giovio were ever in Muscovy, though their testimony is based on interviews with visiting Muscovite diplomats.

<sup>22</sup>The only documentary evidence of *pomest'e* (“service land”) grants prior to the second half of the century is from Novgorodian land registers. On them, and what they tell us about service grants, see Alef *The Origins of Muscovite Autocracy*, pp. 111ff. and Eaton *Cadasters and Censuses of Muscovy*. The earliest land registers are published: *Novgorodskie pistsovye knigi*. 6 vols. S-Peterburg 1859-1910.



## Old Sources and New Methods

How is this issue to be decided? In the absence of newly discovered documents — muster rolls, service records, accounts — the question would seem to be unanswerable. And it is almost certain that no new sources of this kind will be found: there exist complete inventories of the remains of court and chancellery archives from the sixteenth century and they contain no free-standing military records prior to the 1550s. However the lack of such texts does not mean there is no evidence. Indeed evidence survives, but it is scattered and distorted in ways that hinder efforts to reconstruct the military administration. Here is a short list of relevant sources and their deficiencies:

- a) Foreign testimony: only Herberstein describes military documentation in any detail, and his description seems to concern only provincial servitors.
- b) The deployment books: they include military records of some sort, but these describe only the past services of courtiers, totally neglecting the mainstay of later Muscovite military documentation — lists of provincial troops.
- c) The chronicles and diplomatic registers: these provide some limited primary data on the organization of military affairs which probably involved documentation, but contain little or no information on documents as such.
- d) Later archival inventories: these offer many suggestively named documents from the first half of the sixteenth century, some of which may be military, but they give us little indication of their exact character.

By analogy, the extant sources are like a jigsaw puzzle with many pieces missing. In the absence of some idea of the final image, almost every arrangement of the scattered pieces yields only an unrecognizable pastiche. Yet if the final image or some approximation of it were at hand, then the task of placing the pieces in their correct locations would be much easier. The colors and shapes on the pieces would become recognizable as distinct parts of the whole picture, and they could be placed in the frame according to their proper position in the final image. After all the extant pieces are set, the final product is fragmentary but nonetheless visible. Following this logic what is needed to make sense of the surviving evidence concerning early Muscovite military administration is some idea of its general structure. And this is available.

The Muscovite army under Ivan III and Vasilii III was divided into roughly two groups — Moscow courtiers and provincial servitors. This division is reflected in contemporary sources that distinguish members of the *dvor* serving as *voevody* (“commanders”) from provincial *ludi*, *deti boiarskie*, and *dvoriane* serving as troops.<sup>23</sup> To give but one example, in a description of the Novgorod campaign of 1477/8 named courtiers are listed as commanding twenty-four faceless regional contingents (*suzdal'tsy*, *iur'evtsy*, *kolužbany*, etc.).<sup>24</sup> A similar division is indicated by later sources which make it clear that two entirely different systems of registration were operative in the second half of the sixteenth century — the *boiarskie knigi* (“boyar books) and *boiarskie spiski* (“boyar lists”) for those at court, and the *smotrennye spiski* (“review lists”) and *desiatni* (“town military muster rolls”) for provincial cavalymen.<sup>25</sup> On the basis of this evidence it is quite sensible to infer that the courts of Ivan III and Vasilii III used two systems of military documentation, one for court registration

---

<sup>23</sup>For an overview, see Alef Muscovite Military Reforms.

<sup>24</sup>V. I. Buganov and N. G. Savich (eds.) *Razriadnaia kniga 1475-1605*. Moskva 1977, pp. 20-21. Hereafter cited as “RK 1475-1605.” Also see RK 1475-1605, p. 104 (1507/8).

<sup>25</sup>On these documents, see M. Poe *Muscovite Service Registry, 1475-1700*, in: *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 21 (1994), pp. 251-88.

and another for provincial registration. Moreover, each system undoubtedly employed a general procedure governing the creation and use of personnel lists. It would be hard to imagine such a procedure being comprised of fewer than four steps:

- a) a review of personnel in which information was gathered
- b) the drafting of muster rolls on the basis of the review
- c) the use of these muster rolls or parts of them in various tasks
- e) the disposal or storage of the muster rolls, when obsolete

In what follows, this general picture of military registry is used to interpret the limited evidence found in the sources. The presentation is divided into two parts, the first treating the registration of *deti boiarskie* and the second treating the registration of courtiers. Each section is further divided along lines suggested by the hypothetical four-stage procedure described above.

### **The Registration of *Deti Boiarskie***

The first moment in the creation of a muster was undoubtedly a physical review. Sources from the first half of the sixteenth century indicate that reviews of provincial troops were of two types, regular and occasional. The only account of the former from the first half of the sixteenth century is a brief note in Herberstein's *Rerum moscoviticarum*. The bulk of Herberstein's book was written after his first embassy to Muscovy in 1517, therefore his description concerns roughly the first quarter of the sixteenth century. He writes:

Every two or three years the grand prince counts and registers the *deti boiarskie* in each province so that he may know their number and how many horses and servants each has.<sup>26</sup>

Herberstein seems to be describing what would be called in later sources a *smotr* ("review"), the product of which was a *desiatnia* ("town military muster rolls").<sup>27</sup> Evidence of occasional reviews is more voluminous though less direct. The chronicles and deployment books contain several references to troops being inspected before battle. For example a deployment book relates that a review was conducted before the Livonian campaign of 1492/3:

And when all the warriors have gathered, Prince Mikhail Ivanovich and Prince Aleksandr are to review (*peresmotret*) the regiments, and they are to add warriors to those regiments that are understaffed.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup>Herberstein *Moscovia*, p. 79.

<sup>27</sup>On *smotry* and *desiatni*, see Poe *Muscovite Service Registry*, pp. 281-83. Krotov believes Herberstein is describing the construction of a *desiatnia*. See M. G. Krotov *K istorii sostavleniia desiaten (vtoraia polovina XVI v.)*, in: *Issledovaniia po istochnikovedeniiu istorii SSSR dooktiabr'skogo perioda. Sbornik statei*. Ed.: V. I. Buganov. Moskva 1984, pp. 56-57.

<sup>28</sup>V. I. Buganov (ed.) *Razriadnaia kniga, 1475-1598 gg.* Moskva 1966, p. 23 (1492/3). Hereafter "RK 1475-1598."



A half a century later the book records that commanders “reviewed” (*smotrili*) *deti boiarskie* gathered for the assault on Kazan.<sup>29</sup> Occasional reviews were termed *smotry* in the second half of the century, and the documents produced during them were called *smotrennye spiski*.<sup>30</sup>

No source of the first half of the sixteenth century refers to documents under the names *desiatni* or *smotrennye spiski*. Nor do nameless documents similar in content to the town military muster rolls or review lists survive from this period. The only direct evidence of muster rolls of *deti boiarskie* are references to documents that do not survive. A variety of examples are found in the deployment books. Under 1508/9 a deployment book records a document that begins: “And this is the register of warriors (*rospis’ liudiam*) with which the commanders are to serve by regiment.”<sup>31</sup> The regiments of the army are then listed with indications of the number of *deti boiarskie* to serve under each commander, suggesting that lists of provincial servitors may have been available. This conclusion is supported by later evidence. In a deployment book under 1533/4 there is a reference to what might be a list of provincial servitors for the Kolomna district — a *Kolomenskaia rospis’* (“Kolomna register”).<sup>32</sup> Under 1578/9 may be a citation of a list of warriors from Moscow province. The document is titled “List of the Moscow siege, of the boyars, state secretaries, *deti boiarskie* and every sort of person who remained in Moscow in the eighty seventh year.”<sup>33</sup> It relates that 235 Moscow *deti boiarskie*, 414 *deti boiarskie* from the southern borders, 400 “Germans,” 3710 musketeers, and 1040 cossacks served in Moscow during the siege. The exact figures imply that more extensive documentation, and perhaps regional muster rolls, were available to those writing these entries.

Other evidence of muster rolls is found in the description of the tsar’s archive conducted in 1572. The inventory lists hundreds of documents, many of which do not survive. Judging by the characterizations given the documents by scribes, the archive held, *inter alia*, muster rolls of middle and lower ranking personnel. The inventory cites, for example, documentary collections relating to the administration of towns — *spiski ivangorodtskie* (“Ivangorod lists,” 1496-1531).<sup>34</sup> In later times it is certain that many towns functioned as administrative centers for provincial units assigned to them. Certainly a point such as Ivangorod, built expressly as a bulwark against the Swedes and Livonians, served in this capacity. Thus it would hardly be surprising to find documents similar to the later town military muster rolls in the “Ivangorod lists.” Further, the inventory records lists of military documents, such as the *spisok, perepis’ nariadom* (“list of orders,” 1549-56), and military records themselves, for example *vypsi rozriadnye* (“collected extracts of deployment records,” 1512-14).<sup>35</sup> As will be explained in detail below, *nariad* and *rozriad* were names given to documents that definitely contained lists of servitors or data compiled from such lists. Finally, the archival inventory registers documents that can hardly have been anything but muster rolls. The descriptions rendered by the archivists in 1572 strongly suggest they were in fact personnel lists: *rospis’ liudem po gorodu v Vasilegorode* (“personnel register of the Vasilgorod fortress,” after

---

<sup>29</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 370 (1549/50).

<sup>30</sup>See Poe Muscovite Service Registry, pp. 279-81.

<sup>31</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 109 (1508/9).

<sup>32</sup>Ibidem, p. 246 (1533/4).

<sup>33</sup>RK 1475-1598, pp. 300-301.

<sup>34</sup>Zimin Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv, vol. 1, box 28.1.

<sup>35</sup>Ibidem, vol. 1, boxes 145.12 and 181.1.

1523); *spiski pod'iachbikh novgorodskikh* ("lists of Novgorod undersecretaries," 1524-31); *spiski pushechnikov* ("lists of cannoneers," before 1531); *spiski detei boiarskikh dvorovykh* ("lists of *deti boiarskie* at court," 1551-53); *spisochek voevod smolenskikh, v kotorom godu skol'ko s nimi bylo ludei* ("list of Smolensk commanders, with indication of the number of warriors with them in what year," 1563).<sup>36</sup> The variety of lists entered in the inventory suggests a widespread and variegated system of registration.

This seems to establish that the court conducted regular and occasional inspections of *deti boiarskie*, the products of which were muster rolls of lower ranking personnel. The sources also divulge information on the use of these lists. Passages in the deployment books suggest that lists of cavalymen were distributed to commanders at the onset of campaigns. In 1530/1 Fedor Mansurov was sent to Serpukhov with orders for Prince Ivan Andreevich Prozorovskii. Prozorovskii was to decamp to Tula and transfer his forces to Ivan Vasil'evich Strigin-Obolenskii. The passage continues:

And whatever *deti boiarskie* are with you, I [the grand prince] order these *deti boiarskie* to serve with Ivan Strigin, and you are to give the list (*spisok*) to Ivan Strigin. And Fedor Mansurov is to say to Ivan Strigin: Any *deti boiarskie*, boats, cannon, any sort of artillery, and lists (*spiski*), all of this you are ordered to take from Prince Ivan Prozorovskii.<sup>37</sup>

Clearly Strigin was to accept documents of some sort with the command. That this was not an occasional practice is made apparent by dozens of entries in the deployment book in which the phrase "he did not take the lists" (*spiskov ne vzjal*) appears. Here is an example from 1548:

In the left wing [was] Vasilei Mikhailovich Borisov Mashutkin Borozdin. And Vasilei did not take the lists (*spiski*) because of Prince Ivan Gorenkov.<sup>38</sup>

As is made plain by later notes in the *mestnichestvo* cases, rejection of command documents was in fact a signal of protest against a dishonorable assignment.<sup>39</sup> This implies that the distribution of lists, and possibly lists of troops, was indeed an ordinary part of Muscovite military administration in the first half of the century.

Entries in the deployment books strongly imply that the lists received upon the acceptance of an assignment included lists of *deti boiarskie*. In 1507/8 Prince Danil Vasil'evich Shcheniatev and Iakov Zakhar'in were sent to Viaz'ma against the Poles. The end of the order reads: "And Prince Danilo and Iakov went to Viaz'ma with the warriors according to the register (*rospis*)."<sup>40</sup> This may simply mean that they did "as the register ordered." But it could mean that they went to Viaz'ma "with the warriors assigned them in the list," implying that the commanders were issued muster

---

<sup>36</sup>Ibidem, vol. 1, boxes 27.7, 28.3, 36II.14, 160.5, 187.7.

<sup>37</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 226.

<sup>38</sup>Ibidem, p. 353 (1547/8).

<sup>39</sup>The phrase "*spiskov ne vzjal*" is a formula in both contexts. It becomes much more frequent after 1550. See RK 1475-1605, pp. 441-42, 448, 473, 496 and RK 1475-1598, pp. 138, 146, 164, 168, 169, 186, 188, 193, 194, 217, 224, 258, 258-59, 275, 287, 287, 306, 307, 307, 309, 309, 312, 313, 320, 321, 327, 327, 328, 333, 333, 333, 333, 334, 337, 337, 338.

<sup>40</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 103 (1507/8).

records. This conclusion is reinforced by later entries. Under 1563/4 there appears a list of regiments for a campaign against the Lithuanians. Each list of commanders ends with the words “and warriors (*ludi*) with him according to his list.”<sup>41</sup> Two years later in 1565/6 another list of regiments concludes with this: “And with these boyars and commanders will be the commanders of border towns. And with them [are to be] warriors according to their lists.”<sup>42</sup> Extrapolation from later evidence suggests that these unnamed registers were in fact muster rolls of *deti boiarskie*. Beginning in the 1550s references in *mestnichestvo* disputes to “lists of *deti boiarskie*” instead of simply “lists” appear.<sup>43</sup> The most interesting reference is one from 1579 that mentions the distribution of “registers” (*rospisv*) and “name lists (*spiski imiannye*) of *dvoriane* and *deti boiarskie* to the sovereign’s boyars and commanders.”<sup>44</sup> Such references could signal a change in the composition of the registers around 1550, but it seems just as likely that “lists of *deti boiarskie*” is simply a more accurate description of the provincial service records that had been compiled for some time.

Further indication of the use of muster rolls in the administration of *deti boiarskie* is found in early *posol’skie knigi* (“diplomatic books”) containing references to *deti boiarskie* being assigned to escort embassies.<sup>45</sup> Many of the local personnel attending embassies are named in the books, particularly if they served in some position of authority.<sup>46</sup> For example, the entry concerning Princess Elena’s journey to Vilnius in 1495 includes long lists of *deti boiarskie* who were to accompany her.<sup>47</sup> The passage concerning the 1536/37 embassy of Sigismund I to Ivan IV records that the names of *deti boiarskie* attending the tsar at the reception were written down, though no list is offered.<sup>48</sup> On such occasions the names of *deti boiarskie* were probably inscribed for considerations of status.<sup>49</sup> Whatever the reason, the inscription of their names indicates that those making appointments had muster rolls of middle-ranking servitors available to them before the event. More frequently Moscow summoned *deti boiarskie* in groups. For example, in 1517 the grand prince ordered Prince Boris Ivanovich Gorbatiy, commander of Smolensk, to arrange for the escort of a joint Polish-Imperial embassy to Moscow. Among his obligations he is to “send Rakhmanin Tilinin as a *pristav* (“bailiff”) to the ambassadors, and he is to go [with them] to Moscow, and with him are to be fifty *deti boiarskie*.”<sup>50</sup> A further example comes from an embassy of 1529: “And in Moscow the grand prince ordered Fedor Grinogev syn Afonas’ev and Vasili Ushakov to serve the

---

<sup>41</sup>RK 1475-1598, p. 210.

<sup>42</sup>Ibidem, p. 224.

<sup>43</sup>RK 1475-1605, pp. 502-503 (1555/6) and RK 1475-1598, p. 188 (1559).

<sup>44</sup>RK 1475-1598, pp. 306-307.

<sup>45</sup>R. M. Croskey *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice in the Reign of Ivan III*. New York 1987, pp. 103-111.

<sup>46</sup>For the reign of Ivan III Croskey has identified 258 of them. See Croskey *Muscovite Diplomatic Practice*, pp. 103ff.

<sup>47</sup>G. F. Karpov (ed.) *Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii Moskovskogo gosudarstva s Pol’sko-Litovskim, 1487-1533 gg.*, in: SIRIO 35 (1882), pp. 163ff. (#31: Aleksandr to Ivan). Hereafter “Polish-Lithuanian relations, 1487-1533.”

<sup>48</sup>Polish-Lithuanian Relations, 1533-59, pp. 62ff. (#6 Sigismund to Ivan IV).

<sup>49</sup>*Mestnichestvo* was probably operative when the *deti boiarskie* served in specific offices. There are frequent notes in the diplomatic records that *deti boiarskie* are to serve *bez mest* (“without consideration of status”). See, for example, Polish-Lithuanian Relations, 1533-59 (#3, 1535-36), p. 18. Even the deployment books list them occasionally by name, as in Ivan III’s campaign against Novgorod in 1475 or his procession to the same in 1495, where long lists are found. See RK 1475-1605, pp. 20 and 44-45. However the evidence is mixed. The deployment books omit the list of *deti boiarskie* from Elena’s journey to Vilna. See RK 1495-1605, p. 41.

<sup>50</sup>Polish-Lithuanian Relations, 1487-1533, p. 501 (# 85 Sigismund to Vasili, 1517).

ambassadors as bailiffs, and with them were to be twenty *deti boiarskie* as *nedel'shchiki* (“deputies”).<sup>51</sup> In each of these cases authority was delegated by Moscow to a named person who was to muster unnamed local servitors in the specified numbers. This suggests that local authorities had lists of regional personnel which they used to make and record appointments.

Finally, Herberstein provides us with a passage that goes some distance in filling out our understanding of the use of written registry in the administration of *deti boiarskie*. He writes:

[After taking stock of the disposition of his troops, the grand prince] appoints each able and service-ready man an annual stipend, as has been said above. But those with the means serve without remuneration . . . Further he [the grand prince] annually summons some [servitors] by turns from the provinces to serve him at court in various offices.<sup>52</sup>

Each element of this description implies the use to written registers. Stipends, which appear to have been means-tested,<sup>53</sup> could not have been fairly or effectively distributed without accounts of the assets and ranks of personnel. No such records survive from the first half of the sixteenth century, however documents similar to those implied by Herberstein’s description are present after 1550 in the form of the *smotrennye spiski* and *desiatni*.<sup>54</sup> Rotational service similarly suggests that Moscow used lists of personnel to summon servitors and to record that they had full-filled their duty to serve in the capital. Again no indication of records associated with rotational service comes down to us from the early period, but documents used to register occasional service in the capital are found later in the record in the form of the *zhibletskie spiski* (“temporary court service lists”), and *nalichnye boiarskie spiski* (“roll-call boyar lists”).<sup>55</sup>

As to the final disposition of the semi-annual muster rolls, occasional muster rolls, and the service documents constructed from both, there is little solid evidence. They may have been kept briefly to compile successive registers of personnel. It was a well-established practice in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to use old lists to write new ones.<sup>56</sup> The standard procedure was to compare the old list with the state of affairs observed at a review. Changes were noted, and a new list was drafted. The old list then became obsolete and was discarded. The single exception to this rule concerns derivative muster rolls constructed for specific purposes. If the offices detailed in the lists were particularly prestigious, such as the escort of grand princely family members or a foreign embassy, then the list might make its way in some form into the diplomatic or deployment books for the purposes of *mestnicestvo*. Several cases of the names of

---

<sup>51</sup>Ibidem, p. 786 (#105 Sigismund to Vasiliu, 1529).

<sup>52</sup>Herberstein *Moscovia*, p. 79.

<sup>53</sup>Ibidem, p. 45.

<sup>54</sup>See Poe *Muscovite Service Registry*, pp. 279-83.

<sup>55</sup>For a statute prescribing rotational field service, see H. A. Popov (ed.) *Akty Moskovskogo Gosudarstva*. 3 vols. S-Peterburg 1890-1901, vol. 1, no. 1 [1571], pp. 1-2, 19, and 22. On rotational service at court, see A. L. Stanislavskii *Boiarskie spiski v deloproizvodstve Razriadnogo prikaza*, in: *Aktovoe istochnikovedenie. Sbornik statei*. Ed. S. M. Kashtanov. Moskva 1979, pp. 137-9 (*nalichnye spiski*) and 145-7 (*zhibletskie spiski*).

<sup>56</sup>On the construction of new lists from old ones, see Poe *Muscovite Service Registry*, pp. 261-62 and 275.

lower ranking servitors being preserved in these contexts were noted above. However most often the muster rolls were destroyed, which largely accounts for the fact that almost no trace of them exists today.

### The Registration of Courtiers

Moscow conducted regular and occasional reviews of lower-ranking servitors, the product of which were reviews of *deti boiarskie* and other personnel, none of which come down to us. As concerns the court, there is no direct evidence of either reviews or major registers. The first free-standing lists of courtiers (among others) appear around mid-century in the *tysiachnaia kniga* (“thousand book”) of 1550, the *dvorovaia tetrad’* (“court notebook”) of 1551-52, and the so-called *boiarskaia kniga* (“boyar book”) of 1556.<sup>57</sup> However there is indirect evidence that lists of courtiers were part of military administration earlier. The first indicator of the presence of court registers is the size of the *dvor* itself. By the time of Ivan III the grand princely court was no longer made up of a tiny cohort of elite servitors, all of whom were well known to the prince.<sup>58</sup> Alef, for example, estimates that the court comprised 3000 individuals in 1500.<sup>59</sup> Even though true power was held by a group drastically smaller than this, obviously some method of keeping track of courtiers had to be introduced if the machinery of government was to run smoothly. The deployment and genealogical books were apparently part of an effort to reduce the struggle over offices in the expanded court. Nevertheless neither of these sources could have really served as a central court register for the purpose of making assignments. They are unindexed narratives and as such could not easily be used as convenient references for those seeking information on the disposition and availability of elite servitors. The situation required lists of some sort.

Indeed lists appear in the record — registers of court servitors assigned specific military and administrative tasks. They are not complete records of those at court like the later boyar books and boyar lists, but it may be reasonably inferred that they were in fact drafted with the aid of longer lists of this type. The deployment books contain the remains of four distinct types of court lists — regimental, garrison, attendance, and wedding. Though only the first two types are truly military in character, the latter two should be discussed because they indicate the widespread use of documentation in the organization of all activities at court.

Far and away the most common type of muster rolls found in Muscovite documents before 1550 is the regimental list. In its simplest form it is made of a list of *voevody* (“commanders”) assigned to divisions of the field army. Here is a typical example:

In the year 1499/1500 the lord and grand prince sent his commanders with an order (*s nariadom*) to Putiml’. And he ordered the commanders [to serve] by regiments (*po polkom*)

In the great regiment Iakov Zakhar’ich

In the advanced regiment Prince’ Ivan Mikhailovich Repnia Obolenskoi

In the right wing Prince Timofei Oleksandrovich Trostenskoi

In the left wing Prince Vasilei Semenovich Mnikh Riapolovskoi

---

<sup>57</sup>On these documents, see *ibidem*, pp. 269-73.

<sup>58</sup>Alef Reflections, p. 76.

<sup>59</sup>G. Alef Aristocratic Politics and Royal Policy in Muscovy in the Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries, in: *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 27 (1980), p. 98.

In the guard regiment Petr Mikhailovich Pleshcheev.<sup>60</sup>

A very few such registers are inscribed in the chronicles, for example in the Nikonian compilation under 1380.<sup>61</sup> However the vast majority of regimental lists are found in the deployment books, which are almost entirely made up of them. The order of appearance of regiments — great, advanced, right, left, guard — is almost invariant. The lists vary considerably in length and composition. The example cited above is relatively brief, though there are many cases in which fewer than five regiments are mentioned.<sup>62</sup> A long list would include as many as five or six commanders in each regiment.<sup>63</sup> The order of appearance of personnel within wings expresses a definite logic. Members of the grand princely family, if present, are always listed first as the highest ranking member in the highest ranking regiment.<sup>64</sup> They are followed by commanders, who are also listed according to status. That the regiments and positions within them were ranked is demonstrated by the protestations of *mestnichestvo* litigants about serving “with” or “below” their peers and by the fact that variants in the order of appearance in different redactions of the same list were noted in the books.<sup>65</sup>

In the deployment books the regimental lists most often go unnamed. They are simply introduced with a formulary that gives the date, explains the nature of the action, and concludes with a phrase such as “and [the grand prince] ordered the commanders [to serve] by regiments.”<sup>66</sup> However the lists are sometimes given a name, most frequently *rospis’ po polkom* (“regimental register”). The first instance of this name is found under 1474: “and at that time the commanders were according to the regimental register (*rospis’ po polkom*).”<sup>67</sup> The name occurs hundreds of times thereafter in the deployment books. *Rospis’ po polkom* was not only the name given to the lists themselves in the deployment books, but also to the documents that held the lists before they were entered into these compendia. This is clear because there are references to regimental registers being sent to commanders in the field.<sup>68</sup> Another name for the documents that contained regimental lists is *nariad* (“order”). The earliest reference to the term in the deployment books is under 1495, where it is written that the grand prince dispatched his officers “with an order (*nariad*) by regiment.”<sup>69</sup> A later reference (1572) makes it clear that orders were collected by secretaries working in the Military Service Chancellery.<sup>70</sup> Presumably the orders were gathered for entry into the deployment books, as is suggested by the term

---

<sup>60</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 57.

<sup>61</sup>Nikonian Chronicle, in: *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*. S-Peterburg and Moskva 1841-, vol. 11, p. 54. Hereafter “PSRL.”

<sup>62</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 19 (1474/5).

<sup>63</sup>*Ibidem*, pp. 20ff. (1478/9).

<sup>64</sup>*Ibidem*, pp. 20ff. (1477/8).

<sup>65</sup>*Ibidem*, pp. 74, 88, 270, 333, 348, 490, and 508.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibidem*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 19.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibidem*, pp. 143 (1513/4), 150 (1514/5), and 169 (1518/9).

<sup>69</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 42 (1494/5).

<sup>70</sup>Zimin Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv, vol. 1, p. 68 (box 145) and the commentary in vol. 2, p. 344.

*nariad sluzhebnoi* (“service order”), an early name for the books.<sup>71</sup> Around 1550 *nariadnyi spisok* (“order list”) is attested. The phrase seems to have designated a document containing a military list of some sort, and possibly a regimental list.<sup>72</sup> The final name for a regimental list is *razriad* (“deployment record”). The first instance of this term in the deployment books occurs in 1500,<sup>73</sup> and it appears with some regularity thereafter.<sup>74</sup> Deployment records seem to have been written after military operations on the basis of regimental registers or orders submitted to court scribes. Thus the sources never indicate that deployment records were sent to field commanders prior to battles as was the case for both the regimental registers and orders.<sup>75</sup> That the deployment records were entered into the deployment books is suggested by the use of the term *razriad* to designate both beginning in the 1570s.<sup>76</sup>

The regimental lists (under whatever documentary name) are the most numerous and best understood muster rolls from the first half of the sixteenth century. However they are accompanied in the deployment books by a variety of other records that should briefly be mentioned. First, there are lists of commanders posted to various cities for defensive or administrative purposes. A typical example is:

In the same year [1527] the list of commanders from the field:

In Kolomna were the commanders Boyar Prince Vasilei Shikh Semenovich Odoevskoi and Prince Ivan Ivanovich Shchetina Obolenskoi

In Koshira . . .

In Rezan’ . . .<sup>77</sup>

The first such list is found in the deployment books under 1492/3 and similar registers appear frequently thereafter.<sup>78</sup> As with the regimental lists, these registers were hierarchically sorted: cities and the commanders within them are listed in order of descending status.<sup>79</sup> Along the southern frontier such lists were called *rospis’ po beregu* (“frontier register”), *rospis’ ot polia* (“field register”), or *rospis’ voevodam po beregu* (“register of frontier commanders”).<sup>80</sup> To the west they were

---

<sup>71</sup>Buganov argues this. See V. I. Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, in: *Sovetskaia istoricheskaia entsiklopediia*. 16 vols. Moskva 1961, vol. 11, pp. 855-56. Also see Zimin *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv*, vol. 1, p. 72 (box 160) and the commentary in vol. 2, p. 368.

<sup>72</sup>L’vov Chronicle, in: *PSRL*, vol. 20, p. 573.

<sup>73</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 58 (1499/1500).

<sup>74</sup>The term almost always appears in the stock phrase “in other deployment records is written,” followed by a variant of part of the preceding list. See RK 1475-1605, pp. 44, 48, 52, 55-56, where “*inde pisheť*” is written without the word “*razriad*”; and pp. 58, 72, 76, 80, *inter alia*, where “*v ynykh rozriadakh pisheť*” appears.

<sup>75</sup>There is one ambiguous case where a deployment record may have been sent. See RK 1475-1605, p. 80 (1502/3).

<sup>76</sup>Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 124, cites a document of 1573 calling a deployment book a *gosudarev razriad* (“sovereign’s deployment book”). See Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, p. 120, fn. 71 where he cites many cases of the phrase *razriadnye knigi* around 1600.

<sup>77</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 202.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 36.

<sup>79</sup>See A. A. Zimin *Namestnicheskoe upravlenie v Russkom gosudarstve vtoroi poloviny XV - pervoi treti XVI v.*, in: *Istoricheskie zapiski* 94 (1974), p. 290.

<sup>80</sup>RK 1475-1605, pp. 200, 202, and 205.



called *rospis' boiarom i voevodam ot litovskie ukrainy* (“Lithuanian frontier register of boyars and commanders”).<sup>81</sup> Whether these terms designated the list alone or some document which existed prior to the list’s entry into the deployment books is unknown. There is no record of garrison lists being sent to commanders. However, on analogy to the regimental lists, it is very likely that these registers were independent documents, however they were called.

Another type of important muster found in the deployment books is the “attendance list.” These are hierarchically ranked lists of those attending the tsar. Here is the earliest example recorded in a deployment book:

On October 22, 1475 . . . the Grand Prince Ivan Vasil’evich of all Russia went peacefully from Moscow to his patrimony Novgorod the Great. And with the grand prince were:

Boyars . . .

*Okol’nicie* . . .

*Dvoretzskoi* . . .

*Deti boiarskie* . . .

State Secretaries . . .<sup>82</sup>

The attendance lists are almost exclusively found in the deployment books, indicating that they register service-status.<sup>83</sup> In the deployment books attendance lists appear in three contexts: processions (such as the one mentioned above);<sup>84</sup> major military campaigns;<sup>85</sup> and, finally, instances in which the tsar’ decamped Moscow leaving part of the court in the capital.<sup>86</sup> The sources divulge no standard name for attendance lists, so it is difficult to tell whether they had an independent existence prior to their placement into the deployment books.

The final sort of court list recorded in the deployment books is the wedding register.<sup>87</sup> These are descriptions of the weddings of grand princely family members. The first appeared in 1495. They consist (in their fullest redactions) of two parts: a description of the ceremony and a list-by-place of those who took part.<sup>88</sup> Here is a brief example:

---

<sup>81</sup>Ibidem, p. 205.

<sup>82</sup>Ibidem, pp. 19-20.

<sup>83</sup>There are three exceptions. The first is appended to the *tipograficheskaia letopis'* in the 1490s, where lists of boyars drawn from the testaments of the grand princes are inscribed. See *Typographical Chronicle*, in: PSRL, vol. 24, p. 232. The second is a register of Elena’s court as it proceeded to Vilna for her marriage to Grand Prince Aleksandr in 1495. See *Polish-Lithuanian relations, 1533-59*, pp. 163ff. (#31: Aleksandr to Ivan). The third is a court list from the minority of Ivan IV in a diplomatic book. See *Polish-Lithuanian relations, 1533-59*, pp. 143ff. (#8, 1542: Sigismund to Ivan).

<sup>84</sup>RK 1475-1605, pp. 19 (1475/6), 24 (1479/80), 43-44 (1494/5), and 112 (1509/10).

<sup>85</sup>Ibidem, pp. 125 (1512/3), 183-85 (1521/2), 333 (1546/7), 341 (1547/8), 369ff. (1549/50), and 389 (1549/50).

<sup>86</sup>Ibidem, p. 112 (1509/10).

<sup>87</sup>On these documents, see V. D. Nazarov *Svadebnye dela XVI veka*, in: *Voprosy istorii* (1976), no. 10. Russell Martin of Harvard University is currently completing a dissertation which analyses the court lists in detail.

<sup>88</sup>Buganov *Razriadnye knigi*, pp. 175-76.

In the same year on February thirteenth [was] the wedding of Prince Vasiliĭ Danilovich Kholmškii. The Grand Prince Ivan Vasil'evich of all Russia gave his daughter the Grand Princess Fedosia to Prince Vasiliĭ Danilovich Kholmškii

As chiliarchs . . .

As friends . . .

As equerry . . .

Bearing the cap . . . <sup>89</sup>

The wedding lists, like the regimental registers, appear exclusively in the deployment books, meaning that they served as *mestnichestvo* references. For this reason the places in them are hierarchically ranked. The wedding registers are called *razriady*, *nariady*, *rospisi* (“registers”) and *vypisi* (“excerpts”) in contemporary sources.<sup>90</sup>

Like the provincial muster rolls, the court lists were used in the organization of military and other affairs. The evidence suggests regimental registers and garrison lists were given to field commanders on the assumption of a command assignment. They may well have been part of the mysterious *spiski* which were refused in cases of dishonorable assignment. Such documents confirmed appointments and gave the commander some idea of his position in the field army. The role of the wedding and court lists is somewhat more clouded, for there is no evidence of them being sent to officials. However it seems sure that they were used in a fashion analogous to the regimental and garrison lists, as confirmations and directions.

The vast majority of all court lists — regimental, garrison, attendance, and wedding — are written in the past tense. This fact is at odds with our contention that they are the remnants of quotidian administrative documents, that is, documents which would have certainly been written in present or future tense. The shift from the present/future to the past tense can be explained by the purpose of the deployment books and the mode in which they were constructed. These books recorded the already completed services of elite personnel for the purpose of assignment and status determination. Their compilers had no interest in the present disposition of courtiers. Only once a mission was completed could it be recorded in the deployment books and figure in status calculations. As the scribes entered the muster rolls into the books they rewrote them to reflect that the events they recorded had already occurred. This is indicated by the fact that a few of the documents remain in present or future tense, apparently by accident.<sup>91</sup> In addition to changing the tense of the documents, the scribes also eliminated the names of personnel outside the sphere of *mestnichestvo* calculations.<sup>92</sup>

## Conclusion

It has long been recognized that the growth of the army in the era of Ivan III and Vasiliĭ III was a driving force behind the elaboration of the chancellery system. However our understanding of administrative development in this

---

<sup>89</sup>RK 1475-1605, p. 63.

<sup>90</sup>Ibidem, p. 91 (“*vypis*”), 322 (“*rospis*”), and 457 (“*rospis, kto byl na svad'be v chinakli*”).

<sup>91</sup>Ibidem, p. 109.

<sup>92</sup>Buganov Razriadnye knigi, p. 5.

transitional era has been hampered by a lack of relevant evidence. That *some* system of military record-keeping penetrated both court and countryside is reasonably sure, but the character of that system has remained shrouded by the fact that no stand-alone military registers come down to us. A careful examination of existing sources — Herberstein, the deployment books, diplomatic records, chronicles, and the archival inventory of 1572 — provides much of the information necessary to describe, albeit in a cursory fashion, the functioning of the military-administrative system. The following table sums up what is known by solid evidence and by inference about Muscovite military administration in the reigns of Ivan III and Vasilii III.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Provincial Registry</b>	<b>Court Registry</b>
<b>Review</b>	Herberstein/deployment books/chronicles	[No Evidence]
<b>Musters</b>	References to Local Musters	Remnants of lists in the deployment books
<b>Use</b>	Appointment/Organization	Appointment/Organization
<b>Disposition</b>	[No Evidence]	Deployment Books

Herberstein plainly tells us that regular reviews of *deti boiarskie* were conducted around 1517. Further, the deployment books and chronicles provide many oblique references to occasional reviews. While the texts drafted at these reviews do not come down to us, references to muster rolls of various sorts found in a variety of sources clearly indicate that such documents existed. Other evidence demonstrates that these muster rolls, or parts of them, were used in the organization and prosecution of campaigns. The fate of the provincial muster rolls is unclear. However the fact that none survive and that the persons recorded on them were low-ranking suggests that the provincial lists were discarded. There is no solid evidence of reviews or universal registers at the courts of Ivan III or Vasilii III such as the later boyar books. Nonetheless, the very size of the court and the remains of various sorts of court lists in the deployment books imply that large registers of some sort were maintained. The nature of the lists which do survive suggests that they were used in the conduct of military and civil affairs at court, and specifically in making appointments to command and ceremonial positions. Unlike in the case of the provincial muster rolls, there exists hard evidence of the fate of the court registers, for they are found in transmuted form in the deployment books.

Two wider conclusions are suggested by this investigation. First, the central scriptorium was not the limited, stagnant institution implied by the paucity of free-standing administrative sources. It was rather an institution evolving to meet the needs of an expanding administrative burden. This was clearly the case in the realm of central military administration. In the re-constructed military documents can be seen, albeit dimly, the outline of an administrative system moving slowly from the seigniorial to the chancellery system in the first half of the sixteenth century. The staff that kept the military registers, while it seems to have had no separate institutional existence, must have been quite sophisticated: it reviewed troops, recorded their disposition, distributed stipends, processed service assignments, and maintained service histories. All of these tasks bespeak a departure from the rather narrow range of activities probably characteristic of the seigniorial administration.

A second conclusion is this: the reforms of the 1550s and the founding of the first chancelleries did not represent a fundamental break with the past, as might be inferred from the absence of formal chancellery-like institutions prior to the second half of the sixteenth century. Rather, traditional lines of activity shared by personnel within the scriptorium

were separated and distributed among newly formed independent institutions. This can be seen from the fact that the set of tasks characteristic of central military administration in the first half the sixteenth century later became the core of activity in the Military Service Chancellery.

**Appendix: Muscovite Documentary Terms**

<i>desiatni</i>	“town military muster rolls”
<i>gosudarev razriad</i>	“sovereign’s deployment book”
<i>nalichnye boiarskie spiski</i>	“roll-call boyar lists”
<i>nariad</i>	“order”
<i>nariad sluzhebnoi</i>	“service order”
<i>nariadnyi spisok</i>	“order list”
<i>perepis’ nariadom</i>	“list of orders”
<i>posol’skaia kniga</i>	“diplomatic book”
<i>razriad</i>	“deployment record”
<i>razriadnye knigi</i>	“deployment books”
<i>razriadnye zapisi</i>	“deployment rescripts”
<i>rodoslovnye knigi</i>	“genealogical books”
<i>rospis’ boiarom i voevodam</i>	“register of boyars and commanders”
<i>rospis’ liudem</i>	“personnel register”
<i>rospis’ ot polia</i>	“field register”
<i>rospis’ po beregu</i>	“frontier register”
<i>rospis’ po polkom</i>	“regimental register”
<i>rospis’</i>	“register”
<i>rospis’ voevodam po polia</i>	“register of field commanders”
<i>smotrennye spiski</i>	“review lists”
<i>spiski detei boiarskikh</i>	“lists of <i>deti boiarskie</i> at court”
<i>spiski ivanogorodskie</i>	“Ivangorod lists”
<i>spiski pod’iachikh</i>	“lists of undersecretaries”
<i>spiski pushechnikov</i>	“lists of cannoners”
<i>spisochek veovod</i>	“list of Smolensk commanders”
<i>vyvysi</i>	“excerpts”
<i>vyvysi razriadnye</i>	“extracts of deployment records”
<i>zhibiletskie spiski</i>	“temporary court service lists”