

Education and Social Life in XX-Century in Russia

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Annotation: A more conservative approach was taken by Mikhail Shcherbatov, a publicist and historian whose notion of liberty was influenced by the works of Rousseau. Shcherbatov delivered a scathing criticism of the existing social institutions, maintaining that mass education—rather than far-reaching political reforms and the abolition of serfdom—may be more effective in improving the morals of Russian society.

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On a related note, Ivan Betskoy campaigned for the comprehensive reform of education which would result in the development of a "new breed of citizens". His proposals have been implemented in part, e.g., the Smolny Institute was inaugurated for noble maidens, in keeping with Fenelon's doctrine that girls' education was key to the moral regeneration of the corrupt modern society.

Catherine II could be considered the founder of the State University of Land Use Planning, it was announced on May 25, 1779 (on May 14, Julian calendar) that the Surveying School should be opened. The school was named Konstantinovsky in honour of the Great Prince Konstantin Pavlovich, the grandson of Catherine II of Russia who was born in that year. The government and Catherine II of Russia herself patronized and supported the school from the date of its establishing emphasizing a significance of land management and special surveying education. Lack of land surveyors and state importance of land surveying initiated establishing of the school. The legislation of the day emphasized significance of land management: "Current surveying is a business, which is performed not only to the benefit and peace of every holder but the state business containing the Emperor glory and advantage of peace and quiet for all the State."

Catherine's friend Yekaterina Dashkova—sometimes viewed as a precursor of feminism—led the Russian Academy of Sciences for many years. In 1783, she instituted the Russian Academy, which she modeled after the French Academy. Seeking to promote knowledge and study of the Russian language, the Russian Academy prepared the first comprehensive dictionary of the Russian language.

Even the monolith of the Russian Orthodox Church seemed to succumb to the influences of the Enlightenment. The teachings of Platon Levshin, Metropolitan of Moscow, underlined the need for tolerance and encouraged the advancement of ecclesiastical education. Enlightenment ideas were popularized by the nascent Russian theatre. The first Russian theater group of this kind was established in Yaroslavl by Fyodor Volkov and Ivan Dmitrievsky during Elizaveta's reign. Aleksandr Sumarokov was responsible for the repertory of their theatre.

During Catherine's reign the leading playwrights included Denis Fonvizin, who ridiculed the rusticity of provincial gentry and their thoughtless imitation of all things French; Vladislav Ozerov, who authored a great number of Neoclassical tragedies with touches of sentimentalism; and Yakov Knyazhnin, whose drama about a popular uprising against Rurik's rule was declared Jacobin and publicly burnt in 1791.

Even Catherine's favourite poet, Gavrila Derzhavin—who sought in his odes to combine amusement with instruction—would see some of his poems banned from print during the last years of her reign.

Opera

Russian opera

Opera reached Russia in 1731, when Empress Anna invited the Italian opera troupe to show *Calandro* by Giovanni Alberto Ristori during the celebration of her coronation in Moscow. In 1735 another Italian opera troupe led by composer Francesco Araja was invited to work in St. Petersburg. Araja spent 25 years in Russia and wrote 14 operas for the Russian Court including *Tsefali Prokris* (1755), the first opera written in Russian to the libretto by Alexander Sumarokov.

Foreign composers like Johann Adolf Hasse, Hermann Raupach, Galuppi, Manfredini, Traetta, Paisiello, Sarti, Cimarosa and Martin y Soler, Ivan Kerzelli, Antoine Bullant, brought important contribution to the Russian opera, to the Italian libretti as well as Russian libretti. There were also extremely popular operas by the Belgian/French André Ernest Modeste Grétry that were widely performed, including in Kuskovo and Ostankino theatres, where they were given with participation of the famous serf-soprano Praskovya Zhemchugova at the private opera of Nikolai Sheremetev.

Catherine II sent some domestic composers like Berezovsky and Bortniansky abroad to study art of music composition and later they produced some operas in Italian and French. And only at the beginning of the 1770s the first modest attempts of the composers of Russian origin to compose operas to the Russian librettos were made. Among these were successful one-act opera *Anyuta* (1772) to the text by Mikhail Popov, and opera *Melnik – koldun, obmanshchikisvat* (*The Miller who was a Wizard, a Cheat and a Match-maker*) to the text by Alexander Ablesimov with music by Mikhail Sokolovsky (1779).

The most important contribution in the opera genre were made by Vasily Pashkevich with his *The Carriage Accident* (*Neschastyeotkarety*, 1779), *The Miser* to the text by Yakov Knyazhnin after Molière (1782), and Fevey to the libretto by Catherine II (1786), as well as by Italian trained Yevstigney Fomin with his *The Coachmen at the Relay Station* (*Yamshchikinapodstave*, 1787), *OrfeyiEvridika*, opera-melodrama to the text by Yakov Knyazhnin (1792), and *The Americans* (*Amerikantsy*, comic opera, 1800).

Other music

In 1746 the first public concert took place in Russia. This soon became a tradition. Concert life was dominated by foreign musicians before Russian virtuosos appeared in the 1780–1790s; these included the violinist Ivan Khandoshkin and singer Elizaveta Sandunova. The senator Grigory Teplov was also an amateur musician who printed in 1751 the collection of his songs entitled *Idle Hours Away from Work*. Publishing music business, sales of foreign sheet music, and music lovers' periodicals flourished from the 1770s onward.

The overture and songs from Ivan Kerzelli's opera *Derevenskiyvorozheya* (*The Village Wizard*) were printed in Moscow 1778; they were the first opera fragments printed in Russia. Sales of musical instruments (like keyboards, guitars and harps) were also growing. Sacred music genres were transformed under the foreign influences. The Italian operatic composers such as Galuppi and Sarti were involved in producing liturgies for the church service. The genre of the choral concerto (the cycle of three–four contrast movements) became traditional in liturgic music of Degtyaryov, Vedel, Bortniansky, Berezovsky, Davydov, and Turchaninov.

Some of the leading figures of the Russian Enlightenment are associated with Freemasonry and Martinism. In the early 1770s, Catherine the Great's secretary Ivan Yelagin succeeded in reorganizing Russian Freemasonry into a far-reaching system that united some 14 lodges and about 400 government officials. He secured English authorization of the first Russian Grand Lodge and became its Provincial Grand Master. Most Russian lodges were attracted to the Swedish Rite. In 1782, Ivan Schwarz, a philosophy professor from Moscow, represented Russia at the Wilhelmsbad conference where Russia was recognized as the 8th province of the Rite of Strict Observance. His friend Nikolay Novikov was in charge of the Moscow lodges. Spooked by the French Revolution, Catherine clamped down on Novikov and other Freemasons in the late 1780s. Her son Paul interdicted all Masonic assemblies in 1799. Novikov and his circle promoted "prosveshchenie" which combined religious piety, erudition, and commitment to the spread of learning. However it bore little similarity to the skeptical and critical spirit of the European Enlightenment

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