Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century

Charles J. Halperin

Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History, Volume 1, Number 2, Spring 2000 (New Series), pp. 237-257 (Article)

Published by Slavica Publishers
DOI: *https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2008.0033*

Articles

Muscovite Political Institutions in the 14th Century

Charles J. Halperin

The role of the Mongols in the rise of Moscow to a position of political preeminence in 14th-century Russia remains a sensitive and controversial topic in Russian historiography. Those scholars who have concluded that the Mongols did contribute to Moscow's ascension point to two primary areas of Mongol influence: first, the intervention of the Golden Horde (the anachronistic name for the Tatar state centered on the lower Volga river, now commonly described as the Qipchaq Khanate) in the political affairs of the East Slavic principalities;[1] and, second, Muscovite borrowing of Mongol institutions to enforce and expand its rule. Both considerations of Great Russian patriotism and a Europocentric aversion to "Asiatic barbarians" have greatly inhibited scholarly consideration of the merits of the case that the Mongols either altered the course of medieval Russian history or provided models for Muscovy's political order.

Recently, Donald Ostrowski has advanced new and ambitious conclusions about the extent of Muscovite borrowing of Mongol institutions.[2] Although admitting that there is no direct evidence to corroborate his theory,[3] nevertheless he argues forcefully that the 14th century represents a major institutional rift in Muscovy's development, a rift in which Muscovy turned overwhelmingly to Mongol rather than Kievan or Byzantine models on which to construct a new political structure. Muscovite institutional borrowing from the Mongols was so pervasive, Ostrowski implies, that the secular Muscovite court saw itself as a continuation of the Qipchaq Khanate. Furthermore, the secular court was so

[1] The most recent, comprehensive argument for that role is John L. I. Fennell, *The Emergence of Moscow* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968).

[2] Donald Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins of Muscovite Political Institutions," *Slavic Review* 49: 4 (Winter, 1990), 525–42; idem, "The Military Land Grant along the Muslim-Christian Frontier," *Russian History / Histoire Russe* 19: 1–4 (1992), 327–59; idem, *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); idem, "The *Tamma* and the Dual-Administrative Structure of the Mongol Empire," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61: 2 (1998), 262–77; idem, "City Names of the Western Steppe at the Time of the Mongol Invasion," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61: 3 (1998), 465–75. My sincerest appreciation to Dr. Ostrowski for supplying pre-prints of the latter two articles, discussing these issues with me, and reading earlier drafts of this essay. He is in no way responsible for any remaining errors.

[3] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 526, 541, 542; Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, xiv.

Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 1(2): 237–57, Spring 2000.

perceived by the Byzantine-influenced Muscovite Orthodox Church, which sought to replace Muscovy's Tatar ancestry with an invented virtual past of Byzantine Orthodox provenance, and even to eliminate Muscovite institutions of Tatar derivation.[4]

It is impossible within the confines of a single article to address the numerous issues raised by Ostrowski's research. This essay will analyze critically the evidence for a series of Ostrowski's assertions about the origin of Muscovite political and administrative institutions in the 14th century. If these theories are found unpersuasive, then Ostrowski's larger contentions about the relationship of the secular court to the Mongols and the perception of that relationship by the Church should lose some of their persuasive power.

There are serious methodological problems in evaluating the possible Mongol origin of Muscovite institutions beyond the meagerness of the sources on both sides of the steppe-sown frontier. Both Muscovite and Horde institutions may derive from multiple sources, the former from Kievan Rus′, Byzantium and the pre-Mongol steppe, the latter from the eclectic common heritage of the world Mongol Empire or its successor states, especially the Mongol Ilkhanate with its Iranian and Islamic forms. Moreover, both Muscovite and Horde institutions might have evolved in response to changing circumstances. Finally, Muscovy might have adapted those Mongol practices it did assimilate, complicating identification of their steppe origin.

It was endemic on the medieval religious frontier not to admit consciously that one had borrowed institutions from conquered or conquering peoples of a different religion. This was true of Crusader Valencia in 13th-century Spain about Islamic Moorish institutions, of the Arab Umayyad dynasty from the 7th century or the Ottoman Empire from the 14th century about Byzantine institutions, and of the French Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem from the 12th century about Islamic institutions.[5] In general the most reliable evidence of the foreign origin of an institution was its name: calques or loan-words betray borrowed institutions even in the absence of admissions of borrowing, even, it must be added, when there is confusion or disagreement about the nature of the borrowed institution itself. In other cases sufficient credible and contemporary evidence about the institution substantiates the reality of borrowing. Despite the objections of hypersensitive Russian historians, there is a compelling case that Muscovy did indeed borrow a variety of Mongol political and administrative institutions, including the *tamga,* the seal for the customs tax as well as the tax itself; the *kazna*, the treasury; the *iam*, the postal system; *tarkhan*, grants of fiscal

[4] Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 143, 164–98 (especially 177, n. 57), 245–48.

[5] Charles J. Halperin, "The Ideology of Silence: Prejudice and Pragmatism on the Medieval Religious Frontier," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26: 3 (July, 1984), 442–66.

or judicial immunity; and *den'ga* for money. Muscovite bureaucratic practices, including the use of *stolbtsy*, scrolls to preserve documents, and perhaps some features of Muscovite bureaucratic jargon, may also derive from the Qipchaq Khanate, as well as selective legal practices such as *pravezh*, beating on the shins. Certainly Muscovite diplomatic norms for dealing with steppe states and peoples were modeled on Tatar ways. Finally, the Muscovites had no choice but to study Tatar military tactics and strategies, if only to survive by countering them in battle, but the Muscovites also copied Mongol weapons, armaments, horse equipage, and formations.[6] Assertions of Muscovite receptivity to Qipchaq Khanate models cannot be dismissed out of hand.

Yet Ostrowski advances far beyond the limits of these institutions in delineating Mongol influence. He sees a direct parallel between the organization of the central and provincial political institutions of Muscovy and the Qipchaq Khanate, embodied in matching organization charts which demonstrate that the two systems were "direct cognates."[7] According to Ostrowski, the Muscovite Boyar Council, the division of military and civilian authority which he calls "dual administration," the leading Muscovite military and diplomatic official (the *tysiatskii*), the head of the domestic court administration (the *dvorskii*), the provincial administrators (the *volosteli*) – all were direct imitations of the political and administrative structure of the Qipchaq Khanate. These institutions constituted the nerve-center of the Muscovite political establishment; if they were imports from the steppe, then the degree of Mongol influence on Muscovy dwarfs our previous estimates.

To demonstrate this putative congruity one must overcome the methodological obstacles previously enumerated. In no case here is the Muscovite administrative term a calque or loan-word from the Horde. Moreover, their Slavic names, pre-Mongol in origin, precisely conveyed their functions. In many cases we do not have sufficient evidence of what the Qipchaq Khanate practice was, making any projection of it onto Muscovy most speculative. Even granting that both Muscovite and Horde institutions evolved, to verify Muscovite borrowing one must amass clear evidence that at the time of its implementation, the Muscovite institution showed some, if not key, identities with its purported Mongol antecedent. It is the contention of this essay that Ostrowski has failed to supersede these problems and therefore that his case is not convincing.

The grand prince of Moscow ruled in conjunction with his boyars, whom he consulted in the Boyar Council, a "council of state" which evolved, according to

[6] Charles J. Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 90–95.

[7] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 530, 531 (chart).

Ostrowski, into the Boyar Duma (how and when, he does not specify). Ostrowski selected the term "Boyar Council" in preference to Boyar Duma in order to imply that the ruler had to consult with *all* boyars in council, not just a subset of boyars who were members of the Boyar Duma. (He intends the term "Boyar Council" to translate phrases like "all boyars" in the sources. A meeting of the Boyar Council might also have been called a "gathering" [*sobiranie*].[8] Ostrowski equates the Muscovite Boyar Council with the Council of four *ulusbey*s or *karachi bey*s which assisted the Chingizid Khan of the Qipchaq Khanate and dominated its governance. Each *ulus bey* represented one of the four major clans of the Juchid ulus. This institution devolved into each of the successor states of the Qipchaq Khanate, namely the Crimea, Kazan′, and Astrakhan′ khanates, and even into the Muscovite-serving khanate of Kasimov. Ostrowski cites three texts to demonstrate that there were four boyar clans in Muscovy: the 1350–51 treaty between grand prince Semen Ivanovich and his brothers; the 1371 treaty between grand prince Dmitrii Donskoi and the Lithuanian grand prince Olgerd; and the 1375 Dmitrii Donskoi will. The 1371 and 1375 documents contained four boyar names as witnesses. The 1350–51 contained six, which Ostrowski explains away because three came from the same clan; therefore, four *clans* were represented.[9] By the end of the 14th century the Boyar Council had evolved; it now contained more than four boyars. Nevertheless, Ostrowski finds a vestige of the time when the Boyar Council had comprised only the heads of four clans in the late 15th-century account of the Milanese Barbieri, based upon the testimony of a Muscovite envoy from Ivan III, that four boyars predominated in the Council.[10]

The analogy of the Boyar Council and the *ulusbey* Council is not entirely new, but previously historians have done no more than make passing remarks about the possible parallel.[11] Ostrowski actually tries to substantiate the argument by focusing on the number of boyars. Implicitly the Boyar Council took shape before 1350–51, by which time it comprised either four boyars or representatives of four boyar clans, and this number remained stable until at least 1375. After that, vaguely in the last quarter of the 14th century, the membership size was expanded, for reasons Ostrowski does not explicate.

[8] Personal communication with Donald Ostrowski.

[9] However, Dr. Ostrowski informs me that upon reconsideration he has become skeptical of the reconstruction of the names of the witnesses to this treaty.

[10] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 533; Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 45–47.

[11] Mikhail G. Khudiakov, *Ocherki po istorii kazanskogo khanstva* (Kazan′: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel′stvo, 1923; reprint Kazan′, Fond TIAK, 1990), 188–90, 194–95; Jaroslaw Pelenski, *Muscovy and Kazan: Conquest and Imperial Ideology (1438–1560s)* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 54; idem, "State and Society in Muscovite Russia and the Mongol-Turkic System in the 16th Century," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 27 (1980), 162.

Ostrowski's analysis begs many broader questions about the Boyar Council which remain controversial. First, was there an *institution* comprised of the grand prince's counselors, or simply a ruler's habit of summoning whoever he chose, whenever he chose, to discuss whatever he chose? Second, if there was such an institution, did it include *all* the Muscovite boyars, or were there different categories of boyars, some of whom held boyar rank only as an honorific title? Third, if there was such an institution, did it possess legal, constitutional, decision-making power, or was its authority purely consultative, resting on tradition and custom? There is no scholarly consensus on these issues.[12] Ostrowski's analysis bespeaks his positions in these debates, but only implicitly.

There is no disagreement about another salient point which Ostrowski does not confront directly. The term "Boyar Duma" (*boiarskaia duma*) does not appear in any Muscovite source, although its lexical elements ("boyar" and the verb "to think" [*dumati*]) are common enough. The earliest reference to the phrase might be in Giles Fletcher's 1591 travel account, although different historians have evaluated "*boarstua dumna*" differently.[13] Translating a generic phrase as

---

[12] Richard Hellie, "What Happened? How Did He Get Away With It? Ivan Groznyi's Paranoia and the Problem of Institutional Constraints," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 14: 1-4 (1987), 220 (counselors, no "council"); Nancy Shields Kollmann, "The Boyar Clan and Court Politics. The Founding of the Muscovite Political System," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 23: 1 (Jan.–Mar. 1982), 5; idem, *Kinship and Politics: The Making of the Muscovite Political System, 1345–1547* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 8–18, especially 11–14; Robert O. Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia, 1613–1689* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 3–4, 215–20 (traditional, informal, consultative Duma); Sergei N. Bogatyrev, "Blizhniaia Duma v tret'ei chetverti XVI veka. Chast' pervaia (1550-e gody)," *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1992* (Moscow: Nauka, 1993), 119–33, esp. 119–26; idem, "Blizhniaia Duma v tret'ei chetverti XVI veka. Chast' vtoraia (1560–1570)," *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1993* (Moscow: Nauka, 1995), 94–112; and idem, "Blizhniaia Duma v tret'ei chetverti XVI veka. Chast' tret'ia: 1571–1572. Zakliuchenie,"*Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1994* (Moscow: Nauka, 1996), 64–81, esp. 70–81 (criticizes all previous scholarship, especially notion of a "Duma" including all boyars). I have not yet seen Sergei N. Bogatyrev, "The Sovereign and His Counselors: The Ritual of Consultation in Muscovite Political Culture, 1350s–1570s," (Ph.D. diss., University of Helsinki, 1999) or idem, *The Sovereign and His Counselors: Ritualized Consultation in Muscovite Political Culture 1350s-1570s* (Suomalaissen Tiedeakatemian toimituksia. Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae, Humaniora series, vol. 307; Saarijervi: Gummerus, 2000). My thanks to Marshall Poe for all citations to Bogatyrev's work.

[13] Texts and variants: Lloyd E. Berry, ed., *The English Works of Giles Fletcher the Elder* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 211; Lloyd E. Berry and Robert O. Crummey, eds., *Rude & Barbarous Kingdom. Russia in the Accounts of 16th-Century English Voyages* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 153; Richard Pipes and John V. A. Fine, eds., *Of the Russe Commonwealth by Giles Fletcher 1591. Facsimile edition with Variants* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 55 (of the facsimile, not the apparatus). Commentary: Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii, *Boiarskaia Duma drevnei Rusi,* 3rd ed. (Moscow, 1902; reprint: Moscow: Ladimir, 1994): 323, n.*; Crummey in *Rude & Barbarous Kingdom*, ed. Berry and Crummey, 153, n. 2; Gustave Alef, "The Origins of

vague as "all boyars" as "Boyar Council" might qualify as linguistic sleight of hand; it takes a very bold translation to transform a social description into a decision-making political institution.

These considerations place Ostrowski's argument that the Boyar Council was borrowed from the Qipchaq Khanate into their proper historiographic context; we now proceed to the validity of that contention.

Equating the Boyar Council and the Council of the four *ulusbey*s implies a social equivalence between Muscovy and the Qipchaq Khanate, specifically between the "clans" (*rody*) of Muscovite boyars and the "clans" of the Juchid ulus. However, the "clans" represented by the *ulusbey*s were not really "clans"; they were much more than "clans." Schamiloglu calls them "ruling tribes," which represented socio-political aggregates of clans united by a fictive genealogy typical of the steppe. For this reason, the Crimean Shirins had no necessary genealogical relationship to the Kazan′ Shirins. These "tribes" were fluid and malleable.[14] This social foundation differs totally from the genuinely descent-based clans, in some cases lineages, of the Muscovite boyars, which lacked the social scope, totemic charisma, and political voluntarism of steppe clans. Labeling the Vel′iaminovs and the Shirins both "clans" does not make them comparable social or political entities. The Muscovites could only have equated their own boyar clans with Mongol clans if they were grossly ignorant of steppe society – which they were not, or else they could not have borrowed any institutions from the Horde. Ostrowski's line of reasoning is that when the Muscovites adopted the Council of four *ulusbey*s they adapted it to their own society, equating boyar clans with Horde "tribes." There is no evidence to corroborate such a logical leap.

In a similar fashion, Ostrowski plays fast and loose with the number of boyars/*ulusbey*s. The number of *ulusbey*s, four, was not subject to change. Indeed, the reason Schamiloglu could trace the institution from the Golden Horde through each of its successor states is precisely because the number of members was fixed. In all probability this number derived from cosmology, the four points of the compass. Schamiloglu points out that it was an enormous innovation for the Crimean Khanate to switch to five *ulusbey*s, and afterward that number remained static. Even the number five resonated with Inner Asian cosmology, by adding the center to the four points of the compass. The number of "ruling tribes," Schamiloglu insists, was more important than which entities claimed that status. The number "four" was sufficiently significant, too, that there were four

Muscovite Autocracy in the Age of Ivan III," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 39 (1986), 177 and n. 1 (Alef did not mention Kliuchevskii's comment, incorrectly cites Berry, ed., *The English Works*, as 221, and fails to indicate Pipes and Fine, eds., *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, 55 is to the facsimile; Bogatyrev, "Blizhniaia Duma … Chast′ pervaia," 124–25.

[14] Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 33, citing Lindner.

religious *karachi sheyh*s among the Horde's successor states.[15] If the Muscovites made the number of members of their Boyar Council open-ended, then they did not understand what they were copying, suggesting, again, a degree of ignorance which would have precluded borrowing. For this reason, the six signatures on the 1350–51 document cannot be dismissed so easily, and only two documents from the 1370s attest that there were ever four boyars in the Council.

Ostrowski contends that at the time of its formation, the Boyar Council had four members or representatives of four and only four boyar clans, proven by the number of boyar witnesses to government documents. Indeed, this numerical identity is the basis of his argument that the Boyar Council copied the Council of four *ulusbey*s. However, scrutiny of all extant documentation from Muscovy through 1389[16] reveals that neither before, during, nor after 1350–75 was the number of boyar witnesses (or the number of clans they represented) stable, let alone stable at four.

Two charters from Ivan Kalita c. 1328–40 and his c. 1339 will had no boyar witnesses.[17] In c. 1350–51 Semen Ivanovich's treaty has six, including the *tysiatskii* and an *okol'nichii*.[18] Semen Ivanovich's will from 1353 was witnessed only by clerics; so was Ivan Ivanovich's will of c. 1358. Dmitrii Donskoi's grant to Ivan Friazin c. 1363–89 contained no boyar witnesses.[19] Dmitrii Donskoi's immunity grant to Mikula of Novyi Torg, also dated c. 1363–89, was witnessed only by (*okol'nichii*) Timofei Vasil'evich (Vel'iaminov).[20] Donskoi's treaty with his cousin Vladimir Andreevich of c. 1367 contained neither clerical nor boyar witnesses.[21] Dmitrii Donskoi's truce with Olgerd of 1371 contained the names of four boyars, but Nancy Shields Kollmann identifies one as an appanage boyar.[22] Donskoi's 1374–75 treaty with his cousin bore no witnesses, clerical or boyar.[23] Donskoi's 1375 will contained four boyar witnesses, once again

---

[15] Uli Schamiloglu, "Tribal Politics and Social Organization in the Golden Horde" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1986), 33–79.

[16] Vladimir A. Vodov [Wladimir Vodoff], "Zarozhdenie kantseliarii moskovskikh velikikh kniazei (seredina XIV v.–1425 g.)," *Istoricheskie zapiski* 103 (1979), 325–50, proved very helpful in compiling a complete list of published grand-princely *akty* from 1304–1389.

[17] *Akty sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi istorii severo-vostochnoi Rusi,* 3 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademiia Nauk, 1964) [hereafter ASEI], 15–16, no. 2, 16, no. 3; *Dukhovnye i dogovornye gramoty velikikh i udel'nykh kniazei XIV–XVI vv.*, ed. Lev V. Cherepnin (Moscow–Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademiia Nauk, 1950) [hereafter DDG], 7–8, no. 1.

[18] DDG 11–13, no. 2.

[19] DDG13–14, no. 3, 15–17, no. 4; ASEI 3: 16, no. 4.

[20] ASEI 3: 193, no. 178.

[21] DDG19–21, no. 5.

[22] DDG 21–22, no. 6; Kollmann, "The Boyar Clan," 16.

[23] DDG 23–24, no. 7.

including an *okol′nichii*.[24] Donskoi's land exchange and immunity charter with the monk Savva of the Savior Transfiguration Monastery mentioned two boyars and the *kaznachei* (treasurer) as performing the transaction.[25] An immunity charter from Dmitrii Donskoi c. 1363–74 was important enough to contain the name of the *tysiatskii*, Vasilii (Vel′iaminov), but of no other boyars.[26] No boyar names appeared in Donskoi's treaty with Mikhail Aleksandrovich of Tver′ in 1375, his treaty with Oleg of Riazan′ of 1382, an exchange of land c. 1381–89, or yet another treaty with Vladimir Andreevich of 1389.[27] Donskoi's 1389 will contained no fewer than ten boyar witnesses.[28]

There is no pattern to the number of boyar witnesses to these public and "private" charters of the Muscovite grand princes, which varies from zero to ten. In this context, the two documents with four witnesses and the one document personifying four clans are much more likely to be coincidences than a reflection of an institutional standard. In short, there is no evidence that the membership of the Boyar Council was ever set at four.

A different approach suggests the same conclusion. Gustave Alef opined that "the size of the [boyar-CJH] council in the 14th century cannot be established. Neither membership lists nor adequate identification of boyars survive prior to the mid-15th century."[29] Kollmann, while noting the rarity of references to individual boyars in the 14th century,[30] has tried to prove him wrong. Kollmann has thoroughly collated the evidence of published and unpublished charters and grants, chronicles, and genealogies, to assemble the most complete picture of 14th-century Muscovite boyars we have ever had. Of course *lacunae* remain, and Kollmann argues that there were more boyars than those named in the sources. Because being a boyar was, in her opinion, hereditary, the son of a boyar, whose son was a boyar, must have been a boyar himself, even when the sources did not so attest. Extrapolating from her data[31] and other sources, I have charted the number of Muscovite boyars annually from 1346 to 1389. The result is best described as tentative,[32] but it is still instructive that four boyars appear once in

---

[24] DDG 24–25, no. 8.

[25] ASEI 2 (Moscow: Izdatel′stvo Akademiia Nauk, 1959): 338–39, no. 340.

[26] ASEI 3: 259-60, no. 238.

[27] DDG 25–28, no. 9, 29–30, no. 10; ASEI 3: 52–53, no. 29; DDG 30–32, no. 11.

[28] DDG 33–37, no. 11.

[29] Alef, "The Origins," 179.

[30] Kollmann, "The Boyar Clan," 5, n. 1.

[31] Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, Appendix 2, Clan Biographies, 199–241.

[32] For example, Vasilii Protas′evich Vel′iaminov was attested as a boyar in a document dated 1350–51 (to convert the Byzantine calendar) and died in 1356, so I counted him as a boyar from 1350 (most of the March year would have been in 1350) until 1356. I also include appanage boyars and

the 34 years: in 1374 Ivan Sobaka Fedorovich, Ivan Rodion Kvashnin, Dmitrii Aleksandrovich Monastyrev, and Dmitrii Mikhailovich Bobrok Volynskii. Controlling for the number of clans would lower the numbers of boyars in some years, but not add any years with four "clans" to our analysis. There is no consistency to the number of boyars or boyar clans before or after the documents which were witnessed by four boyars. Indeed, there was obviously no rule that all boyars had to witness any given document, which makes inferring the number of boyars from the number of witnesses very problematic.

Furthermore, Kollmann presents the number of boyars, potential clans represented, and actual clans represented for two of the years in this range, and the results are very significant. For 1371, the year in which the treaty between Donskoi and Olgerd contained four boyar witnesses, the number of eligible boyar clans was ten, the number of families actually represented six, the number of boyars seven, and the number of *okol′nichie* zero. Only three of these boyars, I. F. Sobaka Fominskii, D. A. Monastyrev, and D. M. Volynskii, signed the treaty. The fourth signature was by an appanage boyar not included in Kollmann's count. Boyars I. R. Kvashnyn, D. M. Minin, V. V. Vel′iaminov and his brother T. V. Vel′iaminov, did not witness the document. Four clans had no eligible male at the time: Akinfovich, Kobylin, Okat′ev, and Pleshcheev. In 1389, there were eleven boyars representing seven of the ten eligible clans.[33] There is no evidence that one of the four *ulus* "tribes" represented by an *ulusbey* was ever unable to supply an adult male member of the Qipchaq Khanate Council; if the Muscovites equated their own boyar clans with Horde "clans," then they overlooked the impact of their vastly different demographies on their ability to supply council members. Concretely, the data on 14th-century boyars contradict the notion that there was ever any imposition of a four-boyar-clan standard in Muscovy, which then increased.

Therefore, the number of boyars or boyar clans was not fixed at four because it was never fixed at all.[34] These numbers did not evolve, they simply varied. If there was never any norm of boyars or boyar clans at four, then there is no basis for arguing that the increase in the number of Boyar Council members represents a Muscovite adaptation of a four-member Qipchaq Khanate institution.

The four *ulusbey*s shared equal status. Ostrowski's counts of "four" include an *okol′nichii* as a boyar, which itself raises other questions. Ostrowski repeats

okol′nichie. See Appendix. I found no boyars for 1357–66, which is inconceivable: no Muscovite grand prince could function without boyars. I infer a gap in the sources, not a total discontinuity in the boyar class.

[33] Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, 76.

[34] Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, 45: "The number of boyars was not fixed during the Muscovite period."

sympathetically Vernadsky's assertion that in the 14th and 15th century the *okol'nichii*[35] was the equivalent of the Horde *bakaul* or quartermaster general, although the responsibilities of that office changed later.[36] But Vernadsky did not cite any passage in which the *okol'nichii* exercised logistical responsibilities, nor did he consider the likelihood that a quartermaster-general would witness an immunity charter.[37] This interpretation of the term also confuses Ostrowski's counts of boyar witnesses. If *okol'nichii* was an office, then it is not very likely that it was also a kind of status, a sub-type of the rank of "boyar."[38] In later Muscovy, the *okol'nichie* definitely occupied the second-rank status among the boyars.[39] Discarding Vernadsky's groundless speculation restores the *okol'nichii* to the counts of boyars in the 14th century, but obscures any possible analogy to the single-tiered four-*bey* Horde Council.

Any "royal council" (*curia regis*) in the 14th century, sedentary or nomadic, would exercise the highest political authority beneath the ruler, and, given the traditional nature of society, its membership would have some "aristocratic" hereditary features. These generic similarities alone fit both the Boyar Council and the Council of four *karachi beys*, and they are insufficient to prove borrowing. Comprehensive analysis of the patterns of boyar witnesses to grand-princely treaties and charters, and of the number of boyars and boyar clans, during the 14th century, invalidates the contention that the Boyar Council at any time contained four members from four clans. The documents cited to prove that point turn out to be accidental and atypical. Thus, the Boyar Council did not imitate the most prominent and distinctive feature of the Council of four *ulus beys*. Kollmann concluded that the senior member of a boyar clan by genealogical seniority represented that clan in the Boyar Duma. However, she concedes that there were exceptions, as well as instances in which multiple members of the same boyar clan held Duma rank simultaneously. Any analogy to the representative nature of the four members of the *ulusbey* Council remains therefore no more than approximate, especially since we know nothing of the selection criteria of *ulusbeys*, which could have been political as well as

[35] The first reference to a Muscovite *okol'nichii*, 1351–52, unfortunately comes from the reconstruction of the witness list to grand prince Semen's treaty with his brothers, which Dr. Ostrowski now questions. Fortunately other references, e.g. Donskoi's 1375 testament, leave no doubt that the term dates to the second half of the 14th century.

[36] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 536.

[37] Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii, *Istoriia soslovii v Rossii,* 3rd ed. (Petrograd, 1916; reprint Russian Series, v. 16: Hattiesburg, MS: Academic International Press, 1969), 135–36, concluded that the early functions of the *okol'nichii* were insufficiently known.

[38] Cf. Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 46, n. 38.

[39] Kollmann, *Kinship and Politics*, 97–104, discusses this issue for the reign of Ivan III.

genealogical. Therefore neither in its size nor its principles of selection of membership did the Muscovite Boyar Duma match the Council of four *ulusbey*s.

If the Boyar Council was not borrowed from the Qipchaq Khanate, then the likelihood that the Muscovite administrative structure it commanded also derived from Mongol models certainly recedes. We do not, however, need to rely only on such abstract deduction to refute Ostrowski's claims of Horde origin for Muscovy's leading officials, to which we now turn.

Ostrowski equates the Muscovite office of *tysiatskii* (chiliarch, "thousand-man") with the Horde's office of *beklaribek* (*beylarbey, beylarbek, ulugbek*). He suggests that the *tysiatskii*, a pre-Mongol title whose office evolved differently in each of the post-Kievan polities, became in Muscovy the head of the army and foreign affairs. Ostrowski's organization chart shows the *tysiatskii* reporting to the grand prince and the Boyar Council, like the *beklaribek* vis-à-vis the khan and the four *karachi bey*s. When Vasilii Vel′iaminov died in 1374, the office was abolished, but its functions were continued as the "grand lieutenant" (*bol′shoi namestnik*).[40]

Tysiatskii is not a translation of *beklaribek*, which would be "prince of princes" or "emir of emirs." The sources, while leaving little doubt as to the importance of the *tysiatskii*, who may have been second in power only to the Muscovite grand prince himself, are quite vague as to his functions; assigning him responsibility for foreign affairs and the army might be excessively precise. As we have seen, the *tysiatskii* was a witness to a treaty of Semen Ivanovich c. 1350–51, but of no other treaty; he was a witness to an immunity charter of Dmitrii Donskoi c. 1363–74, which hardly seems appropriate for the head of the military and diplomatic establishment, but of no other "private" charter. These anomalies suggest that it might be premature to attribute functional specialization to the office. Certainly it sounds very peculiar for the Muscovites to redefine a native term to have the meaning of a Mongol one instead of translating the Mongol word, only shortly thereafter to abandon it altogether for yet another redefined native term. For Muscovy all known occupants of the office of *tysiatskii* were boyars, but it is impossible to determine if this was a requirement of office.

On the Mongol side, there is even greater ignorance concerning the responsibilities and occupants of the post of *beklaribek*. The *beklaribek* definitely exerted great influence in the Horde. The references to the *beklaribek* do not permit deciding whether he was one of the four *ulusbey*s, a difficulty all too analogous to the uncertain boyar status of the *tysiatskii*. Worst of all, the sources on the Horde shed very little light on who was *beklaribek*. Most specialists on the Qipchaq Khanate describe Nogai (who ran virtually his own state at the end of

[40] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 532–33.

the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries in the western regions of the Qipchaq Khanate), emir Mamai (khan-maker and loser at Kulikovo Field in 1380) and emir Edigei (another power behind the throne at the turn of the 15th century) as *beklaribek*s, but this is only by inference – no source directly attributes this title to any of these suspects.[41] While Nogai's genealogy is unclear, most specialists do not doubt that he was a Chingizid. If so, it is suspect that he could represent the "tribal" aristocracy in contrast to the dynasty. Too little may be known about the *beklaribek* to project his administrative office onto the Muscovite *tysiatskii*.[42] Two unknowns do not make for a very convincing known.

Unlike the *tysiatskii*, the Muscovite *dvorskii*, or major-domo, according to Ostrowski, answered only to the grand prince; Ostrowski traces the *dvorskii* to the vizier of the Qipchaq Khanate.[43] For Muscovy, clearly the *dvorskii* was not a boyar, but of much lower social rank. Ostrowski accepts the observation of al Omari that the Qipchaq Khanate had the same administrative structure as the Ilkhanate.[44] In the Ilkhanate the vizier, following the Saljuk model,[45] was a highly literate professional bureaucrat. His primary responsibility was financial management, but he also played a significant role in diplomacy, especially dynastic marriages, and was expected to accompany the sultan on campaign. During civil unrest his private army sometimes came into play. Under the Ilkhans the vizier was, in Spuler's apt phrase, "die erste Minister," a virtual prime minister. The office was held by men of enormous expertise, influence, wealth, and status, such as Shams ad-Din Juvaini, brother of the historian, and the his-

---

[41] Vadim L. Egorov, *Istoricheskaia geografiia Zolotoi ordy v XIII–XIV vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), 47 (Nogai), 58–59 (Mamai); Andrei I. Pliguzov and Anna L. Khoroshkevich, "Otnoshenie russkoi tserkvy k antiordynskoi bor'be v XIII–XV vekakh (po materialem Kratkogo sobraniia khanskikh iarlykov russkim mitropolitam)," *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* 37 (1988), 126 (Mamai); and Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde,* 43, n. 51 (Mamai). Schamiloglu also joins this tradition. Unfortunately, any light shed on this or any of the issues raised in this essay by Mustafa Kefali, *Alten Orda Hanli'inin Kurulus ve Yükselis Devirleri* (Istanbul: Edebijat Fakültesi Matbaasi, 1976) or István Vásáry, *Az Arany Horda* (Budapest: Kossuth Könyukindó, 1986) is linguistically inaccessible to me.

[42] Cf. Khudiakov, *Ocherki*, 205–09, who did not mention a *beylarbey* (or a vizier) among Kazan' officials (*chinovniki*).

[43] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 530, 532.

[44] Although al Omari added that the Qipchaq Khanate vizier had less authority than his counterpart in the Ilkhanate, and that the Qipchaq Khanate "sultan" less authority and less wealth than the Ilkhan.

[45] Ann K. S. Lambton, "The Internal Structure of the Saljuk Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*. V. *Saljuk and Mongol Periods*, ed. John A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 247–49, 260–69.

torian Rashid ad-Din. The vizier under the Ilkhans headed an elaborate hierarchy of *diwan*s (councils), which were charged with purely civil functions, especially tax-collection.[46]

The question of the vizier in the Qipchaq Khanate is a particularly thorny one. As Ostrowski notes, Schamiloglu has concluded that there was no vizier in the Horde, that his functions were performed by a *qarachi bey*. This scepticism has some antecedents: Vernadsky registered doubts about whether the official called "vizier" of the Qipchaq Khanate by the Arabic and Persian sources actually bore that title.[47] If Schamiloglu is correct that the Golden Horde had no vizier, then either it had no *diwan*s, which would negate the similarity of the Juchid and Ilkhanid administrative structures, or one of the *ulusbey*s possessed bureaucratic expertise far beyond anything usually attributed to the tribal aristocracy of that time.

The existence of *diwan*s in the Qipchaq Khanate is a difficult problem in and of itself. A. Iu. Iakubovskii wrote that the Golden Horde must have organized its *bitichki* (scribes) into *diwan*s, even if direct evidence to this point is lacking. Iakobovskii cited Stefan Orbelian that the *basqaq* of Ilkhanid Armenia was also vizier, but he did not discuss the function of the vizier in the Juchid ulus.[48] Berthold Spuler mentions the vizier and the four *ulusbey*s, but not the word *diwan.*[49] Egorov posits the existence of *diwan*s in the Golden Horde, headed by the vizier, who was inferior in status to the *beklaribek*.[50] Logically, then, the office of vizier and *diwan*s went hand in hand. The vizier in the Ilkhanate and elsewhere was often called the "vizier of the *diwan,*" meaning the central or "great" *diwan* at the apex of a hierarchy of regional *diwan*s.

What is known about the vizierate renders it highly unlikely that the Muscovite *dvorskii* occupied an analogous office in Muscovite administration. The Muscovite *dvorskii* lacked the status or expertise attached to the vizier in the Ilkhanate or the Qipchaq Khanate. The *dvorskii* was not a highly skilled literate bureaucrat and tax collector, he did not command troops or negotiate marriage alliances, he was not the equivalent of the prime minister, he did not accumulate

[46] John A. Boyle, "The Dynastic and Political History of the Il-khans," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Boyle, 356, 369–70, 382, 384, 398, 402, 405–07, 409, 412 presents intermittent data on viziers. Berthold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran: Politik, Verwaltung, und Kultur der Ilchanzeit, 1220–1350,* 2nd ed. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955), presents a definition of the vizier's office (282–85) and a list of all its occupants (285–88).

[47] George Vernadsky, *The Mongols and Russia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 212.

[48] Boris D. Grekov and Aleksandr Iu. Iakubovskii, *Zolotaia orda* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe sotsial′no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel′stvo, 1937), 99–100.

[49] Berthold Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde. Die Mongolen in Rußland 1223–1502*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965), 301–02.

[50] Egorov, *Istoricheskaia geografiia*, 169–72.

great wealth in the service of the grand prince. There is no substantial similarity between the offices or the officials who held them. By background, status, and function, the Muscovite *dvorskii* did not resemble the Golden Horde's vizier.

In Egorov's organization chart of the Khanate, the vizier supervised the "*diwan* of various offices (*palaty*) headed by secretaries." In Ostrowski's adaptation of this chart, the vizier headed a "board of administration [;] *daruga* and *basqaq*s."[51] Ostrowski's alteration obscures the central role of *diwan*s in the vizierate. He neither justifies his emendation of Egorov's chart nor discusses whether he thinks there was a Muscovite equivalent to the *diwan*s.[52] Kollmann and Vodoff describe the 14th-century Muscovite "bureaucracy" as a handful of jacks-of-all-trades scribes (*d'iaki*) who did everything,[53] hardly the equivalent of the bureaucratic resources mobilized by the *diwan* system.

According to Ostrowski, the Mongol Empire was organized in a dual administrative structure, a division between civilian and military responsibilities, despite overlapping functions, between the military *basqaqi* (the Turkic term found in the East Slavic sources; in Mongol called the *tammachi*) and the civilian *darugi* (the Turkic and Mongol term found in the East Slavic sources; in Persian *shihna*).[54] Ostrowski argues that both types of governors were established in Rus′ after the campaigns of 1237–40.[55] Furthermore, the military *basqaqi* were

[51] Cf. Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 531 with Vadim L. Egorov, "Zolotaia orda pered Kulikovskoi bitvoi," in *Kulikovskaia bitva. Sbornik statei* (Moscow: Nauka, 1980), 176.

[52] *Diwan* just means "council," but referring to the "divan of the four *qarachi beg*s" (Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 168) confuses the problem of the "great" or central *diwan* of the Saljuk/Ilkhanid administrative model. Alan Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 20–21, also refers to the "*divan*" of the four *karachi bey*sin the Crimean Khanate, as did Khudiakov to the Kazan′ Khanate. Dr. Ostrowski now informs me that he believes that both the Qipchaq Khanate and Muscovy had *diwan*s, that the Boyar Council in Muscovy was a *diwan*, and that the vizier of the Qipchaq Khanate might have had his own *diwan* separate from the *diwan* of the four *qarachi bey*s. I would draw a hard and fast distinction between policy-making political *diwan*s and the bureaucratic fiscal *diwan*s subordinate to the vizier.

[53] Kollmann, "The Boyar Clan," 7; Vodov, "Zarozhdenie," 346.

[54] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 530; Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 36–44 (I omit other linguistic variants from the chart on 40); and Ostrowski, "The *Tamma*," *passim.*

[55] Ostrowski eventually rejects the evidence of the 16th-century Nikon chronicle that a *voevoda* (=*basqaq*) was appointed to Kiev in 1240, but relies upon paragraph 274 of *The Secret History of the Mongols* that *darugachin* and *tammachin* were assigned to the Orosut. (Ostrowski, "The *Tamma*," 277, contains an error attributing this development to 1229; it should read "c. 1240.") Since the passage on which Ostrowski relies carries no year, his dating is based upon its "content and placement" in the text alone (Ostrowski, "City Names," 465). Because the paragraphs in *The Secret History* about the Rus′ are chronologically inconsistent and substantively convoluted, it is imprudent to rely upon them for dating phenomenon in the East Slavic principalities. On the other

removed when and where the Mongols no longer found them necessary, that is, after an area had been fully pacified. Ostrowski equates the Muscovite *namestnik* (lieutenant) with the civilian *darugachi,* and the Muscovite *volostel′* with the military *basqaq*. In his chart of the administrative structures of the Muscovite principality and the Qipchaq Khanate, the Boyar Duma supervised the *volosteli* who directed the *namestniki* of villages and towns, and the Council of four *karachi bey*s controlled the "heads of *tümans*" who in turn oversaw the "heads of regions and towns."[56]

Ostrowski recounts the division of opinion among Inner Asianists as to whether *basqaq* and *dargua* were separate offices or two terms, in different languages, for the same office, before he sides with those who differentiate between them. He reproduces the texts usually employed to equate the terms, the interpretation he does not share. Juwaini called Tort-Aba both *basqaq* and *shihna*; Juvayni called Chin Timur a *basqaq* but Rashid ad-Din called him a *shihna*. Ostrowski tries to finesse these passages as possible errors, or changes in office rather than vocabulary, but his special pleading seems forced.[57] Exploring this issue for the Mongol Empire would take us too far afield, so instead we will focus on what the sources tell us about these officials in the Rus′ principalities.

The references to the *basqaqi* in the East Slavic sources[58] do not demonstrate that the *basqaqi* commanded troops, surely a *sine qua non* for a Mongol official assigned to an unpacified district. *Basqaqi* are recorded in the city of Vladimir in 1269, the city of Rostov in 1308, and the Riazan′ border as late as the 1350s–1380s. There is no evidence of violent anti-Tatar activity in those places at those times. While a *basqaq* might accompany a military campaign, as did *basqaq* Argaman of Vladimir in 1269 against the "Germans," there are no unambiguous references to regiments or even major garrisons under *basqaq* authority. *Basqaq* Akhmad of Kursk lacked even the minimal forces required to deal with two recalcitrant backwater princelings; the troops who accompanied an unnamed *basqaq* and an otherwise unidentified prince Fedor in Kiev in 1331 might have belonged to the prince. The Mongols were hardly so inept as to assign military governors to cities and regions without assigning sufficient military resources to sustain Mongol rule. This entire issue is moot since the Mongols never occupied

hand, simple analogy suggests that the Mongols imposed the same administrative structure on the Rus′ as elsewhere in their empire. The chronology of their activity, however, remains indefinite.

[56] Ostrowski, "The Mongol Origins," 581; idem, *Muscovy and the Mongols*, 44–45. Note that the *namestniki* subordinate to the *volosteli* are separate, in Ostrowski's schema, from the *bol′shoi namestnik* who replaced the *tysiatskii* in 1374. Dr. Ostrowski kindly suggested an analogy to "lieutenant" and "lieutenant general" or better perhaps to "secretary" and "secretary of state."

[57] Ostrowski, "The *Tamma*," 271, 273–74.

[58] Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 33–39; Charles J. Halperin, *The Tatar Yoke* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Press, 1986), 75–80.

or garrisoned the cities of the Russian forest zone, because no region therein was out of reach of nomadic Tatar contingents from the nearby steppe.[59] There seems to be nothing specifically "military" about the *basqaqi*.

Ostrowski is quite correct that the division between civilian and military functions in the Qipchaq Khanate, as in any conquest state, tended to be very blurred. As we have seen, the quintessentially "civilian" vizier, even in the Ilkhanate, had personal troops. A member of the Imperial Guard (*kesig*) might be assigned under the Yuan in China as a (civilian) *darugachi*; he would retain his military status, and thus would function in both elements of the administration. However, the distinction between the military and bureaucratic chains of command would have been quite precise. And we know the military chain of command for the Mongol Empire and the Qipchaq Khanate very clearly: the decimal commanders of ten, 100, 1000, and 10,000 men, which clearly did not contain the *basqaq*.[60]

Thus, the division between military *basqaq* and civilian *daruga* which Ostrowski posits as a uniform feature in the world Mongol Empire and all its successor states does not seem to have held true for the activities of those officials in the East Slavic principalities, irrespective of whether these were separate offices or different names for the same office adapted from on-site to absentee governorship.[61]

It is very doubtful that the *volostel′* exercised the functions of the *basqaq*, military or otherwise. The *volostel′* obviously administered the *volost′*, a territorial, not military unit.[62] The *yarlik* from Khatun Taidula to Metropolitan Aleksei, 1354, was addressed to "the *temniki* (commanders of 10,000) and to the *tysiatskie* (commanders of 1,000)[63] and to the princes and to the *sotniki*

[59] This is the major ecological and historical difference between Mongol rule in Russia on the one hand, and Mongol rule in China and Iran on the other. See Charles J. Halperin, "Russia in the Mongol Empire in Comparative Perspective," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43: 1 (June, 1983), 239–61.

[60] *Tüman* can refer either to a military unit of 10,000 troops, or to an administrative district supplying 10,000 recruits.

[61] There is a striking and consistent pattern in East Slavic references to these officials: *basqaqi* were always on-site in Rus′, whereas *darugi* were always in the Horde. The significance of this dichotomy for interpreting their mutual functions and relationships has not been fully resolved.

[62] Robert C. Howes, *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967): 81–82. Vodov, "Zarozhdenie," 341, states that the *volosteli* were listed with other unfree court servitors in the will of Ivan Ivanovich, which stipulated that *d′iaki*, *kaznachei*, *tiiuny*, and *volosteli* be set free upon his death. However, DDG no. 4, 16, 19, reads *posel′skie,* not *volosteli*.

[63] Here *tysiatskii* is a translation of the Mongol *minggan*, not to be confused with the Muscovite official supposedly in charge of the military and diplomacy. I am guilty of some interpretation here: the manuscripts of the *iarlyk* read "*tysiashchnye*" "*tysiashchniki*" and "*tysiashch′nye*."

(commanders of 100) and to the *desiatniki* (commanders of 10) and to the *volosteli* and to the city *dorogi* and to the princes and to the traveling envoys (*mimokhozhim poslom*)."[64] The redundant reference to "princes" suggests that this passage has not been preserved without distortion, but two points stand out about the *volosteli*. First, they are mentioned after the full decimal military hierarchy, from the highest (10,000) to the lowest level (ten). Second, they are distinguished from the city administrators (*dorogi*),[65] perhaps because the *volost'* they administered was not urban, or perhaps because there were rural *dorogi* (called *volosteli*?). The allusion to *volosteli* in Dmitrii Donskoi's 1389 testament attributed judicial, not military, functions to them, as did all 14th-century East Slavic treaties and charters.[66] The *volostel'* did not administer a census or supervise conscription, since Muscovy borrowed neither the census nor conscription from the Mongols. Ostrowski presents no Muscovite source to substantiate the "military" functions of the *volosteli*.

Ostrowski offers no evidence that the 14th-century *volostel'* was superior in the administrative hierarchy to the *namestniki*; the documents discussed by Kashtanov rather suggest that urban and rural districts were separate but equal. Ostrowski's equation of *namestnik* and *dorogi* lacks firm documentation. In the 14th century Muscovite *namestniki* were urban, i.e., the deputies of the appanage princes assigned to their "thirds" of Moscow, or, perhaps this early, continuing Kievan practice, and certainly later, as "governors" of cities.[67] Like the Muscovite *doroga* assigned to Grand Bolgar temporarily in the 1370s, but unlike 14th- and 15th-century Qipchaq Khanate *dorogi*, the *namestnik* was always an on-site administrator, not an absentee.

In general, then, the Muscovite system of local administration, of *namestniki* and *volosteli,* does not owe its origin to Mongol models, and we cannot compensate for the gaps in our understanding of their activities by invoking Tatar analogues. Muscovite local governance was not a continuation of Qipchaq Khanate administration of the East Slavic territories via a division between military and civilian officials.

---

[64] *Pamiatniki russkogo prava.* Vypusk III. *Pamiatniki prava perioda obrazovnaiia russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo iuridicheskoi literatury, 1955), 470.

[65] It is impossible to say if *basqaqi* were assigned to cities or districts in the East Slavic principalities: Argaman of Vladimir, Akhmad of Kursk, and Telebuga of Rostov are associated with cities, unlike Milei in the village of Bakota, but the "cities" may represent larger geographic districts. The *basqaqi* on the Riazan' frontier or the *basqaq* accompanying prince Fedor of Kiev could have been assigned to a city, district or region.

[66] Howes, *The Testaments*, 214; Sergei M. Kashtanov, "L'administration locale et la propriété foncière en Russie au XIVe siècle," *Revue des Études Slaves* 63 (1991), 175–83.

[67] Howes, *The Testaments*, 81; DDG no. 2, 12, 13; no. 6, 22 (Tverian *namestniki* and *volosteli*); no. 11, 32.

Ostrowski's argument that the administrative structure of 14th-century Muscovy duplicates that of the Qipchaq Khanate, epitomized by his parallel organization charts, might be summarized by the cliché saying that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The likelihood that each institution discussed here derived from a putative Mongol antecedent – Boyar Council from the Council of four *karachi beys tysiatskii* from *beklaribek*, *dvorskii* from vizier, *volostel'* from *basqaq* – is enhanced by the parallel relationship of those parts to each other.

Unfortunately, organization charts always look neater on paper than in reality. More importantly, there are unresolved ambiguities and contradictions between the two charts. The vizier of the Qipchaq Khanate is connected to his "board of administration" by a solid line, but the *dvorskii* of Muscovy and his "*d'iaki* and *puti* (*prikazi*)" are tied together only by a more tentative dotted line.[68] The *basqaqi* of the Qipchaq Khanate reported to the (civilian) vizier, not the (military) *beklaribek,* and were not part of the "army" commanded by the *beklaribek.*[69] Athough Ostrowski equates the *basqaq* and the *volostel'*, they do not occupy parallel positions: the *basqaq* in the Qipchaq Khanate reports to the vizier, in the location in the Muscovite chart of the *d'iaki* and *puti*, whereas the place of the *volostel'* in the Horde chart belongs to the "heads of *tümans*."[70] Supposedly the *volosteli* and the *namestniki* replaced the *basqaqi* and the *darugi* respectively, yet according to the organization charts, the *volosteli* supervised the *namestniki*, but the *basqaqi* and the *darugi* appear administratively on the same level. The parallelism of the charts decreases, the more closely they are analyzed.

As we have seen, some of the similarities which Ostrowski identifies may be more apparent than real, others either lack evidence or are contradicted by the sources. If the fulcrum or hub of his organization charts – the equation of the Boyar Council and the *karachi* Council – fails, then much of the analogy at large may also fall. The argument from adaptation can only be applied once the fact of initial borrowing has been established. I would argue that the dissimilarities of the institutional pairs Ostrowski has asserted are greater than the similarities. Distortion beyond recognition during adaptation cannot be used to prove bor-

---

[68] I assume *prikazi* (administrative departments) is here only to explain *puti*, since the *prikazi*, some of which did develop out of the *puti*, cannot be documented before the middle of the 16th century.

[69] Dr. Ostrowski does believe the *basqaq* answered to the military authorities.

[70] Dr. Ostrowski now recognizes that for consistency he should have put the *bitikchi* (scribes) in the Qipchaq Khanate chart in the same place as the Muscovite *d'iaki* (scribes), replacing the "board of administration." Similarly, the (civilian) *namestniki* should report to the (civilian) *dvorskii*. The confusion arises from distinguishing *basqaqi* and *darugi* both by function and area of administrative authority.

rowing of foreign institutions. Ostrowski's case, while serious, cannot be accepted.

If there was no "institutional rift" in Muscovite history in the 14th century, if Muscovite borrowing of Mongol institutions was selective and utilitarian, not pervasive and all-encompassing, then historians need to take another look at the possibility that Muscovy's core administrative structures were adaptations of indigenous forms from the Kievan period. Kliuchevskii began his study of the Boyar Duma with the Kievan period, and continued it uninterrupted through Muscovy in the 17th century; as institutional history, leaving aside his Great Russian bias, this conception may still have merit.[71]

Moreover, if 14th-century Muscovy was not as Mongol-influenced as claimed, perhaps the cosmic consequences sometimes attributed to Moscow's victory in the battle for supremacy in northeastern Rus′ need to be reconsidered. Peter Nitsche's not entirely rhetorical question seems apposite here: would the history of Russia have been fundamentally different had Tver′ defeated Moscow in this contest?[72]

In addition, if Muscovy's secular court in the 14th century was not universally modeled on the Tatars, then perhaps it was also not as "Tatar" in the 16th century;[73] the quantity of Mongol borrowing might not have reached the point that it had a qualitative effect upon the self-conception of the Muscovite court and elite. Thus we need to reevaluate Ostrowski's views of the conflict between the Byzantine Church and the "Tatar" Court during the reign of Ivan IV, the likelihood that the *oprichnina* was created as a Tatar state, and the Simeon Bekbulatovich episode. Recognition of the Mongol factor in 16th-century Muscovy should not be confused with exaggeration of Tatar influence.

303 East 8th Street, Apt. 16
Bloomington, IN 47408-3572 USA
chalperi@indiana.edu

[71] Kliuchevskii, *Boiarskaia duma*.

[72] Peter Nitsche, "Mongolensturm und Mongolenherrschaft in Rußland," in *Die Mongolen in Asien und Europa*, ed. Stephen Conermann and Jan Kusber (Kieler Werstücke, Reihe F: Beiträge zur osteuropäischen Geschichte, Band 4; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Land, 1997), 79.

[73] I have similar objections to Ostrowski's arguments tracing *pomest′e* (conditional land grants) to *iqta*, the *zemskii sobor* (Council of the Land) to the *quriltai*, *mestnichestvo* (precedence) to steppe clan society, *krugovaia poruka* (collective responsibility) to Chinggis's practices of government, and so forth. Space precludes expounding those criticisms here.

Appendix: Muscovite Boyars, 1346–89

	Name	Remarks	Years of Service
1.	Fedor Sviblo Andreevich		1375–1389
2.	Ivan Khromoi	brother above	1389
3.	Aleksandr Ostei	brother above	1384–1389
4.	Aleksandr Andreevich Beleutov		1384–1389
5.	Fedor Konstantinovich Krasnoi Fominskii		1346
6.	Mikhail Kriuk	son above	1381–1389
7.	Ivan Sobaka Fedorovich	brother above	1371–1389
8.	Ivan Uda	brother above	1383–1389
9.	Andrei Petrovich Khvost		1346–1356
10.	Andrei Ivanovich Kobyla		1346–1347
11.	Fedor Kosha	son above	1389
12.	Ivan Rodion Kvashnin		1370–1389
13.	Dmitrii Minin		1367
14.	Aleksandr	brother above	1382–1383
15.	Dmitrii Aleksandrovich Monastyrev		1371–1378
16.	Mikhail Ivanovich Morozov		1382
17.	Vasilii Okat′evich		1350–1351
18.	Timofei Volnii	son above	1380
19.	Semen	brother above	1389
20.	Aleksandr Fedor Pleshshev		1375
21.	Vasilii Protas′evich (Vel′iaminov)		1350–1356
22.	Vasilii Vasil′evich	son above	1367–1373
23.	okol′nichii Timofei	brother above?	1389
24.	Mikhailo Aleksandrovich	brother-in-law of #21	1350–1351
25.	? Vasil′evich	Vel′iaminov	1350–1351
26.	Ivan Fedorovich Vorontsov	a Vel′iaminov	1389
27.	Semen Timofeevich	Vel′iaminov	1380–1382
28.	"Ivan, syn′ Grigoryi Chiurovina, called Dranitsa"	Tale of Mitiai	1379
29.	Dmitrii Mikhailovich Bobrok Volynskii		1371–1389
30.	Ivan Mikhailovich	appanage	1371
31.	Yurii Vasil′evich Kochevin Oleshenskyi	?	1377

Year	Total Boyars	Year	Total Boyars
1346	3	1373	5
1347	2	1374	4
1348	1	1375	6
1349	1	1376	5
1350	5	1377	6
1351	5	1378	5
1352	2	1379	5
1353	2	1380	6
1354	2	1381	6
1355	2	1382	8
1356	2	1383	7
1357–66	0	1384	8
1367	2	1385	8
1368	1	1386	8
1369	1	1387	8
1370	2	1388	8
1371	6	1389	13
1372	5		