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ON THE ORIGIN OF 'PODYACHII' (ASSISTANT CLERKS) IN THE FIRST THIRD OF THE XVIITH CENTURY

SUMMARY. The question of origins of assistant clerks 'podyachii' of the grand duke in the first third of the XVIIth century is not enough studied in our national historiography today. The main studies are dedicated to clerks 'dyaki' of the grand duke. Different authors agree that "a clerk" and "an assistant clerk" were people of the same origin. On the grounds of the analysis of assembly and business documents, books with descriptions of immovable property, class and ambassadorial books, the author reconstructed personnel of assistant clerks of the period. On the grounds of prosopographic method in the profession of the assistant clerk the noble trait is found: the group of hereditary clerks, whose fathers served as clerks or assistant clerks; the group formed from the "democratic" layer of the population — the clergy, townsfolk and palace servants. The author also refers assistant clerks to the last category, as their social origin cannot be determined. To sum up, the author came to the conclusion that, basically, the assistant clerks' origin of this period lies in the "democratic" layer of the population. The layer of the nobles among assistant clerks was not great in comparison with clerks who were mainly from the nobles. A resistless barrier did not exist between assistant clerks and clerks. A part of assistant clerks became clerks. However, in the first place the assistant clerks from the noble class raised their social status.

KEY WORDS. 'Podyachiy' (assistant clerk); social origin; 'dyaki' (clerks), children of boyars.

The problem of the social origin of clerks is not often touched upon in our historiography. From what caste groups did the government draw its personnel for clerical work, for document management of governmental initiatives? Typically, researchers deal with this issue in passing, either in the context of general historical research, or in the process of research into the changes in the development of the mandative system. In this case, the authors' attention is focused mainly on the origin of the clerks. One of the few exceptions is the work by N.F. Demidova, who not only investigated the question of the origin of the metropolitan and provincial clerks of the 17th century, but also made an important methodological conclusion, "the main

issue concerns the training of subclerks, for the question of training clerks is derivative” [1; 52]. The reason is that most of the clerks in the era explored by N.F. Demidova became clerks after having served as under-clerks. The question of the social origins of the clerks in the 16th century remained open until now. This article is an attempt to fill this gap in the historiography of mandative bureaucracy.

Identification of the full staff of clerks serving the Grand Knyaz' Vasily Ivanovich is a problem in itself. To date, we know of 103 clerks in the period studied.

Of these, 15 (14.6%) came from noble families.

In two cases, there is evidence about the clerks' fathers, on the basis of which we can make a conclusion about their origin. Ivan Grigoryevich *Shchekin* (1), most probably, was the brother of Alexei Grigoryevich Maliy *Shchekin* (2). The generality of surnames and occupation leaves no doubt about it. Consequently, Ivan is likely to be the son of a Novgorod landowner Gregor Semenov, son of Mikulin Shchokin.

There is one direct reference to the sources. Fedor Rudak Vasilyevich *Ushakov* (3) and his older brothers, Ivan and Nikita, were sons of a Novgorod landlord. This is indicated by scribe books of Bezhetskaya pyatina (1538-39) [2; 199-200]. Any services of the brothers are unknown. Probably they, like most Novgorod sons of noble families, served in the city.

One clerk served in noble service before becoming a clerk. Fedor *Leontiev* J. (4) in 1520-21 judged the Marinina Sloboda land-dispute in Pereslavsky County [3; 66-71]. Of course, cases of this kind concerned not only boyars' sons. However, taking into consideration the decent career of the sons of Fedor Leontiev, we can relate him to the number of “people serving the fatherland”.

On the basis of data on close relatives, five come from noble families.

Stepan Konstantinovich *Buzheninov* (5): in 1555-1556 the estate in Ilyinskoe on Syas churchyard of Obonezhskaya pyatina belonged to Ivan Konstantinov Buzheninov. Nearby another estate was situated, which formerly belonged to Stepan Konstantinov Buzhenin. There are also descriptions of estates which belonged to Tretiak and Bogdan Yarov Buzheninovs and Ivan Dmitriev Nekludov Buzheninin [4; 40-41]. It is clear that Buzhenin, Buzheninov and Buzheninin are different spellings of the same surname. Stepan was a clerk, and Ivan was his brother. If the scribes did not change the information about the rank or position of the landowner, then, most likely, he would be the son of a landowner. If the clerk's brother was from the nobility, the clerk himself, apparently, came from the same background.

The history of the clerk's surname *Plemyannikov* is reconstructed by S.B. Veselovskiy [5; 414-415]. Its founder, Levka Plemyannik, is referred to in the second quarter of the 15th century as a landowner in the Vorya parish of the Moscow district [6; 98, 110, 131]. There is no data about his service.

Leonti had two sons, Mihail and Semen. The older one is known only as an individual person [6; 543]. Semen became a clerk of Ivan III and Vasily III.

Mihail had three sons, Sebastian, Ivan and Dementiy; Semen — one, Vladimir. Dementiy (6) and Vladimir made a career as clerks, continuing the tradition of their father and uncle. Sebastian and Ivan are known only as individuals. In 1533-34, the

brothers Sebastian and Ivan did paperwork for their cousin Vladimir in the Korzenevskaya parish of the Moscow district. Both were called “boyarskiye deti” (children of boyars) of the Great Knyaz’ [7; p. 507, back 509]. There is no evidence about their descendants. The last known source generation of Plemyannikovs is represented by two sons (Ivan and Lavrenty) and two daughters (Maria and Praskovya) of the clerk Vladimir Semenovich. They are known only as individuals.

Thus, we see that for a hundred years of history over four generations there is no career development. Except for the paperwork, their specific service is unknown. This lack of information is likely to indicate that the Plemyannikovs belonged to ordinary provincial nobility and served as city’s “boyarskiye deti” .

The elder brother of Menshik *Putiatin*, Sumorok (7) began his service with an appointment as bailiff to foreign ambassadors [8; 327]. All these are mainly services of the nobility. So there can be a fairly high probability of both Sumorok and Menshik belonging to the service class.

The father of the clerk Afanasiy Grigoryevich *Kalikin* (8) Grigory Kalikin was a landowner in Dmitrov. On approximately June 16, 1504, he acquired the village Schepino on the border of Moscow and Dmitrov districts [9; 393]. On this basis, from the number of the clerk’s ancestors we can immediately exclude people from the “democratic” layers of the population, except, perhaps, the palace servants and small not-serving estate owners.

Afanasiy was married to one Elena Vladimirovna, who previously was married to Nikita Fedorovich Zhabin [10; 74]. About him no biographical information has been found. Nikita had three brothers, Ivan, Philip and Andrew, and three sons, Daniel, Ivan and Vasily. All of them are known only as individuals, small land owners in Moscow district [10; 74-75]. In the middle of the 16th century, the Zhabins were described as a “litva dvorovaya” in Mozhaysk and Medyn [11; 187, 207]. This surname is relatively rare and occurs only among the nobility. It is believed that the Muscovite Zhabins were also of noble origin. Elena, being married to the son of a boyarin, probably was from a noble family herself. Thus, Afanasiy Kalikin can be considered a son of the nobility.

Istoma Stepanovich *Chertovskoy* (9) came from Novgorod landlords of Bezhetskaya and Sheloskaya pyatins. Here the names of an elder brother of service worker Bogdan and nephews Nehoroshiy, Nehosh and Mikhail Bogdanovich are mentioned [2; 977-978], [12; 632], [13; 90], [14; 214-215]. These official services are unknown. It can be concluded that the Chertovskies were primarily related to the city nobility.

Based on anthroponimic data, we calculate the number of children from the families of boyars as three persons. *Kulibayev* is a rare surname. Over the entire study period there are only three bearers of it: the clerks Osan Vasilievich, Tikhon Semenovich (10) and Zamyatnya Ivanovich, a son of boyars. To be fair, his name was written as Zamyatnya Kulyubaev, but at the same time, one can hardly doubt that we have a case of two different spellings of the same surname. In 1561-62, Zamyatnya wrote documents in Chudskiy Stan in County Kashin [15; 148]. In 1564-5, he was among the guarantors of the knyaz’ Vasily Semenovich Serebryaniy with his son Boris [16;

42, 45, 48]. In such lists there were included only boyars' sons, from both the court and city. The Kulibayevs, taking into consideration the lack of information about them, most likely served in the city.

The Skripitsyns. In the first third of the 16th century, bearers of this name are mentioned as writers in acts and landowners in the Dmitrov, Kashino, Pereslavl and Rostov counties [7; p. 480, 483-483back], [17; 18, 73-74, 77, 79, 116, 126, 162-163, 240, 264-267, 285], [18; 343], [19; 552-552back, 555back-557], [20; 820-821], [21; 392]. The "nest" of the Skripitsyns in the analyzed period was in Pereslavl. There is little information about their service in the era of Vasily III. Dmitry Skripitsyn and Shiba Semenovich Skripitsyn in 1519 and 1525, together with other children of boyars, were in captivity in Lithuania [22; 156, 165, 166, 171, 172]. Alexei Smerd Grigorievich Skripitsyn in December 1518 was an assistant to the Lithuanian envoy Gritsko and accompanied him from Smolensk to Moscow [23; 435]. Such appointments usually happened to local Smolensk landowners. In late March — early April 1524 Ivan Skripitsyn went to Novgorod-Seversky for letters that were part of the diplomatic correspondence of the Embassy of Ivan Bryukhov and Ivan Kolychev, who were in Turkey [24; 59]. Apparently, in the first third of the 16th century, Skripitsyn served mainly with the city.

Apparently, from the Skripitsyns family of Pereslavl the Novgorod clerk Zloba Semenovich came (11). In 1538-39, he was an assistant in Dannaya in Kinelskiy Stan of Pereslavsky County [18, 270]. In the same act the Pereslavl and Novgorod landowner Ivan Denisovich Skripitsyn took part. In this case, the undeniable connection between the Pereyaslavl and Novgorod Skripitsyns serves as an additional argument to determine the social background of Zloba Semenovich. The clerk's father could be Semyon Shuba Skripitsyn. However, it is impossible to determine it with certainty. With reference to Ivan Maloy Skripitsyn (12) there are no ties with Novgorod or Pereslavl. At the same time, relying on prosopographic data about the Skripitsyns, we can quite safely conclude that Ivan Maloy was descended from a noble family.

The Novgorod clerk Tretiak Pimenov *Golovin* (13) seems to be descended from the same Novgorod landowners. His estate in the Lyacki churchyard of Shelonskaya pyatina in 1570-71 belonged to his son Bogdan [12; 559]. In Novgorod, the clerk was a stranger. Arriving from Moscow, he received the estate due to the post, and after an order from the capital handed the estate over, which would sometimes go to a new Muscovite clerk who arrived in the place of the previous one. The transfer of the estate to his son meant that the mandative figure was native-born. Beside Tretiak, in Novgorod in the first half of the 16th century several Golovins, the clerk's relatives are mentioned [25; 177-178, 198-199]. Their official services are unknown.

Rusin Shchekin *Protasov* (14), according to the scribe of the book (1587/88 – 1588/89), was a Tula landowner [26; in 1135]. Apart from him, the same source mentions Peter Yakovlevich and Yakov Karpovich Protasovs; Varvara Fedorova, a wife of Karpov Protasov and her son Tretiak [26; 1102, 1190]. In this case, Varvara and Tretiak are landlords of the same camp as Rusin Zaupskiy. It is clear that they are all relatives and children of boyars. Their official services are unknown.

The Novgorod clerk and landlord of the Derevskaya and Obonezhskaya pyatins Alexander Kurbat Vasilievich *Kharlamov* (15) most likely came from the same rank of Novgorod boyars. His father could be Vasily Ermolich Kharlamov, who at the beginning of the 16th century, with Ivan Bryukhov Ryazanov, judged the land-dispute in the Novgorod territory [27; 288-290]. Such orders often fell to local service people. It can be concluded that the clerk Kurbat Kharlamov was from the Novgorod city boyars.

Five out of 103 (4.9%) clerks of Vasily III were hereditary clerks. Ivan Tretiak was the son of the clerk Leva Glebov. In addition to purely anthroponymical data there is a record in the Assumption of the Moscow Cathedral, cited by S.B. Veselovskiy. Here are the ancestors of Tretiak stated, apparently, his father and grandfather: Gleb and a monk Leonid [5; 292-293]. Nikifor Vasilievich *Dyldin* clearly was the son of the late 15th century clerk Vasily Demidovich Dylda.

In the era of the Great Knyaz' Ivan Vasilyevich, Polushka served as a clerk to the Knyaz' Mikhail Andreevich Vereyskiy. The only record of him in sources dates back to the 1470s [28; 168]. Jacov Ivanovich *Polushkin* served the Great Knyaz' Vasily Ivanovich in the 1520s as a clerk. During the reign of Ivan IV in Shelonskaya pyatina in 1550-51 there was an estate owned by the clerk Alesha Yakovlevich Polushkin [29; 89, 95-96]. Taking into consideration the relative rarity of the surname, and the commodity of service activities, we can safely conclude that Alyosha Polushkin was the son of Jacov, and Jacov, in turn, was the son or grandson of the clerk Polushka. Jakov Ivanovich turns out to be a hereditary mandative.

Ushak Grigorievich *Sumorokov* was the son of clerk Grigori Semenovich *Sumorokov*. On March 18th and April 26th, 1524, first the father and then the son wrote two series of data from Ivan Jurevich Podzhogin and Fyodor Borisovich Borozdin at Iosipho-Volokolamsky monastery [30; 89]. The social origin of Grigory Sumorokov cannot be established. We have almost no biographical information about him. The Sumorokov surname was very common in various segments of the population.

Chirka Elizarovich Tsiplyatev clearly was the son of the clerk Yelizar Ivanovic Tsiplyatev.

10 out of 103 (9.7%) clerks of Great Knight Vasily are classified by us as people from the "democratic layers of the population".

There are two direct source indications. Ambassadorial books of foreign ambassadors give the name of "Elka the clerk, *Sergeev* the priest's son" (1) [8; 92]. The palace clerk Ivan *Yakovlev* Junior was also from the religious environment (2). It is stated in the trade paper, written by him: "Iwashko court clerk, son of *Yakovlev*" [30; 24].

The clerk Artemy Pskovitin (3) is known only from reports of the First Pskov chronicles as a close assistant of the clerk Misyur Munekhin. The clerk came to Pskov from Moscow. For this reason, not by chance, the chronicler names Artyom as Pskovitin. It is clear that "pskovitin" in this context is "a resident of Pskov" in contrast to his superior. The lack of the clerk's surname, too, is most likely, not accidental. He did not have a surname because of his origin from "common people". Most likely, Artemy came from a layer of Pskov townspeople.

Based on anthroponymics, Ostanya *Kuznetsov* can be attributed to the clerks with an origin among townspeople (4). Surnames derived from the names of craft trades were usually the prerogative of city residents.

Clerks from the clergy environment can be represented by Ivan Semenovitch Dyakonov (5), Roman Ilich Petrovsky (6), Alesha Mikhailovich Protopopov (7), and Grigory and Nikifor Fomichev Protopopovs (8, 9).

One case relates to the specific: sons of Stepan Fedotiev (10) Fedor and Vasily, like his father, were in the service at the Stables Department. In the book of money distribution dated March 20th, 1573, Fyodor Stepanovich was recorded as a clerk at sanniks, and Yegorov as a clerk at Prince Ivan's saddles and horse service [31; 43, 44]. If the father of the brothers had been from a family of knights, then there would have been a clear social degradation. It is more likely that the stables clerk Stepan Fedotiev himself came from non-privileged classes, most likely from the same court servants.

Let us generalize. 30 of 103: 29,1%. A little less than a third. Not a bad sample for analysis. 15 people from the nobility (14.6%), 5 hereditary clerks (4.9%) and 10 "commoners" (9.7%). In the latter category, seven people came from the clergy, two from the town people, and one from the family of palace servants. Among the 15 clerks who came from the nobility, the only family related to the royal estate was the family of Menshik Putyanin (1 of 15, so 6.7%). We can not say anything definite About the family of Fedor Leontiev. The remaining 11 families (73.3%) are the families of city boyars*.

In the era of Ivan III we found that clerks of noble origin represented 13.7%, 1.4% were hereditary clerks, 12.3 % came from a "common" background. Among the clerks of the first third of the 16th century the corresponding figures were 40.9, 9.1 and 6.8% respectively. It is clear that in social structure the assistant clerks of Vasily III were closer to the assistant clerks of Ivan III than to the clerks of that time.

What do these numbers mean? Firstly, the objectivity of the results obtained. Applying the same methods to study sources of the same type, we obtained similar findings for the two different periods: the second half of the 15th — early 16th century and the first third of the 16th century. Secondly, we see that the social structure of the clerks of the Great Knyaz' is different from the social structure of the clerks who served in the capital. It is hardly coincidental that the proportion of assistant clerks from the nobility is three times smaller than that of clerks. Those from a "common" background, however, are 1.5 times more numerous (9.7%: 6.8% or 1.4: 1). The majority of the clerks come from the "democratic" groups. Among clerks those originating from the nobility, considering the imperfection of our calculations, represented about half, maybe a little more. Among assistant clerks it is unlikely to have been more than 2/10.

Of the 15 clerks, five descendents of boyars became clerks**. 5 out of 15-33.3%. Out of 5 hereditary clerks, only Tretiak Glebov became a clerk (20%). Out of the 10

* Buzheninovs, Golovins, Kalikins, Kulibaevs, Plemyannikovs, Protasovs, Skripitsyns, Ushakovs, Harlamovs, Chertovskis and Shchekins.

** F. Leontyev, Protasov Rusin Shchekin, Putjatin Men'shik N., Chertovskoj Istoma S. Nekrasov and Shchekin A. Maloj G.

assistant clerks of common origin, only one man became a clerk, Stepan Fedotov (10%). Of the 73 assistant clerks whose origin is not certain, 10 became clerks (13.7%)*. That is, out of the assistant clerks with noble roots every third became a clerk. Of those whose fathers served as assistant clerks or clerks, one in five became a clerk. Among those who came from the "commoners" or had unclear origins, only one in ten became clerks. It is clear that origin affects the dynamics of the career. We observed the same phenomenon among clerks of Ivan III.

A comparison of the social structure of the clerks of Vasily III and Ivan III shows a significant increase in the interlayer of hereditary clerks from 1.4 to 4.9%, three and a half times. We can see the tendency of formation of assistant clerk families, a phenomenon that will fully develop only a century later, in the 17th century [1; 66].

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