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Solotchinskii Monastery: The Social Aspect of Secular-Ecclesiastic Relationships in Riazan'
Province in Seventeenth Century Russia

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of
Philosophy in History

by

Kathleen Elizabeth Addison

2021

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Solotchinskii Monastery: The Social Aspect of Secular-Ecclesiastic Relationships in Riazan' Province in Seventeenth Century Russia

by

Kathleen Elizabeth Addison

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor Stephen Frank, Chair

The traditional historical picture of the monastery has been as a separate entity under different laws, serving a parallel but removed part of the local community. However, my study is a local history of a provincial monastery in seventeenth century Riazan'. Using Solotchinskii monastery as a focus, I examine how the monastery functioned as a local religious institution of power, intersecting with the secular institutions. This explores a system of shared governance that came to assert the primacy of local power structures in opposition to the centralization of the Muscovite state. At the same time, the monastery served as a spiritual body and a substantial administrative organization that oversaw a diverse population on its estates. Two critical features provide a framework to this study: First, the foundation of Solotchinskii as a "princely" rather than "saintly" institution routinely endowed by local elite (thus allowing me to trace the long-term relationship between monastic personnel and local elite and gentry). Second, the location of Solotchinskii makes it a unique study: it in Riazan' province and was peripheral to the consolidation of the Muscovite state. This had a critical effect on the formation of political structures and boundaries of negotiation with respect to the multiple political and social

polities and created an atmosphere of compromise that conditioned Riazan' to look for alternative methods of political expression.

My dissertation consists of five chapters that trace the monastery's development from a dependent, subordinate entity in the local community, to an independent and highly organized polity that competed with the local secular organizations. The first chapter explores at the policy of bequeathals and the growth of power and goods by the monastery. Here I use not only wills, but commemorative donation records and memorialization, as well as cadasters to trace the development of the monastery as a landed entity, and more importantly, who exactly was endowing the monastery, and with what. The negotiations that went into writing the terms of donations became increasingly more complex, particularly after a decree in the sixteenth century by the Grand Prince of Moscow forbidding the outright bequeathal of estates to monasteries. In response to this, there were a great deal more donations in part and in kind, endowing the monastery instead with certain benefices, thus allowing the local elite to maintain a hold on property and yet participate in the tax advantages of donation.

The second chapter surveys sources by which I have evaluated the role of the monastery in the community. This presents an overview of the political situation in Riazan' with respect to the centralizing Muscovite state, as well as the later development of political relations between the secular elite and the monastery. It explores the power shifts through the changes following the Ulozhenie of 1649, and the increase of peasant petitions claiming violation of rights. The increasing conflicts documented in the petitions between the secular population to the monastery, as well as complaints by the monastic peasants are analyzed extensively as a tool to view the power of the monastery.

Both were theoretically subordinate to overarching structures at the central State/Church level (i.e., the Muscovite Grand Prince's administration, and the Orthodox Patriarchate), yet the resolution of conflicts at the local remained a matter of importance to both Solotchinskii as well as the Riazan' Grand Prince. There is a fascinating interweaving of both local custom in seeking redress and resolution, as well as the patterns established by each individual entity when necessity drove them to seek outside (i.e., central) intervention. Here I show the types of conflicts that were addressed and trace the presentation of these petitions (both formal and informal) to respective entities in showing where local interests were maintained and separated.

In the third chapter I examine the differing forms of land tenure held by the monastery and demonstrate how the monastery began to be competitive in local institutions as it accrued land, dependent populations, and participation in the production of goods. This created not only an economic tension between the local secular and elite polities, but also fostered some degree of political contention. At the same time, the emphasis was still on maintaining localism in the face of Moscow's increasing centralization. I examine the tax rosters, inventories, donation books, services required for landholding, and the growth of the dependent population (peasants and 'servitors'), as well as the competition for land. One of the significant factors of land tenure was the role of the peasants on this land, their tax status, and transition between rent paid in labor versus cash.

The fourth chapter investigates the economic role that the monastery played. Specific to this is the evidence of competition for labor, particularly on the part of the peasants, who found it of greater benefit to be on monastic lands rather than private, secular estates, both in terms of taxes and labor owed. Critical to this notion is that particularly in the seventeenth century, there was a shift in both

how the monastery derived income from goods and services, as well as how it became an administrative entity in the form of landlord. At the same time, the monastic participation in the local economy as producers of handicraft and artisanal goods brought it into conflict with the local secular economy.

In the last chapter I survey the nature of the documents retained by the monastery and archives. This includes correspondence, petitions, and formal charges for examination of actions taken by the local secular authorities, the monastery, the dependent population, as well as their upward appeal to their centralized superiors. Here the polarity between the secular and ecclesiastic institutes became more obvious and contentious, as the increasingly acrimonious tone of the records demonstrates. My explication of the sources reveals the development of an increasingly formal process of petitions from the elite side.

The dissertation of Kathleen Elizabeth Addison is approved.

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Stephen Frank, Committee Chair

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2021

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From my UCLA experience in the Slavic Department has come one of my enduring friendships with Andrea Hacker, from walking around the Kremlin in the midnight sun, to sojourns in Dublin, Heidelberg, and Bavaria. She and Richard Littler have provided me with careful read-throughs and feedback, chocolate, wine, Star Wars and Scarfolk.

I made an interesting turn-off from the road of dissertation by getting a job first and therefore a substantial delay in producing this work. Colleagues and friends in CSUN and other realms have encouraged me and read the works and made this seem a few more steps to the finish line even when it seemed miles away: Nan Yamane, David Parker, and Michael Ward were part of an early reading group and provided significant feedback as well as stern talkings-to. Joyce Broussard never failed in her encouragement in my long-term adjunct status juggling classes far and wide, and I am so sorry she is not here to celebrate. Kelly Winkleblack Shea, Tom Devine, John Paul Nuno, Miriam Neirick, Clementine Oliver, Patricia Juarez-Dappe, and Susan Fitzpatrick-Behrens, and Pepper Starobin have listened to my various ravings on all things teaching, political, and medieval. In other realms, Samantha Jones, Laura Carlone-Mooslin, and Brian Walsh have become fast friends and family along these 20 years, sharing similar rantings and milestones.

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The immense sources of knowledge and inspiration in research are the magic of librarians, and I am thankful to Nancy Getty, Lynn Lampert, Tanya Walsh, and Valerie Reiff. I also include my online commune folks for wizardry and technical advice: Paula Loewen, Lisa Cronin, Barbara Brandt, and Devin Imodri.

My sister and her husband, Meredith and Robert Alcock, and my amazing nieces (two of whom were also Bruins!) have been a touchstone of sanity and cultural outlets in our wanderings and readings.

My mother, Margaret Bull, did not live to see me finish this, but absolutely understood, as her works in progress in textiles were plentiful and oft unfinished. My nephew famously remarked to her, “Show me something that’s finished, Grannie.” If I could show Mom, here’s my finished (for now) work.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation uses Riazan' province's Solotchinskii Monastery in the seventeenth century as a case study of the interactions between secular and political institutions I seek to present a more nuanced understanding of the role of the provincial religious presence in the social environment during an extremely tumultuous period in Muscovite Russia. I analyze the extent to which the monastery functioned as an alternative locus of institutional power, and in what specific ways it cooperated or competed with local secular bodies of power. I propose that the elite-controlled monastery and provincial worked hand in hand to provide peripheral resistance to the central Muscovite political authority, both secular and religious, in an effort to maintain local autonomy. This was not a new pattern of interaction, and, in all likelihood, it was not an unusual practice. Two critical features provide a framework to this study: the inception of Solotchinskii as a "princely" monastery routinely endowed by local elites (thus allowing me to trace the long-term relationship between the monastic personnel and local elite and gentry); and, because of its endowments and land tenure development, the monastery's relationship with local peasantry, which enabled it to serve as both a spiritual and administrative organ in daily lives.

This study of a small monastery in a rural province in the seventeenth century is intended to provide a picture of how a religion institution functioned in Russia beyond the scope of the larger, more well-known, and prestigious entities, beyond the direct reach of a centralizing state, and how it existed in comparison with the wealthier monasteries founded by saints rather than by nobility, introducing the concept of a princely rather than saintly institution.

Though similar in many ways to the larger monasteries like Solovki, Kirill-Belozersk, and the mighty Trinity Sergius, Solotchinskii functioned more fluidly in negotiating with the local elite for power and wealth. Because of its origins as land and property donated by the Grand Prince of Riazan' in the fourteenth century, it had a different pattern of endowments and finances, in many respects following a business model more than would a monastery founded by a saint. There were no pilgrimages to Solotchinskii. The Tsar did not call upon Solotchinskii to negotiate the political crises of the boyar duma or the Time of Troubles as it did Trinity Sergius. It was not a center of learning as was Kirillo-Belozerskii. This directly affects the way the monastery recorded events, making little mention of the big-picture history of the time, but focused on what was important locally. As such, I attempt a social history of the monastery in order to look at the function "on the ground" of religious institutions far away from the big picture. In reality, how did they interact with their populations? How did they obtain their populations of dependent labor? How religious were they? Is it possible to have a valuation of such a personalized system of religiosity 1000 years after, or, in this case, 500 years later? In looking at both secular and ecclesiastic records that remain, and trying to filter out the historiographic schools of ideology, is it possible to see the interactions of a monastery and local community?

Without recapitulating the history of Kievan Rus' and Grand Prince Vladimir's conversion to Christianity in 988, it is important to the unique nature of Russian Orthodoxy and its hierarchy to mention in brief the start of the monastic tradition in the Pecherskii Caves in this era. It is equally important to take note of the immediate fusion of church and state in this period, with Grand Prince Iaroslav (the Wise) endowing cathedrals and monasteries, which in turn wrote the

history as we know it. Noble patronage was always a critical component of Russian religion, and these endowments created an inseparable link between secular and ecclesiastic power structures.

When the Kievan state fragmented in the twelfth century due to internecine wars and outside conflict, there was a nascent movement to eremitic, or isolated, monasticism that began spreading towards the Northern reaches of Rus'. With the arrival of the Golden Horde in the early thirteenth century, the disruption of a state apparatus was sufficient to create a vacuum that allowed the further growth of the church, at least in part because of the relative tolerance of the Mongols to religions.

The defining event in Russia's history is that of the Mongol invasion in the early thirteenth century. Whether one accepts the argument that the Mongol presence in Russia, in its various forms, for two hundred years either retarded Russia's natural progress that would have kept it on a parallel course with the rest of Europe; or whether one accepts an argument that Mongol presence simply reinforced Russia's so-called Eastern mentality which it may or may not have already been following, the outcome is the same. Russia had no Renaissance in the grand Western tradition, it had no secularizing trend, it had no papal vs. state arguments in the same time frame, and it had no call for Reformation, from either a political or spiritual context, until substantially later. The closest it came was the crisis of Nikonian reforms in the mid-seventeenth century in which the Patriarch of Russia called for revisions of church liturgical materials. An offshoot from this formed in objection to Nikon's proposed reforms, popularly termed Old Believers. But as scholars have pointed out, in many cases the persecution of Old Believers is both exaggerated and is often indistinguishable from that of political dissenters; the

easiest way to dispose of a political opponent was to denounce him or her as a heretic. This is not to say that the Old Believer (*Raskolniki*) cadres were nonexistent or disingenuous, of course; they did (and still do) exist, and one can safely assume that those who will set themselves on fire in protest are sincere in their beliefs. Smaller heretical movements were also in evidence, but these amounted to a minority of the population.

As such, Orthodoxy retained a vital part of Russian culture and identity, and monasticism a significant part of that structure. The extension into the north of the eremitic monks following the “wild honey and locusts” stories, modeling ascetic examples of the desert fathers in embracing hardships and suffering became a core element of early monastic traditions. The monasteries that grew in the wake of these individuals, however, followed a saintly model – that the founder was canonized, pilgrims journeyed to the location, and a community built up around the site, sometimes in the coenobitic tradition. Monasteries such as Trinity, Kirill-Belozerskii, Solovki, and others that grew into the large and famous institutions, have been well written about and studied through their extensive records and reputations. Even smaller monasteries retained significance for providing infrastructure, guidance, and management in outlying regions. Robert Crummey notes, “Socially as well, the monastic communities dominated entire regions of the country. With the hundreds of monks and many more dependent peasants and lay servants, they were among the largest institutions in a society with a sparse population and comparatively rudimentary forms of organizations.”¹

There were studies performed regarding Russian orthodoxy in the nineteenth century as part of an identification of Russian nationalism, at a time when there were conflicting voices in the late

¹¹ Robert Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy 1304-1613*. (London: Longman Press, 1987), p.123.

Empire; should the country “modernize” in a western sense, or, as more conservative elements held, was the uniqueness of Russia upheld in its non-European traditions, including the Orthodox Church?

For most of the twentieth century, religious issues in Russia were bounded by Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology to assure its readers that writers were taking an appropriately non-religious perspective. When explored at all, religious issues in the twentieth century tended to be studied from an economic and political perspective with distinct biases. Even popular perception of the church fastened its existence to that of the authority agency in the State, or as Gregory Freeze wrote, “handmaiden of the state.” While this began to change in the 1990’s and into the twenty-first century, in particular by looking at issues of monasticism, the cultural perspective has only begun to shift. The works of larger monasteries and their interaction with the surrounding community have focused on the monasteries that evolved from “saintly” origins, meaning they had an initial saint (or someone later canonized) found the monastery, and ~~it~~ developed into a larger institution over time.

Historiography

There are two definitive types of literature on religious matters in early modern Russia: general church histories, and those that focus on individual monasteries, in one of several thematic approaches. The general church histories examine the political and revisionary interpretations of outside forces on the Orthodox church during this period. Perhaps the most definitive of the general church histories was E. E. Golubinskii’s 1901 opus discussing its hierarchy, doctrinal

development, philologic effects, infrastructure, hierarchy, and political interactions.² John Fennell completed the first part of his intended opus on the Russian church before his passing, covering the foundation of the church in Kievan Rus' to Muscovy in 1448. Although his study remained incomplete by necessity, he covered the early rise of Christianity in Rus' admirably, and traced out the emergence of the hierarchy, land owning, and the status of the church under Mongol hegemony.³

The most notable church crisis was the conflict of Old Believers and Nikonian reforms, as well as the conflict at the Muscovite court concerning the church, best examined by Georg Michels and Paul Bushkovitch.⁴ While these are not general histories, they focus on a specific context, the *raskol*. They give an overview of the political climate of seventeenth-century religious life which furnishes the background for my own work. In the area of more individual studies of monasteries, there are two major categories into which these works fall: philologic, with a narrow focus on an individual component of monastic life intersecting with secular realms; and economic, with an emphasis on land tenure studies of monasteries' roles as landlords. What is important about Bushkovitch's work is that he specifically argues that monasteries not only played a role in the religious life of the boyars but allowed them an arena or socially prominent venue for activity where one might not be available to them politically. In terms of religiosity, he postulates, the actions of the boyars were visible through their taking part in court ceremonies such as festivals and pilgrimages, as well as through participation as laymen in religious controversies. But in terms of monasticism, he states that the boyars' "relations with the

² E.E. Golubinskii, *Istoriia Russkoi tserkvi* in two volumes. (Moscow, 1904).

³ John Fennell, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448* (Harlow, Essex: Longman Publishing, 1995).

⁴ Georg Michels, *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth Century Russia*, (Stanford: University Press, 1999), and Paul Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society in Russia – The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford: University Press, 1992).

monasteries offer a rare window into their world.” This was the intended focus of his book, in which he “attempt[ed] to trace the character of the changes in religious life of the landholding elite of Russian society.”⁵ He examines the maintenance of the monastery and the donations, as well as joining monasteries, but asserts that the pinnacle of the boyars’ activity with the monasteries was in the fifteenth century, and subsequently declined. By the end of the sixteenth century he felt the role of Russian monasticism was “largely passive” and followed an overall decline in monastic authority in the sixteenth century.⁶ He supported his claim of the decline, characterizing it as “a certain plebeianization of the monasteries (and inevitably also of the episcopacy) and the withdrawal of the aristocracy of the Russian state from direct participation in most important religious activities...” excluding public rituals and attendance at the most important liturgical functions, and decreasing the importance of the previous model of the monastic saint to that of the “primary type of medieval Russian saint.”⁷

Studies of monasticism in general provide a foundation for looking comparatively at Solotchinskii. Pierre Gonneau wrote a masterful history of Trinity Sergius based around the Saint Sergei of Radonezh, which analyzed it as an economic entity, as well as the expansion of the monastery to become one of the largest landowners in Russia.⁸ David Miller also explored the cultural perspective of St. Sergei and the synthesis of the monastery with Russian identity in

⁵ Bushkovitch, p. 7.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 6. Bushkovitch argues that this is a continuance of G.P. Fedotov’s idea that the sixteenth century was an era of decline of fifteenth century religious ideals, noting, “In my view, the phenomenon that he [Fedotov] observed was real, although I prefer to think of it as the decline of importance and spiritual authority of monasticism.”

⁷ Bushkovitch, p. 10. The idea of decreased emphasis of the monastic saint is bolstered by the observations of Gail Lenhoff in her discussion on the growth of “cult” or local saints in relatively the same time period. See Lenhoff, *The Martyred Saints Boris and Gleb: A Socio-Cultural Study of the Cult and the Texts* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1989).

⁸ Pierre Gonneau, *La maison de la sainte trinite: un grand monastere russe du moyen age tardif (1345-1533)*. (Paris: Klincksiek, 1993).

describing it as the sacred center of the Muscovite state.⁹ He and Gonneau used prayer lists, memorials, and donations to trace the involvement of patronage and the nexus of power. Miller contends that the leaders of Trinity Sergius were consistently from the largest patron families donating to the monastery. In a separate article, Miller distinctly ties together the very political involvement of Trinity with the government of Godunov via the appointment of Mitrofan as archimandrite, noting “Mitrofan’s installation, the council’s order, and the ensuing struggle to control Trinity exposed as never before the nature of the monastery’s structure and governance, and its relationship to the state.”¹⁰ As one of the leading institutions of northern monasticism, it gave rise to a number of offshoots as monks within Trinity left to establish eremitic devotions, followed by a cluster of monks in coenobitic cells, eventually evolving into a full-fledged monastery

Among the offshoots and expansion of monasticism in the late fourteenth-early fifteenth century was that of Kirill, former abbot of Simonov monastery, who settled northeast of Novgorod, in the region of Belozersk. It followed the same pattern of development from eremitic to coenobitic, to full monastery, under the stringent leadership of Kirill. Over time the monastery became a critical location for cultural development, renowned for its repository of books and for being a center of learning. A fascinating study by Robert Romanchuk examines the interpretation of texts and follows the education processes of monks at Kirillov that gave rise to a community of scholars. While largely philologic in nature, arguing for an inclusion of the Byzantine and South Slavic literary tradition, this work draws upon monastic traditions and growth of community

⁹ David Miller, *Saint Sergius of Radonezh, his Trinity Monastery, and the Formation of Russian Identity*, (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ David Miller, “How the Trinity Sergius Monastery Got Governance, Got Godunov’s Wrath, and Got New Life,” in *Russian History* vol. 33, no. 2/3, 2006.

from a hermetic origin.¹¹ While Kirillo-Belozerskii did not maintain the kind of political involvement as did Trinity (possibly because of proximity), it retained the largest library and literary tradition in monasteries to that time.

In her study of monasteries in the far north, Jennifer Spock notes that the great northern migration began before the Mongol decline and the centralization of political authority under Ivan III. She argues that northern monasticism emerged as a “strongly developed Orthodox Christian culture that penetrated via Byzantine and South Slavic influence” and adapted to the area.¹² Spock’s study, dedicated to the Solovki monastery¹³, also in the high north, focused on the social and economic interactions of the monastery and its community. She also identified donations as a way to elicit personal connections between the monastery and its surrounding, and even distant, community, in the same manner as Steindorff, Miller, and others have done. In particular, she used the *vkladnie knigi* (donation books) and *prikhodnye knigi* (income books) to trace donations of income and land. Her other sources included the *gramoty* (charters), inventories, *zhitie* (Saint’s lives) and miracle tales. This analysis brought together a picture of a vibrant, interactive community. Her close reading of the donations was organized into social classifications (wealthy, monastic, local workers, poorer). A significant difference between Solovki and Solotchinskii, other than the location, was the lack of a saint, and therefore miracle stories or hagiography, and pilgrims. This directly affected the income as well as the perception of local community.

¹¹ Romanchuk, Robert. *Byzantine Hermeneutics and Pedagogy in the Russian North : Monks and Masters at the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, 1397-1501*, (Toronto: University Press, 2007). See especially chapter five for the community of scholars.

¹² Jennifer Spock, “Monasticism in Russia’s far north in the pre-Petrine era,” in *Monasticism in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Republics*, Ines Murzaku, ed. (London: Taylor and Francis, 2015), p. 287.

¹³ Jennifer Spock, *The Solovki Monastery 1460-1645: Piety and Patronage in the Early Modern Russian North*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1999.

Another valuable work is that by Debra Coulter who has studied the seventeenth-century white clergy in both articles and her dissertation, examining church reforms taken in the time period.¹⁴ She elaborates and analyzes the expectations and duties of monks within the white clergy¹⁵, how the hierarchy was enforced, and the nature of the clergy's relationship to the state during the seventeenth century. The reforms were largely self-imposed, looking in particular at increasing literacy among both the black and white clergy, which Coulter argues increased after the schism to create a uniform standard of church liturgies, enforced by Patriarch Nikon.

Another focus of monastic studies, more in line with the Soviet era, examined financial and landholding interests of the monasteries. V. S. Rumientseva's statistical analysis from the monastic department in Moscow used receipt books and census material from the mid-seventeenth century. She shows a growth in monastic landholding and peasant households of the patriarch, the hierarchs, monasteries, convents, and churches. She finds that these grew considerably at the end of the century until a church council in 1681 outlawed building new monasteries, although it did not preclude the continued development of established monasteries. To that end, she maintains, the increased possessions allowed the church to retain its "feudal privileges" – which included not only financial, but administrative and judicial matters, beyond the spiritual duties. The jurisdiction of judicial matters extended from questions of blasphemy

¹⁴ Debra Coulter, *The Russian Orthodox white clergy in the seventeenth century*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University College London, University of London, 2000. See also Debra Coulter, "Church Reform and the White Clergy in Seventeenth Century Russia," in *Modernizing Muscovy: Reform and Social Change in Seventeenth Century Russia*, Jarmo Kotilaine and Marshall Poe, ed. (Florence: Taylor and Francis Group, 2004).

¹⁵ The difference between black and white clergy (*chernoe* and *belo dukhovenstvo*) in its most basic forms is that white clergy were not monastic – they consisted of village priests, deacons, and parish servants. Black clergy were those who had taken monastic vows and as such were not only in monasteries, but served in leadership positions in the hierarchy, such as metropolitans and the Patriarch. In theory, black clergy were removed from society at large, while white clergy lived among the local community and were directly involved on a personal level.

and crimes against religion and the church at the Patriarch's court down to the level of church-held lands and petty monastic disputes. This was enforced by the Ulozhenie of 1649 and put the Patriarch's court at the level of the Tsar's and the Boyar duma in terms of influence.¹⁶

The issue of church owned lands is important to understand the relationship and conflict between Church and state. These issues were further complicated by the age-old question of which was subordinate to the other. Typical of arguments in other eras and regions, seventeenth-century Russia witnessed conflict between the aristocracy, which wanted the church divested of lands that it could utilize as a reward for state service,¹⁷ while the church sought to safeguard its privileges and properties for sustenance of its own power as well as the maintenance of its spiritual dependents. While the sixteenth-century Russian version of this argument in the form of the possessor versus non-possessor did not arise directly, the tension remained in the background of ecclesiastic-secular confrontations in their councils and decrees.¹⁸ Rumiantseva points out that the 1648-49 *zemskii sobor* meeting included a petition to the tsar requesting that all properties obtained by monasteries since 1580 be revoked and distributed instead to the gentry and boyars. Some success was achieved by this motion: it returned to the policy of disallowing a family to donate a patrimonial estate to a monastery and required instead that should a landholding family member decide to enter a monastery, the land must instead be

¹⁶ V. S. Rumiantseva, "Pravoslavnaia tserkov' i gosudarstvo v 17ogo vekov," in *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov' X-XX vv.*, Aleksandr Preobrazhenskii, ed. (Moscow: Nauk, 2002s)

¹⁷ See above for the definitions of *pomest'ie* and *votchiny*, elaborated upon more extensively in chapter 1 of this work.

¹⁸ To briefly summarize, the alleged conflict between the possessors versus non-possessors was debated over whether the church should own property or material wealth, the non-possessors arguing that the church should focus on less worldly matters in emulation of Christ. The possessors argued that material wealth was necessary to provide a network of support and allow them to minister to the laity. See below for the discussion by Donald Ostrowski on the veracity of this debate, as well as analysis from David Goldfrank, *The Monastic Rules of Iosif Volotsky* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications Inc, 1983)

transferred to another family member and upkeep for the now-clerical family member paid by the remaining secular member.

Bushkovitch asserts that boyars and elite withdrew their support from monastic affairs in the sixteenth century primarily because of what he rightly describes as “the general political history” of the period, observing that the era from Ivan IV’s ascension to the throne in 1547 until the end of the Time of Troubles in 1618 was one “of almost continuous political turmoil,” replete with intervals of violence and courtly maneuvering and politicking. Further, he argues, “the issues contested in these years were not minor. During this period the basic institutions of the later Russian state – autocracy and serfdom – were laid down, as well as a host of lesser social and institutional forms.” Only after 1618, when the political situation had been settled somewhat by the election of a new tsar by the boyar дума, “was there again time to try to reformulate religious beliefs and practices.”¹⁹ The motivation for this reformulation was entirely political, according to Bushkovitch. However, the seventeenth century saw two major issues in the politics and history of the church; the *Raskol* and the ouster of Patriarch Nikon.²⁰

¹⁹ Bushkovitch, p. 50.

²⁰ These two issues are interrelated. As noted above from Georg Michels’ *At War with the Church*, the schism within the Orthodox church centered on the decision of the Patriarch Nikon to change the liturgical texts which he felt had deviated from the originals over the course of time through transliterations and copying errors. Importantly, when he decided to “clean up” the texts, he directed the corrections follow the model of Greek texts in Byzantium – a decision which a section of the Orthodox church felt was tantamount to heresy. Those who refused to follow the Nikonian reforms were deemed “old believers” and were subject to persecution by the church as well as in conjunction with the state. There were other, smaller reform movements such as those deemed the “Zealots of Piety,” a movement involving secular priests and some monks who wanted to enact a sort of populist reform to bring the religion closer to the masses and make it more important in their lives. Between the conflicts of religious literature and popular movements, Nikon became the focus of opposition. He subsequently came into conflict with Tsar Alexei over issues of church power in a sovereign state, the power held by the Patriarch and his role as the spiritual head of the church. Nikon played a game of political intrigue by resigning as Patriarch in 1658 but refusing to give up the mantle of office despite suggesting to the Tsar that the church and the Tsar elect a new Patriarch, and further suggesting that his power came from God, so the Tsar could not remove it from him. A church council was convened, and Nikon was ousted in 1660.

While all these studies focus on the well-known monasteries, largely in the North or proximal to Moscow, and others examine monastic orders particularly for the issues of land ownership,²¹ my study of Solotchinskii is more central geographically, although relatively rural in locale. It was far enough away from Moscow to make it less stringently controlled, and the nature of it as a princely monastery rather than saintly meant it attracted considerably less attention than did more famous (and wealthier) counterparts.

Why Riazan' and Solotcha: Historiography and Background

Solotchinskii monastery became a substantive political presence in the community of Riazan' following its revival after the destructive campaigns of the Mongols who attacked Riazan' in 1237. Solotchinskii was founded in 1390 by the Grand Prince of Riazan' and Murom, Oleg Ivanovich, who had an interesting and often strained relationship with Prince Dmitri Donskoi of Moscow, one of the first Russian princes to weaken the Mongol hold over Russia. It followed pattern of increasing land donations from elite and gentry as a measure of bestowing power and status on the monastery from a predominantly legal perspective. The increasingly complex nature of the donations, making a transition from straightforward bequeathals in memoriam, to highly convoluted partitions of land under specific conditions, argues for a division of power within the region that subsequently reaffirmed its local orientation in favor of maintenance of power, albeit in shared governance, over the centralizing forces of the Muscovite authority. But the status, at the local level, of the ecclesiastic power structure, while no longer subordinate to

²¹ See in particular the study on the church council known as the Stoglav, Jack Kollman, "The Stoglav Council and Parish Priests." *Russian History* 7, no. 1/2 (1980): 65–91; as well as the many debates on the possessor-non-possessor controversy as noted above in fn 18, and further in chapter 1.

that of secular power, rested predominantly in the accumulation of land that it had acquired, both in cooperation with local elite, and direct contravention (at times) of Muscovite rulings for several centuries. In that sense, the traditional historiography done by Soviet scholars is not wrong in the examination of the subject in economic or demographic terms. The records left behind, cadasters, cartularies, and petitions, do reveal much about the nature of the relationship between secular and ecclesiastic society. But they also show that at its most fundamental, political ideologies of the Soviet era aside, the predominant mode of relationship between the monastery and the surrounding secular community is rooted in economics, specifically with regard land, its ownership, and tenancy. I elaborate on this in much greater detail in chapters three and four.

There are multiple studies on landowning and feudalism in this era from Soviet historians including S. B. Veselovskii, A. A. Zimin, I. Iu. Budovnits, I. A. Bulygin, and N. A. Gorskaia. A. A. Zimin argues (and Bushkovitch concurs), that monasteries of this time were both supported and staffed by local landowning gentry and their offspring, and if the donations coming into the monasteries were also coming in primarily from the secular gentry, then it would appear that the former isolationism of monasteries, such as those eremitic foundations in the north, and the ideals expressed by the non-possessors, was not only long gone by the sixteenth century, but that a great deal more secularization of the monasteries had occurred than scholars have previously suggested.²² Zimin combined political and economic elements in his study of Iosif Volokalamsk monastery, but he did so in a unique fashion by choosing this particular monastery, which was at the center of the possessor-non-possessor conflict concerning whether monasteries should retain worldly possessions or be removed from the material world. The claim was traditionally argued

²² A.A. Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina i sotsial'no-politicheskaia bor'ba v Rossii (konets XV-XVI v.)*. (Moscow: Nauk, 1977).

that Iosif Volitskii, founder of Volokalamsk, regarded property as necessary for the support of local populations and therefore had to be “integrated” into the surrounding community; while Nils Sorskii led the non-possessor position to disregard financial temptation.²³ However, Zimin argues that the social structure of Volokalamsk gave rise to a “strange political life” because it effectively became an anti-princely monastery in its struggle to emerge as a parallel power structure to a political, as opposed to ecclesiastic, state.²⁴ By maintaining itself as a center for social and economic support of the surrounding population, endowed by aristocracy, Volokalamsk fought against the centralization of the Muscovite state and the growth of power by the aristocracy, particularly under the central rule of one leader. After conflicts of a political nature following the death of Vasilii III and under the reign of Ivan IV, he notes, in the 1560-70s, Volokalamsk again began to play a better-known role in the political life of the country. However, the monastery subsequently became heavily embroiled in the possessors/non-possessors debate over monastic inheritance of *votchiny*, “and thus at the end of the sixteenth century Volokalamsk monastery lost its own former knowledge of the country’s political life, but the Josefian tradition continued to appear...in the governing of the Russian Church, aspiring to follow the theories and practices of the militant churchmen.”²⁵

I. Iu. Budovnit’s classic study of monasticism attributed the growth of feudalism more to the monasteries than the political consolidation of Muscovy. He argues that, beginning in the second half of the fourteenth century in Northeast Russia as well as in the regions of Novgorod and Pskov’, the style of monasteries changed from the traditional Kievan or “church warden” style towards those which “...represented its own feudal *votchina* with a branching economy, with the

²³ There is a significant argument made by Donald Ostrowski that it was virtually impossible to determine who would have been of what persuasion in this argument. See fn 18 in this section, as well as fn 8 in Chapter 1.

²⁴ Zimin, p. 281.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 318.

foundation primarily based in the labor of feudal, dependent peasants.”²⁶ He concurs with the statistics of V. O. Kliuchevskii that demonstrate consistent growth of monasteries from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries due to their new style of “feudal” monasticism that overtook the comparatively weak pre-existing feudal structures “. . . where they had greater reserves, not enslavement or working forces, and where there were no laws favorable for separating *pomesti’e* landowners.” He suggests that, rather than the traditional portrait of eremitic monks settling in the uninhabited Northeast and subsequently attracting a following of devoted peasants, monasteries were founded on “well-trodden paths already colonized by the People (*narod*).”²⁷ Expanding on this idea, he states that the monasteries were developed several versts from populated villages on traveled roads which were usually situated in new pasturable hunting areas of economic significance fruitful for sustaining the newly founded monastery. Arguing for the pre-existence of the natural peasant *volost’* commune, Budovnits states that the monasteries would then gradually appropriate peasant land and “convert the baptized inhabitants into feudal serving people.” Interestingly, he specifically terms the local population “feudal serving people” [*feodal’nye zavisimye liudi*] rather than the more precise term for serfs, *smerdy*. This argues for the recognition of the Ulozhenie of 1649 as the legal basis for enserfment rather than the gradual process suggested by some. While the existing charters clearly show the land was transferred from local aristocracy, Budovnits addresses this by peremptorily dismissing the land as already seized from the peasantry by the boyars and other *votchini* who subsequently willed those stolen peasant lands to the church. The only difference between the feudalization of gentry-seized lands versus that of church-seized lands was that the church employed “exploitation of the religious feelings of the population . . . making use of the

²⁶ I. Iu. Budovnits, *Monastyri na Rusi i bor’ba s nimi krest’ian v XIV -XVI vv*, (Moscow: Nauk, 1966), p. 112.

²⁷ *ibid*, p. 115.

huge backing central powers. It received more income and more rapidly enserfed [zakreposhchen] the baptized peasants.” He proposes that a collaboration of the new feudal monasteries and the central government of Moscow, with the church essentially a handmaiden of the state, existed, a picture later painted by critics of the church, and entirely in keeping with the time that Budovnits was writing about: “Inclined towards the regions where there were no gentry landowners, the new monasteries were quickly able to become supporters of the centralizing feudal government.” Further, he notes, “Several northern monasteries were founded to be political servitors of the central government...helping to secure for Moscow the further regions on the path to Christianization.” Where local gentry was in place, there was a competition for feudalization and enserfment of the local population.²⁸

S. B. Veselovskii looks at land ownership in the southeast, first arguing that the primary form of land ownership was the communal village, later following a decrease of patrimonial lands in the fifteenth century due to partible inheritance, and then followed by royal grants of land for service. Within the *pom'estie* system, he suggests, the “enslavement” of the dependent population took place as the peasants were forbidden to leave estates.²⁹ He views the process of land accumulation by monasteries in early modern Russia as a process in conflict with the gathering of the lands by Ivan III, and the consolidation by Ivan IV. Veselovskii used *dukhovnye gramoty* (spiritual charters) and *zhalovanie gramoty*, as well as the collected *akty* (records) of the Muscovite gentry and nobility to evaluate donations of land and villages to various monasteries particularly Trinity Sergius, Kirillov, and Simonov, despite the Tsarist decrees to prevent this process. However, Veselovskii’s article on monastic donations

²⁸ *ibid*, p. 359.

²⁹ S. B. Veselovskii, *Feodal'noe zemlevladienie mitropolich'ego doma* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1947). See also Veselovskii, “Monastyrskoe zemlevladienie v moskovskoi rusi vo vtoroi polovine XVI v.,” in *Istoricheskie zapiski* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1947), tom 10, pp 95-116.

approaches the topic from a statistical and economic perspective, focusing more on the aspects of land, types of estates, and the process of estate accumulation by the monasteries in opposition to the State, rather than on the acts of donations and personal relationships behind them. However, he failed to examine the impact of the donations on the monasteries themselves, perhaps given the limitations of publication at the time in the Soviet Union.

The pattern of continued monastic development is examined in an article by Ia. I. Vodarskii, who reports that 494 independent monasteries and convents existed in European Russia in 1653.³⁰ By 1700 there were 426 independent monasteries with another 174 attached to the independents, all of them holding landed estates. Absent the annexed territories, this would seem to be a decline of 58 monasteries in slightly under fifty years; however, in considering the absorbed defunct monasteries that were no longer economically viable, this fact demonstrates an increase in the *holdings* of existing monasteries. While reorganized, there is no significant decrease. This is absolutely in keeping with the church council of 1681, which outlawed building new monasteries but left open the option to absorb monastic lands and attach them to pre-existent ecclesiastic holdings within the respective diocese. These allow a substantial challenge to the conventional models as espoused in “traditional” historiographic interpretations of monastic decline in the sixteenth century.

N.A. Gorskaia’s studies are largely demographic, but they specifically study the landholdings of monasteries and demonstrate clearly that allocations of land to monastic peasants were decreasing in the late seventeenth century and giving rise to rental in land through cash payments (*obrok*) rather than the previous form of rent paid by labor or goods (*barshchina*). This also

³⁰ Ia. I. Vodarskii, “Tserkovnye organizatsii i ikh krepost’nye vo vtoroi polovine XVII – nachale XVIII v” in *Istoricheskaia geografiia Rossii XII – nachalo XX vv: Sbornie statei k 70 letiu L. G. Beskorvnogo* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 70-96.

challenges the notion of the decrease of holdings in the sixteenth century, as she shows progressive increases in holdings until the mid-seventeenth century. Thereafter, she argues, because of the political changes of service to the state, the monasteries (and she explicitly studied Solotchinskii) began to shift the allocations of land to peasants and instead lease them to landless peasants paying cash.³¹

Bulygin's study focuses on the Petrine era and the effect of the reforms; in particular, abolition of the Patriarchate and establishment instead of the Synod. Bulygin contends that the main goal of Peter's reform was to seize the land of the church with only a fractional amount being retained by monasteries and churches. He further looks at Peter's practice of forcefully extracting loans from the church to forestall seizure of some lands. While his work is interesting and traces the downfall that others attribute to earlier, his work falls beyond the parameters of my study in the seventeenth century.

As many of the works in the historiography attest, most studies of the twentieth century emphasized the ownership of land and dominance of the people on monastic lands, portraying monasteries as property owners rather than religious institutions. But examining monastic landholding is critical to understanding the economic ties between Solotchinskii and the surrounding region. The nature of status is in relationship to land ownership; this is not new. In Kievan Rus', this dates back quite far and is relevant because of the types of claims that nobles and elites held on the land, not simply because of the types of land, but because of the types of claims to rank within the "junior" and senior boyar; the service retinue (*druzhina*) or boyar deti. Land was given (often in perpetuity) for a term of service, whether based on genealogy or

³¹ See my more detailed analysis of her studies of cadasters and tax rosters in chapter four.

working rank, and we see several types of land tenure in the pre-Mongol period– the patrimonial *votchina* and the service nobility’s *udel* or *pom’estie*³². The type of land was tied to the rank in status. However, with the incursion of the Mongols beginning in 1237, the destruction of both lands as well as claims to status deteriorated; or, for the less fortunate under direct Mongol hegemony, completely abnegated. After the defeat of the Mongols, initiated by Dmitrii Donskoi in 1380 but taking a full century for completion, the former senior elites were left in a situation of owing favor and obligations to Donskoi, as the soon to be “state” of Muscovy emerged. New land allocations were being determined. Formerly independent territories were annexed to the Muscovite Grand Prince, and the old claims of nobility (and with that, rights to certain lands) by virtue of birth or term and type of service were now more problematic. Patrimonial estates may have been less challenged, but the period of Mongol domination was problematic to the land ownership balance of church versus state precisely because of the diminished power of the state. The Mongols had a *relatively* peaceful coexistence with the church, and having little use for lands themselves, had no serious objection to the bequeathal of lands to ecclesiastic institutions. But in the fourteenth century, this became a new issue as the Grand Prince of Moscow took his place and shifted the balance of power through allodial gerrymandering. Here the issue of old claims to patrimonial estates became directly relevant, but as Ann Kleimola has pointed out, many of the post-Mongol era claims of noble lineage were re-invented in the absence of any supporting (or contradicting) evidence, which relates directly to the issue of rights to hold *votchini* or *udely*. The genealogy that is extant post- Mongol in Riazan’ is particularly valuable precisely because it was entirely new following the destruction of the original genealogies, and

³² Discussed extensively in Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, New Jersey: University Press) 1961.

left Grand Prince Oleg' firmly in place, outlining his territorial holdings and subsequent donations to Solotchinskii.

Adding to this complication is the fact that the consolidation of territories came in the wake of Moscow's emergence as a center of power in the fourteenth-fifteenth century. Donskoi claimed oaths of loyalty amongst his nobility and duly rewarded them. Conversely, particularly in the case of Riazan' and Grand Prince Oleg', those nobles who were out of favor found themselves reeled in to the demands of a figure whose authority was growing as he accumulated territory and loyal domains. Oleg' was under the relative autonomy granted by both removal from the direct sphere of influence of Moscow by virtue of distance, as well as having had significantly longer than the rest of northern and western Russia to recover from the effects of the Mongol incursion (Riazan' being the first city destroyed in 1237 because it was the furthest east).

However, as Terpigorev' noted, Oleg' fell into disfavor with Donskoi by failing to provide an army at Kulikovo field in 1380. The Riazan' chronicles argue that there was in fact an army, but it was delayed in arriving. Either scenario is possible, and it is noteworthy that a treaty of sorts was worked out by having Donskoi's daughter marry into Oleg's family, thus ending whatever dispute might have been taking place. Riazan's historical background is critical to understanding a local study that could more deftly negotiate the intersection of nobility and church power.

Riazan' was left in relative isolation, although it was technically part of the consolidation of the state and became subordinate to the Muscovite authority. Clearly, however, as territorial matters continued to be decided on the local level despite the decrees from the state, a relative degree of negotiation remained, whether under the guise of "local custom" or regional autocracy. This allowed the monastery to maintain fluid boundaries with the secular authority to protect regional

interests, while turning to the larger church and state to protect monastic interests when local interests were in conflict.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE:

Although there are studies that examine the large monasteries, or there are general histories of the Russian Church, and even studies that focus on the nature of Orthodoxy as an identifying feature of Russian nationalism, there are no studies that detail the function of monasteries at the local level or examine in a substantive way the nature of religious life outside the main centers such as Moscow. The studies that are there are analogous to studying Christianity in the west if one were looking at St. Peter's or Notre Dame or one of the wealthy and prestigious institutions, and not allowing a viewpoint of how churches work in local communities outside of large urban areas. The dissertation in simplest terms is about how a small monastery functioned in a rural location in seventeenth-century Russia and is designed to be a microhistorical approach. I chose the seventeenth century because it is the most dynamic period for church relations in Russian history in conjunction with a new Imperial political setting, starting in 1613 with the election by the nobility of a new Tsar, who subsequently named his father as patriarch of the Russian Church.³³ At the start of the century, you have the closest relations possible between church and state, and by the end of this time period, Peter the Great has declined to approve the appointment of a new patriarch, and subsequently puts the church under the control of one of his administrative colleges. Two major themes that I argue in the dissertation are those of power relations between secular and ecclesiastic entities, as well as the more broadly defined relationship of religion and subaltern people. This encompasses using materials from every

³³ The patriarch is the supreme ruler of the Orthodox Church in Russia; as eastern orthodoxy has autocephalic leaders, as opposed to the west with only one pope.

aspect of where the monastery intersected with everyday life: from being administrators of a landed estate, the local arm of justice (for segments of population), overseers of serfs, tax collectors, and – then – spiritual regulators. The records run the gamut from tax rosters, census shifts, economic matters in terms of how land is worked (rent or labor), marriage contracts, familial squabbles, enforcement of both church and state decrees.

The purpose main of this study is to examine a small monastery's functioning and to analyze a segment of church history that stands out against a traditional historiography of looking at large monasteries; but, in the larger scale of Russian history, it is about power relations and the success of change. It is focused particularly on the pre-Petrine period because of a series of legal reforms and changes in social structure that really pushed for a secularization process, something argued in broader terms by several prominent historians, particularly Paul Bushkovitch and Valerie Kivelson. It also specifically predates the Petrine reforms, in particular the spiritual reforms imparted by Peter the Great, essentially subordinating church authority to that of an autocratic imperial State.

Methodologically, my approach has been to work through this wonderful cache of records that are almost untouched, save by one demographic historian in the United States, and one in Russia in the 1970's. The majority of them are the day-to-day administrative and financial management records, but the real importance comes from the base of petitions that are filed with and heard by the monastery. This part to me is most exciting because here is where you can get the local voice, both from the gentry and nobility, who are competing with the monastery in some senses (power, land, tax revenues); but also, I argue, forming a cohesive resistance to their own loss of

power due to the attempts at centralization. The petitions from the lowest levels of society are the part I find most exciting because reading through them allows the analysis of the subaltern character and reveals what was considered important in the monastic villages; here is where we can see the equivalent Menocchio or Martin Guerre, Steven Ozment's German family history, or the study of a well-known French monastery at Cluny.³⁴ Again, these are western microhistorical models because these models are not available for the early modern period in Russia. Later Soviet studies and nineteenth century ethnographies will approach peasant studies, but with a kind of political lens that filters out elements unsuited to a political agenda; here it is precisely that kind of unfiltered look that is so valuable.

I have structured the study thematically in the following chapters. The first chapter explores at the policy of bequeathals and the growth of power and goods by the monastery. Here I use not only wills, but commemorative donation records and memorialization, as well as cadasters to trace the development of the monastery as a landed entity, and more importantly, who exactly was endowing the monastery, and with what. The negotiations that went into writing the terms of donations became increasingly more complex, particularly after a decree in the early sixteenth century by the Grand Prince of Moscow forbidding the outright bequeathal of estates to monasteries. In response to this, there were a great deal more donations in part and in kind, endowing the monastery instead with certain benefices, thus allowing the local elite to maintain a hold on property and yet participate in the

³⁴ The most notable microhistorical studies for methodological purposes include Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-century Miller* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013); Natalie Zemon Davis, Guerre, Du Tilh, and Guerre, Martin, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983); Ozment, Steven E. *The Bürgermeister's Daughter: Scandal in a Sixteenth-century German Town*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); as well as David Sabeau, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Barbara Rosenwein, *To Be a Neighbor of St. Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049*. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989).

tax advantages of donation. Studying the process of donations reveals who was involved with Solotchinskii at a local elite level from the earliest Grand Prince who donated land and took holy orders himself. Tracing the evolution of lands and commodities granted to Solotchinskii paints a picture of how much land was bestowed, allowing the monastery to grow in power and wealth.

The second chapter presents an overview of the political situation in Riazan' with respect to the centralizing Muscovite state, as well as the later development of political relations between the secular elite and the monastery. It explores the power shifts through the changes following the Ulozhenie of 1649, and the increase of peasant petitions claiming violation of rights. The increasing conflicts documented in the petitions between the secular population to the monastery, as well as complaints by the monastic peasants are analyzed extensively as a tool to view the power of the monastery with regard to judicial outcomes, settling disputes of marriage contracts, overseeing complaints of dishonor done to the village locals either by local secular people or by outsiders, ruling on apportionment of lands between conflicting parties, and meting out punishments for violations of law and order. Both were theoretically subordinate to overarching structures at the central State/Church level (i.e., the Muscovite Grand Prince's administration, and the Orthodox Patriarchate), yet the resolution of conflicts at the local level remained a matter of importance to both Solotchinskii as well as the Grand Prince of Riazan'. There is a fascinating interweaving of both local custom in seeking redress and resolution, as well as the patterns established by each individual entity when necessity drove it to seek outside (i.e., central) intervention. Here I show the types of conflicts that were addressed and trace the presentation of these petitions (both formal and informal) to respective entities in showing where local interests were maintained and separated.

In the third chapter I examine the differing forms of land tenure held by the monastery and demonstrate how concomitantly the monastery began to be competitive in local power institutions as it accrued land, dependent populations, and participation in the production of goods. This created not only an economic tension between the local secular and elite polities, but also fostered some degree of political contention. At the same time, the emphasis was still on maintaining localism in the face of Moscow's increasing centralization. I examine the tax rosters, inventories, donation books (looking for annual support), services required for landholding, and the growth of the dependent population (peasants and 'servitors'), as well as the competition for land. One of the significant factors of land tenure was the role of the peasants on this land, their tax status, and transition between rent paid in labor versus cash.

The fourth chapter investigates the economic role that the monastery played. This is perhaps the most effective and concrete demonstration of the monastery's gains in power. Specific to this is the evidence of competition for labor, particularly on the part of the peasants, who found it of greater benefit to be on monastic lands rather than private, secular estates, both in terms of taxes and labor owed. Critical to this notion is that particularly in the sixteenth-seventeenth century, a shift occurred in both how the monastery derived income from goods, as well as how it became an administrative entity in the form of a landlord. At the same time, the monastic participation in the local economy as producers of handicraft and artisanal goods brought it into conflict with the local secular economy.

In the last chapter I approach the correspondence, petitions, and formal charges for examination of actions taken by the local secular authorities, the monastery, as well as their upward appeal to their centralized superiors by surveying the types of documents and their function. Though I do not conduct

a philologic study, I do explore the form and function of documents, who wrote them, how they were distributed, and who had access to them.

The work on Solotchinskii traces the monastery's development from a dependent, subordinate entity in the local community to an independent and highly organized polity that competed with the local secular organizations. It analyzes how the monastery worked in conjunction with its local population of peasant-servitors, as well as in periodic conflict with the Riazan' secular community. While landholding serves as the basis for empowering the monastery with lands, goods, people, and commodities, making it an important contributor to the local economy, the records show that Solotchinskii struggled to defend its claims against encroachment of other monasteries, offenses, or conflicts with nobility, and functioned on a daily basis as an effective landlord managing its population. It dispensed justice, observed challenges by the peasant population, and strove to retain control on the local level as an empowered institution on a par with secular authority.

Chapter 1: Local Political Consolidation Between Secular and Ecclesiastic Polities in Solotchinskii Monastery



Solotchinskii Monastery, Church of the Holy Spirit (Tserkov' sviatogo dukkha)

The development of interaction between distinct jurisdictions of secular and ecclesiastic domains proved to be a gradual one in Riazan' province in pre-Imperial Russia. The ecclesiastic realm carved out by Solotchinskii monastery derived from a secular origin and patronage. It gradually transformed into an independent political, economic, and administrative polity that stood as a parallel institution of power in a largely cooperative relationship with a secular partner instead of parent. Ultimately the process of negotiating appropriate areas of authority between the two led to a system of *relative* shared governance although not as inclusive a system of cooperation between authority structures, one which originally incorporated and later excluded the central power of the Muscovite State and Patriarchate. The symbiotic nature of the local structure affected not only the overall relationship in a gradual inversion to the interests of the central authorities, it also distinctly influenced the means by which the two local entities divided their respective areas of administration. As a result, an important transformation was demonstrated in the levels of administrative complexity that reflected the growing social and political complexity. This became most apparent in the latter half of the seventeenth century as new processes were developed to cope with political trends mirrored in both the State and Patriarchy's growing bureaucracy. Specifically, what began as a process of local polities working in cooperation with a centralizing State in a tripartite relationship, made a transition that distinctly favored the locality's power structure over that of the State, even as rifts between a formerly harmonious, yet distinctly unequal relationship grew into a more mature and equal partnership. Finally, as the monastery grew wealthier and more established in its rights and authority during the seventeenth century, it served as an institution of power that often came into conflict with the locality to which it had been previously subordinated, replete with its own jurisdictions and duties that were more and more contested by the previously cooperative venture.

These processes are evident through a wealth of both monastery and secular documents preserved in local archives. Of particular significance are petitions and bequests that clarify the establishment and subsequent endowment with land of the monastery, which over time detail not only the simple landholding or tax status of the monastery's administrative sphere, but more importantly document how disputes emerged and were resolved on a local level. Finally, the documents show the process of refinement for the addressing of those disputes as the levels of complexity increased.

Solotchinskii monastery was established in 1390 by the local appanage Grand Prince Oleg' as a place of solitude, prayer and retirement. Its founding story is related in numerous places, and according to Archimandrite Makedonii's history of the Riazan' Eparchate, Oleg' came upon two monks, Vasilii and Evfemii, ensconced in the wilds of his lands practicing a type of solitary monasticism, enduring the hardships of the wilds in order to attain a closer spiritual relationship with the Divine. Impressed by their mission, and "delighting in spiritual talk with them," he became a royal patron at first, donating lands overlooking the junction of the Oka and Solotcha rivers, about twenty *versts* from Riazan' proper, that they might build a monastery better suited to his own tastes.¹ He then continued to endow the monastery, along with a nearby sister convent, with lands and benefices, and built two churches, Pokrovskii and Rozhdestvenskoi. The monastery soon attracted more monks. Oleg' himself periodically withdrew there in retreat where, as Makedonii noted, he "relaxed and rested, fatigued from his travels." Over time he continued to endow the monastery and convent, reportedly becoming more and more interested

¹ Makadonii, *Solotchinskii monastyr'*, Riazan', 1886. See also S. Terpigorev, "Solotchinskie monakhi i ikh krepostnye," in *Istoricheskii vestnik*, vol. 27, Feb. 1887, pp. 241-65; L. I. Denisov, *Pravoslavnye monastyri rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow: 1908), pp. 714; under the auspices of the Russian Orthodox Church, an official guidebook of monasteries in Russia published in 2000, *Monastyri: entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Moscow: Respublika, 2000), p. 217. A *verst* is approximately 1.06 km.

in the spiritual matters at the monastery. Eventually Oleg' accepted a low rank in the monastic community while continuing to serve his "princely office." Makedonii described Oleg's gradually increasing involvement and stays with the monastery as seasonal, noting that he "came to live [there] by turns: in Riazan', attending to business, in the monastery attending to spirit." He donated wood, salt, beaver furs and fish to the brothers. Eventually, following a political misunderstanding², Oleg' withdrew further and further, until finally in 1402 he took the strongest vows as a *skhima* and fully dedicated himself to the monastery, becoming brother Ioakim just before he died that year on July 5. His body was subsequently interred at the Pokrovskii church, which he founded. His wife was also consigned to Zachatieskii *zhenskii monastyr*, the sister convent to Solotchinskii, taking the veil as sister Evpraksia, and when she died in 1405, she, too, was buried in Pokrovskii church, in the same coffin. Terpigorev, a local historian of Riazan' in the late nineteenth century, reported that the Grand Princess began a tradition that was a basis for conflict, because with her "very original" bequeathal of a village she gave to the convent, she stipulated that although the village was to go to the convent, the monks of the monastery were to manage and collect the receipts from the village. "As a consequence...there occurred constant misunderstandings between them [the monastic personnel and the village]."³

Solotchinskii was not the first monastery in this area, nor was it the first monastery endowed by nobility. The monastery of the Holy Trinity at Riazan' was founded considerably earlier and also benefited from royal patronage.⁴ The establishment of monasteries in Russia, from their

² Oleg' was accused of treachery in one of the battles against the Mongols led by Muscovite prince Dmitrii Donskoi, in that Oleg' failed to supply armies and/or show up for the battle. See both Terpigorev, p. 243, as well as Makedonii, p. 23. This was resolved in 1386 with the moderation of the subsequently canonized founder of Trinity Sergieus, St. Sergei of Radonezh. See below, fn 4.

³ Terpigorev, 243.

⁴ Holy Trinity at Riazan', however, was founded in approximately 1208, or just prior to the Mongol invasion in 1237, which largely destroyed Riazan'. It was subsequently resurrected in 1351 according to one version, or in 1386

earliest inception in Kievan Rus' in the south, fell into two distinct types: princely and saintly monasteries. These two categories, however, were not mutually exclusive, as for example in the case of the martyred princes Boris and Gleb⁵, which spawned numerous cathedrals, churches, and monasteries in their memory. However, the general pattern of development for princely and saintly monasteries remained clear. Monasteries (together with their churches and cathedrals) that were of a "saintly" origin, such as at Trinity Sergius, as well as Kirill Beloozersk, Volokolamsk, and Savitskii, were founded during the great northern migration in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries. At this time there was a split in philosophy among monks in Kievan Rus' regarding the best type of spiritual existence and practices possible, and particularly whether monasteries should emphasize an eremitic or coenobitic lifestyle; that is, the life of a solitary monk, eremitic, or those who lived communally, the coenobitic. The northern migration was undertaken by monks who desired the solitary, hardship-inspired, primarily eremitic lifestyles of solitary men seeking a more mystical and contemplative religious existence. This traces back further to the tendencies of the early monks in the Kievan Caves (Pecherskii) monastery, one of the earliest and most prestigious monasteries in Southern (Kievan) Russia in the eleventh century. Pecherskii was established by the Grand Prince of Kiev, who installed his own Archimandrite. The Pecherskii monks lived an austere life according to the Byzantine Studite rules and later formed their own monasteries, leading historian John Fennell to describe

after a meeting of Grand Prince Oleg and Dmitri Donskoi, moderated by Saint Sergei of Radonezh; or in the late fourteenth century by the nephew of Grand Prince Oleg' in honor of the meeting of St. Sergei. See *Monastyr'i entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik*, pp. 217-219.

⁵ The two princes were murdered by their half-brother Sviatopolk the Damned in 1015 and subsequently martyred by another half-brother, Iaroslav the Wise; see in particular chapter 2 in Gail Lenhoff's *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb: A Sociocultural Study of the Cult and the Texts* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1989) for the most comprehensive survey of both the initial incident, its portrayal in the primary sources, and the social implications surrounding the development of Cult of Saints. The original tale of the martyred princes is of course found in the Russian Primary Chronicles (*Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisi* [hereafter PSRL]), in many differing versions and volumes.

Pecherskii as the “nursery of future prelates.”⁶ However, Pecherskii remained unique as a non-saintly, princely or secularly founded establishment, for it managed to attain political independence (due largely to political instability in the fragmenting Kievan “state”) and subsequently divided into like-minded cells closely adhering to the mother organization. While Pecherskii’s co-founder, Feodosii, was later canonized, hence completing the transformation from princely to saintly monastery, its origins as a princely monastery that chose to withdraw from secular life make it a noteworthy early example of monastic foundation.

The great northern exodus to spread monasticism, particularly after the incursion of Mongols beginning in Riazan’ province in 1237, exemplified the patterns of development of the saintly monastery. This is particularly shown by the eremitic, or single-dwelling, monk of the “wild honey and locusts” reputation, who endured the type of hardships reminiscent of the early desert fathers in fourth-fifth century Christianity – living in hollowed out logs, living an ascetic existence that favored the spiritual and tested the physical strength of the monk.⁷ This stands in contrast to the coenobitic, or community based, monasteries of monks. Herein lies, in part, the basis for the “possessor/non-possessor” historical debate on the accumulation of material goods by early churches and monasteries. Despite an ongoing scholarly controversy, the question at what point in time the church became a landholder in competition with secular institutions remains open.⁸ Fennell argues that this phenomenon is found in the fourteenth and fifteenth

⁶ John Fennell, *History of the Russian Church to 1448* (London: Longman Press, 1995), p.67. The Studite rules of Constantinople represented a more conservative and reform-oriented type of monasticism, perhaps corresponding to the Cluniac type of reforms seen in France in the 10th century.

⁷ I.U. Budovnits, “Monastyri na Rusi i bor’ba s nimi krest’ian” in *Religiia i tserkov v istorii Rossii*, A.M. Sakharova, general editor (Moscow: Mycl’ Pub, 1973), p.117. This article derived from his more comprehensive study in his monograph *Monastyri na Rusi i bor’ba s nimi krest’ian v XIV-XVI vv* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), with the discussion of northern migration and different types of monastic formation discussed esp. in chapters 2 and 4.

⁸ There is a myriad of information regarding this largely political controversy dressed in terms of ecclesiastic reforms, postulating a variety of reasons for a conflict between two positions within the church on the question of

centuries, and that knowledge of landholdings prior to the Mongol invasions cannot be adequately determined; however, since he also argues that part of the reason for monastic and episcopal growth was in fact sanctuary from Mongol invasions, especially Kipchak hordes, this would need reconsideration with respect to the chronology.⁹

The intention here is not to revisit the Possessor/Non-Possessor debate over doctrinal issues surrounding the growth of ecclesiastic land holding, but to shed light on the emergence of the types of monastic communities developing in this period. This is important because the type of monastery defined the type of relationship it would develop with its surrounding community, and in turn, the parameters of their interactions. The character of this relationship centered around spheres of power at the secular and ecclesiastic levels and was influenced greatly by the measure of lands each polity held and how each defined their relationship to the other's functions as an administrative instrument of society. It is clear through records of large monasteries (and, indeed, from the fact that we can even speak of "large" monasteries at all by the fourteenth century in the north) that successive land grants were bestowed on institutions both for commemoration and for veneration. One can, however, make a distinction in the variation of monastic formation between the commemoration of a secular patron, such as a regional grand prince or family member, and that of a saintly figure (even those royal patrons later canonized or

whether to own property was in keeping with the mission of ecclesiastic objectives. See Goldfrank for the rules of Volokolamsk. Donald Ostrowski has laid out a highly persuasive argument as to the inherently political nature of the polemics, arguing in fact that there is no basis for the historical debate as there are no clear definitions of what constituted a possessor vs. non-possessor; or, more succinctly, those who advocated the church maintain material property for the purposes of being a social services safety net for the community at large, versus a position advocating isolation and non-materialism to emulate a life of Christ (*Slavic Review* 49:4, 1990, pp. 525-64). See M. Joseph Rouet de Journel, *Monachisme et monasteres russes* (Paris: Payot, 1952); Victor Arminjon, *La Russie Monastique* (St. Vincent sur Jabron: Editions présence, 1974), as well as Golubinskii, *Istorii russkoi tserkov.*
⁹ Fennell, p. 205-207; this is not to say that he is entirely wrong, but if one attributes growth to this causation, the date of early 13th century would be more realistic. See also Charles Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press) and Thomas Noonan.

in the preliminary stages of *proslavleniia*, a type of pre-qualifying process for sainthood, akin to beatification) around whom a monastery or a cult religious following might develop. With the bestowal of lands from secular sources, either in part or whole, the monastery became an institution of power and administration in regional communities above and beyond its traditional existence as a spiritual haven. At the same time, it entered a more amorphous, mixed status with respect to interactions with local community. The entry into this more heterogeneous status not only required more than a simple hierarchy for adopting new and enlarged administrative functions; it required a reconfiguration and a process of negotiation with the surrounding secular community that would, in fact, demarcate and delimit individual spheres of influence between these polarities, and allow for a revised position in the social order on both sides. What followed was a breakdown of the traditional system of cooperation between the Church and State entities as localism laid claim to the monastery's loyalty over that of cooperation and even subordination within either the ecclesiastic hierarchy or the centralized state at the Muscovite level.

At first glance, it would seem that Solotchinskii monastery in the seventeenth century served as little more than an administrative body overseeing the complex management of an ecclesiastically held estate, not greatly different than any other private estate in Russia at this time, and with land tenure practices similar to those found in much of seigneurial Europe. Indeed, from its very founding in the fourteenth century, the monastery was clearly intended to be categorized as a princely rather than a saintly monastery, such as Holy Trinity. While the foundation legend of the two monks, Vasilii and Evfemii, describes the typical process of northern migration and eremitic origins, the transformation through royal patronage by Prince

Oleg' at its very beginning makes it a princely rather than saintly monastery. The endowment with lands, benefices, and money from local nobility in successive generations allowed its growth as a coenobitic, or communally based, monastery as well. It is from that consideration that the monastery's relationship with the surrounding secular community was shaped, in that it was never as far removed, either physically or interactively, from the local villages and hamlets, whether in their possession or retained by secular owners. This stands in direct contrast to the saintly monasteries with their accompanying mystical aura of "otherness" and removal from worldly matters, precisely the factors by which they drew patronage.

The monastery at Solotcha was an integral and vital part of the secular community precisely because it was so closely connected. The people on the monastic estates, the families who donated landed estates, those who bequeathed their goods and the care of their souls to the monastery, and those who retired there were all part of the same community that both comprised and surrounded the monastery. The monastery and local community were inextricably related, and no degree of separation of "otherness" truly existed. Politics, economy, judicial, and administrative matters affecting lives -- all intersected here. They were gradually defined by category, with the prime criteria for classification appearing to be directly related to one's status vis-a-vis land tenure. If a person, free or otherwise, dwelled on monastic land, his or her petitions or grievances were addressed by the monastery; similarly, the same is true at the secular level. Aleksandr Piskarev, a nineteenth century local historian in Riazan', noted of the monastery, "In all its own *votchini* [estates¹⁰], it was landlord, administrator and judge..." This

¹⁰ *Votchina* [the singular form of the term] is a complex term deserving of further discussion, as it is most correctly a patrimonial estate. However, the historical context of this term also warrants a note of distinction, as it relates back to a time of internecine strife during the fragmentation of the Kievan principalities and made a transformation from being an appanage principality to being a privately held estate; hence, in the time of my current study, it could be

is not unusual in any part of Russia, nor, for that matter, concerning the practices of European monastic land dwellers. What is unusual is the fundamental role of the monastery as an administrative body in the daily activities of the brothers who lived there, and the inhabitants of their lands. Of additional importance is the process of negotiation in defining administrative boundaries between the monastery and the secular bodies, both local and in centralizing Moscow from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, until the religious and administrative changes of Peter the Great.

This development is shown extensively in the petitions presented to the monastery by inhabitants of monastic lands as well as the families of those who bequeathed to the monastery. While that would seem to be typical of the judicial administration, the petitions examined cover a broad spectrum of social matters, not simply judicially based complaints¹¹, as one might well expect to find in a society with separate secular and ecclesiastic courts. This of course predates the formation of any hierarchal or organized legal judicial system by several centuries, and therefore one would readily expect to find private administration of these matters. As such, the distinction by type of land tenure is not unusual. What is surprising is the range of social levels that these petitions cover, particularly during the seventeenth century, starting with representation of local Riazan' elite at the beginning of the century, and ends with group petitions from peasants and local villagers. In part, I would suggest, this is related to the passage of the *Ulozhenie* of 1649, which was an overhaul of the Russian legal code that in turn created a monastic *Prikaz*, a specific department to oversee church administration regarding legal claims against the church as well as

donated to the monastery by a private landholder. Jerome Blum discusses this briefly in *Lord and Peasant in Russia* (Princeton: University Press, 1961), but does not draw the exact distinction between an *udel'* and *votchina* that deserves more thorough study and explanation than can be provided here.

¹¹ This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4 of this study as I explore the legal issues between monastery and secular communities.

formally enserfed dependent populations. George Florovsky noted that previously “...the patriarch was head of a realm virtually independent of the secular authorities.”¹²

Typical of such representation were land donation decrees, starting in the fifteenth, but especially in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which came predominantly from the local nobility. Estates, villages, or particular benefices or economic production rights were ceded to the monastery in sum or part, at times resulting in familial disputes over claims to the property bequeathed. Also of note is the fact that, over time, there is an increasing level of “complexity” demonstrated in the bequeathal patterns, shifting from a straight, simple donation into a more explicit (and often disputed) and detailed contract. For instance, the descendants of Grand Prince Oleg’, through a series of bequeathals, endowed the monastery over successive generations. Riazan’ Grand Prince Fedor Olgovich [married to the daughter of Moscow’s Grand Prince Dmitrii Donskoi] gave the monastery the village of Fedorok and control of the people in it; he later added Savitskii island and Lake Tish, with the provision that his family and the *volost’* heads were to retain hunting rights on the property. In 1483, Nast’ia, wife of Prokofeev Davidovich, a minor noble in the retinue of Ivan Fedorovich [the succeeding Grand Prince of Riazan’, son of Fedor], gave to Solotchinskii the village of Kalialinskoe “in memory of her husband, along with all the taxes and people and animals.”¹³ In 1502 Fedor Vasillivich gave the village of Sil’chin in quit-rent maintenance.¹⁴

In an undated donation decree that falls sometime between 1483 and 1501, Riazan’s Grand Princess Anna endowed both Solotchinskii and its sister convent Zachataiskii zhenskii

¹² George Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology: Part I.* (Askerhus, Norway, Nordland Publishing, 1979), accessed from http://www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/english/florovsky_ways_chap3.html

¹³ Aleksandr Piskarev, *Drevnye Gramaty i akty Riazanskovo kraia* (Riazan’, 1864), #6, pp.4-5. [Hereafter DGARK]

¹⁴ *ibid*, #9

monastery” (where Grand Prince Oleg’ had installed his wife some 100 years earlier), with land and financial benefits. In one decree she endowed the convent with both the rights and profits of onion production and a hive of wild bees in Mikhailov, as well as the beekeeper’s labor. She included the provision that a portion must be given over to the monastery, which held the estate in question. She further directed that the hegumen of the monastery provide “year after year” for the convent the same rights, as well as giving offerings of resin and fish to the convent

“For the sake of the Holy Theotokos and Her Honest Nativity of Christ, the Grand Princess Anna, granted the Igumen Antonya Solodshinskogo with his brothers (or, according to him, a different Hegumen will be, that of Grand Princess Sophia) gave a side to Mikhailov mountain to the Holy Conception, and a bee-keeper flour and food to eat the sources. And it went to those estates for five poods of resin. (On the original letter is the seal of black wax, and on the other hand is the signature of the Princess. "Grand Duchess Anna," The time of writing this letter must be considered between 1483 and 1501, the time of widowhood and death of the Great Duchess Anna).¹⁵

In another decree, she endowed the monastery with the village of Cheshuev, from her holdings in Romanov, but required that the people in the village remain exempt from monastic levies:

“...and that, my people are not a burden for more than five years. And my *volostels* (chief of a rural district) do not enter the outskirts of the city, neither the driver, nor the beekeeper.¹⁶

In 1510 the children of local noble Fenin Grigorev gave their *pomest’ e* estate to the monastery, but by this time, 130 years after the monastery’s foundation, the complexities of negotiation between secular and ecclesiastic parties were much more readily apparent. The terms of the

¹⁵ Piskarev, DGARK, #7, p. 8

¹⁶ *ibid*, #8, p.9

contract became increasingly specific with respect to the amounts and details of lands given: “the forest clearing in the glade of Roinskaia by the little river in Krapivenk, with the village.”¹⁷

By the mid seventeenth century, the donations became even more specific, demonstrating further refinement in the culture of negotiation between the secular and ecclesiastic bodies. On October 13, 1654, in a petition addressed to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, there is an “inventory” submitted by secretaries Mikita Golovnin and Sidor Davidovich for donation to the Riazan’ archiepiscopate with lands including “the village of Luchinskii, with three villages and five hamlets, and the village of Borisovskii, with Okologorod’s subdistrict village, the agricultural lands, the free fields, a pair of plots and four hamlets, and the village of Srezneva with its hamlets and 44 *chetverty* but without a half *chetvert* of plowed fields or post taxes, and in the present year 1654, 62 rubles, 17 *altyn*’ and 4 silver pieces.¹⁸ Money paid to the archiepiscopate’s office by scrivener Levontin Birin.”¹⁹

In 1655 a decree of Tsarevich Aleksei Alekseevich issued an order to Riazan’ Prince Mikhail Vasil’evich Schetinin over a dispute regarding local rights to tax income from a monastic property. The Tsarevich rendered a decision that Schetinin was to exempt the inhabitants on Solotchinskii estates in different regions in Riazan’, “in the Okologorodni subdistrict village Novoselok,” the lands of Chushuev with hamlets, in Perevitskii’s subdistrict village of

¹⁷ *ibid*, #10. Grigorevskoe in fact became one of the larger estates and subsequently most populated villages owned by the monastery.

¹⁸ a *chetvert* is approximately 4.1 acres of land in this time period; earlier it would refer to one-half *desiatina*”, or 2.7 acres of land, which would be significantly smaller. However, Sergei Pushkarev relates that in the 16-17th centuries, this term took on a meaning of “lying across three fields,” or approximating 1.5 *desiatiny* of land, at that time evaluated as 4.1 acres. See Pushkarev, *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p.7. See also Veselovskii, *Feodal’noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoi Rusi*, (Moscow: Nauka, 1947), A.A. Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal’naia votchina* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), and Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant*.

¹⁹ Russian State Archive of Ancient Records [hereafter RGADA], fond 1202, opis 3, dela 3.

Grigorevskoe and the village of Bildino with hamlets and with all of these forests settled after cadasters in the Ponizkii region in the monastic wasteland in the hamlet of Nitaev.” But those *votchini* [estates] which qualified after [being listed in the cadasters, which] were listed in the tax rosters and royal inventories were to pay the taxes and *strelt'sy* support by demand of the Tsar. He authorized the local regional (secular) authorities to act with force when extracting taxes from those peasants who had not paid (apparently at the instruction of the monastery), and demanded that Schetinin dispatch this order to all the villages and hamlets involved, and to instruct the local inhabitants of their requirement to pay.²⁰

The evolving degrees of cooperation and careful consideration of the exemptions and conditions applied to the donations are indicative not only of a more complex society, but also of the specific intention of each party to remain vested in their own interests. Princess Anna's donation of the beekeeping rights and production on her land, for example, show not only that she was concerned with the financial well-being of the monastery as well as the convent, but that she continued to receive benefits from her own holdings as well, notably in the clause exempting the peasants from monastic levies – meaning that she retained taxation rights and income. By delineating precisely what benefits and lands the monastery (or convent) was to receive, the terms demonstrate that the negotiation process is one that required the cooperation of both parties, secular and elite, in defining the larger realm of community in Solotcha and its surrounding villages. Thus, the donation of Golovin and Davidovich shows that they had in mind the benefit of the local community in terms of the partial donation to the archiepiscopate, but their own retention of certain production rights, including taxable income that bound them to

²⁰ A. B. Selivanov, ed., “Drevnie akty Riazanskago krai,” in *Trudy Riazanskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi komissii*, tom II, no. 6 (Riazan', 1888), p. 112, document #18 [Hereafter TRUAK].

the State. They created a contract based on cooperation between local ecclesiastic and secular entities that worked to the benefit of each party. However, when those interests were no longer mutually beneficial, each side looked beyond the local level for resolution to their disagreements. Therefore, when Archimandrite Sergei objected to the imposition of secular taxes on inhabitants of monastic lands (hence under monastic authority), likely with the realization that the inhabitants could only afford to pay to one branch of authority, and he knew that no local resolution in his favor was possible, he took his appeal to the Tsar. By going outside of the local realm to achieve a compromise that was otherwise unreachable, Sergei was able to obtain a more favorable result that allowed him at least a partial exemption.

The progression from elite donations defining the degrees of financial largesse to ascertaining the given spheres of influence are notable in the case of Schetinin precisely because of the assignment by the Tsar in Moscow, rather than the local elite, to the resolution of this dispute. It is not clear from other petitions of this time that this case was particularly unusual or of such extremity that one would necessarily be forced to seek the highest level of intervention; rather, it would seem to indicate an evolving complexity of the appropriate venue to which the petitioner should or could turn to seek redress. The development of further centralized bureaucracy in Moscow in the latter half of the century, particularly during the reign of Peter I, could well have contributed to the growing complexity by opening further possible venues for petitioning.

Petitions in the first half of the seventeenth century (as well as those from the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries) reveal a very gradual process of evolution for determination of the appropriate venue. Records from these earlier files show a tripartite system of cooperation for working out these avenues: donations of land were directed for approval to Moscow, primarily to the tsar, for

simple cases of straightforward requests. This is in large part a response to the sixteenth century decree by the Muscovite court that donations of *pomest'ie* estates could no longer be made to monasteries, since this was contrary to the interests of centralization.²¹ Petitions would be approved only for special exceptions, predominantly because the court, beginning with Ivan III, was of course strongly in favor of escheat. Lands could be donated for commemorative purposes, but it is important to emphasize that lands “lost” to the state in favor of gain by the church were also those lost to government taxation, as well as property that could be used to reward elite secular service. It was clearly in the state’s best interests to retain as much property as possible and to check the growth of ecclesiastic landowning, not only out of financial considerations but also to avoid the potential division of power. Hence, the delineation within the local petitions for explicit benefices such as fishing rights, hunting within particular areas, donations of particular types of land (arable vs. marsh) and certain production rights such as honey, became the norm as the local secular elite found that circumventing the explicit directions of the state with respect to outright estate donation was easily enough done by changing the terms of the contract. Instead of donating the estate, they could donate the income rights from the estate, in part or full, and retain the actual property as long as possible, as Grand Princess Anna had done.

Grand Prince Oleg’ himself demonstrated another aspect present in the donations is the process of bequeathal from the very outset of Solotcha’s foundation. While he endowed the monastery with the prescribed lands, both for the monastery and neighboring convent in honor of his wife Evrosiniia, one must consider the process by which Oleg’ retired to the monastery – through a

²¹ See Jack Kollmann, “The *Stoglav* Council and Parish Priests,” in *Russian History-Histoire Russe* (7:1-2, 1980), pp. 65-91.

series of stages that allowed him to make a gradual transition, retaining his own secular interests in business and politics, all the while endowing the monastery before his deathbed avowal to the strictest order. It was not unusual for elite boyars to enter a monastery, nor indeed to send their wives to convents (voluntarily or otherwise), towards the end of their lives. Oleg', however, did what was apparently the normal procedure of reaching the point in his life wherein he retired (whether for political purposes or not) and took a graduated series of vows that allowed him to maintain a status as a lower monk yet continue to function in the secular world and conduct his business, going back and forth between the monastery and the business concerns in Riazan'.²² It is only a short while before his death that he actually took the vows of a "*skhima*," a level of monastic status equated with the strictest vows, consigning Evrosiniia similarly at the same time.²³

In short, all of these petitions are representative of the differing kinds of donations typical of this monastery in particular, and many of the assorted monasteries across Russia.²⁴ What emerges is a detailed picture of complexity and the process of demarcation within a relatively short period of time, as effectively demonstrated by the local elite and monastery both in conjunction with and, later in opposition to, the centralized state government. When placed against the background of political activities and conflict between church and state in the early seventeenth century, particularly during the tumultuous period of "troubles" in the waning days of Muscovy,

²² A. Dobroklonskii discussed this in detail in his work on the social levels of monastic inhabitants and the differing levels of vows that those entering the monastery could take, in "Ocherki iz zhisni Solotchinskago monastyria," in *TRUAK*, tom II, No. 7, 1887, p. 127.

²³ Terpigorev, "Solotchinskie monakhi," *op cite*.

²⁴ Ludwig Steindorff, for example, documents the details of memorialization and commemoration donations typical of that by the aforementioned Nast'ia Davidovicha, in his examination of the correspondence between a wife donating to a monastery in memory of her husband, including the very frank discussion of how much donations equate to the type and duration of memorial service rendered by the monastery. Steindorff, "Princess Mariia Golonina: Perpetuating Identity through "Care for the Deceased,"" in Gail Lenhoff and Ann Kleimola's *Culture and Identity in Muscovy, 1359 – 1584* (Moscow: ITZ-Garant, 1997).

it requires examination within a whole different spectrum of consideration: that of local power structures on the periphery of a much larger centralized government. The complexity and specificity of the donations, making a transition from simple land donations to extremely detailed and concretely defined types of maintenance, inclusive of exceptions to the rule, indicates that contrary to previously supposed claims that the church was being undermined by the state²⁵ (a position which may arguably have held true in the confines of the later Muscovite central government), in the peripheral zones of Russia, there was a degree of cooperation and negotiation fostered between secular and ecclesiastic society that demonstrates mutually reinforcing power structures.

As already suggested, a tripartite system of cooperation existed for the most part, but particularly so at the local level in Riazan' between the church and secular powers. Areas of authority were delineated according to each polity's interests. Strictly financial transactions between the local elite and the monastery were detailed in petitions between families and the archimandrite or hegumens of the monastery. Land donations were usually presented from the elite to the church, except in the case of an entire estate, in which case permission had to be applied to and received from Moscow. Internecine struggles on the secular level were usually appealed to the monastery, keeping things local. For decisions relating strictly to church policy, monastic or clerical personnel could file petitions either with the Archiepiscopate in Riazan'-Suzdal', or further up the ranks to Moscow's Patriarch, as was seen in the case of several priests and monks who were tried within ecclesiastic courts, as well as in settlements and punishments that involved mandatory confinement at Solotchinskii. Terpigorev notes in two instances, both regarding

²⁵ Paul Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society in Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), argues for a decrease in church authority at the expense of increasing state power, something which is clearly not indicated in the records of Solotchinskii.

Archimandrite Ignatius (thus in the late seventeenth century), who was regarded as a strict disciplinarian, that he had the support of the Patriarch Hadrian. Both cases involved monks sentenced to time at Solotchinskii, one held in chains for 24 days; the other protesting that his sentence was too harsh.²⁶ In the event of a dispute between the monastery and the local nobility, however, appeals could be made to the Tsar or to the court in Moscow, a phenomenon particularly seen in the late 1680s under the rule of the particularly disputatious Archimandrite Ignatius.

What is also important about Solotchinskii monastery as an administrative body is that, in the seventeenth century, it was an extremely powerful and wealthy institution that could easily hold its own as a competitive administrative system in the local entity. Terpigorev calculated that the monastery held 5,432 male souls, 24,738 *chetverty* of land, and forests measuring 28 x 12 *versts*. “With these colossal holdings, the Archimandrite of Solotchinskii monastery administered with a power that was ‘entirely governmental’” as Makedonii stated mildly.²⁷ Hence we see that the tripartite cooperation of State, local secular representation and local ecclesiastic separation could not remain constant, and two main measures emerged. Largely in light of political turmoil in Moscow at the time²⁸, but also in response to the now historically conditioned traditional pairing of local secular elite with monastic interests, there was a dichotomy of cooperative power on the local level in favor of local strength rather than measures imposed from outside by Moscow.

²⁶ Terpigorev, p. 246.

²⁷ Terpigorev, p.243. He unfortunately does not establish a date as to the time of these holdings.

²⁸ The seventeenth century in Moscow saw three large political crises spanning the century: at the start the State was faced with the Time of Troubles, against a background of uprisings and famine; in mid-century the State was faced with the religious challenge of the Nikonian reforms; and in the last third of the century, the struggle for continuation of the dynasty that was ultimately resolved with the ascension of Peter the Great.

Yet, the sources show clearly that there was a process of determining respective niches of power appropriate to each polity's interests and jurisdictions.

A great many cases prove quite representative of this pattern. In ventures requiring no mediation, such as simple and straight-forward donations or commemorations between the elite and the monastery, there are numerous records of annual donations by families that the monastery administered. Paying support money for the *strel'tsy* guard for uniforms, bread, or simply to ensure the *strel'tsy* presence as protection in an era prior to any kind of standing army or permanent police force serves as a significant and well-recorded example. Osipa Chizhov, a scrivener or attorney also recorded as Iosif Chizhov, was recorded in multiple annual donations for numerous sequential years giving support for *strel'tsy* bread or uniforms.²⁹ There are also straight-forward annual donations of support to the monastery itself for “money and bread dues” from not only the elite, but from villages as their expected tithes were recorded.³⁰

There are petitions of numerous types to the Tsar from the local elite seeking redress for local grievances. In the seventeenth century as the elite fought to maintain control over their own domestic land holdings, one of the most common complaints lodged against the monastery was that of peasant theft – that is, of peasants belonging to noble estates being “stolen” by monastic estates for economic advantages.

A 1673 petition from a village elder, Fral Pavlov in Korostova, on the estate of the *stol'nik* I. S. Khitrov, requests intervention from the Tsar because the village peasants were caught in a

²⁹ RGADA, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 60; f. 1202, o. 1, d. 62, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 65, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 67, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 82; this covers a period of five years and there are multiple years recorded.

³⁰ RGADA, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 158.

dispute over land holdings between Khitrov and prince M. V. Obolenskii. Obolenskii claimed the peasants were his, while Khitrov, through Pavlov's petition, claimed them as his property.³¹

In 1676 a local grand prince of Riazan', Ivan Andre'evich Golytsin – who distinguished himself as a patrimonial prince in deference to the Tsar -- appealed to Tsar Fedor Alekse'evich, requesting that the elders in his town of Kuz'minsk and village of Shkhemin, Georg Tanin, Ivan Savinok, and their respective peasant colleagues, be freed from monastic service, along with a host of other peasants whom Golytsin claimed were stolen and beaten by monastic estates during the height of haymaking/mowing season.³² A few years later, in 1680, Golytsin's village elder in Kuz'minsk addressed a petition to the village elder Terentii Konstantinovich Medvedev claiming that more of Golytsin's peasants were stolen and "beaten half to death."³³

The petitions did not always spell out the reasons for the contestation of peasant ownership, as in a 1682 complaint from Agrafinin Pustin monastery in Riazan' district [*uezd*], who sought freedom for peasants Borisova Rykova and Liubima Mikhailova, claiming that they belonged to the estate of M. S. Pustinin.³⁴

The petitions were also filed between monasteries. One such document from 1685, addressed to the Archimandrite Filaret of the nearby Spasoby Periaslavl'skii monastery, from Solotchinskii on behalf of the local landowner Vasilii Vasilivich Karagin and the population of his entire estate, claimed that some of his peasants were confiscated by monastic peasants of the Periaslavl'

³¹ RGADA, f. 1202, o. 3, d. 12.

³² RGADA, f. 1202, o. 3, d. 14.

³³ RGADA, f. 1202, o.3, d. 17.

³⁴ RGADA, f. 1202, o.3, d. 21.

monastery, beaten and robbed during the rye harvest.³⁵ This crucial timing of peasant theft underscores the importance of the incident: not only was it a measure of theft, but one that incurred specific economic damages by theft of the workers at the time they were most critically needed. This carries greater importance in establishing the priority of local interests, that of Solotcha through the monastery and Karagin, over the expected ecclesiastic interests, those of Solotchinskii and Spasoby-Periaslavl'skii.

There were, of course, economic advantages for the monastery in gaining private peasants, and disadvantages to the secular owners who lost their laborers. The primary reason for secular complaint of peasant theft is one of tax exemption, since the collective tax liability for the private secular estate remained fixed on the number of households, rather than a per capita assessment of individuals. However, on monastic estates, there was a tax exemption based on the number of souls, and hence the more souls counted into the monastic census (although this is also determined, according to N.A. Gorskaia, by households), the less taxes they paid.³⁶ The seventeenth century was also a period that saw a growth in the number of peasants paying cash rent rather than labor or *corvée*, so the monastery could directly increase its revenues in terms of collecting rent.³⁷ While a similar trend occurred on secular estates, these landowners lost out not only in terms of tax liability, but in terms of actual cash receipts. Finally, there is the issue of the timing of these petitions that outlines the gravity of the complaints: at the height of harvest season, their workers were allegedly being snatched away, thus impacting their ability to bring in the harvest.

³⁵ RGADA, f.1202, o.3, d. 24. Notable in this entire series of petitions is the lack of recorded resolution.

³⁶ N.A. Gorskaia, *Monastyrskie krest'iane Tsentral'noi Rossii v XVII veke* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), p. 279.

³⁷ *ibid*, pp. 275-278.

There is a point, however, at which the cooperative terms of agreement did need to be appealed upward, and this negotiation is seen largely after the Time of Troubles ended in 1613 with the election of the new Romanov tsar. While some petitions were sent to the tsar prior to this, the need for the secular elite to appeal to the tsar rather than the Archimandrite of Solotchsinskii does not necessarily indicate a breakdown of local cooperative processes. Rather, it supports my claim that the local Riazan' elite and the monastery worked hand-in-hand on issues that they could in fact negotiate absent central intervention. In matters of local importance, compromise was preferred and was accomplished. However, when the issues were such that the two bodies in the periphery could not come to terms, petitions were made for intercession by central authority. This is significant because many issues of local importance were, in fact, similar to issues that were later brought to the attention of the tsar or state court when the petitioners were comprised of the elite factions. If charges of theft from monastic lands occurred, petitions were usually brought to the archimandrite. However, if such charges involved theft *by* the monastery or its personnel (as opposed to its secular servants or peasants), and an inquiry made to the monastery resulted in a less than satisfactory resolution, the secular complainant would often seek redress from a higher authority. While this usually involved presenting the complaint to the secular court or Tsar, in cases of sufficient gravity, charges could be presented to the Metropolitan of Moscow or to the Patriarch.

Grievances against the monastery or its people are seen in many types of petitions presented to the Tsar. Terpigorev noted of a case involving the archimandrite Ignatius, who was felt by many to be too strict and demanding, and, because of this, several monastic personnel appealed to higher authorities within the church hierarchy for redress. An unusual petition appeared in 1633,

however, in which an inter-monastic dispute was sent to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich by a monk from Trinity Sergius monastery, one Iakov Serge'ev, claiming that he had been robbed by the archimandrite and brothers at Solotchinskii. He reported that he was going to purchase rye bread and chickens from Solotchinskii through an arrangement with the Solotchinskii monk Artemius Kolemin, under the direction of Archimandrite Makarius. He took 100 rubles from Trinity Sergius' treasury, negotiated a contract with the cellarer Semen, then set out on the road along with his servants, Nichaika and Ivaska. On the road they were set upon, beaten, and robbed of the 100 rubles, their horses and sleigh, the horse collars, a cart, a traveling blanket, two fur coats, a monastic cassock and a *klovik* (the headdress of an Orthodox monk), a pair of service horses, and various additional amounts of cash. All in all, the total loss came out to be 186 rubles and 50 kopeks. It is unclear why Kolemin charged the monks and archimandrite at Solotchinskii with this crime, nor why the petition was presented to the Tsar, other than perhaps in hopes of recouping financial losses from a Tsar who was in theory quite close to the church.³⁸ The more appropriate venue would have been within church parameters, but perhaps the political standing of Trinity, or the significant distance from the great northern monastery made it more pragmatic to approach the Tsar.

In the case of the later seventeenth century, however, during the reign of Peter I, who created a large-scale administration and bureaucracy that attempted to implement some form of localized policing, it is possible that petitions were made to the monarch as an emerging avenue of appropriate reporting. There is a petition in 1691, which is unfortunately incomplete, complaining that Prince Mikhail Iakovlevich Cherkassov, Gavril Strekov and Khristofor Grigore'evich Kobiankov, along with his nephew Ivan Ivanovich, were all robbed and beaten

³⁸ Selivanov, A.V., "Drevnie akty Riazanskogo kraia," in TRUDY, t. 2, No. 6, p. 108.

while on the road to Moscow, traveling between Periaslavl'-Riazan' and the village of Shumoshi.³⁹

In this case, as with others of this type, it would appear that the forum of appeal to the Tsar was chosen because the parties were landed elite and thus addressed their complaints to those of similar social status found at court. In several cases, however, the petitions involved parties who did not belong to the Riazan' elite, and therefore might be considered "outsiders" who were either not familiar with, or not willing to accept, the local traditions of negotiation with the monastery. It might also be, as other financial records at this time indicate, that Solotchinskii monastery was financially strapped and unlikely to be a successful source of remuneration.⁴⁰

Many of these cases were decided or negotiated at the local level-because, given the tumultuous nature of Church-State relations during the Nikonian reforms, neither the church nor the secular petitioners could depend any longer on a speedy resolution. Additionally, the petitions were also unable to depend on a decision that might have otherwise been anticipated in the earlier part of the century when there was a particularly close relationship between the Tsar and Patriarch. The Tsar and the Patriarch Philaret were so closely allied that the Tsar in fact referred to Philaret as the "co-ruler" of Russia in more than the typically considered Caesaropapist perspective, but indeed saw him as a legitimate secular ruler. The importance of this model cannot be underestimated in its effective influence on secular government-church relations outside of Moscow. The deliberate fostering of resistance to central authority directly affected peripheral secular-ecclesiastic relations, both in terms of the emulation of cooperative power-sharing, as

³⁹ RGADA, f. 1202, o.3, d. 32.

⁴⁰ See my discussion of financial woes attested to under Archimandrite Ignatius, especially in 1689, discussed in elsewhere in chapters 3 and 4.

well as the fractious nature that led to a dissolution of that cooperative partnership in mid-century Moscow politics under the Nikonian reforms in particular. Both examples were mirrored in due course on the local level, although, I would argue, to a much lesser extent on the part of the dissolution of partnership. The divorce of interests was much less likely in peripheral regions because there was still a vested interest in retaining local power than in submitting to the authority of a higher, centralized authority in accordance with respective polities. The venue governed by “outsiders” was used either as a last resort or simply because it did not fall within any known resource on the local level, by historical tradition deviating from the tripartite cooperation that almost by necessity had to end once effective institutions were in place in Moscow to demand such compliance. Also influencing the submission to State authorities was the ever-growing bureaucracy of the Muscovite state as the processes of appeal moved through the seventeenth century towards being “modernized,” or at least streamlined as the Colleges of the central state made the execution of local power more difficult.

The question of appropriate venues for jurisdiction became an issue when disputes arose over interpretation of donation terms, usually lands and/or peasant labor on them, the rights of the donator to bequeath the lands, or (as become more the case in the seventeenth century) a dispute between the political and economic interests of the secular or ecclesiastic interests presented itself. When local politics could no longer accommodate the respective interests of the secular elite and monastery, or the dispute could not be locally settled, new avenues of appeal to the over-arching institutional entities of the State and the Church had to be utilized.

The ability of complainants to appeal to alternate authorities in either the secular or ecclesiastic political structure for clarification and satisfaction of local disputes raises the question of how the

petitioner decided to whom he would appeal for resolution. It seems that he would file where he thought his interests would be best represented, but this action depended on the type of grievance being addressed. The petitions and decrees began to change from elite donations defining degrees of financial holding to ascertaining the increasingly more specific rights of each polity to administer their respective holdings. For example, in the dispute of Archimandrite Sergei and the nobleman Schetinin over which peasants were taxable by whom, is notable precisely because of its assignment to the Tsar in Moscow, rather than the local elite, for resolution of the dispute. It is not apparent from other petitions of this time that this case was particularly unusual or of such great importance that either party would necessarily be forced to seek the highest level of intervention. Lands could be donated for commemorative purposes, but it is important to emphasize that lands “lost” to the state through donations to the church (whether in part or in total) were also those lost to government taxation. The state also lost property that could be used to reward elite secular service. It was clearly in the state’s best interests to retain as much property as possible through escheat or mandate, and to check the growth of ecclesiastic landowning. Hence, the delineation within the local petitions for explicit benefices such as fishing rights, hunting within particular areas, donations of particular types of land (arable vs. marsh), and certain production rights such as honey, became the norm as the local secular elite found that circumventing the explicit directions of the state with respect to outright estate donation was done easily enough by changing the terms of the contract. What emerges from these cases is a detailed picture showing that the politics of bequeathal were at the root of dissension in the local political order, because by establishing it as a princely monastery from its inception, Solotchinskii monastery was assured of the loss of relative political neutrality that might have been seen in the evolution of a “saintly” monastery. The perpetuation of patronage

and dependence of the monastery on the secular elite could not overcome its primarily secular origins. The inherent conflict set the stage for a larger political fight between the secular elite and the monastic polity that transcended the traditional local cooperation. The process of monastic bequeathals in this princely monastery, and the way that process evolved, demonstrates the way monasticism expanded its boundaries of authority within the local political order.

Chapter 2: Peasants on Monastic Estates

In 1691, on the Solotchinskii monastery estates, the peasant Avraam Ivanov and his cousin, Artemius Ivanov, came into conflict over land allotted to them by the monastery for personal usage, a peasant right traditionally known as “kitchen plot.” Artemius, through a village priest, filed a complaint with the Archimandrite of Solotcha, Ignatius, alleging that he had been cheated of land that was rightfully his, and asking for justice and redistribution. Ignatius heard the case, ordered an investigation, and concluded that the disputed land had indeed not been apportioned fairly, and so ordered that Artemius’ petition be granted. However, his cousin Avraam, from whom the land was being taken, objected and in the following year countered, claiming that Artemius deliberately had filed a wrongful petition that resulted in unjust redistribution. In 1692 this petition was upheld, and the land returned to Avraam. A year later, as Artemius alleged in a new petition, Avraam had turned over the land that he was never entitled to in the first place to a wandering peasant with some resources, leaving Artemius bereft of land that he needed. The archimandrite ordered the land surveyed. All parties presented their evidence, and a land substitution was made. Subsequently, however, Avraam again petitioned the monastery’s head, claiming that the lands should not have been taken away from him, and that Artemius had subsequently dragged him out and beaten him in retribution for losing his land.¹

Among the most fascinating developments revealed in the records and charters that are the focus of this study are the peasant petitions of grievance and rights such as the case above. In previous

¹ Russian State Archive of Ancient Records (hereafter RGADA), f. 1202, op 1., d. 259; and d. 286

centuries, the petition base existed solely between the local elite and gentry (*dvorianstvo*) to the monastery, or to their respective upper agencies (privately owned or state-given land). Indeed, peasants were present in the petitions not as individuals (or collectives) seeking redress, but as property being disputed. However, over the course of the seventeenth century, particularly in the second half, there was a significant increase in the number of petitions that came from, or were written for, peasants on monastic estates, demanding and receiving the intervention of the monastery as an agency of authority in economic, legal, social, and spiritual matters.

The earliest and most numerous surviving petitions pertain to the perceived misallocations of land, which was particularly crucial to the dependent population because their livelihood and obligations to the monastery, in both labor and cash, left them vulnerable. However, the complaints presented to the monastery also show a pattern of evolution. The matters presented for adjudication include disputes with locals over land use, over-taxation, and the necessity of the monastery in arranging marriages and enforcing marriage contracts. They began seeking recourse for violations of honor, and myriad other matters that left the monastery in a position potentially less spiritually than administratively inclined. Because the monastery was ultimately responsible for the peasants on its estates, other entities such as local secular nobility were entitled to petition to the monastery for redress of peasant misbehaviors and crimes, with the expectation that the monastery would provide financial compensation or mete out justice. By the same token, starting in the seventeenth century, peasants could petition to the monastery for protection and redress when outside entities imposed perceived violations on them.

The timing of the increase of petitions is particularly important in that it follows the Code of 1649 from Moscow (*Ulozhenie*) that legally enserfed the majority of peasants. One would expect to see

significantly decreased demands or responses from peasants as their prerogatives were suppressed or decreased, but the opposite is the case. Simultaneously, there was a transition in the type of dues that peasants/serfs paid to the monastery, shifting from labor to cash, which to some extent allowed a redefinition of reciprocal obligations. This chapter analyzes the process of petitioning the monastery in order to explore the variety of petitions addressed, peasant expectations in terms of tradition and customary rights, and cases in which the monastery intervened on their behalf. These petitions arose in response to significant social and legal changes imposed on them following the 1649 law code which eroded their perceived or traditional rights. In attempting to account for the increase, analysis of case studies permits the reader to see the challenges the peasantry put forth in their complaints of being dishonored, and why transgression of the new legal boundaries led to their protests. These petitions provide insight into the peasantry's ability to complain about abrogation of their newly restricted rights by their citation of law and precedent. Their petitions utilized accepted formalities and cited legal precedent, while emphasizing their subordinate status within the social hierarchy, and an almost child-like perception of what constituted fairness. It is likely that peasants turned to a local scribe for assistance or to compose the entire document. Yet through these petitions, as well as reports from monastic personnel about the peasants' lack of compliance, we can evaluate the motivations of petitioners, whether peasant, noble, or other, (and the monastery as well) in defining what they perceived their new legal status and obligations to be.

The Moscow Code of 1649 (officially known as the *Sobornoe Ulozhenie*) was a substantial revision of the legal system comprised of 25 sections. However, it is most significantly known for the sections dealing with property rights, particularly those of landowning nobility and lesser gentry who had long clamored for new laws. Key to these sections was the transformation and significant dilution of

previously established peasant rights from former law codes. This new code included a compromise between a conservative Tsar striving for centralized authority, and the opposing forces of both the Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in Moscow and the *zemskii sobor*, a council of nobility which subsequently ratified the Code in January of 1649. The compromise was to the benefit of the boyars, specifically endowing them with confirmed land tenure, including the dependent labor forces of peasants, who now became bound by dramatically restricted legal rights. The result was a legal stipulation which restricted peasant movement and subordinated the labor population to the demands of either gentry, state, or monastic administration. The ability of peasants to move about freely had already been circumscribed in previous centuries: it was limited to movement with permission of one's landlord, or only on St. George's day. However, the new restrictions came on top of an emerging change in the way the dependent population paid its obligations: either by cash or dues (*obrok*), or by physical labor (*barshchina*). In earlier times, the obligation was strictly one or the other, but in the era following 1649, it could be found in a combination of forms. Additionally, because the Muscovite-centered state was, at mid-century, attempting to change traditional social structures and put an end to the traditional system of social ranking (*mestnichestvo*), the provincial estates had greater dominion over the local populations as their benefit from the Code of 1649. It is not insignificant that in return for labor or cash, the now enserfed peasant had reasonable expectations of the landlord or estate that held authority over him, including protection from outsiders and enforcement of their perceived rights. Hellie, Blum, and others argue that the predominant form of labor-based populations in the North and Northeast were as peasants on State owned lands, granted for the use of service and administrative personnel. The status as a State peasant, with a hierarchy of legal rights as prescribed in the Code of 1649, was preferable to that of a serf on private estates, with dramatically less protection.² As with

² See for example Richard Hellie *Enserfment and Military Change* (Chicago: University Press, 1971), in which he argues for a gradual process of enserfment based on existent social 'traditional' structures, procedurally recognized

feudalism in the west, one's social status was rooted in the nature of one's relationship to land, regardless of the level of society one belonged to – boyars, artisans or peasants.

The *mestnichesvto* system is significant not only for governing rank and placement within society, but because, at the time of the Code's promulgation, it was eroding significantly and the *zemskii sobor* felt particularly obliged to protect what rights they could, and thus gave them some ability to demand compromise when it came to passage of the Code. Many have argued that the system empowered the nobility, and that some sections of the Ulozhenie were forced on Tsar Aleksei by the boyars as a means of preserving their traditional noble rights in the face of centralizing power of the State.³ The terms of compromise were negotiated as the Tsar presented the nobility with an obligation of service to the state, as defined by land holding. The nobility was in turn able to negotiate with the Tsar over how they would *agree* to serve. The restriction of the peasant population's mobility, guaranteeing a stable labor force for the noble and gentry landowners, was one of those conditions of service.

But the Ulozhenie also included another significant section, the creation of the *monastyrskii prikaz*.

The *prikaz* was a temporal agency established by the State to resolve petitions of the secular population, with members of the *zemskii sobor* to administer justice and render decisions on claims against persons or property of the church. These excluded estates belonging to the patriarch's see

with the passage of the decree as a means of modernization and centralization of State authority. I would take extreme exception to some claim that, in comparison with feudalism in the west (a loaded term in and of itself; see Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The medieval Evidence Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) for distinctions between different types of perceived socioeconomic relations typified as "feudal" for further discussion), Russia 'got' feudalism last and must needs be present with a centralized monarchy. Sufficient evidence exists for differentiation of class structures in significantly earlier (non-centralized) periods of Rus' to distinguish feudalism and serfdom without the presence of a centralized monarchy; see Daniel Kaiser, *The Growth of Law in Medieval Russia* (Princeton, New Jersey: University Press, 1980).

³ See Anne Kleimola, "Up through Servitude: The Changing Condition of the Muscovite Elite in the sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Russian History/Histoire Russe* (1979), as well as Genealogy and Identity among the Riazan' Elite" in *Culture and Identity in Moscow, 1359-1584*, ed. G.D. Lenhoff and A.M. Kleimola (UCLA Slavic Series III: ITZ, Moscow, 1997). The *mestnichesvto* system was ultimately eliminated in 1682 and replaced by the Table of Ranks under Petrine law.

(eparchate). The church, which in the latter half of the seventeenth century had its own political struggles, did not like allowing a secular entity to make decisions on its behalf. The problematic patriarch Nikon particularly hated the restriction of his powers; and it was abolished in 1677 because of the church's assertion that secular personnel were not qualified to judge these matters, although it grudgingly compromised on restrictions on land ownership.⁴ The establishment of the *Prikaz* in part explains the apparent increase in petitions over the latter half of the seventeenth century, but is not sufficient cause for tenor and the revised form that the petitions took, nor does it explain why they included petitions from peasants. The more reasonable explanation lies in the reconfigured social relationships as defined by both land and legal status.

One might expect the most notable distinction in social relations to be that between the ecclesiastic and temporal orientation among the population of Solotcha and its surrounding territories. However, the split was less frequently between secular and ecclesiastic, but rather carried an economic or class orientation; specifically, between those holding power within the local political arena (both secular and ecclesiastic), and those without. There is perhaps no more telling evidence of this than in the type and tenor of petitions presented to the monastery, which served as both adjudicator and judge for its tenants, servants and, post 1649, serfs. In contrast to petitions between theoretical equals such as ecclesiastic and secular elites, these letters and grievances changed dramatically over the course of the seventeenth century and carry a distinct change in tone. Instead, Solotchinskii's records reflect a dramatic rise in the number of peasant grievances over the course of the seventeenth century and changed in content and tone. While in

⁴ E.E. Golubinskii, *Istoriia Russkoi Tserkvi* (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1969) t. 2; Paul Dukes, *Making of Russian Absolutism, 1613-1801* (New York: Longman Press, 1990); Sergei Pushkarev, *Dictionary of Russian historical terms from the eleventh century to 1917*. Compiled by Sergei G. Pushkarev. Edited by George Vernadsky and Ralph T. Fisher, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

many cases the petitions were tied to specific economic complaints, often issues of taxation, a peculiar trend emerges in these texts: the peasants seem to have availed themselves of greater opportunities to seek redress not strictly in a legal sense, but justice in the ‘spirit’ of the law rather than the letter. This can be seen in the petition of Avraam and his cousin at the beginning of this article, as well as below in the exploration of various forms of dishonor.

Finally, and most notably, there is the presence of the voice of peasants themselves: entirely absent at the beginning of the century; but by the century’s end they are also well-represented in grievance of personal injury (physical or social) and economic contention just as any local elite. The complaints are not only relegated to the alleged abuses of local elites against monastic peasants—although this certainly comprises much of the corpus—but complaints were filed by monastic personnel against monastic peasants and submitted for redress to the head of the monastery – specifically seeking recourse as a local matter. This served to reinforce the position by the Church that the *monastyskii Prikaz* section of the Code of 1649 was unjust and helped spur its repeal in 1677.

The distinct emergence of a peasant voice in the complaints is surprising. While at the beginning of the century peasants were included in petitions as part of transferable property, by the century’s end they are represented as complainants themselves in cases of theft, robbery, abuse of person, victims of petty and major crimes, complaints of slander, breach of marriage contracts, and bad business dealings. Certainly no one would argue for increased peasant rights in a legal sense after 1649, but the increased number of petitions as peasants tried to place themselves in the renegotiated social boundaries enforces their sense of violated traditional rights. There are

not a substantially greater number of responses to the petitions submitted to the respective archimandrites, so there is no concrete indication that decisions were being rendered more favorably, or that peasants had any particular reason to expect a more favorable outcome. Economically, as noted previously, there was a transition in terms of rent paid to the monastery via *obrok* versus *barshchina*; those complaints are analyzed elsewhere, although they are considered here as part of the general trend of recognition; such that the peasantry more routinely petitioned to the monastery for redress in recognition of the perceived right of petition of every citizen of the Tsar. However, I relegate the complaints directly related to economic influences to another category investigated elsewhere, and I reserve this essay for distinctly ‘social’ complaints. Nonetheless, the fact that the peasantry—whether because of increased opportunities through administrative process, or because of a newly presented right of appealing to the Tsar, had this increase in representation remains a significant finding of the latter seventeenth century.

A prime example is a petition from 1689 addressed to Solotchinskii’s head, Ignatius, from both the *starets* (elder monk) Kiprian of Grigorevskoe as well as the *striapchego* (secular serviceman, representing the State in rural provinces) Iosif Chizov, advising Ignatius about the status of repairs on a mill in the nearby village of Bil’dino, as well as other local matters.⁵ This could also be written by a type of transitional person essentially acting as a lay monk, a *sluzhka*, as in the case of a formal response in 1688 from the village elder and lay brother (*starosta* and *sluzhka*) of the village of Romanov, Markel Chizhov, in which he responded to an earlier report co-authored by himself and the Romanov village priest Iosif alleging wrongful collection of *obrok*-rent from

⁵ RGADA, f.1202, op.1, d. 166. A *starets* was a member of monastic personnel, and the *striapchego* a secular clerk or scribe.

“powerless peasants” while at the same time complaining of peasants refusing to give their service in ploughing monastic lands, and about runaway peasants being returned.⁶

Literacy was, of course, extremely limited at this time among all social classes--from peasantry to parish clergy, and to the nobility as well. Hence the widespread reliance on a literate individual in the area, such as a village elder or a monk affiliated with a particular village or hamlet – both for general correspondence (including ordinary letters) and specific reports of misconduct transmitted by the *starets* to the archimandrite. There were also the temporal clerks or scribes, *striapchii*, specifically affiliated with legal presentations and with the Muscovite court system. In certain cases, the *striapchii* and *startsii* provided reports to the monastery that were co-authored and provided status reports from the outlying areas, as in this example.

In fact, these reports from outlying villages in the form of correspondence between the monastic personnel and the archimandrite provide a good perspective as to what was deemed important in local relations. It is not simply a matter of economic conditions, although these frequently form the nucleus of the reports; it is the complaints that are noted in the status reports, and the variances in claims that seem to present different pictures of local grievances to be addressed. These often took on the topical matter of dispatches and transportation of goods to the monastery from its beholden area; but they also detailed irregularities in procedure, disregard of established (or perceived) hierarchy, and often sought clarification in policy from the head of the monastery regarding policy on monastic estates to be administered by lower-level personnel in the villages and hamlets. One aspect frequently noted under dispute is the problem of peasants cutting lumber in reserved forest areas: A petition from the peasants of Solotchinskii monastery estates

⁶ RGADA f.1202, op. 1, d. 100.

notes a dispute over forest lands with the peasants of the nearby Bogoslovskii monastery, arguing that their forest rights were held in the geographic area defined by the boundary of two rivers. They turned to the archimandrite for resolution of this matter. Archimandrite Ignatius, in a series of documents dating from 1691-94, petitioned Tsars Ivan and Peter (putatively co-ruling at the time in Moscow under the regency of their older sister Sophia), stating that the complaint filed by the archimandrite of Bogoslovskii, Anthony, should not be believed.⁷ We also have the report from the starets of Novoselok village in 1688, who reported on the matter of disobedient peasants who did not obey a monastic order to come hew the reserved monastic forest.⁸

The relationship of the peasantry to the surrounding community is of primary importance in evaluating the tenor of relations between secular and ecclesiastic institutions, in no small part because the peasantry themselves fell between the two realms. However, as Dobroklonskii pointed out in his evaluation of the different ranks of service, there is no easy qualification for what constitutes peasantry in Solotcha and its surrounding villages during the seventeenth century. Indeed, it is necessary to be wary in assigning too great a “voice” to the case studies found, lest one think too readily of Carlo Ginzburg’s *Menocchio*. Natalie Zemon Davis and David Sabean, as well as myriad others, have given appropriate warnings about placing a voice by a subaltern group that is not “speaking” for itself, but is recorded by observers. Yet, as Sabean notes, the dialogue can be construed in local (rural) studies even when it is not the peasants themselves doing the writing.⁹ Such is the case in the region of Solotcha, where one

⁷ RGADA, f. 1202, op. 1, d 112.

⁸ RGADA f. 1202, op. 1, d. 91.

⁹ David W. Sabean, *Power in the Blood* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in 16th Century France* (Stanford, CA: University Press, 1987); Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: the Cosmos of a 16th century Miller*, trans. John and Anne Tadeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); Ginzburg, “Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I know about It,” *Critical Inquiry* 20 (Autumn 1993).

sees a transformation in the presentation of the peasantry from little more than assets on a tax roster to a recognized legal entity which at the end of the seventeenth century was entitled to petition the monastery to adjudicate for protection of their “traditional” rights. As part of the Ulozhenie of 1649, all forms of population, free or unfree, were legally permitted to petition for address of their grievances, albeit the effectiveness of this left much to be desired in some quarters. While this option is seen at one level of petitioning and allows a way of “hearing” the peasantry, on yet another level there are petitions by the local gentry who were fighting amongst themselves for power and status with relationship to the monastery. They are also seen turning to the monastery to adjudicate claims between rival families for theft of the peasants themselves, as well as petitioning to the monastery for grievances involving crimes committed by the peasants as perpetrators rather than objects. This two-fold view of society offers a perspective that shows the peasantry not simply as unruly children, as even they refer to themselves as helplessly subordinate, but as part of a complex series of interactions that once again demonstrate a purposeful attempt to strengthen local authority on all levels, with each player in this game being perfectly willing to use any method available to reinforce its respective position.

The earliest petitions of Solotchinskii, dating from the late fourteenth century, included the donation of not only the lands and benefices of estates to the monastery by the local elite, but also the households and [male] souls within the households on estates to provide labor and services to the monastery. The bequests to Solotchinskii also show that successive generations of nobility followed suit and became more specific in their endowments to the monastery: not only land, income, or benefits, but partial and explicitly defined benefits such as fishing or wood-cutting rights in particular areas of the forest. These measures of spelling out precise allocations

had two benefits: they allowed the nobility to make donations of land and rights to the monastery, despite their preclusion from both land decrees in the early sixteenth century that were later reinforced in the Code of 1649 prohibiting donations in toto. The narrowly defined bequests also allowed both the nobility and the monastery to benefit from maintaining local control over income and labor to each other's benefit. Again, however, we can find evidence that this local cooperation was as easily set aside when the results were not satisfactory to one party or the other, and the negotiated concerns could be addressed to their respective authority structures in Moscow, asking for clarification of the ruling in the new age of redefined legal rights. Specifically, we see evidence in the petition base from both the elite and the peasantry regarding complaints of corruption in tax collection or revenues paid to the monastery, who were in turn supposed to pay the "Moscow supply money" further up the hierarchy. We also see complaints from the elite, both locally and outside Riazan' proper, of banditry and theft arising *from* the peasantry (as opposed to *of* the peasantry) under the jurisdiction of the monastery. Finally, there are numerous complaints from both the peasantry and the elite addressed to the monastery regarding cross-claims of having paid appropriate cash in their obligations, only to be slighted on service credit; or of having paid their appropriate cash rent, only to see their landlords attempt to claim both their labor and cash by force. While direct conflict with regards to land tenure is examined elsewhere, the outlet provided by the monastery for peasants venting protests serves as a significant indicator of social change within this community; in fact, the very nature of how the peasantry is portrayed in the seventeenth century sources underscores the very nature of that transformation.

The attempts of Muscovite secular authorities to extend their reach and administration into the countryside placed a layer of secular managers and personnel in Riazan' provincial structures, some under the auspices of local gentry, and others as agents of the Tsarist bureaucracy (particularly in the second half of the century). This included the previously mentioned Iosif Chizov, as well as an individual who recurred in numerous reports, Tarasa Zheliabovskii. This permitted the provincial governors and secular personal to build up relationships with local nobility, either boyars or *dvorianstvo*, and install an administrative network, including the limited judicial and military apparatus, with scribes. At issue, however, is the degree of acceptance of the presence of "outsiders" from Moscow, and, as noted above, to what extent local nobility would find it acceptable to join forces with local monastic entities to embellish local power; and yet, concomitantly, having no qualms about appealing to the respective secular or ecclesiastic entity in Moscow should that verdict be more beneficial.

A series of correspondences in 1690 between the local *striapchego* Tarasa Zheliabovskii and the monastery (and in later correspondence, specifically to the archimandrite Ignatius) indicates in a list of general matters from the outlying villages, centered in Grigorevskoe, that the peasants both refused to come to cut from the reserved forest to provide labor (and lumber) to the monastery; and later that the same territory fell under dispute with a local secular household headed by one Matvei Karandeev, such that the archimandrite called for a formal assay of the land, with Zheliabovskii and Ivan Kazanets to oversee inspection of the land to make a decision regarding the boundaries.¹⁰

¹⁰ RGADA f. 1202, op. 1, d. 209-211.

These petitions represent the outlook of management type complaints about disorderly peasants and appeal to the monastery as their governing agency to impose a degree of discipline and/or consequences. But by no means are the reports of the outlying villages restricted to disorderly peasantry; they also are found in relationship to the local nobility's misdeeds, as well as the encroachment of authority of the Muscovite agents in the countryside against the authority of the church; and, more importantly, the authority of the hegumen as a representative of the Riazan' eparchate. These range from the admonishment of a Muscovite scrivener, Iosif Chizhov (who appears frequently in the records as a scrupulous record-keeper regarding donations to the monastery on behalf of locals), that as part of his duties in representing the local secular interests, he and a Solotchinskii starets, Kiprian, should journey to a nearby monastery "without loitering, nor hurrying" to ensure that a supply of lumber destined for Solotchinskii was in order; and that upon conclusion of their business, neither he nor the starets should delay their return, "do not loiter to buy fresh cucumbers in the monastery."¹¹ Chizhov and Kiprian also on several occasions wrote to archimandrite Ignatius for clarification on whose duties were in whose jurisdictions: for example, noting that the village of Grigorevskoe (bequeathed to the monastery in parts in the sixteenth century) had allowed the destruction of monastic fields by cattle, come up short on tax collections (which would be paid to the church, rather than the state), and specifically what to do about the argument by locals that *obrok* had been paid in butter and rye, and whether this was due to the monastery or secular agents, particularly the local beekeeper who maintained receipts for *obrok* rent.¹²

¹¹ RGADA, f. 1202, op. 1, d. 162.

¹² RGADA, f. 1202, op. 1, d. 164, 165, 166.

The peasants, for their part, also play a vital role in the petitions during this time period, ranging from the previous century's petitions complaining that they had been stolen by locals (and other local monasteries) at harvest time – in other words complaining of the peasants as lost property; to the emergence of peasants demanding redress for grievances, not simply of quandaries about cross-bounds taxation, but specifically relating rights of honor: the deviation from traditional rights had left them demanding not only financial compensation, but restoration of honor and/or abolishment of shame within the local community. In a case similar to the petition presented at the beginning of this chapter regarding the allotment of lands as salary for monastic service, another set of cousins sought resolution.¹³ A peasant petitioner asked for validation from archimandrite Ignatius and complained that he and his cousin had done the same work, had paid their taxes, and as per precedent, divided the jointly allotted lands. However, at odds was the “kitchen plot” and its misappropriation, offending the petitioner’s sense of right. In his 1683 petition to Ignatius, the peasant Artyushka Ivanov complained of a deviation from tradition, citing precedent: “In the past years, lord, according to your decree in the new donation registers, as a pair of servants, we divided the land in two, but...he [Afanasi] did not share the kitchen plot with me equally and then, out of mischief and spite, he sowed a hemp field. ...Grant to me, merciful lord and father Archimandrite Ignatius, that the kitchen plot with him, Afanasi, be divided equally.” In this instance, a rare response is included, with the Archimandrite ruling that indeed, the kitchen plots should be divided equally.¹⁴

¹³ The term cousin does not necessarily relate to a bloodline cousin, but often referred to extended family members or household occupants, through marriage or second or third-line cousins. A common tendency in village communities prior to Peter the Great’s capitation tax (i.e., tax on individuals) was to have large households, communal in nature, because taxes were collected per household. Another form of passive resistance by peasantry included striking similarity in names, i.e., permutations of Ivan, for example, meaning that when census rosters were taken of household occupants, the head of household would be listed as Ivan, when there might be five Ivans living in one household. Lastly, there is a tendency of peasantry to use only a patronymic rather than a last name, as people often took last names from the name of the village, estate, landlord, or relationship to occupation.

¹⁴ TRUAK #12, p. 110; Dobroklonskii; f. 1202, op.4, d.377A.

Also related to land tenure, but reflecting the question of honor and proper status, is a petition of monastic peasant Larka Marakov from Novoselok, addressed to the Archimandrite of Solotchinskii, Kirill, in 1701: he noted that the previous year he had been allotted two fields of autumn land in Cheshuev village, along with the peasants of a local gentry man. He said that he was ruined because he had been given the worst fields, and therefore appealed to the archimandrite that this situation be corrected: “Merciful lord, o archimandrite, order that the present autumn lands to me be shared with Stepan, divided in two equally (in fairness), so that I, your orphan, am not working with *frivolous state servants* [meaning secular competition] and in all of your monastic errands and in journeys, please don’t let it come to be that I, from him, Stepan, am in a wretched hovel from now until the end, don’t end up ruined.”¹⁵

Here the clear distinction of the petitioner’s dependence on the archimandrite’s ruling, both for protection as well as reinforcement of legal status according to peasants on monastic estates in distinction from those of State lands.

Aleksandr Dobroklonskii, discussing the complaints about land allocations, notes, “In their complaints, and in their decisions, the archimandrites make it clear that it was then considered a matter *of justice* for the same service will receive the same remuneration, and that in the minds of monastic servants and authorities there was a need for strict correspondence between the size of the service and the allotment.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Dobroklonskii, “Opisanie del’ arkhiva solotchinsago monasyria” in *Opisnyi del’ Riazanskogo istoricheskii arkhiva*, vol. I, 1889; p. 4. emphasis mine.

¹⁶ Dobroklonskii, *Solotchinskii monastyr, ego slugi i krest’iane v XVII vv*, 1888, p. He referenced the Marakov case in the context of this phrase about justice.

In another land dispute case, as well as a protest that he was being unfairly required to do more work on monastic lands by the starets, came from a peasant in the smaller hamlet of Solotcha village, Polkova, named Sidorki Estov (or Zotov, both spellings are included). He wrote to Archimandrite Ignatius in 1697 that the local starets Fedor Dement'ev, had over-taxed him and assigned him unnecessary work. In the petition, he repeatedly emphasizes his dependence on the archimandrite “who is speaking to Christ,” to overturn the assignment by the starost, referring to himself.

In the past, sire, 203 (1695), lord I, an orphan, [was a] horseman [stable worker], and the tax on me was a *kost'*, and I, an orphan, had that tax to pull nothing and monastic work all sorts of work that is not needed. And the wood-burning, Sir, I, an orphan, have no one of my own, and I drag myself between... And the former, lord, the starosta Emel'ia Osipov took half of the *kost'* off me, that I needed, and imposed the same village on the peasant on Lara Sevirin, and on top, lord, on the salary of the starosta that my half *kost'* owns all the land ... and the work of a whole monastery and the cottage to pay ... You don't have to pay for half a field. And now, lord, the current starost Fedor Dement'ev calls on me, an orphan, all sorts of monastic dues and to the monastic work... Gracious (Father) Archimandrite Ignatius with me, an orphan, perhaps send me a monastic rule[ruling] and to work to me, your orphan, from that in the end will not ruin me, lord, please smile upon me.¹⁷

In a ruling on this complaint dated November 13, 1697, Ignatius ordered hieromonk treasurer Gerasim to interrogate the *starost* about why he was demanding the *kost'* of land and labor from Sidorki, and to report back to him (Ignatius) on the outcome.

In the cases of Ivanov of the hemp field and Marakov, the underlying issue is only partly about the land, albeit that does play a significant role, and more to do with the loss of honor: each had been “done out” of his rightful allowance and now faced dishonor. In the first case, dishonor came at the hands of a cousin who knowingly brought disgrace through his actions, demonstrated by his spiteful planting of hemp rather than allowing his cousin to use the land as traditionally

¹⁷ RGADA f.1202, op. 1, d. 434. A *kost'* is a measurement of land equivalent to 1/16 of a *vyt'* according to Hellie's *Economy and Material Culture of Russia*.

understood: for personal resources. In the second case, Marakov sought redress that he not be humiliated by someone who is not a monastic servant, but an outsider, a secular person, and feared that he would end up in a state of disgrace by his ruination. In the case cited at the beginning of this chapter, the back-and-forth petitioning is significant in not only seeking an audience for their grievances, but also for usage of their relatively new rights to petition the matter, which peasants did quite vociferously. Also significant was the protest not only of loss of land, but as well for a revenge beating in the wake of a decision awarding land, subsequently seen as an unfair decision (tested by precedent, land surveys, and dictates of the archimandrite). The protest of the last part, the beating, was explicitly and particularly for the loss of honor even after the loss of land. In the case of Sidorki, he felt aggrieved that he was being unfairly taxed and had labor demanded of him by a local starost, when he already paid rent and the salary of the starost, and that further obligations would cause him “ruin.”

The demands that could be made on the monastery after monastic peasantry committed crimes is also reflected in a 1695 petition presented to Archimandrite Ignatius by a group of travelers passing through on their way to Moscow when they were assaulted, held hostage, robbed, and humiliated by a local tavern keeper. A party from Shatskoe *uezd* led by the Boyar L’ev Kirillovich Naryshkin, a village priest, a sacristan, and several peasants from the villages of Nosino were traveling through the village of Putiatin when they were set upon the tavernkeeper,

In the present, lord, on the 13th day of January 203 (1695), we traveled – I, the priest Anisim, and the sacristan Grishka, to Moscow to him, the *boyarin*, with peasant petitions about church [matters], but we, peasants, all together went in obligation to him, the *boyarin*, carrying carts of fish, five *poods* of honey, and five of fox furs, and our own fish, caught in our lake for to give to Moscow. And how on the road [going through] the village of Putiantin, and how the head of the pub Dmitrii Riumin with the innkeeper/tax collector came out on the road and approached us with horses and with all the carts and started to tie/bind us and to strike, and to close us in the icehouse, and even locked us (in

the icehouse) and took our bread. And how night time came and he, the head, in our carts demanded [us] to get on our knees and with five carts of fish as a bribe, and in obligation to the boyar above-mentioned all was carried off, and both of our remaining piglets he carried off, as well as a ten of geese, a pair of toboggans, two halves of ham, an axe, all of our supplies, sugar and two cauldrons, and tormented us in the number of tortures of me by him, the head, of the priest Anisima, and [not caring about our suffering] carried off, the head, an IOU (acknowledgement of debt) written to me in ten rubles in the name of Periaslav's city of the Riazan' metropolitan Treasury decree by the clerk Evstrat Elekseev, son of Sera, for payment in the present year for Shrovetide (three days before ash wed) with bail for me, the sacristan Grishka Kazmin [sic]. Unable to restrain (himself) in tormenting, he took in hand the priest Anisim, and it appeared that he, the head, committed on us this torment and destruction, because all of the men, myself, the priest Anisim and the sacristan Grishka, and the peasants, and took from me, and the priest, the receipts that I (had) before, for himself, the head. ...I petition that he took from me, the head, 50 rubles, and from the sacristan, Grishka, with all of it he took the receipts, and my horses and carts, and of peasants' horses, and that all they had, he took the receipts from our hands, my priests hands and the sacristan Grishka; and then he, the head, tortured all of us; it would be said that as a custom/tax of 40 *altyn*', and of this to him, the head, appearing many goings against the right from us. Please, lord father archimandrite Ignatius with brothers, grant our petition, etc. and put in writing to take from the monastic treasury to righting this.¹⁸

In unpacking this grievance, the petitioner looks to the monastery for financial compensation, but also notes that this was an affront to their honor ("many goings against the right from us") and that by custom there should be a fee of 40 *altyn*'. The archimandrite responded with a decision that the financial compensation should be made, directing the hieromonk of the treasury, Gerasim, to do so, and notes that the priest from another parish, Anisim of Bogoiavlenskoe and others have signed this petition, which will be recorded in the books at Solotchinskii. Interestingly, there is no mention made of the monastery finding the tavernkeeper and meting out punishment for these crimes, although this is found in other petitions of similar instances, all with the notation that the criminals should "be humbled with the whip."

¹⁸ RGADA, f. 1202, d. 3, No. 37

The fear of local disgrace is clearly seen in the peasants' petitions to the monastery, pleading for enforcement of broken marriage contracts, or even that the monastery itself should arrange a marriage agreement because the bride price was too high for the potential husband's family, and without a wife, the potential suitor would drift about. Such appeals were made not purely out of economic need (albeit many point out that without the presence of a wife in a household, this will affect the household earning capacity; the implication being the threat of decreased income to the monastery via taxes), but also in order to maintain dignity and respect within the village, lest the voiding of a marriage contract imply something dishonorable about the intended groom or his family. John Bushnell notes that while it was commonplace to record a marriage tax in monastic records, it was not common to petition for formal permission or command to marry, but suggests that because of the proximity to the monastery, Solotcha villages are probably unique in the almost universal cataloging of marriage requests.¹⁹ One of the most frequently claimed reasons for needing intervention from the monastery in arranging the marriages was the price of brides and over-abundance of men as compared to marriageable women; essentially, a bride's family could command any price because of the high demand. In a case from 1692, a mason²⁰ named Grishka Savelev petitioned to Archimandrite Ignatius, referring to himself repeatedly as "your orphan," demonstrating his dependence on the intervention of the monastery to make the peasants cooperate: "I your orphan have come of age...but I your orphan have nothing with which to marry because, lord, the peasants on your monastic estates who have daughters ask a lot of money for them, and I, your orphan, have

¹⁹ John Bushnell, unpublished conference paper, "The Struggle to Win a Bride: Peasant Marriages in Riazan' uezd in the 1690's" (1993), p. 6. Delivered at AAASS, Philadelphia, PA, 1993.

²⁰ There was an extensive amount of renovation ("*remont*") on monastic buildings during this period of time; Terpigorev notes that while the monastery was busy collecting what he termed "extravagant finery" the edifices of the church and other monastic buildings were literally crumbling. The necessity of masons in the area was ongoing, but they remained part of the peasant households as monastic employees, rather than as peasants under authority. See A. Dobroklonskii, "Solotchinskii monastyr', ego slugi i krest'iane v XVII v.," in *Trudy Riazanskoï uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii*, t. 2, no. 6, 1887.

nowhere to get that money.” He further noted that the peasant Andrei Alekseev in the village of Zabor’e had a daughter, Matrena, who would be a good candidate, and asked that the Archimandrite command her to make the marriage. A reply on the back of the petition signed by Ignatius indicates his approval.²¹ Another petition in 1694 pleaded for assistance from the monastery, again emphasizing the petitioner’s dependency on the monastery by formulaic phrasing but is interesting for its invocation of precedent: Vaska Klimenteev submitted, “I was ordered in October 1693, Lord, to give my daughter to Leontii Podshivalov’s son, and my own son Timoshka is of marriageable age. My wife is infirm, and there is a maid the right age in the village of Davidova, the daughter of Zakhar Afanasev...please lord order Zakhar to release her so that my house isn’t ruined, and my son doesn’t remain unmarried...”²²

It is noteworthy that among petitions regarding marriage contracts is the provision made for those would-be suitors who were victims of broken marriage contracts who would, and did, sue the bride’s family to recover damages, including damage to one’s reputation. The monetary compensation, termed *zachest’*, is separate from the traditional amount for a broken contract from the bride’s side, termed *vyvodnye pochesnye den’gi*; which is again separate from the fee required by the monastery should the prospective bride wish to marry off the monastic estate (thus she is lost as taxable property to the monastic census).²³ It was under this category of *zachest’* that another mason, Osipa Iakovlev, demanded redress from the widowed mother of a bride who had made a contract with him, but then broke the contract and married her daughter off to another family. Remarkably, in this petition, the mason demanded not only the price of

²¹ RGADA, f. 1202, o.1, d. 324.

²² RGADA, f. 1202, o.1, d. 324, l. 29.

²³ Bushnell, p. 15; Pushkarev defines *vyvodnye deng’i* as “removal money” or an additional fee on top of bride price paid to the owner of the estate; in this case monastery. *Op cite*, p. 11. Richard Hellie also discusses this in *Economy and Material Culture*, p. 501-02.

zachest', but asked that the archimandrite further intervene and order the mother, Polosa Vasileeva, to stop ridiculing him within the village, claiming that she was going about to neighbors laughing at him and bragging about the better arrangement and wealth that had come to her through the substitute marriage.²⁴ Thus he was humiliated not only by circumstances, but by the mother's insults.

There are also petitions from wife-seeking peasants asking the archimandrite to override a previously arranged marriage, i.e., to release the prospective bride from her obligation, as noted in the request of Zabori Aganov in 1691. He asked Ignatius that he be allowed to marry Domna Simonova, a peasant widow to whom he had proposed and "beat hands" (*"po rukam byl'"*) in agreement, if Ignatius would agree to her voiding the previous contract to marry the peasant Igor Petrov.²⁵ Although no response to this petition is listed, according to Bushnell's study, a monetary fee to the Petrov family would have been standard, if all were in agreement and Petrov did not seek restitution for being dishonored.

An interesting petition in 1695 looks to a deliberate disobedience of a marriage decree by archimandrite Ignatius. The complaint states that a marriage was contracted by Efimka Afanase'ev on behalf of his son to the daughter of a widowed village peasant Mukhin Mikhael. Mikhael refused to turn over his daughter for the marriage despite the archimandrite's decree and "... his daughter did not marry his son Evfimiev, and for that was kept under the guard in the monastery yard; a matchmaking woman secretly married his daughter by a love affair; when monastic servants were taken by Mikhael's daughter, his son [forcibly] resisted. Mikhail's

²⁴ RGADA, f. 1202, o.1, d. 411.

²⁵ RGADA, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 263.

mother and young daughter's husband was interrogated along with the matchmaker." Hearing this case, the archimandrite sentenced: "Brother and son of Mishkin to be humbled with whips, with his shirt on."²⁶

There were also provisions in place for intervention and restitution of honor in the case of dissolution of marriage, as found in a petition of denunciation (*izvestnaia chelobytnaia*) filed on account of the peasant Fedotka and his brother Iaokimka, from the village of Kozlovskii. The petition, dated in 1691, was reported to the village priest, Peter, and forwarded to Archimandrite Ignatius of Solotchinskii, claiming that Fedotka and a woman, Fekolka Gurev'a, were living together "unlawfully" in the house of the Miller, a monastic servant on Solotchinskii-owned lands in the village of Romanova. Ignatius ordered the village *starets* to go to Romanova and see if what Peter had written was true, and if true, to expel both Fedotka and Fekolka Gurev'a from the monastic estate.²⁷ This particularly bears note because expulsion of the peasants from monastic lands meant that the monastery would lose that tax-free exemption granted by Moscow, at a time when the monasteries and entities of the church were struggling to maintain their authority in matters of administration and taxation; the loss of any individual from tax-exempt status meant that they would have to replace the lost labor with someone not exempt, and hence the adultery issue must have been particularly flagrant and concerning. Indeed, in the overall body of petitions filed, despite expectations that the church-based entity would regularly act on behalf of issues of moral standing, this case is quite rare. Other adultery petitions are present in the archival *fondy*, but rarely resulted in the expulsion of parties, instead being followed by a dissolution of the marriage and an agreement of property settlement.

²⁶ RGADA f. 1202, op. 1, d. 451.

²⁷ RGADA, f. 1202, o. 1, d. 266.

Matters concerning peasants' physical well-being are also seen as falling within the monastery's jurisdiction of the monastery, to protect the rights of peasants to be free of the indignity of assault. This also worked inversely, in that the monastery was responsible for the criminal actions and violations of the traditional rights of secular peasantry. A peasant from a local non-monastic household, Philipovich, from the estate of secular landholder Vasiliï Sovost'ianov, petitioned to Ignatius for redress after the local (Solotcha) brickmaker's son, Naum, was beset upon by peasants from the monastic estates not only of Feodor Ivanov, under the jurisdiction of Solotcha monastery, but also from Bogoslovskii monastic lands.²⁸ He was returning from work when he was "beaten half to death" by the group of peasants, apparently of mixed jurisdiction (i.e., both monastic peasants and secular). The appeal would be made to both Solotcha as well as the other nearby monastery for punishment of the peasants as seen appropriate by the monastery, with an appeal for the two monasteries to sort out their respective unruly peasants and discipline them. Similarly, the non-monastic passers-by would frequently appeal to the monastery when they were robbed, cheated, or beaten up by peasants on monastic estates, as seen in multiple petitions. At times, inter-monastic conflicts would be appealed to the higher Episcopal authority in the Metropolitan's main diocese, nearby Perislavl-Riazan', as noted in a stern admonition by the Metropolitan Avraam to Archimandrite Ignatius in 1691, ordering him to discipline the peasants who refused to hew lumber in the forests for delivery to the Metropolitan. He was ordered to ensure that his village priests did not disobey direct orders from the archiepiscopate, and that he free a town tradesman, Ivashka Brovkin, who was wrongfully under monastic arrest (*pod nachal*), for "immense drunkenness."²⁹ The last issue

²⁸ RGADA, f. 1202, op 1., d. 230.

²⁹ RGADA, f. 1202, op 1. d. 236, 237, 239.

was a clarification that the townsman was to be punished by secular authorities, and that he was not subject to monastic jurisdiction.

Another example of secular petitions against monastic personal for physical injury is illustrated in a 1691 petition of denunciation issued on behalf of a secular peasant in the Grigorevskoe household of Vask'e Savost'ianov (Filipovich), who had apparently filed a previous grievance against the monastic peasants from Solotcha village, Ivan Kirilov and Avraam Ivanov, and their children, claiming that in another (unobtained) petition, that these peasants and children had made false accusations against him, and then subsequently attempted to kill him by a mob beating.³⁰

In an interesting theft/beating case, this time including a response from the archimandrite, came in 1692, involving the theft of a bull from a village priest in Romanova village (under the jurisdiction of Solotcha). This file is particularly noteworthy because it contains the initial complaint, the order of investigation, the findings and statements of participants, as well as the resolution (a relatively rare finding, as less than 40% of petitions include a resolution, although most include an acknowledgement of receipt). The village priest, Peter, complained that the peasant Mishka Grigoreev, along with his friends in the village, including Timoshka Ul'ianov, Alferka Iakovlev and Eliseika Grigoreev, had stolen a bull from him. This was accompanied by the transcribed statement of the local *starost* (village elder) Grishka Feodorov, attesting that these peasants, led by Mishka, had indeed stolen the bull. Ignatius subsequently sent an order to the village steward, Sergei Perfilev, to interrogate the peasants “in torturous investigation, in

³⁰ RGADA, f. 1202, op. 1, d. 268

their shirts, tied to a sleigh.”³¹ The ultimate conclusion was that they were guilty of theft of the bull, for which they were to be punished by being publicly beaten in front of the village water well, with a knout, but with their shirts on, and that they should be forced to write (or more likely sign) a letter that they were never again to steal, be in receipt of stolen goods, nor go anywhere in the region without the permission of the steward, *starost*, and *sotskii* (an underling of *starost*, civil official, sometimes judge and administrator – local thug). There is an acknowledgement of a verbal admission of their crime to the *starost* by Mishka and his comrades.

While all of the above constitutes an interesting case, another twist is presented in a follow-up in 1693, in which one of the peasants accused in the bull theft, Ulianov, was subsequently charged along with his brother Agapy Ulianov, by another villager in Romanova, one Aleksei Kondrateev, for not turning over their quota of poppies, oats, and sheep for the village’s annual requirement to the monastery. When confronted by Kondrateev of theft, he said, they threatened him and used foul language, in direct disobedience of the directions the previous year. Although a disposition for the Ulianovs is not included, there is the subsequent acknowledgement from Kondrateev that he eventually received the poppies and oats from the accused.³²

In order to fully appreciate the rise in number of petitions from the peasantry as *subjects* rather than as objects (such as seen in the previous study on bequeathing villages to the monastery, including the dependent population), here is a brief explanation of the process of petitioning. As noted, in the aftermath of 1649, all subjects of the Tsar were granted the right, at least in theory,

³¹ This seems to be a reference for flogging the person in case, as seen in other petitions, that they would be tied to a sleigh or cart, with or without a shirt, and beaten.

³² The initial file of 1692 is found in the Moscow archive RGADA, f. 1202, o.1, d. 292, as well as in the Gosudarstvenii Arkhiv Riazanskoi Oblast, f. 796, d. 159; however, the next year’s follow-up is found only in GARO, d. 160.

to present petitions to whatever appropriate authority was empowered to resolve their complaints; this could and did include petitions all the way up to the Tsar/ina, albeit infrequently. In fact, other case studies regarding complaints of jurisdictional matters between the secular and ecclesiastic institutions were frequently found in both institutional venues, as noted in the case above regarding the punishment of the townsman for immense drunkenness. This happened increasingly as the church fought to maintain its rights considering the *monastyrskii prikaz* formation. The avenues of petition were open to everyone for any matter; there are petitions from Ignatius to the Tsarina begging for funds to build new churches and buildings in commemoration, which is particularly striking when seen in light of a previous request that had already been denied by the local Metropolitan in Riazan'. In short, nothing was off limits and everything was considered fair game. The practice of seeking a positive response from one institution after another denied it became commonplace, and this was standard from the top levels of society down to the bottom.

But while the upper levels of the state servitors, nobility, and church personnel had ready access to scribes and men of letters, the presentation of grievances by peasants and those traditionally marginalized bears a closer look to explain precisely how this rise in petitions was accomplished. While the Ulozhenie did provide the right for all to petition to established authorities, in reality the legal restrictions placed on the peasant population in regard to lack of mobility were simply *de facto* of what had been taking place for centuries. However, the cumulative effect of 1649's components really does not provide a reasonable expectation for a greater awareness of peasant legal rights to suddenly increase in the second half of the century. It would be reasonable to expect a delayed onset for petition increases to the latter second half, but not to the extent of

what was seen in Solotcha at this time; particularly between 1689, the year of marked increase, and 1700.

A better explanation for the increase of petitions would seem to lie in the redefinition of relationships and the limits of authority, particularly in light of increasing centralization, as well as the effects of tying a dependent population to the monastery's estates after 1649. It also seems reasonable to conclude that the assertion of the Church against the *monastyrskii prikaz* would lead the ecclesiastic and monastic hierarchy to protect their interests from outside intervention – either locally or centrally – by maintaining a stronger control of their own affairs. Thus, by strongly defining their territory, their authority, and their population as distinctly ecclesiastical, church entities would strengthen their position against state interests that sought to undermine ecclesiastic polity in favor of temporal. However, the situation of secular versus ecclesiastic really does not apply to the local level, in the rural areas, and we see instead a degree of cooperation on the local level between the institutional polities, as local gentry sought also to challenge the centralizing authority, even if it meant that at the local level, they would cooperate with the ecclesiastic institutions.³³

This cooperation had at its basis, the qualification of land and dependent population to achieve a Riazan'-based polity rather than a Moscow-based authority, even as both the secular and ecclesiastic entities of Riazan' saw their primary authority emanating from Moscow. The classification of land, and one's relationship to it, was a fundamental socioeconomic categorization within Muscovy. Lands in Muscovy were held in three ways, by tradition established during previous centuries and then

³³ Valerie Kivelson discusses this tendency towards localism in *Autocracy in the Provinces: The Muscovite Gentry and Political Culture in the Seventeenth century* (Stanford, CA: University Press, 1996).

reaffirmed for secular service personnel in the Code of 1649. First, land was held by private individuals, either through patrimonial inheritance or through *pomest'e* contract –at the root of it, land in exchange for service, even prior to the Ulozhenie of 1649, which more explicitly defined the terms of service; these “black” lands were subject to taxation. Second, about one-third of Russian lands were held by the State, according to measures during the time of Ivan IV³⁴ This land, and revenues from it, could be held in trust for the state, administered by the growing bureaucracy, or be awarded in exchange for service without the possibility of inheritable transmission. Rewards for loyal service with land were not new, dating back to the Kievan principalities issuing land to a princely retinue or *druzhdina*. However, in the early sixteenth century a *zemskii sobor* revised the system of land accumulation to subordinate the service gentry and enhance the authority of the (privately titled) Tsar, and the state accumulated much of this land either through escheat or circumvention of donation to ecclesiastic institutions. Here is the root of significant disputes between land-holding polities of church and state. Finally, the third form was the non-taxable “white” land of the church, either ecclesiastic or monastic in nature. Since the council of 1505 removed from boyars the right to cede entire estates to the church, and the Ulozhenie of 1649 further circumscribed land transference to the Church, the accumulation of land by the church had to be accomplished by other means. With a limited supply of land and donations available, the church was more inclined to protect its assets, both in land, population, and goods, and was more assiduous in documenting challenges to its rights (defined by precedent and by perception as “tradition”), as well as guarding their properties, and ultimately authority, from encroachment of secular entities.

³⁴ Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: University Press, 1966). R.E. F. Smith, *Peasant Farming in Muscovy* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977).

In the case of marriage contracts and divorce petitions, and the fear that unmarried men would drift about, there was also the potential that as skilled laborers (brickmakers, masons, builders), the unmarried peasant men would seek residence somewhere else where a bride could be procured, meaning that not only would the monastic lands lose a skilled laborer, but a tax exemption and a person whose skills could benefit another institution, be it a monastery or state property. As noted, families arranging a marriage for a daughter to another region, known as marrying off the estate, required the payment of a “removal price” to offset the loss of tax and income. Thus, the monastery’s interest in overseeing these petitions for marriage, as well as dissolution or settlement, was particularly important to their economic well-being. Coming at a time when the monastery was extremely active in rebuilding, the use of masons and brick makers was crucial to the progress of work, and the intervention of the monastery’s archimandrite could well account for the increased replies to peasant petitions. The redress of honor was likely not the motivation for the monastery’s answering of more petitions during the second half of the century, but the desire to maintain control of the situation. The willingness to use the legal precedents as established in the petitioning rights of peasants allowed the monastery to demonstrate a seemingly paternal interest in its flock, while enforcing its standing in the local community. The reinforcement of this paternal relationship between Archimandrite and subject is further echoed when viewing the petitions moving up the line of rank, as each petitioner, regardless of social status, presents himself as completely dependent on the respondents, addressing them as “your spiritual child” or “your orphan.” The use of honorifics emphasized the reciprocal relationships of dependency and obligation.

While forms of address, as Nancy Kollmann has noted,³⁵ did tend to focus on a subservient relationship, the petitions presented to the Tsar, Metropolitan, or Patriarch emphasized a more formal argument, drawing on precedent by previous charter or mandate, referring to specific rulings previously handed down, or previously approved petitions or bequests. At issue ultimately is what the peasant population under the authority of the monastic hierarchy saw as its reciprocal ‘rights’ attendant to its rendering of obligatory service and/or payment. Peasants had the expectation of enforcement by the monastery and its personnel of accepted standards of behavior, commerce, and traditional rights and obligations, and they had the expectation of being able to point out when their rights were being abrogated, either by internal or external forces. But always, the voice of the petitioner resonated with the recognition of social subordination, and the dependency on the mercy and wisdom of granting the petition. Be it for honor, status or tradition, these petitions formed a basis of local voices that expressed their right to be heard.

³⁵ Nancy Kollman, “Concepts of Society and Social Identity in Early Modern Russia,” *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine*, Samuel H. Baron and Nancy Kollman, eds (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1997).

Chapter 3: Land Tenure and Holdings of Solotchinskii

In February 2003, the Scottish Parliament passed a bill enabling small tenant farmers on large estates to purchase collectively portions of the estates on which they live, dependent upon length of occupancy and tenure, and irrespective of the estate owner's desire to sell. A noteworthy subsection also allows anyone "right to roam" so that expulsion from private property is nearly impossible. Additionally, landowners were "aghast" that common grounds such as fishing or grazing areas could be purchased on demand after an independent assessment of value and funds provided by a government lottery. The bill passed by a vote of 101-19-2, with an argument for strong support rooted in dispute over ownership, noting that "half of private land is in the hands of just 343 landowners and only half of Scotland's land has gone on the market in the past century."¹

The objection of the landowners in the current economic system aside, the case of the Scottish land reforms is one commonly reflected as a point of contention between landowners and peasant labor forces in many places and times. As already discussed, endowment with land and labor, as well as financial and material contributions, made the monastery a status-holding power entity that roots it in a largely economic sphere. In fact, the growth of the monastery as a tax alternative benefited both the secular nobility interested in retaining their own prestige and the monastery as it grew, but also the local provincial authority as a cooperative effort seeking to retain its own 'traditional' patrimonial rights in the growth of the Muscovite state. Moscow

¹ *New York Times*, Liz Alvarez, 23 February 2003, Section 1, p. 4.

annexed the principality of Riazan' in the fourteenth century, but this cannot be construed as the full onslaught of absolutism, which did not and would not exist in Russia for several more centuries. The simple reason is that land in exchange for service is nothing new; this is a kinship and patronage network as described by Jerome Blum, Nancy Kollman Shields, and Martin Dimnik that dates to appanage Kiev and is an understood seigneurial right.² Indeed, in its crudest form, since ancient Mesopotamia, the roots of social hierarchy are to be found in land ownership and domination of the labor hierarchy. The case is no different in Solotcha, where much of the correspondence entails the transfer of land and dispute of same. In Solotcha the endowment of land on the monastery conveyed not only the ritual of elite commemoration but the perpetuation of their social standing. On the other side of the equation, the transfer not only of labor via the peasantry, legally enserfed (if only de facto) in 1649, but of authority over a dependent population, may have made only slight difference to the peasantry in the short run. Over the course of the second half of the seventeenth century, however, the change in title made a significant difference as peasants gained a voice in protest of violations in perceived “customary rights” regarding land usage – most notably access to common pasture lands, forests, and fisheries. Some of these petitions were examined in the previous chapter regarding honor, but here in this chapter we will shift to examine attempts by dependent populations to enforce land rights regarding payment of rent and labor, and the erosion of the system of land for service as it gave way to a cash economy.

² See Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961), esp pp.39-42 regarding the *druzhina*; Nancy Shields Kollman, *Kinship and Politics: The Making of the Muscovite Political System, 1345-1547*, (Stanford: University Press), 1987.

Land holding and ownership means economic and social power. Grand Prince Oleg's first donation of land to the monastery served to link power and conflict at Solotchinskii for it seemed to imply the superior power of a "princely monastery" to that of the secular landowners or landholders through service gentry. The anticipated quid pro quo between the monastery and local land-owning gentry and nobility worked at first; the grand prince retired to the monastery before his death, with the expectation that he would be venerated by the monastery and Orthodox church; and portions of his land became tax free, while other valuable portions remained as private property of his descendants. Subsequent generations continued to bequeath territory around Riazan' eparch to the church, including the vicinity of Solotcha and its villages, and continued a cooperative arrangement that reinforced authority. However, as the centralization in Moscow increased and the bureaucracy attempted to expand control into the provinces by extending positions of power to the service nobility, a more tenuous system of agreement developed. This changed the cooperative relationship from one of mutual benefactors to sometimes competitors. It also emboldened the local peasantry to attempt assertion of traditional rights in terms of allocation of plots of land per household to both figures of secular and ecclesiastic authority, causing a more studied demarcation of what belonged to whom. Finally, as circumstances between the two power entities changed, it caused a transition in the form of service rendered by the peasantry, from paying rent in *barshchina* to *obrok*, that is, transitioning from rent paid by labor to rent paid in cash. Demographic studies and cadasters trace this change in significant detail over the seventeenth century.

As evaluated in chapter one, transference of land with expectations of benefit was not unusual from the fourteenth century and beyond. Attempts at shielding property from centralized taxes

has been well documented. What was different about the study of the demographics and petitions than previously analyzed is demonstrating a power shift that was carefully negotiated in dependent circumstances; what worked best at a given time for the monastery as it sought to retain power and influence; and what worked best for the nobility trying to enforce their own authority in light of centralization. Some historians have argued that this is a natural response to absolutism, however, political evaluations of Moscow at the time, particularly after the Time of Troubles, and the demonstrated power of the *zemskii sobor* to in fact elect a new Tsar after the demise of the *Riurikid* line, effectively dispute a demonstration of absolutism at the time. While this would change in the eighteenth century, until the end of the seventeenth century it was far from a political fact. A popular discussion among early modern historians argues for the emergence of a “fiscal military state.”³

The issue of military change is significant and merits discussion because, according to V. Kliuchevskii, “Indebtedness became the key to the enserfment of the Great Russian peasant,” an argument that is further advanced in Richard Hellie’s *Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy*. Hellie posits that gradual enserfment occurred as peasants lost the right of movement, as economic difficulties in the sixteenth century required peasants whom he deemed “traditionally nomadic” borrow from landowners to continue with agriculture activities. As the

³ I am grateful to the comments of the UCLA European Colloquium participants for raising the discussion of autocracy and its effects in this period; see also Nancy Shields Kollmann referring to the “façade of Autocracy,” in *Kinship and Politics: The Making of the Muscovite Political System 1345-1547* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987, pp 146-53; Smith, Norman S, and Dunning, Chester. “Moving Beyond Absolutism: Was Early Modern Russia a ‘Fiscal-Military’ State?” *Russian History*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2006, pp. 19–44.; B. Downing, *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Russia*, (Princeton, University Press, 1992); Marshall Poe, “The Consequences of a Military Revolution in Muscovy: A Comparative Perspective,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 38, no. 4, 1996, pp. 603–618. Valerie Kivelson, *Autocracy in the Provinces, The Muscovite Gentry and Political Culture in the Seventeenth Century*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

economy worsened, these peasants fell into debt they were unable to pay off and were then bound to the land. This process increased over the seventeenth century, and was subsequently encoded in law, “By custom they came to be viewed as belonging where they lived.” Later, in Moscow, petitions by landowners “mostly monasteries” led the govt to formally prohibit peasants from moving. Ultimately, Hellie argues, by the passage of the Ulozhenie of 1649, peasants became serfs by legal definition.⁴

Additionally, and significant for the transition of peasant obligations, is that in the mid sixteenth century, the Muscovite state attempted to centralize the collection of rent in kind (*kormlenie*) by tradition awarded to a local collector, including a prebend. This was established in a decree of 1556, *Prigovor o kormleniakh i sluzhbe*, according to A.A. Zimin, that included both *votchiny* and *pomest'ia* holders.⁵ The specific difference between *votchiny* and *pomest'ia* is long held and goes to estates that were inherited (*votchiny*) versus those allocated for service (*pomest'ia*).⁶ There was a significant transition in land ownership across the fifteenth and sixteenth century, as Ivan III began to restrict land purchases or transference from *votchiny*, with the intention of providing nobility estates as part of their compensation for working in a service capacity. This decree, however, exempted the church. Subsequently, Ivan IV introduced the *prigovor* in 1556, and although it did not directly decrease the private holdings of *votchiny*, and the independence of the landowner from service, for those granted land under the *pomest'ia* system, service was

⁴ Hellie, Richard., *Enserfment and Military Change in Muscovy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁵ A.A. Zimin, ed., *Tysiachnaia kniga 1550 g. i dvorovaia tetrad' 50-kh godov XVI ve* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1950). He attributes the original to its inclusion in the *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei*, vol 13, Moscow, 1846), and further discusses in an article, “Prigovor’ 1555-56 i likvidatsiia sistemy kormlenii v Russkom Gosudarstve,” in *Istoriia SSSR* 1958:1, pp178-182. This information is summarized in Poe’s “Consequences of the Military Revolution in Moscow.”

⁶ Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), Veselovskii, *Feodal'noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoi Rusi* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1947); V.O Kliuchevskii, *A History of Russia* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960).

mandatory. This process of service connected directly to the growth of the revised military system, replacing the traditional princely *druzhina* for service with a larger, better provisioned, professional military. Finally, under the *oprichnina* of Ivan IV, extermination of noble families allowed for the seizure of formerly *votchina* land and transfer of same to *pomest'ia*. Blum also demonstrates that contributing to the decrease of *votchiny* were lands donated or sold to the church as the financial needs of the *votchinnik* increased.⁷ In particular, he notes that the reassignment of lands as *pomest'ia* were provided most often to new rank of servicemen in the *deti boiarskie*, known as the “chosen thousand” under Ivan IV, who received 175,000-225,000 *desiatiny* of mostly black land; of 1078 land allocations, 1050 of the “best servitors” were *deti boiarskie*, with only 28 of higher rank.⁸ With the increase of servitors, the court found it necessary to create an administrative bureau to manage the services and assign the lands, so the formation of the *Pomestnyi Prikaz* in 1556 established required norms of service and provision of armed forces.

It is important to provide an overview of land holding developments, as it goes to the issue of ownership and possible conflicts between State, Church, and private landowners. During the Kievan era, free peasants (*smerydy*) held unclaimed land or worked together collectively on land that was not privately owned. However, with the growth of the appanage state, communal land was claimed by nobility and given out to princely supporters and family members (*druzhina*), or allocated for rewards for service, in which case the land converted to private property. As these pieces of land became smaller as the rank of the landowner decreased (further away from the patronage system) or during the era of fragmentation in Kievan Rus', the term *udel'* was used to

⁷ Blum, p. 171.

⁸ Blum, *ibid*; A.A. Zimin, *Tsiachnaya Kniga*, p. 103.

denote a smaller estate owned by a member of the retinue or *druzhina*. This land included people settled on the estate but did not imply ownership or even necessarily fixed status on the land. Blum notes, “They were his subjects so long as they lived in his *udel*’, but, with the exception of his slaves and indentured people, they were free, up to the latter fifteenth century, to leave whenever they wished.”⁹ That status became moot with the arrival of the Mongols in the thirteenth century.

An important point about the Mongol era, however, is the relative freedom allowed to churches and monasteries: land ownership and tax-free status were awarded to the ecclesiastic entities, which coincides with the significant growth of monasteries in the northern parts of Russia, and the allocations and claims of land. The laboring population on church lands grew because of the protected status afforded to church properties.¹⁰ This growth of private property continued under the centralization of the Muscovite state after the defeat and expulsion of Mongol hegemony, with Grand Prince Ivan III known as the “gatherer of the Russian lands” and a transition to the more typical allodial system deemed feudalism.¹¹

In the early sixteenth century, with the status of private landowning being curtailed by absorption of land from *votchiny* to be used as *pomest’ie*, the people on that land, formerly deemed subjects of the *votchina* owner, became tenants paying rent in labor or cash to the new service gentry (*pomeshchiki*). Until that point, the land was allocated by a communal organization known as the *volost*’, headed by the *starosta*, an elected head of the village. State owned, or “black” land

⁹ Blum, p. 66.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p. 75; see also Charles Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History* (Bloomington, Indiana: University Press, 1985).

¹¹ S. I. Veselovskii, *Feodal’noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoi Rusi* (Moscow: Akademii Nauk, 1947).

contained the majority of peasants and taxpayers. The remaining lands were owned by the church or through private, patrimonial holdings.

The transition of landholding with the centralization of the muscovite state and the desire to suppress both private landholding as well as donations to monasteries gave rise to what Robert Crummey referred to as the “church lands crisis,” described as the conflict between Ivan III wanting to curtail the donation of lands, and a debate within the church between two factions, the Possessors and the Non-Possessors¹² Regardless of the debates, the outcome was a decree in 1580 that prohibited secular gentry from donating lands to the church.

After the 1556 *pomest'ie prikaz* and its demands for service, with *votchiny* landowners decreasing in power, this led to a significantly more fluid interpretation of power in a local level, wrestled between secular and ecclesiastic landowners maintaining a vested interest not only in consolidating lands and their bounty, but in maintaining dependent labor to work those lands for profits and strength. The counter point to the legal restraints brought a series of actions by the now-enserfed peasants to assert previously held rights by custom: “Yet under the surface of restored customs and institutions, earlier trends gathered speed and new developments occurred.”¹³

¹² Referenced briefly in chapter 1, the historiographic debate is fraught with both competing theories of whether or not a monastery should own lands or have dependent labor, to what defined a possessor, to whether or not those arguments can even be determined from the extant sources on Nils Sorskii and Joseph of Volokalamsk. A good description of the argument and issues is found in Robert Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy 1304-1613* (London: Longman Press, 1987), pp. 129-131.

¹³ Paul Bushkovich, *A Concise History of Russia*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 59.

There was resistance to the imposition of service requirements and increased taxation, of course. Hellie notes that both gentry and peasants resented the increased taxation and drafting of peasants-serfs and taxable people, but for access to *pomest'ie* land, there was no option other than service, by law and mandate.

I. Iu. Budovnits, albeit focused on the larger and more famous monasteries, notes that land accrual and monastic growth continued from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, and that in turn led to the development of “feudal monasteries” in areas that had previously shown comparatively weak feudal structures prior to monastic establishment. As such, he argues, the more institutional monasteries “...represented its own feudal *votchina* with a branching economy, with the foundation primarily based in the labor of feudal, dependent peasants.” Prior to the expansion of these feudal monasteries, in the absence of feudal structures, “[where] they had greater reserves, not enslavement or working forces, and where there were no laws favorable for separating *pomest'ie* landowners.” In the process of expanding, the monasteries would settle into land that was useful for sustaining their economy and then would “gradually appropriate peasant land...” and “...convert the baptized inhabitants into feudal serving people.”¹⁴

In contrast to the terminology used by either Hellie or Dobroklonskii for the designation of monastic service people or peasants, Budovnits specifically terms the local population as “feudal serving people” (*feodal'nogo zavisimyx liudei*) rather than the exact definition of serfs (*smerdy*). While existing charters clearly show that land to the monasteries was transferred from local aristocracy, such as those analyzed in chapter 1, Budovnits addresses this by dismissing the land as already seized from the peasantry by the boyars and other *votchini*, who subsequently willed

¹⁴ I. Iu. Budovnits, *Monastyri na Rusi i bor'ba s nimi krest'ian v XIV-XVI vv.* (Moscow: Akademii Nauka, 1966).

those stolen lands to the church, leaving the individual peasants to deal with their kitchen gardens and assigned plots and parcels in plowing fields.

The one significant difference that Budovnits designated between feudalization of secular land seized by the gentry from that of church-seized lands was that the church employed “exploitation of the religious feelings of the population.... making use of the huge backing central powers.” He argues for a collaboration of the new feudal monasteries and the central government of Moscow, with the church depicted as a handmaiden of the state.

This is indeed true of the larger monasteries like Solovetskii, Volokolamsk, Kirill-Beloozersk, or Trinity Sergius, but working through the smaller, regional monasteries and analyzing the relationship within the framework of secular and ecclesiastic relations, a different picture emerges. These larger, well-funded monasteries had the benefit of keeping better records and it is easier to trace out relations and donations between authorities.

The growth of a bureaucratic state for management of land allocation created a particular point of contention in the provinces, where the arm of centralized government enforcement was only beginning to develop its reach. As discussed in chapter one, ecclesiastic and secular landowners both worked together and opposed each other when most beneficial. The power structures in this region were significantly more fluid, and locals of all social hierarchies could embrace the partnership of a local authority institution as it suited their needs. But the effect on the peasant-serf, as well as changes in the cadasters and rent obligations, allow analysis of the shifting hierarchies, expectations, and local efforts to avoid the centralization in the Solotcha region.

The focus by historians on the economic aspects of monastic holdings is important because the church and monasteries represented approximately 20% of the “bound” peasantry as a commodity, enriching it but also creating the existing debates about feudalism.¹⁵ V.V. Rumiantseva extended the period of growth beyond the sixteenth century, stating that the accrual of land continued to grow heartily, as she performed a statistic analysis from the Monastic Prikaz in Moscow, using receipt and census books from the mid-seventeenth century.¹⁶

The growth of monasteries continued to absorb property and peasants even in light of centralization and attempts by Moscow to prevent land falling into the hands of the church, so that it could be used as *pomestie* and service lands for secular personnel. It is therefore important to look not only at the land holdings and the benefices apportioned, but to the holding of service people and peasants in their labor. That analysis shows that negotiating the boundaries of authority was all too common, using whatever means was available to their advantage. We will see Solotchinskii protecting not only its economic assets but asserting its power to maintain and oversee those assets within their community.

The term “community” is contextualized in Valerie Kivelson’s study on regional autocracy in Muscovy.¹⁷ She examined the concept of “community” in seventeenth century Russia by postulating first that the idea of “gentry communities with strong local affiliations” is primarily a

¹⁵ N.A. Gorskaia, *Monastyrskie krest'iane Tsentral'noi Rossii v XVII veke: O sushchnosti i formakh feodal'no-krepostnicheskikohtn oshenii*. (Moscow: Akademii Nauk, 1977).

¹⁶ V.S Rumiantseva, “Pravoslavniia tserkov' I gosudarstvo v 17-ogo vekov,” in *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia tserkov' X-XX vv*, Alexander Preobrazhenskii, editor.

¹⁷ Valerie Kivelson, *Autocracy in the Provinces: The Muscovite Gentry and Political Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Stanford: University Press, 1996).

western European idea that does not apply to Muscovite Russia any more than does the concept of feudalism. She prefers Ferdinand Tönnie's concept of *Gemeinschaft*, or community, as "part of the common vocabulary of scholarship on premodern societies." Kivelson refers to anthropological studies to define various types of "isolable, clearly demarcated group[s] of people, usually united by residence in and allegiance to a particular territorially bounded area."¹⁸ However, in the interpretation of Muscovite Russia, she argues, the gentry identified themselves according to a particular area – a concept that was reinforced by the state in grouping *pom'estniki* in cavalry regions by towns to obtain a more broad-based allegiance.

The original foundation of Solotchinskii monastery through the land donations of the Grand Prince Oleg' is useful for tracking the increase of lands over time, and I have explicated those in chapter one as the founding story. As it started in 1390 and continued, absorbing lands from his family members as well as other locals, Solotchinskii spread out in the region, and as I previously designated, began to become more specific in exactly what bequests were going to the monastery, so that the local landowners could continue to take advantage of the economic opportunities in partnership. The foundation of Solotchinskii as a "princely" monastery as opposed to a saintly monastery guaranteed the continued interaction – and later negotiation and sometimes conflict – between the secular and ecclesiastic community.

It is for this reason that the tracing the expanse of the lands, and the particular types of land and benefits, as well as the people on those lands, through the census, land grants, and subsequent petitions remains so important. It allows not only a window into the economic culture of the

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 4.

community, but also allows analysis of the matters that were being disputed, the regions of jurisdiction, and how to adjudicate those disputes.

There are three significant sources to track this information in archival documents: An unofficial census from 1654, the *pitsovnaia kniga* of 1678, and a *perepisnaia kniga* of 1678. Another important tracking comes from the household expenses books, which allows for comparisons of taxable households and rented land. Lastly is the examination of petitions from peasants arguing that they have received incorrect allocations, as discussed in chapter two.

Putting the material into tabulated form gives the clearest demographic picture of the allocations of land and rents collected from the census and rent collection records. This requires a brief overview of some of the holdings previously presented by donation or otherwise to the monastery. To that end, a map of the region will show the locations of the villages held by the monastery.

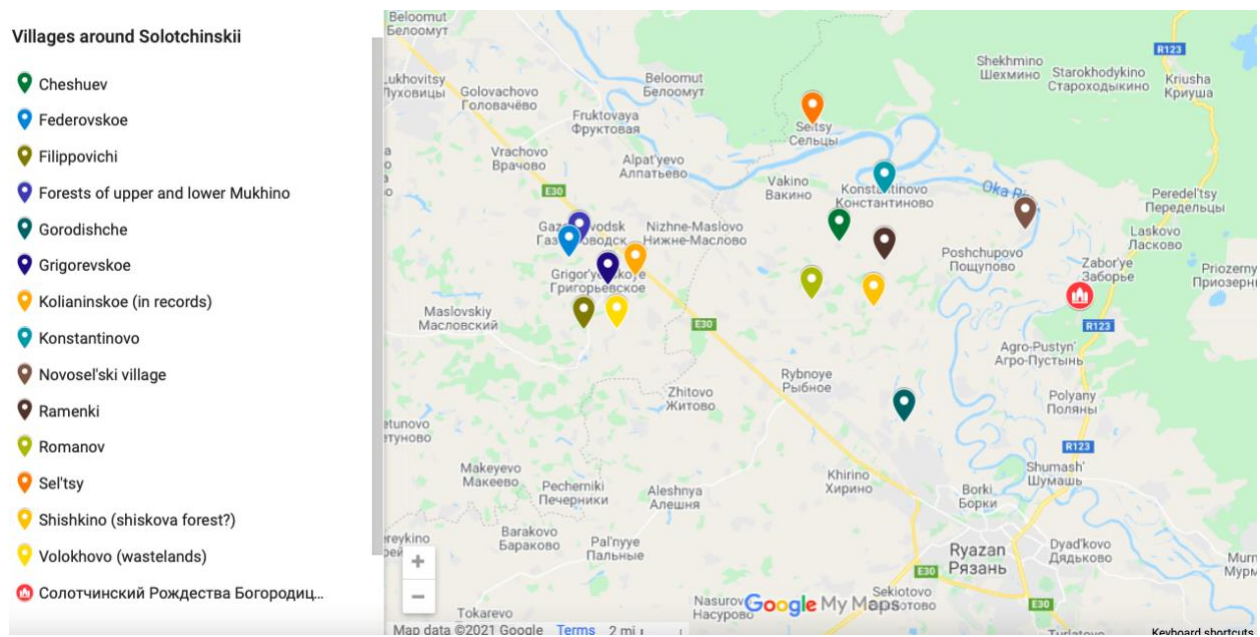


Figure 1, Map of Solotchinskii monastery and the surrounding villages.

In a summary of the lands based on the an inventory from 1664 the estates of Solotchinskii Monastery totaled ten villages and accompanying lands: In Okologorodnoe, the village of Solotcha with forests of Zaborkii, Greater Rikovoe, Lesser Rykovoe, Rameny, Paukovy, Davidovii, and Maksimovii; in Panisskii district (stana), the village of Novoselok with forests of Panova, Shiskova, and villages of Cheshuev; in the Perevitskii district, the village of Gregor'evskoe with the forests of Chuchkanicha, Korostov, Tiunina and Gorodishe; the village of Bildino and forests upper Mukhina, lower Mukhina; the village of Fedorovskoe (in r. Kochetovke), Kolianinskoe (in r. Oleshne); Filipovichii and with wastelands: Ivanovich, Volokhovo (in r. greater Pilese'), Bolmazovo (in r. Bigger Bolmazovke), Olfеров (in the upper reaches of the rivers), Tilstikov (in the upper reaches of the Kleshovoa r.), Polevaia in r. krutinka), Dolmanina (in r. smaller Piles') and Fefilovskaia; in Kobylskii district – the Kitaevo wastelands and the Churniaev (in r. Vozh), wastelands Darkii, and Romanov also.¹⁹ The villages of Novoselki, Cheshuev, Bildino, Fedorovskoe listed the largest populations and households, as well as sources of taxation. This totals ten villages and hamlets, as well as surrounding forests, wastelands, and fields.

S. B. Veselovskii delineated different types of cadasters and census materials, explaining that *perepisnye knigi* are census books which were intended to track the populations and households, particularly after 1649, to ascertain taxes, as well as establish the location of peasants and to which estates they belonged. *Pistsovnye knigi* were intended to track land and conditions on estates and were generally written by scribes and clerks.²⁰

¹⁹ : Dobroliubov, I.V. “*Solotchinskii monastyr’: Istoriko-statisticheskii ocherk*,” from the Riazan’ Gubernaiia Statistical Committee, pub 1884.

²⁰ S. B. Veselovskii, *Voprosy nauchnogo opisaniia pistsovnyx, dozornyx i perepisnyx knig Moskovskogo gosudarstva XVI – XVII vv.* Moscow: *Arkhivnoe delo* no 57, 1940.

According to the *Pistovnaia kniga* in 1678:²¹

Total land held by Solotchinskii	Fields	hayfields	Other types of land	Additional benefices:	Number of "souls"
12,369 desiatin	7046 chetverty	4585	Forests: 35000 desiatin	Fishing rights	5432
			Swamp or wasteland: 1187 destian.	Lakes Seliskoe, Krugovatoe, Terebodits; "South of Rakovoi"; in Oka River	

According to the census, however:

Year	Monastery	Peasant Households in Solotcha village	People in the households	Landless peasants	Other "servants" (<i>slugi</i>) and undefined people
1629	40-65 men	63	38	42	
1646		93	*	*	All (232)
1678		22	87	*	670

²¹ RGADA f. 1202, op. 1, No 317.

Village:	Years	Working homesteads	Peasant or solitary homesteads	Woodland Or Wasteland households	Number of people
Grigorevskoe + Bildino	1628-29	15	137	4	149
Grig/Bildino	1647	n/a	175	n/a	580
Novsel'ski + Cheshuev	1628-9	5	101	n/a	122
N & C	1647	4	129	1	314
N&C	1678	9	189	n/a	824

Summary of Population and Households in 1678:

All Solotchinskii holdings	Working Peasant Households: 787	Peasant shares of land: 746	Total population: 4066
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In examining the number of households across all the villages in the estates of Solotchinskii according to the *piststovii knigi*, the known lands were 7046 *chetverty* in fields, but in pairs, hayfields in 4585 stacks/piles. Fishing rights were found in the villages of Selinskoe, Tish, Tryshina, Moshchentsa, Krugovatoe, Terebodina, Rakova Zavoda and in the Oka River (“from Mikhailova hill to the mouth of the Prosta”) [uncredited citation]. Peasants from Solotchinskii Monastery totaled 5432 souls (presumably male), for all of whom the monastery annually paid in the Economic College 509 rubles, 60 kopeks. In the present time (1884) the lands of Sol Mon total: meadows around 18 *desiatiny*, forests 104 *desiatiny* and plough land in Sapozhkovskoe district 44 des, 1360 sq. sash; in Mikhailovskoe 20 des. 819 sq. *sazhen*; and in Spaskoe 10 des,

1257 sq. saz. In maintenance the monastery receives *oklad* sums in a year of 741 rubles, 71 kopeks. The reserve capital today is in cloisters of more than 29,000. Brothers by the state regulations: 1 archimandrite, 1 treasurer, six ieromonks, 4 ierodeacons and five novices/lay brothers.²²

A survey of lands by Alexander Dobroklonskii has a tally of villages and holdings by the monastery from the *pistsovnyye knigi* of 1678, the monastery held was 12,369 *desiatin* (24,738 *chetverty*) of land,²³ Including about 35,000 *desiatiny* of forest and about 1187 of swamp (94,500 acres forest, and 3204.9 swamp). “In the cadasters and land survey books (*mezhov knigi*), the same as in different papers of Solotchinskii monastery in its *votchiny* known in the following villages and old Riazan’ and Tambovskii gubernie: with Solotcha or Sel’no, with old Sabory, Rykovy, Polkovy, wasted lands of the Rameny, Davidov, Maximov, to the Zaezdy and Samsonovy (or Samnovy); to the new estates of the old Panovy, Shiskov and Cheshuev, Grigorevskii and Bildino with the old Fedorovskii (in the first half of the seventeenth century they had a village), Volokhov, Filipovichii, Gorodishi, Tyuniny, Iukinichy, Kolianinski, Korostovy, Mukhiny, mikhaelovy;... wastelands of the Romanovs or Daraky, Kitaev, Churniaev, Ivanikovichy, Shukino, Solchino, Balmazovo, Olfero, Tolstikovo, Polevaia, Dalmanino, Bovikinskaia and Spichakovskaia, old Liubenka, which were wastelands.”²⁴

²² : Dobroliubov, I.V. “*Solotchinskii monastyr’*: *Istoriko-statisticheskii ocherk*,” from the Riazan’ Gubernaiia Statistical Committee, pub 1884.

²³ This equates to 33,396 acres per the historical dictionary of Sergei Pushkarev, as well as the compilation of measurements in Hellie’s *Economy and Material Culture of Russia, 1600-1725* (Chicago: University Press, 1999), p. 646.

²⁴ Dobroklonskii, A., *Trudy Riazanskoi uchenoi arkhivnok komissii*, T. II, No 6, p. 113-114 (hereafter abbreviated TRUAK), discussing the landed estates within the vicinity of the monastery, the families holding the patrimonial lands granted prior to the seventeenth century.

Dobroliubov's summary of this information follows the same inventory, which he reports were included in the *pistsovny knigi* and totaled 7046 *chetverty* of fields, fishing rights of the lakes in Seliskoi, Krugovatom, Terebodits, the south of Rakovoi and in the Oka River.²⁵ Interestingly, it does not explicitly delineate the forest or meadow rights that one finds in other inventories, petitions and contested land allocations, despite including the fishing rights noted.

He continues and notes that at the start of the seventeenth century, the *votchina* of Tamborsk was "settled on Solotchinskii Monastery with the villages of Archangel'sk and Prebrazhensky. He adds the commentary about his sources, "In shifting the village and woods, pertaining to Solotchinskii Monastery, I attribute to Makedonii, p.8; everything named I saw from former papers I had; only Cherniakovo have I placed in the words of Makedonii ... Liubensky I found only in the correspondence books of Riazan in 1646 (no 11/9931 Arkh M. IU).]"²⁶

Piskarev estimated the number of people living on the monastic lands, "In the monastery there were from 40-65 men. The number of souls living in the *votchiny* are exhaustive. Thus, in the village of Solotcha with woods in 1628-29, there were 63 peasant homesteads and 36 solitary homesteads: about 38 homes of peasants and 42 poor (landless) peasants. In 1646 there were 29 working homesteads and 40 servants, 93 peasant homesteads and solitary homesteads, 4 homesteads of wastelands, 230 people, all peasants and 2 sons of poor peasants. In 1678 there were 22 working homesteads and 87 servants; about 169 peasants and solitary homesteads, and 670 peasants in all. In the villages of Grigorevskoe and Bildino with woods: in 1628-9 there

²⁵ Dobroliubov, I.V. "*Solotchinskii monastyr'*: *Istoriko-statisticheskii ocherk*," from the Riazan' Gubernaiia Statistical Committee, pub 1884.

²⁶ Dobroliubov refers to the history done by Father Makedonii, *Solotchinskii monastyr'*, from the Riazanskogo statisticheskogo komiteta, Riazan, 1886.

were 15 working homesteads, 137 peasant and solitary homesteads, 4 wasteland homesteads; in all the peasants and poor (hermits) were 149. In 1646-7, 175 peasant and solitary homesteads, with 580 people. In Novosel'ski and Cheshuev with woods in 1628-9: 5 working, 5 young, and 101 peasants and solitary households, 122 peasant people. In 1646-7 four working households and 14 servants, 129 peasant and solitary households, one wasteland homestead, 314 people in all. In 1678 9 working households with 34 servants, 189 peasant and solitary homesteads with 824 peasants and hermits." The sources he cited for his information included Makedonii, as well as the *pistsovnyi knigi* of 1678.

Dobroklonskii also reviewed the census figures and found the number of peasants on monastic lands "grew quickly" in the seventeenth century. "From the cadasters of 1678 it is known that for all of Solotchinskii Monastery, the working peasant households were 787; from these the peasant shares turned out to be -- 746. From the correspondence books of 1700 the peasant households (numbered) 748. All of the peasants and servants from Sol Mon in 1678 were about 4066 men. In these general quantities, servants are about 5.5 or 5%. The inhabitants on the *votchiny* of Solotchinskii monastery were comprised of young, servants, homeless and ordinary peasants."²⁷ He utilized sources from the 1678 survey, Makedonii, and the *raskhodnii knigi* of the monastery.

According to Dobroklonskii's inventory and evaluation, lands were assigned to monastic "servants" (*monastyrski slugi*) rather than peasants (*krest'iane*), and were in exchange for service, sometimes called "salary." Regarding the concept of service, he notes, the land given out to the monastic servants, unlike the peasant, was often called "service", sometimes "salary"

²⁷ Dobroklonskii, TRUAK T. II, no. 6, p. 114.

(*sluzhba* or *zhalovan'e*). “In the papers reviewed, I did not find the exact definition of ‘service.’ It is called that in general any work on the monastery, then in particular -- more or less (but not strictly) --defined, as it seems, the size (unit) of labor, works and natural duties on the monastery.²⁸ However, he also stated that while the conditions of service might be different, the status of monastic peasants was considerably better than that of state or private landowner’ serfs.

The types of service performed by peasants and monastic servants varied greatly from clearing and cultivating land, hewing monastic forests, carting materials on behalf of the monastery, building, “heavy work,” or what is referred to in some petitions as “*chistny rabote*” or “clean work” like secretarial or clerical. As typically found throughout Russia, rent was obtained generally through the labor provided in exchange for allotments of land, in a type of arrangement known as “*barschina*” or “quit-rent.”

The use of *obrok* land was not new in the seventeenth century, but the census records below indicate its increase during that time. However, land decrees and petitions earlier in the fifteenth and sixteenth century show a convoluted relationship of land occupancy, as noted in the first chapter’s explanation of piecemeal bequeathals including portions of land and certain benefices, which are echoed in the later census material; as well as indications of rent paid by peasants and monastic servants. A petition in 1512 from a peasant Stepan Iuriev Liubavsky complained that although he had paid rent of five *altyn* per year specifically in *obrok*, the land itself was not delivered or enforced:

Lo I, Stepan Iuriev, son of Liubavsky, gave a note to Archimandrite Dosipey Solodchinsky [sic] and his brothers that he...gave in *obrok* monastery land Solodchinskaya in the village of Fedorovsky and Grigorievsky district from Fedorovsky

²⁸ Dobroklonskii, *Trudy Riazanskoi ychenoi arkhivnoi komissii*, T. II, No. 6, p. 116. (Riazan, 1887).

fields...that a field in the monastery's ran down to Boyan's well, but from Boyan's well down to the bottom with a ridge, yes from Boyanov's well to the bottom with a little handle that flows from the well, to the oak to ...up the narrow crook, for which place the former Archimandrites favored. And now that Yulindintsi and Mukhintsi plow the land, and mow the fields, that land that Stepan can't plow and mow. Give me, Stepan, from that monastic land for the anniversary of the rent to the monastery on Solodsha [sic] - a year for five *altyns*. And the term for the *obrok* rent is a spring day [year to year]. And that I am Stepan plow the monastic forest, that land is the monastery's. And I, Stepan, do not own that land, neither give it, nor curse, the monastery's land. And the record was written by Grisha Stepanov, son of Liubavsky with his own hand, 7020. And here were Prokofey Dmitriev, son of Vasiliev, and Temir Yakimov, son of Dushilovsky.²⁹

In the late seventeenth century, however, the tax basis changed to update to *obrok* lands as a primary source of taxation. In 1680 an *otdatochnaia kniga* noted a closer inventory of the lands and seasonal allocations: "188 May 1 by decree of Archimandrite Protasii and the treasurer Pakomiya and the brothers describe the inventory of the spring arable land in the village of Grigorevsky and in the village of Bil'din with the villages of elder Avramiya." The second part is called "the same year 188 descriptions of the inventory of autumn arable land by the elder Avramius."³⁰

The changes did not always go smoothly, and while the uptick in petitions from peasants previously focused on dishonor, crimes, or other grievances, the specific challenges to the cash rent yielded a different kind of complaint. In another complaint about the use of *obrok*, a petition did not so much object to the payment of rent that they had paid in the past, but that the new form and rate, per an inquiry sent in 1698 to the Metropolitan of Riazan' by the archimandrite of Solotchinskii (although unsigned, by the date, this is Ignatius). He noted that recent revisions in taxation on the villages of Grigor'evskoe and Bil'dino had taken place

²⁹ Aleksandr Piskarev, *Drevnei gramoty i akty Riazanskogo kraia*, (St. Petersburg, Russia, 1854), p. 13

³⁰ RGADA f. 1202, op. 4, No. 10-11.

because the peasants had “paid no salary” on the allocation of 30 *vyte* for a long time, “and the monastic treasury was paid from those *vyte* for the sheltered land for 4 rubles per *vyte*, and on our salary and census arrived again on top of those 30 [another] 23 *vyte*.” The peasants also paid a “monastic road money” and other obligations. He continued, noting that the peasants were now trying to negotiate on their new obligation of *obrok* rent, stating that the good *vyte* land allocations were going to the monastery, and they wanted a reduction in their *obrok* rent.

“...And by that their peasant man petitioned that monastic estate expensive land and meadows be given to them in a tax, and instead we were sentenced ... from them, the peasants, to get 10 rubles a year, and the peasants petitioned....to have farmers from them for 8 rubles a year.”³¹

In a report delineating the tax changes in 1692, we can see the designation of what types of land and allocations are meted out:

In the year 7200 (1692) on May 1, by decree of Archimandrite Ignatius...the *votchini* of Grigor’evskii and the village of Bil’ dino with the villages in the [*okladnaia*] book, listed the arable fields of the tax collector Mikifor Alexeev, and in which village and hamlets listed in the new *okladnaia* books of the land in the fields, and in the new *okladnaia kniga* allotments, [with] a lot of tax on the peasants, and on the monastery to plow given by decree and servants in salary set aside in three fields of land, and from which the fields are transferred to the end of the peasant land into the fields, and that is written in the other books separately on the articles below this.”³²

In this case, as a new level of taxes were imposed via the *okladnaia kniga*, the tax collector was directed to reassess taxes based on revised allocations of fields.

³¹ RGADA f 1202, op 4, no 18. the *otdatochnaia kniga* was a “recovery book” intended to track peasant populations and prevent them leaving lands after 1649).

³² RGADA f. 1202, op 1, no. 317. There is no accompanying conclusion. The *okladnaia kniga* is a book of church expenses and incomes, inventories of tribute, and registry of donations.

N.A. Gorskaia analyzed the rents of Solotchinskii by villages and households and did an extensive statistical analysis of the different types of rents collected as part of her larger study of monastic economies in the seventeenth century. Her findings are in line with those of Dobroklonskii, Dobroliubov, and Piskarev in the types of income, number of households, and classifications of peasants. She determined that until the middle of the seventeenth century, rents from monastic peasants were primarily in the form of *barshchina* owing to the large *votchini* estates.³³ After that, however, her analysis of rent and the allocation of lands for service changed significantly, and led to a transition to primarily *obrok* rent, or payment in cash rather than labor.

Gorskaia specifically notes that at the start of the seventeenth century, the number of laborers on monastic estates compared to private estates was approximately 2:1, but at the end of the century, it was significantly lower. At the same time, she demonstrates through the expense books that the income generated from cash rents increased, caused by two significant factors: the transformation to a cash-based rent, and by the leasing out of the non-allocated monastic lands. She studied numerous monasteries including Solotchinskii and neighboring Bogoslovskii, along with others.

In evaluating the villages and types of land and rent from Solotchinskii specifically, she used the same villages noted in the tables above, but also added in the hamlets and broke down the rented lands of autumn and spring allocations by tracing these from the *otdatochnaia kniga* (“recovery books” intended to track peasant populations and prevent them leaving lands after 1649)

³³ N.A. Gorskaia, *Monastyrskie krest'iane tsentral'noi Rossii v XVII veke*. (Moscow: Akademii nauka, 1977).

recorded by the *starets* Iosif from July 9, 1685 and March 20, 1687, and then compared them to the *okladnaia kniga* to ascertain exactly how many *desiatiny* of land and of what type were assigned to each household across several villages.³⁴ *Obrok* lands remained fixed for the first half of the century, but then began to shift in the second half. In an incredibly detailed analysis of the amounts of land allocated per peasant and household not only in *desiatiny*, but by *vyt'* and *kost'*, smaller portions of *desiatiny* and *chetverty*³⁵; and the amounts of rent paid on each worked, Gorskaia traces the demographic history of the estates belonging to Solotchinskii and how these changed over the seventeenth century.

She notes that for the first sixty years in the seventeenth century, peasants in various regions of Russia were processed by the monasteries of Novodevichi, Znamenskii, Donskoi, Danilov, and Tritskoi for comparison, and tracked the rents in *obrok* in these areas that were recorded and preserved in parish books from as early as 1649. "From the middle of the century, *obrok* lands the peasants of the Riazan' estates of this village, Dushinovo, were increased by half."³⁶

By tracing the growth of *obrok* through the *okladnaia kniga* of 1688 from RGADA f. 1202, op. 4, no 23, 28, 317, with those of 1692 and 1996, she concludes:

New oklad dramatically increased the number of *vyte* in the estate - with 32 *vyte* 11.75 *kost'* in 1680, to about 54 *vyte* 125 *kost'* in 1692. The same significant increase in the number of *vyte* occurred in all other estates of the monastery. Only in three villages (Bil'dino, Volohovo, Gordishch) 2 *des* is installed on the *vyte*. Monastery plowable lands; in everywhere else, for 1 *des* *vyt'* and for 1 *des* *vzgon* (arable fields) (before) it is officially recorded that *vzgon* fields peasants had 41 *vyte* 6.5 *kost'* for seven villages. As a result, the amount in the whole estate really has only 2 *desiatiny* in the field. For the monastery,

³⁴ Ibid, p. 123.

³⁵ According to Richard Hellie, a *desiatin* is approximately 11.2 square meters of land or approximately 1.8 acres, a *chetvert* is half a *desiatina* or 1.39 acres. a *vyte* depended on quality of land (14 *chetverty* average land), and a *kost'* was 1/16 of a *vyte*. Hellie, *Economy and Material Culture of Russia*, pp. 646-68.

³⁶ Gorskaia, p. 124.

this meant reducing the gap to 110 *desiatiny* (compared to 147.92 *desiatiny* in 1680), and the peasant households (if we consider that the number of households left after 1678 unchanged, that's the reason that these estates of Solotchinskii Monastery in 1678 number 746, and in 1700 - 748 peasant and (landless peasant) households) brought the decline of the norm of the monastery's plowable land to 0.34 des. per household, i.e. below the level we received for 1655. By 1696, the situation had not changed, and the last in the 17th century the *okladnaia* of 1698 produced by Archimandrite Theodosius, provided again 2 des. arable land in the field.³⁷

In the analysis of all the data and consideration of its implications, coming after 1649 and enserfment, there was less of a need for depending on *barshchina* rent and the monastery could generate income from the work of the peasantry, and in general as landlords. Gorskaia confirms this in her conclusion that the combination of combining peasant allocations and an increase of the non-allotment land that was leased by the monastery in fact “. . . must have stimulated the final process of enserfment of the peasantry.”³⁸

The comparison of the census and tax rosters, as well as cadasters, concludes that the growth of monastic lands over the seventeenth century did indeed move from labor as rent to a cash payment, and for the monastic lands to be leased out to non-monastic service personnel (previously “landless”) on the estates and villages held by Solotchinskii. Whether looking at the most recent demographic work by Gorskaia, or the inventories of Dobroklonskii, Makedonii, and Piskarev, the interpretations reflect the same outcome and raise implications for complaints by peasantry and serfs against abuses by the monastery, as well as the expectation of enforcement.

³⁷ Gorskaia, p. 278. Here she cites RGADA f. 1202, op 1, #483, as well as Description of the Govt Archive of Ancient Records, P. Ivanov, M. 1850.

³⁸ Gorskaia, p. 343.

Chapter 4: The Economics of Solotchinskii

The nature of provincial relationships between powerful institutions is rooted in a balance of power. The seventeenth century was dynamic in the revitalization of the state apparatus and attempts to control secular power, particularly after the Time of Troubles (*smutaia vremeni*) following the death of Ivan IV. After he killed his last competent son, Ivan Ivanovich, and having endured the death of his young son Dmitrii in childhood, Ivan Grozny was left with a mentally incompetent son, Fedor, and the end of the Riurikid dynasty. A regent, Boris Godunov, was appointed for Fedor, until Godunov eventually sat as Tsar from 1598-1605 after “election” by the *zemskii sobor* or “council of the lands.” This coincided with a series of disasters including a famine from 1601-1603, as well as epidemics that killed about one-third of the Russian population; wars with Poland; and uprisings from the south. Part of the wars with Poland included the illustrious tale of the miraculously still-alive and living in Poland Dmitrii, who was allegedly spared the assassination in childhood by boyar factions, and the now-named “False Dmitrii” was to be installed as a puppet ruler for Poland after the defeat of Godunov.¹ After Russia overcame all the turmoil of this time period, the *zemskii sobor* convened and elected a new Tsar from the Romanov dynasty, Mikhail. The new Tsar then selected his father, Filaret, as the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. This appointment seemingly drew an unbreakable alliance between the Church and State, and yet, by the end of the seventeenth

¹ Godunov was defeated by a consolidated effort of Russians, boyars, and Cossacks with Polish support. False Dmitrii was ultimately murdered when he decided to rule on his own, only to give rise to yet another pretender, False Dmitrii the second, also eventually murdered. There was also a short-lived attempt to install a False Peter. See Chester Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War: The Time of Troubles and the Founding of the Romanov Dynasty* (Pennsylvania: U. Penn Press, 2001).

century, the church saw a dramatic schism over attempted reforms, before being sublimated to the autocratic efforts of Peter the Great²

The initial close-knit relationship of Church and State starting in 1613 did not mean the end of challenges in terms of land, taxation, or the negotiation between monasteries and secular entities. They continued in both the largest and most illustrious (and wealthy) monasteries, as well as those on the periphery, including Riazan' and Solotchinskii. But as the rules in Moscow were shifting, the mechanisms for the State's sublimation of church power were set in place by boyars. This ultimately allowed Peter's formation of the Holy Synod, essentially taking church self-rule out of play, and putting it into a consolidated department of Peter's bureaucracy. In looking at these gradually increasing conflicts, it is easy to see how the monasteries fought to preserve their power through financial holdings, challenging contested claims of land or authority. This chapter examines the financial affairs of Solotchinskii monastery within the communities of Riazan', as well as attempts to retain the authority vested to them.

Valerie Kivelson referred to the situation throughout Muscovy as “[the] indefiniteness of proprietary and natural boundaries was a constant irritant to Muscovites of all social stations, from landed magnate to petty landholder, from state administrator to enserfed peasants.” In the contest for claiming available land, they “litigated for ownership, regulated ownership. . . seized

² The schism is best described by Georg Michels in *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth Century Russia* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1999). The discussion of the *Raskol'* was fostered by the attempt of Patriarch Nikon to revise liturgical texts to a standard of uniformity. However, it became controversial when in 1652, Patriarch Nikon ordered that original Greek texts from Constantinople be used, rather than Russian sources. Those who refused to follow the new texts were deemed heretical “Old Believers” and there were attempts to purge them; however, Nikon himself incurred the ire of the Tsar Alexei over his claims of power rivaling that of the Tsar.

one another's fields and erected, removed, and replaced boundary markers.”³ She turned to the trial transcripts and judgement charters, noting that maps accompanied the transcripts and clarified the boundaries, implying an emerging sense of order, but in fact continued to show “shifting boundaries” as cases continued to argue for their claims. She further continued to examine cases, and those between *pomestniki* and monasteries, evaluating the process of surveying land and assessing appropriate boundaries.

The most obvious source of income for church entities was through private land donations and ownership, in particular those with serfs (previously peasants) on the lands for work or cash rent. Monasteries were not only collecting rents and labor from peasants, the fruits of that labor through sales of commodities, but also collecting fees for church services and sacraments on a regular basis. This became a point of dispute at times, with peasants claiming exorbitant charges being laid for expected “donations” to monasteries and church entities, and these complaints are noted in a variety of services: baptism, burial, (prayers, payments, and services), final (last rights) or extreme unction, memorial prayers, marriages, and even holy water, all conveyed specific charges. Additionally, monasteries provided certain taxes to the Patriarchy in Moscow, usually conveyed by personnel on Christmas day. This is above and beyond the donations, tributes, and endowments provided, which over the course of centuries made the church the largest landowner in Russia, and a point for contention with the expanding Muscovite state, as the Tsar cut off the right to donate private estates (*votchiny*) in order to confiscate and redistribute that land to a service gentry and nobility (*pomest'ia*). As analyzed in the initial chapter of this work, the donations of princely monasteries began in Solotcha in the fourteenth

³ Valerie Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom; The Land and its Meaning in Seventeenth Century Russia* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 57-58. Additionally, the issue is discussed at length in the same book in her chapter 3, “Signs in Space: Peasants and Property in a Serf-Ownning Society.”

century and continued for several centuries until the proclamation prohibiting estate donations in total but became increasingly specific with regards to the specific boundaries of lands, and the people who worked them. Solotchinskii notably appealed to the Episcopate in Riazan'-Murom and even to the Patriarch in Moscow for disputed territory with secular entities as well as neighboring monasteries, in particular Bogoslovskii monastery and the nearby Pokrovskii convent. The defense of territorial claim was necessary to protect economic interests from competing claims. As such we see a number of explicit surveys to describe precisely what lands each party is entitled to, with the ultimate goal being protection of economic interests.

In multiple sources, particularly in the historiography of “feudalism” done in the twentieth century, the church is portrayed as a landlord no different from that of a private landowner, with the same abuses often charged. Historians looked at the accrual of land by the church as a means of retaining power, and this is not incorrect. Most argue that the 1555 edict slowed the donations and was a deliberate attempt to curtail the growing power of the churches, as monasticism took off comparatively late, and bloomed in the period before centralization in Moscow. Historians such as Veselovskii, Bulygin, Budovnits, Zimin, and others have focused on the bourgeois nature of the landowning and revenue generation off the backs of peasants. Rumiantseva stated that the accrual of land continued to grow heartily, as she performed a statistic analysis from the Monastic *Prikaz* in Moscow, using receipt and census books from the mid-seventeenth century. She followed the growth of monasteries across the seventeenth century, maintaining that the increased possessions of land allowed the church to retain their “feudal privileges” – which she argues included financial, administrative, and judicial matters

beyond their spiritual duties.⁴ Two of the most respected Russian historians of monasticism, L.V. Cherpnin and I.U. Budovnits, have both argued from a Marxist perspective out of pure necessity since they wrote during the Soviet era, advocating the position that monasticism fostered feudalism and the growth of monasteries occurred at the expense of the poor peasantry, duped under the guise of religiosity. A.A. Zimin combined the political and economic elements in his study of Iosif-Volokolamsk monastery in *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina* by arguing of course for the Marxist perspective of monasticism as the primary causative factor for feudalism but did so in a unique fashion by setting his case on the structure of a political "hotbed," that is, Volokolamsk. All dealt with the "hotbed" of monastic activity between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Several Western historians, even those of the Eurasian school such as Vernadsky, have argued that Kievan and appanage Rus' were not truly feudal because feudalism existed in a western standard that was decidedly absent from the Russian political and economic portrait. But Zimin argues that the social structure of Volokolamsk gave rise to its "strange political life" because it effectively became an anti-princely monastery in its struggle to emerge as a parallel power structure to a political, as opposed to an ecclesiastic, state. By maintaining itself as a center for social and economic support of the surrounding population, although endowed by aristocracy, Volokolamsk fought against the centralization of the Muscovite state and the growth of power by the aristocracy, particularly under the central rule of one leader.⁵

By the mid-seventeenth century, the donations became even more specific, demonstrating further refinement in the process of agreement as negotiated by the secular and ecclesiastic bodies. On

⁴ V.S Rumiantseva, "Pravoslavniia tserkov' i gosudarstvo v 17-ogo vekov," in *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia tserkov' X-XX vv.* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1988), Alexander Preobrazhenskii, editor.

⁵ A.A. Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina i sotsial'no-politicheskaia bor'ba v rossii konets xv-xvi v* (Moscow: Academia Nauk, 1977), p. 281

October 13, 1654, in a petition addressed to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, there is an inventory submitted by local nobles Mikita Golovnin and Sidor' Davidovich for donation to the Riazan' archiepiscopate with lands including "the village of Luchinskii, with three villages and five hamlets, and the village of Borisovskii, with Okologorod's subdistrict village, the agricultural lands, the free fields, a pair of plots and four hamlets, and the village of Srezneva with its hamlets and 44 *chetverty* but without a half *chetvert* of plowed fields or post taxes, and in the present year 1654, 62 rubles, 17 *altin'* and 4 silver pieces.⁶ Money paid to the archiepiscopate's office by scrivener Levontin Birin."⁷

This partial donation is interesting for its aspects of negotiation because in retaining certain parts of their territory, the noblemen in question subverted the State's prohibition of donating entire estates to a clerical institution [in this case the archiepiscopate, rather than Solotchinskii monastery alone, but retained partial ownership of the productive areas. By retaining the half *chetvert* of arable land on which they were held accountable for taxes, by virtue of its productivity, they were able to negotiate an arrangement, which moderated and met both local and State interests. This delineation of property shows the process of local negotiation despite rulings from the Tsar that forbade entire donations.⁸

⁶ a *chetvert* is approximately 4.1 acres of land in this era; earlier it would refer to one-half *desiatin'*, or 2.7 acres of land, which would be significantly smaller. However, Sergei Pushkarev relates that in the 16-17th centuries, this term took on a meaning of "lying across three fields," or approximating 1.5 *desiatiny* of land, at that time evaluated as 4.1 acres. See Pushkarev, *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p.7. See also Veselovskii, *Feodal'noe zemlevladienie v severo-vostochnoi Rusi*, (Moscow: Nauka, 1947), A.A. Zimin, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), and Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant*.

⁷ Russian State Archive of Ancient Records [hereafter RGADA], fond 1202, opis 3, dela 3.

⁸ See my fuller discussion of this in chapter 1.

A separate designation for Solotchinskii came in 1607 with the “Tsarist charter of landowning privileges to Solotchinskii monastery” from Tsar Vasiliï Ivanovich. He extended privileges “in blessed memory of Lord Tsar and Grand Prince Ivan Vasil’evich of All Russia, and Lord Tsar and Grand Prince Fedor Ivanovich of all Russia,” in which he extended to “Archimandrite Andrean and brothers a grant...signed in the name of our Tsar” endowing the rights of honey production, fishing rights, and hunting of beavers as previously donated by the “old deeds of donation” from the Grand Prince and Princess of Riazan.⁹ Citing extensively from the original donation charter by the son of Grand Prince Oleg, Fodor Olgovich, who

gave to Solotcha’s hegumen Martir’ia land of honey production, hives, manure, and with all the tax rights [which] his father had donated...and in this honey producing land of the decree of his son, Grand Prince Ivan Fedorovich; and Grand Prince Ivan Fedorovich gave to St. John’s [one Solotchinskii’s three churches] to hegumen Martir’ia honey producing land, with manure, and a lake, and with beavers and all the tax rights in memory of his grandfather, Grand Prince Oleg’, who went to the land of Fedor Shiskov; and in that honey producing land per the decree of Grand Princess Eupraksia; and Grand Prince Ivan Fedorovich gave to hegumen Hilarion and the brothers of Solotchinskii monastery for the memory of his grandfather, Oleg’, fishing rights in the Moshcheno Lake...¹⁰

The apparent reason for the need of confirmation and specification of the terms stemmed from the previous charter being unsigned and undated, with the contestation by some local princes, including one Fedor Mezetskoi and his retinue over the right of honey production. The Tsar was called upon to render a decision because apparently all copies of the previous charters were unsigned, save one. Tsar Vasiliï Ivanovich signed this new statement on April 28, 1607.

Codices were appended on May 21, 1614, by “Tsar and Grand Prince Mikhail Fedorovich of all Russia, who heard the petition” and continued the rights of the previous decree for archimandrite Trifon and the brothers. It was reaffirmed yet again June 18, 1621, by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich “and our father Great Lord Holy Filaret’, God blessed Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia”; and

⁹ The charter of 1607 is listed in *Akty istoricheskii* (St. Petersburg, Russia, in five volumes, 1841-43), t. II, no. 79, pp.107-110.

¹⁰ *Akty Istoricheskii*, t. I, no. 14, p. 23.

yet again on April 29, 1630, by Mikhail and Filaret’ “signed in our Sovereign name, giving to Archimandrite Makarii of Solotchinskii monastery and the brothers, before all of the arguments of *votchini* lands and for all the deeds of purchase and of all the decrees that came before, by our new Sovereign donation record of 138 *god’* (1630) in the writing of our secretary Semen Bredikhin, signed.”

A 1653 decree by Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich ruled in favor of a petition by Archimandrite Sergei of Solotchinskii, and ordered Governor Musin-Pushkin of Periaslavl’ Riazan to divert money from funds to the *strel’tsy* guard and give these funds to Sergei and the brothers of Solotchinskii “..in blessed memory of our Great Lord Father, Tsar and Grand Prince Mikhail Fedorovich of all Russia [a donation]” and further ordered that the governor return money deemed unjustly collected from monastic peasants on Solotchinskii estates (he would be entitled to collect money from secular peasants on *votchini*) for *strel’tsy* support.¹¹

The reaffirmation of the land donation charters is significant because it upheld the legal precedent well prior to the decree disallowing donation lands and shows that the clerics successfully continued to solicit donations and maintain favorable standing in vigorously defending their claims. It also shows that the monastery remained a significant focus for Riazan’s nobility and landowning elite, and at times resulted in contentious disputes that could not be negotiated at a local level. By having the Tsar’s decree and subsequent reaffirmations as a trump card, the monastery managed to stand a step ahead of the nobility in power negotiations.

¹¹ A. Piskarev, *Drevnie gramoty i akty Riazanskogo kraia* (St. Petersburg, Russia: 1854), no 29, pp. 75-76.

We also see local workarounds that appeal all the way up to the Tsar in order to protect territories from conflicting claims by usage of land designated as being under Solotchinskii's jurisdiction, encroached upon by a nearby monastery, Bogoslovskii. In 1682, the local state governor (*voevod*) Ivan Mikhailovich Tatishchev received from Tsar Feodor Alekseevich a decree, about allowing servants and workers of Bogoslovskii monastery to use official (state) forests, with general supervision of them even when it approached lands under the jurisdiction of Solotchinskii. It then goes on to cite that Tsar Fedor's father, Aleksei Mikhailovich, 13 years earlier had

established the boundaries of the forest and land of secretary (*diak*) Andrian Iakovlev in the Periaslavl' district of Riazan' from the river to Solotcha, and to Keltsa and to Urozha, the forests of which were owned by Solotchinskii and used by the monastic peasants of Bogoslavskii monastery, and of those of Andrian, established the boundaries given in Solotchinskii monastery of mushrooms (*бороворо*) and black forest from the mouth of the Keletskii to the lands of Laskovskii, and from (the allotted) land of Mat'vei Karandeev now using this forest...

Karandeev, however, was selling the lumber at a higher cost to Bogoslovskii monastery, whose archimandrite Iosif subsequently petitioned to the Tsar for redress. Fedor then applied to another local governor, Peter Zhadovska of Bogoroditska in Periaslavl' district of Riazan, to purchase forest from "our friend" Moiseei Lit'vinov to supply Bogoslovskii with forest adjacent to that of Solotchinskii's. It then follows with an explicit delineation of how much land, from which rivers and which *sazhens* and *versts* could be used.

"That forest from the mouth of the river Keltsa on the left side of the road that drives from the Riazan' to the Struzhan parish, four *verst* eight hundred *sazhen*, from the mouth of the River Keltsa on the Struzhan road down the river Kruzhyge, four *versts* of seven hundred *sazhen*, and from the Struzhan road down the river Krusche to the river Solotchi four *versts* eight hundred *sazhen*, and from the mouth of the river Keltsa on the Struzhan road right the forest of the Solotchina monastery, and to the left of the region described ...

Because the territory designated was not being used as ordered, but was in conflicted claims between the two monasteries, an update to the decree was ordered stating that the Bogoslovskii monastery peasants and workers could use the designated territory, but not encroach on that formerly designated by land survey as belonging to Solotchinskii. In turn, the Tsar ordered that the Solotchinskii monastery and their peasants and workers not go beyond “the red boar forest.” Should anyone, including third parties, violate this policy and cut in the forest, that person would be subject to a fine of ten rubles, although if the tree felled was in an area not specifically designated, it would be a fine of five rubles.¹²

This example is remarkable for the pattern of appeals between the two monasteries, the local authorities, and subsequently up to the Tsar, and later his son, to work out a solution that could not otherwise be resolved satisfactorily, most likely because of the conflicting financial concerns. Each monastery closely guarded their claimed territory, and the peasants in each monastery’s villages claimed rights of forest use or were assigned labor in said territory on behalf of the monastery’s income.

Other issues were not so easily resolved at a local level, and when that occurred, the local entities (secular or ecclesiastic) could appeal as high as the Tsar. In 1605 the tsarist pretender “False Dmitrii” issued a proclamation attempting to clarify jurisdictions for secular and ecclesiastic authority, writing to the archimandrite Andrean (also referred to in the documents as Ondreian), proclaiming his authority as the Tsar and Grand Prince of All Russia through his paternity as the

¹² This extensive document is recorded in *Akty otnosiashchiesia do iuridicheskogo byta drevnei Rossii*, (St. Petersburg, Russia, 1857) t. 1, p.335, stolbyt 776, with the notation that it had been copied into this text from a collection titled “Historical and Judicial records of Riazan Province,” no further publication data provided.

son of Ivan IV.¹³ He drew a designation between the lands owned by the monastery and those of secular authority, and decreed that one institution should not tax or pass judgement against the other, referring to the secular “*namestniki* (chief provincial officer of the State) and their assistants (*tiuni*), these people are not judged in anything, except tax *korme*, and do not send to them for anything; and the bailiffs and constables do not take their exactions on them and do not enter them for anything.”¹⁴ This referred to the secular authorities being unable to tax the inhabitants of monastic lands for anything except *korme*, a tax that was required of all inhabitants, monastic or secular, to support Muscovite administrative personnel including the *namestniki*, *pravedchiki*, and *volosti* with “feeding money.”¹⁵ False Dmitrii further delineated that the archimandrite and brothers of Solotchinskii were to maintain judgement only of their own people in their own villages, and were excluded from rendering judgement on any of the city people or military camps, “whether the city man or the military man will be innocent or guilty, and he is innocent or guilty by the governor and their assistants, and the archimandrite and their brother do not stand up in the innocence or in the guilt.” Admonishing his administrators in Riazan’ and Perevitskii *uezd* further, he stated “and whether the monastic man will be right or guilty, and he is in the truth and in the guilt of Archimandrite Ondreian with his brothers and vicars, and their *tiuni* (assistants) Archimandrite Ondreian with his brothers in them a monastic man, neither in the innocent nor in the guilty, do not stand up.” To maintain the

¹³ This history of False Dmitrii the First is noted at the beginning of this chapter, as is the citation for Chester Dunning’s *Russia’s First Civil War*.

¹⁴ *Akty Istoricheskii*, t. II, no. 58, pages 78-82.

¹⁵ Respectively, the *namestnik* was a lieutenant appointed by the Grand Prince as a local administrator or judge; the *pravedchik* was a bailiff or assistant to the local appointee; and the *volost* was an appointment of a manager to a rural area. The tradition of *kormlenie* or “feeding” had its origins in support for monks who were given food by the local community for commemoration of a deceased individual. The “feeding” system for secular authorities was transferred into the administrative network of reunified Muscovy and was to serve in place of a salary, although this was later revised. See Plavsic, Borivoj, “Seventeenth Century Chanceries and their Staffs,” in *Russian Officialdom: The Bureaucratization of Russian Society from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, Walter Pintner and Don Rowney, eds. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

equality of dividing the jurisdiction, Dmitrii directed that the monastic personnel that they were restricted to judgement of secular personnel only in cases of religious matters: “and do not judge them in anything, except spiritual matters, and in the spiritual matter the archimandrite with his brothers to judge [with] our Lord of Riazan’ himself; and our princes and boyars, and nobles and junior nobility (*detskii boyar*) and all sorts of collectors of tithes, in the monastery and in their villages and hamlets, there is no military camp, neither the supply nor the guides they have.” The local secular representatives were directed to pay for food supplies and horses at the price directed by the monastery, and they (secular) were not to put demands on monastic people for food beyond the required *korme*. He suggested that if the governor’s people were invited to drink or feast with monastic peasants, they were to decline, but that if they did and any crime occurred on monastic lands, it fell under the authority of the monastery: “and the accounting of drinking strongly, and the discipline they have with murder, and that death to pay without trial; either a dead man will come from his hands (secular), or a dead man will come under their monastery and under their villages and hamlets,” meaning that if a secular person committed murder on monastic lands while drinking, they would pay a penalty without a trial; if a murder should occur by a monastic servant, it was to be considered a matter for the monastic.¹⁶

While the establishment of the jurisdiction for authority is important, it is the clarification regarding the taxation issues that seems most relevant: the instructions were explicitly defined to remove any doubt about who was required to pay for administrative expenses, and to prevent abuses on either side. Administrators were not to impose undue taxation and were to pay the full value of materials purchased; while monastic authority did not apply to city people or military

¹⁶ *Akty istoricheskii*, t. II, no 58, pp. 78-82.

camps except for spiritual matters, and those had to be decided in consultation with the Grand Prince of Riazan’.

In 1655 a decree of Tsar Aleksei issued an order to Riazan’ Prince Mikhail Vasil’evich Schetinin over a dispute regarding local rights to tax income from a monastic property. After he received a petition from the archimandrite of Solotchsinkii, Sergei, protesting the taxation of inhabitants on monastic estates, Aleksei rendered a decision that Schetinin was to exempt from taxation the inhabitants on Solotchinskii estates in different regions in Riazan’. But estates which qualified after being included on the tax rosters were to pay the taxes and *strelt’sy* support by demand of the Tsar. He authorized Schetinin to act with force when extracting taxes from those non-exempt peasants who had not paid (allegedly at the instruction of the monastery), and demanded that Schetinin dispatch this order to all the villages and hamlets involved, instructing the local inhabitants of their requirement to pay.¹⁷ The monastery’s protest, centered on their peasants who were exempt from local secular taxes, was upheld against the local nobleman attempting to extract taxes from a population that was not under his direct control.

Some of the material aspects of the monastery’s income can be analyzed from the numerous “reports” (*otpiski or rospisi*) that record when receipts were collected from the local villages, whether by secular or ecclesiastic scribes. These often function as a means of updating the archimandrite, as a kind of progress report one might provide to one’s manager. These *otpiski* in many ways allow insight into the daily functioning of the monastery’s management through status reports: what was collected, what troubles were encountered, what needed attention, any

¹⁷ A. B. Selivanov, ed., “Drevnie akty Riazanskago krai,” in *Trudy Riazanskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi komissii*, tom II, no. 6 (Riazan, 1888), p. 112, document #18 [Hereafter TRUAK].

actionable items requiring immediate intervention, and finally, showing what the daily responsibilities were of the monastery as an institution in local life. We see, for example: “1689 Report to archimandrite Ignatius from the Grigorevskii village settlement’s *starets* Kiprian and scrivener Iosif Chizov with the villagers about the amendment of mills in the village of Bil’dino and about the dispatch lists with the chancellor’s book of field allotments and receipts of beekeeper, who took *obrok* rent payments.”¹⁸

Similar kinds of disputes were most often resolved at the local level, as the monastery played a role in the assignment of resolutions of petitions, as well as punishment for violating policies and decrees within Solotchinskii’s domain. As noted previously in chapter 2 on peasant petitions, the monastery was called upon to enforce local laws and customs, negotiate marriage contracts (and breaking of same), intervene in cases of contested claims in land allocation, and assume responsibility for crimes committed by monastic personnel, secular, or church. An example of this is seen in the petition of a local woman, Fetina, who baked communion bread, who ended up complaining to the Bishop of Riazan, Pavel, in 1681 that a local priest, Fedor of Murom, had acted out during the visit of “a guest, Muksa Belnaya.” While her complaint was that he had acted improperly during the visit of a guest, she further complained that the priest, Fedor, “came to me, a helpless widow, asking for tribute, and I began to tell him that, Father Fedor, to give me a tribute not from the *chev*, the income to me does not come from the church; and how he, Fyodor, called me to bake communion bread, and he gave me land and hay mowing and vegetable garden, and as he accepted me, I believe, last year 189 (1680) but gave me neither land nor hay mowing, nor gardening.” Additionally, she charged, the priest attacked Fetina’s home while he was drunk, and broke out the windows in the sight of many witnesses. “And I began to

¹⁸ RGADA, f 1202, op 1, no 166.

tell him, Fedor, [that for] what you [have] ruined, and he came at me, the poor widow woman, beat and maimed, and.... shamed himself by all the while swearing. And I began to tell him that I would petition you [the metropolitan] ...”. The priest apparently challenged Fetina, telling her to go ahead and petition the Metropolitan, because he “was loved” and had status as a priest. Fedor then pushed her out of the way. Addressing the grievance to the Metropolitan, she noted, “I refused to pay in tribute, but I will gladly pay what’s due.” She asked for redress such that the villagers would know that she had been abused by a priest, and not fall to ruin.¹⁹

In this case, because the local priest was the aggressor, and the woman, marginally employed by the church as a communion bread baker, felt she would not get a fair hearing locally, she therefore appealed to the higher ranks of the church in the diocese to seek justice for her injuries from a member of the clergy. This was considered their responsibility, due to the priest’s behavior while drunk and violent, breaking her windows, and pushing her in view of others. The negotiation in this case was still working within the jurisdiction of the church, but beyond the reach of the local monastery, who might have dismissed the charges as an issue of status.

Perhaps the best insight we have to the monastic economy comes from the routine updates from villages that were sent in for the archimandrite’s review. The *otpiski* (technically “a formal reply” but more properly correspondence) cover reports of progress, disturbances, peasant conflicts brought to the *starets*, collection of fees and taxes, and remanding peasants for discipline. These occurred most often in the archives under the leadership of Ignatius, who seems to have kept a significant record of all events, including the growth of petitions and complaints, as well as the economic well-being. A 1696 *otpiska* to Ignatius from the village of

¹⁹ RGADA f.1202, op 3, d. 21.

Romana, written by the *starets* Dimitrii and the clerk Fedor Tretiakov reported on collection of wood from the forest to build an *omshannik* (warming hut for bees during winter) “but where to put it, I do not know...”. He reported that the peasants did not want to pay a fee for withdrawing from a marriage contract of three rubles, with the claim that “it had never happened before this high;” a peasant named Savka Sherlich had refused to provide the monastery with pigs when the elder came to collect them, and in fact he and his children had met the *starets* and clerk with “donkeys and axes”; a peasant, Ignatius Klementev, was required to appear at the monastery for having refused to send “animals” to the monastery and [he should] be punished for his guilt; the *starets* was to come to the monastery to collect honey; and the tax collector Ivashka Trefimov “asks for a salary of one ruble, as there is nothing to dress him in.” Ignatius responded that the building of the warming hut should continue; that he would review the case of the withdrawal fee from the marriage; and that Savka and his children “will be humbled by the whip.”²⁰

Another 1696 *otписка* from the village of Romanov by the elder Dmitry and the steward Fyodor Tretiyakov stated that “the *iamsky* money and arrow stock” were sent. They reported that that the peasants disobeyed by not providing the *obrok* rent, that the former steward Markel Chizhov had received the monastery dues of rye, oats, and buckwheat, but he didn’t know what to do with these. “The peasant Anichka Matyrskaiia, who gave to Dimitri a petition, does not want to go to the monastery, knowing their guilt that she [shook hands – *po byt’ rukami*] with a false man... farmer Vasily Ivanov Petrushka incessantly beats [others] out of money, according to a contract with the former clerk Markell Chizhov, for chasing the escaped monastic peasant in Ivashko

²⁰ RGADA f.1202, op 1, d. 459.

Forest; that the clerk, Tretiako, lives with the elder Dmitri not in harmony and not in obedience."²¹

This particular report included a reply from Ignatius, ruling that "The *obrok* money will be collected without delay, as will Markell's grains...send for the owned bread to the *pod'iachi* (clerk), the peasant Petrushka to give the money under the contract."²² This report was followed up by the same correspondents (listed as 1696, but not otherwise dated), about sending to the monastery "two peasants and giving them a year's benefit in monastic work and *obrok* money, about the reception on the peasants of uncollected *obrok* money and...about taking on the monastery beekeeper contribution hives of the priest Ivan, who had cut his hair [been tonsured] in the Solotchinskii monastery."²³

There is an interesting and ongoing series of correspondence in 1696-7 between Ignatius and a local clerk from the village of Grigor'evskoe, Taras Zhelabovskii, with the elder Pakhomius, who reported back and forth on happenings and enforcement of the monastic decisions "about the required expulsion to the monastery of the most guilty peasants (attached to their description) and convicts sleeping in Grigorev'skoe, which at the expense of peasant welfare should be guarded." Ignatius' response: "The convicts for their theft will be humbled by the whip and manually recorded (put their hand to the decree) so that they will not steal going forward, and taking a manual record, to release." The next report noted with the tax collector, about how many horses and foals were received for the monastery, sent in fodder, and the receipts with them; that they sent to guard in the monastery with axes of two peasants from outside the village,

²¹ RGADA f. 1202, op 1, d. 498.

²² RGADA f. 1202, op 1, d. 498.

²³ RGADA f. 1202, op 1, d. 502.

that they had collected several sets of taxes and "sufficient" *strel'tsy* bread (money paid to Moscow for support of the *strel'tsy* guard), that the servant Yerofy Sergeev "committed in the night - came to steal horses" and was caught and interrogated.²⁴

One of the criticisms of Ignatius during his era as archimandrite was his frequent pleas for money, donations, and extractions of obligations from peasants both from labor and cash. Father Makedonii, a church historian who wrote an overview of Solotchinskii and its personnel, reported that Solotchinskii was continually building new edifices, only to have them fall to ruin thereafter and start the fund-raising and building again. However, it is worth consideration that in 1618 Solotchinskii was significantly damaged in the attacks of the Polish Prince Vladislav and the Zaporozhye hetman [military leader] Pytor Sagaidachny. Nonetheless, Makedonii's history reports that in the period between 1688 to 1695, Ignatius oversaw construction of Holy Spirit Cathedral with refectory (1688-89); the fortress wall in 1688; the five-domed Nativity Cathedral in 1691, and the church of John the Baptist in 1695.²⁵ As such, Makedonii reported that the fund-raising efforts were wide-spread and vigorous to support the development of further building that he noted would later fall to ruins and seek further rebuilding. Terpigorev also commented on the ongoing building projects, viewing the monastery personnel as bad financial managers, constantly seeking patronage and donations for their building projects. "Thus, it is only natural to explain the startling fact that the monastery, inhabited by no more than fifty or sixty monks, owning tens of thousands of tithing arable, meadow, and steppe land and, in addition, a forest of several dozen miles, and yet constantly needs money." He continued, "Today, we read, he 'builds a 500 rubles archimandrite hat' (cupola or dome for the monastery

²⁴ RGADA, f. 1202, op 1, d. 503.

²⁵ S. N. Terpigorev, "Solotchinskie monakhi i ix krepostnye" in *Istoricheskii v'estnik*, vol. 27, Feb. 1887, and Makedonii, *Istorii Solotchinskogo monastyria*, (Riazan, 1886), p.6-8.

by request of the archimandrite/or in honor of him). God knows for what, and tomorrow they don't know where to find 200 rubles to patch the corroded or failed roof.”²⁶ In conscripting labor from the villages to work on the monastery, it was the norm to recruit workers for one year at a time, depending on skills, for hauling, building, brick-making, and skilled and unskilled construction tasks. According to Makedonii, the monastery would put out an order to the village starets, trying to recruit the landless peasants first, but estimated that one out of a hundred would be sent to the monastery for labor.²⁷ Women were also recruited for working in the monastic gardens, as well as making bricks, wearing stones, and mixing lime.

In the most direct sense of the monastery's income, we turn to the “deposit books” (*vkladnaia kniga*), literally income registers. One surviving register from 1691 shows a line-by-line entry of items such as:

Line in manuscript	Title (if available)	amount	Date rec'd
55ob	Varlaame, bishop of Riazan' and Murom	100 <i>chetverty</i> rye in remembrance	25 Aug 1601 17 Feb 1601
56 ob	Iosif, bishop of Riazan' and Murom	50 rubles in remembrance	April 30, 1621 August 2, 1621
56 ob	Antonii, bishop	25 rubles, not stipulated	undated
56 ob	Isaac, archimandrite of Solotchinskii	10 rubles	Undated
57	Andronik, archimandrite of Solotchinskii	5 rubles and bees	Undated, but he was archimandrite in 1589
57	Gurii (Iurii),	Horse and two	Undated

²⁶ Terpigorev, p. 253.

²⁷ Makedonii, p. 15.

	hegumen of Terekhova	foals	
57	Mukulin, Maksim Fedorovich, “from Riazan”	15 rubles	Undated
57 ob	Roman, priest of “Nishcheva” monastery	5 rubles and a horse	Undated
59	Volkovskii, Ivan, priest	8 hives of bees	Undated
59 ob	Arsenii, treasurer of Solotchinskii	7 rubles	Undated
60 ob	Fedor Rublev	1/3 of a ruble	Undated
61	Posnikov, Ivan	12 hives of bees and 5 <i>chetverty</i> of rye	Undated
62 ob	Fedorov, priest from the village of Novoselok	10 <i>chetverty</i> of rye	1677/1678

The register continues as such listing donations of icons, money, animals – horses, mares, geldings, livestock, and the like– agricultural products, and books.²⁸ These donations came from all levels of society, not only previous priests or monks, but locals without further caste description, all the way up to the highest levels of Moscow.

Donations from the Tsars were not uncommon in this princely monastery, noting, for example, that Ivan IV donated 150 rubles in memory of his son, Tsarevich Ivan Ivanovich, whom he accidentally killed in a fit of rage in 1581. The donation was listed as a memorial “in masses and offices for the dead” and to continue on his name-day.²⁹ A separate entry notes that in 1582

²⁸ Riazanskii istoriko-arkhitekturnii muzei zapovednik, f. KP 8835/1.

²⁹ S. N. Terpigorev, “Solotchinskii monakhi i ix krepostnye” in *Istoricheskii v'estnik*, vol. 27, Feb. 1887, p. 244.

“there was a feast for Tsarevich Ivan Ivanovich, agreed at the wish of Vasiliï Ivanovich, and a donation in the city of Riazan’ of five *altyns* in *kalach* (white bread) in favor.”

Father Makedonii evaluated donations from local gentry as well as from Moscow, looking at the *okladnaia kniga*, although he did not include a date of the sheets. As he chronologically lists the roster of archimandrites, however, he often accompanied the description of an archimandrite with the amount of donations he brought in, including appeals received from Tsars. For “Gurii” starting in 1556, for example, he notes “archimandrite Gurii petitioned to the Sovereigns and Grand Princes Ivan and Peter Alekseevich to give him a new salary certificate for the monastic land in place of the former, issued by Grand Prince Ivan Vasilievich (Ivan IV) in 1556, and described under former Tsars.”³⁰ By reinforcing the precedent of previous donations, and by doing so in writing, this allowed the monastery to retain a position to claim or hold on to territory by tradition and legal status.

The next significant source of income was, of course, rent and peasant obligations. These are listed in the *raskhodnye knigi* (household expense book), similar to the *okladnaia kniga*, but including the outgoing expenses the monastery purchased. These are also provided in comments by Makedonii, who described the archimandrite Andronik (1590-97) as “very bad,” citing the wastefulness and mismanagement of his era. “Having 6000 beehives and monastic beekeepers, and [having] received between them a *pood* of honey for every male, he still bought honey for money...the following year, Father Andronik again sent the treasurer to Periaslavl for honey, and

³⁰ Makedonii, *Istorii Solotchinskogo monastyria*, (Riazan’, 1886), p. 25. This obviously does not refer to Peter the Great and his half-brother, as the chronology is wrong, but may refer to the decree by Ivan IV; who he refers to as Peter Alekseevich is not clear, as the local Riazan’ nobility and genealogy records do not show a prince of this name.

this time bought two *poods*.” He later cites the expense reports of Ignatius as lavishly purchasing “masses of velvet, atlases, Venetian stone, Chinese silk, silver and gold tankards, pearls, gems, and so forth. He brought all of these to the monastery and ordered them to be counted as salary.”³¹

The exchange of goods between the local villages and the monastery was a flow of trade that was both within the region as well as the sale of commodities by the monastery outside the region. Sales records and expense books indicate what the monastery and locals were buying. The monastery would often send a representative (sometimes the treasurer, other times a hieromonk), and used income to purchase, as opposed to the collection of tribute.

“The father archimandrite bought for private consumption tallow candles, a hundred, given secular money... November 15th, on the orders of the hierodeacon Pitirim, given for correspondence of tax deacon Michael Prokofiev secular money... The same date, the archimandrite’s treasurer Alexei Ivanov bought *onuchi* (socks worn in boots) and new stockings, given. He, the treasurer (cellarer), gave secular money... The same date, on the orders of the hierodeacon Pitrizhirim...bought a new pair of *onuchi*, given... At the same date, the blacksmiths Gavriilo Ermolov and his comrade made a private affair, given to them secular money to buy coal ...”³²

Richard Hellie, surveying the services and incomes to the church in *Material Culture*, traces the enrichment of the monasteries from the original land donations to further include “...vertically integrated businesses involving the raising, transport, and sale of grain, as well as the production, transport, and sale of salt. By the mid-sixteenth century the church had acquired about one-third

³¹ Terpigorev, p. 246.

³² RGADA, f.1202, op 3, d. 428.

of all the cultivated land in Muscovy.”³³ These were all common sources of income at Solotchinskii, as well as income registers seen at larger and more famous monasteries.³⁴

A 1696 report from the village of Romanov by the household tax collector Ivan Trofimov noted sending honey, wax, wool, and sheepskin to the monastery, and receiving the money for four sheep and a heifer in an annual obligation.³⁵ A similar list across three villages in 1696-97 noted village elders, clerks and tax collectors listing various economic supplies: wheat, rye, buckwheat, buckwheat, oats, meat, oil, hemp grains, eggs, hops, straw, onions, turnips, and hemp sent to the monastery from the villages of Grigor’evskoe in 1697, from the village of Cheshuev in 1697, and from the village of Novosel’ok for 1696-97 and 1700.³⁶

In his criticism of the monastery’s extraction of tribute from the dependent population, Terpigorev viewed the relationship between the church and its villages as even worse than between landlords and serfs, much in the way that Veselovskii, Bulygin, and others later push the narrative of feudalism. Discussing the review of the *raskhodnie knigi* written by the head of Preobrazhenskii village, he noted, “This is a highly interesting expense book, led by an unhappy man, spending almost all the time in shackles and blocks, and overpowered by the monks, demanding a terrifying amount of pork, goose, oil, fish, honey. It so well characterizes the oppressed position of monastic peasants, that there can be no comparison of their position with

³³ Hellie, *Material Culture*, p. 498.

³⁴ Solovetskii, for example, derived a large amount of income from the production of salt. See Isaiah Gruber, “Black Monks and White Gold: The Solovetskii Monastery's Prosperous Salt Trade During the Time of Troubles of the Early Seventeenth Century” in *Russian History*, vol. 37, no. 3: 238-249, 2010.

³⁵ RGADA, f. 1202, op 3, d. 496.

³⁶ RGADA, f. 1202, op 3, d. 487.

the serfs owned by landlords. This is where the historian of serfdom in Russia will find for himself precious material.”³⁷

While the commodities of the villages and rents were a mainstay for income, the ecclesiastic duties were also a source of income. In part this is because on entry to the monastery, a monk was expected to bring a donation of income for his support in the cloister. These are also listed in the *raskhodnye knigi*, as well as traced per archimandrite by Makedonii. As he chronologically catalogued the roster, he included the donations: “Isaak: (1568-70) He gave Solotchinskii monastery for himself and his parents 10 rubles. ...Adrian (1599-1607): according to the *raskhodnye knigi*, Adrian became archimandrite on March 30, 1599, and gave 2 rubles, 14 altyn.”³⁸ Hellie explores this with greater detail, noting that the fee for tonsuring varied significantly from 0.25 rubles to 8.25 rubles, depending on what period of the seventeenth century one examined; during the Time of Troubles in the early seventeenth century, it was lower, but during the period of copper inflation in the 1660s, it was higher. He also notes a seasonal trend to tonsuring, with a greater percentage occurring in spring, particularly during March. He associates this with the Lent and Easter season, observing that the rate of tonsure fell drastically in the month of April.³⁹

Not only were the village priests expected to receive provisions from the local community (in addition to a salary from the church), but they created a flow of income from charging for services like baptism, marriage, and last rites. The donation books show the patronage of memorials to be performed on the subject’s name day or date of death. Russell Martin, among

³⁷ Terpigorev, p. 254.

³⁸ Makedonii, p. 25-26.

³⁹ Hellie, *Material Culture*, pp. 502-503.

others, reports that “the Orthodox Church in Muscovy certainly expected and required the faithful to pray for the departed. A place for prayer for the dead was provided in private devotions in the home, in the local parish church, and at monastic foundations.”⁴⁰ Similarly, Ludwig Steindorff states, “the monasteries [of Muscovy] grew rich by large donations for the care of one’s own soul, and those of one’s relatives.”⁴¹ Steindorff further found that the type of commemoration depended on the amount of money donated: cheaper donations yielded recording in the *vechnyi sinodik* (memorial volume), while *povsiadnevyi spisok* (daily list) was read by monks during liturgical services.⁴²

Richard Hellie looked beyond the donations in memoriam to the actual cost of services rendered with death: anointment, funerals, and burials. Anointments (*soborovanie*), effectively “last rites” were provided to one nearing death, but were prohibited from being provided to minors, the unconscious, or those sentenced to death. He distinguishes that this was not the same as “extreme unction” in that the service could be provided without a limit to the number of times but capped at one time per illness. Funerals offered a wide variety of charges, from those collected by the village priests to those sent to the Metropolitan and Patriarch. The Tsar and the Patriarch at times in the seventeenth century ordered a portion of the funeral monies to be delivered to Moscow at Christmas. Even with the local percentage, he calculated that funeral income must have been a substantial income for the Patriarchate: “If there were about nine million people in Muscovy at this time and the life expectancy was less than 30 years, this meant

⁴⁰ Martin, Russell. “Gifts for the Dead: Death, Kinship and Commemoration in Muscovy (the Case of the Mstislavskii Princes).” *Russian History*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1999, p. 172.

⁴¹ Ludwig Steindorff, “Commemoration and Administrative Techniques in Muscovite Monasteries,” *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, vol. 22, no. 4, 1995, p. 434.

⁴² *ibid*, p. 435.

that about 300,000 people died every year. At 10 kopeks per corpse, this must have produced an annual income of about 30,000 rubles for the Patriarchate.”⁴³

Hellie takes a different approach to the income from church services as he charts the exact charges for specific services and the years these were recorded. A baptism, for example (*kreshchenie*) was a common fee between 1619-1696, with a median cost of 10.5 rubles. A fine was charged for bastardy (*pocherevnaia poshlina*) averaging 13 kopeks. There was a hierarchy of fees for marriages, *venechnaia poshlina*, designating fees for a first marriage of approximately six kopeks, while a second marriage cost 13.5 kopeks, and a third marriage came in at 19.5 kopeks.⁴⁴

While the village priests expected to receive provisions from the local community (in addition to a salary from the church), the monastery would also install personnel in the village for administrative purposes. There was also a local clerk appointed by the monastery to write up collected receipts of rents and dues. The placement of a village priest, however, was not always without hiccups. A petition about a village priest to Pavel, Metropolitan of Riazan’ from the deacon Vasilii in 1691 reported that the village priest, Antin, had not given him either a church or a parish income as promised. “In the past, sir, and this year he took, the priest Antin, from the church and from the parish all monetary income, the last hundred and eighty-ninth to the present 190 on January the 6th (1681-82), and I, your worshipper, did not get anything. And possessing

⁴³ Hellie, *Material Culture*, pp.506-07.

⁴⁴ The marriage fees were also reflected in Dobroklonskii “Solotchinskii monastyr’ ego slugi i krest’iane v XVII veke,” p. 72. Here the peasants in Romanovo complained that they were being charged 2-3 rubles.

one, and given your holiness on me, your worshipper, as I have nothing to pay, because he, the priest Antin, [kept] from me, and from the parish, have no income to give and offends all.”⁴⁵

Solotchinskii monastery, along with the eparchate of Riazan’ in general, was well positioned to participate in trade, make profits, and collect tribute and rent from the tenants on the land, even as they apparently began to reassign allocations of land in favor of rent in cash rather than in goods. Both were necessary for the economic success of the monastery. The engagement of commercial trade as well helped to fund Solotchinskii’s coffers, which fits in well with the arguments made by historians representing the monastery as a feudal landlord. The management of peasant activity, punishment of crimes, negotiation of disputes such as marriage agreements, response to claims against the monastery for their dependent population (such as theft, robbery, and assault) continued to demonstrate the authority as an institution that could work in conjunction, or at odds with, secular counterparts. At the same time, Solotchinskii remained poised to push back on claims to territory that would interfere with the development of profit and power. It could settle disputes as a local authority among their dependent population, as well as enforce their boundaries and jurisdictions from other entities – be they competing monasteries like Bogoslovskii, or the local *boyar deti*.

⁴⁵ RGADA f. 1202, op 3, d. 233.

Chapter 5: An Explanation and Survey of the Documents

This study is based on an analysis of records from both monastery holdings as well as regional sources. The literature of the time varies tremendously in categorization, intention, and quality, and therefore is worthy of an introductory analysis and discussion. While the core of the dissertation is derived from the records held in monastic *fondy*, there is a considerable wealth of material to be found in official state sources of various types from Muscovy, as well as valuable information and context derived from local chronicles. This chapter will examine the various types of ecclesiastic and secular materials that are used to construct the picture of how the monastery functioned in local society during the seventeenth century. In doing so, it considers the nature of seventeenth century literature as a means for introducing the locality.

There is no intention of a philological study in this chapter, but the corpus of records from the monastic affiliates in Solotchinskii and Riazan' do merit a separate discussion in that the records transmit the voices of the time. The documents, as well as the issues and social stratification, change in tone and breadth, mirroring the social process of emerging complexity. They show the transmission of property, the records of transfer (both human and financial), and the general routine legal and administrative nature of the relationships of people to society, both secular and ecclesiastic. The documents also show, in precise terms, the negotiations through which these relationships became established and later transfigured. These are, of course, explicated in the specific chapters and close attention is paid to the case studies, but a general discussion of the materials is warranted as consideration of the body of evidence.

The records from the archives, as well as the transliterated examples compiled in the historical sources of the nineteenth century, such as those incorporated into *Akty Istoricheskii*, provide a good sampling of communication between the participants: the monastic personnel, the local villagers, and the State and secular institutions. The main collection of archival records (*fondy*) held at RGADA¹ until 1700 consists of over 1300 files and source material of different types. There are indications from regional sources that some of the records are lost. In fact, a 1722 inventory from the monastery that outlines a number of legal charters discusses sets of boxes of different types of judgment charters, land transfers, and decrees from Moscow on the transfer of land in the period of consolidation that are bundled together in packages of letters, a number of which are not reflected in the holdings elsewhere.² There are also a number of documents discussed in the regional sources that are not reflected in the centralized holdings.³ This does not imply that the main archive holdings are incomplete, for they do contain quite a number of different types of materials and give a good representation to the voices in the community.

There is no single category that the records would fit neatly. They are economic in nature, legal, social, personal, functional, and at times even humorous. They address grievances between parties of equal and unequal status, and they outline disputes that were being negotiated. They are statistical and economically oriented but range from dryly factual inventories to highly charged demands for satisfaction of dishonors done; from charters and decrees coming from the

¹ RGADA is the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts in Moscow.

² Aleksandr Dobroklonskii, in *Trudy Riazanskoi uchenoi arkhivnyi komissii* [hereafter TRUAK], T II, No1, 1886, pp. 10-12.

³ The regional reprintings contributed significantly to tracing sources, particularly the *okladnaia kniga*, but generally are not substantial enough in number to sufficiently assess the omission from the main holdings.

Tsar in Moscow, to petitions for rights from peasants in local villages. They vary in issues of importance from establishing jurisdictions of power to the seemingly picayune assignment of garden plots within estate holdings. In short, they cover myriad realms of material and social standing as part of the picture of complex interactions within a community.

I have broken the documents into four general categories: economic, legal, administrative, and social. While some of the documents in these categories transpose and cross over, the criteria for classifying them are essentially fixed, but with the caveat that the variation comes in the application of material to be discussed. Some of the records that might appear clearly economic in nature, for example, have significant implications for the social or legal ordering of the social hierarchy, and therefore may represent “crossover” materials. For example, there are many documents which would generally be fixed as economic in nature, regarding the donations of a local secular administrator, Iosif Chizhov, in his annual donations for commemoration, as well as payment of monies to the monastery, which collected payments to be forwarded to Moscow for the *strel'tsy* guard. However, significant in the sequence of annual presentation of receipts is the petition which follows by Chizhov wondering why he paid money to the monastery but did not receive what he paid for. A “letter of inquiry” more than a direct complaint, the questioning of authority with respect to what happened to the money, the notion of holding the monastery accountable and thus challenging its claim on power, becomes a category more importantly linked to the social segments than strictly relegated to the economic realm.⁴

⁴ RGADA f.1202, op 1, nos. 62, 65, 67, 68, 82.

Economic

In researching the economic category, it becomes clear that some records are essentially raw statistical material – census data, tax rosters, inventories that appear much as a spreadsheet of information would today. These are nonetheless valuable for detecting changes in the household economy, most notably discussed by N.A. Gorskaia in her study demonstrating the shift in how rent was paid during the seventeenth century.⁵ Economic materials, particularly the *okladniie knigi* and *pistsovnye knigi* (respectively donation books and cadasters), examine the donations to the monastery and show the nature of endowments, as discussed previously in chapters three and four. The receipt books show that the monastery was becoming a wealthier institution not simply by means of gradual land transfer, but as it accumulated property, income, benefices, and laborers. It became a productive entity that played a vital role in the economic structure of the region, not separated from the region by its status as an ecclesiastic model. One of the larger monasteries in the high North, Solovki, was studied extensively by Jennifer Spock, who traced the donations from this saintly monastery to evaluate the transfers of land as well as cash and kind donations, including the *vkladnye knigi* (a different type of donation book), as well as income and disbursement books and inventories. Spock found that these sources were valuable for tracing social class, monastic rank, and other supporters of the monastery.⁶ I use them to examine the interactions of the monastery with the local gentry and to demonstrate how bequeathals empowered Solotchinskii as a landed entity that drove the local economy.

⁵ N.A. Gorskaia, *Monastyrskie krest'iane Tsentral'noi Rossii v XVII v: O sushchnosti i formakh feodal'no-krepostnicheskikh otnoshenii*. (Moscow: Nauka, 1977)

⁶ Jennifer B. Spock, "Community Building and Social Identity: Donations to the Solovki Monastery 1460-1645," *Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Neue Folge, 55, no. 4 (2007), p. 535. While her study is fascinating and robust, it also comes from a "saintly" monastery and drew much larger attention than Solotchinskii. For example, she notes that at one point there was a decrease in contributions of smaller amounts for daily prayers while donations from pilgrims to the tombs of Saints Zosima and Savatii increased; as Solotchinskii is a "princely" monastery instead, without founding saints to attract pilgrims, some of the sources would have different implications at Solotchinskii.

The production of honey, wool, grain and other agricultural crops, the trade in livestock, and artisans' handiwork, all yielded income for the monastery and created trade relationships with the surrounding community that necessitated careful record-keeping. The records in turn provide a useful guide to the developing social interactions, but also demonstrate, through documentation of what some considered to be "questionable" expenditures, a series of disputes between the monastery and local villages, particularly under Archimandrite Ignatius, who headed the monastery from 1688-1697.⁷ While petitioning Moscow for funds to improve the monastery, the expense records show the monastery buying a considerable cache of luxury goods not normally associated with monastic life – i.e., jewels, velvets, gold – and without demonstrating that they were used in trade. However, these are also neatly countered by the correspondence from the archimandrite to the Tsar and Tsarina in Moscow pleading for donations to improve the "crumbling" edifices. Technically speaking, such a matter would be categorized under the rubric of official correspondence, but it also has two important social implications. First, it shows the social aspect of connections between monastery and state, overcoming the expected appeal for money to the archiepiscopate (which presumably knew the status of the monastery better than did the Tsar). Second, it raises the question of why materials which would seem to cast a negative light on the leadership of the monastery would be retained in the official files, rather than purged. Certainly, petitions presenting complaints against procedure were not unusual, and in fact in this case give a wealth of information that sheds light onto the nature of relations between the monastic administration and the local population which would likely otherwise be unobtainable. The most logical reason for the negative portrayal by Makedonii and Terpigorev, as well as by Soviet historians, was an ideological objection to the monastery as holders of wealth, especially of that derived from the labor of its dependent peasants. What the *vladnye*

⁷ See in particular the opinions of Terpigorev and Makedonii, as discussed in chap 4.

knigi show more neutrally is a flow of income from its status as a church entity, as well as from more straight-forward economic activity.

In the economic compilations that provide raw statistical data, there are inventories, lists of households, classifications of people living on monastic land as well as the types and amounts of rent paid, harvest yields, and incoming and outgoing visas. There are also expense reports from the monastery detailing receipts, credits, debits, monetary and food expenses. These provide more than a dry listing of numbers, because by classification it shows not only where the income originated, but who was providing it in terms of donations or taxes.

For example, the *vkladnaia kniga* entry for 1687-90 is a list in bookkeeping style providing a line-by-line description of who donated what and how much:

1687, November 21. Biriukov, Fedor Maksimovich, Moscow
Strel'tsy: A cassock, an icon of the birth of Christ for the cathedral, 2 rubles.
Line 67 ob, 1688: Petrov-Solovy, Koz'ma Mikhaelovich: horse
Line 68: 1688: Golovin, Emel'ian Grigor'evich, junior boyar: a measured cut of a horse and a cow (meat).
Line 68 ob: 1690: October 11: Verderevskii, Ivan Ivanovich, *Stolnik* (a Russian courtier inferior to a boyer): 4 rubles.⁸

A 1676 *okladnaia kniga* (salary book or tax register) shows:

At Fr. Gavril's church, the household of Ivashko Petrov the communion bread maker. The landowner gave to that church of his land three-quarters with a third in the field, in two because, there are no hay mowings.

In the village of Korubukhin, the household of the *stolnik*' Iakov Pushkin, it is inhabited by his people, yes one hundred peasant households, yes the landless 20 households, and to the same church and the monastic estates of Solotchinskii monastery, the village of Torki, Romanov as well, and in it the households of the monastery, the 19 peasant households. And the *okolnichik* [a rank of aristocracy just below boyars] Vasili Semenovich Volynskii's village of Khlenin, in his 25 peasant households and five landless peasant households.

And on the tax from that gave in tribute three rubles, three *den'gi*.

⁸ Riazanskii istoriko-arkhitekturnyi musei-zapovednik, f. KP 8835/1 Vkl Kn., Line 67ob, Random sampling.

And in an older salary two rubles, one *altyn*, four *den'gi*.
And from that church the new tribute arrived, one ruble, three *altyn* three *den'gi*.
The church deacon Ivashka Gavrilov, the priest Gavril, put his hand to it and the hand of his father, the priest Gavril.⁹ [an indication of signing the register as witness to the receipts, in this case by Father Gavril and his son, the deacon, Ivan Gavrilov].

These indicators of social status, designated by the ranks of people paying money to the church (in this case the maker of communion bread, the *stolnik'*, and the *okolnichik*) are valuable in tracing not only how the monastery became empowered within the local environment in the first place, but by whom. Later, when compared against the files of local complaints, it becomes possible to see the deterioration of a degree of cooperation in maintaining local power structures as both the secular and ecclesiastic “divides” began to squabble over rights of jurisdiction in given areas, which would subsequently have to be negotiated.

Legal Documents

The legal documents also account for a significant proportion of the records. These are significant for demonstrating the growth of the monastery through tracing the pattern of bequeathals starting in the fourteenth century, as discussed in chapter 1. Initially these records might appear to be a list of straight-forward donations, but close analysis of the wills follows

⁹ GARO f 627, op 1, d 1a, no 216. A *stol'nik* is an assistant to boyar nobility or to an *okolnichik*. The monetary system was in denominations of rubles, kopeks, *altyn*, and *den'gi*. While Hellie traces economic prices of commodities in *The Economy and Material Culture of Russia 1600-1725* (Chicago: University Press, 1999), he states that because of multiple factors, the exact value of the denominations was not static. Pushkarev defines both *altyn* and *den'gi* as monetary units that were named with terms borrowed from Mongols, but also elaborates those denominations had different weights of metal and constituted different values in Novgorodian or Muscovite systems. In the sixteenth century, Moscow began minting new *den'gi* called *den'gi kopeinye*, later named kopeks “that were two times heavier than the old *den'gi*, therefore in weight and value equal to the Novgorodian *den'gi*.” An *altyn* was equal to six *den'gi* or three kopeks at that time. Sergei Pushkarev, *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

from the foundation, through the fifteenth and sixteenth century, reveals a deliberate process of circumventing the existing laws of the Muscovite state in favor of local self-interest, such that estates were partitioned (parts donated, parts retained) for tax purposes. As the monastery became more powerful and accumulated land and service personnel, however, disputes arose at the local level and adjudication became an issue. The much larger issue is not simply one of donations, but of the rights to act on behalf of given populations on monastic estates, as both administrators and judges. It is also indicative of the monastery's tendency, at the local level, to follow the pattern of larger monasteries, such as Trinity-Sergius, in arbitrating and resolving disputes, although Trinity-Sergius did so at a significantly higher political level, to the point of advising Tsars. The interventions are demonstrated in a rise of petitions both amongst the local secular elite to the monastery, as well as to and from the monastery and the hierarchy of political authority in Moscow, both secular and ecclesiastic. Complaints of wrongdoing by inhabitants of the monastic estates were addressed to the monastery with the expectation of resolution and discipline. When travelers across monastic territory were set upon in 1695 and beaten and robbed, they filed a grievance with Solotchinskii. The claim was that the boyar, Lev Kirilov, accompanied by a priest Anisimov, a deacon from the village of Kirivii Luk named Trishki Kuzmin, and several peasants were on the way to Moscow to present taxes and for the peasants to sell some of their goods when they were beset upon by an innkeeper, Dmitrii Riumin. "We went to Moscow with him, a boyar with a community petition about the church's arrangements, and we peasants, all together carried in honor to him, the boyar, the fish, the five pood of honey, 5 foxes, and our fish, caught in our lakes for sale to Moscow." They did not stop in the village of Putyatin because it was expensive, and so the innkeeper Riumin came out on the road

"...and intercepted us with horses and with all carts and took stock of us to for what to take and put us in an icehouse and locked us in without bread. And as come at night and

he, the head, cut open our carts with knives, and with five carts fish as a bribe to him in the tavern, and honors for the Boyar the above took it all away, yes, common sucklings (pigs), he took the same in ten geese, two sledges, two rafts of hams, an axe and all our record, dried biscuits and two cauldrons”

Riumin continued to keep them prisoner and beat them, and then demanded that they “write a loan note of ten rubles in the name of the city of Riazan” – this time narrated by the deacon, who reported that the priest had been beaten and tormented so intolerably that he could not do it. Riumin then demanded 50 rubles from the group, “with all he took the residence permit from the peasants, because of the horses, and what we all had, took the receipts from our hands, the priest and Grischka's hands, and he, the head, tormented us all; as if he had said the toll money of forty *altyns*, and about that on it, head, many people on the roads from us.” The petition concluded by begging Archimandrite Ignatius and the brothers of Solotchinskii to accept the petition and let it be taken to the monastic treasury to make things right. In this case, there is a response that had Ignatius direct the treasurer hieromonk Gerasim to include the petition in the files and make restitution.¹⁰

This particular petition is interesting for its switch in narrators. At first it was spoken in the voice of the peasants who had been robbed of their fish and foxes; then in the voice of the deacon who was ordered to write the loan note; and then to the priest Anisim. It concludes with all involved “putting their hand to it” (attesting in the presence of witnesses) to be assessed by the monastery. This established Solotcha’s jurisdiction and responsibility as overseers of the donated estates, and thus the responsible party for making restitution. There is no mention made of a punishment meted out to Riumin. This petition also illustrated the need for delineating the precise authority of secular and ecclesiastic jurisdiction; however, it is precisely because they are

¹⁰ RGADA f. 1202, op.3, d. 32.

so intertwined, and because of the political affiliation that put localist interests first, that so many interesting disputes are presented. The petitioners sought the best resolution possible for their own interests, rather than what might be the traditional or official ordering. While some cases are clearly within the jurisdiction of the monastery – as in the case with Riumin, or other petitions that demonstrate charges against monastic peasants trading horses in bad faith to secular travelers seeking redress – others are more complex and cross boundaries. The petitioners would try to resolve their disputes on the local level first, but when those cases became too complicated or too much conflict of interest made unraveling the cases impossible, appeals were made to the traditional ladder of authority outside the local network – to the centralizing state or church hierarchy.

Not all complaints, however, fall into the legal categorization for this study. Some complaints filed between local elite and the monastery pertain to purely administrative grievances, in particular the common occurrence of peasant theft – that is to say, theft of peasants as property from one estate to another, in a grievance addressed to the monastery’s administration for resolution as a purely local issue. These “local crimes” are cross-referenced, but deal with the expectations of the monastery functioning as a political and justice agency for their property. In the same vein, complaints from locals who submitted certain annual remunerations to the monastery as the collector for money to support a local contingency of *strel'tsy* guard, later complaining that they were being double billed by the secular authorities for the same thing, are not filed in the legal category, but under the administrative, although one could also be interpret such complaints as being in the economic sphere of jurisdiction. Similarly, these cross-complaints also represent the social aspect of the monastery’s functioning: it was expected to act

as a local authority in administering the lives of its peasants and householders, arranging marriages, and regulating behavior of local populations in what is not seen as a precisely “moral” character, insofar as enforcing church mandates, but in maintaining a sense of social order. This is largely seen in trying to maintain order among peasants and local villages, ensuring relatively harmonious relationships between secular and ecclesiastically held populations and negotiating the areas in between.

The unfolding of these cross-referenced areas requires consideration beyond the simple categorization criteria. There are even more nuanced areas of bargaining between polities who were trying to ascertain how things fit together and to locate the rough edges that needed smoothing. In the end, one can see that there are no clear and precise answers because of the intermixing and the evolution of the relationship between secular and ecclesiastic, local and central, elite and peasant, legal precedent versus local custom, etc. There are several different polities at work in these records, illustrating the need for more thorough surveying of the materials. Thus, for example, there is a petition to the Patriarch of Moscow from Archimandrite Protasei that is complex in multiple ways: it deals with the complaint against another local monastery, Bogoslovskii, over encroachment on Solotchinskii land rights, citing the legal precedent of having received the land from a previous Grand Prince of Riazan’, but now there was a conflict over boundaries:

To the Sovereign sainted Joachim, patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, we pray to petition from Sol mon archimandrite Protasei with brethren. The great sovereign (lord) donated and grand prince of Riazan’ gave our monastery in olden times the registered estate of Kholovskaia Luka and digging, owned by the Bogoslovskii monastery archimandrite Josef with his brethren and the monastic estate the village of Poshupov and the village of Okoemov servants and peasants, and for many years it was, lord, in between and on the borders of our monastery’s estates from long ago, Kholovskaia Luka

and the digging, between the land of Bogoslovskii monastery, and we have a tribute to the great princes of Riazan', and the great sovereigns in all the written letters of the name, and they are in vain. It's been a long time (for me), great and holy Joachim, patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, and perhaps we were led, sir to give us that in Periaslavl Riazan' from his Most Reverend Iosif, Metropolitan of Riazan' and Murom, that, sir, he would consider us to be fortresses against the great sovereign's written complaint and that our monastic estate, Kholovskaia Luka, and the digging, from the sainted monastery is not in vain. Lord, all powerful patriarch, please smile upon us. (In one column).¹¹

Administrative

In the administrative realm, the records include registers of entry and exit visas for tenants of monastic lands, petitions from peasants to the monastery over tax disputes, petitions for substitutions of goods instead of money for taxes, disputes about borders of villages under monastic taxation, formal replies of correspondence between the archimandrite and local gentry and nobility, defined as the service personnel of muscovite court, and the dynastic families classed as boyars. These materials cover requests for memorial prayers, further "formal replies" from the archimandrite (particularly Archimandrite Ignatius in the last decade of the seventeenth century) to local nobility, correspondence to local village priests, as well as donation charters and receipts of money donated for memorial services. Yet, as these are classified also as donations and the provision of services such as requests for memorial prayers, they also cross over to the economic realm with the *sinodiki* (prayer lists) and donation charters.

The majority of records that I include in this category are generally the "cut and dried" documents of the monastery's administrative realm, unchallenged by local tensions. The statistical data that established which territories were owned by the monastery also include how many "souls" [usually based on male souls] and households were on the estates, and the

¹¹ RGADA f.1202, d. 3, no. 414.

monastery's authority over its peasants, particularly after 1649, was, except for the cases of border disputes, generally accepted. While scholars may argue over whether at this point the monastery was simply an ecclesiastical landholder in the same vein as the feudal landlord, that issue becomes moot considering what was the reasonable expectation of the peasants, local secular elite, and the institutional orders in Moscow vis-à-vis what the monastery was supposed to do.¹² A convincing argument can be made for the categorization of some of these criteria as falling within the purely ecclesiastical realm: certainly, prayers of commemoration and administration of sacramental duties are clear enough, as Steindorff notes.¹³ However, rents paid by "monastic peasants" (*monastyrskie krest'ianin*) are both administrative and economic, as are the negotiations of how peasant obligations were to be rendered, either in *barschina* (labor or in kind) or *obrok* (cash). Distinctly ecclesiastic matters including transfers of monks from one monastery to Solotchinskii, disputes about land with nearby monasteries that were appealed to the Patriarch in Moscow, and disposition of property and correspondence between church officials are also clearly defined under the hierarchy of monastic administrative categorization, although there may be crossovers as resistance was met from local and state authorities.

The most numerous of the administrative monastic holdings fall into a generic grouping called *gramota*, or any kind of official written document. There are many different types of *gramoty* and they can range from the extremely formal types of charters issued by the Tsar, authoritatively documenting the scribe, witnesses, and affixing official state seals. These were

¹² See A A Zimin in particular, *Krupnaia feodal'naia votchina i sotsial'no-politicheskaia borba v Rossii*, (Moscow, Akademia Nauk, 1977), as well as I.A. Bulygin, *Monastyrskie krest'iane Rossii v pervoi chtverti XVII veka* (Moscow, Akademia Nauk, 1977).

¹³ Ludwig Steindorff, "Princess Mariia Golenina: Perpetuating Identity through 'Care for the Deceased.'" in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy 1359 – 1584*, Gail Lenhoff and Ann Kleimola, ed. UCLA Slavic. (Moscow: ITZ - Garant, 1997).

seen most significantly in the original donations of land to the monastery and the reaffirmation of these donations by the Tsar or other authorities. Other, particularly declarations or agreements issued by peasants were written by a clerk (frequently brought by the local monastery) and formalized by the bearing witness and kissing of a cross. These generally are a type of contract, or recorded agreement, or notice that a previous contract was being violated. However, declaring these as purely legal in category would be misleading, because while they can formalize legal matters, they can also be something as cross-boundary as the agreement by which a person bound himself or herself into servitude, a transfer of property, or notification of personal injustices being committed that require redress. Most frequently seen in the *fondy* are the *zhalovannaia gramota* registered with the monastery, technically a grant or declaration. These declarations usually identify the writer (or scribe if being written on someone's behalf), to whom the document is addressed, and the issue that is at hand: payment issued, donation received, some sort of transaction (not necessarily legal or economic, although this is the predominant form found in the records of Solotchinskii) between two parties that is formalized with an acknowledgement. But a *zhalovannaia gramota* can also take the form of a complaint being lodged over various kinds of transgressions, or violations of previously acknowledged transactions, formally requesting that one of the parties revise or comply with previous agreements.

An even more formal version of the complaint comes in the form of the *chelobitnaia*, or petition presented between polities for official resolution of dispute. Ann Kleimola discusses the format of *chelobitnii* (plural) and the evolution of the formats seen in the language, humility of the

petitioner, and terminology.¹⁴ The term itself comes from the Russian “*byt’ chelom*” or “to beat one’s forehead,” indicating a subordinate status of one seeking favor from the person addressed. Kleimola also refers to the formulaic “upward allocution” contained within the petition; that is, the addressing of the petition’s recipient (often the Tsar) in supplicatory terms while spelling out the grievance in the second section.¹⁵ Again, there are myriad different types of petitions; most commonly seen in the *fondy* are the *iavochnaia chelobitnaia*, a basic narrative “reporting’ petition.” These are interesting because they lay out the exact nature of the complaints, providing an insight into the relative expectations of the petitioner with respect to the authority being cited. They are also significant both in form and content for addressing the social standing of both the petitioner and the monastery. The social standing is a significant indicator of the depth and degree to which the monastery was interacting with local secular parties, particularly when cross-referenced to the genealogic listings

Interestingly, as the seventeenth century wore on, these complaints become less the strict realm of the local elite (although those are present as well) but become an avenue of appeal for local peasant populations to request tax relief, intervention of the monastery for settlement of disputes with local secular elite, settlement of disputes about rent paid (in what form), land allocation and tenure, marriage contracts, abuses of person, and personal disputes. As such, the question of jurisdiction arose and became an issue of contestation between the monastery and the secular elite with regards to the division of local authority. This effectively demonstrates the shifting boundaries of localism, as discussed under the justification for categorizing some materials as

¹⁴ Ann Kleimola and Horace Dewey, “The Petition (Čelonitnija) as an Old Russian Literary Genre,” in *The Slavonic and East European Journal*, 1970, v. 13, no. 3, pp. 284-301. See also my discussion of the terms of humility in the analysis of peasant petitions in Chap 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 292.

legal versus social. Again, the perceived democratization of the petitioning process is significant in demonstrating the monastery has become an increasingly powerful authority entity, as the monastery had precedence in resolution of the complaints of local servitors and peasants.

Social

There are a multitude of records known simply as “correspondence” (*pis'mo; pismennaia kniga; zapiski*), documenting communications between the monastery and those outside, both secular and ecclesiastic, local and central. These are tremendously helpful for capturing the “voice” of local individuals and are perhaps most valuable in illustrating how the monastery functioned on a more interactive basis. Correspondence between local estate holders document concerns held regarding the monastery’s activity (or lack thereof) in reprimanding unruly peasants or being held accountable when untoward events transpired on monastic lands. As noted in the legal section, this would also include holding monastic peasants responsible both financially and legally. However, Ignatius would also send his responses to the local administrator to carry out punishments contained within petitions, as we see in one of the updates from 1695 from an outlying *starosta*, Iosif, in the village of Romanov: “About the settlement of the protected monastic forest, about the whitewash of the forest watchman who should be humbled for neglect and about the wounds inflicted on them by the black priest Iosif for drinking.” Ignatius ordered treasurer hieromonk Gerasim to question (white) priest Iosif about the names of the peasants Iosef beat, and to explain how Senka was not caught by (black priest) Iosef and why he was not taken away.¹⁶

¹⁶ RGADA f. 1202, op 3, d. 425. The difference between black and white clergy was black clergy were not monastic, but village priests who could be married. White clergy had taken monastic vows.

Another very broad source of records known as “*akty*” (records) are found in official Muscovite repositories. Many of these have been excerpted from the official Russian bureaus that collected and published their records in various categories: legal, economic, judicial, social. These are found in volumes from the nineteenth to the twentieth century that archive official decrees and orders from the centralizing Muscovite (and later Imperial) state, usually petitions to or mandates from the Tsar. These are tremendously valuable in illuminating the secular side of the interactions of various polities with Solotchinskii. They range in topics from the official decrees of the State regarding the prohibition of donating estates to monasteries in the early sixteenth century (which was not completely forbidden, but had to be done by petition; absent this petition, we find many circumventions by local elite with partitioned donations), to the official registering of money received from the monastery in annual support payments for the *strel'tsy* guard.¹⁷ *Akty* also contain records from the Tsar including donations to monasteries in commemoration.

Pamiatii are a large part of the records from the monastery; literally “memorials,” covering the memorial services or commemorative feasts. These are seen at Solotchinskii not only in the form of local commemorations in honor of noble families, but there are also several *pamiatii* from Moscow, notably from Ivan IV, donating in memory of his son. The *vkladnaia kniga* is a broader classification of donations made to the monastery, starting initially with the donation of

¹⁷ The prohibition of donating entire estates was technically part of the *Stoglov*, from a 1551 church council which gave rights to the Tsar to accept or reject petitions seeking to donate *votchiny*. A decree from the Tsar in 1550 had limited the donation of *votchiny* to no more than 50% of the estate for commemoration. See *Zakondatel'nye akty Russkogo gosudarstva vtoroi poloviny XVI – pervoi poloviny XVII veka: Teksty*. Ed. N. E. Nosova. (Leningrad: 1986), p. 29, no. 1; and Jack Kollman, “The Stoglav Council and Parish Priests,” in *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, v. 7 (1980).

lands from Grand Prince of Riazan' Oleg as he bequeathed the land and money to establish the monastery. The *pamiatii* are more specifically relegated to individuals on given occasions, such as the anniversary of death or on the saint's name day. However, the *pamiatii* also form a body of works functioning as responses to previous correspondence, largely between ecclesiastical personnel, for example.

Equally crucial are the *sinodiki* (prayer lists) which document the commemoration of the dead, masses to be said for them, and donations made in their name. Both the *pamiatii* and *sinodiki* trace the donations which not only endowed the monastery but provided the basis for its growth in power and status over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, even while the local secular authority was becoming increasingly subjugated to Moscow during the centralizing processes of Ivan III and his descendants. In fact, the process of political subordination to Moscow started even as early as the late fourteenth century, following the dispute between Grand Prince Oleg' and Dmitri Donskoi over Oleg's failure to provide military assistance at Kulikovo field in 1380, but had to be continually reinforced over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with annexation, renewal of oaths, and reminders of Riazan's vassal status to Moscow's liege. Over this same time, the *sinodiki* and *vkladnye knigi* demonstrate the cooperation of Solotchinskii and the Riazan' *dvorianstvo* in retaining local power, albeit seemingly at the expense of building the monastery's power, something which caused the two to come into conflict in the seventeenth century. By the same token, the books cannot be overlooked as a source of participation in the religious experience by the local population for spiritual purposes. It is one of the few areas in these records where we see the monastery acting in a "traditionally" religious manner; specifically lacking from these records are any traces of

doctrinal or theological issues, outside of the intramonastic politics. Ludwig Steindorff uses the *sinodiki* to show that donations played a part in enhancing the prestige of elite families, arguing that “participation in the system of donation and remuneration by liturgical commemoration was also a question of prestige. Social position within the Muscovite elite was expressed to a large degree by the ability to make grants to ecclesiastic institutions.”¹⁸ Other historians such as Russell Martin and Ann Kleimola have found them useful tools for genealogical research. Martin found that the *sinodiki* could assist in reconstituting a list of those purged in the *Oprichina* of Ivan IV. Kleimola found that reconstruction of dynastic claims was possible after the destruction of Riazan’ records by Mongols, because the *sinodiki* enabled her to discern claims of status and privilege.¹⁹

The donation records are also supplemented, and in some cases overlap the *pistsovnye knigi*, or cadasters of land donations. These relate specifically to property and demonstrate the willingness of the *dvorianstvo* to endow the monastery for commemorative purposes. It further showed the process of subdividing particular parts of the estate or providing certain income-generating provisions rather than the whole estate, also for maintenance of local interests, in keeping with the rulings of both the church and state in the sixteenth century. The *pistsovnye knigi* contain explicit surveys and descriptions of lands, often described in terms of geographic features and boundaries. These trace out exactly what benefits were being endowed or claimed and were used to evaluate competing claims or complaints of encroachment. This is an important

¹⁸ Ludwig Steindorff, “Commemoration and Administrative Techniques in Muscovite Monasteries,” in *Russian History*, 1992, v.22, no 4, p. 434

¹⁹ Russel Martin, “Gifts for the Dead: Death, Kinship and Commemoration in Muscovy (The Case of the Mstislavskii Princes),” in *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, vol 26, no. 3, summer 1999; Ann Kleimola, “Genealogy and Identity among the Riazan Elite” in *Culture and Identity in Muscovy: 1359-1584*, Gail Lenhoff and Ann Kleimola, Ed. (Moscow: ITZ-Garant, 1997).

source because it establishes who the owners of the secular lands were, creates boundaries, and places them in a cartographic context. When cross-correlated with the land disputes registered with the monastery in the *zhalovanie* and *chelobytnie*, it provides the reader with the surveyor's reports to distinguish the boundaries and see the areas of dispute. In the larger scale, the demarcation of the local boundaries between secular and monastic estates allows a "mapping" of the local community both in a physical and in a social sense. Valerie Kivelson elaborates on this nicely, as well as the problem of shifting boundaries when based in natural landscape. "The process," she concludes, "was complicated and very fallible." Kivelson looked at the case of competing claims between one Nikifor Griboedev and the Snovitskii monastery over hay fields in 1677, with the attempt to ascertain ownership established by "orders arrived from Moscow requiring the local governor to send out a retired serviceman or clerk from the local town hall, a good man who should question local people to find out: whether in the hamlet Teplaia there is arable field land and whether there are borders and boundary markers with other estates or whether those uninhabited fields are separate from other properties..."²⁰ The *pistsovney knigi* were also used historically in documenting the amount of land that church clergy received, in particular white clergy, or those in villages serving as parish priests. They often complained to the monastery or local archbishopric that they were not receiving enough glebe land to support themselves and appealed for more in land and/or salary.²¹

The cadasters therefore give insight into the physical growth of the monastery in competition with the secular land holdings. Finally, placed in conjunction with the inventory of households

²⁰ Valerie Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom: The Land and Its Meanings in Seventeenth Century Russia*, (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006). p. 59.

²¹ Debra Coulter discusses this and other issues affecting lower clergy in "Church Reform and the 'White Clergy' in Seventeenth Century Russia," in *Modernizing Muscovy: Reform and Social Change in the Seventeenth Century*, Marshall Poe and Jarmo Kotilaine, eds. (Florence: Taylor and Francis Group), 2004, pp. 289-314.

and the *okladnaia kniga*, they give the reader insight into the jurisdiction of how many people the monastery oversaw.

Kormleni were taxes levied secularly on towns and *uezdy* (districts) to support or “feed” government officials; generally paid in kind, to support *namestniki* and *volosteli* (governors and rural district administrators). They were an important source of revenue for boyars, “much abused” and revised in the fifteenth century as Muscovy began to regulate the system by defining what had to be paid in what amounts. By the late fifteenth century, this made a transition from being in kind to in cash. Ivan IV abolished *kormlenii* 1555-56 and “replaced it with incomes drawn from taxes based on various kinds of land tenure.”²² These secular forms were occasionally noted by decrees extended to both secular and monastic persons when there was a conflict over who had jurisdiction for collection. There continued to be an obligation for monastic peasants in villages to provide provisions for the monastery, but these were no longer referred to as *kormlenii* and are registered in the monastic income books as donations, rather than as commemorations. The household expense books also show the monastery purchasing necessary goods from various local sources with “secular money.”²³ Philological studies of these historical records have also been made and note in particular that formulaic language is very similar in donation books and commemorations.²⁴

The outcome of the classification is complicated, as noted, because the records tended to cross purposes; something under the administrative realm might well be petitioning for economic

²² Lawrence Langer, *Historical Dictionary of Medieval Russia* (Landham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 2001), p. 108.

²³ See my discussion of this in chapter 4 regarding the purchases of food and personal items.

²⁴ See L. I. Ivina, “Vkladnaia i kormovaia kniga Simonova monastyria,” in *Vspomogatel'nye istoricheskie distsipliny*, vol 2, 1969.

redress, while donations of land could be classified as administrative, economic, or religious, depending on the context, taxation, or authority. The purpose of this section is to illuminate the different kinds of documents and explore how they can be considered in different ways so as to understand what was happening in the Solotchinskii territory and Riazan', contrasted with what was happening in Moscow and the more centralized state.

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