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## THE MUSCOVITE MONARCHY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY: “NATIONAL,” “POPULAR” OR “DEMOCRATIC”?

Recent debates among American historians of Muscovy have focussed on the question of how far the power of the state was despotic. Traditional arguments in favour of the despotic model have been forcefully restated by Marshall Poe,<sup>1</sup> while the “revisionist” position of the so-called “Harvard school” has been ably defended by Valerie Kivelson.<sup>2</sup> Kivelson sums up the work of the “Harvard school” as follows:

In place of an all-powerful despot wielding arbitrary power over cowering slaves, these studies have found a monarch ruling in council with his boyars and elites, constrained to rule according to custom, tradition, piety, and even law, and enjoying a high degree of legitimacy in the eyes of his subjects.<sup>3</sup>

Representatives of the “Harvard school” such as Kivelson and Nancy Shields Kollmann are concerned primarily with evidence of the ruler’s consultation with the elites of Muscovite society, but they do not exclude the possibility that peasants, if not serfs and slaves, might be included in the political community.<sup>4</sup> The St Petersburg historian Boris Mironov goes even further down this path. He finds so

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1. Marshall Poe, “The Truth about Muscovy,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 3:3 (summer 2002): 473-486.

2. Valerie A. Kivelson, “On Words, Sources, and Historical Method: which Truth about Muscovy?,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 3:3 (summer 2002): 487-499.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 490.

4. See, for example, Nancy Shields Kollmann, *By Honor Bound: State and Society in Early Modern Russia* (Ithaca — London: Cornell University Press, 1999): 200-201; V. A. Kivelson, *art. cit.*: 492; idem, “Muscovite ‘Citizenship’: Rights without Freedom,” *Journal of Modern History*, 74 (Sept. 2002): 466, 468.

much evidence of societal participation in Muscovite politics that he describes the seventeenth-century state as a “popular monarchy” (*narodnaia monarkhiia*).<sup>5</sup>

In this essay I shall critically examine the concept of “popular monarchy” in Russian historiography. In particular, I shall ask whether this concept corresponds to the “national (*natsional’naia*) monarchy” which is often said to have succeeded the older patrimonial state; or whether it is closer to the notion of a “democratic (*demokraticheskaiia*) monarchy” advanced in the 1920s by R. Iu. Vipper.<sup>6</sup> Finally, I shall consider whether there is any connection between “popular monarchy” and the well-attested phenomenon of Russian “popular monarchism.”

Let us begin with an examination of Boris Mironov’s concept of popular monarchy. Mironov identifies five political “subjects” (i.e. active participants in governance) in seventeenth-century Russia: the sovereign; the boyar *duma*; the “assembly of the land” (*zemskaia sobor*); the Sacred Council (*osviashchennyi sobor*) headed by the Patriarch; and the “people” (*narod*).<sup>7</sup> The role of the “people” — which for Mironov comprises not only the military servicemen and “better” townspeople, but also the peasants and the urban poor — expressed itself in various ways. First of all, representatives of these groups served as elected members of the assemblies of the land. Mironov recognises that there is evidence of participation by state peasants in only 2 out of 57 assemblies, but he argues that the peasants’ interests were represented at least in part by the urban delegates (the *posadskie liudi*).<sup>8</sup> In addition, he notes, the *narod* participated in the life of the royal court. Royal christenings, name-day celebrations, weddings and funerals, as well as the election of tsars and their coronations, took place in public — in the presence not only of members of the Sacred Council and boyar *duma* plus the elected urban representatives, but also of the “common people” (*chern’*) who were not represented in the assemblies. The role of the *narod* in such ceremonies, Mironov insists, was not purely decorative; popular approval was important to the political elites, and rival court factions often found it necessary to obtain the support of the “ordinary” (*prostoi*) people of the capital.<sup>9</sup>

Although, as these examples demonstrate, Mironov sometimes employs the term “*narod*” to mean the “common” people (*prostoi liud, chern’*), his use of the term “popular monarchy” is in general an inclusive one, intended to convey the idea that all strata of Muscovite society were “subjects” of governance in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries (in contrast to the situation in the eighteenth century,

5. B. N. Mironov, *Sotsial’naia istoriia Rossii perioda imperii (XVIII - nachalo XX v.)*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (St Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2000), vol. II: 116-127, 175-182.

6. I shall leave aside the issue of ethnic homogeneity which is often associated with the notion of a “national” state. Rather, I am concerned here with the nature and extent of the social support sought by the monarchy: whether this was universal (*narodnaia = vsenarodnaia*) or selective, directed primarily towards the “common people” (*narodnaia = prostonarodnaia*).

7. B. N. Mironov, *op. cit.*, vol. II: 118. Many of Mironov’s examples are taken from the sixteenth century.

8. *Ibid.*: 120.

9. *Ibid.*: 121.

when — he argues — the *narod* became “objects” of governance).<sup>10</sup> In the inclusive sense, *narodnaia* may be more appropriately be translated as “national” rather than “popular.”

The notion of a “national” monarchy in this socially inclusive sense can also be found in some of the older historiography. Both Kliuchevskii and Platonov, for example, used the terms *natsional’noe* and *narodnoe* virtually interchangeably to describe the Muscovite state which emerged in the course of the fifteenth-seventeenth centuries from the earlier “patrimonial” state. For Kliuchevskii, the formation of such a “national state” was linked with the process of political unification of the north-east Russian lands under the Muscovite principality, and the wars of Muscovy against Poland, Lithuania and the Germans. Kliuchevskii’s concept of nationhood (*narodnost’*) had social and religious as well as political ramifications: he wrote that the process of unification led the Muscovite grand princes “to merge their dynastic interests with the welfare of the people (*narodnoe blago*), to fight for the faith and the nation (*narodnost’*).”<sup>11</sup> For Platonov, the Muscovite state in the sixteenth century was both patrimonial and national; and in the latter capacity it was *narodnoe* in the sense of “popular,” or even “democratic.”<sup>12</sup> This complex situation was characterised by the historian as follows:

If the sovereign was the patrimonial owner (*votchinnik*) of his tsardom, then it belonged to him as his property, with all the unconditionality of ownership rights [...]. If the power of the sovereign was based on the consciousness of the people (*narodnaia massa*), who saw the tsar and grand prince of all Rus’ as the expression of national (*narodnoe*) unity and the symbol of national (*natsional’naia*) independence, then the democratic (*demokraticeskii*) character of this power is obvious [...]. Thus power in Muscovy was both absolute and democratic.<sup>13</sup>

A similar definition of the Muscovite monarchy as not only “popular” (*narodnaia*) but also “national” (*natsional’naia*) and “democratic” (*demokraticeskaia*) was provided by the emigre publicist Ivan Solonevich in his rambling neo-Slavophile tract.<sup>14</sup> But, while stressing the “harmonic” nature of the Muscovite state system,

10. *Ibid.*: 133.

11. V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Sochineniia v vos’mi tomakh*, vol. II (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1957): 116.

12. The adjective “*demokraticeskii*” in Russian usage has more of a social connotation (= popular, of the people (*demos*, *populus*, *narod*)) than English “democratic,” which is associated primarily with representative political institutions.

13. S. F. Platonov, *Ocherki po istorii smuty v Moskovskom gosudarstve XVI-XVII vv.* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe sotsial’no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel’stvo, 1937): 97. Platonov argued elsewhere (in his popular short account of the Time of Troubles) that the patrimonial principle gave way to the national after the election of Michael Romanov as tsar by “all the land” in 1613: S. F. Platonov, *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh*, vol. II (St Petersburg: Stroilespechat’, 1994): 493.

14. Ivan Solonevich, *Nardnaia monarkhiia* (San Francisco: Globus, 1978), *chast’ 4*: 107. First published in Buenos Aires in 1952. There is an electronic version of the 1973 edition at <http://www.rus-sky.org/history/library/narmon1.htm>.

which combined autocracy (*samoderzhavie*) with local self-government (*samoupravlenie*),<sup>15</sup> Solonevich also argued that the lower classes, with their anti-boyar attitudes, played an important part in the creation of the Muscovite autocratic system from the time of Andrei Bogoliubskii (*sic*) onwards. The monarchy was created and supported by the masses, including the peasants, and this imbued it with its democratic character.<sup>16</sup>

Another variant on the theme of “democratic monarchy” can be found in the writings of R. Iu. Vipper, a somewhat maverick Russian historian, long reviled as a Stalinist apologist, who has however recently been the subject of a degree of rehabilitation both in Russia and in the West.<sup>17</sup> Vipper’s concept of popular monarchy may be described as “divisive” rather than “inclusive”: a “democratic monarchy” in which the ruler attempts to ally himself with the lower classes against the nobility. Vipper approached the topic from a comparative point of view. The sixteenth century throughout Europe, he argued, was a “golden age” for the nobility, who managed to limit the power of monarchs by means of parliamentary institutions and constitutionalism.<sup>18</sup> Spokesmen for the nobility fulminated against tyranny and despotism; and they also “kept a jealous watch to ensure that a people-loving monarch (*monarkh-narodoliubets*) did not rise up against them, and that there was no rapprochement between the bearer of supreme power and the lower classes.”<sup>19</sup>

In the West, Vipper continued, there was no place for a “democratic (*demokraticheskaia*) monarchy”; the position of a ruler who tried to adopt a populist (*narodnicheskaia*) policy would have been very insecure. The actions of such a *narodoliubets*, directed against the nobles, would be condemned by their publicists as tyranny, and he would be accused of the sin of demagogy.<sup>20</sup>

Vipper illustrated his point by citing the case of Christian II of Denmark (r.1513-1523), who had tried to introduce measures which ran counter to the interests of the nobility: the creation of free and classless royal courts; the suppression of piratical activities by knights; and the prohibition of the sale of peasants like animals. Christian was overthrown by the nobles, but while he languished in prison he was

15. *Ibid.*, *chast*´4: 19, 48.

16. *Ibid.*, *chast*´3: 97-112, 146-147; *chast*´4: 50, 103-105.

17. D. M. Volodikhin, “*Ochen´ staryi akademik.*” *Original´naia filosofii istorii R. Iu. Vippera* (Moscow: Izdatel´stvo Universiteta Rossiiskoi akademii obrazovaniia, 1997); Maureen Perrie, *The Cult of Ivan the Terrible in Stalin’s Russia* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001): 12-17, 92-99.

18. R. Iu Vipper, “Ivan Groznyi” [reprint of 1st ed., 1922], in S. F. Platonov, *Ivan Groznyi (1530-1584)* [and] R. Iu. Vipper, *Ivan Groznyi*, ed. and introd. D. M. Volodikhin (Moscow: Izdatel´stvo Universiteta Rossiiskoi akademii obrazovaniia, 1998): 111. The Stalin-era editions provide a rather different interpretation: see R. Iu. Vipper, *Ivan Groznyi*, 2d ed. (Tashkent: Gosizdat UzSSR, 1942); 3rd ed. (Moscow-Leningrad: Izdatel´stvo AN SSSR, 1944). There is an English translation of the 3rd ed.: R. Wipper, *Ivan Grozny* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947). All references here are to the 1998 reprint of the 1st ed.

19. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 112.

20. *Ibid.*: 112.

described as a “people’s king” (*narodnyi korol’*) by the participants in an uprising of peasants and townspeople.<sup>21</sup>

Christian’s fate — Vipper argued — demonstrated what would inevitably happen to any Western ruler who attempted to introduce populist policies. But a democratic monarchy stood a better chance in Eastern Europe, where the military servitors were more firmly subjugated to the crown. Serfdom, the historian noted, was introduced later in autocratic Muscovy than in constitutional states like the Carpathian and Baltic lands, where it appeared from the early sixteenth century. (Serfdom, of course, benefited the nobility at the expense of the peasantry.) But even in Muscovy, Vipper alleged, the military-service elite sought to limit the power of the monarch in their own interests. Understandably, the ruler’s reaction against such attempts resembled the policies of a “demagogic tyrant” (*tiran-demagog*) like Christian II.<sup>22</sup> (Here Vipper is obviously thinking of Ivan IV and the *oprichnina*.)

Vipper found a parallel to King Christian’s democratic policies in some of the policies of the early years of Ivan’s reign, in particular in the administrative reforms of the 1540s and 1550s. He admired the social inclusiveness of the statutory charters (*ustavnye gramoty*), such as the Beloozero charter which was addressed to all groups in the local population, ranging from princes and petty gentrymen (*deti boiarskie*) to peasants, fishermen and beaver-trappers. In response to their complaints about the abuses committed by centrally appointed judges and investigators, it granted them rights of self-government, encouraging the gentrymen and peasants to combine together to elect their representatives.<sup>23</sup> Vipper was particularly impressed by the fact that such charters were issued in response to petitions from the local people. “Consequently,” he wrote, “the higher authorities encouraged expressions of public opinion, listened to the advice of private individuals and accommodated them.”<sup>24</sup> Vipper further commented:

In the practice of contemporary Western European states one can scarcely find anything even remotely comparable to Ivan IV’s open, bold and broadly popular appeals to the population, apart from the unsuccessful attempts of King

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21. *Ibid.*: 112-113.

22. *Ibid.*: 111, 113.

23. *Ibid.*: 134-135. Vipper’s work is not footnoted, but he is clearly referring to the Beloozero anti-brigandage charter (*gubnaia ustavnaia gramota*) of 1539: see A. I. Iakovlev, ed., *Namestnich’i, gubnye i zemskie ustavnye gramoty Moskovskogo gosudarstva* (Moscow: Tipografiia Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1909): 51-53; for an English translation, see H. W. Dewey, ed., *Muscovite Judicial Texts, 1488-1556* (Ann Arbor: Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 1966): 33-34.

24. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 135. Valerie Kivelson cites a similar document as evidence that Ivan IV presented himself as a ruler who was “responsive, concerned, and attentive” to “popular initiatives and demands”: V. A. Kivelson, *op. cit.*: 492; idem, “Merciful Father, Impersonal State: Russian Autocracy in Comparative Perspective,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 31:3 (July 1997): 651. In the view of a pre-revolutionary historian, these reforms of local administration showed that the government “hearkened keenly to the voice of the Russian land”: Sergei A. Shumakov, *Gubnye i zemskie gramoty Moskovskogo gosudarstva* (Moscow: Universitetskaiia tipografiia, 1895): 47.

Christian II of Denmark to break through the wall of noble privileges and alleviate the position of the serfs — attempts which were suppressed by both the revolts and the pamphleteering of the “grandees.”<sup>25</sup>

Vipper adduces a number of other examples of the “democratism” and “populism” of Ivan’s entourage in the 1540s and 1550s. The frescoes in the Golden Palace of the Moscow Kremlin, painted in 1547-1552, and probably commissioned by the young tsar’s mentor, the priest Sil’vestr, depicted a young ruler as a just judge and fearless warrior who bestowed alms on beggars. Vipper commented that these pictures displayed “a definite social tendency, and in general the government liked to stress its democratism, its attentiveness to the simple folk, the lower strata of the people.”<sup>26</sup> Vipper was also impressed by the “Address to benevolent tsars,” a proposal for land reform which championed the interests of the peasants against their landlords. The proposal was not implemented, but Vipper cited it as evidence of “that populism which the government permitted the public to voice, and which it was willing to heed.”<sup>27</sup> He also attributed “democratism” to the former Metropolitan Ioasaf, who at the Hundred-Chapters Council of 1551 proposed that peasants should be relieved of the tax imposed for the ransoming of prisoners of war, and that the burden of payment should be transferred to rich bishops and monasteries.<sup>28</sup> Even the publicist Ivan Peresvetov was depicted by Vipper as a populist and democrat, although the objects of Peresvetov’s “democratic” concern were the petty servicemen, rather than the peasantry.<sup>29</sup>

In relation to the policies of the later period of Ivan’s reign, Vipper cited the chronicle account of the introduction of the *oprichnina*, in which, he wrote, the tsar’s proclamations of January 1565 from Aleksandrova Sloboda to Moscow “divided his subjects into sheep and goats, and allocated them his mercy and his wrath respectively,” condemning the boyars and officials for their extortions and abuses of the population, but assuring the merchants and ordinary inhabitants of Moscow of his continued favour.<sup>30</sup> Finally, Vipper mentioned the assembly of the land of 1566 which, unlike earlier assemblies, included representatives of the merchants and traders. “This addition,” he wrote, “in endowing the assembly with a national (*vsenarodnyi*) character, was consistent with the democratic tendency

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25. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 135.

26. *Ibid.*: 134. Vipper named his source as I. E. Zabelin: cf. Ivan Zabelin, *Domashnii byt russkikh tsarei v XVI i XVII stoletiiakh, chast’ I* (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul’tury, 2000), reprint of 4th ed. (1918): 154-178.

27. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 135-136. This source is now known as “Pravitel’nitsa” and attributed to Ermolai-Erazm: see *Pamiatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi. Konets XV — pervaiia polovina XVI veka* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1984): 652-663.

28. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 136-137. See E. B. Emchenko, *Stoglav. Issledovanie i tekst* (Moscow: Indrik, 2000): 412.

29. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 152-156, 159. For Peresvetov’s writings, see *Sochineniia I. S. Peresvetova*, ed. A. A. Zimin (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1956).

30. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 155-156.

which the tsar had already displayed in the proclamation which he had sent in 1565 to the population of Moscow.”<sup>31</sup>

There is obviously a degree of ambiguity in Vipper’s analysis. It is not entirely clear whether he sees Ivan IV as a “democratic monarch” like Christian of Denmark, whose policy genuinely favoured the interests of the lower classes against those of the nobility, or as a populist who sought to counter the power of the aristocracy by making demagogic appeals to the masses. The latter seems more probable: in relation to Ivan’s proclamations to Moscow at the time of the introduction of the *oprichnina*, for example, Vipper refers to the tsar’s “populist tendency” and his “skill of a demagogue.”<sup>32</sup>

The concept of a “democratic monarchy” in the Russian context is of course highly problematic, since there is little evidence that the policies of the Muscovite rulers actually benefited the ordinary people at the expense of the nobility: rather, the opposite case is more persuasive, especially when one considers the process of enserfment. In certain cases, of course, the interests of the state and those of the ordinary people did coincide and came into conflict with those of the elites — for example, in campaigns against corrupt officials.<sup>33</sup> But overall, although the sixteenth-century Russian monarch may have had greater power vis-a-vis his nobles than was the case in states to the west, such as Poland, this hardly made him a “people’s tsar.”

By using terminology such as “democratic monarchy,” however, Vipper’s work draws our attention to an important and distinctive feature of the Muscovite state in this period: the socially divisive populist rhetoric which accompanied so much official policy in the mid-sixteenth century (and which co-existed somewhat uneasily with the official ideology of a cohesive and united society on which the neo-Slavophiles of both East and West have focussed). A classic example of this populist discourse can — as Vipper noted — be found in the two messages which the tsar sent to Moscow from Aleksandrova Sloboda on 3 January 1565, when he threatened to abdicate the throne. In his first message, Ivan criticised the boyars and “chancellery people,” citing not only the damage they had done to the state during his minority, but also the harm they had caused to the ordinary people (*liudem mnogie ubytki delali i kazny ego gosudar’skie toshchili*). The boyars had shown no concern for their sovereign and his state, nor for “all Orthodox Christians,” but instead they had inflicted violence upon the latter (*krestianom nasilie chiniti*) and had failed to defend them against invaders. In his second message, addressed to the “merchants and traders and all the Orthodox Christians” of Moscow, the tsar assured them that they were exempt from his wrath and disfavour.<sup>34</sup>

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31. *Ibid.*: 159.

32. *Ibid.*: 155.

33. See, for example, M. Perri [Maureen Perrie], “Sudebnik 1550 g., narodnyi monarchizm i bor’ba s korruptsiei v Rossii v XVI-XVII stoletiiakh,” in *Sudebnik 1497 g. v kontekste istorii rossiiskogo i zarubezhnogo prava XI-XIX vv.*, ed. A. N. Sakharov (Moscow: Parad, 2000): 211-221.

34. *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* (hereafter *PSRL*), vol. XIII (St Petersburg, 1904), reprinted (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul’tury, 2000): 392.

In his message to the elites, Ivan referred to abuses of the *kormlenie* system as an example of the crimes committed by the boyars.<sup>35</sup> *Kormlenie* (literally, “feeding”) was a system of local administration in which centrally appointed provincial governors were remunerated by the local population in cash and kind for the services which they provided. The charters of 1555 which abolished *kormlenie* had cited abuses of the system as the main reason for the reform, and had used language similar to that of the tsar’s 1565 missive when they described the damage suffered by the local people. In the charters, the peasants were said to have complained that the governors had “caused them great harm and losses” (*chiniat im prodazhi i ubytki velikie*); as a result, the tsar, “pitying the peasants for these great damages and losses” had decided to remove the governors and replace them with local institutions of self-government.<sup>36</sup>

The Soviet historian N. E. Nosov described the “love of the peasants” (*krest’ianoliubie*) expressed in these charters as “blatant political demagogy.”<sup>37</sup> Terms such as “demagogy” and “democratism” were frequently used by Soviet scholars to characterise such bids for popular support, issued in the tsar’s name. As Marxists who regarded the autocratic state as the instrument of the “feudal” class of the landed nobility, they were obliged to present its expressions of concern for the lower classes as hypocritical and cynically manipulative. For those who see the state as an autonomous political force which is able to negotiate with various social groupings, however, the tsar’s bids for popular support are less blameworthy. Vipper, for example, who used the terms “populism” and “demagogy” virtually interchangeably, wrote admiringly of “the skill of the dynasty, which was able to stand above classes and keep them in strict subordination and order.”<sup>38</sup>

Soviet scholars often resorted to the concept of “social demagogy” in order to explain the belief of the ordinary Russian people that the tsar was their friend and protector against “traitor-boyars” and corrupt officials — a belief which they described as “naive peasant monarchism” or “monarchist illusions” (thereby implying a kind of false consciousness inculcated into the masses by the elites). In my own recent work I have preferred to use the term “monarchist populism” rather than “demagogy,”<sup>39</sup> and I have argued that it may indeed have contributed to the formation of “popular monarchism.”

The official chronicle account of the introduction of the *oprichnina*, which we have already cited, supports the idea that there was an inter-relationship between monarchist populism and popular monarchism. On hearing the tsar’s messages

35. *Ibid.*, vol. XIII: 392.

36. See, for example, S. A. Shumakov, *op. cit.*: 110.

37. N. E. Nosov, *Stanovlenie soslovno-predstavitel’nykh uchrezhdenii v Rossii: izyskaniia o zemskoi reforme Ivan Groznogo* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1969): 378.

38. R. Iu. Vipper (1998), *op. cit.*: 201.

39. See, for example, Maureen Perrie, “Popular Monarchism: the Myth of the Ruler from Ivan the Terrible to Stalin,” in Geoffrey Hosking and Robert Service, eds., *Reinterpreting Russia* (London: Arnold, 1999): 164, 167.

from Aleksandrova Sloboda, the ordinary citizens of Moscow petitioned the tsar, “not to abandon the state, not to give them to the wolves to devour, but to deliver them from the hands of the mighty (*sil’nye*).” They also offered to assist Ivan in his campaign against the “evil-doers and traitors,” saying that “they would not support them and would themselves destroy them.”<sup>40</sup> This account suggests that the Muscovites accepted Ivan’s depiction of himself as their protector against exploitation by the boyars, and were willing to present themselves in turn as his allies against corruption and treason.

Tsar Ivan’s use of populist devices, therefore, may have contributed to his positive popular image among contemporaries, and subsequently to his representation in folklore as a “good” tsar.<sup>41</sup> The notion of an alliance of tsar and commons against “traitor-boyars” and corrupt officials reappeared in popular revolts in the seventeenth century, when it mobilised “rebels in the name of the tsar.”<sup>42</sup> This provides a strong indication that the rhetoric of “monarchist populism” had been accepted by the ordinary people, and could be used by them against the elites.<sup>43</sup> Thus while notions of the Muscovite state as a popular or democratic monarchy of the type described by Mironov, Solonevich or Vipper must be rejected as somewhat romanticised and idealised, it is undoubtedly the case that sixteenth-century Russian rulers frequently employed populist rhetoric against the elites, in order to mobilise popular support for their policies; and that the populace in its turn made use of this discourse in order to promote its own interests. The inter-related languages of monarchist populism and popular monarchism comprise a distinctive feature of Muscovite political culture which deserves further investigation by historians.

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40. *PSRL*, vol. XIII: 393.

41. Maureen Perrie, *The Image of Ivan the Terrible in Russian Folklore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), paperback reprint (2002).

42. See, for example, M. Perri [Maureen Perrie], “V chem sostoiala ‘izmena’ zhertv narodnykh vosstaniy XVII veka?,” in I. O. Tiumentsev, ed., *Rossia XV-XVIII stoletii: sbornik nauchnykh rabot* (Volgograd — St Petersburg: Volgogradskii gosudarstvennyi universitet, 2001): 207-220.

43. Valerie Kivelson, who is concerned primarily with gentry petitioners, sees seventeenth-century protestors as operating within the official ideology of an integrated society, although she recognises that they protested primarily against the actions of the “powerful” boyars and officials. See Valerie A. Kivelson, “The Devil Stole his Mind: the Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising,” *American Historical Review*, 98:3 (June 1993): 742-745; idem, *Autocracy in the Provinces. The Muscovite Gentry and Political Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996): 230-232, 242-248.

