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José María Pino Suárez 400-2 esq a Lerdo de Tejada. Toluca, Estado de México. 7223898475*

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**TÍTULO:** La opinión del pueblo y del poder supremo: sobre la naturaleza de la relación entre el soberano y sus ciudadanos en Rusia a mediados del siglo XVI.

**AUTORES:**

1. Dr. Mikhail B. Rumyantsev.
2. Dr. Vitaly V. Penskov.
3. Dra. Olga V. Batova.
4. Dr. Sergey Yu. Sumenkov.
5. Dr. Vladislav Yu. Turanin.

**RESUMEN:** Según los autores, la eficacia del trabajo de la maquinaria estatal de Moscú estaba determinada, en gran medida, por el alcance de los canales de retroalimentación dentro del poder supremo. En el verano de 1547, la pasividad del poder supremo en la investigación de los hechos de abuso de los gobernantes, la eliminación de las consecuencias del incendio, junto con el aumento de los impuestos y las malas cosechas y el subsiguiente aumento del precio del pan, llevó a la rebelión de los ciudadanos en Moscú y obligó a Iván IV a dialogar y satisfacer sus demandas.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** periodo moderno temprano, régimen político, estado ruso, autocracia.

**TITLE:** Opinion of the people and the supreme power: about the nature of the relationship between the sovereign and his nationals in Russia in the middle of the XVI century.

**AUTHORS:**

1. Dr. Mikhail B. Rumyantsev.
2. Dr. Vitaly V. Penskoj.
3. Dra. Olga V. Batova.
4. Dr. Sergey Yu. Sumenkov.
5. Dr. Vladislav Yu. Turanin.

**ABSTRACT:** According to the authors, the effectiveness of the work of the Moscow state machine was largely determined by the extent of feedback channels within the supreme power. In the summer of 1547, the passivity of the supreme power in investigating the facts of abuse of governors, eliminating the consequences of the fire, coupled with the growth of taxes and crop failures and subsequent rise in the price of bread led to the rebellion of citizens in Moscow and forcing Ivan IV to dialogue and satisfy their demands.

**KEY WORDS:** Early Modern period, political regime, Russian state, autocracy.

**INTRODUCTION.**

In the historical drama of the Russian poet, writer and playwright A.S. Pushkin “Boris Godunov”, narrating about the beginning of the Time of Troubles in the Russian state at the beginning of the 17th century, is a remarkable dialogue between the governor of the young Tsar Fedor Godunov, Peter Basmanov, and the supporter of the False Dmitry I, Gavrila Pushkin.

Basmanov in a conversation with Pushkin said that the power of Godunov was unshakable, because the army was on his side. The following words, uttered by Pushkin, responded to the governor: “But do you know how strong we are, Basmanov? Not with an army, no, not with Polish help, but by an opinion; yes! opinion of the people. You remember the triumph of Dimitri and his peaceful conquests, when everywhere, without a shot, the obedient cities surrendered. And the mob was knitting the stubborn governors? You saw it yourself, willingly your hosts battled with him ...”.

Accidentally we have paid attention to this sentence? No, not by chance. The great Russian poet, not being a historian and not possessing the skills and the amount of knowledge of a specialist, which is engaged in the history of the Russian state and its institutions in the early Modern period, nevertheless, intuitively found and expressed in figurative form one of the most characteristic features of states in that period. Historian N. Kollmann, describing this side of their political regime, noted almost two centuries later that «in all these states, legitimacy was grounded not only in the measured deployment of state-sanctioned violence, but also in the state’s fulfillment, to a greater or lesser degree, of expectations that the ruler would respond to his people, respect tradition and provide security» (Kollmann, 2012; Konaş, 2016; Nasution & Sinaga, 2017; Nidya, Wulandari & Jailani, 2015).

So, the legitimacy of the early modern states was based not only on violence of the supreme power, more or less ordered by means of the systematization and codification of law and the improvement of administrative and judicial practices.

At the early stages, its significant component was the trust that the submitted people were ready to render to the authority if it responded to the prevailing views in public opinion how should be the “correct”, and therefore legitimate, legitimate power. And Russia of early Modern period was no exception in this series. The same N. Kollmann wrote in her work that “as powerful as the tsar claimed to be, his legitimacy was based on popular expectations that he be pious, render justice, succor the

poor and respond to his people” (Kollmann, 2012. 386). Denying the supreme power of legitimacy as inappropriate to these requirements, society, thus, questioned its existence. And the sad fate of the Godunovs dynasty (Boris Godunov’s sudden death accelerated dynasty’s fall - his son Fyodor failed to keep power in his hands and was strangled during a palace coup), and of the False Dmitry I, who was overthrown by a palace coup too, and also of Vasily Shuisky, replaced the False Dmitry, just confirms these observations. On the contrary, exactly the trust taking into confidence by the “land” at the Zemsky Sobor of 1613 to Mikhail Romanov and his “party” allowed that the new dynasty to gain a foothold on the throne and hold on for 304 years.

But it is curiously that N. Kollmann, examining the question of the legitimacy of royal power in the eyes of Russian society, the “land”, took the events of the “rebellious” XVII century as an example, or to be precise, the series of revolts and unrest in the period of the rule of Mikhail Romanov’s son, Alexei Mikhailovich “the Quiet”, in the course of which this mechanism of legitimizing of the supreme power manifested itself through its interaction with the “land”, with the very “opinion of the people”. But did this mechanism of legitimizing the supreme power and a kind of feedback between the sovereign and his subjects work before, with the last Rurikovichs - with the same Ivan the Terrible? Let's try to answer this question.

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Methodology.**

According to the good old tradition established since the days of the dominance of positivistic approaches to the study of history, in analyzing the features of the functioning of the state mechanism of a state formation, priority was given to its aspects, which we would call “external”, lying on the surface and performing in a certain extent representative functions.

As noted R.W. Scribner, historians of state and law traditionally focus on studying “observable structures of state and its prescriptive legislation at the expense of close examination of practical difficulties the state encountered in the pursuit of its own goals” (Scribner, 1987. 103).

These “external” sides of his work, a kind of “form”, are quite reliable, hid for the time being from the gaze of researchers its essence, “content”, those internal springs that put the whole mechanism into action and give it its distinctive character and characteristics, peculiar only to him.

As applied to the early-modern states, the turn towards the study of this “internal”, seemingly hidden side of the stowage and functioning of the state machine was outlined not so long ago - in the last quarter of the last century. Exactly then, the increasing attention was paid to the study of what J. Brewer called «sinews of power», or, in other words, the creation (more precisely, the perfection, because, in our opinion the development of political, legal, administrative institutions and practices in the late Middle Ages and early Modern period went on an evolutionary path) of the corresponding to the challenges of the time “musculature”, the infrastructure of power as the center and in regions. These “sinews of power”, noted by N. Kollmann, mentioned earlier by us, represented “new taxes and bureaucratic institutions to administer territory collect revenues and mobilize human and material resources”, and they found their legislative reinforcement and legitimation “by new codifications of the law and new centralized judicial systems”, confessional politics and the development of a corresponding political ideology closely related to the latter and based on it (Kollmann, 2012. 1-2). Willingly or unwittingly transferring the realities of modernity for them to early Modern period, the researchers of the “old” school, fixing political, administrative and legal changes and taking at face value loud political declarations and the “power scenarios” played out at the political foreground, characterized the early-modern states as “centralized”. Thus, they emphasized their fundamental difference from the loose, unconsolidated politicians of the Middle Ages and opposed the “centralization” of the early-modern monarchies of medieval “feudal fragmentation”. However, were

the early-modern states so “centralized”? Is it possible to assume that the phrase attributed to the tradition of “the Sun King” Louis XIV “L’etat c’est moi” reflected the political, administrative and legal realities of early Modern period?

This question, perhaps, should be answered rather negatively than affirmatively. Of course, in the course of the gradual evolution of state institutions in the era of the early Modern period the state, the supreme power gradually, step by step, expanded the scope of its authority, its jurisdiction and competence, pushing the "land" into the background. However, this process turned out to be stretched for several centuries and even in the XVIII century in the same France, which is considered to be a country of classical, “exemplary” absolutism, was far from complete.

As noted by S. Carroll, at that time “France was a composite polity, a state which imperfectly melded together regions with distinctive and varying identities” (Carroll, 2006. 331), and N. Kollmann added to this characteristic that “France’s vaunted absolutism was accomplished by skillful accommodation with provincial nobilities, guilds, municipalities and other intermediary bodies, and by recognition of regional languages, over 300 provincial and local customary law codes and age-old seigneurial privileges” (Kollmann, 2012. 19). What can we speak in this case, for example, about the United Kingdom or Spain?

The concept of “compositeness” of an internal political, administrative and legal structure, inherent not only for France, but also, to a greater or lesser extent, for all early-modern states of Europe, proposed by H.G. Koenigsberger and developed by J.H. Elliott, in our opinion, more objectively reveals their essence than the concept of “centralization” (see, for example: Elliott, 1992). This “compositeness” suggested, in particular, that in conditions when “sixteenth-century Europe was a Europe of composite states, coexisting with a myriad of smaller territorial and jurisdictional units jealously guarding their independent status” (see: Herberstein, et al. 1851. 51), and the supreme power has not yet increased sufficiently the notorious “musculature”, which would allow it to gain a certain

independence from the “people's opinion”, the latter retained its importance for monarchs who wish to preserve loyalty and obedience of the subjects, that guaranteed their readiness to make certain sacrifices for a satisfaction of *raison d'État* (under which, at that time, it was worth understanding, above all, the dynastic interest and that in the Russian state of that era it was called short and pithy “the cause of the sovereign”).

### **Results and discussion.**

So, in the early modern states and Russia of the end of the XV - XVII centuries were not an exception in this series. Reliance on the “people's opinion” (meaning by it, of course, first of all, the opinion of the “political nation”, the upper stratum of a society having the capacity and desire to put pressure on the supreme power to achieve its often particular goals) gave to the authority the necessary “credibility” and provided to it a certain space for maneuver in solving urgent foreign and domestic political tasks. However, did such a mechanism for coordinating the interests of the reign of Ivan the Terrible, which entered into history as a ruthless tyrant and despot, worked?

At first glance, the answer to this question is completely obvious. Another imperial diplomat and memoirist S. Herberstein wrote about the father of Ivan Vasily III, that “in the sway which he holds over his people, he surpasses all the monarchs of the whole world” and his subjects “oppresses nearly all of them with close confinement” (Koenigsberger, 1978. 30). Ivan the Terrible, in accordance with the established historiographic tradition, went further than his father. But is there not here a previously noted contradiction between loud declarations designed for an inexperienced listener and the real course of the “sovereign's cause”?

Perhaps, in this case, the answer to this question will be affirmative. To substantiate these declarations to life Ivan the Terrible should have had the appropriate “musculature” of power, but with the latter, the situation was not very good. Of course, if we compare the state apparatus of the Russian state in the times of Ivan the Terrible, especially at the final stage of his reign, with the machine that Ivan III

or Vasily III possessed, then there will be changes. But these changes will be more significant than epoch-making - their effect will be affected much later, after Ivan's death, with a new dynasty.

More or less streamlined fiscal system, a standing army, professional administrative and bureaucratic apparatus, all these "sinews of power" of Ivan the Terrible, although have already taken shape and are gaining more and more power, nevertheless, they have not yet become an component and infeasible part of the Moscow political "discourse" (it was not by chance that the aristocratic opposition to Ivan the Terrible harshly criticized him for the preference which he allegedly rendered to rootless ones, in terms of the noble boyars, lectors and clerks).

Consequently, the named institutions and structures could not yet be a reliable pillar of the first Russian tsar. Here, by the way, we should not forget one more important point – could Ivan, a man educated in a completely conservative environment and imbibed, as they say, with mother's milk, the values of an aristocratic court culture, so immediately, without a peep, abandon the traditional, powerful administrative practices tested by several generations of Moscow authorities. We note in this regard that the notorious Oprichnina, in our opinion, was an attempt of Ivan the Terrible to solve the issue of reliable control over the state machine, which was provided by mechanisms for coordinating the interests of various court "parties" and groupings within the framework of traditional political and administrative "discourse".

Taking into account the "opinion of the people" was an indispensable element of Moscow's administrative and legal practices, without which they lost a significant part of their effectiveness, by only the simple reason that, as N. Kollmann noted, "in early-modern Russia, the state had too few officials on the ground in its vast and sparsely populated empire to accomplish its needs without relying on local villagers to staff and support centrally assigned officials» (Brewer, 1989. 425). Note that this circumstance was pointed out by Academician Pokrovsky back in 1991 (See: Alekseev, 1991. 5-6).



Without the support of the “land” and reliance on its administrative and legal structures and institutions that were formed over the centuries, the wheels of the state machine would turn idle and the sovereign could not perform those functions that the church entrusted to him within the framework of the “royal” “discourse”. A list of those functions and responsibilities looked very, very impressive - enough to recall at least the famous message of the Rostov Archbishop Vassian Snout, directed to Ivan III on the critical days of the late autumn of 1480, when the fate of the Russian state was decided on the Ugra River.

Ivan the Terrible, a “bookish” person and knowledgeable (thanks to Metropolitan Macarius) in the essence of this “discourse”, could not but take into account his demands, carrying out his activities as an Orthodox sovereign. It seems, however, that he did not immediately come to the realization of this role. In any case, in his address to the Stoglav Cathedral, he wrote that the turning point in his life was the great Moscow fire in the summer of 1547 and the unrest in the capital caused by it (Stoglav, 1863. 31).

Up to this point, the sovereign’s ear was deaf to the “people’s opinion”, as it was, for example, in the summer of 1546, when a delegation of Novgorod shooters- arkebuzirov tried to submit a request to 16-year-old Ivan with a request to take in the situation of abuses perpetrated by local administrators in recruiting martial people and supplies for the campaign against Kazan. Ivan refused to accept the complainants, and then, they considered themselves in law (according to tradition, the sovereign was obliged to listen to the complainants and to execute the right trial of bribe-takers and grafters, indicated, for example, by the famous church ideologist of the beginning of the 16th century Joseph Volotsky (Iosif Volotskij, 2007. 183, 184)), tried to hand over the letter by force. It caused an armed clash between Novgorod’s people and the nobles of the state guard with the victims on both sides. This tragic event did not become the last bell for Ivan, and in the autumn of the same year the picture

repeated, evidence of this is the assessment by the Pskov and Novgorod chroniclers of the visit of the young sovereign to Pskov and Novgorod.

In Novgorod, the chronicler noted, surrounding Ivan, his brother Yuri and cousin Vladimir, the court behaved “arrogantly”, and in Pskov, according to the local scribe, the grand duke did not do what was expected from him — he did not take up legal proceedings and restore order, but instead caused great losses to local communities by demanding gifts and reimbursement of travel expenses. Dissatisfied Pskov's people sent a delegation to Moscow with a request to punish the sovereign governor in Pskov, the duke Pronsky Turuntay, who was in favor at the court of the young sovereign.

A large delegation of Pskov arrived on June 3, 1547 to the Grand Duke in his country village Ostrovok not at the right time - less than a month and a half after the big fire in Moscow, the city was restless, searched, tortured and executed suspects of arson. The disgruntled Ivan gave to the complainants a cool deal - according to the chronicler, they were dishonored, and they were only saved by the news that the bell of the Annunciation's Cathedral in the Kremlin collapsed in the capital and Ivan hurried to Moscow, again refusing to consider the complaint.

The ill-treatment of the complainants and the apparent non-fulfillment by the sovereign of the duties of the “royal” “discourse” inflamed the already tense situation in Moscow. On June 21, 1547 another fire occurred in the capital, surpassing all previous Moscow fires. In a fire that burned all day and died away only at night, most of the city burned down, and nearly 2,000 Muscovites died (according to other sources, a thousand or even two more), the survivors lost everything that they had been making for years.

The inaction of the authorities led to the fact that on June 26 Moscow was stirred up. At the meeting of the popular assembly the people of the dukes Glinsky were declared guilty of fires, and about the Glinsky themselves at the meeting it was said that they had set fires in anticipation of the invasion of the Crimean Tatars, who allegedly stood in Pol, expecting news from Moscow (See: 12. 621).

Aroused by all this news, Moscow residents from the popular assembly rushed to catch and kill the Glinsky people (and along with them, servicemen from the south-western border, differing from Muscovites in terms of their dialect and habits, came under attack) and robbed their possessions. Tsar's uncle (by mother) duke Yu.V. Glinsky was pulled out of the church, where he prayed, and publicly killed.

Execution of Glinsky (in that it was a penalty, no doubt – the popular assembly passed their sentence to the duke, accusing him and his people for fires and need to think in bribery too, and the crowd carried out the sentence), Moscow residents organized and armed as for a war campaign, they then went to the village of Vorobyevo near Moscow, where the king himself was at that time with his family and court. On July 29, Ivan had a meeting with a delegation of Moscow residents, demanding to extradite duke Mikhail Glinsky, the brother of duke Yuri, who was executed as per the profane sentence, and their mother, princess Anna Glinsky, accused of witchcraft. They were not in Vorobiev, since Mikhail Glinsky was a governor in Rzhev, and Princess Anna was with him, and it allowed to Ivan to save his relatives by agreeing with the Muscovites.

The Novgorod chronicle reports the curious detail. According to her testimony, Ivan was horrified when a crowd of armed Muscovites came to him in his residence, and entered into negotiations with them. He allowed (in such way it is possible to interpret the chronicle text) to inspect his residence for the purpose of staying of the Glinsky's, accused of a crime, there and made a promise not to impose disgraces on the Muscovites (later punishing only the instigators of the riot).

The meeting of Ivan IV with the Moscow residents had a result. The peculiar mechanism of feedback ensuring communication between the supreme power and the subjects worked, and it is obvious that the results of the tsar's communication with the people satisfied the latter. Unrest in Moscow began to decline and order was gradually restored. The tsar himself took the lesson very seriously, which was taught to him in the hot July days of that year, and later did not neglect his duties as an Orthodox

sovereign. This is clearly illustrated by subsequent events - at least Ivan's penitential speech, delivered by him to the participants of the Stoglav Cathedral. And in the future, the tsar tried not to deviate from the image assigned to him by the tradition.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

The events of June 1547 in Moscow are the very case that N. Kollmann wrote about, analyzing the Moscow rebellions of the time of Alexei Mikhailovich, that they unfolded “as a ritual drama between the ruler and the people, a drama that acted out and tested the tsar’s legitimacy”.

As in 1648 or 1662, in the summer of 1547, unrest began “when abuse was too great, taxation and service too burdensome (indeed, the chronicles mention the crop failure and the high cost of bread in 1547, as well as the increase in taxes in connection with the upcoming war with the Kazan Khanate - Aut.), and government too unresponsive», and Ivan IV, like and his successor, also had to enter into direct communication with the people, “playing the role of mediator and judge, as the crowd invoked traditional rights to petition and claim face-to-face interaction with the sovereign as father figure” (Kollmann, 2012. 386).

It is worth noting that the young tsar was not talking to the crowd, but to a completely organized people, and this organized nature, as noted by N. Kollmann, “transformed this exchange from uncontrolled violence into righteous dialogue” (Kollmann, 2012. 389). And the fact that the scenario in which the people communicated with the supreme power in the person of the monarch during the urban rebellions of the time of Alexei Mikhailovich, coincides in details with the events of the summer of 1547, suggests that this tradition of direct appeal of the people to the monarch was formed long before these events (it can be seen already in the events of the summer of 1381, when Moscow faced the threat of being captured by the Tatars), and that this tradition was one of the constituent elements of the Moscow political culture and the “royal” “discourse”, effectiveness of which both sides recognized and which worked in both directions.

As well as the people had the right to appeal to the monarch, so the tsar could turn for support directly to the people, hoping to receive it - this is exactly what happened in January 1565, when Ivan addressed to the Moscow residents to support the establishment of the famous Oprichnina and received their support. These interactions and interrelationships established by the tradition between the king and his people were, according to N. Kollmann, a reference point of the Moscow political system (Kollmann, 2012. 403), its head stone and if so, it can be said, the fundamental, headline article of the unwritten Moscow “constitution”, which guaranteed the stability and efficiency of the state machine of the Russian state.

Let us emphasize once again, this circumstance was perfectly realized equally by the supreme power itself and ordinary subjects of the Russian tsar, accepting this rule of the “game” and acting in accordance with him in the political foreground of the Russian history of early Modern period.

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#### **DATA OF THE AUTHORS.**

1. **Mikhail B. Rumyantsev.** Doctor in Law. Belgorod State University. Russia. Email: [mikrumjancev@rambler.ru](mailto:mikrumjancev@rambler.ru)
2. **Vitaly V. Penskoj.** Doctor in History. Belgorod State University. Russia. Email: [penskoj@bsu.edu.ru](mailto:penskoy@bsu.edu.ru)

**3. Olga V. Batova.** Doctor in Law. ITMO University (Saint Petersburg National Research University of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics). Russia. Email: [batova-7878@mail.ru](mailto:batova-7878@mail.ru)

**4. Sergey Yu. Sumenkov.** Doctor in Law. Penza State University. Russia. Email: [sumenkov@bk.ru](mailto:sumenkov@bk.ru)

**5. Vladislav Yu. Turanin.** Doctor in Law. Belgorod State University. Russia. Email: [turanin@mail.ru](mailto:turanin@mail.ru)

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