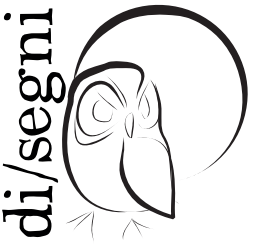
READING RUSSIA.
A HISTORY OF READING IN MODERN RUSSIA

vol. 1

Damiano Rebecchini and Raffaella Vassena (eds.)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Volume 1

Edited by Damiano Rebecchini and Raffaella Vassena

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List of Abbreviations

In the notes the following will be used:
d. (dd.) *delo (dela)*
f. *fond*
l. (ll.) *list* (*listy*)
op. *opis'*
TsGA Moskvy, *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv goroda Moskvy*, Moscow.
OR RGB *Otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki,* Moscow.
OR RNB *Otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi Natsional'noi Biblioteki,* St. Petersburg.
RGADA *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennii arkhiv drevnikh aktov*, Moscow.
RGIA *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv*, St. Petersburg.
RO IRLI *Rukopisnyi otdel Instituta russkoi literatury i iskusstva,* St. Petersburg.
SPb ARAN, *Sankt-Peterburgskii filial Arkhiva Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk*, St. Petersburg.

INTRODUCTION[1]

Damiano Rebecchini, Raffaella Vassena

1. These volumes originate in two gatherings convened at Milan State University in 2013 and 2017 which brought together an international group of scholars of the history of literature, publishing history, and social history, with a view to exploring the phenomenon of reading in Russia from a broad and multidisciplinary perspective. The first occasion was a conference entitled 'Reading Russia. Places and Manners of Reading, 1760-1930', which was followed by the publication, in 2014, of *Reading in Russia. Practices of Reading and Literary Communication* (Milan, Ledizioni).[2] The second was instead a workshop with the more ambitious title 'Towards a History of Reading in Russia', from which the project represented by these volumes emerged. Our aim was to put together a first history of reading in Russia intended not only for experts in Russian Studies, but also for scholars interested in the history of reading and book history in Europe. After sharing drafts of numerous chapters with colleagues, the majority of the authors met together for three days at Gargnano, on Lake Garda, to discuss issues needing resolution in the various chapters, and the overall structure of the project.

In light of the above, a first important clarification is called for: these three volumes are not constructed on a common theoretical basis or with a

1 Pages 13-16 and 31-42 were written by Damiano Rebecchini, pages 17-30 by Raffaella Vassena. The editors wish to thank the reviewers who agreed to appraise anonymously the contributions to these three volumes. Especial thanks to Joachim Klein, Irina Paperno, William Mills Todd III, and Yuri Tsivian for their valuable advice. We also thank Daniel Brooks for his revision of the English texts.

2 D. Rebecchini, R. Vassena (eds.), *Reading in Russia. Practices of Reading and Literary Communication, 1760-1930* (Milano, 2014) Open access:
https://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/disegni/article/view/8292/7913

shared methodological procedure. Each author has brought to the table his or her own historical and methodological expertise, which has been thus enabled to dialogue with those of the others, while maintaining the writers' own individual scholarly identities. If the divergence of procedures among the contributors might seem at first sight to be a weakness, we believe it is rather one of the strongpoints of this work: a phenomenon as fluid and elusive, as hard to pin down, as reading acquires a degree of substance and clarity as the authors of these volumes investigate its dynamics, each from a different critical perspective, deploying the methodologies of their own disciplines and their own interpretive approaches.

Given the methodological diversity among us, our starting point was an extremely broad definition of reading. By 'reading' we mean above all that process of 'visual encounter with a written text' in which some level of interpretation is present. Such a wide conception of reading has allowed our authors a considerable latitude in choosing their sources and defining their material for analysis. The following chapters contain analyses of the reading of written texts from very diverse media: from inscriptions on triumphal arches to shop signs, manuscripts, typed samizdat productions, film scripts, as well as, naturally, books, newspapers and journals, which will undoubtedly occupy the lion's share of this story of Russian reading. The result is an attempt to throw some light on the processes of familiarisation and appropriation of the written word on the part of Russian readers which derive from the specific cultural and social circumstances characterising the Russian, or Soviet, ambience over the last three and a half centuries. If reading is indeed a "practice that is always realized in specific acts, places and habits" (G. Cavallo, R. Chartier), shared by specific "interpretive communities" (S. Fish), the scope of these volumes has been to identify and define, within each chronological section, the main transformations that have influenced the form and significance of those acts, spaces and habits in relation to the communities that produced them.[3]

Our giving particular attention to the visual encounter with the written word has not meant that we have lost sight of the important role played by orality in the process of interpreting texts. It was especially true of a country like Russia, where literacy spread more slowly and patchily than in many other European countries, that the culture of the spoken word and the culture of the written word were strong influences on one another. As Daniel Waugh has emphasised, without considering the various non-written ways a text might be transmitted, it would be difficult to assess accurately the real impact of any written text on its readers. Regarding the Russian eighteenth century, for example, Gary Marker speaks of a genuine "symbiosis of text

3 G. Cavallo, R. Chartier (eds), *A History of Reading in the West*, tr. by L. G. Cochrane (Amherst, MA, 1999), 2; S. Fish, *Is there a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge MA, London, 1999).

and orality," underlying the continual interaction between educated readers and a receptive public of widely varying levels of literacy. It will not surprise, then, to find that reading aloud is central to several chapters, whether in the public sense of a master reading to his pupils or events before a mass audience, or the private one of familial, cultural or literary gatherings.

In a cultural environment such as Russia's, where until the end of the nineteenth century illiteracy was less the exception than the rule, the importance not only of orality but also of images in influencing the reading of texts should not be underestimated. The authors of a number of chapters have tried to give due weight to the importance of pictures in preparing, guiding, contextualising, sometimes even misdirecting the interpretation of the written word in different times and places: from the images on the covers of early nineteenth-century novels to the vignettes of satirical journals towards the end of that century, from caricatures to the black-and-white photographs of early Soviet publications, from the didactic illustrations of Stalin-era schoolbooks through the moving images of cinematic adaptations of the classics of Russian literature to the pictures supplied for new digital 'readers-authors' or 'wreaders' on modern Russian digital platforms.

When deciding on a chronological framework for this work, we initially wanted to embrace a temporal arc rather broader than the one that we settled on, which runs from the last decades of the seventeenth century to our own day. Given that the history of reading is clearly one of *longue durée*, in which a certain resistance on the part of readers tended to reduce the impact of political and technological 'revolutions' that transformed the production and circulation of texts, an ampler perspective would have enabled us to track more precisely the emergence of a series of modes and practices of reading whose roots were often to be found in the more distant past. In the end, however, we had to give way in the face of a particular historiographical circumstance. As Daniel Waugh makes clear in his introductory chapter to the first volume, for the period prior to Peter the Great's reign, we simply do not have sufficient sources available to us for the reconstruction of a plausible overall picture of Russian readers and reading, however fragmentary. Nearly two centuries of philological studies have succeeded in clarifying a number of aspects of the manuscript production of Slavic texts in the Russian context between the eleventh and the seventeenth centuries, showing how these were largely texts linked to the concerns of the Church and Orthodox faith. Research in more recent decades has revealed a rich trove of texts written on birchbark that testify to a written secular culture alongside the written one already thriving in Kievan Rus'.[4] For a period stretching from the fifteenth century to the first half of the seventeenth, it has also been possible to reconstruct some of the mechanisms for circulating texts

4 For a popular overview of the birchbark texts, see V. L. Ianin, *Ia poslal tebe berestu*... (Moscow, 1965).

between monasteries and other writing centres. And yet, as Waugh shows, a good deal remains to be discovered about the identity of readers in Muscovy over those three centuries, and on how and why those readers engaged with the texts.

In the period we are looking at—from the end of the seventeenth century until our own day—first the Tsarist empire, then the Soviet State, and now the Russian Federation were or are multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-confessional entities. Any history of reading that fails to take into account these three dimensions must perforce be an incomplete one, as indeed inevitably is this one in certain respects. We would have liked to dedicate more space to the reading lives of the many national, linguistic and religious minorities making up the Russian and Soviet Empires —from the Islamic and Protestant communities to the remaining 'Old Believers'—but not all the scholars we consulted were able to contribute to this part of the story. In the end we were compelled to settle for a history of reading that concentrated largely on the reading performed by Russian readers of predominantly Russian texts.

It would also have been interesting to analyse the reading of Russian texts beyond the confines of the Russian and Soviet spaces, and especially to investigate the particular relationship with reading Russian texts that evolved among the many diaspora communities in Western Europe and elsewhere in the world in the course of the twentieth century. Most likely this would have involved a different relationship with the written word than that experienced by their fellow nationals in the mother country. But here too, we have been unable to go as far as we would have liked: we must trust to further future research in this area. This is not to say that many of the contributors to these volumes have not dedicated a good deal of attention to the changing nature of the geography of reading in Russia. Susan Smith Peter, for example, describes in detail the cultural dynamics that led to the birth of a first daily newspaper in the city of Kazan and to the formation of a first local reading public in an Eastern region of Russia inhabited by a significant Muslim minority. Simon Franklin reconstructs the kaleidoscopic topography of the urban 'graphosphere' of the early nineteenth century and the impact of shop-signs on contemporary readers and observers, from the gaudy signage in the centre of St. Petersburg, with its sophisticated polyglot lexicon, to the barely grammatical announcements in the suburbs. Tat'iana Golovina looks into the channels of access and modes of circulation of books between two small landed estates in the Vladimir Oblast in the mid-nineteenth century. Denis Kozlov traces with some precision the circulation of the main literary journals during the Khrushchev Thaw, not only in the major cities and principal republics of the Soviet Union—from Ukraine to Belarus and the Baltic and Caucasian republics—but also in the more remote constituent republics of the Buryats and the Bashkirs or the

Altai Republic. Given the uneven development of communication routes—canals, major roads, railway networks—and the variable efficiency of the postal and book distribution systems, we are confronted with an extremely variegated geography of reading in a cultural situation where geographical distances were an important conditioning factor.

2. These three volumes, in their four-part development, aim to reflect the different phases of the transformation of reading in Russian history over time. In order to take account of the differing paces of evolution and differing temporalities of reading in Russia in relation to epochs and geographical contexts, we have alternated long panoramic chapters embracing considerable timespans with briefer case studies that attempt to photograph the situation of the Russian reader in different geographical areas and/or cultural and socio-economic circumstances from a synchronic perspective. If the panoramic chapters trace a more or less linear evolution of reading in Russia, the case studies point to a more complex and contradictory state of affairs, where tradition persisted side by side with innovation and continuity was to be found together with breaks from it. With the help of the case studies we have tried to present a stratification of the tastes of the Russian people and their expectations in given periods or geographical areas, thereby demonstrating the weight of tradition and inquiring into the resistance or relative openness to the intrusion of the new.

The First Part describes the slow evolution that took place between the reign of Peter the Great and that of Paul I, or from 1682 to 1801. During this 'very long Russian eighteenth century', such change as occurred had its roots in the second half of the seventeenth century but is seen to have particularly speeded up during the reign of Catherine II, in the last decades of the eighteenth, amounting to something of a first 'revolution' in reading. The Second Part covers the successive evolution that ensued during the 'long Russian nineteenth century', in a period stretching from the beginning of Alexander I's reign in 1801 to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. In this phase, transformations that had begun in the last twenty years of Catherine's reign became more rapid and evident, both in terms of a widening social base of the reading public and in the scale of the success of popular genres. This evolution further accelerated, following the reforms of Alexander II which allowed millions of peasants to engage personally and directly with the written word, often for the first time, while in the cities a genuine 'mass readership' began to form. The Third Part and Fourth Part, which share the third volume, embrace even more rapid and profound changes. In the Third Part we analyse the violent life changes imposed on the Russian public in the 'short twentieth century' (1917-1986). The transformations ushered in by the Bolshevik authorities led on the one hand to an extraordinary growth in literacy among the population, but on the oth-

er with ever more sophisticated and pervasive controls over what could be read. Fastest of all were the changes that took place in the last, post-Soviet and contemporary phase, covered in the Fourth Part, due to the coinciding in the 1990s of a political revolution—the fall of communism and the opening towards a form of capitalism—and a technological one—the digital revolution. These overlapping 'revolutions' at last made accessible to the Russian public not only a much wider range of available texts but new aids to reading capable of profoundly transforming the contemporary Russian reader's manner of reading.

In the first of the contributions on the eighteenth century, Gary Marker tackles a few methodological and conceptual issues relating to the study of reading in Russia in this period and provides an in-depth overview of the current state of play. Underlining the importance of the interaction between older and new reading practices, Marker details the perspectives afforded by recent studies and outlines possible directions for future research, in particular a number of crucial questions, including the language in which readers read (Russian as opposed to Latin, German or French); the influence of orality and images on eighteenth-century readers; the differing approaches of reading communities, especially within the monastic world; the coalescing of secular readers into a modern reading public; various practices of 'self-inscription' in both private and public library books; the use of sources such as subscription lists for both books and periodicals at the end of the eighteenth century.

The changes described in the First Part initially concerned a very limited number of readers from court circles, the higher aristocracy, the Academy and the ecclesiastical world. In the period between 1682 and 1762, from the reigns of Peter the Great through to that of his daughter Elizabeth, when the printing presses were almost entirely in state hands, reading was seen by the authorities as more than anything a tool for the education of the subject populace. In this phase a series of stand-offs between secular and religious knowledge shaped new prescriptive visions of reading adopted by the diverse reading communities associated with the court or with the principal cultural institutions. As Kirill Ospovat shows, reading was seen by the Tsar and the leading ideologists of the new state as a potent means of regulating the conduct of the people, not only via the consumption of a certain kind of manuals and instructional literature, but also through the assimilation of literary and theatrical behavioural models emanating largely from court circles. In this context the very idea of 'reading for pleasure' was put before readers as an officially sanctioned element of life conduct proper to the loyal subject.

As Rodolphe Baudin shows, the last thirty years of the eighteenth century saw rapid and profound changes overtake Russian reading and readers. It was in fact during Catherine the Great's reign that signs of substantial

change from the Petrine and immediate post-Petrine era become evident. In this period we find, directly encouraged by the Empress, a boom in translating foreign works and the first appearance of a vibrant independent publishing industry. In the wake of a rising demand for books among the nobility, and thanks to the emergence of private publishing firms, we see a rapid growth in secular printing. From 1762 to 1800 more than 7000 non-religious titles were published in Russia, as compared to an overall production of 928 titles for the decades 1725-1755. This period was witness to the formation of a literate lay public, still for the most part composed of nobles, but with a certain autonomy with respect to the community of readers connected to the court or the academies. The energy of the new private publishers was also a boost to the spread of reading not only in the major cities but also in the provinces, among the lesser nobility and the better-off merchant class. This phase saw too the formation of new categories of readers, bringing distinct markets for feminine and children's literature, groups with their own specific cultural requirements, as witnessed by the appearance of dedicated journals. Needless to say, this new dynamism generated a degree of tension in the cultural sphere. As Baudin puts it, the history of reading in this phase "is very much a history of the tension between the dynamics of a growing number of readers and a liberalisation of both literary forms and forms of literary consumption on the one hand, and the attempts made by Court and the literati to support yet control this general progress on the other."[5]

The aristocratic public in this period began to establish its autonomy from the culture of the court, finding an alternative legitimisation in, for example, European masonic culture. With Catherine II's encouragement, the publication and diffusion of large numbers of foreign works in translation led to nothing less than a 'Europeanisation' of the Russian reading nobility. While the reading of literary and theatrical texts had been deployed by the government in the Petrine and post-Petrine era as a powerful instrument for regulating the behaviour of its subjects, the dissemination of new texts, particularly of a fictional or semi-fictional nature (letters, diaries, epistolary novels, etc.) and new habits of shared reading, now contributed to the Russian reader's forming an interior world adapted to the 'Age of Sensibility'. As Andrei Zorin writes, "having Europeanized their appearance, manners, and practices of everyday life, members of the Russian upper class began attending to the Europeanisation of their inner selves."[6] Following Robert Darnton, Zorin emphasises how the reading 'revolution' that occurred in Russia at this time, was—as in other European countries—not so much a passage from an intensely focused reading of a limited number of religious texts to the wider ranging consumption of a greater range

5 Baudin, "Reading in the Times of Catherine II," vol. 1, 156.
6 Zorin, "A Reading Revolution?," vol. 1, 221.

of works of fiction, as a search on the reader's part for a similar level of intensity to that typical of religious reading applied to texts dealing with other areas of human life: friendship, love, approaches to nature and to art.

Contemporaneously in the ecclesiastical world, among the new readers educated in the seminaries of Catherine II's time, the borders between religious and secular culture tended to blur. As Ekaterina Kislova shows, a study of the inventories and catalogues of the seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions, between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, suggests that, influenced by the Tsarina's outward-looking cultural policy, the new generation of Orthodox clergy began to read secular works both in Russian and in foreign languages. New acquisitions and donations meant that new genres begin to appear in the seminary catalogues alongside the traditional liturgies, theological and philosophical works: contemporary lyric poetry and drama, novels and historical verse, newspapers and literary journals. Of course, the presence of such works in the catalogues does not prove whether or how they were read, but significant confirmation can be gleaned from other sources: the loan records of seminary libraries, for example, show that it was just these kinds of secular texts that leaders often failed to return —a confirmation of the fascination they exerted not only over the students, but also over the teaching staff and the librarians themselves.

Analysing the Russian journals of the period, Bella Grigoryan shows that Catherine's era constitutes a sort of hyphen with the succeeding century, anticipating a series of cultural dynamics that would be developed in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Studying how the Russian reader is represented in the pages of Russian newspapers and journals from the 1770s to the 1830s, Grigoryan highlights a whole series of *topoi* relating to the Russian public and reading which would remain constant throughout the period. More and more often the readership of these publications around the turn of the century is pictured as a lively and enquiring public, increasingly active and socially diverse. While in the journals of the earlier part of Catherine's reign, this portrait appears something of a case of cultural wishful thinking rather than a reality, with the passage of years such rhetorical constructions seem to acquire a certain historical solidity, as demonstrated by the increasing numbers and the widening social extraction of the subscribers to the journals of the 1830s.

In a contribution embracing nearly the whole chronological arc of the three volumes, Simon Franklin shows us the weight of familiarity in the Russian citizenry's daily encounters with the written word in the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg at three different points of imperial and Soviet history: at the beginning of the eighteenth century, halfway through the nineteenth century, and in the 1930s. These encounters were controlled and directed by the state, by turns attracted and irked by the new market

imperatives. Relying on a variety of sources, Franklin considers the often barely decipherable Latin and Russian inscriptions on triumphal arches in Moscow from Peter the Great's time; analyses the messages of shop signs in the two cities, from the French notices in the smarter streets to the chaos of incorrect Russian in the humbler districts in the mid-nineteenth century; and describes the demoralising impact of the uniform grey graphics of 1930s shop signage on the Soviet citizen, in strident contrast with the varied and eye-catching slogans on the political posters and placards which punctuated Soviet streets.

In the Second Part we see the profound changes that take place during the 'long nineteenth century,' between 1801 and 1917, both in the social make-up of the Russian reading public and in the published genres that impact on the taste of the Russian reader. These were transformations that had already manifested themselves during Catherine the Great's reign but which in this phase become more rapid and evident. It was particularly in the first three decades of the century, during the so-called 'Golden Age' of Russian literature, that in certain cultivated and/or noble circles of the two capitals a sophisticated and original culture of poetic reading developed which, reappropriating certain practices and models from the Age of Sensibility, would leave profound traces in the subsequent development of poetry reading in Russia. Daria Khitrova shows how the reading of poetry was practiced among a restricted group of noble literati as a form of 'emotive complicity' between writer and reader. The new reading practices tended to cancel the gap between those writing and those reading, creating a communicative landscape in which the reading of poetry assumed naturally a position in an emotional continuum extending through conversation, recital, singing and writing. With their underlinings, inscriptions, comments, quotations and copying into private diaries or albums to be shared with family and friends, the noble readers of the Golden Age 'performed' on the template created by the poet, personalising it and enriching it with new contents and meanings.

At the same time, thanks to an improvement of economic conditions generally, to a fall in the price of books and to a degree of social mobility, the Russian reading public continued to grow over the first decades of the nineteenth century, to include not only the urban nobility, but in ever greater numbers the middling and lesser provincial nobility, clerks, retailers and the better-off artisans. It was in this phase that the first public libraries begin to appear in many provincial cities along with a certain number of local newspapers with a specific local audience. In her close analysis of one of these new daily papers, *Kazan News* (1811-1821), Susan Smith-Peter highlights the role played by the new institutions promoted by Alexander I, such as the provincial universities and local periodicals, in creating new local cultural identities within the Empire. Thanks to the new paper, we are witnesses to the birth of a particularly active and dynamic public in Kazan,

who prove to be not only 'consumers' of information emanating from the capital—as was the government's intention—but producers themselves of a new variety of autonomous regional news, contributing to the establishment of a specific regional identity. Smith-Peter's contribution thus demonstrates the unwittingly contradictory nature of tsarist cultural policy, which favoured the rise of relatively autonomous regional institutions capable of undermining the hegemony of the central power.

It is into this panorama of social mobility and a changing public that the success of the novel bursts. If in the first decades of the century it was chiefly English, German and French novels that captured the attention of the public, distracting it from the old chapbooks and chivalrous romances of *lubok* literature, from the 1830s the Russian novel began to make its mark. Damiano Rebecchini describes how, in the first thirty years of the century, thanks to the many translations of European novels in circulation, the Russian reader became familiar with typically Western heroes, behaviour and milieux. The narrative genres of the European sentimental novel, the Gothic novel, the bandit novel stimulated a degree of identification with the protagonists of such texts and their emotions, but with the success of Walter Scott's historical romances, the Russian public gradually acquired a less mimetic approach to reading. As well as their evident function as escapist reading, Scott's novels stimulated more analytic reading attitudes, as well as a greater tendency to compare the past with the present and the western world with the Russian one. The 1830s, in fact, saw a great number of Russian historical romances invade the market, imitative of Scott but substituting more typically Russian heroes and situations. The success of so many novels dedicated to Russia's past helped to create a shared historical imagery, composed for the most part of national stereotypes that —contrastingly with Western models—reinforced a sense of cohesion among readers belonging to different social and cultural worlds. Hard on the heels of this homogenising phase, however, in the 1840s there occurred a contrary movement of division, fragmentation and ideological radicalisation of the readership in concomitance with a period of economic crisis. The appearance of two important novels on contemporary Russia—Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* and Gogol's *Dead Souls*—divided the public into opposing halves, provoking different reactions from readers largely along generational lines. At the same time, the success of the new publishing phenomenon, the 'thick journal', also contributed to a greater segmentation of the public, creating new communities of readers and radicalising their opinions. From then on, for most of the nineteenth century these journals promoted new ways of reading and shaped new generations of readers. It was in their pages that the public would discover the novels of Turgenev, Tolstoi and Dostoevskii, published in instalments with the accompaniment of commentaries by the critics of the moment. Increasingly diverse in their aesthetic and ideologi-

cal stances, the thick journals carved up the public into distinct communities of readers, united by similar interests, tastes and ideological positions. Generational differences were accentuated, social ones attenuated. Reading in their journals of choice the same literary texts and opinion pieces on the most debated issues of the day—be they 'the feminine question' or nihilism, crime reports or the condition of the peasantry—the new readers moved steadily further away from the tastes and ideas of their parents and radicalised their aesthetic and ideological positions.

The high season of the novel is also the concern of the case studies investigated by Katherine Bowers and Tatiana Golovina. Bowers describes the impact of the Gothic novel which, having arrived in Russia in the 1790s courtesy of translations of Radcliffe, Walpole and Lewis, was imitated in the decades following by such Russian writers as Karamzin, Narezhnyi and Gnedich, provoking lively debates among the literary critics of the day. As Bowers suggests, the critics' concerns about the baleful consequences that the reading of Gothic literature might have on the Russian public helped to create a stereotype of the Gothic novel reader (characterised by an excess of sensitivity and emotional fragility, weak nerves, masochistic tendencies) which would persist into the subsequent decades. Golovina, for her part, examines the role of reading in the life of a family of small landowners in Vladimir province, some 120 miles east of Moscow, in the 1830s and 1840s. The apparent cultural isolation of these readers intensified their relationship with the by no means negligible number of books that they managed to procure through the libraries of the nearest cities, travelling salesmen and a busy network of exchanges with their neighbours. Their reading embraces both Russian and foreign authors, moral, satirical and historical novels, travel writing and the leading newspapers and magazines. Studying their correspondence, Golovina shows that romantic and sentimental texts in particular profoundly influenced their vision of the world, shaped their values and emotions, educated their aesthetic and critical sensibilities. She concludes that for these lesser landowners, brought up in a masonic environment, reading was less a pastime than a form of self-improvement, an irreplaceable source of knowledge of themselves and of the world around them.

The major reforms initiated by Tsar Alexander II in the 1860s, following the liberation of over twenty million serfs, favoured the capitalist development of the publishing market and introduced a widening section of the population to the written word. With the gradual establishment of a vast network of elementary schools in the countryside, reading ceased to be a privilege of the few, becoming a precious opportunity offered to the many of integrating themselves into the new social conditions and new urban lifestyles. Large publishing houses, often backed by foreign capital, exploited new technological advances in printing, transport and communications to

step up production, amplify their distribution channels and develop new commercial networks. As Abram Reitblat shows, a rapid increase in book production occurred in the space of a few years, rising from 18.5 million copies in 1887 to 56.3 million in 1901. The opening of many local libraries and the launch of hundreds of circulating libraries, accessible to the less well-off, made it possible to read novels by Russian and foreign authors in the thick journals, as well as historical, scientific and socio-political texts, even clandestine ones on occasion. In the 1870s and '80s, alongside these bulky publications, typically with a pronounced ideological leaning and intended for an educated public, there began to appear mass-circulation newspapers and cheap illustrated weekly magazines aimed at a huge audience of semi-educated readers who had already outgrown the popular chapbooks of *lubok* literature but lacked the education to fully appreciate some of the contents of the thick journals. Thanks to these weekly magazines, middle- and lower-ranking employees, country priests, shopkeepers, junior officers, elementary school teachers and others of some but limited educational attainment were able to read for themselves the latest news in fields such as science, fashion, literature and the arts in easily digestible form, where the texts (novels and folk-tales in instalments, dramas, biographies of important figures, travel accounts, informative scientific, technical artistic and ethnographic articles, etc.) were accompanied by a wealth of illustrations (portraits, landscapes, reproductions of artworks...).

Often these weekly magazines would come with free supplements which, thanks to the high print runs and low cost of the periodicals, became an important path for the dissemination of the Russian classics among the less educated readers. Raffaella Vassena provides an example of the process with her contribution on Dostoevsky's evolving readership between the 1860s to the early 1900s. After the writer's death in 1881, his wife Anna Grigor'evna made a deliberate effort to tailor new editions to the needs of sections of the public previously unfamiliar with her husband's work. Throughout the 1880s and '90s she produced not only various editions of Dostoevsky's complete works, sometimes in the form of free supplements to inexpensive magazines, but even early adaptations aimed at children and adolescents, as well as 'popular' editions. At the same time public readings were organised of the writer's works for audiences of the peasant class, provoking criticisms from some who thought his works unsuitable for the humbler reader. Dostoevsky's case shows how writers at the end of the nineteenth century could be elevated to the status of moral authorities and acquire a public well beyond the confines of that for which the works were originally intended. Another example is provided by Marcus Levitt who traces the evolution of Pushkin's status as national poet through a study of the different editions of his collected works that appeared between 1855 and 1887. Levitt shows how, in a period of great social tension, Pushkin's work became a field of

conflict for various groups (the liberal intelligentsia, radical critics and popular activists, the tsarist authorities) wishing to instrumentalise his works to influence the masses. As Levitt observes, the 'public' tended to remain—as much for the established authorities as for cultured society—an 'imagined community' shaped according to their own ideological objectives. A similar process can be seen in the case of the readers of daily newspapers, which achieved extraordinary levels of circulation in Russia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. In her case study devoted to the image of Tolstoy presented by the Russian newspapers in 1908 and the reading public's reaction to his 80th birthday celebrations, Raffaella Vassena shows how, in a context of notable technological development and massive expansion of readership, the new media informed readers' practices and functioned as creators of new models of reference which challenged the traditional ones.

The discrepancy between ministerial dictates and school practice—and the resulting tensions—are the focus of the substantial contribution by Roman Leibov and Aleksei Vdovin dealing with reading in the Russian schools in the nineteenth century. Their chapter describes in some detail the evolution of the methodology and aids deployed on the syllabuses of the gymnasiums and technical schools in imperial Russia between 1840 and 1917, and how norms were actually put into practice. What emerges is a mixed picture that shows, on one side, the meddling of the tsarist government in the teaching of literature, which remained for a long period subordinate to Russian language teaching, and, on the other, the importance of extracurricular and clandestine reading as a form of resistance to the instructions of the Education Ministry in the late nineteenth century. Authors such as Tolstoi, Turgenev and Dostoevskii enjoyed an increasing popularity among younger readers alongside 'classics' such as Pushkin and Gogol, despite their exclusion under the 1871 'classicist' reforms introduced by Education Minister Dmitrii Tolstoi. The growing 'symbolic capital' of contemporary writers, simultaneously with a loosening of the grip of tsarist censorship, allowed a slow but inexorable emancipation of Russian literature, which would eventually be granted autonomy as a discipline with the educational reforms of 1912.

At the end of the nineteenth century, a new type of limited circulation magazine appeared next to the thick journals, small in format and boasting sophisticated graphics, trumpeting the advent of modernism. *Mir iskusstva* was the emblematic first example: manifestos of an artistic programme as exclusive as it was innovative, such modernist journals were aimed at an elite of insiders able to make the new European aesthetic sensibility their own, and more interested in the aesthetic enjoyment of a work than in its moral and ideological implications. As Jonathan Stone shows, alongside the traditionalist reader—who tended to attack or mock the new fin-de-siècle

literature—there emerged a new sort of modernist reader, who aspired to be more than a passive recipient, but almost the co-author of symbolist texts: invested with the same tautological capacity the reader and writer would assume simultaneously the roles of producer and consumer of the artistic work. Roman Timenchik sketches a lively pen-portrait of a 'school' of Silver Age poetry readers: readers with distinct features and habits, rooted in modernist culture, but who nevertheless, in their recourse to a performative, totalising and quasi-idolatrous reading of the poetic text cannot fail to recall those of the Golden Age described by Daria Khitrova.

A chapter apart is dedicated to reading in the peasant world in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although the beneficiaries of the literacy campaigns promoted by the reforms of Alexander II and cultural initiatives by the populist intelligentsia, the peasantry maintained an ambivalent attitude towards reading, legacy of a patriarchal tradition still solidly grounded in Orthodox Christianity: while religious texts were regarded with respect and devotion, secular works were initially seen as a source of temptation and sin. As Reitblat recounts, this situation began to change in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, as the peasant world's percentage of readers rose rapidly, especially among the younger generation, and with it the production and circulation of *lubok* literature. Among the *lubok* genres most popular with the peasant readership, other than the lives of saints, were, Reitblat shows, chivalric and adventure stories, folk fables and songs, adaptations of novels and historical tales. Such texts lent themselves to collective reading, which might take place either in private houses or in public meeting places, where the rural communities shared books, listening to them over and over, often ending by committing them to memory, and treating them as a refuge from their exhausting and monotonous lives. Important channels of distribution for such books were the new people's libraries and the elementary schools set up by the new local administrations (*zemstva*), which played a key role in the education of the children of the peasantry—increasingly resistant to accepting their parents' values and keen to leave the village for the big city. By the turn of the century the tastes of these younger readers became more demanding to the extent that many were turning to the classics of Russian and foreign literature.

The Third Part of this history of reading, entitled "After the Bolshevik Revolution," describes the turbulent transformations that took place in the Russian 'short twentieth century' (1917-1991). In the years immediately following the October Revolution, the Bolshevik, later Soviet power sponsored a change of gear in the mass literacy campaign and in book production. As Dobrenko and Reitblat demonstrate, the social structuring of the Russian public changed markedly, with an extension of the popular reading base accompanying a progressive reduction of the cultural elite (who emigrated or died during the civil war). Under the new political arrangements, reading

became a potential vehicle for involving the peasantry and urban working class, and to this end was promoted at all levels. The proliferation of new libraries and reading rooms in the cities and villages suggests that the composition of the 1920s public was relatively dynamic and varied. Made up for the post part of workers, urbanised peasants, Red Army soldiers and party functionaries, the new Soviet audience acquired a utilitarian conception of reading, which became a means of adapting to the new living conditions: moral, religious or entertainment literature was replaced by newspapers, political and technical manuals, as well as literary texts by contemporary Soviet authors, these too often treated as 'how to' guides to the new Soviet reality.

Three voices that broke ranks with the new public described by Dobrenko and Reitblat are the subject of Lekmanov's case study. The diaries of these three readers reveal profiles rather different from the 'ideal Soviet reader' that the government was trying to shape in those years. They testify to the important space that nineteenth-century and modernist literature maintained in a system which —as suggested in the title of Jeffrey Brooks's contribution—was still "adjusting to a new normal." As Brooks shows, the dismantling of the old system and the creation of a new media apparatus that effectively met propaganda requirements was a slow and gradual process, only completed with Stalin's rise to power at the end of the 1920s and through into the 1930s. Only then did it become clear what particular category of reader was to be the main target of the ideological project promoted by the Party: children.

The issue of children's reading during the Stalinist era is pursued by Olga Malinovskaya, who looks at the prescriptive aspect through an analysis of Soviet school curricula. Focusing on Russian literature programmes for secondary schools, Malinovskaya notes a move from the 'formal' approach of the 1920s, which favoured a stylistic and poetic analysis of the literary text to a 'social/historical/economic' one from the early 1930s, which aimed to inculcate a class consciousness in the student, encouraging a strongly critical attitude towards the classics and the bourgeois and religious values they embodied. After 1936 the scholastic programme underwent further modification, this time in the direction of providing Soviet students principally with the tools for self-analysis. Authors and literary characters became models against which to compare and evaluate their own ideological soundness and correct any falling-short that process might reveal in the development of their political consciousness. Through such techniques as expressive reading, acting out and memorisation, and with the help of illustrations of positive and negative literary 'types,' young Soviet pupils were prompted to involve themselves emotionally and 'visualise' the protagonists of the classics of Russian and Soviet literature, measuring their own responsiveness to Party directives by comparison.

Thomas Lahusen's contribution also focuses on the Stalin era, using a plethora of ego-documents, such as diaries, letters and interviews to investigate the reading tastes and practices of Soviet citizens of different social extractions and educational levels. He shows how socialist realist literature influenced readers' mindsets in varying measure, sometimes leaving open small gaps for a critical spirit to emerge through. Lahusen discovers that the 1930s Soviet public was far from homogenous or aligned compactly with the dictates of socialist realism and that even children's reading could sometimes escape the cramped "horizon of expectation" forged by Soviet ideologues, thanks perhaps to a surviving well-furnished family library or a schoolmistress teaching her pupils to 'read between the lines.'

Denis Kozlov's field of investigation is the geographical circulation of periodicals during the Thaw. If the increasing demand for magazines, literary or otherwise, on the part of the Soviet public could only be satisfied up to a point, due to paper shortages and a distribution system that was still overcentralised, the 1960s saw a significant rise in circulation, reaching levels never previously achieved in the history of imperial and Soviet Russia. Kozlov looks at the circulation and subscription levels for dozens of literary journals, highlighting the divergences between the different regions of Russia and the various republics of the USSR, and finds a considerable disparity between the great urban centres and the remoter provinces. This, Kozlov reminds us, should not necessarily be taken to indicate a feebler interest in reading on the part of the latter: many other factors need to be considered, as for example the inefficiency of the distribution system for printed material in the more distant regions, or the persistence in certain areas of the Soviet Union of 'old-fashioned' usages like collective readings and shared subscriptions to periodicals. As Kozlov rightly emphasises, in tracing the intellectual history of Russia, statistics can only take us so far, and need to be tempered with other, empirical sources that more adequately reflect the specificity of contexts and different forms of interaction between literature and society.

Josephine Von Zitzewitz's contribution investigates the clandestine circulation of samizdat texts—typescript texts run off in secret during the 1960s and 1970s. Using a questionnaire distributed online, she traces circulation networks, reading practices and the sorts of text most widely distributed. Although samizdat is generally associated with political dissent in the USSR following the Thaw, Von Zitzewitz makes clear that it was a practice which arose initially from an urgent desire to read texts, literary as much as political, that were simply hard to find on the open market. The replies of her interviewees map a very varied panorama of motivations and degrees of engagement on the part of samizdat readers, and no less of reading places and practices, not to mention genre preferences, inclining decidedly towards literary texts, and only subordinately to journalistic works of political

and social hue. Notwithstanding the variety of responses, the questionnaire reveals clearly enough the specificity of the samizdat phenomenon, closely connected to the social networks that generated and sustained it: the samizdat consumer is defined as "much more than just a reader," on account of his or her active participation and strong sense of being responsible for the efficient functioning of each link of the chain of communication.

In Catriona Kelly'a case study we see instead the impact of Soviet film adaptations of great Russian classics on an essentially more passive public, the cinema audience. Taking as an example the film *The Queen of Spades* (1982) by director Igor Maslennikov, based on Pushkin's short story of the same name, Kelly explores the specific reading dynamics inherent in the process of adapting a classic for the screen, showing how these can challenge previous interpretations of the text ingrained in the public consciousness.

In the Fourth (and final) Part, entitled 'Towards a digital revolution,' we look at a very short, and still ongoing, post-Soviet and contemporary period, in which an acceleration of changes in reading is brought about by the overlap of a local political revolution—the collapse of the USSR—and a global technological upheaval, the digital revolution. Birgit Menzel analyses the issues from a diachronic perspective, identifying four phases of reading mutations, taking place between 1986 and 2017. The first phase, covering the perestroika years, is characterised by a loosening of Soviet censorship and a boom in readers' interest in previously banned literature, which is reflected in print runs of millions of copies of the main literary magazines; in 1991, the end of the USSR and the swift collapse of the Soviet publishing system, ushers in a phase of rapid privatisation and the enormous success of Russian and imported commercial literature (historical novels, fantasy, mystery, hard-boiled detective novels, female detective novels...); from the turn of the millennium a new phase begins, marked by the relative prosperity of the reading public, a revival in book production and the rise of new publishing phenomena, soon overtaken, in more recent times, by the return of a controlling strong and centralised state; finally, from 2008, there is a new decline in book consumption, due both to an economic downturn and to the booming popularity of social networks. The digital revolution of the new century has undoubtedly signalled a decline in traditional reading institutions and a fragmentation of the public, once again divided by social, geographic and generational barriers.

While it is true that the educational and cultural initiatives sponsored by the Putin government to restore the 'great literature of Russia' to its traditional position of authority have only partially managed to invert the tendency, the decline of the printed book needs to be reconsidered in the light of the rise of new electronic formats and new reading practices. The contributions of Henrike Schmidt and Birgitte Beck Pristed are dedicated to this issue. Schmidt explores the cultural, social, economic and legal implications of

reading on the Russian-language web (the 'Runet'), providing a survey in the round of digital libraries, e-book commercial platforms, self-publication portals, literary blogs and social networks. These reading sites are important for a number of reasons: on the one hand, they make up for the shortcomings of the physical libraries surviving in the Russian Federation; on the other, they create new virtual communication spaces that generate new supralocal and global interpretive communities of great importance to diaspora Russian readers; finally they facilitate sharing and discussion among users, as well as the spontaneous production of new texts, free from the interference of traditional normative groups such as publishers, critics or censors. This very absence of barriers creates the conditions for a new digital intimacy between readers and their literary favourites, as demonstrated by, say, the Facebook page of a popular writer such as Tatyana Tolstaya. Although subject to governmental restrictions and control, the Runet has none the less become the furthest frontier of a new 'public sphere', as Birgitte Beck Pristed's essay confirms. Taking as her models the cases of social reading platforms such as LiveLib.ru BookMix.ru, Beck Pristed illustrates the campaigns of Russian web entrepreneurs to promote reading by associating it with fun and friendship, or more generally with the pleasant and comfortable life, adapting their promotion strategies to groups of internet users previously given little consideration by the print publishing market. In Russian social reading networks, the act of reading, often associated with domestic images like an armchair and a cup of coffee, becomes an invitation to take a regenerating pause from the stress of the daily routine; alternatively, reading can be linked to a set of more dynamic and competitive images and by association with sporting equipment be presented as a game or competition, so that troops of Stakhanovite new readers are challenged to read more and more books and register their 'likes'. As Beck Pristed suggests, the compensatory practices facilitated by these digital platforms, such as discussion forums, second-hand book exchanges, campaigns to raise funds for district libraries, should not be seen as in opposition to, but rather in continuity with a long and well-established tradition of cultural activities ancillary to shared reading.

3. The wider scale chapters of this history of reading are heavy with the names of a series of political figures: Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Alexander II, Lenin, Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, Mikhail Gorbachev, Vladimir Putin, and there is no doubt that the central power in Russia, perhaps more than elsewhere in Europe, had a certain weight in determining the reading choices of the population. In contrast, too, to the situation prevailing in other countries it was, for a number of historical reasons, more the state than the Church which influenced the habits of Russian readers. Perhaps on account of the low levels of literacy of most of the population during the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century, the Orthodox Church seems to have encour-

aged reading among the faithful to a lesser extent than the Catholic Church and less still than the Protestant Churches.[7] For a long time, for example, the Russian Orthodox Church, as indeed the Catholic, discouraged the faithful from direct access to sacred texts, unlike the Calvinists, Puritans and Pietists.[8] From the mid-seventeenth to the first half of the nineteenth century, the Bible circulated in Russia only in Church Slavonic and remained on the whole restricted to the clergy.[9] The first complete translation of the Bible into modern Russian dates to 1876, some 340 years after Luther's German translation and the earliest Italian, French, English and Dutch versions. Bibles in modern Russian reached a wide public circulation only during the second half of the nineteenth century, and would again disappear from domestic bookshelves and bookshops from 1917 to 1991.[10] It was left to the religious minorities, such as the Old Believers and a few rationalist sects (for example the Molokans) to encourage, as far as was possible in defiance of persecutions, the direct reading of sacred texts and other religious material by their followers.[11] The attitude of the Church hierarchy towards literacy and reading remained for a long while distinctly suspicious. We read, for example, in an official document produced by the Holy Synod as late as 1851 "literacy by itself in the hands of the ignorant only increases the possibilities of mistakes and errors."[12] Only from the 1860s, and particularly from the last decades of the century through to the 1917 revolution, do we see a massive circulation of religious texts (chiefly lives of saints, the New Testament, and psalters) among the ordinary people, printed on the initiative both of the Orthodox Church and of private publishers.[13]

The influence of the state on Russians' reading was exercised in different ways in different periods, but with a notable persistence and over a much longer arc of time than in the other European countries, first and foremost through a tight control over printed texts that could effectively end up in

7 Cfr. J.-F. Gilmont, "Protestant reformation and reading," in Cavallo, Chartier (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West*, 213-237; D. Julia, "Reading and the counter-reformation," ibid., 238-267. See also L. Artiaga, *Des torrents de papier. Catholicisme et lectures populaires au XIXe siècle* (Limoges, 2007); J. T. Zalar, "Reading in an Age of Censorship: The Case of Catholic Germany, 1800-1914," in S. Towheed, W.R. Owens (eds.), *The History of Reading. Volume 1: International Perspectives, c. 1500-1990* (Basingstoke, 2011), 133-144.

8 Gilmont, "Protestant reformation and reading," 215-217.

9 G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700–1800* (Princeton, 1985), 65; J. Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature. 1861-1917* (Princeton, NJ, 1985), 24. In the early nineteenth century, the clandestine distributers of some books of the bible in Russian were rigorously persecuted by the ecclesiastical authorities. See G. Florovskii, *Puti russkogo bogosloviia* (Paris, 1983), 194.

10 According to Jeffrey Brooks, "nearly 350,000 copies were published by the Synod for the Great Britain and Foreign Bible Society between 1828 and 1854, and approximately 10.5 million in the fifty years that followed." Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read*, 306.

11 Ibid., 25-27.

12 Ibid., 301.

13 Ibid., 306-311.

the hands of the Russian people. From the time of Peter the Great it was the State authorities more than the Church that promoted publishing and reading, and then only in the forms it judged to be in its interest. As Yukiko Tatsumi and Taro Tsurumi have recently noted, "publishing in Russian was launched at the beginning of the eighteenth century as a state project."[14] From the reign of Peter the Great at least until that of Catherine II, the state had almost complete control over what was printed, and only in 1783 did it begin to concede, on its own initiative, a little room for private publishing. Prior censorship—not, to be sure, the only, but perhaps the most effective, means of control—was first abolished in England, for the majority of publications, in 1695; in France it was abolished repeatedly (only to be reimposed), in 1789, in 1814, in 1848 and in 1881; in Prussia it was first lifted in 1850. In Russia, however, a first, partial step toward abolition was made only in 1865, and then only for the thick journals and major collections, while briefer publications, and particularly those aimed at a mass audience, were for a long time still subject to prior inspection by the authorities. The complete abolition of prior censorship had to wait until 1905, but it would reappear in 1914 for the First World War and be reinforced from 1917 under the Bolshevik and then Soviet regimes, lasting through until 1990.[15] In a decree concerning the printed media promulgated in the first months of the Revolution, Lenin claimed that the very idea of the freedom of the press was a bourgeois trick at the expense of the proletariat. Consequently, by the mid-1930s the whole process of the publishing, publicising and distribution of books was brought entirely the control of the Soviet state.[16] For the greater part of the twentieth century readers in the Soviet Union had access to a considerably smaller range of texts than their counterparts in the West. More broadly speaking, in the last three centuries, with the exception of brief periods of relatively greater publishing freedom—for example between 1783 and 1796, 1865 and 1881, and more completely from 1905 to 1917 and from 1990 to our own day—state control of printed works was generally profound and pervasive. As a result, for at least a good part of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries there was a considerable circulation of manuscript and typewritten clandestine texts, even in periods of high circulation of printed works, as documented in many of the chapters of these volumes.[17]

14 Yu. Tatsumi, T. Tsurumi (eds.) *Publishing in Tsarist Russia. A History of Print Media from Enlightenment to Revolution*, (London, NY, Oxford, New Delhi, Sydney), 1.

15 Ch. Ruud, *Fighting words. Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906*, 2nd edition (Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2009), 5-16, 137-226.

16 E. Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Reader. Social and aesthetic contexts of the reception of Soviet literature*, translated by J.M. Savage (Stanford, 1997), 163.

17 On the circulation of manuscript literature in Russia in the nineteenth century, see f. i. A. I. Reitblat, "Pis'mennaia literatura v Rossii v XIX veke, ee sotsiokul'turnye funktsii i chitateli," in D. Rebecchini, R. Vassena (eds.), *Reading in Russia. Practices of Reading and Literary Communication. 1760-1930* (Milano, 2014), 79-97. On the relationship between the reading of

Given the control exercised by Russian and Soviet censorship, even in periods when there was a greater degree of liberty elsewhere in Western Europe, we have not dedicated the close attention to the history of publishing in relation to reading history that has been thought appropriate in the case of other nations.[18] There are two reasons for this: in the first place, both Russian and Western scholars have for many years been producing valid works describing in detail the outlines and evolution of book production in Russia,[19] recently also dedicating attention to the print production of the linguistic minorities present in the Russian Empire.[20] Secondly, the history of reading often proceeds at a different rhythm to the history of the book and of publishing and its key transformative moments do not always coincide with those of publishing history. In the light of the degree of state control, it seems especially wrong to suggest that the relation between the production of texts and their consumption is a linear or immediate one: often, in fact, it turns out to be complex and contradictory. The story of reading in Russia in the twentieth century is proof of as much. Not infrequently, works published at the beginning of the century can circulate and be read by a wide

manuscript and of printed texts in the Muslim communities present in the Russian Empire between the eighteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, see D. Ross, "A collateral cultural revolution: Russia's state-driven papermaking and publishing efforts and their effects on Volga-Ural Muslim book culture, 1780s-1905," in Tatsumi, Tsurumi (eds.), *A History of Print Media from Enlightenment to Revolution*, 141-170.

18 See f. i. V. Infantes, F. Lopez, J.-F. Botrel (eds.), *Historia de la edición y de la lectura en España 1472-1914* (Madrid, 2003).

19 On the history of the book and of the press in Russia, apart from the *Kniga. Issledovaniia i materialy* series (which has now reached over 116 numbers) for the eighteenth century see among others: S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v XVII veke* (Leningrad, 1970); S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1973); S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v poslepetrovskoi epokhi (1725–1740)* (Leningrad, 1976); G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700–1800* (Princeton, 1985); A. Iu. Samarin, *Tipografschchiki i knigochety: ocherki po istorii knigi v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2013). On the nineteenth century, see f. i. M. N. Kufaev, *Istoriia russkoi knigi v XIX veke* (Moscow, 1927; 2nd edit. 2003); M. V. Muratov, *Knizhnoe delo v Rossii v XIX i XX vekach: ocherk istorii knigoizdatel'stva i knigotorgovli, 1800–1917 gody* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1931); *Kniga v Rossii, 1861-1881*, volls. 3 (Moscow, 1988-1991); *Kniga v Rossii, 1881-1895* (St. Petersburg, 1997); I. E. Barenbaum, *Knizhnyi Peterburg: tri veka istorii. Ocherki izdatel'skogo dela i knizhnoi torgovli* (St. Petersburg, 2003); R. N. Kleimenova, *Knizhnaia Moskva pervoi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow, 1991); L. McReynolds, *The News under Russia's old regime. The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton, NJ, 1991).

20 For studies on the printing of books in other languages than Russian within the Russian Empire, see for example A. Benningsen, C. Lemercier-Quelquejeay, *La presse et le mouvement national chez les musulmans de Russie avant 1920* (Paris, 1964); A. G. Karimullin, *Tatarskaia kniga poreformennoi Rossii* (Kazan', 1983); S. P. Luppov (ed.), *Frantsuzskaia kniga v Rossii v XVIII veke. Ocherki istorii* (Leningrad, 1986); M. Lott, *A Brief History of the Estonian Book* (Tallinn, 2000); S. Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews Modern: The Yiddish and Ladino Press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires* (Bloomington, 2004); L. Khachaturian, *Cultivating Nationhood in Imperial Russia: The Periodical Press and the Formation of a Modern Armenian Identity* (New Brunswick, London, 2009); Yu. Tatsumi, T. Tsurumi (eds.), *A History of Print Media from Enlightenment to Revolution* (London, New York, Oxford, New Delhi, Sidney, 2020).

public only decades later, as was the case for example with the great success that Silver Age poetry enjoyed in the perestroika years and the early 1990s. At various points, readers in the Soviet Union complained of a lack of books or magazines that interested them, giving rise to a phenomenon known as *knizhnyi golod* ('book hunger') and stimulating an increased circulation of clandestine literature and various forms of 'hidden' or secret reading.

4. In order to understand exactly how the state was able to exercise an influence over Russian readers, apart from controlling the kind of works published, it is worth thinking about *where* those readers actually read their preferred books and magazines. One of the institutions in which the state had a ready opportunity to shepherd the reader, influencing his or her ideas and emotions, was obviously the school. It was in the public schools that the majority of Russians learned to read. Thanks to the reforms of elementary schooling initiated by Alexander II in 1865 and again by the Soviet government immediately after the revolution, illiteracy was drastically reduced over the whole country from the later nineteenth through the twentieth century. According to Boris Mironov, literacy rose from about 28% of the overall population in 1897 to 44% in 1920, 56% in 1926, 87% in 1939, reaching 98% by 1959.[21] And it was exactly the rapid increase in literacy in the first decades of the USSR that contributed to the myth of Russia as "the nation that reads most in the world."[22] As well as establishing a well-defined canon of acceptable authors, with numerous exclusions, schools were able to promote specific modes of interpretation that would profoundly influence how Russian readers would continue to read texts in later life. The importance of this factor has induced us to dedicate considerable space in these volumes to educational procedures, including regulation, bearing on reading—within eighteenth-century seminaries (see Kislova in the present volume), in nineteenth-century schools under the tsars (see Leibov-Vdovin in volume 2), and in Soviet schools (see Malinovskaya in volume 3). Even if the specific phenomenon of children's reading often eludes the net of history in its actual day-to-day practice, due to lack of sources, reconstructing the shaping of the school canons and the main interpretative procedures taught to pupils in Russian and Soviet schools is an indisputably valuable contribution provided by these essays.

Less attention has been paid in these volumes to another important physical space where readers encounter texts: libraries.[23] In this case the hand of

21 B. N. Mironov, "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries," *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 31, 2 (Summer, 1991), 243.

22 On the creation of this myth, see S. Lovell, *The Russian Reading Revolution. Print Culture in the Soviet and Post-soviet Eras* (London, 2000), 21-35.

23 Among the studies of public libraries in the Tsarist empire see N. Rubakin, *Etiudy o russkoi chitaiushchei publike. Fakty, tsifry, nabliudeniia* (St. Petersburg, 1895), 42-76; M. Iu.

the state is manifested in the failure in the first place to provide sufficient funds for the financing of public libraries, and subsequently—from the 1870s—in the application of measures aimed at managing the acquisition of stock. The establishment of a network of public libraries in the main provincial cities (*gubernskie biblioteki*) dates, in fact, only to the 1830s, but due to a chronic lack of financing, the beginning of a more comprehensive service had to wait for the 1860s and the founding of a series of district libraries (*uezdnye biblioteki*) in addition to those of the governorships. For many readers, however, access to books remained limited, on account of a number of factors: the public libraries demanded a subscription fee, were often open for only two or three hours a day, and the acquisition of new books was largely left to the initiative, and pockets, of local administrations and/or local associations or institutions.[24] Even in the late nineteenth century, the development of public libraries in Russia was still seriously underfunded in relation to demand, but they were also quantitively considerably fewer than in other major European countries, or even the more developed areas of the New World, from the United States to Australia. According to such an alert contemporary observer as Nikolai Rubakin, by the end of the nineteenth century, European Russia possessed fewer than 600 public libraries, while Germany had more than 1600, Sweden over 1800 and Switzerland over 2000.[25] The paucity of public libraries was moreover only partly made good by the quite numerous private circulating libraries, which were primarily commercial enterprises (*biblioteki dlia chteniia*) and demanded higher access fees.[26]

From the 1860s onwards, following the educational reforms of 1864, the establishment of improved school libraries, and, in the subsequent decades, of various kinds of people's libraries (*gorodskie narodnye biblioteki, zemskie sel'skie narodnye biblioteki* and *narodnye chital'ni*) provided the state not only with a means of disseminating culture but also with a vehicle for directing the reading of the Russian citizenship. Even if these new libraries were the result of local authority initiatives, and financing, rather than central gov-

Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki vo vtoroi polovine XIX – nachale XX veka* (St. Petersburg, 2014), 18-39.

24 Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki*, 25-28, 30, 37. In the few cases in which the state granted extra funding for the purchase of Russian books this was for public libraries in cities where Russian speakers were in a minority, for example in Tbilisi, Vilnius, Riga, Tashkent or Askhabad, that is, as part of a Russification programme (see Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki*, 27).

25 Rubakin, *Etiudy o russkoi chitaiushchei publike*, 35-36. Matveev gives a figure for 1908 of 552 public libraries in Russia, as against 733 in England in the same year, and 1126 in the USA, but he emphasises that the financing of Russian libraries was enormously inferior to, for example, American ones. See Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki*, 36, 305. On public libraries in France and in England, see f.i. M. Lyons, *Le Triomphe du livre. Une histoire sociologique de la lecture dans la France du XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1987), 169-191; R. Altick, *The English Common Reader. A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Chicago, London, 1957), 213-239.

26 On circulating libraries in Russia see A. I. Reitblat, "Biblioteki dlia chteniia i ikh chitatel'," in Idem, *Ot Bovy k Bal'montu i drugie raboty po istoricheskoi sotsiologii russkoi literatury* (Moscow, 2009), 54-72; Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki*, 39-46.

ernment projects, lists of banned titles, and guidelines for book acquisitions generally, were issued by the Ministry of the Interior, clearly demonstrating the central power's concern over the range of books that it thought safe to allow into the hands of the populace.[27] In the Soviet era, as Evgeny Dobrenko has shown, the libraries were a space in which not only had the state drastically reduced the number of available titles, in part through the creation, in the 1920s and '30s of reserved collections (*spetskhrany*) closed to ordinary readers, but had also set up a framework of regulations which were aimed, with the collaboration of the librarians, to guide, if not control, the Soviet reader.[28] Although during the Soviet period the public library was at least one of the places where the reader enjoyed a certain access to books, it was an access limited to the titles approved by the dominant ideology and closely monitored by the authorities.

Comparing the situation on Russia with that in Western countries, it is evident that a series of intermediate cultural institutions which between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries promoted and encouraged reading—such as the *Lesegesellschaften* (reading societies) in Germany, the Netherlands and Central Europe, the reading circles and book clubs of England and the United States—failed to develop in Russia in the same way. As Manfred Alexander writes "The organised *Lesegesellschaften* like those in Germany or other countries have no equivalent in Russia before the end of Nicholas I's reign."[29] The *Lesegesellschaften*, reading circles and book clubs were forums where the reader not only had easy access to books but was also able to discuss them with like-minded folk and, as Jürgen Habermas and others have argued, they made no small contribution to the emancipation of the middle class and the development of a public sphere in the West.[30] In Russia, by contrast, with the exception of a few learned societies frequented by the nobility, public spaces for open debate on books, such as those described by Habermas, developed to a much more limited extent and were generally monitored, when not closed down, by the authorities.[31] Sometimes, as

27 Matveev, *Rossiiskie biblioteki*, 31, 52-54; A. I. Reitblat, "Zemskie sel'skie 'narodnye biblioteki' i ikh auditoriia," in Idem, *Ot Bovy k Bal'montu*, 169-186; B. Eklof, "The Archeology of 'Backwardness' in Russia: Assessing the adequacy of libraries for Rural Audiences in Late Imperial Russia," in M. Remnek (ed.), *The Space of the Book: Print Culture in the Russian Social Imagination* (Toronto, 2011), 108-141.

28 See Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Reader*, 181-235.

29 M. Alexander, "Das Beispiel eines russischen Diskussions- und Lesezirkels. Die 'Petrashevtsy' 1844-1849," in O. Dann (ed.), *Lesegesellschaften und bürgerliche Emanzipation. Ein Europäischer Vergleich* (München, 1981) 239.

30 See J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Th. Burger (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 57-73; O. Dann (ed.), *Lesegesellschaften und bürgerliche Emanzipation* (München, 1981).

31 According to Geoffrey Eley, "Nineteenth-century Russia provides an excellent counterexample for the growth of the public sphere. It displayed an absence of all those processes —particularly the emancipatory impulse of free associational initiative, which under Tsarism was precluded by a combination of social backwardness and repressive state authority—that

Susan Smith-Peter shows, these debates found a home in the provincial universities or in the pages of local newspapers such as those in Kazan' or Kharkiv provinces, but only for the limited periods of time allowed by the government.[32] In general in this period, if we exclude the odd coffee-house and some of the new circulating libraries in the big cities, it was above all the private and protected space of the home, rather than book clubs or other cultural associations or institutions, that was able to host free discussion of what was being read.[33] For a while—in the 1860s and '70s—Alexander II's reforms permitted a greater freedom of debate on books in the pages of the thick journals or in public forums.[34] In these two decades reading acquired a more public character. Institutions such as universities, scientific societies, voluntary cultural associations were able for some years to stimulate a wider debate on recently published books and not infrequently organised public readings attended by large audiences.[35] Simultaneously, in the last decades of the century, the success of mass-circulation newspapers favoured the embryonic development of a public sphere.[36] None the less, if we exclude the 1860s and '70s, the public spaces in which Russian readers could not only read but also freely discuss what they had read remained limited. This situation did not improve in the wake of the Bolshevik revolution; if anything, it worsened. During the 1920s, with its great literacy campaign, the Soviet authorities initiated a drive to get readers out of their houses. Factory and trade-union libraries were opened, mobile libraries and 'read-

Habermas's concept of Öffentlichkeit presupposed." G. Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," in C. Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA, London, 1996) 325. A viewpoint that partly contradicts Eley's claim, at least with regard to the scientific associations of the second half of the century, can be found in J. Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism, and Civil society* (Cambridge, 2009). On the difficulties of applying Habermas' interpretive paradigm to the Russian situation, see A. Schönle, "The Scare of the Self: Sentimentalism, Privacy, and Private Life in Russian Culture, 1780-1820," *Slavic Review*, 57, 4 (Winter 1998), 727; M. Velizhev, "The Moscow English Club and the Public Sphere in Early Nineteenth-Century Russia," in A. Schönle et al. (eds.), *The Europeanized Elite in Russia, 1762–1825: Public Role and Subjective Self*, (Ithaca, New York, 2016), 220-237.

32 Smith-Peter, "The Struggle to Create a Regional Public," vol. 2, 347-375.

33 For the era of Nicholas I, Bella Grigoryan speaks of "a pre-political public sphere" (Grigoryan, "The Depiction of Readers and Publics," vol. 1, 237). On private salons as a space of free discussion see M. Aronson, S. Reiser, *Literaturnye kruzhki i salony* (Moscow, 2001), 47-49, 183-296; N. L. Brodskii (ed.), *Literaturnye salony i kruzhki. Pervaia polovina XIX veka* (Moscow, 2001); A. S. Bodrova, "Literaturnye obshchestva v Rossii pervoi poloviny XIX veka: problemy mezhdistsiplinarnogo opisaniia," *Russkaia Literatura*, 1 (2021), 5-18.

34 S. Lovell, *How Russia Learned to Talk. A History of Public Speaking in the Stenographic Age, 1860-1930* (Oxford, 2020), 21-96.

35 See Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia*. On public readings see A.I. Prugavin, *Zaprosy naroda i obiazannosti intelligentsii v oblasti umstvennogo razvitiia i prosveshcheniia* (Moscow, 1890), 53-81; Aronson, Reiser, *Literaturnye kruzhki i salony*, 315-320; R. Vassena, "Publichnye literaturnye chteniia epokhi Velikikh reform kak primer kommunikativnoi (ne) udachi," in Rebecchini, Vassena (eds.), *Reading in Russia*, 165-187.

36 McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime*, 3-4, 11-18

ing huts' (*izby-chital'ni*) for country readers; working men's clubs were set up where book discussions could be held and in many cities lectures were organised after which readers could meet Soviet authors and discuss their latest books with them.[37] For a brief period, in the mid-1920s, the Bolshevik authorities saw the ordinary Soviet reader as the most reliable critic of the new Soviet literature, but it did not take the public long to realise that the institutions set up to stimulate reading were in fact mechanisms for controlling readers.[38] In the course of the twentieth century, readers tended increasingly to retire to the private space of their own rooms and to hide their reading from the eyes of a dangerously intrusive state, which might assume the form of a fellow student, a co-worker or a neighbour, ready to denounce them for deviant choices. As time went on, readers in the Soviet Union were inclined to share their reading and their thoughts regarding it only with a restricted group of trusted friends. If during the first years of the Thaw collective public reading made a brief comeback and between the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, mass public readings were improvised by young enthusiasts in symbolic sites in different cities, such as at the Maiakovskii monument in Moscow, or even in stadiums packed with passionate fans, the phenomenon was soon brusquely terminated halfway through the 1960s, while the wide circulation of *samizdat* and *tamizdat* (foreign published) texts emphasised the distinction between readings to admit to and those not to admit to. As a witness who as a child saw samizdat texts being passed on by his parents remembers "we weren't allowed to tell anybody about it, and during the week that the book was at ours we weren't allowed to bring any friends home."[39] Khrushchev's building programme, which led in the early 1960s to the construction of a large number of single-family units replacing crowded shared apartments, afforded a significant boost to the reading and circulation of samizdat and tamizdat literature. As the pervasiveness of these clandestine texts indicates, the preferred reading of Russians in the late Soviet period became increasingly a private matter.

5. It was precisely because of the numerous forms of control over reading exercised by the state, that reading communities in Russia tended to take a different form to those of other Western countries. Rather than being open and inclusive groupings, sharing their reading experiences with the widest possible number of fellow citizens with similar literary tastes and cultural interests, they were inclined to be socially restricted associations which, for reasons of self-protection would as far as possible exclude other readers. It was in fact the private and as may be clandestine nature of these shared readings that helped to ensure, even augment, the emancipatory and

37 Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Reader*, 171-180.
38 Ibid., 82-145, 228-235.
39 Von Zitzewitz, "Reading Samizdat," vol. 3, 239.

group-identity-reinforcing aspects of the act. The shared reading of the Silver Age poets, for example, whose works had been banned by the Soviets, took on over the course of the twentieth century, as Roman Timenchik shows, a quasi-religious value for some groups of readers. The reading and committing to memory of the poems of Gumilev, Akhmatova and Mandel'shtam became something of a cult, transforming the readers into closed circles of proselytes ready to fight for their banned or fallen heroes. Small gestures, like copying out a poem, binding a volume in an original fashion, collecting their works or keeping them in a special place or order, or pressing flowers or pine needles between the pages, constituted a symbolic entry into an imaginary community of adepts of a cultural sect, and were like initiation rites. Thus, while one part of the physical community of readers became increasingly closed off within tight groups of trusted friends and acquaintances who shared the same artistic, poetic or musical tastes (*kruzhki* or *tusovki*), another formed ideal communities uniting readers distant in time or space, but adhering to the same poetic cult, who could recognise one another from a slight hint, gesture or quotation in their initiates' language. As some of the samizdat readers questioned by Josephine Von Zitzewitz recalled, "samizdat rallied, brought together and, one could say, created a stratum of people who understood each other by the merest hint and trusted each other"; or again, that samizdat "brought together people who were close to each other in spirit."[40] In this sense the reading of samizdat texts, for all that it involved only certain segments of society, created cultural networks that reinforced a sense of alternative identity, in opposition to the official culture. Participating represented becoming aware of the growing internal emancipation of Soviet society in relation to the authorities.

The presence of omnipresent state control in Russia favoured the development of every kind of 'hidden' or clandestine reading, which is described in detail in the third volume of this work: night reading, reading matter concealed behind fake covers, 'by tomorrow' high-speed reading; reading and copying, sometimes to dictation, sometimes with music at full volume to hide the noise of the typewriter. Naturally, between the 1920s and the mid-1980s the pressure of the dominant ideology varied considerably according to period, and with it the response of readers and the 'hidden reading' practices adopted. This would be a good moment to cite two hidden reading cases concerning actual representatives of the ruling party, cited in two different chapters of this history: that of Militsa Nechkina, who was for a long time one of the top soviet historians and choir leader of hardline Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, and that of Egor Ligachev, second secretary of the CPSU during Gorbachev's perestroika. As Oleg Lekmanov writes, to judge from her diary Nechkina "would represent an exemplary intellectual reader as formed by the Soviet State," were it not for a whole strand of

40 Ibid., 251.

readings recorded in the diary in the early 1920s.[41] From that document there emerges a genuine passion for the Silver Age poetry of Alexander Blok, Anna Akhmatova, Innokentii Annenskii and others, a passion strong enough to cast some doubt on the purity of Nechkina's Marxist faith in those years. As Lekmanov puts it, what set the budding historian on the Marxist road "was not so much the personal inclinations of young Nechkina as her understanding of the logic of social order."[42] From that realisation, halfway through the 1920s, mention of her reading of modernist poetry suddenly disappears from Nechkina's diary. At the opposite end of the Soviet historical parabola, sixty years on, we find the case of Egor Ligachev, second-in-command of the Communist Party, "the most orthodox of the orthodox," as described by Roman Timenchik. In 1988 Ligachev invited into his office Vitaly Korotich, the publisher of the first Soviet edition of Gumilev's poetry, which had been banned for the previous seventy years. Ligachev showed him a small bookshelf tucked away above the door to his office, on which some strange-looking samizdat volumes of Gumilev's poetry were neatly arranged —this senior high official of the Communist Party had secretly copied them out over the years and bound them in fine leather covers. After sixty years, those habits of secret reading, all the more precious perhaps *because* forbidden, were now beginning to disappear.

6. We will conclude with a few remarks on the sources that have been most often used in these volumes and on others which might in future be consulted to further our knowledge of the history of reading in Russia. One can note a certain tension in this history between the contributions which tend to emphasise the educational and disciplining function of reading and those which rather emphasise its emancipatory function with respect to the dominant ideology, and this may have something to do with the sources adopted. We might ask, indeed, whether another set of sources might have provided a different picture. A quantitative analysis of the circulation of books based on sources such as wills and private library catalogues, such as those conducted by French and German historians for the *anciens régimes* of their countries, might provide us with a more varied and complete overview of the geography of reading in Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unfortunately, wills and private library catalogues have been preserved in a very piecemeal fashion in Russian archives and tend in any case to ignore cheaper publications such as magazines and the popular *lubok* literature booklets. Then again, even the quantitative study of much more recent sources such as the subscriptions and print runs of the main Soviet Thaw journals may, as Denis Kozlov shows, only tell us a small part of the story of their reading, and it would require a close analysis of reading practices in different geographical, social and cultur-

41 Lekmanov, "The 'Other' Readers of the 1920's," vol. 3, 286.
42 Ibid.

al contexts to furnish a more complete picture of what was actually read. A more thorough study of the material culture and day-to-day life of Russians, particularly in relation to local history and the social history of the middle and lower classes, together with an analysis taking greater account of factors such as improvements in communication networks (the postal service, road and rail connections, etc.), changes in the organisation of daily life (the structuring of the domestic economy, the balance between work and leisure time, the physical arrangement of homes, types of lighting, etc.) might help us to better understand the real circulation of books and where and how texts were effectively read.[43]

The subscription lists not only of thick journals but also of books have been an important source for establishing the identities of Russian readers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[44] In this period, in fact, publishers would often print at the end of the last volume of a work a list of its subscribers, with their name, civil or military rank and city of residence. Such a source, however, as Gary Marker has emphasised, only provides us with the identity of wealthier readers (or rather, purchasers), who had ordered the book before publication, and paid the full price, whereas more often than not volumes would continue to circulate subsequently, even among much less well-off—though no less important—readers. Other chapters make use of source texts of a programmatic nature (introductions, review articles, scholastic manuals, etc.) which tend to emphasise the disciplining benefits of reading. Conclusions drawn from these could be usefully enhanced by studying the private correspondence or the diaries of readers of the time, or sources generally that provide evidence of the actual effect of the reading. Letters of readers to writers—from those sent to Dostoevskii and Tolstoi through to those send by the inmates of forced labour camps to Soviet writers—are another interesting source for tracing the influence of their public's feedback on writers' work.[45] In this area, as Roman Timenchik notes, much work still remains to be done, for example, on the letters sent to poets of the Silver Age, such as those received by Alexander Blok and Valerii Briusov at the beginning of the twentieth century, and those sent to Anna Akhmatova and Boris Pasternak in the 1950s and '60s, which are still undisturbed in the Russian archives and would repay careful study.[46]

43 A good example of regional history paying attention to the relationship between reading and material culture might be W. J. Gilmore, *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life. Material and Cultural Life in Rural New England, 1780-1835* (Knoxville, 1989).

44 See A. Iu. Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2000); M. Beaven Remnek, *The Expansion of Russian Reading Audiences, 1828-1848*, PhD dissertation (Berkeley, 1999).

45 R. Vassena, *Reawakening National Identity. Dostoevskii's* Diary of a Writer *and its Impact on Russian Society* (Bern, 2007); T. Lahusen, *How Life Writes the Book. Real Socialism and Socialist Realism in Stalin's Russia* (Ithaca, London, 1997).

46 Timenchik, "Early Twentieth-Century Schools of Reading Russian poetry," vol. 2, 247-248.

No less valuable are the letters from readers to the editors of newspapers and magazines, from those sent in the mid-nineteenth century to the first thick journals to the numerous letters from Soviet readers.[47] Finally, an increasingly important role is today being played, especially in investigating reading in the late Soviet period, by the sources typical of oral history, such as interviews, postal or online questionnaires, manuscript memoirs and diaries, as Josephine Von Zitzewitz's work on samizdat reading shows.

While readers' memoirs tend to describe reading as a completed act, whose significance is by then fixed, and often emphasise its emancipatory effect, diaries allow us to watch close-up the dynamic process by which Russian readers constructed day by day the meanings of the stories they were reading in relation to the evolution of the reading 'I', whether they registered a growing awareness of the dominant ideological discourse, or whether they marked its opposite: that same ideology becoming an internalised habit. Even allowing that self-censorship, as we saw in Nechkina's case, should not be underestimated, diaries represent a privileged source precisely because they help us to see the reading and interpretation of a work as a dynamic process and not as something stable. The recording of Russians' reading in diaries shows us something of the functioning of the ideology over time in relation to a wide range of contextual factors and to the gradual construction of the reader's personal identity. This is a source that can usefully be supplemented with iconographic material, and in the 20th century particularly by photographs, which provide us with precious information helping us to home in on the reader's sense of self and the significance of his act[48]. While written sources confine the evanescence and indeterminacy of reading within the rigid norms of writing —linearity, consequentiality, a conventional set of meanings, and the coherence of the meanings that 'I' constructs—photography counterbalances this effect by restoring the indeterminacy and opening of the senses that a text always unfolds before the eyes of the reader. Furnishing simultaneously all kinds of concrete details about the reader, from facial expression to position of hands, from the clothes worn to books and objects surrounding him, with an exactitude that no written description could aspire to, photographs not only give us important details on those "acts, places and habits" in which reading has always taken place, but also help us to evoke the opening out of meaning in relation to the world he inhabits which the text unfurls before the eyes of the reader.

47 See f. i. D. Kozlov, *The Readers of* Novyi Mir*: Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge, MA, 2013).

48 A good example of how some iconographic sources can throw light on the study of reading and its spaces can be found in S. Colclough, "Representing reading spaces," in R. Crone, S. Towheed, *The History of Reading. Volume 3: Methods, Strategies, Tactics* (Basingstoke, 2011), 99-105.

Part I.
The Long Eighteenth Century

HOW MIGHT WE WRITE A HISTORY OF READING IN PRE-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIA?

Daniel C. Waugh

My contribution to this volume is something of an outlier as the only chapter dealing with the subject of reading in Russia prior to the eighteenth century, leaving one to wonder whether those who would focus on the early period are on the same page as colleagues who work on the subject in the 'modern' period. Do we have similar kinds of evidence, and are the ways in which we might analyze it similar or perhaps rather different? Whereas the other chapters here can focus on relatively narrow periods or subjects, if my task is to say something about a good many centuries from the time when formal literacy first arrived amongst the East Slavs with Christianity, I can at best sketch out some ideas. My focus here will be on Slavic writing, not on writing in languages of other peoples who lived in or near the territories of Russia. I am going to use 'Russia' as a shorthand for the territories that at one time or another also included parts of today's Ukraine, Belorussia and the Baltic region. For the most part, following a summary about the earlier evidence, my focus will be on the Muscovite period (roughly from the fifteenth down through the seventeenth centuries).

My examples will be some rather specific case studies, from which broader generalization may yet be premature. I must leave discussion of theoretical literature on reading to others.[1] Gary Marker's chapter provides conceptual insights which can both be brought to bear on my material (as he does in some examples) and may serve to highlight issues treated in many of the other contributions to this volume. My contribution is in a sense much narrower in its focus, the emphasis being on the practical realities of how the

1 A good, short introduction to some of the challenges in analyzing readership is R. Chartier, "Reading Matter and 'Popular' Reading: From the Renaissance to the Seventeenth Century," in G. Cavallo, R. Chartier (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West*, tr. by L. G. Cochrane (Amherst MA, 1999), 269-283, 432-436.

'pre-modern' material has been or might better be studied. It may turn out that the challenges faced in trying to write about reading in the pre-modern period are in fact not so different after all from those faced by scholars who work on the later centuries.

Perhaps we can all agree on some basics. To analyze reading, we need to know what texts were available, who possessed or accessed them, and how they used them. The third of these tasks is certainly the most difficult. It helps, of course, to have some understanding of what we may mean by 'texts' and 'reading.' Do we confine ourselves to words on the written page (or otherwise inscribed, for example, in graffiti or on an icon or mural)? Or should we not also explore the ways in which individuals who lack the formal literacy to read text on a page might nonetheless learn of its content through oral transmission, visual representation, or other means? Arguably, without considering the various non-written ways a text might be transmitted, we may be unable to say much about the real impact of any text on its 'readers.' In particular, there is the danger of relying too much on statistics of the numbers of copies of a particular work and their distribution as a way of determining readership, where even (especially?) in the modern period, we have quite persuasive evidence that readership might considerably exceed the relatively small numbers of copies of a given text.

A further word of caution is in order here. Apart from being able to document what readers actually accessed and what they did with it, naturally we wish to know about attitudes toward reading. Prescriptive texts about the value or dangers of reading are indeed of interest. But they are limited in value, I would argue, if we cannot then document the degree to which they were absorbed and followed.

There is a very large literature about the 'book culture' of early Russia.[2] Some of the key questions addressed include what the repertoire of written works was and how it changed over time, what was to be found in specific book collections (a.k.a. libraries), how authors and copyists went about their tasks and with what result. It is important to understand that the printing of books in Russia began only in the middle of the sixteenth century, and,

2 I can but cite a few of the titles which provide a starting point for further study. The currently authoritative guide to authors and works is *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi*, 4 vols. in 9 (Leningrad, St. Petersburg, 1987-2017). On the introduction and forms of writing in early Russia, see S. Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus, c. 950-1300* (Cambridge, 2002). See also his "Literacy and Documentation in Early Medieval Russia," *Speculum*, 60/1 (1985), 1-38. More generally, see N. N. Rozov, *Kniga Drevnei Rusi* (Moscow, 1977) and Idem, *Kniga v Rossii v XV veke* (Leningrad, 1981). The more recent book by two leading scholars, L. V. Stoliarova and S. M. Kashtanov, *Kniga v Drevnei Rusi (XI-XVI vv.)* (Moscow, 2010) includes a compact overview but focuses in greatest detail on aspects of the codicological study of the early manuscripts and on specific examples of the earliest scriptoria which can be documented. There is some overlap between it and the monograph by Stoliarova, *Drevnerusskie nadpisi XI-XIV vekov na pergamennykh kodeksakh* (Moscow, 1998), which explores in depth what we can learn from the inscriptions on the earliest codices in Russia.

even if the numbers of printed books by the end of the seventeenth century were substantial (on this, more below), manuscript books continued to be very important. Furthermore, despite some improvement by the end of the seventeenth century, as near as one can tell (the evidence is hard to quantify) the formal literacy levels across the population remained very low. Oral transmission of knowledge continued to be essential for most of the population, a fact which then complicates considerably any effort to assess the impact of 'reading.' Even if we were to confine our subject to the written word, the very uneven preservation of written texts and (especially for the earliest centuries) the paucity of copies of them is a serious obstacle to research.

i. writing and its uses in early russia—the first centuries

While the beginnings of formal Slavic literacy date to the middle of the ninth century, it was only with the introduction of Christianity amongst the East Slavs in the late tenth century that Slavic writing began to spread in our Russia, and then first and foremost in connection with the needs of the Church. What is probably the earliest example of a Slavic text of any substance produced in Russian territory is a wax tablet with portions of two of the Psalms found in the northern town of Novgorod and dating from around the year 1000.[3] The earliest dated Slavic manuscript also is from Novgorod, a large parchment *Aprakos* Gospel, commissioned by one of the local elite in 1056. The currently authoritative descriptive catalog of Slaviano-Russian manuscript books found in the libraries of the former USSR includes 494 entries for the period up to the fourteenth century, the collection containing almost without exception church service books or other writings of religious content, a few certainly in formats and combinations that might well have been read privately.[4] How many such books might have once existed in Russia in this period can never be known. One should be cautious about arguments *ex silentio* which assume much of the book stock of pre-thirteenth-century Russia was destroyed during the Mongol invasion and thus speculate about there having been large numbers of books beyond

3 There is some epigraphic material that appears to antedate the Novgorod tablet, but is at best insufficient to prove much about the use of formal Slavic literacy in Russia prior to Prince Vladimir's conversion in 988-89. For a discussion of this evidence, see Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus* and also A. A. Medyntseva, *Gramotnost' v Drevnei Rusi (Po pamiatnikam epigrafiki X-pervoi poloviny XIII veka)* (Moscow, 2000).

4 *Svodnyi katalog slaviano-russkikh rukopisnykh knig, khraniashchikhsia v SSSR XI-XIII vv.* (Moscow, 1984). For the continuation of this ongoing project, see *Svodnyi katalog slaviano-russkikh rukopisnykh knig, khraniashchikhsia v Rossii, stranakh SNG i Baltii. XIV vek. Vyp. 1 (Apokalipsis-Letopis' Lavrent'evskaia)* (Moscow, 2002). Naturally manuscripts which made their way outside of Russia would have to be added here, but the Russian holdings certainly form the largest part of the extant collections of interest for our subject.

the very basic selection necessary for the Church to function.[5] We have no meaningful data to indicate whether there were library collections of any substance. If such existed, they were probably to be found only in or near a few major towns. As the more sober assessments of the range of available texts in these early centuries have emphasized, the scope of all the formal written knowledge in early Russia probably did not exceed what might have been found in a single monastic library in Byzantium, and there certainly was nothing like the range of genres that an educated Byzantine might easily have accessed.[6]

This is not to say that there was no application of writing beyond Church circles. Laws began to be written down, even if their earliest copies are of substantially later date than the time they were composed.[7] The recording of narrative chronicles began some time before the end of the eleventh century, though their earliest copies date from the fourteenth century. There are a very few early charters or their copies, and there was quite a bit of communication for various purposes, often amongst laymen, as attested in writings preserved on birchbark starting in the eleventh century. The birchbark texts include documentation about economic dealings, private notes amongst members of families and the like. To what degree they may have been written and then read by professional scribes (that is, not necessarily by the senders or recipients themselves) is difficult to know.[8] In discussions of early Russian literacy, there has been a tendency to relegate 'practical' literacy such as is evidenced on the birchbarks and in the growing body of government paperwork to a separate box, leaving one still rather poorly informed as to how it was possible for the burgeoning Muscovite bureaucracy

5 See Rozov's sensible attempt to provide perspective on statistics, among them the wild suggestions by B. V. Sapunov (*Kniga Drevnei Rusi*, 78-85).

6 For a reasoned characterization of the content of the repertoire of books in the earliest centuries, see Stoliarova and Kashtanov, *Kniga*, Ch. 2. Francis J. Thomson has written pointedly about the limited repertoire of the books compared to what was available in Byzantium, the most pertinent essays reprinted in his *The Reception of Byzantine Culture in Mediaeval Russia* (Aldershot, 1999). For a more positive take on what the surviving manuscript evidence may tell us, see W. R. Veder, "Old Russia's 'Intellectual Silence' Reconsidered," in M. S. Flier, D. Rowland (eds.), *Medieval Russian Culture*, Vol. 2, California Slavic Studies XIX (Berkeley, 1994), 18- 28. Veder's point is that the limited and often very cryptic selections (a kaleidoscope) from longer texts which are to be found in the few surviving early florilegia may suggest the existence of a rather open-ended kind of creativity, for which only a few signals were needed to stimulate new thinking and original analysis.

7 For a good overview of the early Russian laws, see D. H. Kaiser, *The Growth of the Law in Medieval Russia* (Princeton, 1980).

8 The largest number of the birchbark documents has been found in medieval Novgorod, published in an ongoing series, *Novgorodskie gramoty na bereste*, 12 vols. to date (Moscow, 1953-2015), with a substantial portion also collected in the appendix to A. A. Zalizniak, *Drevnenovgorodskii dialekt* (Moscow, 1995). For a popular overview of these documents and their significance, written by one of the most important scholars who has worked on Novgorod, see V. L. Ianin, *Ia poslal tebe berestu*... (Moscow, 1965; 2nd ed. 1975).

of the fifteenth-seventeenth centuries to recruit and/or train those with the requisite skills to ensure it could function.

The totality of the evidence from the early centuries attests to the fact there were literate individuals, in some cases ones whose writings suggest they were acquainted with a number of different texts. Extant manuscripts (such as those containing homiletic works or legal texts) may indicate copyists had in hand several books or separate texts from which they produced a compilation, that process perforce requiring a kind of reading. However, there is little indication of how literacy could have been acquired and whether it was particularly valued. The idea that reading might be undertaken to stimulate the intellect or for pleasure was arguably not part of the culture, even if there are the occasional statements about the value of books and, allegedly, the devotion even of princes to learning.

One of the best recent overviews of book culture in early Russia prior to the introduction of the printing press suggests that its earliest 'church' period lasts through to the end of the fourteenth century, before giving way to a 'church and monastery' period lasting from the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century.[9] In contrast to the earliest of these periods, the second one certainly sees a considerable expansion in the number of books preserved (and presumably the numbers produced), the emergence of more centers of book production and ones more widely distributed than in the earlier period, and the broadening of the content of books. This is the period when we begin to see the proliferation of what have been termed *chet'i sborniki*, that is miscellanies which arguably were put together for private reading and were not part of the repertoire necessary for liturgical practice (on them, see the discussion below). At least to some extent (as had been the case in the Islamic world earlier), the adoption of paper as a writing medium facilitated the spread of texts—it was a lot cheaper than parchment, even if in the first centuries of its use in Russia it all was imported. The first major library we can confidently document in Russia was that of the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, from which we still have a good many books that were in its original collection.

2. Books and Reading in the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery

The example of the Kirillov Monastery illustrates many aspects of the challenges in studying reading in pre-Modern Russia and also the methodologies which enable scholars to say a great deal about that subject. Founded in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century on the rather remote White Lake (Beloe ozero) in Northern Russia, originally as a location for escape from this world following the models of the early ascetic desert Fathers, the

9 Stoliarova and Kashtanov, *Kniga*, Ch. 2.

monastery grew rapidly into a sizeable cenobitic institution which enjoyed elite patronage and became a center of book production and learning.[10] The descriptive listing of its books compiled in the 1480s was the first such library catalog produced in Russia, and a remarkably sophisticated one at that, listing more than 200 volumes. The collection continued to grow, with the inventories compiled in the seventeenth century eventually including more than 1900 entries, this after a good many of the monastery's books had been transferred elsewhere. While we have other substantial inventories of books in Russian monastic collections for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a distinctive feature of the Kirillov collection is the fact that so much of its early holdings remained intact and/or can be identified in extant manuscripts today. Thus the study of these books can reveal a great deal about the book production within a fifteenth-century institution, a production that required reading of the books, and writing that enables one to explore the significance of that reading. Very often when analyzing one of the books written or compiled by a Kirillov monk, we can also consult directly the exact copy of a work he had been reading and citing.

Of course one of the key challenges if we wish to be able to undertake this kind of analysis is to establish what books might have been available. Contemporary inventories are not always helpful, since, more often than not, their descriptions are so cryptic it is impossible to know for sure which extant book might correspond to one that is listed. Inscriptions on books naturally are an important source, colophons sometimes identifying copyists; once we have a copy in an identifiable hand, it may be possible to identify other copies by the same scribe, even if he did not sign his work. Often inscriptions indicate ownership by or donation to a particular collection. Evidence such as this has long been mined in the study of early Slavic book culture, although systematic collection of such data is a relatively recent and, as yet, very incomplete process.

In the case of the Kirillov books, the recent work by M. A. Shibaev has now raised their codicological study (that is the study of the totality of evidence about any individual book's history) to a new level, thanks to his meticulous analysis of the paper evidence. Up to now, it has been commonplace to describe watermarks in manuscript books with reference to albums in which similar ones have been depicted and identified, where possible from dated books. Given the usual qualifications about the degree of similarity and the possibility that batches of paper were used over a good many years, such evidence can help to narrow down the date range for a manuscript book.

10 A good, compact overview of the most important work on the Kirillov library is in M. A. Shibaev, *Rukopisi Kirillo-Belozerskogo monastyria XV veka. Istoriko-kodikologicheskoe issledovanie* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2013), 7-14. Shibaev has raised questions about the traditional dating of the founding of the monastery to as early as 1397; see his "K voprosu o rannikh etapakh formirovaniia biblioteki Kirillo-Belozerskogo monastyria," *Drevniaia Rus'. Voprosy medievistiki*, 43 (2011), 1, 31-35.

Using new imaging techniques, Shibaev has managed to record each and every watermark in his corpus of Kirillov codices (not just the ones that match published album images) and then, in conjunction with his careful classification of the different manuscript hands, has been able to determine with some confidence the exact sequencing and interconnection in the production of manuscripts that were in the monastery and on which various scribes worked.[11] In other words, going beyond the evidence of texts (but also taking that into account), he is able to connect with physical evidence what otherwise might be seen as a set of discrete books. In the process, he has been able to expand our knowledge of copying and authorship within this 'reading community.'

Shibaev's work points the way to what needs to be done if we can hope to move beyond the example of one textual community and connect it with others. After all, books traveled. Many years ago Nikolai N. Rozov advocated the idea that we could write a geography of books in Russia, plotting their origins and migrations.[12] The sophisticated codicological tools now available to us may in fact be able to tell us a lot about where many books were produced and thus the ultimate source of ones that then turned up in

11 Another example of the elucidation of watermarks for a specific collection, but one based on the less thorough and less accurate older method of tracing them is E.V. Krushel'nitskaia, "Filigrani na bumage dokumentov i rukopisnykh knig, sozdannykh v Solovetskom monastyre v XVI v." in *Knizhnye tsentry Drevnei Rusi: Knizhniki i rukopisi Solovetskogo monastyria* (St. Petersburg, 2004), 3-153. I can claim no credit for these recent studies, but I would nonetheless note that I was interested in the potential for using paper evidence in this fashion decades ago and made some suggestions about it at the time, even if they failed to inspire any meaningful follow-up. See my "Soviet Watermark Studies – Achievements and Prospects," *Kritika*, 6/2 (1970), 78-111; summary and partial translation by Theo Gerardy in *IPH Information* (Bulletin of the International Association of Paper Historians), N. F., Jhrg. 5, Nr. 3 (1971), 62-66. I was told that a translation of this article into Russian circulated in, e.g., the manuscript division of the Lenin Library (now RGB). The article elicited several responses in print by Russian watermark specialists. In the oral discussions following D. S. Likhachev's keynote address at the Tikhomirov Readings in Moscow in 1972 (see *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1972 god*, 256-257), I reiterated my recommendations; some of the material also entered into the paper (never published) which I gave to a specially convened session of the Sector of Old Russian Literature in Pushkinskii Dom on 19 September 1975: "O proekte primeneniia vychislitel'nykh mashin v sostavlenii kataloga opisanii drevnerusskikh rukopisei" (see *TODRL* 40 [1985], 450).

12 N. N. Rozov, "Ob issledovanii geograficheskogo rasprostraneniia rukopisnoi knigi (po materialam Sofiiskoi biblioteki)," in *Puti izucheniia drevnerusskoi literatury i pis'mennosti* (Leningrad, 1970), 160-170. For a recent indication of what is possible, see A. S. Usachev, "O geografii napisaniia russkikh rukopisnykh knig v XVI veke (materialy k istorii knigi v Rossii)," *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana*, 17, 1 (2015), 141-167. Usachev's impressive systematization of data about sixteenth-century Muscovite manuscripts with dated inscriptions has now just appeared: *Knigopisanie v Rossii XVI veka: po materialam datirovannykh vykhodnykh zapisei*, 2 vols. (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2018). As he emphasizes, codicological study of most of these books still lies ahead, and his conclusions are but tentative. Nonetheless, his observations about the apparently small number of copyists of entire books and his mapping of the widely dispersed locations where the copies were made are of considerable interest.

another location, if not necessarily how they got there.[13] To do this is going to require a huge amount of labor over many years and ideally the computerization of all the data.

In fact, there has been some progress in putting standard European watermark catalogs online, though a more ambitious project was abandoned. Shibaev's imaging technology feeds the information directly into a computerized database, which is exactly what we need. Such work would be part of the larger project of getting all old Russian manuscript descriptions on line. A lot has been done now by way of preparing for the creation of such an electronic catalogue, though whether it will in fact contain all the essential details and when it might ever be realized remains to be seen.[14] As always, the quality of what comes out of a computer is governed by the quality of what is put in. There has been much progress in cataloguing Russian collections previously not described, but we are still a long way from having a comprehensive command of what is out there. Even some of the most recent catalogues produced by well-informed scholars fall short of what ideally we should have.[15] Were we to have a truly comprehensive database of manuscripts, the task of writing about readership might be a lot easier. I certainly will not live long enough to see that day.

Even before Shibaev's study, Robert Romanchuk was able to write a substantial analysis of the Kirillov reading community which provides one of the best examples of what can in fact be said about actual reading and its impact in early Russia.[16] As Romachuk shows, drawing on his excellent knowledge of the Byzantine texts, there was a clear idea of the stages through

13 For comparative purposes here, one might look at the challenges faced by archaeologists, as summarized by Marcus Milwright (*An Introduction to Islamic Archaeology* [Edinburgh, 2010], 158): "[T]he analysis of spatial distribution…is limited by the fact that, other than in exceptional circumstances, we cannot know precisely what modes of exchange resulted in the movement of an artefact from its place of manufacture (if known) to its place of deposition." In fact the tools we can apply to the study of books arguably are much more likely to yield results.

14 See, e.g., E. V. Krushel'nitskaia, "Opisanie rukopisei biblioteki Solovetskogo monastyria v sisteme elektronnogo kataloga: zadachi, opyty, problemy, perspektivy," and L. V. Emel'ianova, "Informatsionno-poiskovaia sistema 'Depozitarii'—instrument dlia registratsii i issledovaniia rukopisnykh materialov," 436-456 and 457-465 respectively, in *Knizhnye tsentry Drevnei Rusi: Knizhniki i rukopisi Solovetskogo monastyria* (St. Petersburg, 2004). It is clear that the system devised in the U.S. by the Library of Congress many years ago fell far short of what we really need, even though it has been used to register the manuscripts and their facsimiles in the Hilandar Collection at the Ohio State University.

15 An example here would be the several volumes of the ongoing catalog of the Pogodin Collection in the Russian National Library, a project that took years to get off the ground and is still a long way from completion.

16 R. Romanchuk, *Byzantine Hermeneutics and Pedagogy in the Russian North: Monks and Masters at the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, 1397-1501* (Toronto, Buffalo, 2007). I first read Romanchuk only after seeing Gary Marker's draft paper for the Milan conference. See his comments on Romanchuk's study in the current version of his essay, where he makes the point that surely at least in monastic contexts in Muscovy there were other such reading communities. The questions of how they may have been connected, books were exchanged, and so on, still require much study.

which monks in training were to pass, where one important element was the knowledge of key church texts and the actual reading of them, once the novice had achieved a certain level of understanding. In this context then, it is possible to explain the significance of the books accumulated at Kirillov, their content specifically oriented to support not only basic ritual functions but a program of pedagogy. It might be difficult to find a better example than this of how reading was applied and focused. Over time, with the growth and changes in the monastery, some of the original goals changed, and that in turn also contributed to changes in the content of the monastery books and the degree to which certain monks looked farther afield to supplement what they already had in hand.

Placing this material in a broader context, Romanchuk confronts boldly the much-debated question of the supposed "intellectual silence of Rus," posed long ago by Georges Florovsky.[17] On the one extreme is scholarship such as that by Francis Thomson (cited above in n. 6) about the poverty of content of the Russian libraries (even when compared with Byzantine monastic ones). On the other hand, there is the tendency that was prevalent in so much of the otherwise very substantial Soviet-era scholarship, to seek out pre-Renaissance or Renaissance elements in the interests of Russian bookmen, most notably in the apparently encyclopedic curiosity and collecting of the Kirillov monk Efrosin.[18] Romanchuk finds here some middle ground, rejecting the idea of intellectual silence, but at the same time showing how Kirillov was neither Byzantium redux nor a Russian version of Florence.

The Kirillov library in fact is not the only monastic collection we can document extensively.[19] Considerable effort has gone into identifying the books of such collections (whether or not included in the contemporary inventories) with ones which have survived to the present, since only then, by being able to consult them, may it be possible to establish patterns of how they were used. For example, we have now a pretty complete idea of the books

17 G. Florovsky, "The Problem of Old Russian Culture," *Slavic Review*, 21 (1962), 1-15, an essay which provoked a variety of responses. Florovsky was mainly concerned with what he saw as the absence of any development of systematic theology amongst early Russian churchmen. In particular, see William Veder's response, cited in n. 6 above.

18 On Efrosin and his books, with references to all but the most recent work, see *Slovar' knizhnikov*, 2/1, 227-236; 2/3, 103-105; Shibaev, *Rukopisi*, Ch. 5. On the books and their production at Kirillov, see various essays in the valuable irregular series, *Knizhnye tsentry Drevnei Rusi*, one volume of which (St. Petersburg, 2014) is devoted entirely to that monastery. Any study of early Russian books and bookmen will need to look closely at all of the volumes in this ongoing series, several of which are specific to the book culture of the Solovki Monastery.

19 On some of the other most significant monastic libraries, see M. V. Kukushkina, *Monastyrskie biblioteki Russkogo Severa. Ocherki po istorii knizhnoi kul'tury XVI-XVII vekov* (Leningrad, 1977), where one can find additional references to the published inventories and related studies. A good example of how one must go about reconstructing the contents of a monastic library that has now been dispersed is M. D. Kagan, "Istoriia biblioteki Ferapontova monastyria," in *Knizhnye tsentry Drevnei Rusi. XI-XVI vv. Raznye aspekty issledovaniia* (St. Petersburg, 1991), 99-135.

from the St. Joseph of Volokolamsk Monastery, many of which indeed can be identified as the direct sources for various writings and compilations by Muscovite bookmen. For the Solovki Monastery on the White Sea, there are several early inventories, and a fair amount of the collection survived intact down into modern times. The organization of the Solovki inventories in the seventeenth century suggests that they were compiled specifically with readers' needs in mind—that is, to serve as finding aids and not just records of the monastery's possessions.[20] As with Kirillov, Solovki offers possibilities for delineating the histories of individual bookmen, learning about the acquisition of books for its library, and seeing exactly how readers of the monastery's books incorporated that reading into what they wrote. It is possible, for example, to trace the history of its local chronicle writing from the sixteenth down to the ninetenth century, given the preservation of various versions of the texts which were then supplemented by each new generation. A recent monograph on Sergei Shelonin, who worked at the Moscow Printing Yard editing and correcting its publications in between his long residences at Solovki, documents his literary activity from evidence in Solovki books, many of which he himself donated to the monastery.[21] When the Solovki monks, shortly after Shelonin's death, took a stand against Nikon's reforms, an important polemical tract they composed drew heavily on books we still have that were in the monastery's library.[22]

A cautionary note is in order here. Even when we might undertake a close examination of texts composed by a given author and in which there are quotations from other sources we can identify, we may be left with questions about what this reveals about *reading*. The writings of Semen Shakhovskoi, a literate elite layman in the seventeenth century who was well versed in Orthodox texts, illustrate the problem. Some of his compositions are little more than pastiches of quotations (which should not surprise us for a Muscovite author), but many of them, not quite accurate, probably came from memory, not from copying a written text.[23] So, how did he learn those texts? Did he read them at some point on the page, or, in the case of works that would have formed a regular part of Church services, did he simply have them etched in his mind by virtue of having heard them regularly? An

20 There is an interesting parallel here in the medieval Arab world, where the cataloging of privately-endowed libraries that opened their doors to readers from out in society seems to have been designed to facilitate finding books one might wish to consult. See K. Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh, 2012; pb. ed. 2013), 152-155.

21 O. S. Sapozhnikova, *Russkii knizhnik XVII veka Sergii Shelonin: Redaktorskaia deiatel'nost'* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2010).

22 N. Iu. Bubnov, "Rabota drevnerusskikh knizhnikov v monastyrskoi biblioteke (Istochniki solovetskogo 'Skazaniia... o novykh knigakh' 1667 g.)," in *Kniga i ee rasprostraneniia v Rossii v XVI-XVIII vv. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Leningrad, 1985), 37-58.

23 On Shakhovskoi as a writer, see E. L. Keenan, "Semen Shakhovskoi and the Condition of Orthodoxy," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 12-13 (1988/89), 795-815.

analogous point about what constitutes 'original' writing in Russia (thereby revealing something about an 'author's' reading) has been made with regard to the miscellanies we discuss below, the point being that the collection of works by others of itself represents a kind of reader response and creative act, even if those who were responsible for the compilations themselves did not then proceed to compose their own works drawing upon that reading.

The kind of analysis Romanchuk and others have been doing can move us away from the otherwise stark contrast that is suggested when we compare prescriptive texts relating to reading and book learning for laymen in what we might loosely term the 'Renaissance' (whether or not that term really fits for Muscovy). On the one hand, Leon Battista Alberti's *Della Famiglia*, a book of advice for elite Florentines in the fifteenth century, admonishes that "It is a father's duty...to punish his children and make them wise and virtuous."[24] But the fathers should also "see to it that their sons pursue the study of letters assiduously" (p. 86), which, as he goes on to elaborate, means learning to read and write perfectly, studying arithmetic and geometry and the works of the Classical authors. In contrast, the Muscovite manual of household management, the *Domostroi*, compiled around the middle of the sixteenth century probably as a guide to proper conduct for the Muscovite servitor class, in the first instance stresses Orthodox values and respect for authority, be it that of Church and autocrat or of paterfamilias. The upbringing of sons gets particular attention, where the advice (at least partially echoing Alberti) famously is "наказуи дети во юности, покоятъ тя на старость твою" ("discipline/punish children while they are young, so that they will give you peace in your old age").[25] For both sons and daughters, the important thing is to instill in them the fear of God and "учити их рукоделию, отцу сыновъ, а матере дщери" ("teach them manual labor, the father instructing the sons, the mother the daughters"). So education at least for laymen means keeping young hands busy, not book learning, hardly a surprise in a Muscovy where there was no school system and probably most members of that servitor class were functionally illiterate. It should not surprise us that there are few well-documented examples of literate lay authors in sixteenth-century Muscovy, even if by the time of someone like Shakhovskoi a century later, their numbers would increase.

Beyond someone like the monk Efrosin, whose wide-ranging curiosity still fits most comfortably in an Orthodox framework, the few examples we have of Muscovite encounters with those who possessed Western Renaissance (as opposed to Byzantine Orthodox) learning must give us pause. One such individual, also an Orthodox monk, was Maksim the Greek (born Michael Trivolis), who spent time in Renaissance Venice and then in a Dominican

24 *The Albertis of Florence: Leon Battista Alberti's* Della Famiglia, tr. with an introd. and notes by G. A. Guarino (Lewisburg, 1971), 77.

25 V. V. Kolesov, V. V. Rozhdestvenskaia (eds.), *Domostroi* (St. Petersburg, 2000), 28.

Monastery in Florence before entering a monastery on Mt. Athos.[26] When he was sent to Moscow toward the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century to assist in translation of Greek church texts into Slavonic, he ran afoul of the authorities, ostensibly for mistakes in the rather complicated translation process, but presumably also for lecturing the Muscovites on their ways. Maksim left behind a large corpus of writings, which showed his familiarity with the Greek Classics, an erudition that evoked little response later, even though a good many copies of his works were made. If Maksim was read, it seems to have been primarily for his moralizing sentiments and for his defense of what he considered to be proper Orthodox conduct.[27]

3. The printing press: an agent of cultural change in Muscovy?

A second example is that of the first printer in Muscovy whom we know by name, Ivan Fedorov.[28] Printing began in Muscovy in the 1550s with a few church texts deemed necessary to replace books consumed by a major fire in Moscow and to support the extension of Orthodoxy into newly conquered lands to the east and south where the non-Russian inhabitants were Muslims.[29] Who were the first printers is not known, and those earliest editions they produced were technically not very polished products. However, by the beginning of the 1560s, one Ivan Fedorov (probably a Belorusian or Ukrainian) had arrived in Moscow, having previously received a Renaissance education in Krakow. The few books he and his collaborator produced in Moscow show a much greater mastery of the printing art than the books published by his predecessor. Like his predecessor, Fedorov was tasked with producing books for the Church. That is, unlike in the Renaissance West, where it has been argued printing soon became one of the main agents

26 A good introduction to Maksim is J. V. Haney, *From Italy to Muscovy: The Life and Works of Maxim the Greek* (München, 1973), although there is much else to be said on the basis of more recent study of the corpus of works attributed to Maksim.

27 See I. Shevchenko, "Byzantium and the Eastern Slavs after 1453," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 2/1 (1978), 5-25; here p. 14: "It gives one food for thought about the Muscovy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to realize that this highly cultured Byzantine was long revered in Russia for his statements on the sign of the cross, whereas his classical references were never picked up."

28 On the beginnings of printing in Moscow, see E. L. Nemirovskii, *Vozniknovenie knigopechataniia v Moskve. Ivan Fedorov* (Moscow, 1964); on Fedorov's activity in Ukraine, see Idem, *Nachalo knigopechataniia na Ukraine. Ivan Fedorov* (Moscow, 1974). For new research on Fedorov, see the collection of articles edited by Sergei Bogatyrev as a special number of the journal *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 51, 2-3 (2017) under the title *The Journeys of Ivan Fedorov: New Perspectives on Early Cyrillic Printing*.

29 Opinions vary about the reasons for the introduction of printing; for the most recent assessment, see A. S. Usachev, "O vozmozhnykh prichinakh nachala knigopechataniia v Rossii: Predvaritel'nye zamechaniia," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 51, 2-3 (2017), 229-247, where he emphasizes concern over the need for standardization of Church books as the first priority.

of cultural change, in Muscovy it was an agent for reinforcing the cultural status quo.[30] While we do not know the details, Fedorov did not last long in Moscow and decamped to the Orthodox areas of Ukraine (then part of Lithuania-Poland). It was only after arriving there, where there was demand for textbooks for Orthodox schools set up to block the inroads of Roman Catholicism, that Fedorov then published the first Slavonic primer in 1574.[31] He also would print the first full edition of a Slavonic Bible in 1581, a book that was certainly valued by those who could obtain it in later decades, even though, unlike in the Protestant world, there was not the same emphasis among the Orthodox regarding the importance of reading the scriptures.[32]

Indeed, the beginnings of printing in Muscovy were modest. After all, Gutenburg's press was already a century in the past, and printing of Slavic books had arrived in Poland before the end of the fifteenth century.[33] The number of books printed in Muscovy before 1600 was very small, and the repertoire limited to a few texts essential for Orthodox practice. Even as one moves down through the seventeenth century, the apparently almost exclusive emphasis in Muscovite printing on books with religious content might cast some doubt on the weight we should place on the printed word

30 The classic statement of the impact of printing on the Renaissance is E. L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and cultural transformations in early-modern Europe*, 2 vols. in 1 (Cambridge, 1980; original ed. 1979). Her work has provoked some criticism for pushing the argument too far. In contextualizing the Russian example with reference to the "communication revolution" elsewhere, Aleksandr Filyushkin emphasizes the "lack of public demand for information," the result being that the processes to be found elsewhere appeared in Russia only with a delay of some centuries. See his "Why Did Muscovy Not Participate in the 'Communication Revolution' in the Sixteenth Century? Causes and Effects," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 51, 2-3 (2017), 339-350.

31 The preservation of textbooks such as primers from this period is very poor almost everywhere, since presumably they wore out from constant use and then were discarded and replaced by newer printings. Fedorov's primer became known from a copy that surfaced in a private collection only toward the middle of the twentieth century, when it was offered to the State Lenin Library in Moscow. Not having any proof that such a book was genuine, the Soviet book specialists rejected it; it came instead to Harvard's Houghton Library in the Kilgour Collection in 1953. Roman Jakobson's careful study of the text along with a publication of a facsimile established its authenticity and secured its place in the pantheon of early East Slavic imprints. See R. Jakobson, "Ivan Fedorov's Primer," with an appendix by W. A. Jackson, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 9/1 (1955), 5-45 (the facsimile on 24 pp. inserted between pp. 16 and 17). Interestingly, there is some evidence to suggest that the book had once been in the collection of Count Grigorii S. Stroganov (d. 1910), whose Muscovite ancestors had noteworthy book collections (see below). A second copy of the 1574 primer has more recently been discovered in the collections of the British Library.

32 On the 1581 Bible, see R. Mathiesen, "The Making of the Ostrih Bible," *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 29, 1 (1981), 71-110. The next full edition of the Slavonic Bible appeared in Moscow only in 1663.

33 For the history of the earliest Cyrillic printing in Poland, see E. L. Nemirovskii, *Nachalo slavianskogo knigopechataniia* (Moscow, 1971), and Idem, *Istoriia slavianskogo kirillovskogo knigopechataniia XV-nachala XVII veka. Kn 1: Vozniknovenie slavianskogo knigopechataniia* (Moscow, 2003).

there in any assessment of literacy and reading.[34] Those who have focused on the processes of 'westernization' of traditional Russia have been happy enough to tout the beginnings of Muscovite printing, even if the content and significance of what was produced did not quite seem to fit any paradigm of 'modernization'. In recent decades though, our understanding of this subject has undergone considerable re-assessment.[35]

There are a number of related questions here: how many books were actually produced and in what specific subjects; how and where were they distributed; what can we know about who owned them; what evidence is there for how they were used?

Arguably the most significant evidence cited in the recent reassessments of the impact of printing in Muscovy is the fact that very sizeable percentages of the books published in the seventeenth century were in categories most agree related to the acquisition of basic literacy. The acquisition of literacy involved starting with a primer or alphabet book, generally short with only one or two full texts, and moving on to the Breviary (*chasovnik*), which contained the basics of church service and responses, followed by the Psalter, usually in an 'explanatory' version. To learn the rudiments of the alphabet did not necessarily mean advancing to being able to read beyond what may have been painfully slow ability to make out letters and pronounce syllables that would make a word comprehensible. To a degree, even if a learner were to move to the more advanced stages of this educational sequence, rote memorization of texts most likely was the way he mastered what was in the Breviary and Psalter. How this then might transfer to being able to read independently an unfamiliar text is difficult to know. Even having mastered

34 The standard catalog of early Moscow Cyrillic imprints is A. S. Zërnova, *Knigi kirillovskoi pechati, izdannye v Moskve v XVI-XVII vv.: Svodnyi katalog* (Moscow, 1958), though it now has been supplemented by the work of I. V. Pozdeeva and others. Exceptions to the printing of books with religious content included the major seventeenth-century compendium of laws, the *Sobornoe Ulozhenie of 1649*, and a military instruction manual. On the printed legal codex, see L. A. Timoshina, "Staropechatnye izdaniia Ulozheniia 1649 goda i prikaznye uchrezhdeniia serediny XVII veka, in *Fedorovskie chteniia. 2005* (Moscow, 2005), 296-304. As Simon Franklin has explored, the printing of short forms for bureaucratic use also was undertaken; see his "K voprosu o malykh zhanrakh kirillicheskoi pechati," in *450 let Apostolu Ivana Fedorova. Istoriia rannego knigopechataniia v Rossii (pamiatniki, istochniki, traditsii izucheniia)*, ed. D. N. Ramanzanova (Moscow, 2016), 428-439.

35 An introduction to some of the issues here is G. Marker, "Russia and the 'Printing Revolution': Notes and Observations," *Slavic Review*, 41 (1982), 266-284, in which he discusses publication of books in Moscow in the seventeenth-century that would have been used for instructional purposes. For a very different approach to the Muscovite encounter with print, see S. Franklin, "Three Types of Asymmetry in the Muscovite Engagement with Print," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 51, 2-3 (2017), 351-375, where his concern is not the content of what was printed in Muscovy but rather the way in which imported imprints were received, with a kind of "reverse technology transfer" of their translations being confined to manuscript copying and thus very limited in their distribution. Franklin's article includes a long section on the relationship between printed imagery (engravings) in the imported books and caption text, which often was translated and juxtaposed to the printed originals.

the Psalter would not necessarily make the Muscovite learner into an active reader, where the Psalter in and of itself might be recited or consulted for a variety of purposes (e.g., for divination). Moreover, learning to read did not necessarily mean learning to write.[36] The acquisition of literacy following this pattern might occur in something like a 'monastery classroom' or, one assumes, simply through individual tutelage, but there was no such thing as a school system. The acquisition of literacy for practical functions of administration might well have been through a process of 'apprenticeship'.[37]

Nonetheless, we now have some impressive statistics regarding the printing of the basic 'instructional' books, a fact which has led Irina V. Pozdeeva and others to emphasize that there was a substantial effort underway in seventeenth-century Muscovy to provide basic literacy education. Between 1615 and 1652, some 350,000 books came off the Moscow presses, of which more than 100,000 were 'instructional' books (*knigi dlia obucheniia*—the three noted above plus the *Kanonnik*). From 1652 to 1700, some 35% of the editions put out by the Printing Yard were 'instructional', a total of over half a million copies, of which nearly 260,000 were primers.[38] The records of the Moscow Printing Yard which Pozdeeva has mined indicate not only the size of each edition, but the speed with which it sold and who the purchasers were. 'Instructional' books sold out quickly; in many cases, a single individual might buy up dozens of them, though for what ultimate destination is hard to learn.

To assess what this means for our knowledge of reading in Muscovy requires that we look beyond the production and sale statistics. The research Pozdeeva and others have been doing also includes careful descriptions of extant copies of the printed books in various libraries and archives. The key

36 The same seems to have been true elsewhere in Europe at the time, but arguably had not been the case in the medieval Arab world where the patterns of reading and learning to write in important cases were substantially different from those found in Russia. For the interesting comparative perspective from the Arab Middle East, see Hirschler, *The Written Word*. Among the significant differences between the Arabic and Slavic cases is the fact that in the Islamic world there are written 'certificates' attesting to an individual's having read a particular text; a good many of these certificates indicate precisely who the individuals were and what was their place in the social spectrum.

37 On the nature of such education in 'early modern' Russia, see the various works by Ol'ga E. Kosheleva cited in Marker, "The Eighteenth Century: From Reading Communities to the Reading Public," in the present volume. A useful summary of her conclusions is in her "Obuchenie v russkoi srednevekovoi pravoslavnoi traditsii," in *Odissei. Chelovek v istorii* (Moscow, 2012), 47-72. On what most scholars consider to be the first formally organized educational institution in Muscovite Russia, see N. A. Chrissidis, *An Academy at the Court of the Tsars: Greek Scholars and Jesuit Education in Early Modern Russia* (DeKalb, ILL, 2016).

38 I.V. Pozdeeva, *Chelovek. Kniga. Istoriia. Moskovskaia pechat' XVII veka* (Moscow, 2016), 57, 154, 206, 213. For an idea of the approach to compiling into a computerized database and analyzing the statistics on the sale and distribution of books from the Moscow Printing Yard, see V. P. Pushkov, L. V. Pushkov, "Opyt postroeniia bazy dannykh 'Knizhnyi rynok Moskvy 1636/37 g.' Po dannym arkhiva Prikaza knigopechatnogo dela," in *Fedorovskie chteniia. 2005* (Moscow, 2005), 356-368.

data here are inscriptions on the books, indicating who owned them, or marginal notations which might point to what parts of a text attracted attention or how the presumed reader reacted to the text.[39] Unfortunately, the evidence of notations leaves many questions unanswered. Ownership does not necessarily equate with readership.[40] In fact many of the inscriptions tell us no more than that someone sold the book or donated it (donations usually being to a religious institution). Analysis of the other kinds of notations for the most part still lies ahead and will require detailed study if we are ever to hope to say anything meaningful about what such marginalia really mean. At very least though, we now have a great deal of evidence about ownership and distribution of printed books, which made their way to any number of often remote locations scattered around Muscovy.

We might agree with Pozdeeva that the printed book in Muscovy was a (though not necessarily 'the') key element in the development and strengthening of a national culture which at its core was Orthodox Christian. At various levels of society and in a wide range of activities in daily life, Orthodox belief and ritual might play an important part and be reinforced by the texts in the printed books. As she demonstrates, some of the introductions or colophons to the books were important in reinforcing the claims of divinely-inspired political authority. Yet, in the absence of additional data, all this still leaves us short of learning as much as we would like about actual readership and the impact of the books on the reader.

The kind of study which is needed to begin to fill in the gaps can be illustrated in a recent book on the history of the first printed collection of canon law in Muscovy, the *Kormchaia kniga* of 1649-52.[41] The authors of this study (principally E. V. Beliakova) begin by examining the centuries-long earlier history of the translation and copying of various versions of the canon laws amongst the Slavs, in order to determine what version was used in the Moscow edition. As this analysis makes clear, knowledge of the various versions of canon law and its supplements was obligatory for bishops and their staffs, and over time con-

39 For published collections of owners' inscriptions, see S. P. Luppov, *Chitateli izdanii Moskovskoi tipografii v seredine XVII veka. Publikatsiia dokumentov i issledovanie* (Leningrad, 1983). For the holdings of the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, we now also have L. I. Kiseleva (ed.), *Korpus zapisei na staropechatnykh knigakh. Vypusk 1. Zapisi na knigakh kirillicheskogo shrifta, napechatannykh v Moskve v XVI-XVII vv.* (St. Petersburg, 1992). The best current descriptions of early printed books in Russian repositories routinely include the texts of the owners' inscriptions. See, for example, *Moskovskie kirillovskie izdaniia XVI-XVII vv. v sobraniiakh RGADA. Katalog. Vypusk 1. 1556-1625 gg.; Vypusk 2. 1626-1650* (Moscow, 1996, 2002). For additional references see Marker, "The Eighteenth Century: From Reading Communities to the Reading Public," in the present volume.

40 A striking illustration of this point is cited by Gary Marker in his chapter: Prince Aleksandr D. Menshikov, a close collaborator of Peter the Great, affected many of the trappings of European culture, accumulated a large library and was concerned that even his daughters acquire literacy in French. However, it appears he was functionally illiterate.

41 E. V. Beliakova, L. V. Moshkova, T. A. Oparina. *Kormchaia kniga: ot rukopisnoi traditsii k pervomu pechatnomu izdaniiu* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2017).

scious editing and re-combination of texts was undertaken in order to meet the needs of Church administration and society. At very least, such activity implies active reading and absorption of texts, even absent explicit statements explaining the thinking that led to editorial decisions. We should emphasize here how daunting a task it is to undertake such analysis, as manuscript genealogies are complex, and many of the texts are very large. To have a particular prescriptive text of course may not tell us anything about the degree to which its admonitions were followed in practice.

The decision in the middle of the seventeenth century to print a collection of canon law seems to have been a response to a perceived need to supply sees and their parishes at a time when the church authorities in Moscow were attempting to strengthen uniform centralized control. That is, there was an awareness of the necessity of having such texts for reference and guidance. In the case of the printed *Kormchaia kniga*, the main manuscript on which the edition was based has been preserved, replete with editorial marginalia and instructions to the printers. So here we have concrete evidence of how reading and interpretation translated into the production of a particular book, even if such notations do not necessarily get us into the deeper layers of the thinking of those who much have read and been familiar with the texts in question. We do know the names of a good many of the individuals who were involved in the making of this edition. It is possible in the case of canon law to demonstrate from other documentation how it was applied in practice, although there is much yet to be done in such study.

Close textual analysis then is essential if we are to learn about readership in Muscovy. Many other examples might be adduced, where the study of individual texts and their transmission has been undertaken, though often more attention has been paid to the beginning of textual tradition than to its later stages, which might be the ones that would tell us the most about readership as copies proliferated. Such studies usually move us away from the body of evidence that Pozdeeva has emphasized, since for the most part we are talking about manuscript copies, and the content of texts may go well beyond the 'religious' emphasis of most of the Muscovite printed books. In fact though, it is somewhat artificial to draw any kind of dividing line between the uses of printed as opposed to manuscript books. As Marker suggests in his chapter below, we still need to analyze the function of the continuing production of manuscript books well into the period when the printed word had become central to intellectual life in Russia.

4. Lay literacy and reading in Muscovy

Pozdeeva's work focused on countering the otherwise prevalent narrative of much of Soviet-era scholarship which sought to emphasize 'secular' lit-

erature and in the process failed to appreciate the ways in which 'religious' texts were central to Muscovite culture. Not the least of the problems with that dominant narrative was its failure to engage effectively with the question of whether one might reasonably classify any given text or book in an apparently rigid dichotomy between 'religious' and 'secular' and whether in fact the reading patterns one might seek to determine for laymen and for clerics were substantially different.

As an example, consider the Book of Royal Degrees (*Stepennaia kniga*), which many have treated as a work of 'history', despite the fact that its presentation of the history of Russia down to the time of its compilation in the middle of the sixteenth century might better be described as princely hagiography. Clearly the church hierarchs were involved in its creation, even if the recent very detailed analyses of the editorial processes fail to agree on details about the interrelationships of extant texts and their manuscripts and what, exactly, the intent was in producing the book.[42] Was it read and by whom? As Nancy Kollmann has stressed, we have a great deal to learn about how it was used.[43]

I would note in passing here a recent collection of essays about visual sources (especially the multitudinous miniatures illustrating an encyclopedic royal historical compilation, the so-called *Litsevoi svod*, which is contemporaneous with the *Stepennaia kniga*) that includes interesting evidence of how the artists drew on written sources such as the *Stepennaia kniga* even if the illustrations which resulted then did not in fact explicitly illustrate the text to which they were attached.[44] The subject of such pictorial evidence for the reading that must have been done by those who created and/or commissioned it (not to mention the subject of the reception of the visual by

42 The now authoritative edition is N. N. Pokrovskii, G. D. Lenkhoff (eds.), *Stepennaia kniga tsarskogo rodosloviia po drevneishim spiskam. Tekst i kommentarii v 3-kh tomakh* (Moscow, 2007-2012). The differing views on the textual history may be found in A. V. Sirenov, *Stepennaia kniga. Istoriia teksta* (Moscow, 2007) and A. S. Usachev, *Stepennaia kniga i drevnerusskaia knizhnost' vremeni mitropolita Makariia* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2009). Concerning them see the review by Gail Lenhoff, "Current Research on the Stepennaja kniga: Consensus, Controversies, Questions," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 61 (2013), 438-443, in which she highlights Usachev's contributions based on careful codicological analysis. Sirenov's *Stepennaia kniga i russkaia istoricheskaia mysl' XVI-XVII vv.* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2010) attempts to assess the impact of the text in later Muscovite historiography, but, judging from Lenhoff's critical comments, leaves a great deal to be desired. Sirenov and N. N. Pokrovskii have produced an edition of the *Latukhinskaia Stepennaia Kniga. 1676 god* (Moscow, 2012), an important step in making available the still largely unpublished large seventeenth-century Muscovite historical compilations.

43 See N. S. Kollmann, "On Advising Princes in Early Modern Russia: Literacy and Performance," in G. Lenhoff, A. Kleimola (eds.), *The Book of Royal Degrees and the Genesis of Russian Historical Consciousness*, UCLA Slavic Studies, N.S., VII (Bloomington, IND, 2011), 341-348; esp. 346-347. This volume contains a number of stimulating papers from a conference on the *Stepennaia kniga*.

44 The essays, introduced by Brian Boeck, and written by Sergey Bogatyrev, Nancy Shields Kollmann and Isolde Thyrêt are in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 19, 1

its 'readers' who might not have formal literacy in the written word) merits separate discussion.

The *Stepennaia kniga* was never printed in Muscovy, but a good many copies were made and in turn served as sources for other narrative texts, including ones that arguably were closer to what we might today consider to be 'secular' history. Unlike in the mid-sixteenth century at the time of its creation, which was in the hands of literate clerics, in the seventeenth century, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich launched a project to compose a continuation of the *Stepennaia kniga*, the work to be done by laymen appointed to a special government department created specifically for that purpose.[45] Little progress was made, one of the reasons seeming to have been the difficulty in locating manuscript copies of the *Stepennaia kniga* in various monastic libraries where they were sought. It is somewhat unclear how the Tsar envisaged the book they were to produce. It certainly might have reinforced the message that was conveyed in some of the introductions and afterwords of the books being printed in Moscow—namely the idea that Moscow was the 'Third Rome' whose rulers were to fulfill the Divine mandate on earth by defending the one, true Orthodox faith.

5. libraries

As we look beyond monastic libraries to determine the contents of other book collections in Muscovy, we encounter a number of difficulties, some already familiar from the discussion above. We might well start by asking, for example, whether Muscovite rulers collected books, and, if so, which ones. It is possible to document collections of secular elites elsewhere in Europe: an example is that of the King of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus, in the late fifteenth century, a collection that has been dispersed and partially destroyed, but much of which can be reconstructed.

Much ink has been spilled on whether Tsar Ivan IV (r. 1533-1584) had a library, including Classical works that are otherwise unattested.[46] I remain

(2018), 9-114. In particular note Kollmann's treatment of the *Litsevoi svod* as a kind of graphic novel, and Thyrêt's evidence about conscious textual choices for the illustrations relating to the life of Evdokiia Donskaia. The emphasis here is on the creative process, not on reader response; in fact, the *Litsevoi svod*, never finished and never copied, had but a limited 'readership' even if there is some evidence about the artistic conventions in it having influenced subsequent Muscovite painting.

45 S. A. Belokurov, "O Zapisnom prikaze ('Zapisyvati stepeni i grani tsarstvennye'). 1657-1659 gg," in Idem, *Iz dukhovnoi zhizni moskovskogo obshchestva XVII v.* (Moscow, 1902), 53-84 (reprinted from *Chteniia v Obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh*, 1900, bk. 3, sec. ii).

46 For my take on Ivan's alleged library, with citation of the most relevant scholarship, see "The Unsolved Problem of Tsar Ivan IV's Library," *Russian History*, 14/1-4 (1987), 395-408; also my review of N. N. Zarubin, *Biblioteka Ivana Groznogo: Rekonstruktsiia i bibliograficheskoe opisanie*, in *Slavic Review*, 43, 1 (1984), 95. For a vigorous argument supporting the idea that Ivan had a wonderful library of the Classical authors, see A. A. Amosov, "'Antichnaia' biblioteka

skeptical about the evidence (and adhere to the minority view that he may not have been functionally literate, even if he had a book collection). To date, no books have been found which can be matched with the all too vague reports about his collection, even if the writings attributed to him suggest that their author was familiar with at least some of the standard church texts.[47]

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the second Romanov, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich (r. 1645-1676) was literate and had a rather voracious curiosity about a good many subjects. As yet there is no agreement about what might have constituted his library beyond a few devotional books. I have argued that the collection of materials assembled in his Privy Chancery, an institution that died with him, was in fact his library.[48] It contained a wide range of material, much of it documentation about affairs of state including the religious disputes of the middle of the seventeenth century, but also an extensive file of descriptive and news accounts about foreign countries. In this regard, it was substantially different from anything that can be securely documented for the collections of any of his predecessors in the Kremlin. Perhaps we are left to conclude that for much of the Muscovite period, whether or not they were literate, the Muscovite rulers were more concerned with practical matters than with reading, even if they were interested in supporting the writing and production of texts in support of Orthodoxy.

Among the most prominent elite families in Muscovy who patronized book production and accumulated book collections were the Stroganovs. Entrepreneurs who made their fortune from exploiting the resources of the Russian North in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (salt, furs, mining), the Stroganovs commissioned the building and decoration of churches, had workshops producing icons and embroideries for Church use, and supported scriptoria that produced often lavish copies of books ranging over a number of genres. The Stroganovs had an interest in chronicling the conquest of Siberia (in which they had been involved), and their craftsmen created works whose painted decoration borrowed from Western motifs and styles.

Ivana Groznogo. K voprosu o dostovernosti sokhranivshikhsia izvestii ob inoiazychnom fonde biblioteki moskovskikh gosudarei," in *Knizhnoe delo v Rossii v XVI-XIX vekakh. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Leningrad, 1980), 6-31.

47 The skeptical (and not widely accepted) view about whether Ivan was even literate was forcefully articulated by E. L. Keenan, *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha: The Seventeenth-Century Genesis of the "Correspondence" Attributed to Prince A. M. Kurbskii and Tsar Ivan IV*, with an Appendix by D. C. Waugh (Cambridge, MA, 1971). Various texts other than the letters addressed to Kurbskii have been incautiously attributed to Ivan. Among them is a didactic religious text known as the *Reply to Rokyta*, which was an official response in defense of Orthodoxy delivered to a minister of the Czech Brethren after a 'debate' with the Tsar in Moscow in 1570. While the manuscript (now in Harvard's Houghton Library) very likely is the one actually handed to Rokyta, my examination of it and its text, which is little more than a catechism of Orthodox belief, finds nothing to suggest Ivan was the 'author.' Cf., however, V. Tumins, *Tsar Ivan IV's Reply to Jan Rokyta* (The Hague, 1971).

48 "The Library of Aleksei Mikhailovich," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, 38 (1986), 299-324.

The Stroganov paterfamilias in the sixteenth century, Anika, had a collection of books that then was divided amongst three of his heirs, who in turn supplemented the holdings. The recent detailed study of the Stroganov collections by Natalia A. Mudrova traces the history of the collections, using both the contemporary inventories and related documents and, importantly, identifying extant books whose inscriptions or other codicological evidence connect them with the Stroganov holdings.[49] Unfortunately, there is little here to shed light on the reading habits of the Stroganovs, although perhaps further study of the individual books may tell us something. In fact, for the most part, it seems the family's patronage of book production and their collections were for the purpose of being able to make donations of the books to religious institutions. In some ways then, this evidence can be read as supporting Pozdeeva's point about the key role of Muscovite books in reinforcing the Orthodox cultural values of society at all levels.

There were certainly other libraries in seventeenth-century Muscovy, some held by laymen and in many cases collections which contained a range of genres, not just the standard repertoire of Orthodox literature. Much of the evidence comes from the last third or so of the seventeenth century, a time when interaction with the West was beginning to have a major impact both on the policies of the government and on the cultural tastes of the Muscovite elite. We know, for example, that the Ambassadorial Office (the *Posol'skii prikaz*) had a book collection, which included Western imprints, and that it was producing translations of some of the books, in the first instance for the royal family, but presumably also for key officials. A number of those individuals were clearly literate; some even knew a language other than Russian. Among those who owned and read books were important Muscovite statesmen: Afanasii Ordin-Nashchokin, Artemon Matveev, and Vasilii Golitsyn. We have occasional evidence about their borrowing or loaning books, in some cases from residents of the foreign community in Moscow.

This broadening of interests extended even to conservative clerics, a noteworthy example being Afanasii, Archbishop of Kholmogory, who borrowed and arranged copying of books for his substantial library and had a demonstrable curiosity about a range of subjects.[50] That he was a voracious reader is certain, and it has been possible to demonstrate how he used at least some of what he read. Among the most important book collections the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century were those assembled

49 N. A. Mudrova. *Biblioteka Stroganovykh (vtoraia polovina XVI-nachalo XVIII v.)* (Ekaterinburg, 2015).

50 The substantial study on Afanasii by V. M. Veriuzhskii, published over a century ago, retains its value in part for its information about his library: *Afanasii, arkhiepiskop kholmogorskii. Ego zhizn' i trudy v sviazi s istoriei Kholmogorskoi eparkhii za pervye 20 let ee sushchestvovaniia i voobshche russkoi tserkvi v kontse XVII veka* (St. Petersburg, 1908), esp. Ch. VI. See also the recent work by T. V. Panich, especially *Literaturnoe tvorchestvo Afanasiia Kholmogorskogo. "Estestvennonauchnye" sochineniia* (Novosibirsk, 1996).

by Ruthenian (Ukrainian, Belarusian) clerics, who became prominent hierarchs in the Russian Orthodox Church. As Gary Marker indicates, these learned men, even if they might not always have seen eye to eye, carried on extensive correspondence that documents how they formed a kind of 'republic of letters' in which ideas and books were exchanged. That correspondence should prove a valuable source of evidence about reading in Russia in the Petrine period and beyond.

For summary information on our knowledge about Russian libraries in the seventeenth century, one may still usefully consult a study by Sergei P. Luppov, one of a series of volumes he devoted to the book culture of the Muscovite and immediate post-Muscovite period.[51] However, his interpretive framework is that of the Soviet-era in the emphasis on trying to make much of the in fact limited information about book ownership amongst laymen. Luppov likes statistics, ones which prove to be rather un-helpful for understanding the reading interests of those who owned books. He shoehorns pre-modern book holdings into modern categories of knowledge ("history," "geography," etc.), even if, we would have to think, those were not the categories which bear any relevance to the way an individual would have perceived the content of a given book. We do have to give Luppov credit though for being one of the first to compile and publish information about book ownership, based on inscriptions, even if, under the somewhat misleading title suggesting that such data may tell us who readers were.[52]

6. The study of manuscript miscellanies as a window into Russian reading

Any analysis of reading in Muscovy must be based on close examination not simply of individual books containing single texts, but miscellanies (florilegia) where multiple works have been brought together in a single binding. While there has long been an awareness of the importance of such collections, given the large numbers of them which have survived, the analytical focus on trying to derive from them information about reading might reasonably be dated back only several decades. A programmatic article by the eminent specialist on early Russian literature, Dmitrii S. Likhachev, underscored the importance of studying "convoy"—that is the context of works accompanying any individual text which frequently would have come down

51 S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v XVII veke. Knigoizdatel'stvo. Knigotorgovlia. Rasprostranenie knig sredi razlichnykh sloev naseleniia. Knizhnye sobraniia chastnykh lits. Biblioteki* (Leningrad, 1970). The continuation volume for Peter the Great's reign is Idem, *Kniga v Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1973). Research in manuscript collections continues to turn up new information on private libraries. See, for example, I. A. Poliakov, "Stol'nik kniaz' S. V. Romodanovskoi i ego biblioteka," *Peterburgskii istoricheskii zhurnal*, 14, 2 (2017), 194-205.

52 Luppov, *Chitateli izdanii Moskovskoi tipografii*.

to us only as part of some larger book.[53] His point was that the convoy might tell us something about the context in which a specific text would have been understood by its copyist or owner. In trying to move away from lumping books into what ultimately are the unhelpful categories of 'secular' as opposed to 'religious', Soviet-era scholars began to emphasize the importance of miscellanies which they characterize as "*chet'i sborniki*," that is books that clearly would not have served a liturgical function but rather might be imagined to have been created for individual reading.[54] These could and did, of course, contain works in many genres, the books for the most part having been copied and/or kept by clerics and Orthodox institutions.

The recent study by Irina M. Gritsevskaia (cited as well in Gary Marker's chapter below) offers one of the best introductions to the ways in which the evidence of the *chet'i sborniki* might be analyzed, even if her book may only very indirectly tell us about 'reading'.[55] She opens with a compact but widely ranging review of the literature on the study of manuscript miscellanies and then summarizes her observations (spelled out in detail in a separate monograph[56]) regarding the indexes of permitted and forbidden books, texts which exist in various redactions and were frequently copied in Russian monasteries. On the one hand, she seems to view such lists as evidence of actual reading, with the differences among copies reflecting what was available and being used. On the other hand, as she carefully points out, many of these prescriptive lists in fact merely repeat what would have been obsolete guidance (produced elsewhere in the Byzantine Orthodox world) from an earlier era. Thus, it can be difficult to correlate recommended authors with copies of their works which any given institution might have held.

What this then means, if one is wanting to write about readers and reading, is that codicological analysis of extant books is essential (the sort of thing, as indicated above, which Shibaev and others who have worked on the Kirillov books have been doing). Before proceeding to some detailed examples of such analysis, Gritsevskaia undertakes to refine the typological analysis of *chet'i sborniki*. That is, they are not all of one ilk. Some had more or less stable content, whereas others might incorporate only a few 'standard' texts mixed in with other works. The delineation of the different types might then enable one to suggest, at least in theory, how they were used in different reading contexts. Some might have been primarily for collective reading, where groups of monks would hear a text read aloud, even if not actually following it on the written page. An example could be collections of monastic rules and texts re-

53 D. S. Likhachev, "Izuchenie sostava sbornikov dlia vyiasneniia istorii teksta proizvedenii," *TODRL*, 18 (1962), 3-12.

54 R. P. Dmitrieva, "Chet'i sborniki XV v. kak zhanr," *TODRL*, 27 (1972), 150-180.

55 I. M. Gritsevskaia, *Chtenie i chet'i sborniki v drevnerusskikh monastyriakh XV-XVII vv.* (St. Petersburg, 2012). Important parts of the book were anticipated in a number of her articles which she lists in the bibliography.

56 I. M. Gritsevskaia, *Indeksy istinnykh knig* (St. Petersburg, 2003).

garding the enforcement of their norms. Other collections might more probably have been for silent individual reading, their content perhaps less stable and much more diverse. As Gritsevskaia admits, the boundaries between the different types and their likely use often are quite fuzzy.

What she says about the more diverse (and, one might suggest, 'open-ended') collections is of real interest, where to some degree she is invoking the ideas of Veder about the possible ways in which a 'kaleidoscope' of texts might have stimulated the creation of other works. Recent work on medieval Arabic reading suggests there are some parallels in that, as the social composition of readers in the Arab Middle East expanded, the production of manuscripts of very diverse content (libraries in and of themselves) seems to have proliferated.[57] Conceivably this is what may emerge from our Russian evidence as we move down through the seventeenth century and beyond.

Her study makes it very clear that careful codicological analysis combined with textological study are essential if we are to hope to say something about readership and the impact of reading. For any and all miscellanies, we always must address the question of when the works they contain came together in order to be able to comment on the possible intent of their compilers or copyists, who, it tends to be assumed, were also their readers. Often the collection of works into a single book may not in fact have been done anywhere near the time when an owner of any one of the parts inscribed his name or when the copies were made. Miscellanies may have been put in their present form only in some later century.[58] In that event then, a collection of seventeenth-century texts may tell us about reading interests not in that century but in, say, the nineteenth. Unfortunately, much of the Muscovite manuscript legacy including such miscellanies still awaits proper codicological analysis. Published catalogs for some of the key collections in many cases are over a century old, produced in a time when such analysis was not being undertaken, and many of the most recent catalogs are too cryptic to tell us much more than what texts are to be found in any given book. As Pozdeeva determined in her project on provincial libraries, the keepers of those collections lacked the training to do a proper job of description and analysis.[59]

The information we might want about ownership and, potentially, readership more often than not is to be found in monographic study of particular texts, which generally include manuscript descriptions and where possible

57 See Hirschler, *The Written Word*, 186-188.

58 See my articles on the collecting activity of the famous nineteenth-century scholar Pavel M. Stroev, many of whose books containing important, often unique copies of seventeenth century texts are collections he himself put together in order to group the works thematically, even if they came from distinctly separate sources: D. K. Uo [Waugh], "K izucheniiu istorii rukopisnogo sobraniia P. M. Stroeva," *TODRL*, 30 (1976), 184-203; 32 (1977), 133-164.

59 In his address at the "Tikhomirov Readings" in Moscow in 1972, Dmitrii S. Likhachev lamented not only the general lack of progress in the description of Russian manuscript collections but more specifically the fact that in the provincial repositories sometimes there was

will try to say something about who possessed copies or used them. In my own experience though, this kind of analysis may yield far too little. Indeed, manuscripts brought together in their current form around the time the individual text copies were made may have no particular thematic focus. Do we then conclude their producers or readers simply were eclectic in their tastes and might have been stimulated to think in creative ways about new subjects? In my work on Muscovite *turcica* (works with 'Turkish' themes), I was able to identify a few examples of collections that contained more than one such text.[60] Furthermore, some of the collections could be attributed to the circles of the elite who were connected with the Ambassadorial Office—for example, some manuscripts included texts translated from foreign newspapers or pamphlets that increasingly were being obtained by the government. In one or two cases, the works that interested me even are found in books connected with the above-mentioned Archbishop Afanasii Kholmogorskii.[61] But, *as yet*, such evidence is sparse and scattered, arguably insufficient to enable us to write a larger history of reading in Muscovy and how it changed over time.

The example of the foreign news translations contains material relevant to any attempt to understand what reading might have involved in Muscovy at least in a narrow circle of individuals.[62] The acquisition of foreign news, often in the form of printed or manuscript newspapers and separates, can be traced back into the sixteenth century, but it was only with establishment of an international postal connection to the West in the mid-1660s that the acquisition of such material and the mechanisms for processing it were regularized. The foreign texts had to be read by the professional translators in the Ambassadorial Office, many of whom were not ethnic Russians even if they may have grown up in Muscovy. The procedure was that after reading the original text and relying on his understanding of what was important news for the government (which meant, among other things, some knowledge of the international context for the news reports), the translator would

no one who could even decipher the old Russian cursive handwriting. See D. S. Likhachev, "Zadachi sostavleniia metodik opisaniia slaviano-russkikh rukopisei," *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1972 god* (Moscow, 1974), 234-255. Granted, much has been accomplished since then.

60 See my *The Great Turkes Defiance. On the History of the Apocryphal Correspondence of the Ottoman Sultan in its Muscovite and Russian Variants*, with a foreword by Dmitrii Sergeevich Likhachev (Columbus, O, 1978).

61 New information about Afanasii's acquisition of some of these texts, is in T. A. Bazarova, "'Prishla pochta is-pod Azova...': pis'ma uchastnikov Azovskikh pokhodov (1695-1696) v Nauchno-istoricheskom archive SPbII RAN," *Istoriia voennogo dela: issledovaniia i istochniki*. Spetsial'nyi vypusk X (2019). *Azovskie pokhody 1695 i 1696 gg.*, ch. 1, 1-22 (http://www.reenactor.ru/ARH/PDF/Bazarova_14.pdf, last accessed 11 February 2021).

62 For a current overview of what we know about the news translations, with references to the now extensive literature, see Ingrid Maier, Daniel Waugh, "Muscovy and the European Information Revolution: Creating the Mechanisms for Obtaining Foreign News," in S. Franklin, K. Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire: Mechanisms of Communication in Russia, 1600-1850* (Cambridge, 2017), 77-112. The authors are currently completing a book-length study of foreign news in Muscovy, which will include a discussion of readership.

render the German or Dutch (the most common languages of the sources) into Russian, but usually in some abbreviated or summary fashion. The resulting compendia (termed the *kuranty*) then might be edited by a secretary before being read to the Tsar, with his boyars (key noble advisers) listening in the antechamber. Even though some, incautiously I would argue, are wont to talk about the 'readers of foreign news' in Moscow, suggesting perhaps there were many more of them than the sources would indicate, we nonetheless have here a readership, at least some of whom did not actually look at the texts on paper but heard them read. The tsar, who was perfectly capable of reading the texts themselves, heard them read, but also kept written copies for, one might assume, possible silent reading if he wanted to consult something. The reading out loud of written news texts is also something we can document for Western Europe, where often an inn or coffeehouse was the place where people (literate or not) gathered to learn the latest reports.[63] In such situations, whether or not the news was deemed for privileged consumption only (as was the case in Muscovy), we can assume some further transmission of it orally occurred.

As Gary Marker notes, the old paradigm of searching out the routes to modernity has pretty much shaped the literature on Russian reading since the Enlightenment.[64] Indeed, there can be no question but that the world that lay ahead for Russia was one which ultimately would be fundamentally different from that of Muscovy. Certainly some of what I have surveyed above, including the case of the *kuranty*, fits nicely into such an interpretive scheme. However, there is much here to demonstrate how one-sided it can be. The scholarship on literacy and reading may rightly emphasize how central their development and spread throughout all levels of society was in the making of the modern world. However, there also is evidence that certain reading communities which placed a high value on books and reading did so precisely in order to strengthen their adherence to traditional (if you wish, 'pre-modern') values.[65] The case of the Old Believers, the religious schismatics who broke with the Orthodox Church in the middle of the seventeenth century in the face of the Nikonian reforms of ritual and text, is an example of this. Paradoxically it is precisely thanks to the diligence of the

63 See A. Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven, London, 2014), Ch. 11; A. Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000), 352-353, 374-380.

64 See Marker, "The Eighteenth Century: From Reading Communities to the Reading Public," in the present volume, for references. For my perhaps idiosyncratic take on the discussion insofar as it relates to the Petrine era, see D. C. Waugh, "We Have Never Been Modern: Approaches to the Study of Russia in the Age of Peter the Great," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 49, 3 (2001), 321-345.

65 For some comparative perspective on the role of literacy, see J. Goody, I. Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5 (1993), 304-345, and R. Horton, "African Traditional Thought and Western Science," *Africa*, 37, 1-2 (1967), 50-71, 155-187.

Old Believers in preserving and copying the pre-Nikonian books that we can learn a great deal about readership amongst rural village inhabitants in Russia beginning in the late seventeenth century and moving down to modern times.

It may never be possible to come up with any meaningful statistics to document the degree to which there was non-elite literacy in Muscovy. But there certainly are some suggestive examples, such as the Popovs and a few other families in the Pinega region.[66] We now know quite a bit about a few such peasant libraries, small as they were, which were actively used collections of books and documents. In these cases, a lot of the documentation may date from the eighteenth, nineteenth and even twentieth centuries, but there is some material from the seventeenth, and the involvement with their books of several generations of any one of the families can offer interesting perspectives on the continuities and changes in reading habits. Are those few instances exceptional though, reflecting something about the distinct culture of the Russian North where many of the Old Believers took refuge, or do we know about them simply because the state of preservation of books in that region is better than for other areas? Only further research can answer such questions.

I would conclude by reviewing briefly one very specific example which demonstrates what we might be able learn about reading in 'late Muscovy.' While it would be presumptuous to suggest this case study lends itself to broader generalization, at very least it may highlight the ambiguities of how we might interpret such evidence. My 'hero' here (around whom I have written a substantial book) is an Orthodox sacristan Semen Popov, whose activity spans the late-seventeenth-early eighteenth century divide that too glibly has been used to demarcate the 'old' and 'new' Russias. Popov was a provincial, in the town of Khlynov (later Viatka, now Kirov) north of Kazan' on the way into the western foothills of the Urals.[67] While communication between the Viatka region and the Russian capitals was relatively slow and infrequent, nonetheless there is plenty of evidence to demonstrate how books and texts produced elsewhere penetrated the region. As an individual known locally for his literacy and respected for his position, Popov was

66 On the Popovs, see N. V. Savel'eva, "Biblioteka pinezhan Popovykh," in *Knizhnye tsentry Drevnei Rusi. XVII vek. Raznye aspekty issledovaniia* (St. Petersburg, 1994): 266-314; more generally on those northern village collections, Idem, *Pinezhskaia knizhno-rukopisnaia traditsiia XVI-nachala XX vv.*, T. 1. *Ocherk istorii formirovaniia pinezhskoi knizhno-rukopisnoi traditsii. Opisanie rukopisnykh istochnikov* (St. Petersburg, 2003). For another example, see B. N. Morozov, "Arkhiv torgovykh krest'ian Shanginykh," *Sovetskie arkhivy*, 1980/2, 57-61. For a careful analysis of Old Believer book culture in its first decades, see N. Iu. Bubnov, *Staroobraidcheskaia kniga v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XVII v.* (St. Petersburg, 1995).

67 On Popov and his books, see D. K. Uo [Waugh], *Istoriia odnoi knigi. Viatka i "ne-sovremennost'" v russkoi kul'ture petrovskogo vremeni*. (St. Petersburg, 2003), and note as well Gary Marker's cautionary remark at the end of his review in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 53 (2005), 116-118.

enlisted in fiscal administrative tasks devised as part of Peter the Great's reforms. His career, and indeed his literary interests, defy any attempt to pigeonhole him in a 'religious' or 'secular' box.

We know quite a bit about the texts he owned and read, and can reasonably posit his authorship of certain works. Marginal notations in his hand often indicate what interested him in a particular text, and in some cases his inscriptions identify from whom he obtained a copy of it. The town censuses generally enable us to say more about the 'reading community' of which he was a part.

Popov kept himself informed of the news, much of it coming in the first printed Russian newspapers, the *Vedomosti* Peter the Great began to have published starting in late 1702. Popov's collection of these texts (mostly manuscript copies, not the printed originals) is one of the largest assembled in any one place in early eighteenth-century Russia and includes what is apparently a unique (manuscript) copy of first number of the *Vedomosti*. Among these products of Petrine officially sponsored propaganda in his collection were copies of a few of the texts issued in conjunction with the public celebrations of Russian victories in the Northern War.[68] He certainly read some of the important Church texts, presumably in part because a knowledge of them was relevant to his profession but also because he could use them in his own writings. The collected hagiographic tales of the *Prolog* (Synaxarion) were particularly relevant for him. So also was the *Stepennaia kniga* and one of the major seventeenth-century historical compilations, the so-called *Chronograph of 1617*. The emphasis in Popov's writing on local history seems to have been to demonstrate the divinely-sanctioned place of Viatka in the larger order of things. While not a 'fledgling of Peter's nest,' as were many famous members of the Tsar's entourage, Popov was arguably far from a unique example of a man of the Petrine era, caught between the modernizing pressures of the state and the culture and traditions of the Russia that had not yet really been much changed by any 'march to modernity.'

To study reading in 'pre-modern' Russia (I cannot avoid that descriptor, much as I would like to) is going to require a lot of work, where, as much as possible, we need to free ourselves from some of the pre-conceptions as to what we would hope to find, and to recognize that what turns up may in fact call into question that which we thought we knew. The picture which emerges is likely to be a messy one. Yet at least a good many of the questions

68 Popov had a manuscript copy made from the printed text of Iosif Turoboiskii's description of the triumphal arch erected for the celebration in November 1703 as well as a manuscript copy of the published program for the play "Revnost' Pravoslaviia" mounted by the Moscow Academy in February 1704, both of the manuscript copies having been obtained from the same *viatchanin*, Osip Tepliashin in May 1704. For details, see Uo [Waugh], *Istoriia odnoi knigi*, esp. 99-113.

we might reasonably ask are ones which probably are relevant to any inquiry about reading, whatever the period and place it is to be found.

Not the least of the tasks here is going to be to look closely at the intersection between oral and written culture. Analyses of formally composed works such as saints' lives may reveal how written sources are interwoven with oral testimony, with orally transmitted legend and so on. To understand this then tempers how we would understand the impact of reading a written text. In work I have been doing recently, attempting to determine how news was communicated in Muscovy, I have found very interesting evidence (documented in written sources about the responses to the Stenka Razin rebellion) about how information may move back and forth between the written and the oral, where responses of the literate to both forms of communication can be established.[69] Furthermore, we have a lot of evidence, still to be systematized, on how the posting or reading aloud of a written text may reach well beyond the circle of those who possessed formal literacy.

As Simon Franklin has put it, "the culture of the written word and the culture of the spoken word overlap, interact modify and modulate each other. Writing does not obliterate speech and memory, but rather the functions of each are affected by the presence of the other".[70] I would suggest this insight is essential to keep in mind if we wish to learn about reading and readers, whether in Muscovy or even beyond in the most recent centuries. In his chapter below, where he cites hard statistics on print runs of tens of thousands of the thick journals during the Thaw of the late 1950s and early 1960s, Denis Kozlov emphasizes that the size of those editions was inadequate to meet demand. Thus, "one needs to examine other practices of reading, such as collective reading, sharing of printed matter, reading in public or institutional libraries, and other similar ways of accessing the printed word. This is where statistics reaches its limit, because such unorthodox practices of reading and information exchange obviously cannot be quantified."[71] I am not sure I would label such practices as "unorthodox," but we can probably all agree that in many ways the methodologies we employ in studying Muscovite practices are just as relevant to modern times.

69 See my "What was News and How Was It Communicated in Pre-modern Russia?" in Franklin, Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire*, 213-252, esp. 236-250.

70 Franklin, *Writing*, 9. In the medieval Arab world, there is interesting evidence about the relationship between the written and spoken word, where in oral recitations of texts, to which a broad cross-section of society might be invited, the listeners might as well be following along in a written copy of what was being recited and could thereby raise criticisms of omissions or errors by the reciter. See Hirschler, *The Written Word*, esp. Ch. 2. Hirschler prefers the term "aural" to "oral" in his analysis, since a great deal of his evidence pertains to what the 'readers' would have heard. That is, his emphasis is not on the production of the spoken word, but its reception.

71 Kozlov, "Reading During the Thaw: Subscription to Literary Periodicals as Evidence for an Intellectual History of Soviet Society," vol. 3, 206.

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THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: FROM READING COMMUNITIES TO THE READING PUBLIC

Gary Marker

"To write is to produce the text; to read is to receive it from someone else without putting one's own mark on it, without remaking it." (Michel de Certeau, *The Practices of Everyday Life*, 169)

"Reading is as it were overprinted by a relationship of forces (between teachers and pupils, or between consumers and producers) whose instrument it becomes." (Ibid., 171)

"...reading has no place... [the reader's] place is not here or there, one or the other... simultaneously inside and outside... associating texts like funerary statues that he awakens and hosts, but never owns. In that way he escapes from the law of each text in particular, and from that of the social milieu." (Ibid., 174)[1]

INTRODUCTION

The chronology of this chapter traces Russia's 'long eighteenth century' (more-or-less from the last quarter of the seventeenth century through 1801). It begins, however, with a brief digression drawn from Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984). The book includes a slim but insightful chapter entitled "Reading as Poaching" that, at least as I read it,

1 M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, 1984). See also J. Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and Its Other* (Stanford, 1995), especially chapter 6, "Turns and Divisions," 157-189.

offers a valuable crafting conceptual space for thinking about the history of reading, Russia included.

De Certeau saw reading fundamentally as a quotidian practice, whose social meaning was shaped inextricably within cultural and institutional relations of power and inequality. He argued strenuously against two alternative forms of over-determined reasoning that find their way into the scholarship. First, he largely rejected the vision of the autonomous or unconstrained reader capable of creating meaning from texts utterly independent of the forces of authority that frame the reading in the first place. On the contrary, the authority of "the media," he insists, functions much like catechisms, shaping and delimiting how one reads and understands. He was equally censorious about the opposite extreme, however, that reduces the reader to little more than a vessel, a passive object of the text itself and the larger forces that produced it. He imagined a type of reading that was and is not confined by "the law" of the text, but that, instead, "poaches" from it, in essence creating meanings out of the text (or combinations of text) not necessarily anticipated by those who produced them. In other words, the history of reading must simultaneously accommodate the force of top-down prescription and the incapacity of that prescription to be absolute. For the purposes of this chapter, let us term this principle of indeterminacy 'de Certeau's Paradox.'

De Certeau further insisted that these social and cultural practices need be studied empirically, by way of documentary evidence, and free of the positivistic trappings of objectivism.[2] But how? If an individual's reading is massively preconditioned (de Certeau dubbed this "scriptural imperialism"), shaped to a large extent by phenomena external to what takes place when eye meets text, how can it also be "autonomous" (again, de Certeau's term[3]), i.e., not simply a product of those mighty forces but rather cognitively generated within the act of reading itself, how shall we proceed? How do we as historians of reading accommodate the simultaneity of heterogeneity, or the fragmentation of reading, and cultural disciplining by those clerical and lay elites who presided over the circulation of texts? Equally important, how do we go about situating our work along this broad and sometimes maze-like continuum and still remain attentive to the contextual specificities of Russia?

This set of tensions—disciplining vs. re-creative autonomy, theory vs. irreducible empiricism convey a vision of the multiplicities and indeterminacies of reading practices that in many ways frames this chapter. I would further argue that they tacitly constitute an ongoing set of themes that weave their way through many, if not all, the contributions to this volume. The

2 De Certeau, 165-69. Robert Darnton addressed the questions of potential sources and methods more concretely in his well-known essay, "First steps toward a history of reading," in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York, 1990), 154-187.

3 De Certeau, 169.

richly documented chapters by Reitblat, Kozlov, Kislova, Leibov and Vdovin, for example, strongly emphasize the empirical.[4] By contrast, Kirill Ospovat's chapter inclines in the other direction by addressing reading in the first half of the eighteenth century as an exercise of prescription. Employing the Foucauldian lens of social control, what Ospovat calls "the monarchy's top-down disciplining effort," he shows both the formal authority of the state and the nascent moral authority of lay literati aggressively sought to shape not simply *what* people read but *how*.[5] Closely related to this analysis is Bella Grigoryan's perusal of what might be termed the imagined reader and readership as reflected in contributions to literary journals.[6] Similarly, Andrei Zorin's essay explores the narrative strategies and language through which authors of the Sentimentalist Age framed the emotional qualities of the ideal reader within their fiction.[7] If not exactly decrees, these formulations were nonetheless thoroughly prescriptive, commanded rather than merely suggested. And if not quite synaptic, Zorin's analysis does make a direct link between reading and the body.

From de Certeau's perspective, the next questions should be: do the empirical and conceptual analyses converge? How well did disciplining succeed? Did readers succumb to these "laws," did they "become their instrument[s]," or did they remake them? As if in response, several of the chapters, in particular the previous essay on Muscovy by Daniel Waugh[8] but also several of those that follow addressing more modern times, seem rather closer to the notion of autonomy, at times revealing a pastiche of unanticipated, even eccentric, reader responses that defy overarching models. Were these surprising reformulations, his chapter seems to inquire, functioning outside the prescriptive norms, and if so, how and why? Rodolphe Baudin's concept of an "inner tension" between production and consumption, seems to embrace his spirit of indeterminacy.[9] He even complicates matters further by observing (quite rightly) that literati themselves imagined readers as "autonomous," "Adults" engaging in an "emancipatory practice". This sense of reading indeterminacy recurs, at least by implication, in several essays on late periods through notions of "guided reading". "adjusted reading," "the other readers," "reading milieux," reading as "misunderstanding," etc. So, de Certeau hovers throughout, if mostly as unnamed muse.

4 See Kislova, "What, How and Why the Orthodox Clergy Read in Eighteenth-Century Russia" in the present volume; Reitblat, "The Reading Audience of the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century" and Leibov, Vdovin, "What and How Russian Students read in School 1840-1917" in vol. 2; Kozlov, "Reading during the Thaw" in vol. 3.

5 See Ospovat, "Reforming Subjects" in the present volume.

6 See Grigoryan, "The Depiction of Readers and Publics in Russian Periodicals, 1769-1839" in the present volume.

7 See Zorin, "A Reading Revolution?" in the present volume.

8 See Waugh, "How Might we Write a History of Reading in Pre-Eighteenth-Century Russia?" in the present volume.

9 See Baudin, "Reading in Russia in the Times of Catherine II" in the present volume.

The scholarship on reading in Muscovite and Imperial Russia, has come quite far over the past twenty or so years, both in terms of its fields of inquiry and in the volume of basic research. Reading and readers has become complicated, non- and even anti-paradigmatic, such that it may be unrealistic, at least for now, to talk about reading during this time period in holistic or broadly interpretive terms. Several years have elapsed, I should note, since literacy, print culture, and readers constituted the central focus of my scholarship, and I do not offer any fresh research of my own here. Instead, what follows are my own somewhat individual reflections on the state of the field, changes that have taken place in the historiography, open questions (quite a few of these), possible avenues for future research, and whether some of the current scholarship might point toward a rethinking of long-held assumptions about the patterns of eighteenth-century reading and the contexts within which it occurred: sociological (to which I remain partial), cultural, and institutional.

The sections are arranged topically and thematically, with a heavy emphasis on current scholarship, but each is informed by an overarching set of questions. Was there a chronological shape or trajectory to this history of reading(s) during the long and turbulent eighteenth century, or was it fundamentally too fragmented to allow for that? Did the rise of absolutism, Enlightenment, educated society effectively frame or direct reading, whether it be individual or collective? I offer some provisional and open-ended propositions on how one might conceptualize the changing terrain of Russian reading given the current state of the field, and on how the history of reading might intersect with and possibly inform recent challenges to some of the traditional frameworks of Russian history, and, of course, vice versa.

I. RE-PERIODIZATION: READING AND THE EARLY MODERN

Over the past couple of decades eighteenth-century Russian studies has been pushed out of its comfort zone, buffeted by pointed challenges from a number of scholarly quarters. These iconoclasts raise doubts about precisely how and where to situate the eighteenth century within the *longue durée* of Russian history. Some reject the cherished vision of the eighteenth century as radically transformative, the temporal crucible of Russia's modernity. They bluntly question just how different the eighteenth century was from Muscovy, with at least one medievalist boldly concluding that the eighteenth century constituted little more than a continuation of Muscovy, that in the end "Peter the Great didn't matter."[10] Not surprisingly, eighteenth-century

10 See as an example the *Slavic Review* forum "Divides and Ends: Periodizing the Early Modern in Russian History," *Slavic Review*, 69, 2 (summer, 2010), 410-447, in particular the contributions by Donald Ostrowski, Russell Martin, and Nancy Kollmann: D. Ostrowski ,"The End of Muscovy: the Case for Circa 1800," 426-438; R. E. Martin, "The Petrine Divide and the

specialists have either begged to differ, or, more typically, have avoided the subject completely. Other critics have been more circumspect, but they too have concluded that the basic direction of state formation, physical expansion, social institutions, and ideology were in place much earlier, and that the eighteenth century constituted little more than a continuation of dynamics already set in motion.

Recent books on empire also lean in this direction, arguing that the basic drive toward and framework of empire, a multi-confessional and multi-peopled realm ruled by Moscow, emerged well before Peter the Great, no later than the conquest of Kazan' and, in the eyes of some, as early as the reign of Ivan III.[11]

In place of the traditional *Drevniaia Rus'/ Rossiiskaia Imperiia* chronological antinomy (Ancient Russia/Russian Empire, familiarly termed `the Petrine Divide'), ever more historians now speak of an early modern era (*rannee novoe vremia*), spanning Muscovy through the eighteenth century. Indeed, the idea that there was such a thing as a discernible phenomenon called 'old Russian culture' spanning from Saint Vladimir in the tenth century through Tsar' Aleksei Mikhailovich in the seventeenth, and that this old Russian culture constituted a shared set of beliefs and practices across centuries has largely been set aside, even though there is as yet no widely accepted alternative on the horizon.

Periodization of Early Modern Russian History," 410-425; N. S. Kollmann, "Comment: Divides and Ends-The Problem of Periodization," 439-447. In his deliberately provocative essay, Ostrowski proposed that, if one looks at the underlying structures and dynamics of Muscovy, the period between 1450 and 1800 saw no significant turning points and instead constituted a single epoch of expansion and state building. Peter the Great, he insisted, did nothing to fundamentally redirect them.

A related forum appeared in *Kritika* in 2015: "Forces for Change in Early Modern Russia" with essays by Paul Bushkovitch ("Change and Culture in Early Modern Russia") and Nancy Kollmann ("A Deeper Early Modern: A Response to Paul Bushkovitch"), *Kritika*, 18, 2 (spring 2015), 291-330. The most recent issue of the journal *Quaestio Rossica*, 6, 1 (2018) contains two additional meditations on this set of issues. Aleksandr Kamenskii, "K problem `vekovoi russkoi otstaslosti'," 185-206; and Ol'ga Kosheleva, "Sovremennaia otechestvennaia istoriografiia Rossii predpetrovskogo vremeni: novye aspekty," 269-289. Both essays situate the eighteenth century within a much longer continuum.

11 See inter alia Matthew P. Romaniello, *The Elusive Empire: Kazan and the Creation of Russia, 1552-1671* (Madison, WI., 2012). Romaniello refers to the post-1551 arrangement as "the Muscovite empire." Several – but not all – recent studies of empire, most notably those by Nancy Kollmann (*The Russian Empire, 1450-1801* [Oxford, 2017]), and Valerie Kivelson and Ronald Suny (*Russia's Empires* [Oxford, 2016]) have implicitly endorsed Romaniello's insistence upon pushing empire back to the sixteenth century. One of the earliest texts to push the onset of empire back to Ivan IV is G. Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire 1552-1917* (Cambridge, MA, 1997). By contrast, Alfred Rieber's two recent studies adhere to a more traditional periodization. A. J. Rieber, *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation* (Toronto, 2017); idem, *The Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands: From the Rise of Early Modern Empires to the End of the First World War* (Cambridge, 2014).

These revisionary approaches have begun to have a modest impact on current Russian book studies.[12] At a minimum the field has become much more aware of the difficulty of drawing clear separations between one period and the next, no matter how insistently Peter the Great commanded *renovatio*. The porous and constructed nature of chronology is one important theme of this chapter, which in several places inquires what differentiated eighteenth century reading and readerships from that of earlier times. In the end I find it impossible to imagine the book culture of the eighteenth century without constantly referencing the seventeenth, an outlook that shapes the totality of this chapter. As a result, some of the narrative threads developed in the first chapter by Daniel Waugh, as well as quite a few of the works cited there (e.g., the formidable studies by I. V. Pozdeeva), reappear here, sometimes as reinforcement, other times with a slightly different inflection. The Viatka sacristan Semen Popov, about whom Waugh has written so extensively, and who straddled the seventeenth-century fin de siècle without much concern about which foot stood in which epoch, also makes a cameo appearance in this chapter. Similarly, the meaning of inscriptions, so fundamental to reconstructing reading practices in Rus' continues to preoccupy eighteenth-century studies, where it flows ultimately into the analysis of subscriptions. The two simply cannot be neatly disentangled, neither methodologically nor chronologically. These narrative overlaps are unavoidable and—dare we say it?—*productive* consequences of the very demystification of chronology that the current periodization debate evokes. Our common goal is to interrogate old certainties and to encourage further discussion rather than to command closure.

Other challenges have taken direct aim at a second mighty pillar of this historiographic convention: secularization. The conviction that Peter the Great tore asunder Rus' fundamental unifying spirituality (*dukhovnost'*) and thereby initiated Russia's Age of Enlightenment had been an interpretive truism for many generations of scholars. Some embraced the change, others bemoaned it, but almost everyone agreed that the Petrine era constituted an epistemic shift from faith-centered to secular and reason-centered outlooks among the growing ranks of educated elites. This presumption reigned supreme, one of the relative handful of modernization models that drew adherents from all sides, Soviet and non-Soviet historians alike. It defined our approaches, shaped our research questions, and framed what we chose to look at.

12 See, for example, Irina Pozdeeva's most recent writings on Muscovite printing, in which she portrays a much greater degree of continuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than she had in earlier works. I. V. Pozdeeva, *Chelovek. Kniga. Istoriia. Moskovskaia pechat' XVII veka* (Moscow, 2016); idem, "Moskovskii pechatnyi dvor XVII v. Mezhdu srednevekov'em i novym vremenem," *Acta Baltico-Slavica*, 40 (2016), 126-166. For more on this see WAUGH, "How Might We Write a History of Reading in Pre-Eighteenth-Century Russia?", in the present volume.

During the long reign of this paradigm, clerical figures, when they drew any mention at all in the mainstream of scholarship, were discussed almost exclusively from the perspective of state building, institutions, political ideology (Feofan Prokopovich for example), and occasionally political dissent. Alternatively, religious hierarchs were assessed against a yardstick of national progress defined as rationalism, education, and Enlightenment, sometimes passing muster, other times not. But the fact that they were clergy, and that their outlook was at heart pastoral, defined by a salvation-centered Orthodoxy, largely fell out of the conversation, except in the subfield of works specializing on church history or those published in explicitly Orthodox venues. As recently as 2002 a searching study of the sacralization of tsarist authority which deemed religious discourse to be foundational to tsarist sovereignty nevertheless concluded that the Petrine era marked the end of the line, during and after which with sacred images giving way to secular ones.[13] Religious sensibilities among lay literati drew even less attention (except as literary metaphors or tropes), a casualty of an entrenched teleology that situated the lay elites of the eighteenth century on a one-way developmental ladder leading up to the emergence of the intelligentsia in the mid-nineteenth century.

This aversion to examining religiosity among eighteenth-century lay elites has now changed, and quite dramatically, thanks in no small measure to very fundamental questions first posed in the 1970s and 1980s by several Tartu- and Moscow-school semioticians, most prominently Viktor Zhivov and Boris Uspenskii. Their seminal articles placed the concept of sacrality at the very center of their inquiry into key terms.[14] Subsequently Zhivov

13 A. A. Andreeva, *'Mestnik Bozhii' na tsarskom trone. Khristianskaia tsivilizatsionnaia model' sakralizatsii vlasti v rossiiskoi istorii* (Moscow, 2002). The concluding chapter is entitled (in Russian), "The Reforms of Peter I and the Beginning of the Process of Secularization of the Political Sphere."

14 The essay "Tsar' i Bog" is perhaps the most influential example, but the two of them, both together and separately, developed their approach to the sacred in several essays, thereby elaborating its centrality within discourses of political and moral authority well into the Imperial period. V. M. Zhivov and B. A. Uspenskii, "Tsar' i Bog. Semioticheskie aspekty sakralizatsii monarkha v Rossii," *Iazyki kul'tury i problema perevodimosti* (Moscow, 1987), 295-337. The article has since been republished several times and translated into English in a volume of their translations edited by Marcus Levitt: *"Tsar and God" and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics* (Boston, 2012), 1-112.

See also Iu. Kagarlitskii, "Sakralizatsiia kak priem. Resursy ubeditel'nosti i vliiatel'nosti imperskogo diskursa v Rossii XVIII veka," *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*, 38 (1999), 66-77.

Some other examples of this recent outpouring of relevant works: *Chelovek i mir v kul'ture Rossii XVIII veka*, published by Pomorskii Gos. Universitet (Arkhangelsk, 1997) includes a large section entitled "Religioznost' russkogo cheloveka v vek Prosveshcheniia," that intermingled clerical and lay writers extensively. More recently Gary Hamburg's magnum opus, *Russia's Path Towards Enlightenment*, contains the evocative subtitle *Faith, Politics, and Reason, 1500-1801* (New Haven, 2016). Noteworthy among the many recent studies are works by Elise Wirtschafter, Andrey Ivanov, Maria-Cristina Bragoni, Ernst Zitser, Margarita Korzo, Elena Smilianskaia, Aleksandr Lavrov, Elena Pogosian, and several others also have placed religion and the supernatural at the center of eighteenth-century Russian culture. E. Kimerling Wirtschafter, *Religion and Enlightenment in Catherinian Russia: The Teachings of Metropolitan*

wrote a searching study of Stefan Iavorskii, tellingly entitled *On the History of The Church in the Time of Peter the Great* (*Iz tserkovnoi istorii vremen Petra Velikogo*). The book contained politics aplenty, but its overarching premise was to examine Iavorskii primarily as a pastoral figure rather than as a mostly political ideologist, and to situate him within ongoing theological issues confronting Orthodoxy in Russia and elsewhere, in his day.[15]

Most historians tend to proceed cautiously, and are prudently wary of embracing the latest 'turn' in historical epistemology. But much like our colleagues of the European Enlightenment, we too are increasingly writing religion back into the text of cultural and intellectual analysis. This scholarly rediscovery of spirituality and religious discourse is quite welcome, at least in my view, in that it reveals the vitality of Orthodoxy-as-cultural-production throughout the eighteenth century. It broadens the field of inquiry in very productive ways, and most assuredly in the study of reading and writing. Here I would point to the chapter by Ekaterina Kislova that analyzes clerical reading among theological seminarians, not as a subset of life in the metropoles or as part of an overly homogenized notion of an Enlightenment-framed `obshchestvo,' but instead as an object of study in itself. As in empire studies, rethinking secularity implicitly revisits the very idea of a Petrine—in this case cultural—revolution and thereby obliges us to take seriously the uncomfortable question posed above about how much the eighteenth century really mattered. To date, though, the religious turn in Russian historiography, at least for the eighteenth century, has not generated the sort of groundbreaking reconceptualization that we see elsewhere.

These varied attempts to reformulate the underlying assumptions of our field are timely. How, then, might they relate to the history of reading? Does the concept of an early modern, for example, undermine the conventional wisdom that the reading public of the eighteenth century, and especially the reign of Catherine the Great, constituted a sharp divide from what preceded it? Alternatively, if we accept a more pluralist definition of reading, or a space of reading that admits the continued and even enlarged vitality of Orthodox learning and texts, does the appearance of a public, or the very

Platon (DeKalb, ILL, 2013); A. S. Lavrov, *Koldovstvo i religiia v Rossii, 1700-1740 gg.* (Moscow, 2000); E. B. Smilianskaia, *Volshebniki, Bogokhul'niki, Eretiki: Narodnaia religioznost' i `dukhovnye prestupleniia' v Rossii XVIII v.* (Moscow, 2003); E. A. Zitser, *The Transfigured Kingdom: Sacred Parody and Charismatic Authority at the Court of Peter the* Great (Ithaca, NY, 2004); M.C. Bragone, "Fortuna e diffusione del Piccolo Catechismo di Lutero nella Russia di Pietro il Grande," *Rivista storica italiana*, 1, 2017, 227-238; idem "Eshche o perevode stikhov Grigorija Bogoslova v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XVII - nachale XVIII veka (Evfimij Chudovskij i Fedor Polikarpov)," *Kul'tura i prosveshchenie v Rossii XVII-XVIII vv*. (Moscow, forthcoming); A. Ivanov, "Reforming Orthodoxy: Russian Bishops and Their Church, 1721-1801," PhD Dissertation. Yale University (New Haven, 2012).

15 V. Zhivov, *Iz tserkovnoi istorii vremen Petra Velikogo. Issledovaniia i materialy* (Moscow, 2004). See in particular the discussion of Iavorskii's defense of the independence of the Church, 106-130.

idea of a public, suddenly seem less epoch-making than we have long imagined? If we are to integrate the history of reading with the so-called 'big questions,' these are timely matters to ponder.

2. LEGIBILITY AND VISIBILITY

The very definition of reading, and the practices that might be subsumed within it, has grown more elastic in recent years. In the process it has become more difficult to bracket empirically. To give one major example, ever more scholars now embrace the so-called `visual turn,' i.e., the proposition that visual texts were in some fundamental way read, that, like verbal texts, their meanings were not forever fixed or frozen by their creators but instead were appropriated and re-appropriated in visual dialogue with their audiences, their readers. I find the equation of visibility and legibility compelling.[16] And yet, integrating it into historical narratives is no simple matter.[17] For one, visuals-as-reading necessitates decoupling reading and literacy, an almost unthinkable proposition a generation or two ago. What does it mean to `read' images vis-à-vis merely seeing them, or vis-à-vis reading words?; how, in our disciplinary imaginations were they/are they read?; and who constitutes the reader(s)? Like sounds, visuals surround us, they occur every day, everywhere, to everyone: on walls of churches, household icons, on the streets, in books or codexes (words, after all, are also visual), as broadsheets, graffiti, etc. Churches, bell towers, walls, streetscapes, attire, all constitute sites of potential meaning, and scholars these days are taking full advantage of this type of textualization to produce some stunning readings of their own of Muscovite and early Imperial culture. Simon Franklin's chapter in this volume, on reading the streets and signage, explores multiple aspects of this theme of the interplay of word and image in public spaces.

Even as we recognize that alphabets and images are both vision-dependent systems for communicating meaning, that both start with the eyes (a point exquisitely made by Franklin's concept of a `graphosphere'), one is still confronted with the fact that they are different from one another. Unlike

16 This formulation comes from S. Strättling's *Allegorien der Imagination: Lesarkeit und Sichtarkeit in russischen Barock* (Munich, 2005).

17 On Russian history and the visual turn see the introductory comment, "Russian History after the Visual Turn," *Kritika*, 11, 2 (spring, 2010), 217-220, as well as the essays in the issue that dwell on visuals as texts in themselves. See also Valerie Kivelson and Joan Neuberger, eds., *Picturing Russia: Explorations in Visual Culture* (New Haven, 2010). Among recent monographs that have embraced the visual turn see E. Vishlenkova, *Vizual'noe narodovedenie, ili `Uvidet' russkogo dano ne kazhdomu'* (Moscow, 2011). A very recent issue of *Kritika*, includes a very engaging series of essays on Muscovite visual sources, largely the astonishing *Litsevoi svod* during Ivan IV. "Visions of Russian Culture and Politics: Images as Historical Sources," *Kritika*, 19, 1 (Winter 2018), 1-114. See in particular the essays by Brian Boeck, Nancy Kollmann, and Isolde Thyret.

reading words, which requires an acquired range of skills involving both decoding and understanding (literacy) in order to decode any meaning at all, images do not. The sign systems are complex and fundamental, of course, but most people manage to look at pictures and extract some meaning without formal training and without necessarily knowing the visual codes. Ignorant, naïve, or mis-reading, perhaps, but reading none the less. Against this backdrop of ambiguity, reading in the old-fashioned sense seems refreshingly straightforward, a product of training and social filtering that is by definition exclusive. Just to get to the stage of simple or misreading the written word, one has already travelled a ways down a circumscribed educational path, one that entails holding the physical object—the book—in one's hands, primarily indoors. How, then, might we equate visibility and legibility in a way that delimits the lens of reading images, lest the "visual dominant," in Marcus Levitt's apt phrase,[18] lose all interpretive specificity.

As a document-bound historian and a latecomer to pictorial Russia, I have pondered such issues over the past few years while learning on the fly. Since the main thrust of the chapter, as well as the focus of the volume overall, is the reading of written texts, I will limit myself to just one or two thoughts. We have a long journey ahead of us in comprehending how to integrate this type of decoding into the older modes of historical explanation that we continue to employ. For me, the most satisfying approach has involved a blend of pictorial semiotics (decoding the layers of intended meanings as art historians have been pursuing for generations) on one hand, and thick description (a la Clifford Geertz) and deep contextualization, on the other: reconstructing as closely as we can the specific spatial, chronological, social, and even individual setting in which audiences were presented with specific imagery. This fusion of sign and reception entails adopting the models of reader-response, opening up a second point of entry (audience) separate from textual creation and intent.

Roger Chartier posed this question a number of years ago in his critique of the idea of separate high and low cultures.[19] He wondered, for example, about what and how congregants, whether rich or humble, saw as they

18 M. Levitt, *The Visual Dominant in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (DeKalb Illinois, 2011). Levitt is primarily interested in the idea and articulation of the visual ("to see and be seen") within Russian letters ("the intersections of Russian literature and the visual") rather than with legibility/seeing as reading. Within that frame of reference he situates his analysis squarely within the Enlightenment. At the same time he recognizes the long history within Christendom, including Orthodoxy, of privileging `seeing' and `light' as pathways to knowing.

19 This has been a continuing thread in several of his most influential essays, extending from the 1980s until the present. See, in particular, R. Chartier, "Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early-Modern France," in S. L. Kaplan (ed.), *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe From the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Amsterdam, 1984), 229-254; "Texts and Images. The Art of Dying," in *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early-Modern France* (Princeton, 1987), 32-70. For a defense of the heuristic distinction between high and low culture see J. LeGoff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago, 1992), 1-12.

passed through the spaces of Cathedrals. Irrespective of high artistic mastery and the staggering financial resources that brought these magnificent Cathedrals into being, where in our matrix did high culture end and low culture begin if representatives of all estates in French society were looking at the same scenes? Among medievalists, this question centers on Scriptural knowledge, whether imagery constituted a broadly accessible alternative for those who could not decode the written word. This has been a popular argument until recently, but some scholars now caution against the assumption that iconography and church frescoes seamlessly substituted for verbal text, as the "Bible of the Simple." The images, they remind us, were high up, poorly lit, and all but impossible to see in the exquisite detail with which they were composed. Do we truly imagine, they ask, that congregants *in general* saw them in the prescribed way? Even if they did, do we have any evidence to tell us what they saw, or what they thought they saw? The magnificent stained glass windows may have constituted a familiar presence, but universal visibility is by no means a given.[20] Visual reception, in short, is a muddle, a further demonstration of the opacity of the cultural space that both joins and separates prescription and reception.

Paradoxically, one might plausibly imagine that matters were different in Russian Orthodoxy, and that visual reading was relatively *more* accessible than in Catholic Europe. Internal architecture was different, congregants stood and often moved around during services, iconostases and wall paintings (*rospisi*) were affixed closer to the congregants' eyes and thereby perhaps more available to engaged reception than the stained glass and frescoes of Gothic Cathedrals. If so, did they read collectively them as a congregation, through the eyes of the churchmen, or in individual reflection? All seem vaguely plausible, and they set one's imagination spinning.[21] But, absent any evidence of reception or individual reflection, for now this remains in the realm of speculation. Thus, for the rest of this chapter let us stick to the more traditional definitions of reading, the world of words.

3. LITERACY, LEARNING TO READ, SCHOOLING.

This section begins with truisms. First, the sine qua non for reading words is learning one's ABCs, the *azbuka* in Russian. Regardless of where, how, or

20 An early articulation of skepticism is Lawrence Duggan, "Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate?", *Word and Image,* 5 (1989), 227-51. See also Sara Lipton, "The Vulgate of Experience: Preaching, Art, and the Material World," unpublished keynote address at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds July 2015.

21 Levitt alludes to this possibility in his discussion of the work of Pavel Florenskii and more recently I. Esaulov, who has posited a distinctly Russian visuality embedded in the notion of *ikonichnost'*. Their usage, though, is decidedly religio-philosophical, a way of abstractly characterizing Russian culture overall, rather than social or empirical.

why one read, if the ultimate object was in some manner to decode a written text one had to achieve some level, or type, of literacy. And gaining that very literacy ipso facto constituted an acting of learning, almost certainly overseen by an instructor. In other words, the gateway to reading (passive literacy) necessarily ran through education, specifically some variant of a structured student-teacher interaction. The actual pedagogy and locus of that education may have been variable, but the fact of it was not.

In its current state, the analysis both of the ability of eighteenth-century Russians to read literacy and of the education that made it possible has a good deal of room for growth. First, we have far less to go on for Russia than do historians of literacy for much of the rest of Christendom. If relatively more abundant than previously thought, as shown by what Simon Franklin mapped several years ago for the early medieval period, the source base is still rather sparse. Prior to the latter decades of the eighteenth century, Russia lacked a full complement of parish registries (*metricheskie knigi*) that scholars elsewhere have employed to calculate percentages of signatures. Instead we have several surveys done by administrative bodies, as well as some muster rolls, from which one can extrapolate and at times disaggregate percentages of signers. Some censuses, such as the town lists (*magistratskie listy*) and confessional rolls (*ispovednye spiski)* required householders or those making confession to sign or to make a mark in lieu of signing. But these are sporadic before the end of the eighteenth century. It is entirely possible that the archives contain far more such lists than have to date come to light, in which case we can still hope for some well-grounded future generalizations.

A small cohort of younger scholars have begun the laborious work of examining specific lists of signatures produced during the eighteenth century by cohorts outside the elites.[22] Their research is in very early stages, and provincial records are still mostly unexplored. We are far from crafting any general or richly empirical profile, and, as a consequence, we are beholden to the available older surveys and analyses for possible generalizations. This paper is not the place for an exhaustive and technical review of the sources and scholarship on early modern Russian literacy.[23] But some general observations do seem worth making. Although the numbers could fluctuate widely from one survey to the next, and from one locale to the next, overall the preponderance of evidence, both old and new, leans heavily in the di-

22 See, for example, A. Golubinskii, "Literacy in Russian Peasant Society at the End of the Eighteenth Century," in *Newsletter of the Study Group on Eighteenth Century Russia* (2015). This is an abstract of a much more detailed unpublished presentation from the group's annual Hoddesdon meeting of that year.

23 For the earlier period Simon Franklin has conducted the most searching analysis of literacy. See his article, "Literacy and Documentation in Early Medieval Russia," *Speculum*, 60, 1 (1985), 1-38 as well as his book, *Writing, Society, and Culture in Early Rus c. 950-1350* (Cambridge, 2002).

rection of the 'pessimistic view,' i.e., that Muscovy and the Empire were characterized by strikingly low levels of general literacy (however defined), especially outside specific elites, until quite late. Among those within the lower estates who did acquire some modest degree of literacy, a narrowly utilitarian notion of reading and writing was the norm.

The picture requires a good bit of texture, of course, both in mapping social or geographic differentiation and in comprehending the relationship between individual literacy outside the upper nobility and the communicative nature of reading in public. From a social perspective a high proportion of eighteenth-century clergy seem to have achieved a functional level of literacy, especially once seminary training became compulsory in 1737. Staff in the chanceries and collegia consisted mostly of scribes all of whom needed some degree (although just how much remains unclear) of reading and writing simply to do their work. The bureaucracy ran on paper, and for the eras in question they required small armies of scribes to transcribe and recopy the records on which governing relied. Consequently chancery officials and their offspring tended to have a comparatively higher rate of literacy. So too did a significant proportion of the merchantry, especially those plying their wares at the Empire's periphery. In some—but by no means most—surveys soldiers[24], bailiffs, townsfolk (*meshchan'e*), coachmen and hereditary

24 The longitudinal evidence on literacy outside the upper clergy and upper serving men is perplexing and often contradictory, in particular for soldiers and military recruits. Carol Stevens' well-crafted study of Belgorod soldiers in the seventeenth century reveals a relatively high proportion of signers, between twenty and forty percent, and a much higher one among officers. Christoph Witzenrath's analysis of literacy among military officers in Irkutsk during the late seventeenth century conveys something similar, and an even higher level of literacy among Irkutsk townsmen (which Witzenrath explains as being a function of the necessity for literacy among traders and merchants in the borderlands who typically engaged with literate foreign merchants). But surveys of soldiers and soldiers' children from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—times when the institutions of primary education are generally understood to be expanding—show much lower proportions across the board, typically1.5 to ten percent, even in the north and even among junior officers. For example, a 1771 survey of over 6,000 military recruits from Moscow province yield an overall literacy rate (name signing) of 1.54%, with a peasant literacy of 0.56%! Household peasants rated higher (nearly 20%) which means that those poor farming souls sent by their village elders to serve in the ranks had virtually no literacy at all! Children of merchants (25%) and clergy (75%) were by far the most literate. An extensive 1844 survey of adult males—discussed also in the chapter by Damiano Rebecchini—from Saratov province revealed (once the figures have been corrected for some computational errors) an overall literacy rate of 4.0%, with an urban rate (merchants, meshchan'e, and household peasants) of almost 31% and a rural peasant (state, crown, and serfs) rate of 2.1%. A few decades later, in 1880, 22% of recruits signed their names, comparable to or lower than what Stevens and Witzenrath show for Muscovy. Unless one is prepared to argue that, after a century of institution building, the eighteenth and early nineteenth century witnessed a *decline* in lower-class literacy from where it stood in the seventeenth century (so far, no one has proposed that), something remains severely under-explained.

C. B. Stevens, "Belgorod: Notes on Literacy and Language in the Seventeenth-Century Army," *Russian History*, 7 (1980), 115-122; C. Witzenrath, "Literacy and Orality in the Eurasian Frontier: Imperial Culture and Space in Seventeenth-Century Siberia and Russia," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 87, 1 (January, 2009), 55-70; L. V. Volkov, "O gramotnosti naseleniia

workers[25] also appear to have been comparatively more likely to learn to sign their names. The forward march of written records meant that literacy was fast becoming an essential attribute of the Russian peasant *community*, much like it had become in the rest of Europe,[26] even if very few *individual* peasants could read or write. Every locale, it seems, could turn to at least a handful of people who could sign and read basic texts. Some peasants did more. The evidence of the latter comes from the well-documented peasant inscriptions on books (especially in the north), and, by the latter part of the eighteenth century,[27] a few peasant autobiographical fragments. And, of course, there is the nonpareil Mikhail Lomonosov, born into a state peasant family of White Sea fishermen only to become the great and learned polymath fully fluent in Latin and German, as well as Russian. So anything was possible at every rung of the social ladder. But even with all of that, the existing surveys generally convey a very low level of reading and signing.

The wider cultural implications of this low level of literacy also demand further exploration. Within nearly all of pre-modern Christendom (certainly before the sixteenth century) the majority of the population were unable to read or write, illiterate in all senses of the term. And yet once written texts were introduced into those very cultures they became realms in which reading of one sort or another evolved into a familiar practice for nearly everyone. Sites of reading were ubiquitous, and nearly everyone, irrespective of location, age, gender, or social station, bore witness (i.e., they were physically present) to acts of reading.

For many communities in which individual illiteracy was almost universal reading was present in some form or another and incorporated into the cyclical rhythm of life. That is, literacy existed as an asset of the community but not necessarily of its individual members. Word-based objects were familiar, if not quite quotidian, presences. People regularly read words aloud, whether liturgical, legal, or seigneurial, to others; those who heard them

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Rossii v XVIII v.," *Voprosy arkhivovedeniia* (March-June, 1964), 125; B. M. Mironov, "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries," *History of Education Quarterly*, 31, 2 (summer, 1991), 240; "Sostoianie gramotnosti mezhdu kupechestvom i zhiteliami podatnago sostoianiia v saratovskoi gubernii," *ZMNP*, vol. 14 (1846), 525-528.

25 *Trudy istoriko-arkheograficheskogo instituta. Vol. XI Krepostnaia manufaktura v Rossii, Pt, IV, Sotsial'nyi sostav rabochikh pervoi poloviny XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1934), 15-39; A. Kahan, "The `Hereditary Workers' Hypothesis and the Development of a Factory Labor Force in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth-Century Russia," in C. Arnold Anderson and Mary Jane Bowman (eds.), *Education and Economic Development* (Chicago, 1965), 295.

26 The classic work for late medieval England western remains M. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (Oxford, 1991).

27 The leading Soviet and post-Soviet anthropologists and *knigovedy*, such as M. M. Gromyko and I. V. Pozdeeva, have produced a wealth of scholarship demonstrating incontrovertibly that some peasants owned and inscribed books. They have tended to draw broader conclusions from this evidence than I think is warranted, but their field research has nevertheless been impeccable and deservedly influential.

read, or who witnessed others reading (or alternatively bore witness to the appearance or *performance* of reading wherein someone bearing a physical text spoke passages that had been committed to memory), were themselves participating in a culture of reading. Thus, individual illiteracy and public reading coexisted in a single field as cultural norms for several centuries.

This symbiosis of text and orality, public reading and general illiteracy, was an evident feature of Russia's parishes and landed estates, an essential presence at the intersections of authority and quotidian existence. When viewed in that light, it elevates the place and importance of education in a popular setting to a status that resonated socially well beyond those relatively few who learned how to read and write. The history of Russian education, a topic long deemed rather dry, specialized, and self-contained, is beginning to reemerge from its hermetic isolation, and to a large extent with a social or socio-culture agenda. Multiple projects are afoot to study education on-the-ground and in-the-classroom during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The fields of inquiry currently include seminaries, public schools, private pansions, home schooling, academies, and gymnasia.[28]

This *in situ* approach gives less weight than have previous generations of scholars to the intellectual dimensions of abstract projects, a la Ivan Betskoi for example, and Empire-wide systems of reform, and more attention to specific classes, flesh-and-blood students, and texts that were actually used.[29] Eventually a fuller picture will emerge of the relatively elite and privileged sites of learning, both institutional and with so-called private governors, and of the skills and reading practices and preferences that they engendered. In this volume we see evidence of this type of exploration, for example in the contributions by Roman Leibov and Aleksei Vdovin that address—actual—reading in—real, existing—schools for the mid- and late nineteenth century. So too do the chapters on twentieth-century schools and reading.

Extra-institutional education-cum-reading is another area of newly invigorated research, and this has particular significance for the entire pre-Reform era, dating back into the seventeenth century. Here one need make specific mention of the work of Olga Kosheleva. Kosheleva has reminded us repeatedly that, for all practical purposes, there were virtually no formal schools in Muscovy until very late in the seventeenth century, and that learning was conducted in more intimate or informal settings between tutors and learners, `apprenticeship' (*uchenichestvo*) as she terms it. The

28 An entire conference held in Moscow in January 2017 was devoted to the topic, the vast majority of which presented new research based upon close and very concrete analyses of specific sites or modes of learning, both institutional and domestic. The most recent contribution to this growing corpus is I. Fedyukin, "Shaping up the Stubborn: School Building and `Discipline' in Early Modern Russia," *Russian Review*, 77, 2 (April 2018), 200-218.

29 Educational reform and projects for reform continue to draw interest of course. See, for example, Igor' Fediukin et al., *`Reguliarnaia akademiia uchrezhden budet…' Obrazovatel'nye proekty v pervoi polovine XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2015).

idea of the classroom certainly existed, witness Vasilii Burtsev's famous engravings of classrooms in his primers of the 1630s. But, with the rarest of exceptions, the classrooms themselves did not. Across numerous essays written during the past two decades she has argued that this constituted a "Russian Orthodox paradigm of education," distinct from Byzantine and Latin models, and she is preparing a full-length explication of this thesis.[30] Kosheleva's insights have considerable resonance for later eras, since, as far as one can surmise, most elementary reading instruction continued to take place outside of the physical space of classrooms, probably into the nineteenth century, and continued to employ traditional scripturally-centered Slavonic texts, primer, breviary, Psalter (*azbuka* or *bukvar,' chasoslov*, *psaltyr'*) and rote-based pedagogies.

Can we hope eventually to construct a detailed map of this paradigm and its effects, geographically and socially, or to arrive at broader textured profiles of the reading abilities and practices that emerged from it? Only time and more research will tell, but there are some templates developed elsewhere that are worth keeping in mind. In their book *Reading and Writing. Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry*, for example, Francois Furet and Jacques Ozouf made a compelling case for a rather wide spectrum of semi-literacy in early modern France, i.e., something more than mechanical word recognition but far less than the ability to read unfamiliar texts. Furet and Ozouf fell back on the accepted formula positing that more people could read than could sign; and more could sign than could write. From this they extrapolated an approximation of likely or potential readers, disaggregated into all the appropriate groupings. The thrust of their work implied that `literacy' in early modern France subsumed a spectrum of reading skills and practices, especially among the rural lower classes, and that this spectrum complicated the accepted social profile of literacy in particular among those being taught in village schools, at home, or in the

30 Kosheleva has been pursuing this line of reasoning as far back as 1994, in an essay entitled "Pedagogicheskie traditsii pravoslaviia," where she put forth the idea of a distinctly Orthodox "pedagogical paradigm for Russia." Since that time she has produced a very large number of articles sketching out her notion of a distinctly Russian Orthodox conception of education during the pre-Petrine era. She has also insisted upon the relevance of Orthodoxy in Russian education for the entire Imperial period, its inner connection with humanistic currents, and its central place in popular education and missionary–directed education within the Empire. Since then she has written numerous articles on the subject. Regarding apprenticeship see inter alia "Uchitel' i uchitel'stvo v dopetrovskoi Rusi i v period petrovskikh preobrazovanii," in *Uchitel' i uchenik: stanovlenie intersub''ektnykh otnoshenii v istorii pedagogiki Vostoka i Zapada* (Moscow, 2013), 627-660; "Fenomeny shkoly i uchenichestva v pravoslavnoi kul'ture: problema izucheniia moskovskikh uchilishch XVII v.," in E. Tokareva (ed.), *Religioznoe obrazovanie v Rossii i Evrope XVII v.,* 82-94; "Educational Models for Enlightened Eighteenth-Century Russians," *Russian Studies in History*, 48, 2 (2009), 50-62; "What Should One Teach?: A New Approach to Russian Childhood Education as Reflected in Manuscripts from the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century," in M. Di Salvo, D. Kaiser, V. Kivelson (eds.), *Russian History in Word and Image* (Boston, 2015), 269-295.

church.[31] But the meaning, frequency, and nature of that reading (the murky realm of semi-literacy) remained opaque.

Kosheleva's notion of the preeminence of apprenticeship in the absence of formal classrooms seems consonant with some of what Furet and Ozouf (and others) have said about fathoms of semi-literacy. But where Furet and Ozouf engaged the subject quantitatively, Kosheleva has deployed a very different mode of research, a blend of archival discovery and close textual exegesis that is decidedly non-arithmetic. Without much better records of local schooling a level of synthesis for Russia on the magnitude of what Furet and Ozouf produced for France is probably impossible. Moreover, a specific a priori relationship between signatures on documents and reading of any sort can never be assumed (recall that Menshikov was taught how to sign his name) or automatically transposed from one context to another. At this point this bedeviling question has scarcely been addressed for eighteenth-century Russia. Nevertheless, her work opens up potential avenues for investigating a specifically Orthodox habitus of semi-literacy, both individual and collective. Through them we may get a clearer or at least more pluralized understanding of popular reading practices in the early modern centuries.

4. diverse practices of reading and writing

Once more interpretive boundaries are in flux, in ways that sometimes resituate the interplay of prescription and reception. We accept that reading written texts itself constitutes a very broad spectrum of practices and media, from looking at signs and notices to public orations to silent reading in solitude, and that sites or spaces of reading were many and varied. Words, as Simon Franklin reminds us in his essay in this volume, appear on an array of surfaces, and our understanding of what it meant, or might have meant, to read would do well to include any physical spaces where writing appears.[32] Our map of Russian reading and readers has moved beyond the major centers of book culture to embrace distant and isolated locales, where, from time to time, we find clusters of readers who have assembled a surprising repertoire of texts. We delight in uncovering audiences and creative bookmen, especially those who left behind commentary and detailed marginalia, in remote and unexpected places. What, though, does it add up to?

31 Originally published in French in 1977, the English translation appeared in 1982. F. Furet, J. Ozouf, *Reading and Writing. Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry* (Cambridge, 1982), especially 23-58.

32 Franklin develops this point extensively in his soon-to-appear book, *The Russian Graphosphere 1450-1850* (Cambridge, 2019). There he addresses numerous sites and surfaces on which words appeared: cloth, enamel, icons, gravestones, etc., all of which were thereby transformed into sites available for reading.

Over the years I have belatedly come to appreciate the enduring relevance and vitality of hand copying well after the flourishing of movable type in Russia. Although not linked to a market-based system until rather late vis-à-vis Catholic and especially Protestant Europe, this dynamic began and ended with the curiosities and demands of actual readers. Beyond their separate functionalities, movable type and hand copying coexisted sometimes quite porously, complemented each other, overlapped, and occasionally morphed into hybridized combinations of part print/part manuscript Newly discovered examples of individuals hand-copying printed texts continue to multiply, as do examples of readers interweaving pages of printed text into their manuscripts. One thinks here once again of the Viatka town chronicler, Semen Popov, who interspersed laws and decrees, snippets of the official quasi-newspaper *Newsnotes* (*Vedomosti*), and other imprints into his otherwise hand-written *Anatolian Miscellany* (*Anatol'evskii sbornik*), a chronicle of Viatka's history.[33] Much like the miscellanies of learned monastics, Popov's creative weaving of texts blended reading and writing, print and manuscript, so thoroughly as to make it virtually impossible to disentangle one from the other.

All of this hand copying speaks to the presence of some very active and engaged readers, a blurring of lines between reading and writing, and reading as a form of cultural production. It raises a myriad of new analytical questions, especially if one wishes to speak about changes over time, or about `Russia' as something culturally syncretic. What is new or remarkable about its unmistakable presence in later centuries? Weren't there always at least a few scattered remote outposts of East Slavic bookishness, coterminous with the northeastern migration of Rus' Orthodoxy? Just how extensively was each of these cross-medium adventures practiced, and for how long? Did widespread hand copying persist because printed books remained hard to get and expensive? Was it cheaper or easier to recopy books by hand onto paper (itself a pricey commodity) than to purchase them from distant typographies? Did some eighteenth-century readers inscribe different meaning onto hand-written volumes than onto printed ones? Was this primarily a provincial or clerical phenomenon?

Lots of questions and possibilities for fruitful research. A digital-Humanities mapping of this phenomenon might reveal a great deal about early modern literate Russian culture and the place of reading within it. That would be an enormous undertaking likely occupying a small detachment of scholars. But well worth it were it occur.

33 D. Uo (Daniel Waugh), *Istoriia odnoi knigi: Viatka i `ne-sovremennost'' v russkoi kul'tury petrovskogo vremeni* (St. Petersburg, 2003).

5. THE LANGUAGE(S) OF READING: RUSSIAN VS. POLYGLOSSIA

It is safe to assume that, for the vast majority of eighteenth-century Russians (i.e., those for whom Russian was the spoken language), if they read at all they did so in Russian or, in church, Slavonic. The millions of Imperial subjects who were not primarily Russian speaking, of course, had a different repertoire of written languages. Thus, the question posed here about di- or poly-glossia is explicitly one focusing on Russian elite culture, in this case an elite defined primarily by access to secondary education, and hence including clergy. In each instance the language(s) of reading opens up almost immediately to broader and particularly acute discussions about the structure of culture and society.

French. For the eighteenth century, determining the preferred language in which well-educated or polyglot cohorts read has gained renewed attention. Over the past three decades much work has been done on Russians reading French, largely through the labors of Vladimir Somov in St. Petersburg, Vladislav Rjéoutski and their collaborators.[34] One project has begun to map the locations of individual copies of works by women writers in several languages, including Russian thanks to Hilde Hoogenboom. Once completed, it promises to allow us to reconstruct the relative frequency with which, say, translated French novels circulated in Russia as opposed to those in the original.[35]

So far these projects have uncovered no new sensations, but they have yielded some curiosities. For one, several of Peter the Great's closest aides, most notably the street-vendor-turned-Radiant Prince Aleksandr Menshikov, insisted that their children learn to read French at an early age, and they provided French tutors to make sure that they did.[36] Menshikov's pursuit of familial gentility for his daughters is interesting on multiple counts. By nearly all accounts he was illiterate, although one recent article has ques-

34 Two recent collections deserve attention here: V. Rjéoutski (ed.), *Quand le francais gourvernait la Russie*. (Paris, 2016), and D. Offord, L. Ryazanova-Clarke, V. Rjéoutski, G. Argent (eds.), *French and Russian in Imperial Russia*. 2 volumes. Volume 1: *Language Use among the Russian Elite*. Volume 2: *Language Attitudes and Identity* (Edinburgh, 2015).

35 http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/womenwriters. See also H. Hoogenboom, "Bibliography and National Canons: Women Writers in France, England, Germany and Russia (1800-2010)," *Comparative Literature Studies*, 50, 2 (May, 2013), 314-341, and idem, "Sentimental Novels and Pushkin: European Literary Markets and Russian Readers," *Slavic Review*, 74, 3 (Fall, 2015), 553-574.

36 Menshikov's daughters, Mariia and Aleksandra, are the subjects of some ongoing research. Both of them were home tutored, raised to be cultured ladies at court, and both made illustrious if tragically brief betrothals, one to Peter II, the other to Gustav Von Bühren (or Biron), the favorite of Anna Ioannovna. Both wrote letters in French. A. V. Morokhin, "K biografii kniazhny Aleksandry Aleksandrovny Biron, urozhennoi Menshikovoi," *Menshikovskie chteniia*, 3, 10 (2012), 90-95.

tioned that assessment.[37] This behavior suggests that at least some of the rough-and-tumble Petrine acolytes (or ` fledglings' [*ptentsy*] as they are often called in Russian) already were thinking about foreign language reading as a measure of culture and gentility virtually from the moment they moved to St. Petersburg, if not before (the more urbane and well-travelled courtiers such as Petr Tolstoi and Boris Kurakin did not need to be told).

In a broader vein, the thrust of this research has shown rather clearly that the language used was generally a matter of forethought, a discovery that substantially complicates our understanding of why and when Catherinian-era nobles read or wrote in French and when they resorted to Russian, which in most cases they still considered their native tongue. As we read in Kislova's chapter, seminarians and even seminary administrators also participated in this openness to French. All of this work effectively undermines the enduring image of a slavish, exclusively noble Russian Francophilic Voltairianism (currently undergoing serious revision from several quarters) and to support the late Michelle Marrese's critique of the idea that Russian Europeans had become veritable foreigners in their own land.[38]

German. This earlier-than-expected flickering of elite Francophonie would seem to challenge the prevailing view that German was the second language of choice in the first half of the century. Recent studies, however, such as Michael Schippan's history of the Russian Enlightenment and N. I. Khoteev's study of German books in early eighteenth-century Russia,[39] sug-

37 Iu. N. Bespiatykh and A. I. Rakhman, "Gramotnyi A, D. Menshikov," *Menshikovskie chteniia,* 1 (2003), 26-29. Bespiatykh and Rakhman maintain that Menshikov knew how to read, and was described as such by a handful of courtiers and foreign envoys (at least one of whom, the Holstein envoy Friedrich Bergholtz, could neither read nor understand Russian) as well as by some notations in his daily account books ("povsednevnye zapiski delam kniazia A. D. Menshikova") of the 1720s. The wording of these accounts of his engaging in reading seems vague and formulaic in their descriptions, suggesting at most, that official papers and documents were arrayed in front of him. Serious doubts, therefore, remain about his ability to read. Implicitly the authors accept the consensus that Menshikov did not know how to write notwithstanding an extensive corpus of letters and documents with his name affixed. All, one assumes, were dictated and penned by scribes or other chancellery officials. Thus, one's best guess is that if Menshikov achieved any literacy at all (which I doubt) it was minimal.

38 M. Lamarche Marrese, "'The Poetics of Everyday Behavior' Revisited: Lotman, Gender, and the Evolution of Russian Noble Identity," *Kritika*, 11, 4 (fall, 2010), 701-739. Several of the contributors to *French and Russian in Imperial Russia* elaborated on this theme of the continued use of Russian among Francophone Russian elites in the late eighteenth century. See in particular the essays by Offord, Argent, Rjéoutski; Rjéoutski and Somov; Murphy, Baudin, and Tipton. Taken as a whole they provide compelling evidence demonstrating that the elites switched languages quite deliberately, often engaging in what Tipton described as «switching codes» from one language to the other.

39 M. Schippan, *Die Aufklärung in Russland im 18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2012) Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, Band 131; N. I. Khoteev, *Nemetskaia kniga i russkii chitatel' v pervoi polovine XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 2008). Khoteev's study adheres to the standard periodization, but it argues, based upon sales and library inventories, that German-language books circulated more broadly within the court and service elites than was previously thought.

gest otherwise. Instead, they offer a spirited defense of the view expressed long ago by Eduard Winter, Helmut Grasshof, and Boris Krasnobaev that the Russian Enlightenment was as German-inflected as it was French.[40] In this rendering, German thought circulated widely among Russian literati and readers, both in the original and in translation. To date, however, no one has undertaken the painstaking mapping of German texts that both Hoogenboom and Rjéoutski et al. have been conducting for French.[41] Thus, while the ongoing presence of German-language reading within the Russian Enlightenment is unmistakable and clearly important, its contours and dimensions need further investigation.

Latin. One topic that is now undergoing some long overdue scrutiny is the teaching and reading of Latin in the eighteenth century. A 2015 conference at the German Historical Institute Moscow was dedicated entirely to the place of Latin in early-modern Russian letters: "The Neo-Latin Humanist Tradition and Russian Literature of the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" ("Neolatinskaia gumanisticheskaia traditsiia i russkaia literatura kontsa XVII-nachala XIX vekov"). Themes ranged widely, but their central premise was that Latin played a not inconsiderable role in the life of letters, lay and clerical, and that Latin schooling constituted a recurring literary trope. The written record makes it clear that several literati knew Latin well, read it extensively, and even wrote Latin poetry.[42]

From a broader social perspective, though, the central locus for this research is and needs to be the rapidly expanding network of Orthodox seminaries, whose curricula and lectures were in Latin, and whose public disputations among advanced students typically took place in Latin. How well did seminarians actually learn the language, and did they continue to read it later on, whether working as clergy or as state servitors? If so, to what extent, and toward what purpose? These questions still linger within in the scholarship. My own—admittedly incomplete—study of seminaries a number of years ago inclined me toward the skeptical view expressed by

40 E. Winter, *Die deutsch-russische Begegnung und Leonhard Euler. Beiträge zu den beziehungen zwischen der deutschen und der russischen Wissenschaft und Kultur im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1958); idem, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt der deutschen Russlandkunde im 18. Jahrhundert*. (Berlin, 1953); Helmut Grasshoff, *Literaturbeziehungen im 18. Jahrhundert: Studien und Quellen zur deutsch-russischen und russisch-westeuropäischen Kommunikation* (Berlin, 1986); P. N. Berkov, Helmut Grasshoff, Ulf Lehmann, *Literarische Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Russland und Westeuropa im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1968); B. I. Krasnobaev, *Ocherki istorii russkoi kul'tury XVIII veka: obshchestvennaia mysl', shkola, nauka, iskusstvo, i literatura, kniga, periodika* (Moscow, 1972).

41 An exception to this is a recent essay by Ekaterina Kislova, "Deutsch als Sprache der Aufklärung an den russischen Seminarien im 18. Jahrhundert: zur Geschichte der kulturellen Kontakte," in A. Beutel, M. Nooke (eds), *Religion und Aufklärung. Akten des Ersten Internationalen Kongresses zur Erforschung der Aufklärungstheologie* (Tübingen, 2016), 327-336.

42 See the unpublished paper from that conference by A. Kostin, "Latinskaia obrazovannost' kak priem v russkoi belletristiki 1760-1780 gg."

Gregory Freeze and others that seminarians typically took a decidedly inattentive approach to Latin which they saw as being of little use in their future roles as parish priests.[43] The pattern I observed, based primarily on reading published histories of seminaries, was one in which most seminarians retook the same courses year after year while waiting for a position to come available in their home parish. But this impression may perhaps turn out to have been too harsh. Several scholars, including—once again—Ekaterina Kislova, Denis Kondakov, and Liudmila Posokhova are pursuing these questions at the micro level, looking at specific seminaries or regions in pursuit of a concrete profile of quotidian Latin.[44] Kislova's chapter synthesizes this scholarship into a broader discussion of seminary reading, and brings the ongoing research to the readers of this volume. Preliminary results suggest at least some traces of seminary-based Latin reading and writing beyond the obligatory curriculum.

6. READING AND SELF-INSCRIPTION: READING COMMUNITIES AND PUBLICS

The remainder of this paper addresses readers as cohorts—who they were, where they were, how they constituted themselves, etc.—against the backdrop of the question raised earlier of how to situate the eighteenth century. I focus on a circumscribed but important subset of the topic, what one might term the body of self-conscious or self-fashioned readers, i.e., those who, by their actions, embraced the ascription of `reader,' both individual and collective. These groups consisted of those who read (or wished to be seen as having read) in the old-fashioned sense of reading for content and reflection. Can we speak of the contours of this group with any coherence, social, geographic, spatial, professional? Did their composition change over the century and, equally important, did their own sense of the collective reading body evolve in ways that alter how we have tended to think of them? In the end, is our current periodization of reading in need of revision? As with literacy, it is premature to imagine closure to this set of conversations any time soon. My own views fall into the thoroughly indecisive 'on one hand... on the other hand' camp.

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43 G. L. Freeze, *The Russian Levites: Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1977), chapter 4, "The New World of the Seminary," 78-106.

44 To date Kislova has produced the most extensive body of research on the teaching and deployment of Latin—as well as other languages—in Orthodox seminaries. In addition to her chapter in this volume see "'Latin' and 'Slavonic' Education in the Primary classes of Russian eighteenth century seminaries," *Slověne. International Journal of Slavic Studies,* 4, 2 (2015), 72-91; "Latyn' i 'slovenskii' v nachal'nom obrazovanii detei dukhovenstva XVIII v.," *Studia Slavica*, 60, 2 (2015), 315-330; "Iz istorii lingvisicheskoi kompetentsii dukhovenstva XVIII v.: uchitelia evropeiskikh iazykov v russkikh seminariiakh," *Vestnik moskovskogo universiteta. Seriia 9. Filologiia,* 2 (2016), 61-76.

6.1. Reading Communities

Reading communities may be defined very simply as discrete groups that shared a common physical space or some other specific bond of familiarity in which reading loomed large, and that tended to read the same works and share them among themselves. Such communities existed in Russian history from Kyivan times onward, embodied typically by monastic brethren who read the earliest liturgical texts and who composed the early chronicles. We cannot say with any specificity how commonplace volitional reading was in subsequent centuries (although it clearly took place), whether it was rigidly cloistered or opened to the surrounding laity (both patterns have been documented, but their respective frequencies remain undetermined). But it surely existed, and some monasteries ultimately assembled impressive libraries, at times far removed from centers of political authority or the metropolitan seat.

Robert Romanchuk's study of the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery in the fifteenth century demonstrates just how extensive these collections could be in distant places, and, with the right abbot, just how aware the monks could be of Humanist intellectual currents in Byzantium and beyond. They not only received works from abroad, but they amended and revised them for specific purposes, incontrovertible evidence of active and engaged reading within the monastery. Romanchuk sees Kirillov as a powerful counter example—albeit just one, as he is judiciously reluctant to generalize—to what he has termed 'Old Russian obscurantism.' In his rendering, it constituted a reading community of intense intellectual curiosity, what he terms an 'ethology of reading.'[45] Judging from the reviews, most of his fellow medievalists have embraced his conclusions. Some, however, have questioned whether Kirillov was anything more than a quirk, a short-lived, one-off exception that somehow managed to acquire and engage a handful of Humanist texts.[46] Certainly by the mid-sixteenth century Greek and Latin texts were appearing in monastic libraries with greater frequency, although once again it would be premature to describe this as commonplace. For our purposes, however, its intellectual currency or originality is less important than the sheer fact of its existence in a distant locale as a vibrant monastic reading brotherhood.

Monastic reading communities constituted something of a social norm, I would suggest, the most well developed institutional context for reading, both communal and silent, until very late in the seventeenth century.

45 R. Romanchuk, *Byzantine Hermeneutics and Pedagogy in the Russian North: Monks and Masters at the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, 1397-1501* (Toronto, 2007), especially chapters 3, 4 and 5. See also N. V. Ponyrko, S. A. Semiachko (eds.), *Knizhnye tsentry drevnei Rusi. Knizhniki i rukopisi Kirillo-Belozerksogo monastyria* (St. Petersburg, 2014).

46 For examples of these alternative readings see the reviews by Donald Ostrowski in *Slavic Review*, 68, 2 (Summer 2009), 426-427 (mildly skeptical); and Christian Raffensperger in *Speculum*, 87, 1 (January, 2012), 275-276 (more convinced).

Evidence for this pattern comes from multiple sources, such as the monastic libraries of the north that M. V. Kukushkina and others have inventoried, on the assumption that library building over several decades represented an expression of intellectual curiosity on the part of the monks themselves.[47] I. M. Gritsevskaia's study of monastic reading and reading miscellanies (*chet'i sborniki*) gives a vivid picture of such monastic communities for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[48] Gritsevskaia builds her case around readers' annotations and what she terms "the regulated repertoire of reading" from the instructions generated by the monastery itself. Methodologically, her approach moves beyond assembling library inventories and provides a detailed profile of monastic reading practices. Thus she is able to describe individual and institutional reading practices in considerable depth. Without referencing de Certeau or his dicta, her work nevertheless constitutes a splendid example of a history of reading that accounts for both the force of disciplining and the re-creative potential of readers themselves.

This implicit diffusion returns us to the question of whether there was a particular geographic shape or profile to monastic reading communities. Did every Muscovite monastery constitute a reading community (in principle, certainly, but in practice unclear), and, if so, were some of them *more reading* than others? What do we make of the fact that an inordinate proportion of the evidence for monastic libraries and reading, including most micro-studies, comes from the North. Did people in Vologda actually read more (they certainly seem to have based upon the proliferation of scholarship on Vologda book collections), or is this an illusion, a function perhaps of record keeping?

Granted, transcription was commonplace, and scholars invariably perk up when non-liturgical manuscripts appeared in specific repositories, and even more so when they migrated from one repository to another (hinting, perhaps, at wide circulation). When a given hand-copied text shows up in more than a few repositories, and in more than one locale, does that constitute evidence of widespread familiarity and reading, as some scholars have maintained? Alternatively, does it provide a sufficient footprint to allow us to identify networks of readers? Without presuming expertise in the extensive literature on Muscovite manuscripts (for that level of expertise consult the previous chapter by Daniel Waugh), it nevertheless seems to me that, with relatively few exceptions we have only episodic evidence for most of the Muscovite era of how a given manuscript found its way to a specific monastery.

By contrast, archival records make the circulation of printed texts from central typographies relatively easy to reconstruct from the seventeenth century forward. Who apprised the monks in one monastery of a text's exist-

47 M. V. Kukushkina, *Monastyrskie biblioteki russkogo severa. Ocherki po istorii knizhnoi kul'tury XVI-XVII vekov* (Leningrad, 1977).

48 I. M. Gritsevskaia, *Chtenie i chet'i sborniki v drevnerusskikh monastyriakh XV-XVII vv.* (St. Petersburg, 2012), 15-47, 62, 151 and ff.

ence in another? And by what means? We often see the name(s) of the transcriber, but who arranged for the copying, and how? How did the texts to be transcribed physically get from one place to another? In some exceptional instances there are surviving letters or inscriptions that tell us, and these bear evidentiary witness to pathways of communication from one cloistered locale to another.

Clearly, long-standing established networks connected cloistered communities or at least connected individual monks or abbots from one community to the next. It would be illuminating to reconstruct more fully how these networks operated. Unfortunately the records for doing so seem sparse. Still, I would argue that discrete communities, and the networks that linked them, constituted the closest thing to a self-conscious collective readership to exist in Muscovy, at least until the dawn of the Muscovite Baroque.

6.2. A Monastic Republic of Letters

With the influx of learned monastics from the Ruthenian lands during the second half of the seventeenth and first quarter of the eighteenth century, one sees the emergence of a still more self-conscious, and even self-fashioned network of readers bound together by a common education, by their sense of cultural difference, and by their dedication to writing letters to one another. These affective bonds coexisted with the fierce, no-holds-barred doctrinal disputes and personal rivalries that marked their transposition from Kyiv, Chernihiv, or Minsk. Over time the brethren of this self-conscious community began to include a handful of Muscovites, (Fedor Polikarpov, Karion Istomin and a few others with ties to the Lichuodas brothers, Chudov Monastery, or Moscow's printing house [*pechatnyi dvor*]) from among those who had undergone a Jesuit-based training in Novgorod or Moscow not dissimilar from their own.

The expressions of a common cultural identity reflected their acute awareness of being Ruthenians in Muscovy (among themselves—but only among themselves—they occasionally described themselves as *inostrantsy*). Compared to the relative intimacies of Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Baturin, Muscovy's vastness and the remoteness of some dioceses to which they were assigned proved challenging to ongoing written communication, and they employed written correspondence, both personal and intellectual, to maintain close ties. But the bond extended beyond that in its embrace of a shared and—in Muscovy—highly exceptional neo-Scholastic erudition. It was on this basis that Istomin et al. were invited in.

The titanic doctrinal polemics and vicious denunciations that often divided them into warring camps (and occasionally into prison) in their public

roles were on the whole more muted in their letters. Instead, they made arrangements via their correspondence to visit one another, to inquire about friends in common, to inquire into the state of affairs in remote parts, to discuss what they had read and to seek out each other's opinions. They reminded one another of previous letters and conversations, and asked for advice on how or whether to raise potentially controversial topics in public (time and beards are prominent issues). Decades before it became commonplace among lay elites, their letters used the language of brother and friendship freely, and on occasion much less polite appellations. Indeed, they went out of their way to do so, and thereby draw a circle around those who belonged. "Please send my best wishes to my dear friend..." was a common sentiment, one extended to Istomin and Polikarpov. They also conveyed among themselves an unself-conscious nostalgia for Kyiv and for earlier times, and not just Stefan Iavorskii, whose lifelong attachment to Kyiv is well known. Even Prokopovich was known to write wistfully to former colleagues in Kyiv about "when the times were better." The man had a soft side after all.

Epistolary friendship, personal frankness, and intellectual intercourse had characterized earlier generations of Kyivan hierarchs (Lazar Baranovych, Ioanniki Hal'yatovs'ki, etc.) still communicating within the relatively intimate confines of the Hetmante, and its frequency only grew as Peter proceeded to populate his church with dozens of Ukrainian monastics. More importantly, it took on an enlarged symbolic meaning when transposed onto Muscovite/Imperial soil. Members of this fraternity would frequently include a sentence or passage (sometimes several) in a foreign language, usually French, Latin, or Polish, although the latter, their literary language of choice in the seventeenth century, fell into relative disuse over time. Often it would be a quotation (without citation, since the reader was presumed to know it), but occasionally the letter-writer would simply switch languages for a few phrases or sentences. This nominally frivolous gesture had genuine cultural capital, I would argue, in its re-articulation of a shared learning, as if to say, we are among those privileged learned souls who can read and write these words now sailing in a vast sea where few others can do so. Once again, this was less about ethnicity per se or even station and more about cultural difference and the intensity of their Jesuit educations.

One could argue that there is nothing new here. Communities of like-minded readers from time immemorial used semiotic markers to assert among themselves what they held in common, whether they be Scriptural quotations, Patristics, or the enduring words of a leader of their movement or sect (here one might include the anxious letters of the earliest Old Believers that, in what were otherwise very business-like communications, referenced the same Scriptural and Patristic texts repeatedly as a mode of

spiritual solidarity.)[49] Still I would say that this coterie of hierarchs did constitute something noteworthy in the history of East Slavic Orthodox readers, a self-consciously trans-local body constituted as the sum of their learnedness and curiosities, and vigorously maintained via their correspondence.

This description is reminiscent of the *respublica literaria* of early modern European science (in whose works, by the way, these clergy had a considerable interest and to which they referred often in their letters). Far-flung correspondence, mostly in German and Latin, about latest research and theorems kept them abreast of each other's work and careers. But these letters were full of gossip, family news, bits of politics, opportunities for work framed in phraseology that they knew and accepted as their own.[50] Reading each other's work, drafts, and correspondence was the glue that held them together, and in this sense I think the Ukrainian monastics were different.

6.3. The Making of a Reading Public

Important as this clerical *respublica* is to our story and to East Slavic Orthodoxy at the time, its epistolary practices were not intended as public performances. Outsiders were not invited; no one was asked to bear witness to what was being written. Hence while the participants were dynamic and influential figures, and while their self-fashioning may have established a prototype for future literati (what Marina Kiseleva has termed "the choice to be an intellectual"[51]) their epistolary activity did not constitute a bridge to reading as public-ness. Other practices, however, some of them long standing, might well have had a public face, and these I would subsume under the generic omnibus category of 'self-inscription.'

What did it mean to affix one's name to a book, to join a list of subscribers, or to scrawl graffiti on a church wall? When individuals assembled private libraries why did some of them choose to compose inventories when most of their fellow bibliophiles did not? Daniel Waugh's chapter walks us through the question of inscriptions and their practical meanings for earlier centuries. Some of these actions had a utilitarian dimension: owners' inscriptions kept track of where and to whom a book belonged; inventories allowed one to maintain a record of ownership; subscribing by definition placed one's name to a list. Still, most literate people did not write graffiti

49 A recent collection of documents relating to Ivan Neronov provide a sample of this particular epistolary network. K. Ia Kozhurin (ed.), *Sobranie dokumentov epokhi: Protopop Ivan Neronov* (St. Petersburg, 2012), 56-66.

50 On science as a republic of letters, see A. Grafton *Worlds Made by Words* (Cambridge, MA, 2009); *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in the Age of Science, 1450-1800* (Cambridge, MA, 1991).

51 M. Kiseleva, *Intellektual'nyi vybor Rossii vtoroi polovinoi XVII-nachala XVIII veka. Ot drevnerusskoi knizhnosti k evropeiskoi uchenesti* (Moscow, 2012).

on cathedral walls, most book buyers[52] did not write their names in books or compose inventories, and prior to the 1750s there was almost nothing to which to subscribe. In each circumstance there is an element of individual agency of which we need try to take account.

Willful or not, each of these acts constituted a form of self-inscription that others could witness, an immortalization of one's place in the great chain of books.[53] I see them as conscious, and in some sense public.[54] Owners passed their books to others, some of whom affixed their names and other identifying information just below those of previous owners, thereby creating a chain of material heritage linking generations of inscribers with a particular copy of a book. Presumably they anticipated that someone at some point would see the inscriptions, even if that someone was merely the next owner. One might also wonder whether ownership inscriptions by non-elites, especially among peasants and townsfolk, carried still greater meaning beyond the fact of ownership, precisely because of their exceptionalism as household artifacts.[55] After all, even the most intrepid bygone advocates of a hidden 'authentic' peasant readership conceded that few peasant households contained books.[56]

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52 In this context `buyers' refers specifically to the person to whom an individual copy went. Some earlier documentary collections occasionally employed a different definition of buyers to include those who bought directly from the press, sometimes in bulk, primarily for the purpose of resale or as agents for institutions. In some studies, buyers such as these were conflated with `readers.' S. P. Luppov, *Chitateli izdanii moskovskoi tipografii v seredine XVII veka* (Leningrad, 1983).

53 There is a very large literature, almost entirely composed of brief and highly focused articles, on readers' inscriptions. There are as yet no synthetic studies, and the state of the research does not lend itself to systematic aggregation, but they do raise suggestive possibilities. See, as examples, G. Iu. Semenova, "Ob interesakh chitatelei XVII veka po materialam zapisei v knigakh (opyt primeneniia korrelatsionogo analiza)," *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, 1 (1994), 169-178; L. I. Kiseleva, "Zapisi na knigakh kak istoricheskii istochnik," in Iu. G. Alekseev et al. (eds.), *Aleksandr Il'ich Kopanev. Sbornik statei i vospominanii* (St. Petersburg, 1992), 117-134; A. A. Amosov, and others authored a large number of such studies. See, for example, A. A. Amosov, "Knizhnaia kul'tura krest'ianstva russkogo severa. Istochniki i perspektivy razrabotok," in *Vklad severnogo krest'ianstva v razvitie material'noi i dukhovnoi kul'tury* (Vologda, 1980), 36-41; E. V. Blagoveshchenskaia, "Nadpisi krest'ian i dvorovykh XVIII-XIX vv. na knigakh," *Istoriia SSSR*, 1 (1965), 140-143; Ia. D. Isaevich, "Krug chitatel'skikh interesov gorodskogo naseleniia Ukrainy v XVI-XVII vv.," *Fedorovskie chteniia, 1976* (Moscow, 1978), 65-76.

54 Here I am referring explicitly to inscriptions (*chitatel'skie/ vladel'cheskie zapisi*) rather than the broader category of marginalia or commentary, which had a very different set of functions and require a completely different type of analysis. The checklist edited by L. I. Kiseleva, *Korpus zapisei na staropechatnykh knigakh* (St. Petersburg, 1992), which was intended primarily as a reference index, includes every notation and inscription.

55 Among the most informative of these studies are the many articles by A. I. Kopanev, e.g., "Iz istorii bytovaniia knigi v severnykh derevniakh (XVI v.)", *Pamiatniki kul'tury. Novye otkrytki* 1975 (Moscow, 1976), 98-100.

56 Here I am alluding to two strands of late Soviet, and even post-Soviet historiography, one sociological, the other ethno-cultural. The first maintained that there existed a discernible cohort of common (or "democratic") readers, who, in the eyes of some *knigovedy*, constituted a much larger-than-imagined substrate of conscious consumers of the book. The second

Interpolated meanings have relevance as well to inventories of personal libraries, albeit with certain caveats. In my view, the contents of large private collections are best understood not as reflections of reading per se but as texts in themselves, important to be sure, reckoned separately from the books within.[57] When commissioned by the owner, they constituted a type of public or semi-public performances, or self-fashioning. The owner *may* have read the books, but we cannot know that from the existence of an inventory. One ought not assume, therefore, that there is an a priori symmetry between the profile of a library, whether private or institutional, and the mental world, reading, or range of curiosity of the individual book collector.[58] Perhaps the starkest example of this distinction was Aleksandr Menshikov yet again, who, in addition to hiring French tutors for his children, compiled an excellent private library (sometimes alleged on rather slender evidence to have held over 13,000 volumes including 3,000 rare books purchased from abroad!) and arranged for an inventory. He no doubt wanted his name and that of his family associated with the fact of the library's existence even though he most assuredly never read any of it. His children may have, but the *ex libris* was his.[59] For researchers, then, inventories should constitute simply the beginning of this type of exploration, and not the documentary mother lode. Beyond utility, when eighteenth-century personal library owners commissioned inventories they were proclaiming,

line of argument is somewhat different in that it looks at peasant bookishness and oral traditions less as social stratification and more as evidence of an enduring religiosity and essential Russianness especially among Old Believers. In their separate ways both of these approaches imagine peasant reading as acts of resistance to the dictates of formal authority. See, in this context, the many foundational works of Irina Vasil'evna Pozdeeva. I. V. Pozdeeva, "Zapisi na staropechatnykh knigakh kirillovskogo shrifta kak istoricheskii istochnik," *Fedorovskie chteniia* (1976), 39-54; idem, "Knizhnost' staroobriadcheskogo verkhokam'ia. Istoki, chitateli, sud'by (po zapisiam na ekzempliarakh knig Verkhokam'skogo sobraniia NB MGU)," *Mir staroobriadchestva*, 6 (2005), 120-127; idem, "Lichnost' i obshchina v istorii russkogo staroobriadchestva," *Mir staroobriadchestva*, vol. 5 (1999), 3-28; idem, *Chelovek, kniga, istoriia: moskovskaia pechat' XVII veka* (Moscow, 2016).

57 Some examples of informative studies of personal libraries are O. E. Glagoleva, "Chastnye knizhnye sobraniia kak istoricheskii istochnik (po materialam Tul'skoi gubernii vtoroi poloviny XVIII-pervoi poloviny XIX v.)," *Vspomogatel'nye istoricheskie distsipliny*. Vol. 19, 1987, 170-182; R. G. Pikhoia, "Istoriia o tom kak krepostnoi s general-auditorom sudilsia," in *Knigi starogo Urala* (Sverdlovsk, 1989), 180-184; and P. I. Khoteev, "Biblioteka sozdatelia russkogo farfora D. I. Vinogradova," in S. P. Luppov et al. (eds.), *Russkie knigi i biblioteki v XVI-pervoi polovine XIX veka* (Leningrad, 1983), 72-84.

58 For a different approach to libraries and their owners see M. J. Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early-Modern Russia: Pagan Authors, Ukrainians, and the Resiliency of Muscovy* (Leiden, 1995).

59 The figure of 13,000 comes from a 1783 article in *Livlandische Jahrbucher* (Riga) by an obscure Baltic scholar, Friedrich Konrad Gadebusch, as cited in Luppov below. Luppov was appropriately skeptical. On the library in general see S. R. Dolgova, "O biblioteke A. D. Menshikova," in B. B. Piotrovskii, S. P. Luppov (eds.), *Russkie biblioteki i ikh chitatel' (Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury epokhi feodalizma)* (Leningrad, 1983), 87-97; I. V. Saverkina, "K istorii biblioteki A. D. Menshikova," *Kniga v Rossii XVI-seredina XIX v.* (Leningrad, 1987), 37-45; S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1973), 230.

if only to themselves, membership in a book-centered community of cultured elites. In this way inventories constituted acts of self-fashioning by projecting the persona as reader irrespective of the concrete act of reading. They may also have wished to associate themselves with the types of books they collected. This, of course, is noteworthy for our story as it alerts us to the appearance of something new: the valorization of `the lay reader' within elements of Petrine court culture. But that doesn't mean these `readers' necessarily read.

By contrast, sources on book borrowers from institutional libraries, scant though they are, bring us closer to actual reading, based upon the presumption that one borrowed books in order to read them. In the nineteenth century, with the growing popularity of private lending libraries (*biblioteki dlia chteniia*), such materials can provide an interesting window into reading preferences and the demographic profile of borrowers. Eighteenth-century sources are fewer, however, and these tend to be confined to institutional libraries. Thus, Khoteev's analysis of book borrowers during the early years of the library of the Academy of Sciences (1720s and 1730s) reveals a lot of borrowing, nearly all of which was done by people associated with the Academy—mostly foreign scholars—and a few courtiers. Not surprising, but still valuable in its documentary confirmation.[60]

6.4. Subscribers and Subscription Lists

As part of the frisson generated by *histoire du livre* during the latter decades of the twentieth century a massive 'book subscription list project' took shape, headquartered in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, focusing largely on Great Britain and the broader Anglophone world.[61] Published lists of subscribers were well established in much of Europe already in the late seventeenth century, and they constituted readily accessible sources for scholars looking for documentation on readerships. In other cases the archival records of publishing houses contained additional lists (i.e., those not made public) of buyers and subscribers. These lists proved irresistible to several scholars (myself included) precisely because they were *data,* linking the names of actual individuals to the specific publications to which they subscribed. In the

60 N. I. Khoteev, *Chitateli biblioteki Akademii nauk po dannym za 1724-1728 i 1731-1736* (St. Petersburg, 2010). The names of individual borrowers and the books they borrowed are listed on pages 18-134.

61 So far as I am aware the first English-language expression of scholarly enthusiasm for the potential insights that these lists offered is P. J. Wallis, "Book Subscription Lists," *The Library* Fifth series, 29, 3 (September, 1974), 259-286. Wallis went on to establish the Book Subscription List Project in Newcastle that same year, and he energetically proselytize on its behalf, and the journal *The Library* became a central locus for this scholarship. See, e.g., his subsequent article, "The Book Subscription Lists Project: Its Relevance for Historians of Mathematics," *Historia Mathematica*, 2 (1975), 321-326.

end they generated dozens, possibly hundred of articles profiling the social contours of the audience for the Enlightenment. What better evidence of reading and readership could there be?

Although the project's geographic scope did not extend to Russia (or for that matter to anywhere in Eastern Europe), its practitioners paved the way for our own investigations by uncovering literally hundreds of subscription lists from several countries. These were subjected to every sort of analysis: thematic, geographic, social standing, gender, etc., and the results weighed heavily on our understanding of readerships in Europe and North America. And yet, the past decade or so has witnessed a precipitous decline in the historical sociology of reading, and the dethroning of subscription lists in particular. Interests have shifted to questions of interiority, emotion, and the mental world of individual readers, or the discursive commonalities of clusters or communities of readers. These are vitally important topics, but they are decidedly non-quantitative. No one so far as I can discern has explicitly rejected social history and numerical aggregations. But for the moment at least the field has clearly moved away from a mode of counting that in its flowering too frequently conflated subscribers and readers. In the process, though, it seems to have turned its back on counting and on subscribers altogether, understandable perhaps but—in the spirit of de Certeau's insistence on the empirical—unfortunate nevertheless.

I would argue that such lists *do* reveal a great deal, in particular about the culture and representation of reading in the late eighteenth century, so long as one avoids mechanically conflating subscribers with readership in general. Russia came late to the world of print journalism and even later to subscription lists, at least for publications directed to a general readership.[62] Russianists also arrived late to the study of those lists, but arrive we ultimately did! The first formally announced subscriptions appeared in *Monthly Works (Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia)* in the mid-1750s, although these initial lists were not included in the journal itself. It was not until the middle of Catherine's reign, roughly the 1770s that subscription lists became both public and relatively commonplace. Individuals subscribed in response to public announcements in existing imprints of a planned or forthcoming publication, and a few dozen such lists were published, generally for relatively prominent periodicals edited by leading literati of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

As was true elsewhere, subscribers in Russia were invited via public announcements in existing periodicals such as the weekly *St. Petersburg News*

62 Subscriptions existed to some older periodicals, *Vedomosti, Moskovskie vedomosti,* and *Peterburgskie vedomosti*. But individuals who did subscribe were not publicized. Similarly, the Academy of Science's (mostly Latin) scholarly periodicals were open to subscription at home and among scientists elsewhere in Europe. But this had more to do with maintaining communications within the international scientific republic of letters rather than with seeking visibility in Petersburg.

(*Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti,* begun in 1703), and *Moscow News* (*Moskovskie vedomosti,* begun in 1756) to become sponsors of the fledgling venture via subscription. If the enterprise proved successful (relatively few did), they were invited on the pages of the publication to renew their subscriptions. The initial goal was largely practical, to establish a stable cohort of loyal buyers who might in turn encourage others to join their ranks. In an environment in which sales were still quite sparse (rarely more than a few hundred copies) and life spans of periodicals typically were short, establishing a core of subscribers was essential. No one understood this fact of publishing life better than Nikolai Novikov, the towering presence of Catherine-era publishing, whose years of work as an editor, occasional author, and major publisher taught him the value of networking, publicity, and sustained patronage.[63] Both Bella Grigoryan's and Rodolphe Baudin's contributions to this volume say much more about Novikov and the wider intellectual circles in which he worked, but suffice it to say attracting loyal and renewing subscribers became one of his ongoing endeavor.

This evolved into something of a ritual of reciprocal celebration between editorial boards on one hand and subscribers on the other, in particular when books and journals published the names of subscribers on the pages of the publication By making the names public the editors sent a dual message: one that celebrated the journal through the names of its often well-known subscribers, the other that celebrated the subscribers as a collective body of enlightened patrons for a worthy new intellectual venture, the book or journal in question.

The published lists gave much more than names (and therein gender). They typically included formal titles appropriate to the subscriber's estate (nobility, clergy, merchant, etc.) and even rank within that estate (among the nobility "His Radiance" [Ego Siiatel'stvo], "His Highly wellborn" [Ego Vysokoblagorodie] etc.; among merchants the specific guild was sometimes listed, as was the higher ranking of "Honorary or Distinguished Citizen" [Pochetnyi or Imianityi Grazhdanin]), town or region of residence, and sometimes occupation. As a completed roster a list publicly acknowledged their participation, and the public in question was *obshchestvo*, in this circumstance fashioned as a community of like-minded readers. Like the Ukrainian clerics of the Petrine era, this public reinforced their shared identity by writing lots of letters to each other, and these often included the affective language of friendship, as well as passages in foreign languages. This time, however, the articulation of cultural identity took several other forms

63 The scholarship on Novikov is voluminous, and much of it concentrates on his activities as editor, journalist, and publisher. See, in particular, I. F. Martynov, *Knigoizdatel' Nikolai Novikov* (Moscow, 1981); R. Faggionato, *A Rosicrucian Utopia in the Eighteenth Century: The Masonic Circle of N. I. Novikov* (Dordrecht, 2005); W. Gareth Jones, *Nikolay Novikov, Enlightener of Russia* (Cambridge, 1984); and G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, 1985), 103-152.

as well—lodges, clubs, salons, societies, editorial collaborations, et al.—an institutional layering that far exceeded what had preceded them.

We now have a substantial volume of scholarship that has disaggregated readers' inscriptions and subscribers' lists for the late eighteenth century, thanks in large measure to the work of Aleksandr Samarin.[64] The profile of *subscribers* (social, geographic, professional, gender) is clear and unmistakable: overwhelmingly male, drawn largely from the middle and upper strata of the hereditary nobility (ranks eight and above), and urban. With a few noteworthy exceptions (e.g., *Morning Light [Utrennii svet]*, which had a large base of provincial clergy among its patrons, and the two journals from far away Tobol'sk in Western Siberia, *Irtysh* and *A Learned Library [Biblioteka uchenaia]*) St. Petersburg and Moscow predominated.[65] None of this is surprising, but its meaning remains unexplained.

Let us linger upon the profile that the lists reveal, as well as the fathoms of reading that they obscure about the dawning cultural politics of Russian readership in the latter eighteenth century. On one hand, they painted a highly skewed and circumscribed representation of reading and readers overall. They generally excluded whole strata of readers and reading practices, rendering them newly invisible, even though none had suddenly turned to ashes in the wake of educated society's (*obshchestvo*) ascendance. They convey nothing concrete about subsequent contemporary readers, i.e., those to whom the subscribed copy got passed on, or who may have participated in shared readings of a given article or issue, whether read aloud or passed from hand to hand. Presumably the clubs, lodges, and drawing rooms of cosmopolitan Russia attracted he first wave of subsequent readers, who were much like the subscribers themselves, i.e., male nobles occupying relatively high positions in service. Over time, though, as copies travelled further from the initial subscriber, especially after the establishment of new venues of sociability, such as reading libraries, the demographics of this audience almost certainly grew less homogeneous. But all of this is nothing more than an educated guess, based on decidedly non-quantifiable evidence. Thus, there is much that the lists keep hidden.

64 A. Iu. Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2000); idem, *Rasprostranenie i chitatel' pervykh pechatnykh knig po istorii Rossii (konets XVII-XVIII v.)* (Moscow, 1998), especially chapter 3, 126-153; idem, "Zhenshchiny kak gruppa podpischikov na knigi i zhurnaly v kontse XVIII veka," *Sovremennye problemy knigovedeniia*, vol. 13 (2000), 154-171; "O geografii rasprostraneniia russkikh izdanii vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka," *Izvestiia vysshikh uchebnykh zavedenii. Problemy poligrafii i izdatel'skogo dela*, 1-2 (2000), 133-144; "` Sie vydumano v pol'zu obshchestva i avtora': podpisnye izdaniia v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka," *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*, 54 (2002), 146-163.

65 In addition to Aleksandr Samarin's many relevant works see also my own, now rather dated, articles, "Russian Journals and Their Readers in the Late Eighteenth Century," *Oxford Slavonic Papers* New series, 19 (1986), 88-101, and "Novikov's Readers," *The Modern Language Review*, 77, 4 (Oct. 1982), 894-905.

On the other hand, the Russian lists of subscribers from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries do provide a fair snapshot of what we can reasonably call the reading public. Both consequences, I suspect, were intentional, and here I think it is valuable to take seriously Ospovat's deployment of disciplining, and to see it as a deeply embedded feature of a specifically lay intellectual life from its very outset. The cultural and political ascendancy of educated society is a foundational concept of the Russian Enlightenment, certainly, but the aspect of a collective and publicly constituted readership is less well studied. In this context Benedict Anderson's concept of an imagined community seems apposite. Membership merged their self-constructed totemic identity as readers-in-public with a strong articulation of ` Russia' as both a nation and as a culture of the written word. More boldly, it constituted an expression of moral capital, a claim in full view for the preeminence of a particular cast of print-lay, civil type (*grazhdanskii shrift*), this worldly, and largely secular. Equally, it projected the cultural hegemony of a lay elite, a reading and writing public, who largely succeeded in presiding over the multiple discourses of ` Russia,' past, present, future. Sacrality vs. secularity aside, this profile stands worlds removed from the one over which Muscovy's monastic overseers of the word presided.

All of this helps give a clearer shape to the chronology of Russian readership. First of all, the reading public was new. Theirs was a world of the printed word triumphant, where, *if one so wished*, the space between thought, writing, publication and circulation to readers, both familiar and unknown, was dramatically foreshortened from what it had been in the seventeenth century. They had scant patience for the gaps and silences of old Russian culture, preferring instead to get everything into print as rapidly as was feasible. Just consider the tidal wave of publishing of old and newly uncovered documents in Novikov's *Ancient Russian Library (Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika)*; the discovery and quick publication of *Zadonshchina* and *The Tale of Igor's Campaign (Slovo o polku Igoreve)*; and Karamzin's document laden multi-volume *History of the Russian State* (*Istoriia gosudarstva rossiiskogo*).

The reading public's pursuit of social presence was different from those of earlier monastic reading communities and from the clerical republic of letters, precisely in their valorization of public and print. The latter certainly read voraciously, often wrote voluminously, and were at least as learned as the literati that came later. They had a clear sense of collective identity, but they made no effort to project themselves as a cohort to anyone but themselves. None of this difference had anything to do with advances in technology, and only slightly with markets or market consciousness. Even with the eighteenth century's frontal assault on monasteries, these communities persevered more-or-less as before, even to the point of rejecting the choice of print so as to maintain some boundaries around circulation and readership. Prominent clergy, such as Platon Levshin and Gavriil Petrov,

also participated fully in the culture of educated society, and, from the 1750s onward, quite a few homilists published their sermons in civil type and composed them in a literary style so as to attract educated lay readers. But none turned their backs on exclusively hand written texts, the older church alphabet and type (*kirillitsa*), or Church Slavonic as a fundamental language of Russian Orthodoxy.

Still, public-ness, was intoxicating business for all involved in the latter decades of the eighteenth century. In short order this public came to define themselves as overseers of the national discourse, and, as such, they convinced others to believe them. Ideological divisions and militant fractiousness notwithstanding, they effectively established their realm as the space in which ideas competed and verdicts were rendered. As Europe, the Russian past, peasant spirituality, et al. were discovered (or `rediscovered') it was primarily through the lenses of the educated reading public, who then projected their categories onto everyone and everything else. This was cultural hegemony par excellence,[66] albeit without the connotations of class. They established parameters within which subsequent generations—including ours—framed paradigms of Russian culture.

CONCLUSION: READING, RUSSIA, THE EARLY MODERN, AND DE CERTEAU

When seen in toto, the history of reading does not conform very closely to the eighteenth-century-as-Muscovy hypothesis. Rather it reinforces an older proposition that, in cultural matters, the long eighteenth century introduced new practices, distinct from even the most urbane and Europeanized literary practices elements of late Muscovy. The emergence of a lay literate public, the valorization of print, and especially the explosive growth of secular printing; the symbolic bifurcation of church orthography from civil, the Europeanization of elite culture, the elevation of reading and writing over seeing and, other changes gave the eighteenth century a distinctive cultural cast relative to what immediately preceded it. Our century still matters. Dixhuitièmistes can breathe easily.

Let us not fall into a heuristic complacency, however. Eighteenth-century reading accommodated a motley and disjointed array of practices, old and new, secular and religious, lay and clerical, Russian and non-Russian. What had been present in the seventeenth century did not disappear or suddenly fade into the recesses of backwardness. Older reading practices remained, even if they grew invisible to the mental constructs of those very elites. In an age of print triumphant hand-copying thrived, even of printed books.

66 In Antonio Gramsci's famous formulation, "cultural hegemony proposes that the prevailing cultural norms of a society [...] must not be perceived as natural and inevitable, but must be recognized as artificial social constructs [...] that must be investigated to discover their philosophic roots...."

In a century of European-informed models of childhood, institutionalized religious education grew exponentially, and literacy instruction remained overwhelmingly the terrain of the clergy, church books, and older pedagogies. Most of those introduced to reading at a basic level followed in the pedagogical footsteps of Muscovite forebears. And so on... Our job is to try to understand how they interacted or fit together.

Consequently, the history of reading simply belies the rigid trope of an overarching secularization, a model that ultimately obscures as much as it explains. The enduring interpretive antinomies of *renovatio* that have described a radical separation of pre- and post-Petrine Russia appear today too over-determined to accommodate the diverse and messy reality that current research reveals the eighteenth century to have been. Equally in need of some critical revisiting is the enduring proposition that defined Russia's late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a space of two mutually incomprehensible cultures, one European and the other... shall we say, traditional. The boundaries between all of these opposites were simply too porous, with too much religiosity and church-book reading among lay elites, too much `secular' reading among educated clergy and the rest of literate society, and too much borrowing back and forth to accommodate the polarity.

As an alternative let me suggest that the history of reading could adopt a different type of mapping, more polycentric or scalar, one that subsumes the eighteenth century within a longer early modern that was dynamic and sometimes radically discontinuous (the emergent lay reading public) that nevertheless sustained a great many Muscovite cultural practices. Here we return to the anti-deterministic or anti-reductionist inscriptions with which this chapter began, a call to refuse, on one hand, to reduce `reading' to the reading public and its epigones, while on the other hand avoiding the temptation to invent (or perhaps to revive) an iconic, self-created, and unconstrained or anti-canonical cohort of popular readers, e.g., the `democratic intelligentsia' of bygone eras.[67] De Certeau was surely right in insisting on the power of prescriptive hierarchies within which *all* reading took place. Still, given the current state of our field I think we as researchers would do well to be particularly attentive to its limitations by pursuing the traces of unanticipated (even heretical in de Certeau's sense) readings by some non-elite eighteenth century literate *chudaki*.

From that perspective, the most interesting readers to seek out, and the ones who may allow us to pursue de Certeau's paradox most fruitfully, are those who, like the merchant Ivan Tolchenov[68] or the Viatka town chronicler,

67 The reference here is to M. M. Shtrange's classic (and, in fact, still valuable) monograph, *Demokraticheskaia intelligentsiia v Rossii v XVIII veke* (Moscow, 1965). The book itself builds upon a considerable body of careful research, but the defining paradigm of a coherent `democratic intelligentsia' was highly anachronistic, to say the least, for the eighteenth century.

68 D. Ransel, *A Russian Merchant's Tale: The Life and Adventures of Ivan Alekseevich Tolchenov, Based on His Diary* (Bloomington, Indiana, 2008). See also A. I. Kupriianov,

read and reflected at the interstices of cultural fluxes, who intermingled old and new in their choices of reading, religious and secular, literary and liturgical, satire and saints' lives seemingly without needing to join one camp or define themselves categorically. Clearly, there were many other such readers (just recall Lotman's searching essay on one person's reading of *Bednaia Liza*[69]), and I suspect that some left traces of themselves, waiting to be discovered. If I were to make just one recommendation for future inquiry, it would be to scour the records in search of them. Similarly, research into the still poorly understood realm of semi-literacy ought to provide fertile ground for a more multi-dimensional portrait of eighteenth century readers and their practices. To be clear, the goal here is *not* to devalue in any way the ascendant well educated lay readers of the late eighteenth century, or to diminish the significance of the reading public. Both of these constitute defining and transformative features of the Elizabethan and Catherinian decades. Rather, it is to situate them within a more textured and more heterogeneous profile of readers and reading practices that can only enrich our understanding of what the eighteenth century was all about.

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69 Iu. Lotman, "Ob odnom chitatel'skom vospriiatii `Bednoi Lizy' N. M. Karamzina (K strukture massovogo soznaniia XVIII v.)," *XVIII Vek*, vol. 7 (1966), 280-285.

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REFORMING SUBJECTS: POETICS AND POLITICS OF READING IN EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIA

Kirill Ospovat

Over the last several decades, historical scholarship has investigated the manifold material, cultural, and political implications of reading in early modern Europe. A rediscovery of the material aspects of the print and book trade has led to new assessments of the role of reading in general cultural and political developments since the Renaissance and, in particular, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period which witnessed dynastic crises, civil wars and restorations across Europe and Russia. Given the crisis of traditional legitimacy, the production, dissemination and appropriation of written discourse emerged as pivotal modes of establishing and negotiating authority. To quote a recent study, this process unfolded as a relationship between the "author/authoriser/authority axis" and "the audience for and of these texts: the reader, or the 'subjects' (that is the matter, the person, those owing obedience) of the text."[1]

Even beyond the specific field of historical studies of textuality, at least three major twentieth-century historians and theorists have explained the early modern "disciplinary revolution" and reformed statehood as phenomena grounded in and shaped by particular textual corpora. Norbert Elias has rediscovered conduct literature and courtly letters as a key to a "process of civilization" which began in the late Middle Ages and culminated in the "court society" of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century embodied by Louis XIV's Versailles and Frederick II's appreciation of Voltaire and the belles let-

1 K. Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 2000), 34.

tres.[2] Gerhard Oestreich has interpreted the literature of Neostoicism, initiated by Justus Lipsius, as a successful attempt by humanist learning to develop an ideology and a code of morals for the modern state emerging from the prolonged tumults.[3] Michel Foucault has traced the gradual development of governmentality as a particular self-fulfilling vision of rule, its objects and aims taking shape in mercantilist theories of administration and, more broadly, political philosophies from Machiavelli to Rousseau.[4]

After Marc Raeff's work there can be little doubt that Russia's transformation in the Petrine decades belonged to the general wave of crises and reforms which swept Europe in the long seventeenth century and led to the consolidation of modern, or "absolutist," statehood.[5] Quite importantly, all three mentioned textual corpora—conduct manuals, neostoicist and mercantilist writings—were present and well received in (post-)Petrine Russia, either as Western editions in the libraries of the elite, or as manuscript or printed translations often sanctioned by Peter and his successors.[6] As Raeff concludes, "the ultimate breakup of the traditional patterns of social, religious, and political culture" under Peter was made possible and compensated for by the "printed word" which "proved one of the more significant tools in Peter's kit" for the refashioning of elites: "The reorientation of behavior patterns initiated in the reign of Peter I, first for the monarch's servitors (others will follow), had to be rooted and consolidated by dint of great effort: it required disciplining in the literal sense, threatening punishment and promising rewards, and systematic inculcation from an early age."[7]

A discussion of the monarchy's top-down disciplining effort merges here with an analysis of the cultural mechanics of reading and subjectivity reactivated, though not outright invented, in the course of Petrine reform. What Raeff describes as a goal-oriented state policy can also be understood as a

2 N. Elias, *The Court Society* (New York, 1983); Idem, *The Civilizing Process. Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (Malden, MA, 2003).

3 G. Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State* (Cambridge, 1982).

4 M. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France 1977-1978* (Basingstoke, 2007); Idem, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (Basingstoke, 2008).

5 M. Raeff, *The Well-ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change Through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800* (New Haven, 1983); Idem, "Seventeenth-Century Europe in Eighteenth-Century Russia? (Pour prendre congé du dix-huitième siècle russe)," *Slavic Review*, 41, 4 (1982), 611-619.

6 For the latest overview of Western political literature read and published in eighteenth-century Russia, see K. Bugrov, M. Kiselev, *Estestvennoe pravo i dobrodetel': Integratsiia evropeiskogo vliianiia v rossiiskuiu politicheskuiu kul'turu XVIII veka* (Ekaterinburg, 2016). On the dissemination of printed and manuscript books in eighteenth-century Russia, see S. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1973); Idem, *Kniga v Rossii v poslepetrovskoe vremia: 1725-1740 gg.* (Leningrad, 1976).

7 M. Raeff, "Transfiguration and Modernization. The Paradoxes of Social Disciplining, Paedagogical Leadership, and the Enlightenment in eighteenth Century Russia," in H.-E. Bödeker, E. Hinrichs (eds.), *Alteuropa, Ancien Régime, frühe Neuzeit: Probleme und Methoden der Forschung* (Stuttgart, 1991), 101-102, 107.

particular mode of reading which, while it reaches more and more readers, implies a never-ending, self-perpetuating cultural dynamic of self-reflection and self-improvement. This was recognized by literary and cultural historians aligned with the Soviet-era school of cultural semiotics. Writing at the same time as Raeff, they explored the symbolic dimensions of the Petrine transformation. A. M. Panchenko in his theoretically charged 1984 account of Russia's seventeenth century illuminated the pivotal role of various modes of production and dissemination of discourse for cultural change.[8] Iurii Lotman's manifold work on eighteenth-century Russia, culminating in (but not limited to) his important yet neglected study *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury XVIII – nachala XIX v.* (1994), offers a conceptual interpretation of the cultural implications and consequences of Petrine reforms centered on textuality and reading. The reforms' cultural paradigm reflected, voiced and perpetuated a fundamental discrepancy between everyday practice and cultural norms introduced and supervised by the reforming government. This discrepancy, according to Lotman, was negotiated through various shifting uses of language and discourse: even while the distinction between the vernacular Russian and Church Slavonic as the language of religious learning was gradually suppressed, Russia's cultural situation was more than ever dominated by an explicit split between "empirical reality" and regulatory "grammars," theoretical (or outright utopian) normative models of statehood and subjectivity.[9] While Elias's, Oestreich's, and Foucault's authoritative accounts of the disciplinary revolution are open to criticism for placing too much trust in normative texts while ignoring the divergent historical realities, Lotman foregrounds this ever-present discordance between text and practice in his theoretical analysis.

In this context, reading emerges as a central cultural procedure allowing for constant and complex negotiation between the sphere of norms (associated with religion and, more and more, phenomena imported from the west) and everyday practice, between authority and the self. Certainly understood by Russian rulers from Peter I to Catherine II as a ready technique of political indoctrination, reading—the encounter between texts and audiences—made possible and (re)shaped the very concepts of statehood, discipline, and subjectivity it was supposed to reiterate and broadcast. It can be thus recognized as culture's self-constitutive procedure which "literature" (here a broad term for secular letters) can only cater to and perpetuate:

> Literature requires a particular type of behavior from the reader, shapes its reader. In order to "become a reader," to be worthy of literature they immerse themselves in, its addressee has to

8 A. M. Panchenko, *Russkaia kul'tura v kanun petrovskikh reform*, in *Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury. Tom. 3 (XVII - nachalo XVIII veka)* (Moscow, 1996), 11-260.

9 Iu. M. Lotman, [B. A. Uspenskii], "K semioticheskoi tipologii russkoi kul'tury XVIII veka," in Iu. M. Lotman, *Istoriia i tipologiia russkoi kul'tury* (St. Petersburg, 2002), 74-88.

> transform himself. Literature carries with it an ideal "image of the reader" which it imposes imperatively on the real reader [...]. The text is addressed not to the real reader [...] but to a particular constructed ideal of a reader [...]. But this ideal actively influences reality, and within one generation the real reader accepts this norm as ideal rules for his own behavior. The reader is expected not to read books but to abide by them in their life. And the reader views this expectation as the medieval audience approached the strict moral norms preached to it: if my conduct in practical life is different from what books require, it is because of my own weakness and unworthiness. But I would like to abide by books in my life and this is the way of life I consider right and just. The closer my conduct is to what is said in books, the higher my moral self-esteem. This is why a depiction of corrupt morals can be taken for propagation of immorality. [...] Once one becomes a "reader," they project a system of bookish concepts, ideals and judgements onto their existence and selfhood.[10]

Lotman's far-reaching conclusions are confirmed by a programmatic text published towards the end of the period covered here, in 1760, in the first pages of the journal *Poleznoe uveselenie* (*Useful Entertainment*). Usually associated with its editor, M. M. Kheraskov, this journal was in fact a semi-official publication of the recently founded Moscow University where Kheraskov served. The journal was initiated and sponsored by the university's founding patron, Elizabeth's favorite Ivan Shuvalov. Backed by the government's political and cultural authority, *Useful Entertainment* quite appropriately opened with an essay "On the Reading of Books" (for its full text, see Appendix):

> Reading books is of great utility to mankind [...]. However, there is a great difference between reading and being a reader. An ignorant clerk avidly reads books written without thought; a merchant admires what they call rhymes produced by an ignoramus such as himself – but they are not readers. There are many inept writers, and the number of mindless readers is much greater – even though an author of a badly written book only brings dishonor to himself, while a foolish reader who reads it harms himself and others [...], shares his folly with other ignoramuses. [...] If I start reading in order to profit from the book I chose, I will begin with the following considerations: what is the book that I intend to read? How will I read it? Will I contemplate each issue,

10 Iu. M. Lotman, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury XVIII – nachala XIX v.*, in *Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury. XVIII -- nachalo XIX v.* (Moscow, 1996), 112-113.

> or just rush to finish the book? This is not fitting for books with worthy content. Many read novels to become better at the arts of love, and often underline the tenderest passages with a red pencil. But philosophy, lessons of morality, books on sciences and the arts and so forth are not novels, and one does not read them for erotic maxims. This is why I must immerse myself in the book's content, analyze the author, the book and its value. [...] Someone who reads a book for pleasure but without reasoning can find many harmful lessons even in the most useful of books.[11]

From the standpoint of straightforward indoctrination, it would seem counterintuitive for a state-run publication to insist on the ineptitude of the reading multitude or to voice regret that "these connoisseurs [ignoramuses] have been taught to read." Indeed, the essay demonstrates a contempt both for the "empirical reality" of non-noble audience, and for the existing reading practices which it wishes to substitute for an exigent ideal of a never-ending self-improvement as a "technology of the self." Instead of being easily educated by new wisdom, the readers must strive to make themselves worthy of their task, to "become a reader" before the book is even opened–a paradox which reveals the self-centered cultural value of reading beyond its pragmatic uses. The procedure is so crucial that it is the reader rather than the author who is entrusted with the power and responsibility to shape the public around them by promulgating the right lessons.

The 1760 essay appeared during a transition from the first, Petrine, phase of new Russian letters and a reading culture dominated by earnest prescriptives and theoretical writing (roughly divisible into religious works in Church Slavonic and secular Western texts translated from Latin), to the second, "Catherinian" phase marked by the growing importance of belles lettres—fiction, drama, and poetry, mostly in Russian and French. The underlying cultural assumptions concerning reading and its effects on individual subjects and the body politic remained, however, largely the same, so that Catherine's moral journalism of the 1760s could pursue the same goals as Feofan Prokopovich's sermons.[12]

Lotman derives the complex status of emerging Russian literature from the dialectics of secularization: while Petrine reforms subvert the absolute cultural domination of religious discourse in favor of secular statehood, this statehood along with the prescriptive "grammars" it imports—from conduct manuals to novels—claims for itself the authority enjoyed earlier by "church books": "Literary speech was invested with the authority of the

11 *Poleznoe uveselenie*, 1 (January, 1760), 3-8.

12 J. Klein, "'Nemedlennoe iskorenenie vsekh porokov': o moralisticheskikh zhurnalakh Ekateriny II i N. I. Novikova," in *XVIII vek. Sbornik 24* (St. Petersburg, 2006), 153-165.

state, sacralized along with deified secular power."[13] In fact, by the last years of Peter's reign, when the reading subject had become the primary focus of royal efforts to create a disciplinary society, Petrine publishing policy encompassed several areas of normative discourse and knowledge: Orthodox theology, Western political theory and conduct manuals, and the natural sciences. The 1760 essay offers a similar disciplinary variety in its outline of a curriculum worth reading: "philosophy, lessons of morality, books on the sciences and the arts and so forth." All of these discourses were grounded in humanist rhetoric, appreciated at the Russian court at least since mid-seventeenth century, which considered the education of the subject for public life as a primary goal of reading and learning.[14]

As a procedure which drives and reflects the fashioning of model subjects, reading is situated in the 1760 essay between three major elements of a nobleman's social existence: class identity, formal education, and the practice of leisure. Forcefully distinguishing its ideal reader from the *pod'iachii*, chancellery clerk, the essay was tapping into a steady flow of government-sponsored discourse aiming to recruit the nobility for civil service which required education and reading. "The writers of the eighteenth century showed that the nobleman could be useful to the country only if educated. True nobility depended upon knowledge."[15] This was, of course, the vision behind Moscow University, the publisher of *Useful Entertainment*.

Although the state eventually founded educational institutions, Petrine decrees and the contemporary cultural imagination made the upbringing of noblemen a responsibility of their fathers, and that process was integrated into the ethos of inherited distinction. The essay "On the Reading of Books" introduces education at the paternal home at once as a primary condition for and an impediment to true reading: "A father has bought many books according to the teacher's list [...], the child is beaten into reading them but not because he does not understand them [...], he is given La Fontaine's fables or Molière. These authors deserve much praise—but what will he understand without a guide?" The cultural utopia of noble identity is subverted by the very practices of its implementation: "These are the consequences of inept tutors, and that is what it means to be an inept reader!" The contrast between the cultural –textual– model and actual practice is directed (as in Fonvizin's famous *The Minor* [*Nedorosl'*]), 1782) against the private, household existence not sufficiently regulated by government policy. Besides the deficient education of the youngest, this sphere encompassed the frivolous conduct of adults who "read novels to become better at the arts of love." It

13 Lotman, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury*, 93.

14 With regards to Feofan Prokopovich, the polymath (theologian, rhetorician, and political theorist) who can be said to embody the diversity and coherence of Petrine culture, see R. Lachmann, *Demontazh krasnorechiia. Ritoricheskaia traditsiia i poniatie poeticheskogo* (St. Petersburg, 2001), 168-170.

15 R. Wortman, *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness* (Chicago, 1976), 28.

is only here that we encounter female readers: "I have heard from a girl that she read Molière and found the best advice in him on how to deceive her mother." This judgement echoes moral criticisms of the novel and drama, prominent in contemporary French letters and represented by J. J. Rousseau's contemporaneous *Lettre a M. D'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758) and *Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761). *Useful Entertainment* captures their main nerve as it depicts the false mode of reading as a parody of the proper procedure: in both cases readers are competent enough to "draw worthy lessons" from books, that is, to recognize them as guides for real-life practice.[16]

In fact, frivolous leisure and eroticized commerce of the sexes, decried here in the name of cultural and political authority, had once been officially introduced by Peter I as part of his reeducation of Russian society. The famous decree of 1718 instituted assemblies as spaces situated on the boundary of pleasure and state business, "a free meeting or gathering in someone's house not only for amusement but also for business."[17] This formula clearly builds on the classic Horatian precept for poets which outlined practices of leisure and cultural consumption for Roman aristocracy and was revived by humanistically educated baroque elites: "He who joins the instructive with the agreeable, carries every vote, by pleasing and at the same time improving his reader."[18] Adopted for the title of *Useful Entertainment* and numerous other eighteenth-century publications, this maxim captures the tensions between reading and practice, the public and the private, leisure and service, authority and subject, which framed and drove various uses of reading in Petrine and post-Petrine Russia.

In what follows, I will outline the evolution of normative approaches to reading from Peter's reign until the death of his daughter Elizabeth in 1762 which inaugurated a new, Catherinian era. First, I will address Petrine disciplinary visions of reading as shaped by paradoxes of secularization. The dependence of the emerging secular letters on modes of authority associated with religious writing, as theorized by Lotman, was made explicit in Petrine reflections on the alignment of religious knowledge with political duty. Peter's own notes along with translated and original works (most importantly, by Samuel Pufendorf and Feofan Prokopovich) published under his royal sponsorship outlined a vision of both secular and religious reading as a procedure which shaped the subjects' selfhood according to the requirements of the reformed state and its *reason*. In the following section, I will

16 On the importance of this French debate for Russia see Lotman, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury*, 109-112. On Rousseau and the patterns of reading in the eighteenth century, see R. Darnton, "Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity," in Idem, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 1984), 215-256.

17 Translation quoted from L. Hughes, *Peter the Great: A Biography* (New Haven, 2002), 131.

18 *The Satires, Epistles, and Art of Poetry of Horace Translated Into English Prose...* (London, 1748), 399.

investigate specific normative modes of secular reading which took hold in Russia during the Petrine and early post-Petrine years. Relying on the neostoic alignment of classical learning and political conformity explored by Oestreich, Peter and Petrine literati such as Antiokh Kantemir aimed to develop in Russia a 'civic humanism' as a mode of educating disciplined and zealous servitors. In the political crisis of 1730, this vision revealed its republican undertones and made reading and letters suspicious to Anna Ioannovna's monarchy. Reacting to this, Vasilii Trediakovskii adopted the French model of absolutist literature, illuminated by Norbert Elias, which was couched in the idiom of love and associated the procedure of reading with 'private' existence and unconditional obedience to royal authority. In the next section, I will illuminate the interaction of those two models of reading—the 'civic humanist' and the 'absolutist' —in court literature which emerged under Elizabeth's reign. Approaching the practice of reading as integral to education in civic ethics and arts of conduct figured in a growing number of translated conduct manuals, as well as in the court poetry and fiction produced and translated by the likes of Trediakovskii, Sergei Volchkov, and Mikhail Lomonosov. The Horatian formula of combining "the instructive with the agreeable" was repeatedly used to designate reading—and the literature which made it possible—as central to the public and private existence of a courtier and civil servant. In the final section, I will address two personalized accounts of reading experience from this era: the confessions of Mikhail Avramov, the Petrine reformer-turned-conservative, and Denis Fonvizin's highly charged recollections of his father. In both cases, reading tastes and responses driven by state-sponsored publishing policies emerge as central elements of personal identity. Located in the spaces of privacy and individuality, the normative uses of reading nonetheless manage to inscribe the reading subject into symbolic and tangible structures of the political order.

I. REASON OF STATE: PETRINE PUBLICATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

In an undated note, Peter I wrote:

> Those who do not know for themselves should very much be instructed. Judgement stands above all virtues, for all virtue is void without reason. [...] It is true one should preserve innocence, in the words of St. Paul: "Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good." But this innocence should be steeped in

> reason, not in foolishness, in the words of Christ: "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." [19]

This note reveals the thinking behind Peter's publishing policy as it emerged in the last years of his reign in translations such as *Honorable Mirror of Youth* (*Iunosti chestnoe zertsalo*, 1717) and Pufendorf's *On the Duty of Man and Citizen* signed into print shortly before the tsar's death in 1725. Peter aligns biblical wisdom with secular reason, associated at once with "new science" and Cameralist governmentality. This alignment was not unique to Russia: in fact, it followed from Francis Bacon's highly influential amalgamation of learning and absolutist statehood expressed in the famous dictum "knowledge is power."[20] Baconian visions famously underlay the culture of royal academies which Peter observed in Berlin, London, and Paris, and transferred to Russia when he established in 1725 the Petersburg Academy of Sciences.[21] In his *Advancement of Learning* (owned by Peter's learned general Bruce and published in Russian adaptation in 1760) Bacon quoted St. Paul, among others, to argue against the opinion that learning makes minds indisposed "for policy and government" and inclined "to leisure and privateness," while in fact "it may be truly affirmed that no kind of men love business for itself but those that are learned." In this theory of government, learning is recognized as a source of civic zeal:

> For to say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, it is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than a seeing man can by a light. And it is without all controversy that learning doth make the minds of men gentle, generous, manageable, and pliant to government; whereas ignorance makes them churlish, thwart, and mutinous. [22]

Petrine publications seem to rely on this political use of learning for the fashioning of subjects. In particular, Pufendorf's work *On the Duty of Man and Citizen* begins its explication of civic duty with a discussion of the divinely given double faculty of reason (*razum*, in Russian) and will:

> It has been given to man to become acquainted with the diverse multiplicity of objects that he meets in this world [...]. But he has

19 N. A. Voskresenskii (ed.), *Zakonodatel'nye akty Petra I. Akty o vysshikh gosudarstvennykh ustanovleniiakh*, vol. 1 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1945), 151-152.

20 J. Martin, *Francis Bacon, the State and the Reform of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2007).

21 For a Baconian genealogy of Petrine reform, see R. Collis, *The Petrine Instauration: Religion, Esotericism and Science at the Court of Peter the Great, 1689–1725* (Leiden, 2012), 11-16.

22 F. Bacon, *The Major Works*, ed. by B. Vickers (Oxford, 2008), 130.

> also the ability to envisage his future actions, to set himself to achieve them, to fashion them to a specific norm and purpose, and to deduce the consequences; and he can tell whether past actions conform to rule.[23]

Just as in Peter's note (composed, we might surmise, in conjunction with the translation of Pufendorf), reason appears here as the faculty of discipline and (self-)government. This is why it should be a matter of state concern to provide education to subjects, along with publications inviting a particular mode of reading. According to Gavriil Buzhinskii's dedication and preface to his translation of Pufendorf, after the by now deceased Peter had initiated massive reforms of the state apparatus, he needed to make sure his servitors would have enough understanding of the law driving the state and their own actions "to grasp in the speediest manner all truths and their duty."[24] As Conal Condren concludes in his study of early modern concepts of office and obligation, "the presupposition of office took proper conduct to be by a *persona* as a function of office; conversely, improper conduct was office abuse."[25]

The vision of reading as a mode of constructing the subjects' interiority around the concept of duty had evident religious resonances. This was manifested in an important work personally devised and sponsored by Peter but largely overlooked by subsequent scholarship: Feofan Prokopovich's *Exegesis of Christ's Sermon on the Beatitudes* (*Khristovy o blazhenstvakh propovedi tolkovanie,* 1722). Composed on the tsar's direct orders and explicating his political theology, this work must assume a central place among the publications of Peter's final years.[26] In his preface, Feofan insisted on the need to establish the true meaning of divine doctrine:

> Many misinterpreters do not reason well on these beatitudes and misunderstand their meaning. Seducing themselves and others with the empty name of promised salvation, as if beating on air, they walk blindly towards eternal damnation. For instance: an idle person, poor due to his idleness, flatters himself by remembering the words of Christ: *blessed are the poor*. A man persecuted for his crime claims the words of salvation: *blessed are they which are persecuted*. [...] Conversely, many feel sorrow in their hearts because of their wealth, even if it was acquired lawfully, or their

23 S. Pufendorf, *On the Duty of Man and Citizen According to Natural Law,* ed. by James Tully (Cambridge, 1991), 17.

24 S. Pufendorf, *O dolzhnosti cheloveka i grazhdanina po zakonu estestvennomu* (St. Petersburg, 1726), 8.

25 C. Condren, *Argument and Authority in Early Modern England: The Presupposition of Oaths and Offices* (Cambridge, 2006), 6-8.

26 I. Chistovich, *Feofan Prokopovich i ego vremia* (St. Petersburg, 1868), 124-128.

> deserved honors [...]. For this reason [...] we offer here the meaning [*silu i razum*] of the Lord's words for the instruction of those who claim salvation in vain and those who in vain despair of it.[27]

Hermeneutical uncertainty as to the meaning of Gospel, associated (for polemical purposes) with traditional liturgical orality and popular opinion, must be remedied by a single correct interpretation accessed through a disciplined reading of authoritative texts. This procedure is identified with the work of *razum*, reason, a concept which merges textual hermeneutics with the ethics of state service: the one correct reading of Christ's sermon is required to inculcate the readers with true piety which is also the true principle of political compliance and zeal. [28] It is a major paradox of Petrine "secularization" that the production of the new civic subject was modeled on —or even amalgamated with—religious reform of the (Counter-)Reformation type.

Petrine visions of education and the profound politico-theological effects of reading were manifested in some of the tsar's spectacular measures, among them the trial and killing of his son, Tsarevich Aleksei. The 1718 manifesto proclaiming his exclusion from royal succession (soon followed by a death sentence) opened with a paragraph outlining the tsarevich's reluctance to learn from teachers and books he was abundantly provided:

> we have provided him with teachers of Russian as well as foreign languages and ordered to have him instructed in those in order for him to be educated not only in the fear of god but [...] also to learn other languages, *so that through reading histories and all civil and military sciences in these languages which are appropriate to a worthy ruler of a state he could become a worthy heir to our Russian throne*. But we saw our abovementioned effort to educate our abovementioned son to go in vain, since he constantly violated his obedience to us and ignored everything wherein lies the duty of a virtuous heir. [29]

The rejection of politically instructive reading offered by the sovereign father amounts to a renunciation of inherited identity and status, or so the manifesto suggests. In one of the preceding letters to the tsarevich, Peter proclaimed he would not leave the country to the "lazy slave from the

27 F. Prokopovich, *Khristovy o blazhenstvakh propovedi tolkovanie* (St. Petersburg, 1722), 10b-20b.

28 Ju. Lotman, B. Uspenskij, "Echoes of the Notion 'Moscow as the Third Rome' in Peter the Great's Ideology," in *The Semiotic of Russian Culture* (Ann Arbor, 1984), 53-67; B. P. Maslov, "Ot dolgov khristianina k grazhdanskomu dolgu (ocherk istorii kontseptual'noi metafory)," in *Ocherki istoricheskoi semantiki russkogo iazyka rannego Novogo vremeni* (Moscow, 2009), 238-247.

29 Voskresenskii, *Zakonodatel'nye akty Petra I*, 164. Italics mine.

Gospels [who] buried his talent in the earth (that is, threw away everything that God gave him)."[30] Reconstructing the political theology behind this letter, Ernest Zitser concludes that the tsar "did not want Aleksei's formal obedience" but "demanded that his son undergo a political conversion."[31] By publishing his letters to Aleksei alongside the manifesto and other proceedings of his trial, Peter transformed them into royal instructions to the broad public of servitors, once again merging Gospel precepts with an insistence on reading in a coherent lesson of service ethics. In the framework of the reformed state, reading and learning came to be associated with personalized discipline of duty and service which from now on had to underlie one's status in the hierarchies of power.

These demands addressed to the empire's nobility were institutionalized in the Academy of Sciences which opened in 1725 on the basis of a project personally approved by Peter before his death. Plans for the Academy, developed, among others, by Leibniz, were deeply rooted in the Baconian paradigm of politicized knowledge. Combining a research branch with a school for the nobility and the empire's only secular press, the Academy embodied cultural policies of Peter's last years and was conceived as a central institution of national (re)education. Michael Gordin has demonstrated that the introduction of "new science," the Academy's core task, was inseparable from Peter's "educational projects and new manners reforms designed to transform Russia into a 'Western' state."[32] A Saxon representative in Petersburg remarked in 1743 that the Academy had been established "for the propagation of foreign manners" ("zur Fortpflanzung fremder Sitten").[33]

As Raeff is right to note, "it was characteristic of the petrine didactic legacy that [...] an educational and scholarly institution was entrusted with the selection and production of books."[34] Addressing all of the Russian reading public as an audience of students, the Academy was expected to broadcast a very particular vision of knowledge and subjectivity. One of Leibniz's projects, translated into Russian, provided a dense definition of learning which aligned the natural sciences, religious belief, and secular ethics:

> That which the youth have to learn consists in the following, namely: in the knowledge of God and creation. In order to comprehend both we must make use of the divine light revealed to us in the Holy Scripture, from which proceeds [...] Theology.

30 Translation adapted from E. Zitser, *The Transfigured Kingdom. Sacred Parody and Charismatic Authority at the Court of Peter the Great* (Ithaca, 2004), 143.

31 Zitser, *The Transfigured Kingdom*, 142-146.

32 M. Gordin, "The Importation of Being Earnest: The Early St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences," *Isis*, 91 (2000), 1.

33 *Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, vol. 6 (St. Petersburg, 1870), 480.

34 Raeff, "Transfiguration and Modernization," 104; G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of the Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, 1985), 44-61.

> [...] This, however, consists not in useless squabble and disputations over empty ceremonies, because in this fashion God is not served, but in sincere love for God and your neighbor.[35]

Situated on the same crossroads of baroque secular and religious learning as Feofan Prokopovich, Leibniz (in a very "Petrine" fashion) divorces piety from religious ceremony and strife, and aligns it with academic knowledge "of the Creator and creation" and an interiorized ethics of public life. Speaking a language he shared with Leibniz and Pufendorf, Feofan in a 1718 sermon identified the Christian "love for thy neighbor" with service duty: "we have to observe everything that we see benefitting our neighbor but first of all that which is our obligation according to our rank, as work assigned to us by God."[36]

In addition to the translated books that made up most of the its publications, the Academy published its own journals, *Notes on the St. Petersburg Gazette* (*Primechaniia na vedomosti*, 1728-1742) and, starting from 1755, *Monthly Publications* (*Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia)*.[37] The *Notes,* well-read even after they stopped appearing, included popular essays on various topics, mostly scientific, but also made sure to instruct their readers in the right uses of knowledge for self-discipline. A lengthy overview of "philosophy" (a general term for all formal knowledge) published in 1738 insisted that the goal of all wisdom is to ensure that man follows his God-ordained obligation "to judge according to reason and act according to reason," which means that every subject should "fulfill the duties of low [...] rank with utmost loyalty and zeal in order not to resemble the inept slave by hiding the talent given to him"[38]. An essay adopted from *The Spectator* in 1731 once again alluded to the parable of the talents to inscribe reading into an economy of personal existence:

> There is another kind of Virtue that may find Employment for those Retired Hours in which we are altogether left to our selves, and destitute of Company and Conversation [...]. Exercise of Virtue is not only an Amusement for the time it lasts, but that its Influence extends to those Parts of our Existence which lie beyond the Grave, and that our whole Eternity is to take its Colour from those Hours which we here employ in Virtue or in Vice, the Argument redoubles upon us, for putting in Practice this Method of passing away our Time. *When a Man has but a little Stock to improve, and has opportunities of turning it all to good Account,*

35 Voskresenskii, *Zakonodatel'nye akty Petra I*, 271.

36 F. Prokopovich, *Sochineniia* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1961), 95.

37 On *Primechaniia*, see A. Keuten, "K istorii russkikh i nemetskikh *Primechanii k Vedomostiam* (1728–1742)," *Russian Literature*, 75 (2014), 265–304.

38 "O Filosofii," in *Primechaniia na Vedomosti*, 52 (1738), 195-196.

> *what shall we think of him if he suffers nineteen Parts of it to lie dead* [...]? But because the Mind cannot be always in its Fervours, nor strained up to a Pitch of Virtue, it is necessary to find out proper Employments for it in its Relaxations. The next Method therefore that I would propose to till up our Time, should be useful and innocent Diversions. [...] But of all the Diversions of Life, there is none so proper to fill up its empty Spaces as the reading of useful and entertaining Authors.[39]

Here, the concept and model practices of leisure—first of all, reading—are introduced to the Russian public as an officially sanctioned element of proper life conduct.[40] Divided into business and diversion, it is still driven by a totalizing imperative of virtue and duty. Just as in Peter's letter to Aleksei, in *The Spectator* essay (which originally appeared only four years before it) and in the 1738 essay on philosophy, the parable of the talents emerges as a powerful trope for an internalized social discipline, situated on the border of the religious and the secular and projected into the individual psyche through the transformative experience of reading. In a 1734 testament, the model Petrine servitor and scholar Vasilii Tatishchev advised his son to read the Church fathers and Feofan's *Exegesis of Christ's Sermon* alongside *Honorable Mirror of Youth* to prepare for state service.[41]

2. 1705-1730: Political humanism, inglorious revolution and sweet love

An originary scene of Petrine reading has been recorded and publicized by Heinrich von Huyssen, the one-time tutor to Tsarevich Aleksei and a Leibniz correspondent. In 1705, he published in German a lengthy apologia of Peter I and his court, directed against recent less favorable accounts. Huyssen praised the tsar's urge to educate his magnates and servitors even in leisure, and related an episode illustrating Peter's curiosity. One day the tsar walked into a tent of a German who had Aristotle's *Politics* and Juvenal's *Satires* on his table. Looking at the book titles, Peter commented that diligence and honesty are the best policy for subjects ("fleißig und ehrlich seyn, ist bey Privat-Leuten die beste Politique") while rulers need divine support, cunning and forcefulness. As for satires, Peter continued, they are forbidden in his lands under severe punishment. Yet, as the conversation developed, Peter learned that these satires were not libels but works devised

39 *Spectator*, 93 (June 16, 1711); "O poleznom upotreblenii vremeni," in *Primechaniia na Vedomosti*, 11 (1731), 43-44. Italics mine.

40 V. M. Zhivov, "Vremia i ego sobstvennik v Rossii rannego Novogo vremeni," in *Ocherki istoricheskoi semantiki russkogo iazyka rannego Novogo vremeni* (Moscow, 2009), 64-67.

41 V. N. Tatishchev, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Leningrad, 1979), 137.

to reform corrupt mores and customs ("übele Sitten und Gewohnheiten") of the Roman aristocracy and populace with artful ridicule and moral lessons ("schöne Moralia und Sitten-Lehren"). As an example, the tsar was introduced to the last verses of Juvenal X, which he liked so much that he afterwards acquired a Dutch version of the text and would often elaborate on its message ("Verstand," *razum*) to his retinue.[42] Huyssen then quotes the relevant fragment from Juvenal in Latin accompanied by a translation into German verse.

> Pray for a sound Mind in a sound Body; beg for a great Soul, not terrified by the fear of Death, that esteems the last Stage of a long Life among the Gifts of Nature, that is able to bear Misfortune, that knows not how to be angry, that desires nothing, and thinks the Troubles and cruel Labours of Hercules more agreeable than the Lasciviousness, the Luxury, the Softness of Sardanapalus. I shew you what is in your own Power to bestow upon yourself. Be assured, that the only Path to a Life of Peace is thro' a Course of Virtue. O Fortune! did Men act right, thou wouldst have no Divinity about thee; but we make thee a Goddess, and place thee in the Skies.[43]

With Juvenal, Peter is shown to discover classical letters as an authority easily aligned with a royal top-down reform of the nation's mores—and, with it, the legitimacy of secular, personalized reading patterns. Merging his own voice with Juvenal's, Peter followed the neostoic appropriation of Roman imperial experience conveyed by Tacitus and other authors as a key to early modern political realities. Outlining an ideal image of a diligent and zealous subject, Juvenal situated him in a world dominated by a repressive royal rule and threats of popular mutiny. This was a world quite familiar to Peter and his courtiers: the prosecution of the rebel *streltsy* of 1698 was still underway in 1705. As in other parts of early modern Europe, the reading of classical authors and —by extension—their humanist interpreters and imitators emerged in Russia as a cultural technique allowing the reader to make sense of current political existence.[44] Both Gavriil Buzhinskii in his preface to Pufendorf's outline of European history published in Russian in 1722 on Peter's orders and Tatishchev in his massive *History of Russia* com-

42 [H. von Huyssen,] *Ausführliche Beantwortung des freventlichen und lügenhafften Pasquils … von dem Tractement sowohl der Fremden insgemein als insonderheit der gefangenen Schweden in Moscow …*, s. l. 1706, 86-87; P. P. Pekarskii, *Nauka i literatura v Rossii pri Petre Velikom* (St. Petersburg, 1862), vol. 1, 99.

43 *The Satires of Juvenal*, translated into English prose by T. Sheridan (Dublin, 1769), 253-255.

44 L. Jardine, A. Grafton, "'Studied for Action': How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy," *Past & Present*, 129 (1990), 30-78.

piled between 1720s and late 1740s quoted Livy's claim that "in history you will find sources of your own and the society's good, you will see examples to follow and avoid."[45]

One of the best-educated noblemen of the last Petrine generation, Antiokh Kantemir, made the alignment of classical satire with service discipline into a life-long literary project. In a satire on the virtues of nobility written by 1731 he praised the reading habits of a true statesman of the previous generation (alluding, quite possibly, to his own father):

> Kakov zhe moi otets byl — kto togo ne znaet?
> Pallas, Mars, sudilishche ob nem vozdykhaet:
> V delakh voiny iskusen, ran polno vse telo;
> Bitvy, osady, miry — vse to ego delo [...]
> V grazhdanskom pravlenii, ei, byl ne posleden —
> Rishel'e i Mazarin pred nim v delakh beden.
> V naukakh ves'ma glubok, nad knigami nochi
> Prosizhival — tem gorbat byl i slab na ochi.
> Biblioteka ego predivnaia byla,
> Khot' ne ochen' velika — sovershenna slyla;
> Knigi razny sobrany po luchshei primete.[46]

As in all of Europe, a thoughtfully collected library, erudition, and diligent reading are represented as attributes of an effective politician (like Richelieu) in an age when *reason of state* emerged as a field of theoretical knowledge.

If for Peter the intellectual empowerment of subjects through education and reading was a way of fostering service zeal and awareness, the dialectical consequence of this process was the emergence of the free-thinking servitor, prepared for self-reliant political reflection and action. Such was the figure of Prince D. M. Golitsyn, the leader of the failed aristocratic revolution of 1730.[47] A member of Peter's *poteshnye* guards, sent in 1697 to Venice to study, he became upon his return the governor of Kiev where he employed

45 Buzhinskii quoted in Bugrov and Kiselev, *Estestvennoe pravo i dobrodetel',* 99; V. Tatishchev, "Istoriia rossiiskaia," *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1994), 79-82.

46 Translation: "Who knows not how great my father was? Pallas, Mars, and the courts mourn him. He was skilled in the arts of war, his body covered in wounds. Battles, sieges, treaties were his work. [...] He was not the last person in civil administration. Richelieu and Mazarin were worse statesmen than him. He was deeply steeped in sciences. He spent his nights reading books, developed a humpback and weakened his eyes because of this. His library was a marvel. It was not large but was considered perfect, assembling different books according to the best principles." A. D. Kantemir, *Sobranie stikhotvorenii* (Leningrad, 1956), 370-371.

47 I. de Madariaga, "Portrait of an Eighteenth-Century Russian Statesman: Prince Dmitry Mikhaylovich Golitsyn," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 62, 1 (1984), 36-60; B. A. Gradova, B. M. Kloss, V. I. Koretskii, "K istorii Arkhangel'skoi biblioteki D. M. Golitsyna," in *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1978 god* (Moscow, 1979), 238-253.

local scholars to produce a corpus of translations of Western political literature. While most of these translations were circulated in manuscript form, Peter was aware of them and considered having some of them printed. It is a noteworthy if neglected paradox that Peter himself displayed significant interest in history and the political discourses of European republics (a category which included limited monarchies): Venice, the Netherlands, England, and Sweden. Similarly, by 1730 his loyal servitor Golitsyn amassed a library which provided a textual foundation for aristocratic constitutional reform: for example, it included a manuscript of Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* in Russian translation. Tatishchev, intimately involved in the defeat of the *verkhovniki*, later claimed in his *History* that the events of 1730 which—at least in his version—shook the foundations of Russian monarchy, originated in the circulation of subversive books, *knigi nepotrebnye,* and pernicious reading practices:

> [...] the beginnings of societies, customs, governments and duties of rulers and subjects are properly speaking the subject matter of philosophy and its subdivisions: moral philosophy, natural law and politics, as has been sufficiently demonstrated by different philosophers in different languages. [...] They have not been translated into our language except for Pufendorf's doctrine of moral philosophy and politics mixed in his short book *On the Duty of Man and Citizen.* On the contrary, too many inappropriate books have been publicized: for example, Machiavelli's *The Prince,* Hobbes's *Leviathan,* Locke's *Treatise on Government,* Boccalini and others circulate although they are more harmful than useful. For this reason, unreasonable people develop strange opinions irreconcilable with the wisdom and interest of the state, and some have attempted the illicit. This is why I found it fitting to briefly speak of this matter which is unnecessary for my history. [48]

This is a vivid testimony of the effects and powers attributed to reading in contemporary political imagination. Tatishchev feels obliged to provide a theoretical argument in favor of Russia's "eternal" autocracy to counter political hubris fostered by improper reading. The attempted coup is blamed on particular translated works. If the translations of Locke and Traiano Boccalini (a widely popular early seventeenth-century Italian pamphleteer with republican leanings, translated with Peter's direct approval) fit neatly into a "republican" vision of rule, the counterintuitive appearance of

48 Tatishchev, *Sobranie sochinenii,* 1, 359. On the Russian reception (and prosecution) of Boccalini see S. Polskoy, "'Vedomosti Parnasskie' T. Bokkalini i ikh russkie chitateli: k voprosu o vliianii respublikanskikh idei v Rossii pervoi treti XVIII veka," *Izvestiia Samarskogo nauchnogo tsentra Rossiiskoi akademii nauk,* 17, 3 (2015), 189-197.

Machiavelli and Hobbes on this list says much about political perceptions of reading as activity. *The Prince* offers no arguments for an aristocratic oligarchy envisioned by Golitsyn but does instruct its audience on the workings of popular discontent behind changes of power. It is not a republican ideology but the education of its reader in the arts of political action that makes this text subversive.

The same is true of Hobbes's *Leviathan*. An outspoken apology of absolute sovereignty, it was still seen with suspicion by orthodox royalists during the English civil war when it appeared. In a tone quite similar to Tatishchev's, two of these writers claimed that "Hobbes had written a 'Rebells catechism' and [...] had published 'false and evil Doctrines' which were 'pernicious to the Soveraign Power of Kings, and destructive to the affection and allegiance of Subjects.'"[49] What caused this rebuttal was not so much Hobbes's overall assessment of monarchy as the theoretical arguments behind it. Rejecting any kind of dynastic divine right, Hobbes prefers monarchy over several possible types of "commonwealth," all of them grounded in a free and collective decision of the people: "men agree amongst themselves, to submit to some Man, or Assembly of men, voluntarily, on confidence to be protected by him against all others."[50] This theory seems to go beyond providing all subjects a right to resist repression; it also includes the possibility of aristocratic rule by a collective body or assembly, where elective monarchs "are not Soveraignes, but Ministers of the Soveraigne" lacking the power to appoint their own successors.[51] (This was precisely the political model offered by Golitsyn's Supreme Privy Council to Anna.) While Hobbes is explicitly skeptical of this option, what seems to trouble Tatishchev is the political knowledge—a pattern of political action, agency, and empowerment—that this account provides to power-thirsty actors. Later in the same chapter, Tatishchev evokes Leviathan as an emblem for the lawless rule of the Supreme Privy Council in its initial period dominated by Menshikov, and then compares Golitsyn and his allies of 1730 to "Roman Brutuses."[52] Denouncing the dangers of learned imitations of aristocratic republicanism, Tatishchev paradoxically replicated Hobbes's own analysis of the origins of rebellion in *Leviathan*:

> By reading of these Greek, and Latine Authors, men from their childhood have gotten a habit (under a false shew of Liberty,) of favouring tumults, and of licentious controlling the actions of their Soveraigns [...]. And as to Rebellion in particular against Monarchy; one of the most frequent causes of it, is the Reading of the books of Policy, and Histories of the antient Greeks, and

49 E. Curran, *Reclaiming the Rights of the Hobbesian Subject* (New York, 2007), 12-13.
50 T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London, 1985), 228.
51 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 246.
52 Tatishchev, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1, 368.

> Romans; from which, young men, and all others that are unprovided of the Antidote of solid Reason, receiving a strong, and delightfull impression, of the great exploits of warre, atchieved by the Conductors of their Armies, receive withall a pleasing Idea, of all they have done besides.[53]

Across early modern Europe, a natural response to this threat produced by books was the persecution of certain habits of political reading.[54] Indeed, during Golitsyn's somewhat belated trial in 1737 special attention was paid to confiscating Machiavelli's and Boccalini's suspicious works from his library. Three years later, in 1740, Anna's loyal courtier A. P. Volynskii was tried and beheaded over his interest in political writings (especially Lipsius), his comments on their relevance for the current reign, and a reformist project of his own.[55]

Since, however, suspending all reading in the realm was not an option even under Anna Ioannovna, what was required was an alternative, a conformist pattern of reading that would yield the desired political effects on individual subjects and the body politic. This pattern, associated with court society (dismantled during Peter's early maturity but gradually reemerging by the 1730s), was introduced to the Russian public in 1730, only months after the defeat of the *verkhovniki,* in the *Voyage to the Island of Love* (*Ezda v ostrov liubvi*)—Vasilii Trediakovskii's translation of the 1663 French erotic novel *Le Voyage de l'Isle d'Amour* by Paul Tallemant. In his groundbreaking discussion of this translation, Lotman suggests that it represented an attempt to transplant to Russia a particular code of polite behavior, *civilité* or *galanterie*, and was thus inscribed into the general Petrine trend to see texts as "instructions for conduct." In this case, what was being prescribed and regulated was leisure, a private space of courtship and adultery, both separated from and juxtaposed with official hierarchies of rank and political existence.[56] Indeed, the rules for such a space were already given in Peter's decree on assemblies, thereby including it within the broad scope of political education.

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53 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 267, 369.

54 S. N. Zwicker, "The Constitution of Opinion and the Pacification of Reading," in K. Sharpe, S. Zwicker (eds.), *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), 302.

55 S. P. Luppov, "Biblioteka Artemiia Volynskogo," in *Pamiatniki kul'tury: novye otkrytiia. Pis'mennost', iskusstvo, arkheologiia. 1978* (Leningrad, 1979); K. Ospovat, "Kazn' avtora: Delo A.P. Volynskogo, 'absoliutizm' i problema politicheskoi slovesnosti v 1740 godu", Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 151 (2018), 49-73.

56 Iu. M. Lotman, "'Ezda v ostrov liubvi' Trediakovskogo i funktsiia perevodnoi literatury v russkoi kul'ture pervoi poloviny XVIII veka," in Idem, *O russkoi literature* (St. Petersburg, 1997), 173-174. On Russia's "court society" of this period see S. Polskoy, "Dvor i 'pridvornoe obshchestvo' v poslepetrovskoi Rossii: Praviashchie elity i dvorianstvo Rossii vo vremia i posle petrovskikh reform (1682–1750)," in A. Doronin (ed.), *Praviashchie elity i dvorianstvo Rossii vo vremia i posle petrovskikh reform (1682–1750)* (Moscow, 2013), 320-367.

Not only does this erotic novel end with the male protagonist's return to the manly life of glory and reason, *razum*, but Trediakovskii emphasizes in his preface that the book is distinguished at once by delightfulness and wisdom, "thoughtful [...] fiction [...] as well as very delightful and pleasant verses, but first of all wise maxims of morality," *nravouchenie*.[57] While *nravouchenie* is a general term for the cultural discipline imposed on the Russian reader, its immediately political implications are made explicit in a series of Trediakovskii's poems published together with his translation. Here, a language of gallant love was developed next to, and amalgamated with, the praise of Russian empire and Empress Anna. One of the poems explicitly styled love as a principle of political cohesion and peace:

> Liubov' pravit vsemi grazhdány,
> Tu chtiat vezde i poseliany,
> Ta vschinaet brani,
> Nalagaet dani.
>
> Ne bez liubvi mir, dogovory;
> A prekrashchal kto b inoi ssory? [58]

Other works of Trediakovskii's in Anna's praise leave little doubt that "conflicts" refer here to Golitsyn's attempted revolution, while, according to another poem, "Anna krasneisha Aurory / Vsekh v liubov' sebe serdtsa preklonila vechnu."[59] Given this understanding of love as a trope for absolutist pacification, Trediakovskii's translation (sponsored by the diplomat and aristocrat A. B. Kurakin) can be seen as a cultural gesture involving its audience in a civil compact different from, and opposed to, that of "republican" political literature. This was how Trediakovskii's work was perceived by Johann Daniel Schumacher, the effective manager of the Academy of Sciences and thus one of the government officials responsible for cultural policy. Congratulating Trediakovskii on his success, Schumacher affirmed that it concerned the whole polity, or at least its reading elites:

> I am delighted by the good success of your book among people of wit [*gens d'esprit*] not only out of love for you but also for our sake. It is well known that once poetry and music start to soften

57 *Ezda v ostrov liubvi, perevedena ... chrez studenta Vasil'ia Trediakovskogo* (Moscow, 1834), unnumbered.

58 Translation: "Love rules over cities, is venerated by peasants, starts wars and imposes contributions. Without love there are no peace treaties, who else would stop conflicts?" V. K. Trediakovskii, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, edited by L. I. Timofeev (Moscow, Leningrad, 1963), 82-83; J. Pogosjan, *Vostorg russkoi ody i reshenie temy poeta v russkom panegirike 1730–1762 gg.* (Tartu, 1997), 34sqq.

59 Translation: "Anna, more beautiful than Aurora has subdued all hearts by love." Trediakovskii, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, 56.

> the mores of a nation, however barbaric it may be, rulers will find a way to benefit from it. [60]

Schumacher directly links the introduction of fine arts both to stability of royal rule and to the Petrine project of disciplining the nation, as embodied by the Academy. In this, he singles out the *gens d'esprit* as a relevant milieu and a cultural type whose behavior and political sentiments can be fashioned and manipulated through reading and publishing. In the aftermath of 1730, the malleable courtier had to succeed and suppress the republican-minded statesman as the ideal type of reader and social actor—a task made easier by the fact that both modes of conduct were equally grounded in humanist learning and reading patterns.

3. 1737-1762: the courtier and his books

Indeed, with its erotic escapism, *Voyage to the Island of Love* represented only one dimension—and a singular episode—of the politically charged consensus shaped and reflected by post-Petrine Russian letters. The broader outlines of that literary culture can be seen from two prominent political novels widely read in Russia between 1720s and 1750s: Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (1699) and John Barclay's *Argenis* (1621). Both novels probed the boundaries between dissent and conformity, political reflection and obedience. Situated on the crossroads of classical learning, political theory, and Catholic piety, Fénelon's book portrayed the path of a prince (as well as that of the reader) towards a true understanding of monarchical order and the duties of subjects and rulers. Written for the education of the heir to the French throne but disapproved by Louis XIV, *Télémaque* was translated into Russian by Andrei Khrushchev, who was sent abroad by Peter I and executed along with Volynskii under Anna. His translation widely circulated and was published by the Academy on the personal orders of Empress Elizabeth in 1747. In 1751, it was followed by *Argenida*, Trediakovskii's translation of Barclay's Latin novel *Argenis* known to Feofan Prokopovich and already translated by Trediakosvkii once before in the 1720s.

An epic portrayal of a political crisis (loosely modelled on the French Wars of Religion) and the reestablishment of authority, *Argenis* provided a comprehensive model of the absolutist political cosmos, endorsed by readers across seventeenth-century Europe. Condemning the political hubris of magnates who dared to challenge royal authority, Barclay saw political fiction such as his own as an important means of pacification. Within the

60 P. P. Pekarskii, *Istoriia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk v Peterburge,* vol. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1873), 25-26.

novel, his alter ego, the court writer Nicopompus, designs "a stately fable, in manner of a history" for the politically active public:

> They shall meet with themselves and find in the glass held before them, the show and merit of their own fame. It will perchance make them ashamed longer to play those parts upon the stage of this life, for which they must confess themselves justly taxed in a fable. [...] Then will I take off the mask from the factious subjects, that the people may know them: what they are like to hope, what to fear: by what means they may be reclaimed to virtue, and by what means continuing obstinate, they may be cut off. [61]

In what is effectively Barclay's commentary on his own work, the edifying effects of fiction are shown to be crucial for the absolutist political compact: they help refashion and reform individual subjects and their understanding of their political role, extending the imperative of obedience into their inner selves.

Barclay's novel portrays the transition from civil strife driven by competing powerful actors to a pacified polity dominated by an absolute monarch and his court. A similar transition was taking place in Russia between 1730 and 1750, between the *Voyage* and *Argenida*. Accordingly, a court literature and reading habits emerged and, in erasing the very possibility of political upheaval, embedded the reading subject in the hierarchies of royal service and favor. Their advent was marked by the publication of a series of conduct books. *La Véritable politique des personnes de qualité,* then attributed to Fénelon and known in English as *The True Conduct of Persons of Quality,* appeared in Trediakovskii's translation as *Istinnaia politika znatnykh i blagorodnykh osob* in 1737 and 1745. In 1741, Sergei Volchkov published his version of Balthasar Gracian's conduct manual known in French as *L'homme de cour,* followed by reeditions and many other similar works.[62]

The True Conduct of Persons of Quality included three chapters insisting on obedience to authority and prohibiting sedition or even criticism of government. Instead, it taught its audience to earn favor with patrons and profit from reading: "if there be any overplus time, they make use of it to read Books, which instruct and divert at the same moment."[63] Reading became both a source and an attribute of courtly wisdom which regulates

61 J. Barclay, *Argenis,* edited and translated by M. Riley, D. Pritchard Huber (Assen, 2004), vol. 1, 333, 337; J. Barclay, *Argenida: Povest' geroicheskaia ... perevedennaia ... ot Vasil'ia Trediakovskago* (St. Petersburg, 1751), vol. 1, 416-417.

62 M. Okenfuss, "Popular Educational Tracts in Enlightenment Russia: A Preliminary Survey," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies,* 14/3 (1980), 307-326.

63 *The True Conduct of Persons of Quality,* translated out of French (London, 1694), 85; *Istinnaia politika znatnykh i blagorodnykh osob, perevedena chrez Vasil'ia Trediakovskago* (St. Petersburg, 1737), 98.

leisure just as it does business. It was defined in a distinctly humanist, Horatian language of delight and profit. Accordingly, *belles lettres*, and the newly emerging poetry in Russian in particular, became a privileged space of courtliness. Kantemir captured and attempted to canonize this trend in his verse adaptions of Horace's *Epistles*. Written around 1740 and published after his death in 1744, they were devised to develop a cultural canon for Russia's reemerging court society. In particular, *Epistles* I, 2 outlined the reading habits appropriate for a young aristocrat destined for the highest positions:

> Znamenite Lollie, poka udivliaesh'
> Ty Rim sladkorechiem, ia prochel v Preneste
> Troianskoi spisatelia voiny, koi Khrispppa
> I Kraptora uchit nas prostrannei i luchshe,
> Chto chestno, chto gnusno nam, chto k pol'ze, chto vredno.
> Dlia chego ia tak suzhu, kol' dosug — poslushai. [...]
> Dobrodeteli, vprotiv, i mudrosti sily
> Poleznyi predstavil nam obrazets v Ulisse [...]
> Esli ty trebovat' ne budesh'
> Pred zorei knigu s svechoi, i serdtse k naukam
> I k chestnykh del znaniiu svoe ne prilozhish',
> Liubov' il' zavist', otniav son, tebia izmuchit. [...]
> Teper', poka molod, ty v chisto primi serdtse
> Moi slova; teper' ty vruchi sebia luchshim
> Nastavnikam, i delam obykai poleznym.[64]

> While you, illustrious Lollius, are making declamations at Rome, I have once more read over at Praeneste, Homer the Writer of the Trojan War: Who sets forth more folly and in a better manner than either Crantor or Chrysippus, what is lovely, what deformed, what profitable, what pernicious. Hear, if Business don't hinder you, my Reason for being of this Opinion. [...] Again, he hath set before us a fine model of the power of virtue and wisdom, in the person of Ulysses [...] And if you don't call for your book and candle before day, and apply your mind to study and some laudable pursuit, you shall be tormented and kept awake with envy or with love. [...] Now then while you are young, and your mind uncorrupted, drink in these maxims; now lend your ear to those of more experience than yourself.[65]

64 A. D. Kantemir, *Sochineniia, pis'ma i izbrannye perevody,* vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1867), 407-414.

65 *The Satires, Epistles, and Art of Poetry of Horace,* 215, 217, 221.

Both Horace's text and Kantemir's annotations firmly situate the act of reading and interpretation in the social space of the imperial court and government. Addressed to the young aristocrat Lollius, the epistle instructs him to read Homer's classic works as lessons in political wisdom: against the backdrop of a major crisis, Homer gives vivid examples of the rulers' cunning and folly, industry and idleness. While associated with the spaces of youth and leisure, education and reading still necessarily pertain to duties of service and Lollius' standing as "a man as skillful in governing no less than in philosophy," as Kantemir describes him.[66]

Just how much the Horatian reading pattern of delight and profit came to be appropriated by the Russian elites can be seen from a rare personal testimony. In 1747, Tatishchev thanked Schumacher for sending him the Academy's recent publications with a direct paraphrase of the Horatian formula:

> I was very much delighted by the newly printed books you sent me because when my disease does not allow me to write *I take pleasure in reading such works which do not burden the mind but are agreeable due to their wise maxims*.[67]

In his classic description of court society (explicitly based on Gracian, among others), Norbert Elias sees its reading and writing habits as an extension of specific techniques of human observation and self-observation "with a view to self-discipline in social life," inscribed into the constant competition for prestige and influence.[68] At the Russian court, the future Catherine II was discovering in the mid-1740s the combined arts of self-observation, reading, and survival thanks to an experienced foreign diplomat who explained to her

> that a philosopher of fifteen could not know herself, and that I was surrounded by so many rocks that I ran great danger of being wrecked, unless the temper of my mind was of a very superior stamp; that I ought, therefore, to fortify it by the study of the best works, such as the Lives of Plutarch, that of Cicero, and the Causes of the Greatness and Decay of the Roman Republic, by Montesquieu. I immediately ordered those books to be procured for me, and there was considerable difficulty in finding them in St. Petersburg at that period. I told the Count that I would trace my portrait for him, such as I supposed it,

66 Kantemir, *Sochineniia, pis'ma i izbrannye perevody,* vol. 1, 407.
67 V. N. Tatishchev, *Zapiski. Pis'ma 1717-1750 gg.* (Moscow, 1990), 326. Italics mine.
68 Elias, *The Court Society*, 105.

> that he might see whether or not I really did understand myself.[69]

At court, according to Elias, the only valued "forms of literature and learning" were those linked "with the life of this society." Professional, "pedantic" scholarly knowledge was discarded in favor of genres—like memoirs or novels—which were "nothing other than direct organs of social life."[70] This is how proper reading is described in a book, *The Perfect Education of Children* (*Sovershennoe vospitanie detei*), referred to in Tatishchev's letter; it was attributed to Jean-Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde and published in Volchkov's translation in 1747. A reasonable nobleman

> is not very interested in the many odd sciences of the world: knowing that the human mind is brought by them not only to confusion but even to degradation. He strives to learn that first and foremost which a good and honorable person is required to know [...]. In each sphere or topic he does not read much but chooses the books of the best authors, reflects upon them and remembers well. Finding the best maxims in all of them he strives to put them to action for his own good and that of others. [...] If he studies something or reads books, it is to perfect himself, not to appear wise and learned.[71]

Just as this book appeared, a new generation of educated nobility was emerging in the capitals (first of all, from the Noble Cadet Corps) for whom sociability of this kind represented a natural space of advancement and self-fashioning. In the early 1750s, the cultural self-consciousness of this group erupted in a series of manuscript poems provoked by I. P. Elagin's *Satire on the Petit-maître* (*Satira na petimetra*), a mildly critical portrayal of a fop. Among the responses defending the lifestyle of young aristocrats was an anonymous epistle to Beketov, a page who was for a short time Empress Elizabeth's favorite. A central place in this defense belongs to reading habits:

> Skazhi, Beketov, tot ne priamo l' veselitsia,
> Kto v userdi uchen, ne vovse v tom truditsia,
> Kto chteniiu liubit knig, ne mozhet byt' bez nikh,

69 *Memoirs of the Empress Catherine II* (London, 1859), 28-29.

70 Elias, *The Court Society*, 104-106.

71 *Sovershennoe vospitanie detei: Soderzhashchee v sebe; molodym znatnago roda, i shliakhetnago dostoinstva liudiam, blagopristoinye maniry, i prilichnyia povedenii* (St. Petersburg, 1747), 207-209. For the original, see *L'Education parfaite, contenant les manieres bienséantes aux jeunes gens de qualité* ... (Amsterdam, 1713). On this translation and its original see M. S. Nekliudova, "'Sovershennoe vospitanie detei' (1747 g.), ili chto stoit za perevodom S. Volchkova" (forthcoming).

Sidit i s knigoiu i u druzei svoikh,
Veselosti i trud den' priamo razdeliaet,
V trude ostrit svoi um i sam chiuvstvo uslazhdaet?
Mne kazhetsia, sto krat scheslivei on tovo,
Akrome kto nauk ne molvit nichevo.[72]

The space of cultivated leisure—both separated from and amalgamated with business, i e. state service—is depicted as a feature of social distinction, a mode of collective existence characteristic of the new generation of noble elites. Placed between satirical extremes of the pedantic scholar and the ignorant fop is the educated courtier who makes reading a crucial part of his public role at court and in government service. In 1749 Catherine was glad to note the rise of the new favorite, the twenty-two-year-old page Ivan Shuvalov, "for, while he was a page, I had marked him out as a person of promise, on account of his studiousness; he was always to be seen with a book in his hand."[73] Shuvalov apparently followed the advice given in *The True Conduct* to read and learn because "an abundance of useful and entertaining knowledge [...] procures all Persons of Merit to be their Advocates."[74] Immediately after his rise Ivan Shuvalov emerged as the "Russian Maecenas," a major patron of learning and letters, the founder (in 1755) of the Moscow University and thus a sponsor of the next generation of educated noblemen, which included Kheraskov, Gavriil Derzhavin and Denis Fonvizin.

4. PRIVATE VOICES: READING AND SECULAR PIETY

Against this background of normative visions of reading as practice and cultural technique, we can make sense of the few first-hand accounts of reading experience known so far from early eighteenth-century Russia. Stemming from different decades and social contexts, most of them are nonetheless permeated with the normative imperative of approaching reading as a mode of instruction for political and cultural existence. The tensions between secular and religious knowledge, between service and leisure which shaped the prescriptive visions of reading, also informed actual reading practices—or

72 Translation: "Tell me, Beketov, is he not truly happy who has studied diligently but does not devote his whole life to this work? Who likes books and cannot be without them, reads a book even when visiting his friends, distinguishes pleasures from work, perfects his wit through studies and delights his senses? I think he is much happier than he who does not know anything outside of his studies." I. F. Martynov, I.A. Shanskaia, "Otzvuki literaturno-obshchestvennoi polemiki 1750-kh godov v russkoi rukopisnoi knige (Sbornik A. A. Rzhevskogo)," in *XVIII vek. Sbornik 11* (Leningrad, 1976), 142.

73 *Memoirs of the Empress Catherine II*, 113.

74 *The True Conduct of Persons of Quality*, 59; *Istinnaia politika znatnykh i blagorodnykh osob*, 70-71.

at least written accounts of them. Behind these tensions we can discern an overarching structure of established authority, both secular and religious, as a common foundation for divergent yet interlinked and mutually dependent visions of reading and its effects on subjecthood.

The most famous case where reading and book production emerged as a focal point of all the cultural and political tensions of the reformist era is the story of Mikhail Avramov, charged by Peter in 1712 with the establishment of the St. Petersburg press. For Avramov, a zealous servitor placed in the very center of the tsar's cultural reforms, the tensions they unleashed became a matter of intense spiritual and intellectual experience that he recorded in his autobiography. There, he recounts how he came to share the emperor's taste for "pagan books" by Virgil and Ovid, and volunteered to print and disseminate a publication containing images and stories of pagan deities. This publishing act had an intensely personal effect on Avramov:

> With this style of life, my humble God-given mind was obscured through these Satan-driven actions. Because of this, I was favored by the lovers of this world and at that time, a fool, I was called by many a man of wit. This false human glory made me more and more proud, and I renounced my God-given humble way of life and from this point on started living a deadly pagan life, loose and shoreless, full of love for letters and voluptuousness. Having forgotten the fear of God, I immersed myself in all corporeal temptations, dissolute worldly pleasures, drinking, insatiate adultery and intense fornication, as well as other mad deeds and crimes. [75]

With a self-conscious rhetorical skill, Avramov emphasizes the intimate link between reading and living, manifested in his case by the interplay between a love of letters, *slovoliubie* (an equivalent of *philologia*) and *slastoliubie*, voluptuousness. He depicts a specific public sensibility, encouraged by Petrine reforms and the monarch himself, which explicitly associated secular reading with a demonstrative hedonism and contempt for traditional moral strictures. Slightly later, other religiously-minded witnesses also complained about the "epicureanism" of the Russian court.[76] Most famously, Mikhail Shcherbatov in his later tract *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia,* dating from the end of 1780s, concluded that as a result of the Petrine reforms, "sciences, arts, and crafts began to flourish" in Russia, but

75 Chistovich, *Feofan Prokopovich i ego vremia*, 262-263.

76 E. Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt der deutschen Russlandkunde im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1953), 98.

at the same time "luxury and voluptuousness laid the foundation of their power."[77]

Avramov, who goes on to describe his conversion to a strict religious morality and confessional zeal, easily appears as a representative of conservative opposition to Petrine reforms, a man rooted in the "old Rus'."[78] However, as Lotman has demonstrated in his conceptually charged discussion of Avramov's trajectory, this simplistic distinction does not hold: as much as Peter himself, Avramov believed in the idea of top-down moral reform of the realm, led by the monarchy and the church—even if his vision of reform came to diverge from the one accepted at court.[79] As the director of St. Petersburg press, Avramov was a central figure in the implementation of Peter's cultural agenda. For all his religious fervor and explicit criticism of Peter's religious policies, Avramov's later denunciations of pagan literature and the practical hedonism associated with it did not imply a turn away from disciplinary reform or the royal authority at its center. Avramov collected materials for a future history of Peter, and praised his improvements of the "military and civil order [*chin*]."[80]

In fact, Avramov retained his allegiance to the reformist ethos, and over several decades submitted to Peter and his successors several projects of administrative reform. It is within this discursive mode that he makes explicit his critique of what we can call the Petrine religious settlement and offers his alternative, which Pekarskii defined in 1862 as "one of these theocratic governments the likes of which until recently unfortunately existed in the regions dependent on Rome but now, thanks to Garibaldi, only exist in Rome itself."[81] Indeed, pleading for the restoration of patriarchy and traditional piety, Avramov inscribed them into a vision of a future disciplinary state which would merge local parishes into a centralized system of control over the population, as well as its mental and practical habits.[82] Radically diverging from Petrine policy on the issue of patriarchy, Avramov shared its understanding of the church as an institution of an all-embracing social discipline. His vision included a limited "traditional" curriculum of religious reading as a necessary tool for securing the subjects' obedience.[83] Against this background, Avramov's rejection of Ovid as a wrong kind of public and private reading can be seen as a necessary consequence of his own interpretation of Petrine reformist agenda. Avramov's approach to reading, shaped by an Augistinian narrative of personal conversion, remained nonetheless embedded in a vision

77 M. M. Shcherbatov, *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia*, translated and edited by A. Lentin (Cambridge, 1969), 157.

78 Pekarskii, *Nauka i literatura v Rossii pri Petre Velikom*, vol. 1, 514.

79 Iu. M. Lotman, *Besedy o russkoi kul'ture. Byt i traditsii russkogo dvorianstva (XVIII-nachalo XIX veka)* (St. Petersburg, 2001), 243-253.

80 Pekarskii, *Nauka i literatura v Rossii pri Petre Velikom*, vol. 1, 509.

81 Ibid., 509.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid., 500.

of reformist governance which aligned the spiritual and political discipline of the self. While at odds with Petrine cultural habits, Avramov's vision of pious morality as a foundation for service zeal and disciplinary statehood remained very much relevant for later generations of Russian servitors.

This can be seen from Denis Fonvizin's account of the moral and reading habits of his father, Ivan, a zealous servitor and avid reader, in his own narrative of spiritual conversion, "Sincere Confessions of My Deeds and Thoughts," composed around 1790:

> My father was a man gifted with a vigorous, sound intellect. Given the idea of a proper upbringing current in has day, he was never given the opportunity to enlighten his mind with formal learning. He did read a great many Russian books, and particularly preferred the *Ancient* and *Roman History,* the *Opinions of Cicero* and other well-translated and morally instructive volumes. He was a virtuous man and a true Christian [...] He detested the practice of bribery. When circumstances gave him the chance to make his fortune he never once accepted anything whatsoever. [84]

Here, diligent reading of the few existing Russian books—exemplified by several identifiable editions published by the Academy of Sciences around 1750, at the time of the memoirist's childhood—is firmly defined as a didactic practice. The value of Rollin's *Ancient History* and Olivet's excerpts from Cicero lies in their capacity to fashion the reader into a man of virtue, true Christian faith, and solid reason—three concepts which programmatically coincide in Fonvizin's phrasing. Furthermore, the immediate significance of this self-discipline manifests itself in honest service to the state which places the law over material self-interest. Departing from this portrait of his father, Fonvizin proceeds to narrate his own descent into blasphemous epicureanism in reading and writing, soon followed by a return to faith once again identified with solid reasoning and dutiful service.

Similar to Avramov and their common model, Augustine's *Confessions,* Fonvizin inscribes his personalized account of reading into a narrative of religious conversion, manifesting its role as a primary technique of selfhood and inner discipline. Both Avramov and Fonvizin deploy the authoritative confessional pattern to address the complex dialectic of secularization which at once subverts and reestablishes religious order in the name of the state. While Avramov's critique of secularization could appear as politically heterodox in the Petrine and early post-Petrine decades, by the early 1760s—the timeframe of Fonvizin's changes of heart—secular piety was firmly re-established as the dominant normative mode of selfhood within

84 *The Political and Legal Writings of Denis Fonvizin*, trans. W. Gleason (Ann Arbor, 1985), 28. Translation amended.

the conceptual framework of disciplinary statehood. The 1760 essay "On the Reading of Books," backed by the institutional authority of the Moscow University and anticipating Fonvizin's comic masterpiece, opposed true reading to any self-indulgence, whether rooted in family life or associated with the supposedly novel arts of adultery. By the Catherinian era a normative ethics of service lay at the heart of state-sponsored educational and publishing policies and aspired—with a degree of success we have yet to establish—to define personal experiences of reading for several generations of the Russian public.

Appendix

"О чтении книг"[85]

Чтение книг есть великая польза роду человеческому, и гораздо большая, нежели все врачеваньи не искусных медиков. О сем можно сумневаться тому, кто книг не читывал; однако великая разность читать, и быть читателем. Не смысленной подьячей с охотой читает книги, которыя писаны без мыслей, купец удивляется, по их наречию, виршам, сочиненным таким же невежею каков сам он; однако ж они не читатели.

Сколько есть не искусных сочинителей, гораздо большее число безумных чтецов; но сочинитель, написав дурную книгу, делает безчестие себе, а глупой чтец читая оную, и себе и другим вред делает; омраченныя мысли, погрузнув в мраке глупаго сочинения, в двое тупее становятся, и не прочистив настоящим образом свету, к познанию прямого содержания, хорошей или дурной книги, сообщает свое безумие другому невеже.

Сии то знатоки, или чтецы по просторечию, весьма досадно, что грамоте учены; они пользы иной чрез то не приносят, как только, что от чтения, или лучше сказать, от не понятности и тупости своей, на конец с ума сойдут или ослепнут. Читать книги много наблюдать надлежит; первое испытать себя: на что я хочу читать? что я хочу читать? и как я буду читать? Ежели стану читать для того, что дома скушно, а гости не едут, так я советую читать все что захочется, и что попадется, для того, что это для таких людей не опасно; гости приехали, материя из головы уехала, да и век назад не возвратится.

Ежели я стану читать, чтоб пользу получить от выбранной мною книги, то я прежде всего буду думать: что за книгу я читать берусь? как читать ея

85 *Poleznoe uveselenie*, 1 (January, 1760), 3-8.

буду? всякую ли материю толковать, или скорей книгу кончить? но это не похвально для книг хорошаго содержания. Романы для того читают, чтоб искуснее любиться, и часто отмечают красными знаками нежныя самыя речи; а Философия, нравоучении, книги до наук и художеств касающиеся, и тому подобныя, не романы, и их читают не для любовных изречений; для сего должно мне, вникнув в содержание книги, разобрать автора моего, содержание его книги и достоинство онаго.

Но в том моего намерения нет, чтоб подробное дать наставление в чтении книг; на то есть особливыя книги и весьма великия, о чем по каталогам справиться можно.

Скажут мне, что в нашем народе не столько еще дошли до наук, чтоб читать важныя и всякия ученыя книги; что очень жалко, однако это не оправдание. Есть книги, которыя не самой великой важности, и так легко и внятно писаны, что каждому, кто только человеческой смысл имеет, понимать способно. Все учат детей своих языкам, а больше Французскому. На что это? на толи, чтоб он вертопрашно передо всеми не своим языком болтать мог, а между тем гнушаясь природным, чужия слова мешал в нево, и тем бы так как себя безобразным, не складным и уродливым его делал? так пускай он безумствует; он и книг дурных не читая, на дурную книгу походит, которая ни мысли, ни складу не имеет.

Когда ж отец учит сына, чтоб он прочистя разум свой чужестранными книгами, затем что мы своих не довольно имеем, принес обретенное сокровище в чужих языках в пользу природному, и нетрогая собственной его чистоты, украшал по примеру других приятными изречениями, хорошим складом и внятным писанием, то деньги на учение пропали не даром. Хотя можно обойтись не сочиняя книг, но что надлежит до протчаго, например: писать хорошенько письма весьма нужно, чего однако со всем хорошим Французским изречением не многие смыслят.

Теперь обратясь на прежнюю свою материю о чтении книг, то сие не меньше сожалетельно, как и то, чтоб для порчи Рускаго языка учиться по Французски говорить, что отцы или сами чужих языков не знаючи или положась на учителей своих, которые и сами на их жалованье положились, что будет им, что прогуливать; дают ребенку читать книги не для чего инаго, как чтоб он читал что нибудь. Отец по реэстру учительскому накупил много книг; учитель говорит они необходимо надобны; робенка бьют, чтоб он читал их, а не за то что он ничего не разумеет; отец говорит, что он за книги дорого дал, так должно читать их, они полезны. Но пусть робенок начнет разуметь книгу; ему дали Фонтеновы басни или Мольера: сочинители всех похвал достойные; но что он без предводителя разуметь будет? Есть в Фонтене, а в Мольере и очень много, что писано в закрытом разуме, а иное в издевку людским слабостям; ну ежели он не поймет сего, и вместо того, чтоб с Мольером смеяться, как сын отца обманывает, сам тому следовать станет?

Я слышал от одной девицы, что она читая Мольера призрядныя наставления нашла в нем, мать свою обманывать. Не знаю, была ли в том ей нужда? но знаю что мать за учение ея много денег заплатила, и очень радовалась когда дочь читала Мольера. Вот какие следствия от неискусных учителей происходят, и вот каково неискусным читателем быть! Ежели кто для охоты но без разсуждения читает книгу, тот может из самой полезной много вредных наставлений вычерпать, чему пример помянутая девица. И так всего больше надлежит отцам стараться, чтоб их учители толковали книги детям: для какой пользы они писаны?

А еще больше для всех нужно читать книги умеючи.

Translation
"On the Reading of Books"

Reading books is of great utility to mankind – much more so than all the cures of inept doctors. Someone who has not read books may doubt this; however, there is a great difference between reading and being a reader. An ignorant clerk avidly reads books written without thought; a merchant admires what they call rhymes produced by an ignoramus such as himself – but they are not readers.

There are many inept writers, and the number of mindless readers is much greater – even though an author of a badly written book only brings dishonor to himself, while a foolish reader who reads it harms himself and others: his obscure thoughts become twice as foolish when drowned in the darkness of a mindless work, and without having truly discovered the light of understanding of the true content of a good or bad book, he shares his folly with other ignoramuses.

It is a pity that these connoisseurs, or readers in plain speech, have been taught to read. They are of no use except that reading, or rather their own clouded judgement and folly, at the end drives them mad or blind. To read books, one must observe many requirements. First of all, reflect on your intentions: why do I want to read? What is it I want to read? And how will I read it? If you read because you are bored at home and no one comes to visit, I advise you to read anything you want and can find, since for these people there is no danger: visitors will come and the content will leave your head and never come back.

If I start reading in order to profit from the book I chose, I will begin with the following considerations: what is the book that I intend to read?

How will I read it? Will I contemplate each issue, or just rush to finish the book? This is not fitting for books with worthy content. Many read novels to become better at the arts of love, and underline the tenderest passages with a red pencil. But philosophy, lessons of morality, books on the sciences and the arts and so forth are not novels, and one does not read them for erotic maxims. This is why I must immerse myself in the book's content, analyze the author, the book, and its value.

But it is not my intent to give a detailed instruction for reading books: for that, there are special books, some of them very long, one can look them up in a catalog.

Some will say to me that our nation has not progressed enough in learning for us to read earnest and various learned books. That is regrettable but not an excuse. There are books that are not too earnest and are written in a light and comprehensible enough manner to be understood by anyone endowed with human reason. Everyone teaches their children foreign languages and especially French. Why? In order for them to be able to chat foppishly in public in a foreign tongue and despise their own, making it as ugly, incoherent, and malformed as they themselves are? This kind of person might as well stay a fool: even without reading bad books he resembles one, devoid of thought and logic.

When, however, a father teaches his son to clear his mind with the help of foreign books, since we do not have enough of our own, and to contribute treasures he has just acquired in foreign languages for the benefit of our own – so that he does not corrupt its purity but imitates other languages to embellish it with agreeable maxims, with good and clear style; in that case, the money paid for education was not spent in vain. Although one must not write books, there are many other tasks, such as writing letters in a polished way, which few have mastered despite everyone's good French pronunciation.

Back to my previous topic of reading books. It is bad enough that French is learned to corrupt the Russian language. What is even worse is that fathers either do not know foreign languages or trust their tutors who themselves rely on the fact they are paid a salary they can spend and only give books to the child to get him busy reading. A father has bought many books according to the teacher's list; the teacher says they are essential; the child is beaten into reading them but not because he does not understand them; the father says he has paid a lot for them and they must be read, they are useful. But suppose the child does start understanding a book. He is given La Fontaine's fables or Molière. These authors deserve much praise – but what will he understand without a guide? There some things in Lafontaine and a lot in Molière which are written with a hidden meaning or as a parody of human weaknesses. What if the child does not understand this and

instead of mocking with Molière the son for deceiving his father will follow his example?

I have heard from a girl that she read Molière and found the best advice in him on how to deceive her mother. I do not know if she needed this but I know that the mother paid a lot of money for the daughter's education and was very delighted when she read Molière. These are the consequences of inept tutors, and that is what it means to be an inept reader! Someone who reads a book for pleasure but without reasoning can find many harmful lessons even in the most useful of books, as the example of the girl I mentioned shows. Thus, fathers should first of all make sure their tutors explain to the children the profitable purpose of books.

It is even more necessary for everyone to know how to read properly.

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READING IN THE TIMES OF CATHERINE II

Rodolphe Baudin

introduction

The last third of the eighteenth century, which corresponds roughly to the reign of Catherine II (1762-1796), saw significant developments in Russia's reading practices and changes to the Russian readership itself. This phenomenon arose within a larger context: the development of elite secondary education in Russia in the 1750s and 1760s,[1] which gave birth to a whole generation of readers, quantitatively much larger than Russia had ever known, and hungry for new forms of engagement with literature.

This growing readership included graduates from the Academy of Science gymnasium, as well as the Cadet and Naval cadet Corps, which, according to figures provided by Gary Marker, may have produced up to 4000 graduates between 1755 and 1775. It also consisted of graduates from garrison and hospital schools, as well as the recently founded University of Moscow (1755), which was attended by 300 students during the same period. To these students must be added the pupils of the University gymnasia, which varied from 200 to 500 students.[2] Considering a period larger than the one at the center of this chapter, V. N. Sevast'ianov has established that up to 371,000 people in Russia received a secondary education between 1730 and 1800.[3]

As Marker puts it, this growing number of graduates from secondary education institutions formed "a critical mass of several thousand educated peo-

1 G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, 1995), 69.

2 Ibid., 74-75.

3 A. Iu. Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2000), 6.

ple," which fostered "a social context for the Russian Enlightenment."[4] This intellectual elite came to cherish the moral and cultural progress brought about by the Enlightenment, and Enlightenment-era texts formed the core of the literature chosen for the curricula in these secondary schools.[5] This Enlightenment ethos of progress was central to the writer Andrei Bolotov, for instance, who wrote in his 1767 essay "On the usefulness of reading books" ("O pol'ze, proiskhodiashchei ot chteniia knig"):

> Didn't [the European states] start flourishing from that very moment, when the sciences emerged from their prior oblivion and when a sufficient quantity of books started being printed? [...] Don't we see something similar in regard to our own Fatherland? And haven't our people become more knowledgeable and wiser since the sciences have reached us and book printing started?[6]

The intellectual needs of this new elite rapidly led to a significant expansion of institutional publishing.[7] According to A. Samarin, more than 7000 non-religious books were published in Russia from 1762 to 1800.[8] This figure seems particularly impressive when compared to the more limited overall production of 928 titles for the period 1725-1755.[9] This growing production led to the creation of eight new publishing houses between 1752 and 1774, including the publishing house of the University of Moscow. Although the printing of books remained under state monopoly, the institutional publishing houses accepted orders from private individuals, mainly translations of European books proposed by the *literati*, which significantly contributed to their production volumes.[10] In 1783 however, the State abandoned its monopoly, which resulted in the creation of over 30 private presses in Moscow and Saint Petersburg during the last quarter of the century, some of which turned out to be successful commercial enterprises, attracting dynamic merchants to the book market.[11]

In order to sell their production, both institutional and private presses made efforts to improve commercialization. Indeed, commercialization had been a major issue for Russian presses from the time of Peter the Great, when book production was high but sales were poor. Commercializing meant both advertising and distributing. In order to improve advertis-

4 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 76.
5 Ibid.
6 Quoted in A. Iu. Veselova, "Iz naslediia A. T. Bolotova: stat'ia 'O pol'ze, proishodiashchei ot chteniia knig'," *XVIII vek*, vol. 21 (St. Petersburg, 1999), 359-360. *My translation.*
7 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 69.
8 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 14.
9 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 59.
10 Ibid., 76, 78-79.
11 Ibid., 105.

ing, both institutional and private presses started publishing catalogues meant to attract the attention of the reading public. By the end of the century, over 200 catalogues of books for sale had been published and circulated.[12] Additionally, in the mid-1760s, publishers started advertising their books in newspapers. Moscow University Press advertised their books in the *Moskovskie vedomosti* (*Moscow News*), while the Presses of the Infantry and Naval Corps used *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* (*St. Petersburg News*).[13] Improvements to distribution required developing a network of outlets where books could be purchased. Therefore, in the second part of the century, Russian presses started opening bookstores. Marker has established that the total number of outlets in the two capitals grew from 6 to over 50 between the early 1750s and the mid-1790s.[14]

These improvements in advertising and commercialization reflect a virtuous circle, as they were both the results and the cause of the ongoing growth of readership. This growth, in turn, led to a significant reduction of book prices, which also helped secure new audiences, or helped traditional audiences increase the volume of their purchases. Whereas in the first part of the century, only very wealthy people had access to books,[15] in Catherine II's times, the gentry started not only buying individual books but, as the writer Nikolai Karamzin wrote in 1802, building up "small libraries" (*bibliotechki*): "I know noblemen, whose annual income does not exceed 500 rubles, but who assemble, to use their own terms, small libraries."[16]

This general growth of the reading public led to the rise of print runs. True, Yuri Lotman has stressed that print runs were often more the expression of prestige policies than the consequence of rational commercial thinking.[17] Similarly, books with high print runs may have remained undistributed and/or unsold. However, even if it seems hazardous to consider, as Karamzin did, that the raise of the *Moskovskie vedomosti* print run from 600 to 6000 copies between 1780 and 1800 was the unequivocal sign of a ten-time growth of the reading public,[18] it certainly testified to a growing demand from a growing audience.

Reading, then, was growing in popularity in the last third of the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, one should keep in mind that the overall quantity of literate people remained limited. B. V. Sapunov has established that only 4% of the population of the Russian Empire may have been literate in

12 Ibid., 163.
13 Ibid., 83-85.
14 Ibid., 164.
15 Ibid., 165.
16 N. M. Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle i liubvi k chteniiu v Rossii," in Idem, *Izbrannye sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1964), vol. 2, 177. *My translation.*
17 Iu. M. Lotman, "Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury XVIII – nachala XIX veka," in *Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury.* vol. 4 *(XVIII – nachalo XIX veka)* (Moscow, 2000), 107.
18 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 7.

1783.[19] This figure is modest, especially when compared to the situation in Britain or France during the same period.[20] Besides, being literate did not necessarily mean being a reader, a specific cultural and intellectual practice that was turning into a social role at the time.[21] As the poet Mikhail Kheraskov put it in 1760, "there is a significant difference between knowing how to read and being a reader" ("*velikaia raznost' chitat' i byt' chitatelem*").[22] Those who only "knew how to read," to use Kheraskov's terms, were the merchants, the nonnoble urban population of the townspeople (*meshchane*) and even some peasants, who did form emerging segments among the reading public.

Most of the readers comprising this "nonnoble intellectual elite" (*raznochinnaia intelligentsiia*) read in order to answer basic professional or technical needs.[23] Some, however, also read for pleasure. If so, they favored woodcuts called *lubki*, a genre of popular imagery including short literary texts, or Grub Street novels called "lubok romances" (*lubochnye romany*), a genre halfway between popular imagery and the European romance.[24] Some with more sophisticated tastes seem to have valued satirical literature as well. In the foreword to the 4th edition of his *Zhivopisets* (*Painter*), the journalist, mason, enlightener and publisher Nikolai Novikov, trying to explain the success of his journal, wrote: "Having a very modest opinion of my own talent, I'd rather believe that this work happened to fit the taste of our *meshchane* (townspeople), for only those books which please them go through 3rd, 4th and 5th editions."[25] However, these readers scarcely belonged to the category of Kheraskov's "true readers," that is, readers able to exercise discernment on the books they read. Those readers belonged to the nobility,[26] which read for pleasure, intellectual improvement, and in order to fit the symbolic demands generated by their growing self-reflective cultural status.

This cultural status developed on the foundation of a new social context for this part of the population. Catherine II's reign, often considered as the "golden age of the Russian nobility," was a reign of growing social, if not political, autonomy for the nobility. This autonomy resulted largely from Peter III's manifesto of February 1762, which freed nobles from mandatory

19 B. V. Sapunov, "Iz istorii russkogo chitatelia perioda feodalizma," in *Istoriia russkogo chitatelia*, 4 (Leningrad, 1982), 28-30.

20 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 183.

21 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 5.

22 M. M. Kheraskov, "O chtenii knig," *Poleznoe uveselenie*, 1 (1760). Quoted in V. V. Sipovskii, *Iz istorii russkogo romana i povesti (materialy po bibliografii, istorii i teorii russkago romana). Chast' 1, XVIII vek* (St. Petersburg, 1903), 234.

23 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 208.

24 T. Grits, V. Trenin, M. Nikitin, *Slovesnost' i kommertsiia. Knizhnaia lavka A. F. Smirdina* (Moscow, 2001), 15, 18, 20.

25 N. I. Novikov, *Zhivopisets*, 10-11, quoted in V. B. Shklovskii, *Chulkov i Levshin* (Leningrad, 1933), 43. *My translation*.

26 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 208.

service, and from Catherine II's 1785 Charter to the nobility, which confirmed its privileges. If the first did not result in any mass exodus from service (which remained attractive for status, as well as moral and financial reasons[27]), and if the second could not hide that, politically, the nobility remained very vulnerable to pressure from tsarist authority,[28] both reflected a general feeling that the nobility had gained sufficient symbolic capital to experience a certain degree of autonomy.

This new autonomy launched a general public discussion on free time and leisure, which, as noted by Anna Anan'eva and Alexandra Veselova, became a central topic in many journals from the last third of the eighteenth century. These journals reflected a general anxiety that the nobility's new free time could be misused, and thus attempted to promote proper forms of leisure. Among them was reading, naturally, but not just any old book. As Anan'eva and Veselova noted, the author of an article on the subject, published in the journal *Prazdnoe vremia, v pol'zu upotreblennoe* (*Leisure time, used usefully*) in 1759, i.e. just before the beginning of Catherine's reign, wrote: "Finally, the best enjoyment possible for occupying free hours is without any doubt reading good and useful books."[29] This was an important nuance. Indeed, it is striking to note that the beginning of Catherine II's reign coincided with the appearance of Russian literature's first original novel. Only a few months passed between her coup in June 1762 and the publication of Fedor Emin's first novel *Fortune inconstant, or The Adventures of Miramond* (*Nepostoiannaia fortuna, ili pokhozhdenie Miramonda*) in 1763. After Emin issued his first novel, another writer, Mikhail Chulkov followed suit, turning the 1760s into the first boom of novel writing in Russia.[30] This movement had been preceded by three decades of translated novels from European languages and, as a consequence, a decade of novel bashing by the Russian exponents of classicism, who, very much as it had been the case in seventeenth-century France, accused the genre of corrupting morals and lacking any aesthetic rules.

Another reason why classicist poets like Mikhail Lomonosov, Aleksandr Sumarokov, and even Mikhail Kheraskov expressed concerns regarding the novel, however, was the new genre's impact on the pragmatics of literary appropriation. As their main arguments show, exponents of classicism feared that the novel's lack of prestige would inspire less inhibited forms of literary appropriation, including forms of personal appropriation, such

27 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 137.

28 J. Hartley, *A Social History of the Russian Empire 1650-1825* (London and New York, 1998), 57.

29 A. Anan'eva, A. Veselova, "'Chto-nibud' ot bezdel'ia na dosuge': publitsistika i vopros o svobodnom vremeni v dvorianskoi srede vtoroi poloviny XVIII – nachala XIX vv.," *Die Welt der Slaven*, 63 (2018), Heft 1, 93.

30 R. Baudin, *Formation et poétique du roman russe au XVIII^e siècle: le système romanesque des années 1760*, Thèse de doctorat (Université Paris IV, 2002).

as, for instance, readers selecting their favorite passages. As Kheraskov put it in the previous quoted article "On reading books": "People read novels to learn how to love more skillfully and often underline with a red pencil the tenderest passages."[31] This seemed all the more possible given that the very structure of novels, with their division into chapters, helped break up the text, which created a threat to the proper decoding of its semantic and ideological integrity.[32]

The loss of control over reception was also conditioned by the type of literary consumption that this new genre encouraged. If not always read that way in practice, novels were *primarily* meant to be read *alone*. This new type of consumption seemed like a threat to the forms of social control that both the Court and the *literati* had developed in their respective attempts to transmit proper texts to the public. It was directly opposed to the public delivery of the ideological messaging that could be imparted to an audience by a performance at the theatre, or the reading of a panegyric speech in a court environment.

Therefore, the history of reading under Catherine the Great's reign, if focused on the most dynamic and evolving part of the readership, i.e. the nobility, is very much a history of the tension between the dynamics of a growing number of readers and the liberalization of both literary forms and forms of literary consumption on the one hand, and the attempts made by Court and the *literati* to support and simultaneously control this general progress on the other, according to a social and cultural agenda largely motivated by concerns to both promote and monitor social and cultural autonomy.

The present study will focus on this inner tension of the reading experience in the last third of the eighteenth century, addressing what types of books were offered to the reading public, who the readers were, what new forms of literary consumption they were engaging in, and what new emotional rewards they were receiving while reading.

I. A GROWING AND DIVERSIFYING BOOK MARKET

The overall growth of publishing in Catherine II's time reflects the diversity of the published books. The various presses active in Russia were issuing all sorts of texts, in order to accommodate very distinct needs. This situation is well reflected in Denis Fonvizin's 1769 play *The Brigadier* (*Brigadir*). In the introductory scene, the play's major characters discuss what the brigadier's son, Ivanushka, should read:

31 Kheraskov, "O chtenii knig," 234.

32 R. Baudin, "Normativnaia kritika i romannoe chtenie v Rossii serediny XVIII veka," in D. Rebecchini, R. Vassena (eds.), *Reading in Russia. Practices of Reading and Literary Communication 1760-1930* (Milan, 2014), 39-58.

> The Counselor: And I can also say about you, my dear son in law, that you have a bright future ahead. You just need to concentrate on business, read more.
> The Son: What business? What should I read?
> The Brigadier: Read? The military article and code; it wouldn't do a young man wrong either to read the Instruction for cadastral survey.
> The Counselor: First of all, you should read the Legal code and the decrees. He who, being a judge, knows how to interpret them, my dear son in law, will never be poor.
> The Brigadier's wife: It wouldn't be bad either to take a look at my account books. This way no swindler will ever deceive you. You won't be giving five kopecks anymore where you only need to give four or so.
> The Counselor's wife: May God preserve you from filling your head with anything else than charming novels. Forget, my dear, about all the sciences. You wouldn't believe how instructive these books are. If I hadn't read them myself, I could have stayed an imbecile forever.
> The Son: *Madame*, you're telling the truth. *Oh! Vous avez raison*. I never read anything else but novels myself, which made me the man I am.[33]

What this dialogue shows is that the growth of the reading public had led to its diversification, and that each segment of the public required certain kinds of books, including books which now seem archaic but nevertheless had a real audience. As Marker noticed, the sale levels remained very high for calendars and almanacs until the end of the century.[34] So did the production and sale levels of textbooks (which could rely on a captive audience of students) and law texts.[35] Answering questions about his commercial activity as the director of Moscow University Press during the inquiry following his arrest in 1792, Novikov declared that he had published a legal dictionary (*iuridicheskii slovar'*) "three or four times, with a print run of 3000 copies."[36] But Fonvizin's dialogue also shows a generational gap between an aging public that read technical or practical literature and a young and/or gendered one hungry for leisure literature. This generational gap is well reflected in the history of the Batiushkov family library on the estate of Danilovskoe. As N. M. Morozova has noticed, this collection, gathered

33 D. I. Fonvizin, *Brigadir*, in Idem, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1959), vol. 1, 48-49. *My translation*.
34 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 117.
35 Ibid., 193, 198-199.
36 Quoted in Shklovskii, *Chulkov i Levshin*, 41-42.

by Batiushkov's grandfather and father, underwent a shift in orientation in the 1790s, going from a majority of books on history and housekeeping or textbooks to a majority of leisure literature ones.[37] This shift is also apparent in the publishing that Novikov oversaw in the 1780s. As Marker noted, leisure literature grew rapidly to become a major part of Novikov's production: out of the 973 titles published between 1779 and 1792, 290 belong to this category.[38]

This greater share of leisure literature within the Russian book market in the second part of the eighteenth century proceeded from a boom of translations, largely sponsored by Novikov or by the "Society Striving for the Translation of Foreign Books," an initiative supported and financed by Catherine II herself.[39] It was also spurred by the development of native Russian literature, written by an increasing number of writers who turned to an increasingly diverse number of genres borrowed from European (mainly French) contemporary literature. Indeed, leisure literature was a deeply heterogeneous category, encompassing very different genres, from prose fiction to poetry and drama.

What then, among the leisure literature available, most appealed to the Russian audience? According to Marker, plays sold poorly, especially Russian ones, including the works of the "Russian Racine" Sumarokov, with the notable exception of Fonvizin's 1782 comedy *The Minor* (*Nedorosl'*).[40] Poetry seems to have done better, especially poetry with a moral function. Aesop's *Fables*, for instance, continued, as earlier, to sell well, undergoing six editions throughout the century[41] and also existed as part of the lubok literature mentioned earlier.[42] Russian poets, however, don't seem to have enjoyed such a degree of popularity. True, according to Natal'ia Kochetkova, they are well represented in handwritten collections, which are a trustworthy source of information on what people actually read. The collections she refers to, all dated from Catherine II's time, present verses by Lomonosov, Sumarokov, and Kheraskov, the three classicist poets mentioned above, as well as spiritual verses.[43] However, it may be argued that handwritten collections tend to reflect what literature Russian nobles *valued*, notably for its moral and educational worth, more than what they actually *enjoyed*. And

37 Quoted in A. Iu. Samarin, "Lichnye biblioteki v Rossii epokhi Prosveshcheniia (obzor istoriografii kontsa XX veka)," *Imperskaia Rossiia / Classical Russia, 1700-1825*, 1 (2006), 169.

38 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 132.

39 Iu. D. Levin, *Istoriia russkoi perevodnoi khudozhestvennoi literatury, Drevniaia Rus'. XVIII vek* (St. Petersburg, 1995), vol. 1, Proza, 153.

40 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 97, 205.

41 *Svodnyi katalog russkoi knigi grazhdanskoi pechati XVIII veka, 1725-1800* (Moscow, 1963-1967), vol. 3 (1966), 422-423.

42 Grits, Trenin, Nikitin, *Slovesnost' i kommertsiia*, 13.

43 N. D. Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma. Chtenie v zhizni chuvstvitel'nogo geroia," *XVIII vek. Sbornik 14. Russkaia literatura XVIII – nachala XIX veka v obshchestvenno-kul'turnom kontekste* (Leningrad, 1983), 140.

what they enjoyed most, just as the foppish Brigadier's son from Fonvizin's play did, seems to have been light fiction, from tales to novels, which sold much better than Sumarokov's play, as a 1772 article from Novikov's *Zhivopisets* reveals: "Who in France would believe it, if they were told that fairy tales sold better than the works of Racine? Well, such is the case in our country. *A Thousand and One Nights* sold much better than the works of Mr. Sumarokov."[44]

The overwhelming triumph of light fiction in general, and of the new genre of the novel in particular—a phenomenon anticipated and feared back in the late 1750s and early 1760s by the main poets of Russian classicism—did happen. In his 1802 essay titled "On book selling and the love for reading in Russia" ("O knizhnoi torgovle i liubvi k chteniu v Rossii"), Karamzin wrote: "The curious might wish to know what kind of books sell better in our country? I did ask several booksellers and all, without even thinking, answered: 'novels'!"[45] This popularity of the novel is also reflected in the figures gathered by Marker. Basing himself on Vladimir Sipovskii's estimates, the scholar has established that, between 1763 and 1775 (i.e. is only a third of the period considered in this essay) 123 translated novels were published in Russia. This phenomenon grew even stronger in the 1780s, which witnessed a genuine flood of translated novels into the Russian book market.[46]

Here again, however, the novel as a genre was a large and diverse category. As a consequence, translated novels included all kinds of books. It included Grub Street literature (*lubok* literature), whose appeal for the reader seems to have been very strong.[47] But it also included far more ambitious books, like Fénelon's *The Adventures of Telemachus* or Marmontel's *Belisaire*, two "philosophical novels" which propagated the ideology of moral progress and political virtue central to the value system of the Enlightenment. The former went through four editions between 1767 and 1797, and the latter seven between 1768 and 1796. Somewhere in between popular romances and sophisticated philosophical novels were Lesage's novels, including *Gil Blas*, a modern version of the picaresque novel very popular in France, that went through seven editions between 1754 and 1800.[48]

Naturally, Russian writers tried to capitalize on the new genre's success, as did Emin, whose four novels, published between 1763 and 1766, imitated all the dominant subcategories of novels available in the European literary repertoire. His already mentioned 1763 *Fortune inconstant* was a romance, filled with exotic adventures; his *Adventures of Themistocles* (*Prikliucheniia Femistokla*), also published in 1763, was a philosophical novel, largely reminiscent of Fénelon's *Telemachus*. Finally, Emin authored the first Russian

44 N. I. Novikov, *Satiricheskie zhurnaly* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1951), 299. *My translation*.
45 Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle," 178. *My translation*.
46 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 101, 119.
47 Ibid., 119.
48 *Svodnyi katalog*, vol. 2 (1964), 149-150.

epistolary novel with his 1766 rewriting of Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* under the title *The Letters of Ernest and Doravra* (*Pis'ma Ernesta i Doravry*). Far from trying to repeat Emin's attempts at imitating some of the high forms of European novels, Matvei Komarov produced Russian Grub Street literature, including his *Adventures of the English Lord George* (*Povest' o prikliuchenii aglinskago milorda Georga i o brandeburgskoi markgrafine Friderike Luize*), a lowbrow rewriting of a seventeenth-century popular romance, which went through six editions between 1782 and the end of the century,[49] or his *Life of Vanka Kain* (*Obstoiatel'naia i vernaia istoriia rossiiskago moshennika, slavnago vora, razboinika i byvshago moskovskago syshchika Van'ki Kaina*), a fictionalized biography of a famous Russian swindler.

To our contemporary sensibilities, these works, which ended up forming a corpus of several hundred titles over the period studied in this chapter,[50] differ both in genre and quality. Some may be called romances, others novels. Similarly, some look quite archaic, like *Fortune inconstant* and its European models, whereas others rely on more innovative models, like the Fénelon-inspired *Adventures of Themistocles*, or the Rousseau-based *Letters of Ernest and Doravra*. However, to their first Russian readers, all these works and their European models, available in original versions and/or in translation, were indeed *novels*, as testified by Bolotov's 1791 essay *Considerations and objective judgments on novels, both Russian and translated from foreign languages (Mysli i bespristrastnye suzhdeniia o romanakh, kak original'nykh rossiiskikh, tak i perevedennykh s inostrannykh iazykov Andreia Bolotova)*, which contains reviews of works as diverse as Emin's *Fortune inconstant* and Rousseau's *Emile and Sophie, or the Solitaries*.

If equivalent vis-à-vis their affiliation to a specific genre, these novels did seem different to their first Russian readers when it came to their moral value. Novels could be as dangerous as they could be useful. And since the attempt of the classical poets to ban the entire genre had failed, they had to be distinguished. This was Bolotov's concern when writing the essay mentioned above. As the writer put it: "Novels published recently in our Russian language are so numerous and they differ so much in terms of quality and virtue that there is almost undoubtedly a need, when buying them and reading them, to make a reasonable choice, and not just buy and read anything that falls into your hands."[51]

Fiction itself aspired to help readers sort out good books from bad ones, especially when dealing with novels. In 1788, Nikolay Emin, Fedor's son and a novelist like his late father, printed a sentimental novel titled *Rosa*. In the novel, Count D. asks the young hero Milon what novels he would

49 Ibid., 435-436.

50 Sipovskii, *Iz istorii russkogo romana*, 5-140.

51 A. T. Bolotov, *Mysli i bespristrastnye suzhdeniia o romanakh, kak original'nykh rossiiskikh, tak i perevedennykh s inostrannykh iazykov Andreia Bolotova*, in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, vol. 9-10 (Moscow, 1933), 194. *My translation.*

recommend to young ladies. In response, Milon suggests Fielding's novels, Rousseau's *Emile*, Marmontel's *Moral Tales*, and the novels of Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni, Sophie von Laroche, and Christoph Martin Wieland. As Kochetkova noted, this list, established by one fictional character for another, was also meant to provide guidance to actual readers in their reading choices.[52] Similarly, Fonvizin's *The Minor* staged an example of appropriate reading in scene 1 of act 4:

> Starodum. Oh! you're already here, my dear friend!
> Sofia. I was waiting for you, my uncle. I was reading a book.
> Starodum. Which one?
> Sofia. A French one. By Fénelon. On girls' education.
> Starodum. Fénelon? The author of Telemachus? Good. I don't know the book you are reading, but read it, read it![53]

What this scene stages is a form of mentoring of a young female reader by an older male one. This prescriptive scenario seemed especially necessary for female readers, whose "vivid imagination" was supposed to be particularly endangered by the seductions of the novel.

These fictional attempts to regulate reading at a time when the practice was significantly growing testified to the *literati*'s moral concern. But their concerns were also cultural. As they considered it their civic duty to shape the educated public in Russia, they had to help readers develop a proper understanding of Western cultural history. This seemed especially important in a time when the ever-growing quantity of translations appearing on the Russian market reduced the historical diachrony of European culture to the synchrony of the Russian readers' reception. In other words, Russian readers were discovering Milton and Goethe at the same time, which was cause for confusion.[54] In order to fight that confusion, *literati* started publishing anthologies and/or dictionaries. Karamzin's *Pantheon of Foreign Literature* (*Panteon inostrannoi slovesnosti*, 1798) and *Pantheon of Russian authors* (*Panteon rossiiskikh avtorov*, 1802) are good illustrations of such attempts to regulate reader reception by offering cultural frameworks for their readers. As in all dictionaries, they also built cultural hierarchies by sorting out what deserved to be included in a narrative of cultural progress. By doing so, they were trying to turn *quantity reading* into *quality reading*.

Finally, the publication of such dictionaries served a patriotic agenda: even before Karamzin's attempt at creating a Russian "pantheon," Novikov had issued a *Tentative Historical Dictionary of Russian writers* (*Opyt istoricheskogo slovaria o rossiiskikh pisateliakh*, 1772), with the obvious goal of establishing

52 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 125.
53 Fonvizin, *Nedorosl'*, in Idem, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 1, 149. *My translation.*
54 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 202.

the cultural legitimacy of Russian letters and promoting Russian culture as a whole.[55] If reading was a good thing, then reading Russian—and thus pushing back against contemporary gallomania—was an even better one.

Mentoring readers in order to form their taste was a way to save them the trouble of putting themselves through the personal evolution from quantity reading to quality reading. This evolution was staged by Karamzin in his loosely autobiographical Sternian novel *A Knight of our time* (*Rytsar' nashego vremeni*, 1802-1803), in which the narrator pokes at the pleasure that his fictional alter ego acquired from reading Emin's novels as a child.[56] That evolution was also staged in "On book selling and the love for reading in Russia", where Karamzin wrote:

> Everyone needs something in accordance with their own taste: some need Jean-Jacques, others 'Nikanor'. As physical taste informs us of the harmony between food and our needs, likewise moral taste reveals to man the true analogy between a subject and his soul; but this soul can be gradually elevated—and he, who starts with 'The Infortunate Nikanor' often ends up reading 'Grandison'.[57]

Saving readers the trouble of having to develop their taste by themselves—a task itself hazardous since they could develop misconceptions regarding morals—was the aim of children's literature, a new trend offered to the readers of *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* (*Children's Readings for the Heart and Mind*), a periodical published by Novikov between 1785 and 1789. A result of the "discovery of childhood" that characterized the Enlightenment and, as Darnton has noted, a typical product of booming literary markets during that period,[58] children's literature was of great importance, since it was widely believed that books read by children had a profound and lasting moral impact on them and largely determined what future individuals they would become.[59] This moral agenda led to the publication, on the pages of these first books meant for children, of numerous texts belonging to the genre of moralistic literature. Among foreign authors published in the journal, often in young Karamzin's translations, were Salomon Gessner or Stéphanie de Genlis. Hence, *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* offered children direct access to proper literature, saving them the

55 Ibid., 98.

56 N. M. Karamzin, *Rytsar' nashego vremeni*, in Idem, *Izbrannye sochineniia*, vol. 1, 764-765.

57 Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle," 179. *My translation.*

58 R. Darnton, "First Steps toward a History of reading," *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 2 (1986), 13.

59 On what eighteenth-century Russian writers actually read in their childhood, see L. Rossi, "Knigi i chtenie v avtobiograficheskikh povestvovaniiakh o detstve russkikh pisatelei XVIII-XIX vv.: opyt prochteniia," in Rebecchini, Vassena, *Reading in Russia*, 59-77.

trouble of going through the evolution leading from reading fairy tales and novels to reading moralistic literature, as does Cleon, the imaginary reader from Bolotov's text "On the usefulness of reading books."[60]

Like many projects supported by Novikov, *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* was a journal, a relatively new type of medium for Russian readers that likewise witnessed a spectacular development in Catherine II's time. If the first literary journals, such as Sumarokov's *Trudoliubivaia pchela* (*Industrious Bee*, 1759) or the already mentioned *Prazdnoe vremia, v pol'zu upotreblennoe* (1759) had appeared at the end of Elisabeth Petrovna's reign (1741-1761), the last third of the century saw a significant diversification of this medium, starting from the late 1760s. The call to emulate its model initiated by *Vsiakaia vsiachina* (*All Sorts of Things*), a magazine privately edited by Catherine herself, generated a boom of so-called satirical journals at the turn of the 1760s and 1770s, which included many journals published by Novikov. The appearance of these journals set a new trend, which immediately replaced the trend of the novel: most of the active Russian writers started publishing journals, including Emin and Chulkov, who had been the leading proponents of novel writing earlier in the decade. This swift and radical reorientation of writers' interests shows how trends were becoming a part of both the writing and reading experiences. After this first boom, journals grew increasingly specialized. Throughout the 1770s, they began dropping their satirical tone and instead came to focus on specific topics, such as music, drama, fashion, or (to mention more serious topics) the sciences, agriculture, the economy, etc. As Anan'eva and Veselova put it, the *literati* intended for this diversification of content to address as many reading needs as possible and thereby fight idleness.[61]

Unfortunately, it seems that commercial issues once more jeopardized the moral and social goals that the *literati* placed before themselves. Journals sold rather poorly, with the notable exception of Novikov's *Truten'* (*Drone*, [1769-1770]) and *Utrennii svet* (*Morning lights* [1777-1780]).[62] Nonetheless, to the few readers they actually did reach, these journals offered new forms of engagement with reading. Periodical reading was indeed different from novel reading, for it structured the reader's temporal experience differently. In other words, the development of periodicals led to new varieties of emotional response vis-à-vis reading, such as enjoying waiting for the journal's next issue, either because it promised new materials or because it promised to offer the next installment of material that the reader had already enjoyed.[63] In his memoirs, Bolotov remembered his excitement at waiting for Karamzin's next installment of the *Moskovskii zhurnal* (*Moscow Journal*)

60 Veselova, "Iz naslediia A. T. Bolotova," 360-362.

61 Anan'eva, Veselova, "'Chto-nibud' ot bezdel'ia na dosuge'," 97.

62 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 96-97, 206.

63 R. Baudin, "Mode et modernité en Russie au XVIII[e] siècle: le *Magasin des modes nouvelles*, premier journal russe consacré à la mode," *Modernités russes*, 4 (2002), 57-68.

while in the countryside in the summer of 1791: "We both especially enjoyed back then the *Moscow Journal*, published by Karamzin, so we always expected it with great impatience and were delighted when it was finally brought to us."[64]

Certain specific journals actually gained value from their very periodical nature. This was true of fashion journals, such as Novikov's *Modnoe ezhemesiachnoe izdanie, ili biblioteka dlia damskago tualeta* (*Fashionable Monthly, or the Library for the ladies' dressing room*), published in 1779, and especially of *Magazin angliskikh, frantsuzskikh i nemetskikh novykh mod* (*The Magazine of English, French and German new Fashions*), published in 1791.[65] Besides fostering a peculiar temporality of textual consumption,[66] fashion journals also targeted a specific, female audience. As such, they testify of the rise of new demographic sub-segments in Russian noble readership in the late eighteenth century.

2. READING PUBLICS AND THEIR EVOLUTION

Female readers, no less than children, constituted new segments in Russian noble readership. As Xénia Borderioux noted, social demands faced by Russian noblemen in the second part of the eighteenth century changed, and they were now expected to show growing cultural awareness. As a consequence, women were invited to read,[67] just as Sophia—a fictional role model for Russian women—does in *The Minor*. Another role model, at least for women at court and in the capital's aristocratic circles, was Catherine II herself, a notoriously well-read woman whose self-fashioning relied directly on her reputation as an avid reader, as her *Memoirs* would later testify.[68] Besides the journals specifically published for them, women, according to Borderioux, read novels, but also comedies, poetry, songs, tales, and hocus-pocus.[69] This narrative of frivolity, however, needs to be rendered with more nuance. As Samarin has established in his study of journal subscribers in late eighteenth-century Russia, women mostly read educational literature, then books dedicated to housekeeping and home economics, and *only then* novels.[70] Furthermore, the novels that they read were often of a moralizing nature, as testified by the list of books sent to Ekaterina Chirikova to

64 A. T. Bolotov, *Zhizn' i prikliucheniia Andreia Bolotova, opisannye samim im dlia svoikh potomkov. 1738-1795* (St. Petersburg, 1873), vol. 4, 845-846. *My translation*.

65 X. Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda v Rossii v epokhu Ekateriny II*, Thèse de doctorat (RGGU - Université Paris III, 2012), 176.

66 Baudin, "Mode et modernité," 68.

67 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 175.

68 A. Vacheva, *Potomstvu Ekaterina II. Idei i narrativnye strategii v avtobiografii imperatritsy* (Sofia, 2015), 110-111, 186.

69 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 185-186.

70 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 156.

the countryside in 1797, where the names Mme de Genlis, Mme de Staël, Florian, and Marmontel dominate.[71] An additional feature of female readers from the nobility is that they read *predominantly* in French.[72] Among the thirty-eight books sent to Ekaterina Chirikova, only two were in Russian. This phenomenon of bilingual reading, if not specific to eighteenth-century Russia alone or to the female segment of the Russian readership, was significant.[73] It explains the quantitative importance of French books in aristocratic private libraries and in the court library.[74] It also explains the presence—starting from the middle of the century—of sellers of foreign books (notably French and German ones) in the two capitals.[75]

If women and children from the nobility did emerge as new segments in the Russian readership, then adult male readers nevertheless continued to dominate it as a whole. This major segment, however, likewise evolved. The noble readership went through a process of inner democratization. Once the privilege of higher levels of the nobility, books became available to lower levels as well. These new levels included service noblemen, landowners with limited means, and students from the gymnasia,[76] all of whom acquired access to books thanks to new forms of dissemination. After the failed attempts to open a public library in Saint Petersburg and a private library accessible to the public sponsored by Count Alexander Stroganov,[77] paying libraries and reading cabinets started opening in both capitals in the 1770s. Initially serving foreign, mostly German and French communities,[78] these cabinets sometimes offered Russian books as well. In the 1790s, Russian reading libraries started appearing too. Matvei Ovchinnikov, Fedor Tumanskii, Vasilii Sopikov, and Karl Wilhelm Miller opened reading cabinets from which readers could borrow Russian books for a cost varying

71 Quoted in E. Grechanaia, C. Viollet, "Journaux féminins en langue française 1780-1850," *Cahiers du Monde russe*, 50, 1 (janvier-mars 2009), 41-42.

72 On the gendered aspect of using French, see N. Dmitrieva, G. Argent, "The Coexistence of Russian and French in Russia in the First Third of the Nineteenth Century: Bilingualism with or without Diglossia," in D. Offord, L. Ryazanova-Clarke, V. Rjéoutski, G. Argent (eds.), *French and Russian in Imperial Russia* (Edinburgh, 2015), vol. 1, *Language Use among the Russian Elite*, 228-242.

73 On the use of French in eighteenth-century Russia in general, see Offord, Ryazanova-Clarke, Rjéoutski, Argent, *French and Russian*, "Introduction," 1-24.

74 Grits, Trenin, Nikitin, *Slovesnost' i kommertsiia*, 61.

75 See, for example, N. A. Kopanev, "Rasprostranenie frantsuzskoi knigi v Moskve v seredine XVIII v.," in S. P. Lupov (ed.), *Frantsuzskaia kniga v Rossii v XVIII veke. Ocherki istorii* (Leningrad, 1986), 59-172.

76 E. V. Shesterneva, *Kommercheskie publichnye biblioteki Rossii: stanovlenie i razvitie, analiz fondov i chitatel'skikh grupp (XVIII – nachalo XX vv.)*, dissertatsiia na soiskanie uch. stepeni kandidata ped. nauk (Moscow, 2002), 33.

77 A. A. Zaitseva, "'Kabinety dlia chteniia' v Sankt-Peterburge kontsa XVIII – nachala XIX veka," *Russkie biblioteki i chastnye knizhnye sobraniia XVI – XIX vekov. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Leningrad, 1979), 30.

78 Ibid., 31.

between 10 to 16 rubles a year.[79] The public targeted by these cabinets is clear enough. In the presentation of his catalogue of books, published in 1791, Sopikov explained that his cabinet was open to those, who: "while having free time and the noble and respectable desire to read, cannot, due to various reasons and circumstances, buy them in sufficient quantities."[80]

In addition to being a social phenomenon, this democratization of books and reading was also a geographical one. In Catherine's times, books finally made their way to the Russian provinces, creating a new reading public: provincial readers. As seen previously, getting access to books outside of Saint Petersburg and Moscow had been problematic for decades. In a letter published in Novikov's satirical journal *Zhivopisets* in 1772, the editor, in his response to a correspondent from Iaroslavl', stressed this specific issue: "Conversely, nobles and merchants living in remote provinces are deprived of the possibility of buying books and using them for their benefit."[81] This situation, however, started evolving, notably thanks to the efforts of Novikov, who opened outlets in the provinces in order to improve sales. In the 1780s, he opened from 10 to 20 outlets outside of the capitals.[82] But he was not alone and, by the end of the century, specialists estimate that books could be purchased in some 40 outlets outside of the two main cities.[83] Moreover, items could also be sent by mail—one of the services offered by Novikov[84]—thereby dramatically increasing access to books. Based on data from various lists of subscribers, Samarin has identified some 339 different locations from which people ordered books. If most places in his list are located in central Russia, they include places as diverse as Tambov, Pskov, Tver', Kazan', Arkhangel'sk, Kaluga, and Voronezh.[85]

If books from the capitals were a powerful tool of ideological modernization[86], it seems that the average taste of provincial readers mostly remained conservative. As Marker notes, most books on sale in provincial outlets were religious books or textbooks.[87] In his memoirs, Fedor Glinka remembers what kind of literature people most often read in the province where he lived in the 1780s and 1790s: "In my early childhood, as far as my remembrances go, in our quiet little corner of the Simbirsk province, near the town of Dukhovnitsa, people didn't read much and almost didn't own any books, apart from spiritual ones."[88]

79 Ibid., 34-36.
80 Ibid., 38. *My translation.*
81 Novikov, *Satiricheskie zhurnaly*, 442. *My translation.*
82 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 178.
83 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 202.
84 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 178.
85 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 202-204.
86 Ibid., 207.
87 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 180.
88 Quoted in M. P. Pogodin, *Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin po ego sochineniiam, pis'mam i otzyvam sovremennikov* (Moscow, 1866), 216-217. *My translation.*

Leisure literature seems to have been scarce in the provinces. It occupies the fifth and last rank among the types of books to which provincial readers subscribed according to Samarin, after the abovementioned spiritual books, books on history, educational literature for children, and books on sciences and technology.[89] The conservatism of their taste does not mean, however, that provincial readers were not interested in what was going on in the capitals and beyond. This seems to explain their interest in journals, for which they remained the largest share of subscribers.[90]

Additionally, not all provincial readers were conservative. The growing amount of nobles retiring from service to their provincial estates in the 1780s[91] led to the multiplication of libraries in country houses. Similarly, libraries appeared in provincial towns inhabited by local noble families. For instance, the library of the Iaroslavl'-based Likhachev family, studied by Tatiana Ledeneva, included books by Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Helvétius, Mably, Novikov, Kniazhnin, and Fonvizin.[92]

In addition to nobles, the Russian readership came to include growing numbers of townspeople and merchants, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter. According to Samarin, merchants represent 7% of the subscribers he studied, and townspeople 3,5 %.[93] These figures were growing, which triggered Kheraskov's anxiety and need for cultural distinction. Besides the already mentioned *lubok* literature and the satirical journals published by Novikov, these segments of the reading public were mainly interested (if we believe Karamzin) in newspapers,[94] which they read for their information value. Merchants also continued to support the demand for technical literature, as is apparent from the development of books intended specifically for them. As Anna Zhukovskaia has noted, the genre of letter-writing manuals, for instance, went through various changes over the course of the eighteenth century. One of the most striking is its evolution from a genre intended for nobles at the beginning of the century to a genre intended for merchants by the 1780s.[95]

However, the majority of readers—and the most visible ones—remained nobles from the main urban centers, a situation which would evolve, as explained by Damiano Rebecchini in his chapter, only in the first third of the following century[96]. Noble readers were the ones who mostly consumed the new literature of Enlightenment values, which they themselves translated or produced. They were the ones reading Jean-Jacques, whereas the

89 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 200.

90 Ibid.

91 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 136-137.

92 T. Ledeneva, quoted by Samarin, "Lichnye biblioteki," 169.

93 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 135.

94 Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle," 177.

95 A. Joukovskaïa, "La naissance de l'épistolographie normative en Russie. Histoire des premiers manuels russes d'art épistolaire," *Cahiers du monde russe*, 40, 4 (1999), 672-673.

96 See Rebecchini, "Reading foreign novels," in volume 2.

others, in the best-case scenario, would, according to Karamzin, stop with Richardson's *History of Sir Charles Grandison*.[97] Nobles compose 70 % of all subscribers studied by Samarin.[98] Of course, the reading public cannot be reduced to subscribers only, since they represent, as Darnton rightly noted for Western Europe, only the richest segment of readers.[99] But in the Russian context, noble readers were the most dynamic one. Besides, as mentioned earlier in regards to the new types of readers accessing books through reading cabinets, noble readers were as diverse as the books they read. 8,4% of Samarin's subscribers came from the titled nobility and the imperial family; 8,16% from nobles occupying ranks 1 through 4 in the Table of Ranks established by Peter the Great; 5% occupied rank 5; and 28,64 % occupied ranks from 6 through 8. In other words, 51 % of all readers belonged to the hereditary nobility, to whom must be added 19,26 % of nobles from ranks 9 through 14.[100]

Diverse in rank, noble readers were also diverse in virtue. Initially meant as a virtuous way to occupy free time outside of service, reading turned into a dangerous occupation in the hands of a new segment of the readership: readers "à la mode." As Borderioux noted, under Catherine's reign, reading became a fashionable occupation partly because the Russian public associated it with a French cultural practice.[101] Publishers started aiming at the fashionable public, notably by publishing ads on new releases in fashion(able) journals.[102] Books themselves became fashionable objects when some publishers decided to turn them into decorative items. Borderioux pointed out Anna Urusova's interest in Louis-Antoine Caraccioli's 1760 *Book of four colours*, noting that Urusova read the "green volume," printed with green ink, while her sister read the "pink volume," printed with pink one.[103] Though this kind of highly sophisticated printing practice seems to have been closely associated with Parisian culture, it did initiate comparable experiments in Russia. As Borderioux noted, the Russian writer and notorious fop Nikolai Struiskii indulged in publishing sophisticated books on the private press installed on his estate.[104]

This new type of relationship with books was a slap in the face of the *literati's* intellectual ethics. It was even worse than the type of familiar appropriation of texts, which they had criticized at the eve of Catherine's reign, but which required some kind of intellectual effort. Unsurprisingly, they mocked those who valued the possession of books as object more than the

97 Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle," 179.
98 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 134.
99 Darnton, "First Steps," 11.
100 Samarin, *Chitatel' v Rossii*, 134.
101 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 176.
102 Ibid., 181.
103 Ibid., 177.
104 Ibid.

content of those books. In his 1791 *Pocket book for people moving to Moscow for the winter* (*Karmannaia knizhka dlia priezzhaiushchikh na zimu v Moskvu*), Nikolai Strakhov ironically invited fops and coquettes to compile libraries by selecting books according to their title, not their content:

> Choose books according to their title, not their content. In this, follow fashion and your own knowledge and taste. Avoid as much as possible buying the following useless and empty books: books about virtue [...]; about matters of the heart [...]; about proper behavior [...]; about decency [...]; about true friendship [...]; about proper ways to spend free time [...]; in general don't buy books about things unrelated to fashion or to any topics known to high society, for everything that is not fashionable can be described by the word *fadaises*.[105]

We can get an idea of the "fadaises" ("nonsense") that Strakhov invited fashionable readers to neglect in favor of fashionable books from another satirical text, one published earlier in Novikov's *Drone*. In this article, published in February 1770, a coquette describes a boring library, which, as can be seen from the following quote, contained all the legitimate books of the *literati's* literary pantheon:

> I inherited from an old man who passed away—my late father—a whole lot of books, but, to be frank, I never read any. I assure you that, after having tried one, I started stinking with old morals. I bet that you won't guess what books they were: nothing but Feofans and Kantemirs, Telemachus, Rollins, Chronicles, and other such nonsense.[106]

Without going to such extremes, the diversification of the book production under Catherine II's reign generated two different kinds of reading: a reading of canonized literature on the one hand, and a reading of innovative literature on the other. This movement contributed to the creation of a new generational gap between readers in the 1790s, reminiscent of the gap staged in the 1760s by Fonvizin in his *Brigadier*.

The new aesthetic trend of sentimentalism, which grew increasingly popular from the late 1780s (see ZORIN, "A reading revolution?" in the present volume), seems to have had a specific impact on young readers, as demonstrated by the success of Karamzin's books among students. His 1792 pastoral short story *Poor Liza* (*Bednaia Liza*), as well as his 1794 gothic

105 N. I. Strakhov, *Karmannaia knizhka dlia priezzhaiushchikh na zimu v Moskvu* [1791] (Moscow, 2016), 61-62. "Fadaises" is in French in the original Russian text. *My translation*.

106 Novikov, *Satiricheskie zhurnaly*, 201. *My translation*.

short story *The Island of Bornholm* (*Ostrov Borngol'm*), enjoyed wide success among students from the Cadet Corp.[107] Hence, reading the new literature of sentimentalism helped foster a sense of belonging to a specific community based on age. As Borderioux noted, buying trendy books was a way to oppose older people,[108] who had traditionally been responsible for choosing (i.e. selecting) books for younger readers. In her memoirs, Anna Labzina remembers how Kheraskov, who brought her up, wrote to her: "You can get books from my brother, who knows which ones to give you."[109] Choosing their own books, then, became an act of social autonomy for younger, sentimental readers. Choosing how to read them met the same challenge.

3. READING MODES AND THE QUEST FOR AUTONOMY

In his memoirs, the poet and senator Ivan Dmitriev remembers how his father used to read Lomonosov's odes to the family circle:

> I get no less pleasure from remembering one night at Easter Eve which my father decided to dedicate to family reading. This also took place in the country, after I graduated from my last boarding school. While we were waiting for dawn, my father, in order to fight sleep, took from his library the *Selected Works of Lomonosov*, the first Moscow edition, and began reading aloud the famous strophes from Job, then the *Evening Considerations on God's Greatness*, [...]. The reading ended with the *Ode to the conquest of Khotin*.[110]

This particular engagement with literature is a textbook example of how classicism treats books as an instrument of social control. It reproduces at the reduced scale of the family circle the consumption of texts mandated by the reading of a speech at court. In this scenario, the father embodies authority and reads an authorized text to a passive audience, whose possibilities to engage actively with literature are limited.

The innovative forms of engagement developed by Russian readers in Catherine II's time were radically opposed to this type of text consumption. Leaving the coded spaces of the library or the family parlour, Russian readers, like their European counterparts studied by Darnton,[111] started reading outdoors. In *A Knight of our time*, Karamzin depicts how his young hero

107 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 14, 18.

108 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 184.

109 A. E. Labzina, *Vospominaniia Anny Evdokimovy Labzinoi (1758-1828)* (St. Petersburg, 1903), 61. *My translation*.

110 I. I. Dmitriev, *Vzgliad na moiu zhizn'* (Moscow, 1866), 17-18. *My translation*.

111 Darnton, "First Steps," 13.

used to read on the banks of the Volga nearby Karamzin's own hometown of Simbirsk: "Sometimes, putting down his book, he would stare at the vast blue Volga, at the white sails of the boats and barks, at the flocks of seagulls, diving from the clouds into the scummy waves and flying back to the skies immediately afterwards."[112]

As Kochetkova has noted, reading helped Karamzin's hero enjoy the scenery by creating emotional associations between the landscape and the text. With time, recollections about the text would trigger recollections about the specific place where it was read, and vice versa.[113] This merging of text and landscape, of an intellectual practice with an emotional and physical experience, had a desacralizing function.

This kind of desacralization could go very far, and the new, freer way of consuming literature sometimes reached extremes. In a letter written to Dmitriev on May 31st, 1823, Karamzin remembered how the two of them, during their shared youth, once read on the banks of the river at night: "Your last, private and pleasantly melancholic letter flew me back in my imagination to the banks of the Volga, the crown of Simbirsk, where we once, heroically fighting sleep, read Young at night while waiting for dawn."[114] As this excerpt shows, night reading enhances the transgression of reading outdoors, as it adds to the unusual location an unusual time frame, one less governed by social control and as such associated with freedom by the two young men.

As people started reading them outdoors, books became a part of the new social ritual of taking walks. In an overdoor painting from the 1750s by B. V. Sukhodol'skii entitled "The Walk" ("Progulka"), people are not represented *walking*, but *reading*.[115] Reading also appears as a recurrent motif in several of Karamzin's early literary texts dedicated to walking in the countryside, such as *The Walk* (*Progulka*) and *The Village* (*Derevnia*).[116] Walkers could follow neutral paths regardless of how their itineraries were often culturally coded, and took them to places associated with the memory of cult figures and/or cult literary characters. In *Letters of a Russian Traveler* (*Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*, 1791-1801), Karamzin's fictional double visits Gessner's grave in Zurich with "a volume of his writings in [his] pocket." Similarly, while day-dreaming about Rousseau on St Peter's Island, he suddenly meets another walker, who also came to the island to reminisce about the writer with "a book in his hand."[117]

112 Karamzin, *Rytsar' nashego vremeni*, 766. *My translation.*

113 Kochetkova "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 124.

114 N. M. Karamzin, *Pis'ma N. M. Karamzina k I. I. Dmitrievu* (St. Petersburg, 1866), 351. *My translation.*

115 Ia. V. Bruk, *U istokov russkogo zhanra. XVIII vek* (Moscow, 1990), 62-65.

116 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 124.

117 N. M. Karamzin, *Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika* (Leningrad, 1987), 124, 182.

As Jean Breuillard has noted, reading outdoors became possible when the format of books became smaller.[118] This change was celebrated by Bolotov, who noted that the format of Karamzin's 1794 *Trifles* (*Moi bezdelki*) made it easy to place in one's pocket, and that as such it was the ideal book to be taken out on walks.[119] This reduction of book formats happened throughout the whole of Europe in the eighteenth century, and it is probable that Russia adopted it under the influence of Germany. Breuillard has noted that most books published in eighteenth-century Russia were in the octavo format,[120] a relatively cheap one according to Marker,[121] and that Karamzin innovated when he started publishing smaller books: Bolotov's favourite *Trifles* came out in the duodecimo format; as for *Julia*, it even came out in the sextodecimo format.[122] True, writes Breuillard, the duodecimo format did exist before Karamzin started using it, but it was mainly used to publish utilitarian literature, from alphabet books to agriculture manuals, or to publish unworthy literature, such as novels. Legitimate literature, on the contrary, was always published in large formats. Law or scientific texts were published in-folio, and texts belonging to solemn literary genres like odes were published in quarto.[123] In other words, concludes Breuillard, formats reproduced the symbolic hierarchy of literary genres established by classicism, and what Karamzin did was to publish legitimate literature in the format of an unworthy one. As he wrote to Dmitriev in October 1795, while preparing the collection *Aonids*, his Russian response to the French *Almanach des Muses*: "This way we could each year issue a small book of verses that our ladies would not be ashamed to carry in their pocket."[124] Whereas Dmitriev's father had to get Lomonosov's odes from his library, a legitimate place for a (grand format) legitimate book, younger readers fond of the new sentimental literature only needed to take their favourite (small format) books out of their pocket. This reduction of book dimensions also enhanced their emotional value. They became more precious as they became tinier, and their constant presence in their owners' pocket gave them the moral value of a companion: they became the receptacle of their owners' emotions,[125] sometimes literally inscribed in the books by the penciled notations in the margins that Kheraskov had condemned some twenty years earlier. Some books obviously provided moral support in difficult times, such as during military campaigns. Bolotov took his copy of Fénelon's *Telemachus* to the battlefields of Prussia during the Seven Year war, and in 1788, Dmitriev took

118 J. Breuillard, "Le petit format," in *Derrière l'Histoire, la langue. Études de littérature, de linguistique et d'Histoire* (Paris, 2012), 239.

119 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 123.

120 Breuillard, "Le petit format," 244.

121 Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia*, 116.

122 Breuillard, "Le petit format," 250-251.

123 Ibid., 244-247.

124 Karamzin, *Pis'ma k I. I. Dmitrievu*, 61. *My translation*.

125 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 124.

his copy of Rousseau's *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* when leaving for the front of the Swedish-Russian war.[126]

Carrying them around in their pockets, readers turned books into a new tool of sociability. As Kochetkova notes, books became identifiers for people who shared similar reference points and values. In Nikolai Emin's novel *Rosa,* the heroes become acquainted with one another thanks to Young's *Nights*. Hearing that the heroine longs to have a copy of the book, the hero hands it over to her from behind the bush from where he overheard her conversation.[127] Instrumental in creating emotional communities, books became an important part of these communities' symbolic economy. They were exchanged, as with Karamzin's books among the Saint Petersburg cadets. This, of course, had a special value outside the capitals, where books were scarce. In the episode from his memoirs quoted earlier in this study, Glinka remembers such an experience of shared reading:

> Suddenly there appeared at my home a copy of *My trifles*. Someone had sent us this book from Moscow; how can one describe the impression it produced? Everybody rushed to take the book and immersed themselves in its reading. They read it again and again, and finally came to know it by heart. Our copy went around the entire neighborhood and came back to us torn apart. I suppose this was the fate of all Karamzin's literary experiments.[128]

Besides sharing books, readers started sharing opinions about their reading experiences. Mihail Murav'ev's letters, for instance, are famous for reflecting his opinions on the books he read, which he considered legitimate to share with his correspondents.[129] But sharing one's fondness for specific books took more direct forms as well, like reading aloud in groups, which, according to Kochetkova, became popular under the influence of Goethe. It was used as a sort of metalanguage, in order to express feelings that society forbade one from voicing.[130] Another example of language developed for a specific community on the basis of shared reading was the cryptic language used by the Russian masons in their correspondence.

The emotional communities fostered by shared reading experiences and the use of shared unique languages also developed paraliterary cultural rituals. As Andrei Zorin notes in the present volume, the readers of Karamzin's *Poor Liza* became emotionally invested in the area surrounding the pond nearby Moscow where the writer had placed the action of his short story.

126 Ibid., 131.
127 Ibid., 124.
128 Quoted in M. P. Pogodin, *Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin po ego sochineniiam, pis'mam i otzyvam sovremennikov* (Moscow, 1866), 216-217. *My translation*.
129 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 122.
130 Ibid., 128.

Wishing to immortalize their reading experience and to share it with members of their emotional community beyond their usual friendly circles, readers wrote graffiti on trees surrounding the pond, further transforming the location into a place for literary pilgrimage.[131] This practice of community creation was clearly perceived as such by outsiders, who started covering the trees with salacious, counter-graffiti, spoiling the experience of Karamzin's readers while protesting their unusual appropriation of public space.

This kind of hostile reaction expressed the condemnation of a behaviour seen as irrational and threatening to the cohesion of educated society. Sentimental readers brought such reactions upon themselves by rejecting as alien those who did not share their reading-based emotional experiences. As Kochetkova rightly points out, reading was used by sentimental writers to create moral distinction. In many novels, characters were divided between the righteous ones, who read (appropriate) books, and the evil ones, who didn't read (appropriate) books.[132]

Of course, the moral rules and models of self-fashioning offered by sentimentalist fiction did not necessarily reflect Russian social reality. Meanwhile, they did reflect their authors' ambitions to create new forms of social control for the educated nobility. In other words, freer forms of reading reflected attempts at replacing court-mandated models of engagement with literature with alternative models, ones governed by members of the reader's emotional community. In a society where the majority of educated nobles still considered the state as their main partner, this was considered illegitimate.

The irrational behaviour which people associated with sentimentalism was perceived as a form of intoxication by literature. A frequent criticism addressed to readers of sentimental stories was their inability to distinguish reality from fiction,[133] which is precisely how people perceived the attempts of the readers of *Poor Liza* to turn a real place into a literary one, which presupposed the transformation of fiction into reality. This intoxication was the consequence of the deeper forms of emotional commitment which sentimentalism was developing for its readers. Of course, a similar criticism had been addressed to the novel on the eve of Catherine's reign. But, by the beginning of the 1790s, the danger was not only back, it was stronger than ever. Indeed, besides new forms of emotional engagement, the new little books of Russian sentimentalism also provided greater reading pleasure. Karamzin's reform of the Russian language, which cleansed literary Russian of its archaisms and resorted to French as a model for syntax, had made texts easier to read, notably for less experienced readers such as young people or women. Language, moreover, was not the only thing that

131 On this, see also Iu. M. Lotman, "Ob odnom chitatel'skom vospriiatii *Bednoi Lizy* N. M. Karamzina" (1966), in Idem, *Karamzin* (St. Petersburg, 1997), 616.

132 Kochetkova, "Geroi russkogo sentimentalizma," 124.

133 Ibid., 135-136.

Karamzin simplified. As Breuillard asserts, Karamzin not only reduced the format of books, he also simplified the textual structure of the page. Under the influence of Condillac, whose works he was well acquainted with,[134] the young Russian writer realised that the cognitive possibilities of readers were limited, and tried to add clarity to his texts by rethinking their structure. He would develop only one idea per paragraph and summarize it in the first sentence of every paragraph, so as to offer to his readers the possibility of reading more easily.[135] This innovative approach to structuring literary texts, which amounted to a small revolution in what Roger Chartier calls the "mise en livre,"[136] proved productive. As Breuillard notes, it was adopted by some of Karamzin's epigones, from Alexander Klushin in *Unfortunate M-v.* (*Neschastnyi M-v*, 1793), to Gavriil Kamenev in *Sofia* (1796), or Vladimir Izmailov in *Beautiful Tatiana* (*Prekrasnaia Tat'iana*, 1804).[137]

Making reading easier also meant making it less time consuming. In his 1796 *Abridged course on Russian style* (*Sokrashchennyi kurs rossiiskago sloga*), Vassilii Podshivalov noted that no one cared about (slowly) reading long phrases anymore, and that the newest writers abridged the length of their sentences.[138] This, noted Breuillard, recalled the type of reading "à la mode," popular in France among petit-maîtres, who did not need lengthy books and preferred booklets providing the concise information necessary to fuel society conversations.[139]

If not embodying the *Leserevolution* conceptualized by Engelsing and criticized by Darnton (as it did not lead to the disappearance of intensive reading, which only took on new forms),[140] this radical change, no less than the change of formats, contributed to a desacralization of books and reading. It rejected the serious type of reading advocated from the times of classicism by the "serious elite"[141] of the *literati* and mandated by the "theological, mystical, overly scholarly, pedantic and dry texts" that Karamzin declared unfit for his future *Moskovskii zhurnal* in 1790.[142] This new agenda claimed that the sole value of books resided in their ability to provide pleasure for their readers,[143] and partly explains Admiral Shishkov's hostility towards Karamzin and sentimentalism at the beginning of the following century. An erudite, but not a writer seeking an audience, Shishkov condemned

134 J. Breuillard, "Les sentimentalistes et la conquête de la page," in I. Fougeron (ed.), *Études russes II. La Russie et le russe à travers les textes* (Lille, 1999), 49.

135 Ibid., 53-54.

136 Quoted in Darnton, "First steps," 23.

137 Breuillard, "La conquête de la page," 56.

138 Ibid., 57.

139 Ibid., 48.

140 Darnton, "First steps," 12.

141 Iu. M. Lotman, *Sotvorenie Karamzina* (1987), in Idem, *Karamzin* (St. Petersburg, 1997), 219.

142 Breuillard, "La conquête de la page," 58. *My translation.*

143 Ibid., 57.

the type of reading that sacrificed information for the sake of pleasure and which destabilized the semantic integrity of the text, e.g. by introducing shifts from literal to figurative language. This new kind of reading conferred and relied on a growing level of autonomy from the reader, who from now on was supposed to be able to choose what to understand from the text and how to understand it. Like the coquettes, who, according to Borderioux, could reverse the meaning of a satirical text meant to mock them in order to use it as a normative statement on how to be fashionable,[144] this new generation of readers was supposed to be autonomous enough to find in texts what was required by their personal intellectual and moral development. Far from fearing the corrupting influence of novels, as the *literati* had at the turn of the 1750s, Dmitriev claimed in his autobiography that their consumption did not harm him as a child: "Reading novels did not have a malicious influence on my morality. I even dare say that novels served me as an antidote against everything low and pernicious."[145] Similarly, Karamzin rejoiced at hearing that Russians were reading novels, as he considered any kind of reading to be acceptable.[146] Of course, Karamzin referred mainly to mass readers, but his narrative concerning the development of taste—from *Nikanor* to *Grandison*—lay on the conviction that readers were wise enough not to become corrupted and could independently use literature as a tool of personal improvement.

In other words, readers were considered to be increasingly socially autonomous, and reading to be an emancipatory practice. Readers were not to be treated as children anymore by the *literati* but rather as adults, according to the well-known Kantian metaphor of Enlightenment. In a letter by Catherine II, the empress expressed her ambition that her granddaughters would grow up to become adept readers, able to "choose books reasonably" ("*blagorazumno vybirat' knigi dlia chteniia*"[147]). The difference between this quote and Kheraskov's monitoring of Anna Labzina's choice of literature illustrates the new function carried out by reading in late eighteenth-century Russia. The problem, however, was that, in Karamzin's plans, such independent reading was not intended for the imperial family only, but for the entire educated public; and that the subsequent step after readers were granted autonomy in reading was to be granted autonomy of thought. Indeed, the writer's second attempt at creating a journal, his 1802 *Vestnik Evropy* (*Messenger of Europe*), was not just a literary one, as the *Moskovskii zhurnal* of 1791-1792 had been, but a literary and political one.[148] Karamzin's ambitions laid the foundation for turning reading into a general conversation for the educated audience, one meant to parallel, if not replace, the tra-

144 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 198.
145 Dmitriev, *Vzgliad na moiu zhizn'*, 15. *My translation.*
146 Karamzin, "O knizhnoi torgovle," 179.
147 Borderioux, *Evropeiskaia moda*, 200.
148 Lotman, *Sotvorenie Karamzina*, 269.

ditional dialogue between the public and the state. This move was bold, and some warned both the public and the authorities about its possible dangers. In 1810, one of Karamzin's enemies, Pavel Golenishchev-Kutuzov—who in 1799 had already warned his readers against the writer's dangerously "seductive" ("*prelestnyi*") style[149]—wrote a political denunciation on the writer, whose appeal to readers seemed dangerous. By doing so, he tried to restore the old form of dialogue between the public and the state, which he considered to be threatened by the new one between the writer and the public. Golenishchev-Kutuzov's attempt failed, but it shows that he had sensed the new legitimacy granted to writers, which was to become a specific feature of the nineteenth century, and originated in the growing autonomy of readers and the liberalization of reading practices dating back to the times of Catherine.

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149 N. D. Kochetkova, "Chitatel'skie otkliki na publikatsii Karamzina v Rossii XVIII veka," in E. Waegemans, H. van Koningsbrugge, M. Levitt, M. Liustrov (eds.), *A Century Mad and Wise, Russia in the Age of the Enlightenment* (Groningen, 2015), 18.

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WHAT, HOW, AND WHY THE ORTHODOX CLERGY READ IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIA

Ekaterina Kislova

1. difficulties in reconstructing the clergy's reading

What did the Orthodox clergy read in eighteenth-century Russia? To make even a rough approximation is difficult. The first obstacle is the fact that, during the eighteenth century, the Orthodox clergy was undergoing serious social and cultural transformations instigated by Peter the Great's internal policies, the process of westernization, and new state models of clerical education. We also need to consider two different clerical groups:

a) The 'educated' or 'modern' clergy, which became part of the national westernization project. This group was defined by its shared institutional education. These clerics possessed a good knowledge of Church Slavonic and Latin, and, in some cases, they even knew additional foreign languages. This small, elite segment of the clergy was distinct in its ideology and organizational makeup, and its members largely oversaw and directed the wider clergy's evolution during this period. They included members of the Holy Synod, rectors and professors from theological seminaries, priests and deacons from capital churches, Fathers Superior from wealthy monasteries, preachers close to the court, catechists, examiners, and so on. They were very close to secular society: students from seminaries were able to enter other educational institutions (medical, academic, etc.), and could 'secularize' ("exit into the secular condition") after their education was finished—or even during the course of it.[1]

1 This study was funded by RFBR and FMSH, project number 20-513-22001

On the close ties between the clergy and the developing intelligentsia, see L. Manchester, *Holy Fathers, Secular Sons. Clergy, Intelligentsia, and the Modern Self in Revolutionary Russia* (DeKalb, 2008).

b) The 'traditional' clergy, which was much more numerous and included churchmen from small towns and poor parishes. They learned at home 'from Fathers [i.e., parish priests],' were able to read Church Slavonic, and had practical skills in liturgical singing, etc. They did not know Latin or other foreign languages, but this group in particular was familiar with hand-written, manuscript, pre-Petrine literature, which they read both for official and recreational purposes. During the eighteenth century, this group remained much more numerous than the former[2] and was treated more like those belonging to the 'taxed estates' (*podatnye sosloviia*); indeed, such individuals were considered "illiterate" by the 'modern' clergy and the government. In Russian regions with few seminaries (for example, Siberia), such "traditionalists" constituted the majority of the clergy until the early nineteenth century.[3]

Still, both groups were closely connected to each other: until the mid-eighteenth century, the 'modern' clergy consisted almost completely of sons belonging to the traditional group, because the title of clergyman was hereditary. Thus, within the framework of reading, we should understand that these groups did not necessarily exist in opposition to each other, but instead were linked in complex ways.

A second issue concerns the sources that can help us reconstruct the clergy's reading habits. Narrowly speaking, documents that show a cleric's reflection upon a text can be considered proof that the cleric had read this text; however, few examples of such documents have survived. We can also consider as evidence notes written about texts or even complete copies of texts, as well as translations from foreign languages, whether they are complete or fragmentary. The practice of making notes about interesting and useful textual fragments, or even hand-written copies of them, was very popular among all social estates in the eighteenth century. Such hand-written collections were often anonymous, so we cannot always tell who the writer was and which sources he used.[4] Furthermore, a citation doesn't necessarily mean that the person had read the entire text: printed and handwritten collections of phrases and quotes from various sources were widespread. Any given text could thus belong to a cleric's reading only indirectly, through periphrasis, notes, and allusions in other texts. This was common in clerical society because of the tradition of "exempla"—lists of entertaining examples that could be used in sermons as rhetorical illustrations (such as

2 According to G. Freeze, seminary students at the end of the eighteenth century numbered around 20,000 (G. L. Freeze, *The Russian Levites. Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century* [Cambridge-London, 1977], 88). However, it would be sufficient to point out that in 1796, for instance, there were approximately 340,000 clergymen in Russia (B. N. Mironov, *Russkii Gorod v 1740-1860e gody* [Leningrad, 1990], 254).

3 N. D. Zol'nikova, *Soslovnye problemy vo vzaimootnosheniiakh tserkvi i gosudarstva (XVIII v.)* (Novosibirsk, 1981), 112-151.

4 On manuscript literature of the eighteenth century, see M. N. Speranskii, *Rukopisnye sborniki XVIII veka. Materialy dlia istorii russkoi literatury XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1963).

the Russian translations of various Polish collections—the *Apophegmata*, *The Great Mirror* [*Velikoe zertsalo*], etc.). Therefore, the simple fact of textual citation does not definitively indicate in-depth knowledge of that text; we can gain reliable information about that knowledge only if the document is interpreted in consideration with other sources.

Papers from seminaries—such as professors' reports, reading lists for classes, discussions on exemplary texts, books for reading in private and in translation, and so on—represent more reliable sources. Significant information can be gained from book catalogues of private and seminary library collections, as well as lists of books that scholars failed to return to those libraries. On the one hand, possession of a certain book or its circulation within a seminary library did not necessary mean that it was a part of particular clergymen's reading. On the other hand, orders from seminary authorities to buy particular books, lists of books that were given to exemplary students, and lists of books that were not brought back to the library seem significant. Unfortunately, eighteenth-century seminary archives are in poor condition; such sources have only partly survived and do not provide a complete picture of clerics' reading material.

A third issue concerns the number of languages that the clergy read and the evolution of their language skills over the course of the eighteenth century. As opposed to the 'traditional' clergy, who commonly only read in Church Slavonic and Russian, the 'modern' clergy could also read in Latin, Polish, French, German, and sometimes even Greek and Hebrew.

Keeping these circumstances in mind, we might distinguish three categories of texts read by eighteenth-century clergy:

1) 'Professional' clerical literature in various languages: liturgical and theological texts in Church Slavonic; theological tracts and books of spiritual content in hybrid Church Slavonic, Russian, and Latin; administrative writings; and sermons.
2) Secular fiction in Russian (both original and translated).
3) Literature in foreign languages (Polish, French, German), both 'professional' (moralistic and spiritual) and fictional. We should also include here classical Greek and Roman authors such as Cicero, Tacitus, Pliny the Elder, Julius Caesar, etc. Their writings were also studied as part of seminary education in poetics and rhetoric but held a specific place in seminary culture; they often represented required rather than voluntary reading, as opposed to contemporary fiction in Russian.

In what follows, I will consider the primary features of each category of reading material.

2. 'professional' clerical literature in various languages

The literature that was most important for the clergy may be called 'professional' because reading these texts was required in order for a churchman to become a successful member of the clerical estate. Liturgical and service books in Church Slavonic represented the core of this material: Gospel and Epistle Books, the Psalter, the Octoechos, Menaion, Triodion, Horologion, Irmologion, Euchologion, and so on. Since liturgical books were considered sacred, they required a different caliber of reading. Members of the clergy read such writings not as 'food for thought' or as a simple source of information, but rather as 'spiritual' or 'edificatory' reading that would help them become a better Christian. In mass, these texts were read over and over, out loud and together with the congregation as an act of worship.[5] To this day, there exist special instructions on how to read this kind of Orthodox literature in private; there is even a special prayer to be recited before doing so.

All clerics needed to possess a level of Church Slavonic that would allow them to read such books out loud. Until the late nineteenth century, basic grammar education among all clerics used ecclesiastic books—Primers, the Horologion, and the Psalms,[6] which were learned by heart; knowledge of these texts did not necessarily mean that a particular person could read any other ones.[7] The level of understanding also varied. The *Ecclesiastical Regulation* (*Dukhovnyi reglament* [1721]) demanded not only good pronunciation, but also an understanding of basic Church Slavonic texts. However, during the century in question, church authorities often regretted that the clergy did not understand the Scriptures well enough. In order to show their competence, 'modern' clergymen were supposed to pass an examination before taking their vows.[8] Church Slavonic was not deemed a language that required special study, as it was seen as a part of the united "slavenorosskii" (Slavonic-Russian) language,[9] and until the nineteenth century there were no classes on it in seminaries.

The Holy Scriptures were read as a source for theological discussion only in advanced classes—theology and philosophy—and were not included in

5 See E. A. Mel'nikova, *"Voobrazhaemaia kniga": ocherki po istorii fol'klora o knigakh i chtenii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 2011), 118-125.

6 A. G. Kravetskii, "Liturgicheskii iazyk kak predmet etnografii," in E.E. Levkievskaia (ed.), *Slavianskie etiudy: sbornik k iubileiu S. M. Tolstoi* (Moscow, 1999), 230-231; E. I. Kislova, "Latin as the language of the orthodox clergy in eighteenth-century Russia," in V. Rjéoutski, W. Frijhoff (eds.), *Language Choice in Enlightenment Europe. Education, Sociability, and Governance* (Amsterdam, 2018), 201-202.

7 Zol'nikova, *Soslovnye problemy*, 122.

8 I. K. Smolich, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi. 1700–1917*, Vol. 8 part 1 (Moscow, 1996), 348-350; N. Rozanov, *Istoriia Moskovskogo Eparkhial'nogo upravleniia so vremeni uchrezhdeniia sv. sinoda (1721-1821)* (Moscow, 1870), 86-88. In some eparchies of the late eighteenth century, clergy had to provide catechistic talks to their parishioners on regular basis, but this was not common.

9 See V. M. Zhivov, *Iazyk i kultura v Rossii XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1996).

the program for foundational classes.[10] Furthermore, not all seminary students completed their education with these classes; most of them were assigned to parishes just after taking the middle-level ("rhetoric") class. Until the late eighteenth century, theology in seminaries was taught in Latin and on the basis of Latin tracts, which is why they also studied the Bible itself using the Vulgate.[11] The latter obviously had a lower status in the eyes of the Orthodox clergy, so this Latin text seemed more suitable for theological discussions, which were also conducted primarily in Latin.[12] Consequently, the 1775 order from Metropolitan Platon (Levshin) that required that the Bible be interpreted on the basis of the Masoretic (Hebrew) text and the Septuagint was quite significant. Previously the Greek New Testament had been a source for studying Greek, while fragments from the Old Testament in Hebrew[13] and "the Hebrew Bible" itself were used to study Hebrew. The use of the Church Slavonic Bible in theology classes was thus a significant innovation, one was instituted concurrently with the use of Russian in theology classes.[14]

Advanced students were advised to read from the Church Fathers "in their free time [and] under a professor's eye,"[15] but the language was not specified—this could have been Church Slavonic or Latin. The earliest surviving catalogues of the Trinity Seminary library[16] (1761) present a rather traditional list of names and books: the Church Slavonic writings of John Chrysostom, Theophylact of Ohrid, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ephrem the Syrian, Basil of Caesarea, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Climacus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Pope St. Gregory I, John of Damascus, etc. Their texts in the catalog could be either hand-written or printed.[17] However, many of these authors also had a presence in Latin: for example, the Trinity Seminary had books in Latin by Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ephrem the

10 See OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 5-5 ob.

11 Reading the Bible in French or German was not prohibited and could be used for studying European languages, but the authorities did not encourage the clergy to do this. For example, in 1769 Platon (Levshin) gave a German teacher at the Trinity Seminary the following order: "Attempt to read from German and translate not from the Biblical books only, but from other books in that tongue" (OR RGB, f. 757, k. 21, d. 9, l. 117 ob.). Reading the Bible in French is not mentioned in documents, although in 1779 the Trinity Seminary did buy one especially for French classes.

12 P. Znamenskii, *Dukhovnyie shkoly v Rossii do reformy 1808 goda* (Kazan', 1881), 468.

13 S. Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii* (Moscow, 1867), 267-268, 279.

14 Among these were courses by Apollos Baibakov in 1775 and by Methodius Smirnov between 1784 and the 1790s. Ibid., 289.

15 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 89.

16 There are two versions of this catalogue: OR RGB f. 173.1, d. 585.1 and d. 586. 1. The first was created in 1761 and was updated through 29 September, 1781; it lists 3,435 books. Catalogue d. 586.1 was a copy of d. 585.1 made in 1763, but it also has some additions which were made up to 1765; it lists 2,655 books. Book lists from private collections that were added to the library after 1761 differ in the two catalogue variants; I mainly refer to d. 585.1, but in some cases also use d. 586.1.

17 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 870b.-970b.

Syrian, etc.[18] Still, the list of Latin Church Fathers' writings in this catalogue was much longer and more diverse in Church Slavonic and included not only traditional Orthodox patristic texts, but also works by authors popular in Western Christianity, such as Hilarius Pictaviensis, Hieronymus, St. Augustine of Hippo, and Pope St. Leo I.

In the 1761 catalogue we find a diversity of commentary and interpretation by medieval and contemporary Western theologians whose writings existed solely in Latin (e.g., Willem Hessels van Est's *Commentaria in epistolas apostolicas* and a 10-volume edition of Joao da Silveira) as well as traditional and contemporary Latin writings on church history published in Europe (*Historia Ecclesiastica* of Eusebii Pamphili, *Historia haeresis Monothelitarum*, Noël Alexandre's *Historia ecclesiastica veteris novique testamenti*, etc.). The Trinity Seminary bought a significant number of these books abroad between 1744 and 1751. For instance, in 1744, the seminary bought for a total of 370 rubles 13 volumes of St. Chrysostom's works and 37 volumes of *Historia Byzantina variorum scriptorum Byzantinorum* (both mentioned in the catalogue in 1761), and in 1745 purchased from Amsterdam and London not only Latin editions of Holy Fathers (St. John of Damascus, Eusebius of Caesarea), but also the most popular European collections of theological commentaries and historical works: William Beveridge's *Synodicon sive Pandectae canonum…*; Europe Cornelius a Lapide's *Commentaries on the Bible* in 12 volumes, which were among the most popular theological works of the seventeenth century; *Concordantiae sacrorum librorum*; and *Historia Synodi Florentinae*.[19] Despite their Catholic or Protestant character, these books were considered useful as sources of theological knowledge and were used by Orthodox clergy without any restrictions (or at least none can be found in the seminaries' extant papers). They also served as resources for seminary professors in creating their own theological writings, especially sermons.

The predominance of Latin publications in Trinity Seminary's library of 1761 was a common feature of seminary culture in the first half of the eighteenth century in general; rhetoric, philosophy, and theology were all studied in Latin, and the Latin language itself was studied through exemplary Latin and Neo-Latin authors.[20] The main section of the Trinity library's catalogue mentions 1,685 items in Latin, and only 502 in "Russian" (i.e. in Russian and Church Slavonic; among these, 183 were hand-written).[21]

18 Ibid., l. 3 ob.-6-. The catalogue doesn't mention particular editions, full titles, or even the dates and places of the books' publication; sample records are: "Sancti Basilii magni opera in tribus tomus" or "Sancti Efraëm Syri opera in 5 tomis," so without further research it is difficult to tell which particular editions were available to Russian clerical readers.

19 Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii*, 54-58.

20 See Kislova, *Latin*, 203-210.

21 The "Latin books" also contain a few Polish, German, French, Italian, and Greek editions. Theological, philosophical, and historical-theological works are in the majority, but there are also grammars, dictionaries, textbooks, various scientific works, and so on.

We find a different picture in catalogues from eighteenth-century monasteries and churches. Even in the second half of the century, Russian monasteries and churches did not possess any secular books (with a few exceptions): their collections were limited to liturgical books, and even lacked any writings by the Church Fathers.[22] Moreover, they owned almost nothing in Latin. In a 1765 *Inventory of Male and Female Monasteries…* (*Opis' muzhskikh i devich'ikh monastyrei…*), one can find book collections relinquished by Pskov monasteries and moved to the Pskov kremlin; these included various printed and hand-written Gospels, Irmologions, Euchologions, Menaions, Octoechos, Triodions, Patericons, Synaxarions, etc. There were also some samples of the "newly-corrected Bible," the 1751 or 1756 Elizabethan edition. Books of homilies and orations by Holy Fathers mentioned here often contain notes about their having been given to eminent members of the church hierarchy: "The book of Ephrem the Syrian (Was given in Zlatoustov [Monastery] to the Hegumen); The Book of Ephrem the Syrian in quire (Was given with a receipt to Ioanniky, Hegumen of the Krypetskii Monastery, August 10, 1765); The book of John Climacus in quire (Was taken back from the archbishop)."[23] Books by John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzus are also mentioned. From contemporary literature, there are two copies of Fedor Polikarpov's *Trilingual Dictionary…* (*Leksikon treiazychnyi…*) and two of Archbishop Pitirim's *Spiritual Sling* (*Prashchitsa dukhovnaia)*, a tract against the Old Believers (which was a common type of work in that region).

A similar list is provided in a 1781-1785 inventory of the Zakonospassk Monastery in Moscow. Until 1797, the Moscow Slavic Greek Latin Academy was situated there, but the monastery's churches also had their own small libraries.[24] These typically included Gospels and Epistles, Psalters, Horologions, Triodions, Octoechos, Synaxarions, Menaions, Euchologions, Kormchaia Books, etc. The Holy Fathers John Climacus, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ephrem the Syrian, and St. Gregory I are mentioned once again. There are no polemical writings against the Old Believers because such texts were not as relevant in Moscow, but we can find here several "professional" books, often printed in Kiev, which were important for educated clergy in the capital. These reflect not only the strong Ukrainian influence in the seventeenth and first half of eighteenth century, but also the widespread popularity of specific sermons. They include: Petr Mogila's *Euchologio*n (*Trebnik* [1646]), Lazar Baranovych's *The Trumpets of Preaching Words* (*Truby sloves propovidnykh* [1674]), Ioanniky Galyatovskii's *The Key to Understanding* (*Kliuch razumeniia* [1659]), Isaiia Kopinskii's *The Spiritual*

22 S. P. Luppov, *Kniga v Rossii v poslepetrovskoe vremia. 1725-1740* (Leningrad, 1976), 302-307.

23 A. B. Postnikov, "Sud'ba starykh bibliotek pskovskikh tserkvei i monastyrei," *Pskov*, 31 (2009), 17-19.

24 RGADA, f. 1189, op. 1., d. 334, l. 68-74.

Alphabet (*Alfavit dukhovnyi*), ascribed to Dimitri Rostovskii,[25] and Symeon Polotskii's *Spiritual Dinner* (*Obed dushevnyi* [1681]). All of these books were written by Ukrainian monastic scholars in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Contemporary ecclesiastic books were represented only by the *Ecclesiastic Regulation* (*Dukhovnyi reglament* [1721]) and Gavriil Petrov and Platon Levshin's *Collection of Various Sermons for All Sundays and Holidays* (*Sobranie raznykh pouchenii na vse voskresnye i prazdnichnye dni* [1775]).

Reading the Church Fathers in Church Slavonic was a more or less typical skill required of Russian clergymen, but for the 'modern' clergy this was less important than knowing theological writings in Latin, or knowing Ukrainian and Russian seventeenth and eighteenth-century sermons. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the scope of Latin and Ukrainian books of theology was a lot broader than before, and existing translations into Church Slavonic and Russian were insufficient for an educated clergyman to gain 'divine knowledge.' Seminary students only attained the necessary fluency in Latin in their last years of education, so students who did not study beyond the primary or intermediate level remained unfamiliar with these writings and did not have access to them. And so these students merged with the 'traditional' clergy again. Ukrainian ecclesiastic books (e.g. Kyrylo Stavrovetskii-Tranquillon's *Didactic Gospel* [1619], and various liturgical books published in Kiev) spread everywhere and were obviously popular even among Russian rural clergy.

3. Sermons and spiritual writings

The most popular and universal genres for reading were sermons and similar writings (orations, homilies, etc.). Among the traditional clergy, such writings circulated in hand-written collections of full or partial works by Church Fathers and of Russian texts with a similar style and content (sometimes anonymous), including sermons, homilies, extracts from saints' lives, *khozhdeniia* (travelogues), Bible and Gospel commentaries, and various fragments of ecclesiastic literature.[26] The content of such 'spiritual collections' remained the same from the fourteenth through eighteenth century. As M. N. Speranskii comments on these texts: "The range of texts read by the average eighteenth-century Russian clergyman was limited to the old tradition (mostly of the seventeenth century) [...] The core writings here are Lives, ascetic articles, lessons on church morals, selections from the Holy Scripture (for one or another purpose), moralistic stories, liturgical

25 See M. A. Fedotova, "O pervom izdatele i pervom izdanii propovedei Dimitriia Rostovskogo," *Slověne*, 7, 1 (2018), 160-161.

26 On the tradition of manuscript collections and their fate in the eighteenth century, see O. N. Fokina, *Evoliutsiia drevnerusskogo chet'ego sbornika kak narodnoi knigi v istoriko-literaturnom kontekste XVII-XVIII vekov*. Dissertatsiia... doktora filol. nauk (Ekaterinburg, 2009).

writings (masses), and, rarely, dogmatic and theological writings, mostly formal, canonical, and polemical."[27] There is almost no fiction here, but there was some religious syllabic verse, Apocrypha, and occasionally individual articles regarding secular content. Not all readers of these materials were clergymen; such genres were also quite popular among believers from various social strata.[28]

Specific to the eighteenth century was the presence of "new type" ("scholastic" or "school") sermons in handwritten format. This was a new genre which the traditionalists borrowed from the 'modern' clergy. This kind of sermon began to spread in the late seventeenth century. The first examples were brought into Russia by Ukrainian clergymen (Lazar Baranovich, Dimitri Rostovskii, etc.), and they gained popularity gradually. From the late eighteenth century on, giving sermons became the strict responsibility of every priest. They were obligated to deliver sermons in church "on every Sunday and every holy day," as repeatedly demanded by the Synod; panegyric sermons became an obligatory part of worship in court churches, and the best texts were published at the government's expense. Later—under Catherine II—private typographies started to publish large collections of sermons by Russian clergymen.[29] Readers' demand for sermons remained quite steady, and each one that was published became an example and source for clerics who needed to create their own texts.[30] In 1775, Gavriil Petrov and Platon Levshin's *Collection of Various Sermons for all Sundays and Holidays* (*Sobranie raznykh pouchenii na vse voskresnye i prazdnichnye dni*) was published and sent out to eparchies to provide every priest with officially approved exemplars. This was needed, first and foremost, by traditional clergymen who did not have enough knowledge or skill to create their own original sermons.

However, the tradition of hand-written collections of sermons continued to exist. From the second half of the eighteenth century on, such collections were closely associated with seminaries; future churchmen collected and copied exemplary texts for themselves and used them for their own study and practice. Such collections could include very different texts, including court sermons from different periods (taken both from publications and hand-written copies), as well as workbooks containing professors' and other students' sermons—both final versions and drafts. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the authorities started to actively include sermons in rhetoric classes (from 1798 there was a separate "higher church speech class"). In the Trinity Seminary, sermons by Feofan Prokopovich, Dimitrii

27 Speranskii, *Rukopisnye sborniki*, 102-103.

28 Ibid., 104-105.

29 See E. I. Kislova, E. M. Matveev, *Khronologicheskii katalog slov i rechei XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 2011).

30 See E. I. Kislova, "Sermons and Sermonizing in Eighteenth-Century Russia: At Court and Beyond," *Slověne*, 3, 2 (2014), 175-193.

Rostovskii, Gedeon Krinovskii, Ilias Miniatis, and Platon Levshin[31] served as examples of language and style.

Semen Pavlov, who studied at the Moscow Academy in the 1770s, created a noteworthy collection of handwritten sermons.[32] It begins with copies of two sermons from Petrov and Levshin's *Collection of Various Sermons*. While their origins go unmentioned, their rhetoric is closely examined in the margins, indicating their importance as models. The collection also contains speeches and sermons by Semen Pavlov himself with corrections and comments by his professors, as well as a few anonymous worksheets with drafts of sermons copied by different hands (but arranged by Pavlov). These contain notes about their use in the 1750s, perhaps even before Pavlov's birth. Two printed texts are sewn into this collection—Aleksandr Levshin's "Grateful Sermon to the Omnipotent God on the Solemn Day of the Final End to the Plague in Moscow" ("Slovo blagodarstvennoe ko vsemogushchemu bogu v torzhestvennyi den' sovershennago presecheniia zarazitel'noi bolezni v Moskve" [1772]) and Feofan Prokopovich's famous "Oration at the Funeral of Peter the Great" ("Slovo na pogrebenie Petra Velikogo" [1725]). These are followed by Semen Pavlov's training speech "On the Demise of Someone Well-Known in Education" ("Na prestavlenie kakogo-libo ucheniem slavnago")[33] in Russian and Latin, in which we can find rhetorical figures and devices taken from 'exemplary' texts.

A significant number of such collections were based on copies of court and seminary sermons belonging to professors. Some copies became anonymous (although the writer sometimes mentions a particular publication from which a text was copied), and provide us with few grounds for any definitive conclusions. For instance, a collection in RGADA contains 24 handwritten copies of sermons (as well as a printed one); only nine of them have a specifically designated author, and eight of these were copied from published court sermons of the 1740s.[34] Another three were copied from the first volume of Gedeon Krinovskii's works, again without mentioning any author.

The author's name is more often given in the case of the most influential preachers (Feofan Prokopovich and Dimitrii Rostovskii).[35] The author is also mentioned when dealing with a collection of a professor's or student's writings, but briefly: the time or occasion (a particular holy day) may be mentioned in the title or in the margin, but the date, place, and name of the author is usually only found at the very end of a text, sometimes in Latin.

31 Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii*, 315.

32 OR RGB, f. 173.2, d. 49.

33 Ibid., l. 369-374, l. 375-378 ob., l. 379-381 ob.

34 RGADA, f. 188, op. 1, d. 1031.

35 Anonymous sermons were regularly attributed to Dimitrii Rostovskii: M. A. Fedotova, "O pervom izdatele i pervom izdanii propovedei Dimitriia Rostovskogo," *Slověne*, 7, 1 (2018), 162-166.

Among the anonymous texts, we can also find prohibited ones. For instance, the collection made by the Moscow Academy philosophy student Iakov Filippov contains a sermon titled "for marriage," indicated on the margin.[36] This is a sermon by Amvrosii Iushkevich "God's Blessing..." ("Bozhie blagoslovenie...") written on the occasion of the marriage between Anna Leopoldovna and Duke Anthony Ulrich of Brunswick in July 3, 1739. This text was prohibited during Elizabeth's reign and removed from circulation,[37] but, surprisingly, was available to seminary students via hand-written copies.

Sermons from educational collections could be used for a very long time; for instance, Feofan Prokopovich and Dimitri Rostovskii remained viable models until the late eighteenth century. The collections could also be moved from one place to another, along with their possessors. One collection that belonged to Iakov Filippov contains 53 sermons (19 by Prokopovich and 15 by Georgii Konisskii) that were held in the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and were never published during the eighteenth century (the texts contain some stylistic corrections, which indicates that they were used for studying).[38] Another collection contains three sermons by Simon Todorskii, delivered when he was preacher at the Kiev Academy.[39] They remained unpublished until the beginning of the twentieth century. (The collection also includes a copy of a published court homily on the birthday of the Elisabeth's heir, Petr Fedorovich, in 1743).

Such collections were very widespread. For example, a Kostroma Seminary collection from the last quarter of the eighteenth century had previously belonged to Nikifor Zyrin, a priest at the Trinity Cathedral, and includes a large collection of sermons by Dimitrii Rostovskii along with various speeches and sermons from the 1779-1783 period by Kostroma clergymen.[40] Among them, the outline of a sermon by Kostroma Bishop Parfenii; speeches and sermons by the priest Lavrentii Skvortsov, by the theology student Hierodeakon Flerov; and by the seminary Prefect Ivan Metelkin. All of this is accompanied by corrections and comments, some made by Zyrin himself.

By the late eighteenth century, more writings by Church Fathers were being published in modernized Church Slavonic and in Russian.[41] The spread of newly translated homilies and orations by Church Fathers minimized any linguistic barriers, and thus the 'modern' clergy started to copy these writings into scholarly collections along with court sermons and their

36 OR RGB, f. 299, d. 158, l. 325 ob-333 ob.

37 Decree of November 18, 1742. *Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporiazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia rossiiskoi imperii. Tsarstvovanie gosudaryni imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny.* T. 1. *25 noiabria 1741- 1743 gg.* (St. Petersburg, 1899), 472-473.

38 OR RGB, f. 299, d. 158.

39 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 163.

40 OR RGB, f. 138, d. 69.

41 V. M. Zhivov, *Ocherki istoricheskoi morfologii russkogo iazyka XVII-XVIII vekov* (Moscow, 2004), 236, 263, 576.

own exercises. For example, "A Collection of Educational Notes" from the Kostroma Seminary[42] contains items from 1804-1806, including notes from the Epistles; theological speeches in Russian; as well as a "conversation" (sermon) by John Chrysostom and a speech by Patriarch Flavian (both copied from nineteenth-century printed translations), along with a rather traditional speech by Platon Levshin and illustrative examples from sermons by Gedeon Krinovskii (1755-1759).

Only a few 'new style' sermons managed to find their place within the paradigm of traditional collections. In the mid eighteenth century, new style sermons were rarely copied along with Church Slavonic speeches by Church Fathers, although there are some examples—such as "A Collection of Church Content," in which, among John Chrysostom and Ephrem the Syrian's homilies and notes from traditional collections, one can find a hand-written copy of Dimitrii Sechenov's "Sermon on the Day of the Appearance of the Icon 'Our Lady of Kazan'" ("Slovo v den' iavleniia ikony Kazanskoi bogomateri...") presented at Elizabeth's court in 1742.[43] Placing such texts next to each other was probably motivated by multiple goals—saving one's soul, as well as presenting a worthy repertoire of rhetorical examples and language usage (i.e. Church Slavonic as opposed to Russian with some Church Slavonic elements). In the second half of eighteenth century, "new style" sermons were often accompanied by secular texts: speeches, verses, notes from magazines, etc.

4. Russian fiction and literature translated into Russian

Among traditional clergy, secular literature in Russian and in hybrid Church Slavonic often accompanied *lubok* romances (*Skazka o Eruslane Lazareviche, Skazka o Bove Koroleviche* etc.), and in this regard the clergy was not much different from the urban population (*meshchane*).[44] Contemporary secular literature in the clergy's reading included both original Russian and a large range of translated contemporaneous writings.[45] The place of fiction in the 'modern' clergy's reading is somewhat similar.[46] Original Russian was pres-

42 OR RGB, f. 138, d. 251, from the early nineteenth century.

43 RGADA, f. 188. op. 1, d. 1365, l. 44-500b.

44 Speranskii, *Rukopisnye sborniki,* 104-105; A. A. Pletneva, "Sotsiolingvistika i problemy istorii russkogo iazyka XVIII-XIX vekov," *Zhizn' iazyka. Sbornik statei k 80-letiiu Mikhaila Viktorovicha Panova* (Moscow, 2001), 269-279.

45 See Iu. Levin (ed.), *Istoriia russkoi perevodnoi khudozhestvennoi literatury: Drevniaia Rus'. XVIII vek* (St. Petersburg, 1995), vol. 1, 9-12, 15-16: V. D. Rak, *Stat'i o literature XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 2008).

46 Journals from the second half of the eighteenth century frequently contained both original Russian works and translations without mentioning the sources, so it seems unlikely that the reader could tell one from the other. See V. D. Rak, "Inostrannaia literatura v russkikh zhurnalakh XVIII veka," in his *Stat'i o literature,* 74-204.

ent at the seminaries mostly in the form of poetry and translations of historical, philosophical, and moralistic material. This is quite similar to the general picture of eighteenth-century literary culture in Russia, although the clergy had specific ways of accessing this kind of literature.

Literature in Russian spread mostly as a result of Russian authors being included in the seminary syllabus, specifically in the spheres of rhetoric and poetics. Although the seminaries used theoretical rhetoric and poetic guides in Latin until the second half of the century, they sometimes contained small poetic illustrations of living languages, such as Polish, "prosta mova," and Russian.[47] In the first half of the century, examples of such texts were represented by the syllabic verse of Feofan Prokopovich, Stefan Iavorskii, Antiokh Kantemir, as well as anonymous panegyrics (e.g., *kanty* for Peter the Second),[48] etc.

The spread of public festivals with speeches and declamations[49] created the necessity to study panegyric writing in Russian, and consequently became part of the clergy's circle of reading. From the first third of the eighteenth century on, syllabi in rhetoric and poetics began to include modern syllabic-accentual odes, the main panegyric genre at the time.[50] Surviving hand-written guides demonstrate that this shift occurred in the 1740s. For instance, the 1748 Moscow Academy poetics guide *Phoebus poeticus*[51] was illustrated not only with syllabic spiritual verse, but also with epitaphs in hybrid Church Slavonic (sometimes from Ukrainian and Polish sources),[52] "To the Author of the Satire" by Feofan Prokopovich, and a fragment of "An Ode Written in Honor of Anna Ioannovna" by Trediakovskii.[53] Entries for the latter two failed to mention the texts' authors.

The panegyric ode became an ideological staple of seminary poetry, so much so that seminary students both read and copied them for further use.[54] A late 1740s–early 1760s example of such texts is "A Collection of Examples of Salutary Speeches and Poems, Composed in Trinity Lavra's Seminary."[55] The collection contains speeches and salutations in Latin and Russian, syllabic, and accentual-syllabic verse, as well as anonymous

47 E.g., the 1732 Latin rhetoric, RNB f.522 d.63.

48 OR RNB, f. 577, d. 75, ll.165-168 ob.

49 R. S. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (Princeton, 1995).

50 N. Iu. Alekseeva, *Russkaia oda: Razvitie odicheskoi formy v XVII-XVIII vekakh* (St. Petersburg, 2005), 52-70.

51 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 529.

52 V. I. Kolosov, *Istoriia Tverskoi dukhovnoi seminarii* (Tver', 1889), 77-91; S. I. Nikolaev, *Ot Kokhanovskogo do Mitskevicha: Razyskaniia po istorii pol'sko-russkikh sviazei XVII - pervoi treti XIX v.* (St. Petersburg, 2004), 37.

53 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 529, l. 350b.-36, l. 39.

54 In the mid eighteenth century, texts were often copied without mentioning the author, but towards the century's end, names of authors and even sources for the copied texts (mainly magazines) start to appear.

55 OR RGB, f. 173.3, d. 32.

notes from contemporary poets: Trediakovskii's "Elegy on Peter the Great's Death," Lomonosov's fables, an eclogue, etc. The writer copied all of the poetical passages from Lomonosov's 1748 *Rhetoric*; they were probably needed as examples from which the writer drew for his own texts. The number of anonymous syllabic verses was much smaller than in older guides.

In the middle of eighteenth century, hand-written seminary collections as well as surviving guides for professors began to reflect the corresponding spread of contemporary poetry. In the Viatka Seminary, students copied writings by Lomonosov, Trediakovskii, Sumarokov, and Kheraskov.[56] A collection by Iosif Todorskii, a student of the Vologda Seminary during 1781-1787,[57] contains several exercises, speeches, and verses in Russian and Latin, among them a large number of Lomonosov's laudatory odes. In the last quarter of the century, original Russian writings were officially included in seminary syllabi. For instance, in rhetoric classes at the Novgorod Seminary in 1781, students read Lomonosov out loud "with good articulation."[58] In the early nineteenth century, the same odes by Lomonosov and verses by Sumarokov were used, but professors' reports also mention odes by Derzhavin, cantos from Kheraskov's *Rossiad* (*Rossiada*), poems by Karamzin, and even "The Poems of Ossian."[59] Prosaic texts in Russian remained quite specific in their subject matter (the preachings of Ilias Miniatis and John Chrysostom, sermons by Platon Levshin, etc.); even at that time, secular laudatory speeches were represented mostly by Lomonosov's works.[60]

By the late eighteenth century, the repertoire of contemporary authors broadens, and the gap between seminary and contemporary literature narrows. Lyrical poems begin to appear alongside panegyric odes, and magazines and literary collections become citation sources. For instance, a manuscript connected with Pereslavl Seminary entitled "Odes Collected from Various Very Best Russian Rhymers"[61] contains a few copies of odes by G. R. Derzhavin—his "Ode to God" ("Bog") (copied from the journal *Sobesednik liubitelei rossiiskogo slova*... [*Companion of Lovers of the Russian Word*] of 1784); "On the Birth of a Porphyrogene Child" ("Stikhi na rozhdenie v sever porfirorodnogo otroka"] (first published in the *Sankt-Peterburgskii vestnik* [*St. Petersburg Herald*] of 1779, n. 12); "Ode on the Taking of Ismail" ("Oda na vziatie Izmaila") of 1790-1791 (provided without source); plus the poem "To the Homeland" by A. Turgenev ("K Otechestvu") from *Vestnik Evropy* [*Herald*

56 See A. S. Silina, "Stikhotvornye opyty viatskikh seminaristov serediny XVIII veka," *XVIII vek*, 28 (2015), 45-65.

57 OR RGB, f. 218, d. 501.

58 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l.164 ob.

59 Ibid., l. 90; 94, 940b., 140 ob.

60 In the Novgorod Seminary - Ibid., l. 89 ob.; 93 ob., 94, 140 ob.; in the Riazan' Seminary, see D. Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi dukhovnoi seminarii* (Riazan', 1889), 116; in the Pskov Seminary, see A. Kniazev, *Ocherk istorii Pskovskoi seminarii ot nachala do preobrazovaniia ee po proektu 1814 goda* (Moscow, 1866), 35.

61 RGADA, f. 188, op. 1, d. 756.

of Europe], 1802, n. 4). But the main content was copied from the poetic almanac *Aonides*:

> From Volume 1, 1796:
> "On the Death of Count Orlov" ("Stikhi na konchinu grafa F. G. Orlova", "Sleeping Eros" ("Spiashchii Erot"), and "The Graces" ("Kharity") by Derzhavin;
> "Letter to A. A. P." ("Poslanie k A.A.P."), "Answer to My Friend Who Wanted Me to Write a Laudatory Ode to Catherine" ("Otvet moemu priiateliu kotoroi khotel chtoby ia napisal pokhvalnuiu odu Ekaterine"), "To Myself" ("K samomu sebe"), "Farewell" ("Proshchanie"), "The Lilly" ("Lileia"), "Hector and Andromache" ("Gektor i Andromakha") —all by Karamzin;
> "Ossian's Hymn to the Sun" ("Gimn solntsu. Slepogo startsa Ossiana") and "Ode on Melancholy" ("Oda na unynie") by V. V. Kapnist;
> "Ode to God" ("Pesn' Bogu") by V. V.Izmailov.
> From Volume 2, 1797 — "Poetry" ("Poeziia") by S. M. Magnitskii (never published elsewhere).

The oldest text in this manuscript is Lomonosov's "Ode, Excerpted from Job" ("Oda, vybrannaia iz Iova"); there is no syllabic verse at all. Writing by Tikhon Beliaev is presented as exemplary: "Poems on the Arrival of His Grace Ksenofont, Bishop of Vladimir and Suzdal', at the Pereslavl School" ("Stikhi na prikhod ego preosviashchenstva Ksenofonta Episkopa Vladimirskago i Suzhdal'skago v Pereslavskoe uchil[ishche]") of 1800; as well as an imitative poem by Petr Kankarov, "The Flower (Yesterday, rose, you were blooming)" ("Tsvetok [Vchera ty, roza, rastsvetala...]").

Thus, 'modern' clergymen's reading significantly changes by the early nineteenth century: while in rhetoric and poetics classes still used traditional panegyric poetry, contemporary sentimental lyrics took an important place for seminary students even though such poetry was of no use in seminary life. Students were obviously interested in it. Inventories from seminary libraries also demonstrate that contemporary Russian literature appeared among the "modern" clergy's reading interests from the 1770s onward.

Nevertheless, seminary students were not able to access the library freely. For instance, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century at the Riazan' Seminary, the library was open two or three days a week in the afternoon, and students could only work with the books under their professors' supervision.[62] In rhetoric classes at the Novgorod Seminary, a professor provided students with "decent books" in Latin and Russian for reading in their free time, and the students had to make notes and give reports "on the language's

62 Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi*, 133.

features, on its rhetorical adornments, and on [the text's] useful moral message as well, etc."[63] Thus, we cannot state that all the books mentioned in library inventories were a real part of the clergy's reading, but in many cases the content of the libraries correlates with other information we have at our disposal and thus becomes significant.

When a seminary was established, its library obtained the books that were most necessary for study: ecclesiastical writings (Psalters, Books of Hours, etc.), textbooks (Primers, *Institutiones linguae Latinae* by Emmanuel Alvar, etc.), Latin dictionaries, and classical Latin literature, all of which was used to teach rhetoric and poetics. Other important Latin writings on history, philosophy, and theology were gradually acquired, and libraries also received collections of books that had belonged to deceased church hierarchs and professors; other books were bought in the capitals or even abroad.

Seminary libraries were strongly influenced by the educated church hierarchs who compiled lists of books to be purchased and who often donated their own collections to the seminaries.[64] For instance, Dimitrii Sechenov often sent "books of spiritual content" to the Riazan' Seminary;[65] Luka Konashevich donated "a collection of Church Fathers and church scholars, Bibles of great perfection and the best interpretations of the Holy Writing"[66] to the Kazan' Seminary, and in 1798, Amvrosy Podobedov donated 130 books in Russian (88 on history, 21 on philosophy, and 11 on theology) to it.[67] Platon Levshin and Evgenii Bolkhovitinov donated editions of their own works to the seminaries under their authority.

Sometimes there were also donations from secular figures. For example, in January 1786 the famous freemason and editor Nikolai Novikov donated a considerable number of Moscow University printing office editions (mostly containing moralistic and spiritual content) to the Moscow Academy. Some of these books were given to students, some were taken to the library, and some were also sent to the seminaries in Kaluga and Zvenigorod.[68] In 1798 Court Counselor V. I. Polianskii donated 44 books "on different topics in the Russian and French languages" to the Kazan' Seminary.[69] As a result of such gifts, seminary library holdings were supplemented on an irregular basis.

63 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 89 ob, 138 ob.

64 Personal collections of the hierarchs were also usually donated to seminary libraries after their deaths, but their contents likely reflect the personal interests of the particular collector.

65 Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi,* 132.

66 A. Blagoveshchenskii, *Istoriia staroi Kazanskoi dukhovnoi akademii* (1797-1818) (Kazan', 1876), 131.

67 Ibid., 133.

68 OR RGB, f. 757, k. 41, d. 7, l. 60. This donation could somehow be connected with the anti-masonic actions of 1785-1786: in 1785 the books printed by N. Novikov were examined and partly confiscated, and Platon Levshin had to examine N. Novikov concerning his Christian faith; he found him a true Christian and found his books mostly acceptable (A. N. Pypin, *Russkoe masonstvo. XVIII i pervaia chetvert' XIX veka* [Petrograd, 1916], 185).

69 Blagoveshchenskii, *Istoriia staroi Kazanskoi,* 133.

In the first half of the century, Russian-language editions were present in libraries but sporadically and randomly;[70] they started to be actively collected in the 1770s, a shift that was obviously tied both to changes in the ethnic composition of the clergy (in Okenfuss' terms, "Ukrainian humanists" were being replaced by "Great Russians") and to the general policies of Catherine the Great, who encouraged Russian-language education.[71] It is safe to say that, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Russian-language editions had become an important part of the reading material of seminary students and the clerical hierarchy.

This process is well reflected in the registry of the Trinity Seminary,[72] which has been described above. The section dated 1761-1763 contains few Russian books, mostly 'practical literature': official publications (several copies of the *Ecclesiastic Regulations*, the *Vedomosti* from 1730-1740, descriptions of Anna Ioannovna and Elizabeth Petrovna's coronations, descriptions of various fireworks displays); and student editions (the German-Latin-Russian dictionary, *Weismann's Lexicon,* of 1731; Pamva Berynda's Slavonic-Russian lexicon of 1627; several copies of Slavonic grammars without imprints; one copy of the "Russian printed grammar"—Lomonosov's *Russian Grammar* of 1755; Krasheninnikov's *Description of the Land of Kamchatka* of 1755; geographical atlases; and textbooks on geography, arithmetic, drawing and so on). There are also 'non-practical' examples, such as translated scientific encyclopedias, socio-political and historical works: *Florin's Economy* (*Florinova Ekonomiia*] [1738 or 1760], Samuel Pufendorf's *On The Duty of Man and Citizen* (*Samuila de Pifendorfa o dolzhnosti cheloveka i grazhdanina* [1726]), *The Life and Deeds of Marcus Aurelius* (*Zhitie i dela Marka Avreliia* [1740 or 1760]), Trediakovskii's translation of the *True Politics of Noble and Gentle Persons* (*Istinnaia politika znatnykh i blagorodnykh osob* [1737 or 1745]), ten copies of H. Curas' *Introduction to Universal History* (*Vvedeniie v general'nuiu istoriiu* [1747 or 1750]), Aesop's fables (1747), etc.

After 1763, the library starts receiving books by contemporary Russian authors, for example:

> N. 132 Luka Sichkarev's Ode—most probably, the "Ode on the Birthday of Her Imperial Majesty, Empress Ekaterina Alekseevna..." ("Oda e.i.v... imp. Ekaterine Alekseevne... na den' vysochaishago eia rozhdeniia...," St. Petersburg, 1765).[73]

70 P. I. Khoteev, *Kniga v Rossii v seredine XVIII veka. Biblioteki obshchestvennogo pol'zovaniia* (St. Petersburg, 1993), 29-45.

71 M. J. Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early-Modern Russia. Pagan Authors, Ukrainians, and the Resiliency of Muscovy* (Leiden, New York, Köln, 1995), 213-223.

72 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, and d. 586.1.

73 Two earlier odes are also possible: "Ode to Her Imperial Majesty... Empress Ekaterina Alekseevna... on her much anticipated arrival at the Cadet Corps..." ("Oda e.i.v.... imp. Ekaterine Alekseevne... na vsevozhdelennoe prishestvie v Sukhoputnoi shliakhetnoi kadetskoi korpus..."

N. 133 "An Extraordinary Bliss" ("Suguboe blazhenstvo"), a poem by Ippolit Bogdanovich, and Luka Sichkarev's "Funeral Song for the Russian Scholar Lomonosov" ("Nadgrobnaia pesn'... uchenomu rossiiskomu muzhu Mikhaile Vasil'evichu Lomonosovu"), both St. Petersburg, 1765.
N. 137 An ode of Vassilii Petrov, which could be either the "Ode on the Magnificent Carousel" ("Oda na velikolepnyi karrusel'...," Moscow, 1766), or the "Ode... to Her Majesty Ekaterina Alekseevna... on Electing Deputies to Compose a Project for a New Law Code" ("Oda... gosudaryne imp. Ekaterine Alekseevne... o izbranii deputatov k sochineniiu proekta novogo ulozheniia," Moscow, 1767).
N. 138 An ode by Luka Tatishchev: "Ode... on the Death of Count Mikhail Illarionovich Vorontsov" ("Oda na... konchinu grafa Mikhaila Larionovicha Vorontsova...," Moscow, 1767).
N. 140 Hieromonk Theophylact's "Sermon on the Blissful Death of... Timothey, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kaluga...," published together with an ode by Vassilii Ruban, ("Propoved' na blazhenuiu konchinu preosviashchennago Timofeia propovednika ieromonakha Feofilakta vmeste s odoi Vasil'ia Rubana," Moscow, 1767).

Judging by the data in the catalogue, these books were acquired at the same time. Their themes are also connected, so we may assume that they were bought with similar purposes in mind.

Starting in the 1770s, buying current works by Russian authors becomes the rule rather than the exception. We see groups of theatrical works coming into the library, like N. 66: *Sumarokov's tragedies Khorev, Sinav and Truvor, Semira, Vysheslav, Iaropolk and Demiza, The False Demetrius*, all in one volume;[74] N. 81: *Comedies... The Philoprogenitive Father, The Deceived Fiancé, The Natural Son, all in one volume* (*Komedii... Chadoliubivyi otets, Obmanutyi zhenikh, Pobochnyi syn vse v odnom tome*).[75] Interest in theater can also be

[St. Petersburg, 1764]); or the "Ode... on her joyful arrival in St. Petersburg from Moscow" ("Oda... na vseradostneishee prishestvie iz Moskvy v Sankt-Peterburg..." [St. Petersburg, 1763]).

74 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l.115 ob. These separate editions were probably bound together by the library. It couldn't be Sumarokov's Volumes of *Rossiiskii teatr,* because it contain tragedies *Sinav and Truvor*, *Artistona*, *Semira*, *Iaropolk*, and *Dimiza* (*Rossiiskii featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh Rossiiskikh teatral'nykh sochinenii*. Chast' II. St. Petersburg, 1786) or *Vysheslav, The False Demetrius, Mstislav, Deidamiia* (*Rossiiskii teatr...* Chast' III. St. Petersburg, 1786), so this hardly can be "one volume" from our catalogue.

75 Ibid., l.116. Here we definitely have different editions bound into one volume: it contains D. Diderot's *Le Fils naturel* (translations of S. I. Glebov [St. Petersburg 1766] or Anonimous [1767] or less likely I. Iakovlev's [Moscow 1788]), *Le Père de famille* (translation of S. I. Glebov [St. Petersburg 1765 or less likely Moscow 1788]), L. Holberg's *Pernille, als Tochter vom Hause*, translated by A. Shurlin (Moscow, 1768).

seen in the genre of "conversations"—short interlude-like scenes—that spread throughout the seminaries.[76]

Many church hierarchs encouraged this interest in contemporary fiction. In the spring of 1779, Kheraskov's *Rossiad* was published. On 9 September 1779, Platon Levshin, the rector and prefect of the Moscow Academy, proposed that the Academy buy a number of books for students; the list included the *Rossiad*.[77] Platon's signed statement says, "Buy, and also make a list to buy other books of use to the seminary that were published in the Russian language."[78] In the same year, the *Rossiad* also appears in the library catalogue of the Trinity Seminary.[79] It very quickly became one of the exemplary texts used in classes on poetics and rhetoric. Evidently, the personal involvement of educated hierarchs in the literary process, as well as their interest in works of importance for secular society, served to extend the students' spectrum of reading.

The 1760s and 70s mark the beginning of Russian-language periodicals being added to the Trinity Seminary; these included both newspapers (*Moskovskie vedomosti* and *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*) and literary or literary-historical magazines, which contained translations as well as original works of Russian literature. This process was also guided by the clerical elite. For example, all volumes of *Utrennii svet* (*Morning Light*), a masonic journal that began publication in 1777, were bought by the seminary library in 1779 on the personal recommendation of Archimandrite Damaskin and after discussion with Metropolitan Platon.[80] *Utrennii svet* was also popular in other clerical circles; in 1779, Petr Terlikov, a teacher in the Tver' Seminary, published a whole poem dedicated to this journal.[81] Its masonic character wasn't a problem for Orthodox clergy of the time, and was hardly even considered an issue before the end of the 1780s.

Scientific and (most of all) historical journals were rather popular. The catalogue contains notes on incoming deliveries of the newly issued *Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia* (*Monthly Works*) in 2 volumes in 1764.[82] Records also indicate spontaneous purchases of new volumes of *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika* (*The Ancient Russian Library*);[83] the edition of Nestor's Chronicle of 1767;[84] and, in 1774, 2 volumes of *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika* of 1773. Seminaries also bought actual literary magazines, sometimes with a significant time gap and sometimes without one; for example, the *Collection of the Best Works, or Satirical Library*, in 4 parts [*Sobranie luchshikh sochinenii,*

76 E. P. Privalova, "O zabytom sbornike Tverskoi seminarii," *XVIII vek*, 5 (1962), 407-421.
77 OR RGB, f. 757, k. 41, d. 7, l. 11-12.
78 Ibid., l. 11.
79 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 125 ob.
80 OR RGB, f. 757, k. 41, d. 7, l. 17-17 ob.; OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 122, l. 125 ob.
81 Privalova, "O zabytom sbornike," 409.
82 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 98 ob.
83 Ibid. l. 99 ob.
84 Ibid., l. 99 ob.

ili satiricheskaia biblioteka],[85] *Zhivopisets* (*The Painter*) (two parts in one volume),[86] and *Truten'* (*The Drone*) of 1769 were all bought in 1774.[87] We may assume that these were selected based on their subject matter and with consideration for their popularity in secular society. Sometimes journals could be quite out-of-date when they reached the library, but they could be read several years after they were issued.

Journals from the second half of the eighteenth century continued to be read by the clergy even at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and seminary administrations took close note of them and even bought whole collections of old journals which they thought would be useful for students. For example, in 1807, the Novgorod Seminary bought 16 volumes of *Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia* for 1755-1757 and 1760-1765. The same Novgorod Seminary purchased contemporary magazines in 1803-1806 at the same active rate:[88] in 1805 they bought the 24 volumes of *Vestnik Evropy* for 1804; in 1806—24 books of the same journal for 1805; 20 volumes of *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika*; 12 books of *Drug prosveshcheniia* (*Enlightenment's Friend*) for 1805; and K. P. Shalikov's *Moskovskii zritel'* (*Moscow Spectator*). Journals soon began to be acquired on a subscription basis: in April 1806, the first part of *Minerva* and two volumes of *Drug prosveshcheniia* arrived.[89]

Journals are also well-represented in the Kostroma Seminary library's registry from the 1820-1830s:[90] 20 volumes of *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika*; and *Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia*: volumes 1755-1756, 1759-1761, 1763-1764, and 1768, each in two parts). But here we can also find some provincial literary publications, like *Uedinennyi poshekhonets* (*The Solitary Bumpkin*) of 1786; *Beseduiushchii grazhdanin* (*The Talking Citizen*) 1789 from Iaroslavl'; and *Irtysh, prevrashchaiushchiisia v Ippokrenu* (*Irtysh Transforming Itself into Hippocrene*) for 1789 and 1790 from Tobol'sk. This indicates that journals were extremely popular in seminaries all over the country. Clergy also received subscriptions to theological, philosophical, and historical books.[91]

Thus, the clergy actively bought both journals and books; but did they really read them? One indication of the genuine popularity of this literature can be found in lists of books that were not returned to seminary libraries.[92] In most cases, students took away 'practical literature,' e.g. dictionaries

85 Ibid., l. 118 ob.

86 Ibid., l. 119.

87 Ibid., l. 120.

88 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 189-478.

89 As A. Iu. Samarin notes, "more than a third of the clergy's subscriptions were to journals" (A. Iu. Samarin, *Tipografshchiki i knigochety. Ocherki po istorii knigi v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka* [Moscow, 2015], 310).

90 OR RGB, f. 138, d. 301.

91 Samarin, *Tipografshchiki i knigochety,* 310. The author assumes that other subjects were not popular among the clergy, but we can see quite the opposite.

92 However, not every seminary had strict control over its book stock; see S. Smirnov, *Istoriia Moskovskoi Slaviano-greko-latinskoi akademii* (Moscow, 1855), 280-281.

and grammars of different languages as well as theological and philosophical writings in Latin. However, as soon as libraries acquired more books in Russian, students' true literary tastes became evident. For instance, by 1770, some "Greek, and Latin and other books" which cost 20.5 rubles had disappeared from the Moscow Academy's library; among "the others" were Sumarokov's *Parables* (*Pritchi*), and volume 1 of V. K. Trediakovskii's *Compositions and Translations...* (*Sochineniia i perevody...* [1752]), as well as his *New and Brief Way of Composing Russian Verse...* (*Novyi i kratkii sposob k slozheniiu rossiiskikh stikhov...* [1735]).[93]

The list of people who did not bring books back shows that, in 1784, a theology student named Ivan Florenov did not bring back the July 1761 issue of *Poleznoe uveselenie* (*Useful Entertainment*), and Mikhail Ivanov—Orfelin's *The Life and Glorious Deeds of Emperor Peter the Great...* (*Zhitie i slavnye dela gosudaria imperatora Petra Velikogo...* [Venice, 1772]).[94] Pavel Nechaev, a graduate in rhetoric, did not bring back two volumes of Quintus Curtius's *History of Alexander the Great* (*Istoriia o Aleksandre Velikom tsare Makedonskom...*) in S. Krasheninnikov's translation (St. Petersburg, 1767-1768) and a book by P. Semenov, which had a verbose title reflecting its diverse content: *A Sensible and Ingenious Comrade, or A Collection of Good Speeches, Wise Intentions, Quick Responses, Courteous Jeers and Pleasant Adventures of Noble People in Old and Present Ages* (*Tovarishch razumnoi i zamyslovatoi, ili Sobranie khoroshikh slov, razumnykh zamyslov, skorykh otvetov, uchtivykh nasmeshek i priiatnykh prikliuchenii znatnykh muzhei drevniago i nyneshniago vekov* [St. Petersburg, 1764]).[95] Nikolai Murav'ev, a student of rhetoric, kept for himself not only the New Testament in Greek, but also the entertaining collection *Companion and Collocutor of Merry People, or A Collection of Pleasant and Decent Jokes, Keen and Ingenious Speeches and Entertaining Stories, Collected from the Best Authors* (*Sputnik i sobesednik veselykh liudei, ili Sobranie priiatnykh i blagopristoinykh shutik, ostrykh i zamyslovatykh rechei i zabavnykh povestei, vypisano iz luchshikh sochinitelei* [translation of Ch. Dobrosedov]), a collection very similar to one that Semenov took.

By 1788, twelve books in Latin had disappeared from library of the Krutitskii Seminary, as well as 63 in Russian, among which were Kheraskov's *Rossiad*; Sumarokov's *Sinav i Truvor* (St. Petersburg, 1768) and his *Raznye stikhotvoreniia* (*Various Poems* [St. Petersburg, 1769]); both volumes of A. T. Bolotov's *Detskaia filosofiia* (*Children's Philosophy* [1776-1779]); and three volumes of F. Emin's *Nepostoiannaia Fortuna* (*Inconstant Fortune* [1763]).[96]

93 OR RGB, f. 277, d. 4, l. 426-426 ob.

94 OR RGB, f. 277, d. 7, l. 71-71 ob.

95 The source of this collection was A. Boyer's reading book for Frenchmen studying Latin, *Le compagnon sage et ingénieux anglois et françois...* (London, 1700) with several editions. The translation was very popular among secular society and was even read to Catherine's son Paul (Rak, *Stat'i o literature XVIII veka*, 258-267).

96 RGB, f. 277, d. 7, l. 82-83 ob.

Translations of historical and moralistic writings were very popular: *Paradise Flowers Placed in Seven Flower Beds* (*Raiskie tsvety, pomeshchennye v sedmi tsvetnikakh* [Moscow, 1784]); A. de Claustre's *History of Thomas Kouli-Kan, King of Persia* (*Istoriia o persidskom shakhe Takhmas Kuly-khane* [St. Petersburg, 1762]); S. Gessner's poem *The Death of Abel* (*Aveleva smert'* [Moscow, 1780]); both volumes of C. F. Gellert's *Lectures on Morals* (*Nravoucheniia*) in M. Protopopov's translation (Moscow, 1775-1777); Ia. B. Kniazhnin's prose translation of G. Marino's poem "Massacre of the Innocents" ("Izbienie mladentsev" [Moscow, 1779]); and others. Academic and scientific books such as Lomonosov's translation of G. Heinsius' *Description of the Comet Which Appeared at the Beginning of 1744* (*Opisanie komety iavivshiiasia v nachale 1744 goda* [St. Petersburg, 1744]) went unreturned less frequently. Old and new journals were also popular among students and professors; librarians themselves did not give back: the first volume of *Moskovskoe ezhemesiachnoe izdanie* (*Moscow Monthly*) of 1781 (which before 1779 was known as the masonic *Utrennii svet*); *Svobodnye chasy* (*Free Hours*) for January 1763; several volumes of *Sochineniia i perevody* (*Works and Translations*) for 1758 and 1761; the first volume of *Poleznoe uveselenie* for 1760; and *Vecherniaia zaria* (*Evening Light*), volume 4 (no year indicated); and others.

According to a 1792 inventory compiled by a librarian named Melchizedek, 1,993 books were missing from the Moscow Academy, while there were only written obligations from 471 borrowers pledging to bring them back.[97] A resolution by Metropolitan Platon surmises as to the appeal of specific literature among different clergy groups. According to Platon, missing church books (Prologs, Menaions, etc.) should probably be sought "in churches or from monks." Theology in Latin (*Basilii opera omnia X tomi, Dionysii Areopageiae, Cyrilli Hierosolymitani opera, Pandectae, Poli synopsis*) "does not quite seem possible to have been taken out [by students]," and therefore Platon suggests looking for them among professors. According to surviving obligations, students borrowed "small books, as is seemly for students"[98]—meaning fiction, moralistic works, and historical and entertaining texts.

In the last third of the century there were regular public award ceremonies where the best students received books as a sign of distinction. At first, the choice of books was primarily motivated by efforts to get rid of library books that were in poor condition. For instance, a 1777 Moscow Academy inventory names multiple "award" or "prize" books that were in Latin and from the late and middle seventeenth century; many were from sets whose first volumes were missing. Church Slavonic publications already held in several copies were to be sold.[99] This suggests that books in Church Slavonic were

97 Smirnov, *Istoriia Moskovskoi Slaviano-greko-latinskoi akademii*, 281-283.
98 Ibid., 283.
99 OR RGB, f. 277, d. 7, l. 3-7 ob.

considered more valuable by the clergy and be of greater interest to buyers than old Latin theological works.

By the early nineteenth century, the authorities started using books to promote students' good reading habits. For instance, in 1805-1806 at the Novgorod Seminary, students were given not only practical guides to study (F. I. Iankovich de Mirievo's *Rules for Pupils* [1782] and some Latin textbooks), but also books in theology and philosophy that had been issued relatively recently in Russian. These included: Evgenii Bolkhovitinov's *Essay on the Necessity of the Greek Language for Theology and on its Special Benefit for the Russian Language...* (*Rassuzhdenie o nadobnosti grecheskogo iazyka dlia bogoslovii, i ob osobennoi pol'ze ego dlia rossiiskago iazyka...*) and *Historical Essay on Ancient Christian Liturgical Singing...* (*Istoricheskoe rassuzhdenie voobshche o drevnem khristianskom bogosluzhebnom penii...* [Voronezh, 1799-1800]), Ilias Miniatis's *The Stone of Temptation, or An Historical Essay on the Beginning and Cause of the East–West Church Schism* (*Kamen' soblazna, ili Istoricheskoe iz''iasnenie o nachale i prichine razdeleniia Vostochnoi i Zapadnoi tserkvi* [St. Petersburg, 1783]), G. B. Bilfinger's *Specimen of the Philosophy of the Ancient Chinese...* (*Opyt drevnei kitaitsov filosofii o ikh nravouchenii i pravlenii* [St. Petersburg, 1794]), Theophylact's *A Gift to Constantine Porphyrogenitus* (*Dar Konstantinu Porfirorodnomu* [St. Petersburg, 1788]), and *St. Aurelius Ambrosius's Speech to the Emperor Theodosius* (*Slovo sviatago Amvrosiia Mediolanskago k imperatoru Feodosiiu* [St. Petersburg, 1790]).[100]

Thus, by the early nineteenth century, contemporary literature in Russian had gained a significant place in the 'modern' clergy's reading habits. In comparison with the mid 1700s, publishing flourished during the last third of the eighteenth century, and many works of philosophy and theology were printed both in translation and in the original, greatly expanding the amount (and diversifying the content) of contemporary literature.[101] Even in rural seminaries, students had access to current journals and texts. All these factors allowed the authorities to shape students' reading not just by means of traditional theology, but also by means of contemporary materials in Russian. However, hand-written collections and lists of missing books indicate that much of the literature that was of interest to the clergy remained outside of seminary inventories and guides; such texts primarily consisted of contemporary sentimental poetry and a range of recreational literature, including foreign fiction in Russian translation.

100 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 492, l. 504-505.

101 I. E. Barenbaum, *Istoriia knigi* (Moscow, 1984), 52-66; D. Smith, *Rabota nad dikim kamnem: Masonskii orden i russkoe obshchestvo v XVIII veke* (Moscow, 2006), 62-64; G. Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of the Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, 1985), 103-109.

5. literature in foreign languages

The 'modern' clergy was strongly involved with the Europeanization of Russian culture. During the middle eighteenth century, the teaching of French and German expanded in seminaries, and during the second half of the century many seminary graduates became professional translators.[102] During the eighteenth century, church authorities were likewise in charge of censoring translated writings.[103] On that front the traditional clergy faced certain obstacles: they only knew some Polish religious songs, mostly hand-written, sometimes in Cyrillic transliteration.[104]

ymong the 'modern' clergy, French, Polish, and German books had a large presence. Classical literature in Latin (sometimes in Greek) had its own specific place. These writings were used as exemplary texts in language study, and thus most students in seminaries were familiar with them. Unlike in secular institutions, where the students learned classical literature in French translations and paraphrases,[105] seminary students learned these writings in the original Latin and, less often, in ancient Greek.

As soon as seminary teaching became oriented towards the 'Latin model,' the necessity of buying classical authors became apparent. For instance, in 1741 Riazan' Seminary purchased— along with basic guides to Latin— Ovid, Virgil, and then the "essential" Horace, Cicero, Livy, Quintus Curtius, Sallust, Justin, Cornelius Nepos, and Terence.[106] Among exemplary Latin authors, one can also find Tacitus, Pliny the Elder, Julius Caesar, Quintilian, Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, and Cato the Elder, that is, almost all of the classics of Latin literature which had shaped the perception of classical culture in Europe.[107] In Russian seminaries, Cicero held pride of place; the most common examples in rhetoric classes were taken from his speeches and letters in Latin.

From the New Latin, seminarians commonly read the colloquies of Erasmus, M.-A. Muret, and M. Corderius. Students were asked to read these texts out loud with correct pronunciation and to learn exemplary fragments

102 E. I. Kislova, "Nemetskii iazyk v russkikh seminariiakh XVIII veka: iz istorii kul'turnykh kontaktov," *Vestnik Pravoslavnogo Sviato-Tikhonovskogo Gumanitarnogo universiteta. Seriia Filologiia,* 1 (41) (2015), 53-70; E. I. Kislova, "Frantsuzskii iazyk v russkikh seminariiakh XVIII veka: iz istorii kulturnykh kontaktov," *Vestnik Pravoslavnogo Sviato-Tikhonovskogo Gumanitarnogo universiteta. Seriia Filologiia,* 4 (44) (2015), 16-34.

103 Smirnov, *Istoriia Moskovskoi Slaviano-greko-latinskoi akademii,* 129-131; Samarin, *Tipografshchiki,* 9-51.

104 Nikolaev, *Ot Kokhanovskogo,* 37.

105 V. Rjéoutski, "Latin in the education of nobility in Russia," in V. Rjéoutski, W. Frijhoff (eds.), *Language Choice in Enlightenment Europe. Education, Sociability, and Governance* (Amsterdam, 2018), 180-183.

106 Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi,* 33-34.

107 Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii,* 318.

from them by heart.[108] They also practiced translation (poetry was often translated into prose) and wrote 'imitations.'

At some point, classical Latin literature became the core of seminary reading, which differentiated the "modern" clergy not only from the traditional clergy, but also from people who had a secular education. Knowledge of Latin authors became as important as knowing Russian panegyric odes: both were used as a main source of rhetorical figures and as models for imitation.

Although some seminaries taught ancient Greek, this practice became obligatory only after 1778. Greek authors were present in the clergy's reading lists mostly in the form of Latin translations (for instance, the younger students' reading of Aesop's fables).[109] Besides the New Testament (mainly the Gospel of Luke), the Acts of the Apostles, and books of the Church Fathers, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Homer, and Lucian were used in Greek classes.[110] However, even after 1778, few clerics outside of seminaries had a proper knowledge of Greek, and the Greek classics were mostly read in Russian and Latin.

5.1. Polish Literature

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Polish language was used by educated people in Ukraine, so it was natural to find Polish writings in Ukrainian educational institutions. The personal libraries of church hierarchs from Ukraine contained Polish books, and hand-written collections containing Polish texts and writings by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Polish authors in Latin (such as Jan Kochanowski and Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski) were regularly used in classes on poetics and rhetoric in Ukrainian seminaries.[111]

Polish hand-written and printed texts came into Russia along with their owners, and when those owners died, their texts absorbed into seminary libraries. We can surmise their content by examining the holdings of Feofan Prokopovich: these books concern mostly economy, history and teology: Jakub Kazimierz Haur's *The Storeroom or the Treasury of Remarkable Secrets for the Gentlemen's Household* (*Skład abo skarbiec znakomitych sekretów oekonomiej ziemiańskiej,* Kraków 1689); Łukasz Górnicki's *Happenings in the Kingdom of Poland* (*Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej [...] od roku 1538 aż do roku 1572,* W Krakowie, 1637); one sermon on the occasion of king Jan Hodkevic's death, etc. Theophylacte Lopatinskii, Archbishop of Tver', possessed a whole

108 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 164 ob.

109 Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii,* 322.

110 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 134; I. Speranskii, *Ocherk istorii Smolenskoi Dukhovnoi Seminarii i podvedomykh ei uchilishch... (1728-1868)* (Smolensk, 1892), 110.

111 Nikolaev, *Ot Kokhanovskogo,* 15-16, 75-85.

collection of Polish vernacular satire as well as *Lament of the Dying Mother, Poland (Lament utrapioej Matki Korony Polskiej...* around 1655) by Szymon Starowolski and Jan Kochanowski's *David's Psalms (Psałterz Dawidów)*.[112] Until the 1770s, individual Polish volumes were present in the personal collections of churchmen who were educated in Ukraine. For instance, in a 1774 list of books transferred to the Moscow Academy after the death of Konstantin Borkovskii, archimandrite of the Nizhegorodsko-Pecherskii Monastery, a "Catechesis polona" (Polish catechism) is mentioned.[113]

However, such books and collections mostly went unread by the Russian clergy: Polish was not popular in seminaries, and thus books in Polish were of little interest.[114] For instance, in the 1761-1762 inventory of the Trinity Seminary, there are about ten Polish books mentioned, but the author of the inventory and his successors did not know Polish and missed some titles that did not have Russian or Latin translations and made mistakes in transcription. From 1762 until the 1830s, the library was not supplied with Polish books. In the catalogue of the Moscow Theological Academy's library (1820-1830), books in Polish are found only in one inventory, where they are designated as part of "The library of little-known new languages" ("Biblioteka maloizvestnykh novykh iazykov").[115] Such books make up 24 of the 77 listed, and their titles are given in Latin rather than Polish. It is rather unlikely that the clergy of the Moscow Academy read them: seven of them were printed in the seventeenth century, eleven in the eighteenth (before 1760), and some of them are listed as "in poor condition."

Seminaries from the Russian-Ukrainian 'frontier zone' may constitute an exception. During the eighteenth century, the cultural and linguistic situation there was very close to that in Ukraine more broadly. In the Smolensk Seminary, for example, Polish was actively taught during the entire eighteenth century; even in the second half of the century, it maintained a popularity comparable to that of French and German. Thus, many Polish books could be found in the library—158 out of 2,157.[116] This suggests that Polish books remained a part of the clergy's reading, but this was more of a regional phenomenon.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, books in other languages (English, Italian, Spanish) were sometimes present in libraries, although these languages were not taught in seminaries and were not widely known by the clergy; such literature usually came into the clergy's purview through French and German translations. For instance, a German trans-

112 S. I. Nikolaev, "Pol'skaia poeziia v russkikh bibliotekakh XVII - pervoi poloviny XVIII v. i ee chitateli," *XVIII vek*, 14 (1983), 167.

113 OR RGB, f. 277, d. 6, l. 18.

114 E. I. Kislova, "Pol'skii iazyk v rossiiskikh seminariiakh XVIII veka: iz istorii kul'turno-iazykovykh kontaktov," *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta*. Seriia 9. Filologiia, 3 (2015), 155-170.

115 RGB f. 173.1., d. 622, l. 137-178.

116 Speranskii, *Ocherk istorii Smolenskoi*, 113.

lation of Milton's "Paradise Lost" was found in the Moscow Academy's library.[117] Ieronim Poniatskii, a professor at the Kolomna Seminary, translated into Russian a German translation of Edward Harwood's English *Cheerful Thoughts on [...] a Religious Life* (1764) (*Garvooda radostnye mysli o blazhenstve blagochestivoi zhizni...* [Moscow, 1783]). Contemporary European literature became known mostly in French and German—and later Russian—translation.

5.2. French and German Books

French and German were widespread in seminaries from the middle of the eighteenth century and took on an even stronger position after the 1786 "Statute on Popular Schools in the Russian Empire." The teaching methods for these languages were not atypical—learning texts by heart, translating into and from Russian, etc. The advanced level included grammatical and rhetorical analysis of fiction and the composition of new texts. The most important teaching method both in secular and church institutions was translation of fictional works[118]—both collectively in class "with grammar criticism" and individually (although in the second case the books were still chosen by the teachers).[119] Obviously, the choice in text was often motivated by a book's presence in the library, but we can still ascertain some broader patterns.

Students began studying translation as soon as they began studying language, and they used texts that were widespread both in secular and clerical education and were considered fundamental both in Russia and in Europe. These included Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télemaque* (1699) and *Briefe, nebst einer praktischen Abhandlung von dem guten Geschmacke in Briefen* (1751) by Ch. F. Gellert. Books by Gellert are mentioned in a 1787 report from the Trinity Seminary, in a students' plan of 1804 from the Alexander Nevskii Seminary in St. Petersburg, and in a 1802 report from the Smolensk Seminary.[120]

German books were used for higher-level reading classes—writings by Lutheran theologians, preachers, spiritual philosophers and other writers, etc. At the same time, secular texts were much more popular in French

117 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 610, l. 93.

118 Levin, *Istoriia russkoi prervodnoi,* vol. 1, 148–150.

119 Seminary teachers and students authored many published translations, and even though Latin was the main language, there were also a considerable number of French and German books published. For lists of the translations made in seminaries, see: S. Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii,* 374–376; S. Smirnov, *Istoriia Moskovskoi Slaviano-greko-latinskoi akademii,* 335–337; I. Chistovich, *Istoriia Sankt-Peterburgskoi dukhovnoi akademii* (St. Petersburg, 1857), 91-93; E. Shmurlo, *Mitropolit Evgenii kak uchenyi: Rannie gody zhizni. 1767-1804* (St. Petersburg, 1888), 59-85, 125-137, etc.

120 Chistovich, *Istoriia Sankt-Peterburgskoi,* 114; Speranskii, *Ocherk istorii Smolenskoi,* 110.

classes. For instance, in 1803–1806 beginning French students at the Novgorod Seminary were given sections for translation from D.E. Choffin's *Amusements philologiques ou Mélange agreáble de diverses pièces* (first edition 1749) and the anonymous *La véritable politique des personnes de qualité* (first edition 1692).[121] At the most advanced levels, students read sermons and other writings by famous French theologians and preachers.

The most popular French sermons among the clergy were those by Jacques Saurin (1677–1730); his texts were translated in 1787 at the Trinity Seminary. His writings were also used for studying German: for example, Antonii Znamenskii possessed a handwritten book with seven sermons by Saurin, "some [translated] from a German translation, some from the French original" made by students of the Alexander Nevskii Seminary in 1795.[122] Saurin's sermons from the mid eighteenth century could also be found in Ieronim Poniatskii's personal library, which was purchased by the Trinity Seminary in 1803. These were: *Nouveaux sermons sur l'histoire de la passion de Notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ* (1745) and *Sermons sur divers textes de l'ecriture sainte* (1748–1755).

In the Moscow Academy library catalogue from the early nineteenth century,[123] books by E. Flechier, F. J. Durand, L. Bourdaloue, and J. B. Massillon are also mentioned. Their writings were also used in classes. For instance, in 1781 at the Moscow Seminary, books by J.-B. Bossuet were read in French. Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History* (*Iakova Beninga Bossiueta: Razgovor o vseobshchei istorii* [St. Petersburg, 1761-1762]) could be found in Russian translation in the personal library of Archimandrite Konstantin Borkovskii.[124] In 1803–1806, selected sermons by Massillon, Flechier, Saurin, and Bourdaloue were used at the Novgorod Seminary for individual translation assignments. So too were "Fenelon's spiritual writings" (possibly something from the *Démonstration de l'existence de Dieu, tirée de la connaissance de la Nature et proportionnée à la faible intelligence des plus simples*) and A. L. Thomas's panegyrics. Students learned the best passages by heart.

Almost the same range of texts can be found at the Iaroslavl' Seminary. For instance, in 1810–1811, students P. Tunoshenskii, K. Miloslavov, and Ia. Bazhenov presented Archbishop Antonii Znamenskii with a collection of their own translations from different languages, among them "Dialogues sur l'éloquence, avec une Lettre à l'Académie française" and "Oraison funè-

121 Attributed to N. Rémond des Cours; the Russian translation was published by Vasilii Trediakovskii in 1745 under the title of *Istinnaia politika znatnykh i blagorodnykh osob*. The book was also very popular in seminaries; see above.

122 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 90.

123 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 613, 617, 622.

124 OR RGB, f. 277, d. 6, l. 17.

bre d'Henriette de France," as well as Fénelon's "Discours prononcé au sacre de l'Électeur de Cologne dans la collégiale de St.-Pierre à Lille."[125]

French Catholic theology was esteemed as a model of language, style, and rhetorical art in much the same way that other French authors were read in secular society (albeit as rhetoricians rather than as theologians). For this reason they were relatively rarely translated into Russian during the eighteenth century,[126] unlike German spiritual writers, whose moralistic and philosophical writings were actively translated and published both by clerics and by members of Masonic lodges.

J. A. Hoffmann (1676-1731) and G. J. Zollikofer (1730-1788) were the most popular German authors in seminaries. In the Trinity Seminary regulations, Hoffmann is openly recommended for study: "translate some good author like Hoffman, if you can buy him in Moscow, or Arndt."[127] This probably refers to Hoffman's *Zwey Bücher von der Zufriedenheit* (1725 and later), which was used for studying German in the Pskov Seminary in 1782.[128] The Trinity Seminary library catalogue lists nine copies of this book, which suggests its frequent use as educational material.[129] From the late 1780s, sermons by Zollikofer gained significant popularity. For instance, at the Smolensk Seminary in 1802, "Zollikofer's speeches and the like with grammar analysis"[130] were studied, and his books can also be found in a 1802 Moscow Academy inventory:[131] *Zollikofers Predigten*, vols. 1-7 (Leipzig 1788-1789; later struck out as removed); *Predigten über die Würder des Menschen und den Werth der vorehmsten Dinge, die zur menschlichen Glückseligkeit gehören*, vol. 1 und 2 (1783); *Warnung vor einigen herrschenden Fehlern unsers Zeitalters, wie auch vor dem Mißbrauche der reinern Religionserkenntniß, in Predigten* (1788), and three separate volumes of his sermons from 1772-1774.

Zollikofer's books were also used for collective translation. For instance, a translation of the first volume of *Andachtsubungen und Gebete zum Privatgebrauche fur nachdenkende und gutgesinnte Christen* (Leipzig, 1789) was made by students of the Alexander Nevskii Seminary and edited by the head of the Alexander Nevskii Lavra, Antonii Znamenskii (1765-1824); it was published in 1799 in St. Petersburg under the title *Blagogoveinoe zaniatie mysliashchikh khristian*.

Both Hoffman and Zollikofer were likewise popular in secular circles. The first translation of Hoffmann's *Zwey Bücher*, made by S. S. Volochkov in 1742, went through three editions (1762-1763, 1770, and 1780). This

125 V. V. Luk'ianov, *Opisanie kollektsii rukopisei Gosudarstvennogo arkhiva iaroslavskoi oblasti XIV-XX vv.* (Iaroslavl', 1975), n. 121 (503), n. 124 (502).

126 See E. Barenbaum, *Frantsuzskaia perevodnaia kniga v Rossii v XVIII veke* (Moscow, 2006); these authors and their school's translations are not even mentioned.

127 OR RGB, f. 757, k. 21, d. 9, l. 116 ob.

128 Kniazev, *Ocherk istorii Pskovskoi*, 41.

129 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 101 ob., 107.

130 Speranskii, *Ocherk istorii Smolenskoi*, 110.

131 OR RGB, f. 173.I, d. 610, l. 35.

book, inter alia, belonged to the archimandrite of Nizhegorodsko-Pecherskii Monastery Konstantin Borkovskii.[132] The second edition was prepared by V. Bogorodskii, a student both at the Slavonic Greek Latin Academy and at Moscow University, and was published as *Ioanna Adolfa Gofmana. O spokoistvii i udovol'stvii, Dve knigi, raspolozhennyia po pravilam razuma i very* (Moscow, 1796).

Some sermons by Zollikofer were translated and published by N. E. Popov, professor at Moscow University and at the Pedagogical Seminary, and member of a Masonic lodge;[133] V. I. Simankov suggests that he also translated five sermons by Zollikofer about moral education (published in *Pribavleniia k Moskovskim vedomostiam* [*Additions to the Moscow News*] in 1783). Several years later, the same selections from Zollikofer were translated from German again by Ieronim Poniatskii,[134] Archimandrite of the Novgorod-Pecherskii Monastery, as *Reliable Guide for Parents and Teachers to Children's Sensible Christian Education, Collected from the Didactic Works of Zollikofer, the Most Famous Man of this Century for His Christian Moral Teachings* (St. Petersburg, 1798) (*Nadezhnoe rukovodstvo roditeliam i uchiteliam k razumnomu khristianskomu detei vospitaniiu, sobrannoe iz pouchitel'nykh slov slavneishego v nyneshnem stoletii khristianskim nravoucheniem muzha Tsollikofera*).

Recent graduates who 'went secular' sometimes did translation for a living, and a comparison indicates that they chose texts to translate that were familiar to them from seminary classes.[135] For instance, in 1799, P. V. Pobedonostsev, a teacher in the Moscow University gymnaisum who had graduated from the Moscow Academy two years earlier, published a translation form Gellert called *True and False Happiness* (*Istinnoe i lozhnoe schast'e*). In 1797, not so long after graduating from the Kiev Academy and retiring from the Moscow State Archive, A. M. Shumlianskii, who later became a famous physician, translated *Consoling Reflections on a Feeble and Sickly Life* (*Uteshitel'nyia razsuzhdeniia protiv nemoshchnoi i boleznennoi zhizni*) by the same author.

Translations from Gellert were also published by professors. His *Moralische Vorlesungen* (*Moral Teachings* [*Nravoucheniia*], Moscow, 1775-1777) were translated by M. Protopopov, teacher of Hebrew and Greek at the Moscow Academy. His "Geistliche Oden und Lieder" were translated in verse by the rector of the Trinity Seminary Apollos Baibakov as *Spiritual*

132 OR RGB f. 277, d. 6, l. 17.

133 V. I. Simankov, *Iz razyskanii o zhurnale "Pribavlenie k Moskovskim vedomostiam" (1783-1784), ili Ob avtorstve sochinenii, pripisyvavshikhsia N. I. Novikovu, I. G. Shvartsu i F. V. Karzhavinu* (Khar'kov, 2010), 40-41.

134 Ibid., 45.

135 See also V. D. Rak, *Stat'i o literature*, 534-535.

Songs, from the Most Renowned Ch. F. Gellert (*Pesni dukhovnyia, Slavneishago Kh. F. Gellerta*... [Moscow, 1778, second edition, 1782]).[136]

Although the Bible was rarely read in German, former students were obviously familiar with popular European compilations of Bible stories in German: J. Hübner's *Zweymal zwey und funffzig Auserlesene Biblische Historien, der Jugend zum Besten abgefasset* (1714) and J. M. Wagner's *Auserlesene biblische Historien aus dem Alten und Neuen Testament*. In Germany and Switzerland such compilations entered the school curriculum and practically served as a new catechism due to their Pietistic tendencies.[137] At the Pskov Seminary in 1782, a compilation by Hübner was read in German classes under the title *Heilige Historie,*[138] which demonstrates its status in the clergy's eyes. The same compilation—dedicated to Metropolitan Platon Levshin—was translated from Latin by M. Sokolov, a student, and underwent seven editions between 1770 and 1795. In 1798, it was translated from German by V. Bogoroskii as *One Hundred and Four Sacred Histories, Chosen by Johann Hübner from the Old and New Testaments for Youth, With the Addition of Pious Thoughts* (*Sto chetyre sviashchennykh istorii, vybrannykh iz Vetkhogo i Novogo zaveta v pol'zu iunoshestva Ioannom Gibnerom, s prisovokupleniem blagochestivykh razmyshlenii* [Moscow, 1798; six editions]). In 1775 and in 1793, *Two Hundred and Eight Sacred Histories from the Old and New Testaments, Chosen from the Holy Scriptures and Accompanied by the Best Moral Admonitions* (*Dvesti vosem' sviashchennykh istorii Vetkhogo i Novogo zaveta, vybrannye iz sviashchennogo pisaniia i izriadneishimi nravoucheniiami snabzhennye*) was published; here, an additional hundred and four texts from J. M. Wagner were added to Hübner's one hundred and four translations. It was translated by the archpriest of Moscow's Pokrovskii Cathedral Ivan Kharlamov who had taught foreign languages in 1769-1772 at the Trinity Seminary. Significantly, the first edition was published in 1775, not long after Kharlamov moved from the Trinity Seminary to take up the place of archpriest at the Cathedral of the Archangel. The such books could become best-sellers and provide financial help to the seminaries' graduates and early-career clergymen.

Poetry by authors popular in Europe and in Russian secular society was widely used for studying German. For instance, in 1781 students at the Moscow Academy translated from G. E. Lessing (1729-1781) and F. G.

136 The same text was then translated into prose by the noblewoman E. P. Demidova (married name: Chicherina, 1767-1834) and published in 1782 and 1785 as *Spiritual Odes and Songs of Ch. F. Gellert* (*Dukhovnyia ody i pesni, g. K.F.Gellerta*... [St. Petersburg, 1785]). The contemporaneous publication of two variants of the same text, translated by people of different social standing, shows a clear interest among educated Russian society in this work.

137 See M. Naas, *Didaktische Konstruktion des Kindes in Schweizer Kinderbibeln: Zürich, Bern, Luzern (1800-1850)* (Göttingen, 2012), 171-172; S. M. Huber, *Für die Jugend lehrreicher: Der religionspädagogische Wandel des Bildes des Kindes in Schweizer Kinderbibeln in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 2013), 86-91.

138 Kniazev, *Ocherk istorii Pskovskoi*, 41.

Klopstock (1724-1803), and in 1782, students in Pskov read Rabner's satires. A. von Haller (1708-1777) was also popular; his poetry was translated in 1781 in Moscow and in 1782 in Pskov. Such popularity can also be traced through published translations: Haller's philosophical poem "Über den Ursprung des Übels" (1734) was translated into prose by N. Karamzin in 1786, and in 1798 P. Bogdanov, a student at the Moscow Academy, made a verse translation of that same text.

French poetry, however, is poorly represented in translations, excepting the case of Trinity Seminary in 1785. There students of Ivan Sokolskii analyzed "selected epigrams and other poems by Jean-Baptiste Rousseau," whose most popular poem was "A la Fortune," which had been previously translated by Sumarokov and Lomonosov. But the students also regularly created "imitations" in French, suggesting that some examples of French poetry were available.[139] However, French poetry is represented in the Moscow Academy catalogue only by texts from the early nineteenth century.

'Reverse translation' (i.e. an attempt to simulate the original text from which a Russian translation was originally derived) was also used in language study. Students at the Novgorod seminary translated foreign fiction from Russian, and it is notable that the teacher did not help with the word choice; students had to use only those words which could be found in French books.[140] In 1769 at the Trinity Academy, students of Ivan Kharlamov translated *Magasin des enfants, ou Dialogues entre une sage gouvernante et plusieurs de ses élèves de la première distinction* by Mme. Leprince de Beaumont from Russian into French. They probably used the translation by Petr Svistunov that was published in 1763–1767.

In 1785 at the Trinity seminary, and also in 1803–1806 at the Novgorod Seminary, some of *Numa Pompilius* was likewise translated from Russian into French. In 1785 in Trinity seminary, it could be only have been the life of Numa Pompilius from Plutarch's *Life of Men Famous in Ancient Times* (*Zhitie slavnykh v drevnosti muzhei*), which had been translated from French by S. Glebov in 1765, but in Novgorod in 1803-1806 this could have been another *Numa Pompilius*—a book by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian, translated by P. Veliaminov in 1788 and by G. Shipovskii in 1799. As per this case, classical texts in Greek usually became familiar to students via translations from French.[141]

In 1803–1806 J.-F. Marmontel's *Bélisaire* was used at the Novgorod Seminary for translation from Russian into French; they may have used the collective court translation created under the direction of Catherine II and

139 Kislova, "Frantsuzskii iazyk," 29-30.

140 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 149.

141 It was also common practice for the nobility, see V. Rjéoutski, "Latin in the education of nobility in Russia," in V. Rjéoutski, W. Frijhoff (eds.), *Language Choice in Enlightenment Europe. Education, Sociability, and Governance* (Amsterdam, 2018), 169-189.

published in 1768 as *Velizar*, or the translation by P. P. Kurbatov (*Velisarii*, first edition 1769).

For translation from Russian into French, even Russian translations from German texts that were originally translated from English could be used. For instance, at the Novgorod Seminary Edward Young's *The Complaint: or, Night-Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (*Iungovy nochi*)[142] was recommended for translation; this work had already been translated into Russian by A. M. Kutuzov and printed in *Utrennii svet* in 1778–1780 under the same title. Similarly, when students translated P. J. Bitaubé's "Joseph, poème en prose" from Russian into German they used the popular translation by D. I. Fonvizin (*Iosif: v deviati pesniakh*, six editions, 1769-1819), which was considered an example of both "the importance of Slavonic and the clarity of the Russian language."[143] Obviously, quality and accessibility of the books were important, but the most important criterion was their "moral content."[144]

"Secondary translation" from an earlier translation was widely practiced in Europe: English and Spanish books were translated into Russian from French and German translations, just as Russian texts were translated into English from French or German translations. Hence the author's individual style was unlikely to be preserved, and details—or even the very subject matter—could also be changed.[145] That's why translations may be considered not only as transferred parts of foreign culture, but also as a phenomenon of the "host" culture.[146] But significantly, original texts by Russian writers that were studied in seminaries were never used for translation into French or German (or at least such cases are not mentioned in surviving documents). Thus we may assume that the clergy sensed a clear difference between original Russian texts and translations.

Individually, the clergy could read material not included in seminary documentation. For instance, from the 1760s on, the best seminary students were sent to Moscow University to study languages on a regular basis, and there they came into contact with secular culture. As they did in seminaries, these students regularly made notes on what they were reading, although virtually no such notes have survived. A rare example is Evgenii Bolkhovitinov's "Extracts from French books" ("Vypiski iz frantsuzskikh knig" [1785-1788]). At the time of writing, Bolkhovitinov was a Voronezh Seminary student who was studying German and French at Moscow University. His workbook allows us to reconstruct the range of texts read by a young cleric who also studied in an educated secular environment.[147]

142 Ibid.

143 N. Novikov, *Opyt istoricheskogo slovaria o rossiiskikh pisateliakh*... in Idem, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1951), 360.

144 OR RNB, f. 522, d. 209, l. 149.

145 Levin, *Istoriia perevodnoi*, vol. 1, 185-194, 209-211.

146 See Rak, *Stat'i o literature*, 74-93.

147 Shmurlo, *Mitropolit Evgenii*, 63.

Almost all of Bolkhovitinov's notes are from sources on French and German history, but there also are some from poetry compilations. The main sources were fictional and historical compilations made for entertainment, such as *Bibliothèque poétique, ou nouveaux choix des plus belles pièces, de vers en tout genre, depuis Marot jusqu'aux poètes de nos jours* (by Le Fort de la Marinière, Paris, 1745); and *Variétés historiques, physiques et littéraires, ou recherches d'un sçavant, contenant plusieurs pièces curieuses et interessantes* (Paris, 1752). Bolkhovitinov copied the articles "Sur la tristesse et la joye" and "Origine du cardan solaire, représenté symboliquement par la statue de Memnon" in full; and he copied "Chronographe," "Vertu extraordinaire de la vie d'une femme et de celle d'un homme" and "De la Porte Ottomane" almost in full. Bolkhovitinov took some notes on "Le Diogène de d'Alembert, ou Diogène décent..." by A.-P. Le Guay de Prémontval (1716-1764); and copied a passage ("Il est certain qu'il y a dans la Vulgate des obscurités qu'on ne rencontre par dans l'Hébreu") from *Le Journal des sçavans* (April, 1718). Thus Bolokhovitinov created his own hand-written compilation of works on literature and history; he did so, among other reasons, for the purpose of studying languages. Such compilations could serve as sources of information in rural areas where French books were not readily accessible.

The supply of books to seminaries was always an important concern for the clerical hierarchy, especially when the books (like those in French and German) were rare and expensive. By the last quarter of the century the libraries of well-funded seminaries with high standards of foreign language teaching were actively supplied with editions in these languages. Such deliveries are clearly designated in the catalogue of the Trinity Seminary library; for example, in the 1770s, there was a simultaneous purchase of various books by Gellert—namely, his comedies, fables, works in the sciences, spiritual odes, and letters.[148] Many French books were bought between 1763 and 1774, the majority purchased in 1772 with Platon Levshin's money and possibly on his orders.[149] These included: *Histoire ancienne des Égyptiens, des Carthaginois, des Assyriens, des Babyloniens, des Medes et des Perses, des Macedoniens, et des Grecs* by Charles Rollin (1730); Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748); *Contemplation de la nature* by Charles Bonnet (1769); *L'alcoran de Mahomet*; and others. Records also indicate purchases of seven out of eight volumes of Voltaire's collected works and some additional editions of Montesquieu.

Rural seminary libraries were supplied with foreign language books in an uneven manner. For instance, in 1802 the Smolensk Seminary received 40 German and 39 French books (with the total number of books received numbering around 2,000),[150] while the Kostroma Seminary library, accord-

148 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 585.1, l. 106 ob.
149 Smirnov, *Istoriia Troitskoi lavrskoi seminarii*, 378.
150 Speranskii, *Ocherk istorii Smolenskoi*, 113–114.

ing to an early nineteenth-century catalogue, had more than 400 French books (compared to only 15 German ones).[151] However, in the second half of the eighteenth century, nearly every seminary library had a good selection of Russian translations of French and German books of various genres.

The problem of foreign authors' theological and philosophical principles contradicting those of the Orthodox Church was undoubtedly brought up in a seminary environment, but amazingly we see that many of the 'modern' clergy were rather liberal with regard to ideological bias. Despite the Orthodox Church's suspicion of works by French Enlightenment philosophers, in the last third of the eighteenth century such texts were regularly added to seminary libraries— sometimes by chance, as the result of purchases of entire book collections at auction, and sometimes as a result of purposeful acquisitions.[152] For example, in the 1790s Evgenii Bolkhovitinov bought the *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, the works of Voltaire, and other texts for the Voronezh Seminary.[153] It is unclear whether these books were available to students or if they were only for teachers and Bolkhovitinov himself. Notably, Bolkhovitinov sometimes quotes these works in his sermons, publicly calling Voltaire's works "the most harmful poison," "the most revolting and the most impious [books]," and describes them as "infection."[154] He thought it essential to teach students a critique of Voltaire's views on religion. Under his guidance, the students of a theology class translated *Les Erreurs de Voltaire* (1762) by Abbot C.F. Nonnotte from French; the resultant text was published in Moscow in 1793 (some manuscript copies also exist).[155]

In contrast to Bolkhovitinov, Ioil Bykovskii, an archimandrite from Iaroslavl', included in his collection of didactic notes *Truth, or An Extract About Truth* (*Istinna ili Vypiska o Istinne*) (Iaroslavl', 1787), as well as fragments from "Candide" and "La Princesse de Babylon," all by Voltaire. In 1791 in the same Iaroslavl' Seminary, a student named Mikhail Palmin translated "La Profession de foi du vicaire savoyard" from *Émile, ou De l'Éducation* by Rousseau, which had been banned in Russia by Catherine II. These translations were sent to the seminary library and the translator received ten rubles from the seminary fund.[156] Thus, we see examples of students being rewarded for taking an interest in the works of banned French authors.

151 OR RGB, f. 138, d. 301, l. 29 ob.

152 Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi*, 132.

153 Shmurlo, *Mitropolit Evgenii*, 106.

154 Evgeny Bolkhovitinov (red.), *Volterovy zabluzhdeniia, obnaruzhennye abbatom Nonotom* (Moscow, 1793).

155 Shmurlo, *Mitropolit Evgenii*, 127–134.

156 V. V. Luk'ianov, *Opisanie kollektsii*; F. Ia. Priima, "K istorii otkrytiia Slova o polku Igoreve," *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury*, 12 (1956), 49.

After the French Revolution in the summer of 1794, the Metropolitan of Novgorod Gavriil Petrov sent a letter to all bishops in which he ordered them to cease all classes in French because "as practice has proven, some malevolent people have abused knowledge of this language."[157] In the Tver' Seminary, French books were confiscated from students and teachers and locked up in the library.[158] In Moscow, however, the ban did not affect the teaching of French and had no consequences for the libraries of the Trinity Seminary and Moscow Academy.[159] In the Riazan' Seminary, where French was rarely taught, various "suspicious books" and "definitively prejudicial books" were confiscated from the library. Nevertheless, the library retained P.I. Bogdanovich's translation of Voltaire's *L'homme aux quarante ecus* (*Chelovek v 40 talerov*) (St. Petersburg, 1780, 1785, 1792).[160]

In the same manner, the registry of the Kostroma Seminary library from the 1820s contains, without any explanation, books that had been banned as "Masonic" in the late eighteenth century, e.g. the Russian translation S. P. Ely's *Brüderliche Vermahnungen an einige Brüder Freymäurer von dem Bruder Seddag* entitled *Fraternal Admonitions of Freemasons* (*Bratskiia uveshchaniia svobodnykh kamenshchikov*) (Moscow, 1784), which in 1786 was declared "of dubious worth" and removed from sale and burned along with other prohibited books.[161] The Kostroma Seminary catalogue lists along with that book *Platon's Theology* (*Bogosloviia Platonova* [St. Petersburg, 1780]), Milton's *Paradise Regained* (Moscow, 1787), W. Derham's *Physico-Theology*... (*Estestvennaia bogosloviia*... [Moscow, 1784]), and the works of St. Dimitrii Rostovskii (Moscow, 1804). We cannot say to what extent, if at all, seminary students and teachers could access this literature, but the lack of explanatory notes suggests that the late eighteenth-century ban on Masonic books was not important in the Kostroma Seminary come the nineteenth century.

Most illuminating is the case of the banned Russian translations of the Protestant theologian J. Arndt (1555-1621). His *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum* (1605-1609) were first translated in 1738 by Simon Todorskii, who studied at Halle University, the place where the Arndt's works were originally published.[162] In 1743, this translation was banned in Russia by the Synod's order; in 1784, Catherine confirmed the ban. The stated reason was that the translation was made abroad and had not been approved by the Synod.[163] At the same time, in the 1760s, Arndt's books were included

157 Smirnov, *Istoriia Moskovskoi Slaviano-greko-latinskoi akademii*, 311.

158 Kolosov, *Istoriia Tverskoi*, 241.

159 Kislova, "Frantsuzskii iazyk," 21-22.

160 Agntsev, *Istoriia Riazanskoi*, 132.

161 *Svodnyi katalog grazhdanskoi pechati XVIII veka. 1725-1800. V 6 tomakh* (Moscow, 1966), vol. 3, 429.

162 S. Mengel, "Russkie perevody khall'skikh pietistov: Simeon Todorskii, 1729-1735," *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta*. Seriia 9. Filologiia, 3 (2001), 89-99.

163 *Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporiazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia*, 495.

in two registries of church hierarchs' private libraries. In 1762, Lavrentii Khotsiatovskii (d. 1766), the archimandrite of the Trinity Lavra, donated 34 books from his private library to the library of Trinity Seminary, including *Four Books in One Cover About True Christianity by Ioann Arndt, printed in Halle [in the] year [17]35*.[164] Another copy of Arndt was included in the same library as a part of a collection of books the seminary purchased after the death of Spaso-Iaroslavskii Monastery archimandrite and former Trinity Seminary teacher Vladimir Kalligraph (d. 1760): *Arndtii de vero kristianismo*.[165] By this time, Arndt's book had already been translated into Latin several times (e.g. in Germany in 1624 and 1704, and in Britain in 1708), so this edition might have been also in Latin.

The ban on Todorskii's translation of *Four Books* was not always applied to the German original or to new translations. Ivan Kharlamov, a teacher in the Trinity seminary, used Arndt's books in 1769 in his German classes. This action was approved by the seminary administration and with the knowledge of Platon Levshin. In the second half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth, Arndt is cited by Arsenii Matseevich, Tikhon of Zadonsk, and Makarii Glukharev as one of the most important religious writers. A second translation of his book was made by I. P. Turgenev at the end of the eighteenth century: Ioann Arndt, *About True Christianity, Six Books, With the Addition of Paradise Garden and Some Other Small Works By This Author* (*Ob istinnom khristiianstve, shest' knig s prisovokupleniem Raiskago vertograda i drugikh nekotorykh melkikh sochinenii sego pisatelia*, Moscow, 1784).

Hence, in the eighteenth century the application of any government or church ban in practice needs to be studied, for as we can see, prohibited books could be read rather openly.

conclusion

Certainly, the above observations cannot fully describe the variety of the eighteenth-century clergy's reading. By necessity I have not discussed ecclesiastic administrative texts, such as the *Kormchaia Book* and the *Ecclesiastical Regulation* (*Dukhovny Reglament* [1721]), or, at the end of the century, *On the Duties of Parish Presbyters* (*Kniga o dolzhnostiakh presviterov prikhodskikh* [1776]), which was learned by heart in seminaries and was clearly influential. Theoretically speaking, all clergymen were obligated to know such texts. Churchmen were also required to read aloud government orders for citizens in their churches.

Many educated churchmen read newspapers in various languages. Newspapers in Russian had a significant presence in the libraries of ed-

164 OR RGB, f. 173.1, d. 586.1, l. 109.
165 Ibid., l. 113 ob.

ucational institutions. However, we do not know what kind of access to newspapers the post-seminary clergy possessed, regardless of whether their reading became a habit. European newspapers could also be used in teaching languages;[166] in the 1770s, the members of the Synod subscribed to newspapers in Latin and French, which later went to the seminaries with a recommendation to give them to teachers and advanced students.[167] As a result, newspapers lost their primary purpose—informing the public about current events—and simply became texts for reading.

One should also separately examine the ties between the clergy and the Masons in order to determine the ways in which their reading overlapped. It should not surprise us to find Evgenii Bolkhovitinov in 1788 creating a reading circle in Voronezh in which clergy and nobles gathered together in order to discuss serious philosophical and scientific books.[168] This circle definitely took its inspiration from Masonic ones, but how did this influence its reading program? And how did Novikov's case influence the clergy's reading? In what way did attitudes toward 'spiritual books' change? Here we should not rush to conclusions.

Influence between what we have called the traditional and the 'modern' clergy should also be properly examined. Undoubtedly, after seminary, children of the traditional clergy often returned to the same environment in which their fathers lived, but they also brought back handwritten copies and new books, which therefore became accessible to the traditional clergy. But, due to the frequent lack of sources, we cannot say how the reading of particular clergymen evolved.

Thus we can paint a general picture of how and what the Russian clergy read in the eighteenth century (mostly in seminaries), but the question 'why' still has no fitting answer. Still, it is obvious that the clergy was also, as noted by O. Tsapina, a significant part of the educated community of readers and writers in Russia.[169] Intentionally or not, they became part to the changes taking place in Russian culture, and their intellectual activities were at once rich and in a state of transition over the course of the century.

166 Kislova, "Nemetskii iazyk," 64.

167 RGIA, f. 796, op. 54, d. 454. OR RGB, f. 277, d. 4, l. 420.

168 D. Smith, *Rabota nad dikim kamnem,* 85.

169 O. Tsapina, "Pravoslavnoe Prosveshchenie—oksiumoron ili istoricheskaia real'nost'?" in S. Ia. Karp, S. A. Mezin S.A. (eds.), *Evropeiskoe Prosveshchenie i tsivilizatsiia Rossii* (Moscow, 2004), 301-313.

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A READING REVOLUTION? THE CONCEPT OF THE READER IN THE RUSSIAN LITERATURE OF SENSIBILITY

Andrei Zorin

Thirty years ago in his deservedly famous *The Great Cat Massacre*, Robert Darnton challenged the traditional idea that eighteenth-century reading practices constitute the turning point from the so- called "intensive reading" characteristic of the Early Modern period to the "extensive reading" typical of modern book consumption. According to the traditional point of view, readers of the earlier period concentrated on rereading the same specially chosen, authoritative, and usually holy texts, meditating upon them and sharing them with others, while from 1750 onward, they gradually proceeded to skim over a "great deal of printed matter," including novels and journals, which they used mostly as entertainment. Darnton believes that "no such revolution took place." The real emergence of the new public and new reading patterns did not lead to the abandonment of the process of "intensive reading," but rather to its further intensification through the creation of the emotional bond between the world of the book and the everyday life of the reader. "The Rousseauistic readers fell in love, married and raised up children by steeping themselves in print."[1]

Darnton's conclusions based on archival sources are corroborated by Northrop Frye's analysis of literary production in the age of Rousseau, which he made thirty years earlier in his stimulating essay "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." He juxtaposed literary works from the second half of the eighteenth century to those of earlier and later periods, describing them, respectively, as "literature as process" and "literature as product." Frye wrote that the works from the 'Age of Sensibility' demonstrated an intent to "give the impression of literature as process, as created on the spot of the events

1 R. Darton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 2009), 249-252.

it describes."[2] Works as distinct as *Fingal, Clarissa, Night Thoughts,* and *Tristram Shandy* exhibit just such an intent. More importantly, Frye traced the special connection that existed between this feature of literary works and the special relations it was meant to establish between the work and the audience:

> Where there is a strong sense of literature as an aesthetic product, there is also a sense of its detachment from the spectator. Aristotle's theory of catharsis describes the beholder as being directed towards objects. Where there is a sense of literature as process, pity and fear become states of mind without objects, moods which are common to the work of art and the reader and which bind them together psychologically instead of separating them aesthetically.[3]

This type of literary production regards the author and the reader as joined together by an emotional union established by and through the text that, in its turn, plays only this auxiliary mediating role. The reasons for this discursive strategy can be found in the pragmatics of the literary text itself. The didactic (in the purely pedagogical sense of the word) goals of the literature from the 'Age of Sensibility' cannot be confined only to the sphere of moral instruction. The classical authors of the period set the norms and patterns of 'correct sensibility' and sought to promote these norms in 'real life.' Used in this fashion, literature became a school of sensibility in which readers were taught the art of adequate emotional responses to the most important and affecting events in their lives: falling in love, losing their relatives, retiring to solitude, admiring beauties of nature and art, etc. Events are very rarely described in such literature "as they happened"; rather, they are usually shown through the eyes of an observer who produces a normative emotional reaction to them. The narrator here is the witness of or the participant in the events.

This type of didacticism explains one essential quality of the literature of Sensibility—its specific non-fictionality or quasi non-fictionality. If the reader desires to emulate the described patterns of feeling and behavior, he has to be convinced that all these examples are taken from real life. The reception of the novels of Richardson, of Sterne, *La Nouvelle Eloise, The Sufferings of Young Werther*, etc., testifies to the willing naive realism of the popular audience supported and encouraged by the authors. "It is certainly an indisputable maxim that nature is more powerful than fancy, that we can always feel more than we can imagine and that the most artful fiction must give

2 N. Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," *English Literary History*, 23, 2 (Jun. 1956), 145.

3 Ibid., 149.

way to truth [...] Events that have actually happened are after all the properest subjects for the poetry,"[4] wrote George Wharton.

The relationship between the inner structure of the literature of Sensibility and its reader is even more evident in Russia during the second half of the eighteenth century. At that time, the role of literature as a manual for life was greatly enhanced by ongoing efforts to appropriate new facets of western civilization. Having Europeanized their appearance, manners, and practices of everyday life, members of the Russian upper class began attending to the europeanization of their inner selves.

The 1762 Manifesto on the freedom of the nobility (which had been issued by Peter III but saw full implementation only under Catherine) made government service optional for nobles. The legislator suggested that the nobles should serve out of love for their monarch and the zeal for their duty. Thus the state became responsible for their values, attitudes, and passions. Catherine's main didactic enterprise became the micromanaging of the court practices in order to provide the most elite portion of Russian society with imitable emotional patterns and symbolic models.

A pivotal role in these efforts was predictably played by the theater both as an artistic artifact and social ritual. Theatrical performances produce representations of socially approved symbolic models of feeling—which are, at the same time, visible and expressed by means of the body, pure and free from the empirical reality of everyday life. Thus, the audience constitutes a sort of 'emotional community,' one in which everyone is able to compare his own perception with the reaction of the audience and check the 'correctness' and 'adequacy' of his personal feeling as he is experiencing them. All these functions could be fully realized in the court theater. The ritualized character of court life undermined the barriers between the stage and the audience, especially as the candles were not put out during the performance, facilitating the possibility for actors and spectators to exchange roles (at least in the amateur theaters of the aristocratic set). The significance of the theatrical performance was enhanced by the presence of the empress, who at once played the part of the spectator, producer, and participant in the performance, and confidently used the opportunities afforded to her by each role.[5]

This approach was completely reversed in the masonic lodges, where an alternative and no less ambitious project to completely renovate humankind was being developed. While the 'courtly' strategy of moral improvement was directed from outside in, the lodges trained their members to find the truth inside themselves. The regeneration of humankind had to start

4 G. Wharton, "An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope," in *Eighteenth-Century Critical Essays* (New York, 1960), vol. 2, 741.

5 A. Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia. Iz istorii russkoi emotsional'noi kul'tury kontsa XVIII – nachala XIX veka* (Moscow, 2016), 41, 68-69.

from within the microcosm and only then would the macrocosm be transformed accordingly. Thus, reading rather than attending the theater became the main vehicle for refining the self. "Books are such a tincture that they cause, by their invisible drops, transformations that bring salvation to thousands for years to come. But if just one soul would convert and begin living in God!"[6], wrote an old freemason Ivan Lopukhin to Dmitrii Runich in 1814. Moral improvement was to be achieved also through the practice of letter-writing and keeping diaries; these were supposed to be available to the entire masonic community, and were often actually read during lodge meetings. This type of writing kept a member attached to the whole while he was away and even perpetuated the existence of the lodge during the so called "Sillanum" periods when the actual meetings were canceled. Thus, the solitary practices of reading and writing were simultaneously performed for the "invisible" presence of the entire lodge.

This practice of self-contemplation and self-improvement with the help of books was described in 1786 by a young free mason Nikolai Karamzin in an essay called "The Promenade" ("Progulka"), which published in the masonic educational review *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* (*Children's Readings for the Heart and Mind*) three years before the author's European travels. Karamzin tells how he "went for a walk in the countryside taking his Thomson with him." In the evening he sees the moon and the stars and thinks of his own inevitable death, which immediately makes him remember "the name of Young that will be forever holy for those who, having tender hearts, feel the beauty of nature and the dignity of man." After that, "full of love for the Creator and of various sweet feelings, he goes back to the city reading the Hymn with which Thomson concluded his immortal poem."[7] Several years later, already a famous author, Karamzin describes the technique of contemplating Nature with a book in hands: "I find Thomson, take him to the grove and read, then put a book under the raspberry bush and plunge into reveries and then again take the book in my hands."[8]

Thomson's descriptive poem reveals to the Russian lover of Nature the beauties of the landscape that he sees around him, shows him how to react to those beauties, and demonstrates what emotional state would be appropriate for this sort of meditation. The idealized landscape depicted in Thomson's *The Seasons* is the one Karamzin sees in the grove in the Moscow countryside because, to a sensible heart, all impressions can be traced back to models disclosed in full by the great authors. Therefore, the reader is encouraged to study carefully these patterns and try to emulate them.

From the freemasons' point of view, Karamzin's choice of authors for imitation was uncontroversial. Young was revered as one of the main teach-

6 *Russkii Arkhiv* (Moscow, 1870), vyp. 11, 1219.
7 *Detskoe chtenie* (Moscow, 1788), vol. 18, 161-162, 167, 175.
8 *Moskovskii zhurnal* (Moscow, 1792), vol. 7, 52.

ers of morality and Thomson's hymn was revered as religious poetry. Still, in retrospect, we see that Karamzin subtly shifts the focus from moral improvement to emotional reactions. He uses famous poets to attune himself to proper feelings and demonstrate normative emotional practices to his readers.

With the declining importance of institutionalized religion and its attendant rituals in the lives of the eighteenth-century educated public, literature gradually became responsible for providing infinite varieties of 'public images of sentiment.' Readers were taught to react correctly to standard life events: falling in love, losing their relatives, retiring to solitude, admiring the beauty of nature and art, etc. The classical authors of the period played the role of 'tuning forks,' through which the readers could attune their hearts and find out whether they can feel correctly and like others. The printed text, of course, could not compete with the theatrical performance vis-a-vis the visibility of the public images of sentiment, or the possibility of absorbing these images collectively hic et nunc, or simultaneously elaborating socially approved reactions to them. At the same time, the book allowed you to return to your emotional experience, to refine and perfect your emotions by repeatedly verifying them against a larger pattern. The shared reading of the same texts guaranteed the spread of unified emotional patterns across social and national borders.

Education in the Russian school of sensibility took place on two levels. Russian authors acted as pupils learning from their European predecessors and at the same time became masters at teaching their readers. The classical Western authors were the chief instructors, while their Russian colleagues assumed a secondary role, one in which they would interpret these lessons and convey them to the audience. Russian writers had to instill in their readers the desire to feel and behave in the way that readers of Richardson, Rousseau, and Goethe did in the rest of Europe. The sentimental novelist Pavel L'vov wrote in the preface to his novel *The Russian Pamela (Rossiiskaia Pamela)*: "We also have tender hearts and noble souls in low estates like other countries, where they are so famous because they occur much more rarely than in Russia."[9] The following year, in the sentimental story "Rosa and Liubim" ("Rosa i Liubim"), he again combined national pride with the humble desire to emulate foreign examples:

> I wonder how many sons of divine Russia can think that we do not have elevated souls, enlightened minds, tender feelings in people of low estates! If you allow them to exist in foreign countries, why not allow it in your own. [...] O, my most dear fatherland! With tears of rapture, I pronounce your sacred name. Thou art the kingdom of gods, the country populated with their

9 P. L'vov, *Rossiiskaia Pamela*, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1789), vol. I, preface.

> sons. [...] Some readers censuring my *Russian Pamela* [...] say that at some places I wrote what belonged not to me, but to other creative minds —I rejoice, rejoice heartily that my humble abilities can be similar to their gifts. I would be happy if I could be called not only their imitator, but even their translator.[10]

In 1792 the sixteen-year-old writer Mikhail Sushkov wrote his story "A Russian Werther" ("Rossiiskii Verter") in which the hero, as is appropriate for a Werther, commits suicide. That same year the author followed suit, showing how seriously he took his model. In the preface to the book he wrote: "I read *A Russian Pamela* and the idea of 'A Russian Werther' occurred to me. Here is a Werther that is undoubtedly poorer than the original."[11] The original here was, of course, Goethe's novel, but L'vov's experiment also served as a guide for the young author. Sushkov believed that the heroes of great writers should be imitated both in literature and life, and that Russia was no less capable of producing such heroes than England or Germany, so he followed L'vov in giving a Russian version of a classical example—first in literature, and then in reality. The goals of Richardson and L'vov were moralistic, while those of Goethe and Sushkov were not (to say the least), but the general pattern of Russification and imitation remained the same.

Significantly, Russian authors did not attempt to disguise their imitative strategies. On the contrary, they made all their borrowings explicit and declarative. The authority of the famous foreign writers justified their own legitimacy as instructors in sensibility. Their ambition was to present themselves as the most competent readers of the books that they followed. The traditional narrative technique in Russian sentimental stories, novels, and travelogues includes the creation of a reading hero. Russian literature of sensibility is populated with active readers and filled with scenes of reading that establish the norms of this activity and show to the actual audience how the book itself was meant to be consumed.

The wholesale import of contemporary European emotional patterns was performed by Karamzin in his famous *Letters of the Russian Traveler* (*Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*), a guidebook through a Europe of Sensibility, a sort of a literary map of Europe. It is worth noting that the *Letters* were a product of extended scholarly research in which, apart from his own impressions, Karamzin used a good deal of reference and travel literature and did not hesitate to describe places and events he personally did not see when he thought it necessary. However, he presented his book to the public as an artless chain of notes made right on the spot and immediately sent as letters to intimate friends.

10 P. L'vov, *Roza i Liubim*, in *Russkaia sentimental'naia povest'* (Moscow, 1979), 34-35.
11 M. Sushkov, "Rossiiskii Verter," in *Russkaia sentimental'naia povest'* (Moscow, 1979), 199.

Karamzin's explicit goal was to bring Europe's cultural treasures home to Russian readers. In his travelogue, he told about his personal meetings with C. M. Wieland, C. Bonnet, J. G. Herder, J. K. Lavater, and other leading figures of European culture, as well as his visits to the most important holy literary places, including the Rhine waterfall, Leman, Ferney, and Hermenonville, where Rousseau was buried. However, the author was interested not so much in European landscapes and monuments themselves, but in ways to experience them. Thus, he presented himself as their curious but competent observer, constructing his narrator as a vehicle for conveying emotional patterns—one might even say as a container to import those emotional patterns into Russia. He absorbed models of feeling characteristic of contemporary European culture and was ready to present them to the Russian reader. Unsurprisingly, every time his traveler wandered around these monuments of Sensibility, he portrayed himself with a book in hand.

In Zurich Karamzin visited the tomb of S. Gessner, who died less than a year and a half earlier. Naturally, he did not forget to acquire a volume of Gessner's idylls for this journey:

> A volume of his writings was in my pocket: how pleasant to read here all his incomparable idylls and poems, to read in the very places where he wrote them. I took it out and opened it, and the following lines caught my attention: 'Posterity will rightly revere the urn and the ashes of the bard whom the Muses consecrated as the teacher of virtue and innocence to mortals.' [...] Imagine, my friends, my feeling at two paces from the spot where Nature and Poetry will pour forth tears on the urn of the unforgettable Gessner in eternal silence. [12]

Karamzin brings to his readers the whole set of concepts key to European sentimental culture, but he brings them as his own immediate feelings inspired by the spontaneous reading of the Alp Theocritus, as Gessner was known in the late eighteenth century. He presents other holy places of European culture, like Rousseau's grave in Hermenonville, in a similar fashion:

> Any tomb is a shrine to me, each voiceless peck of dust tells me: 'And I was alive like you, and you will die like me.' How eloquent, then, are the ashes of such an Author who strongly influenced your heart, to whom you owe your most pleasant ideas, whose soul has partly poured into yours.[13]

12 N. M. Karamzin, *Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika* (Leningrad, 1984), 124-125.
13 Ibid, 311.

In Calais, he visited the hotel where Sterne's Yorick has met the monk Lorenzo: "I immediately went to Dessein (whose house is the best in town) [...] 'What do you need, Mister?' a young Officer in a blue military jacket asked me. 'The room where Laurence Sterne lived,' I answered. 'And where for the first time he ate French soup?' the Officer said. 'With fricasseed chicken,' I replied. 'Where he praised the blood of the Bourbons?' 'Where he felt a suffusion of a finer kind on his cheek.'" This duel of Sterne quotations prolongs itself for some time, and at last the Officer points out to the Russian traveler a window of the room now occupied by an old English woman and her daughter. The latter holds a book in her hands—"probably *A Sentimental Journey*,"[14] suggests Karamzin.

The author thus portrays the meeting of kindred spirits, of people who share the same values and the same modes of feeling. According to Benedict Anderson's definition, the imagined community of Europeans emerges here, and it emerges around a book. *A Sentimental Journey* unites two Englishwomen, a French officer, and an aspiring Russian writer. As the professed goal of Karamzin's travelogue was to integrate Russia into Europe, he portrayed himself, a young and educated Russian nobleman, as an accepted member of the European public. Shared feelings provide a sort of emotional continuity across borders and constitute strong bonds of sensibility that prove to be no less important and relevant than the bonds of "homeland, kinship, and friendship."

Just before going to Calais, Karamzin parts with his companion in Paris, a German writer and a scholar named Baron Wolzogen:

> Farewell, dear V*! You and I were not born in the same country, but have an identical heart. [...] How many pleasant evenings I spent in your hôtel in Saint-Germain, reading the attractive fantasies of your compatriot and fellow student, Schiller, or taking up our own fantasies, or philosophizing about the world, or judging a new comedy that we have seen together! [...] And you, my fellow countrymen, do not call me faithless because I found in a foreign land a person with whom my heart was at ease.[15]

Common patterns of feeling unite "identical hearts," and these patterns are based on shared habits of consuming literature and art. Similarly to the Russian writer, the French Officer, and the English girl who were united by their common admiration of Sterne, Karamzin and Wolzogen are brought together by reading the same works of Schiller and watching the same comedies in Parisian theaters. They share a cultural background and type of

14 Ibid., 323-324.
15 Ibid., 321-322.

sensibility developed on the basis of the same literary patterns. Russia, in short, was culturally integrated into Europe by unifying its own reading patterns with theirs.[16] Performing this mission of integration meant not only acquainting Russian readers with European sanctuaries of sensibility, but also creating them at home. Karamzin brilliantly succeeded in this part of his task as well. In 1792 he published his sentimental story *Poor Liza* (*Bednaia Liza*), in which he describes the regular visits of an autobiographical narrator to the forgotten grave of the victim of an unfortunate romance.

The success of Karamzin's touching story was immense. "Near Simonov there is a pond overgrown and surrounded by trees," Karamzin remembered in 1817 in his "Memoir on the Sights of Moscow" ("Zapiska o dostopamiatnostiakh Moskvy"): "Twenty-five years ago I there wrote *Poor Liza*, a simple tale that was so fortunate for the young author that thousands of curious visitors rode and went there to seek Liza's traces."[17] There was no exaggeration in these words. The Russian public was eager to discover that they also had a monument of sensibility worthy of sentimental pilgrimage. "Liza's pond, the place enchanted by Karamzin's pen, became very familiar to me and you don't know it," a young Moscow artist Ivan Ivanov wrote to Alexander Vostokov, his friend in Petersburg and later a famous philologist:

> O! I am guilty, a hundred times guilty, why did not I write immediately at least those three words, which would make you happy: I saw the pond. [...] I went there and did not forget to take with me the *excerpts* which you gave to me [...]. On my way there, I was trembling with joy, the nearer I came to the Simonov monastery, the more [...] it looked to me like I was separating myself from the *ordinary* world and moving to a *literary* one, a delightful world of imagination. Trees, little hillocks, bushes in some inexplicable way reminded me of Liza.[18]

Ivanov, like his mentor, wants to read Liza's story on the spot where the story's events happened and thus had to take excerpts from the text with him. Six editions of *Poor Liza* in seven years failed to satisfy demand. Ivanov was sure he had seen the hut where Liza really lived and said he was so impressed by the accuracy of Karamzin's description that he "nearly dropped his excerpts in the pond."[19] Count Shalikov, Karamzin's epigone, was even more exalting in his praise. In his essay "To the Ashes of *Poor Liza*" ("K pra-

16 Iu. M. Lotman, B. A. Uspenskii, "'Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika' Karamzina i ikh mesto v razvitii russkoi kul'tury," in Ibid., 564.

17 *Ukrainskii vestnik* (Khar'kov, 1818), book 5, part 10, 142.

18 I. Ivanov, Letter to A. Vostokov., in SPb ARAN, f. 108, op. 2, d. 29, 6. Quoted in A. Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia*, 172.

19 Ibid., f. 108, op. 2, d. 29, 6.

khu *Bednoi Lizy*"), he described his visit to the pond and said: "Never before had I experienced such pleasure." It seems to him that "every leaf, every flower, every blade of grass breathed sensibility and knew of the destiny of poor Liza." Shalikov explained to his readers the ways in which sensibility should spread throughout humankind and the role of great writers in this exaltation:

> Possibly before, when poor Liza was not yet known to the world, I would look at the same landscape, at the same things indifferently. One tender, sentimental heart moves thousands hearts, thousands that needed only an *excitation*, without which they would stay in an eternal gloom. How many people come here, like me, to feed their sensibility and to shed a tear on the ashes that would otherwise would rot unknown. What a service to tenderness![20]

Several years later, Shalikov tried to apply to Karamzin the pattern he borrowed from the Calais episode of the *Letters*. Traveling to Kronstadt in 1805, he rushed to the hotel where Karamzin stayed during his European travel:

> "Where is the room occupied by the Russian traveler?" I asked. I did not get any answer and went to seek it, by feeling and found in one of the rooms... a beautiful Englishwoman who laughed when knew what I cared about.[21]

This episode evidently echoed the one in Calais, but with an important caveat. Shalikov is interested in Karamzin in the same way that Karamzin was interested in Sterne—but the European reading public was not ready to share this fascination. Russia has found a writer who, for domestic purposes, can stand aside his famous European colleagues; however, the West—embodied by an Englishwoman in a hotel—does not yet accept a Russian man of genius and the Russian literature of sensibility as a shared authority.

Like many other visitors to the pond, Shalikov also expressed his feelings in an inscription he carved with a knife on a nearby birch. The birches surrounding the pond were covered with such inscriptions and visitors spent a lot of time reading them. The first separate edition of *Poor Liza* appeared in 1796 with an engraving showing wandering admirers leaving their inscriptions on the birches around the pond. The most touching ones were published on the same page. One of them, stating "Non la conobbe il mondo mentre l'ebbe," was used as an epigraph to the edition. This line

20 P. Shalikov, "K prakhu bednoi Lizy," *Priiatnoe i poleznoe preprovozhdenie vremeni* (Moscow, 1797), vol. 15, 236.

21 P. Shalikov, "Puteshestvie v Kronshtadt 1805 goda," in *Landshaft moikh voobrazhenii. Stranitsy prozy russkogo sentimentalizma* (Moscow, 1990), 576.

from Petrarch's sonnet (No. 338) on Laura's death ("The world did not know her when it had her") together with the next one ("I knew her and now it is left unto me to lament her") was carved by poet Vasilii Pushkin, an ardent disciple of Karamzin's and an uncle of the greatest Russian poet. A quarter of a century later, he found this inscription; generally, they still existed—and in a readable state—up until the 1870s.

Karamzin himself wanted to direct his readers' attention to the direct connection between the content of his story and the reading practices of the narrator. In June 1788, four years before *Poor Liza* was written, his friend A. Petrov in a letter asked him whether he "still goes to Simonov monastery and performs all other sorts of activities usual for him." Many years later, when preparing Petrov's letters for publication, Karamzin inserted into this sentence the words "with a bag of books."[22] Karamzin wanted his readers to know that before writing *Poor Liza* he spent his days near Simonov monastery reading. European literary tradition merged with the particular Russian locality in a story similar to those told by the great foreign authors—a story that got a brilliant pen to immortalize it. As is often the case with "intensive reading," the radical textualization of one's emotional practices was accompanied by a nearly compete loss of contact with the text itself. *Poor Liza*, canonized by Russian sentimental culture, lost all whatever scarce features of her own personality. Shalikov was sure that the heroine of the story is now in heaven, "in the crown of innocence, in the glory of the chaste."[23]

Taking into consideration the plot of Karamzin's story, these epithets sound somewhat ambiguous and positively irreligious. The quasi-religious character of this canonization becomes even more evident if we remember that the story takes place near an ancient Russian monastery where Peresvet and Osliabia, two heroes of the Battle of Kulikovo, one of the greatest military victories in Russian history, were buried. Moreover, the pond where Liza drowned herself was—according to ancient legend—dug out by Sergii Radonezhskii, one of the greatest Russian saints who blessed Prince Dmitri Donskoi in battle. Water from the pond was believed to have a healing effect. In 1799, the young poet Aleksei Merzliakov overheard a conversation between a peasant and an artisan who were discussing whether bringing one's sick wife to a miraculous place would have any effect. The artisan, better read in literature, said that the pond did not help girls and even was dangerous for them, because some time ago beautiful Liza had drowned in it.[24] The traditional idea of the pond's healing force gave way here to reinterpreted impressions from Karamzin's story. Even more characteristic is a scandalous episode seen by Ivanov, whose letter we have already quoted.

22 N. M. Karamzin, *Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika* (Leningrad, 1984), 506.

23 P. Shalikov, "K prakhu bednoi Lizy," 234.

24 See Iu. M. Lotman, "Ob odnom chitatel'skom vospriiatii 'Bednoi Lizy' Karamzina (k strukture massovogo soznaniia XVIII v.," in *XVIII vek. Sbornik 7. Rol' i znachenie literatury XVIII veka v istorii russkoi kul'tury* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1966), 283-284.

Wandering on the banks of the pond, Ivanov saw several Moscow merchants who had brought several wenches with them and, having undressed them, pushed them into the water. One of the girls ran around the pond, crying that she was like Poor Liza. "In Moscow everybody knows *Poor Liza*," Ivanov concluded, "from honorable elderly people to an ignorant whore." The monks from Simonov monastery interrupted the orgy. "'How dare you!' they shouted, 'To defile water in the pond, when a maid is buried on the bank.'"[25] The real shrine for them was not the pond connected with the name of the legendary founder of their monastery, but instead the grave of a fictional sinner and a suicide. The myth about *Poor Liza* was able to replace the church tradition because, from the very beginning, it had clear religious connotations. One of the memoirists of the nineteenth century recollects that a high ranking official and literary man, Dmitrii Bludov, believed in poor Liza "like in Barbara the martyr."[26]

Naturally, this practice provoked negative reactions as well. Ivanov saw on the birches near Simonov inscriptions satirizing Karamzin. Especially popular was a short anonymous epigram: "The bride of Erast died in these waters, / Drown yourselves, maidens, there is enough room in the pond." These two rhymed lines reproduced the purpose of the literature of Sensibility to create universal patterns of sentimental behavior that permitted it to claim a status of a secular religion. While Karamzin's admirers urged readers to follow their example and indulge in tender feelings over Liza's grave, the anonymous epigrammatist shifted the focus and suggested emulating the behavior of the heroine herself. Literary suicides, of course, could also produce imitations.

The narrator of the other famous text of Russian Wertheriana, A. Klushin's *Unfortunate M-v* (*Neschastnyi M-v*) depicted the state of mind of a character torn by love and despair: "Young and Pope are thrown out. *La Nouvelle Eloise* and *Werther* lie on his languishing bosom."[27] Both the protagonist of the story as well as his prototype imitate Werther to the end. The initials in the title obviously meant that the story was based on real events. The actual name of unfortunate M-v was Maslov. Similarly, Sushkov's Russian Werther read Addison's *Cato* with its apologia of suicide before killing himself.

Moving from fictionalized stories to ego-documents, we again find the same practices. In 1801 the young Germanophile Andrei Turgenev wrote in his diary, "Today I bought *Werther* [...] and ordered them to bind it with sheets of white paper between the pages without knowing myself why I need it. Now a sudden idea has occurred to me. 'So eine wahre warme Freude ist nicht in der Welt, als eine grosse Seele zu sehen, die sich gegen einen öffnet,' once said Werther. [...] I made note of this place in [my old] *Werther*,

25 SPb ARAN, f. 108, op. 2, d. 29, l. 15.
26 N. I. Grech, *Vospominaniia moei zhizni* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1930), 495.
27 *Landshaft moikh voobrazhenii*, 49.

and now in my new *Werther* I shall compare my feelings and his, and mark what I felt in the same way as he did. I said this to myself, jumped up, ran to my room, and immediately wrote these lines."[28] His own diary merged for him with Goethe's novel to such an extent that he desired to unite those two works physically and continue the diary right inside the favorite book.

A. Turgenev gathered around himself a small circle of young writers. This group later transformed itself into the Friendly Literary Society—one of the first self-declared literary groups in Russian history. He convinced several of his friends in this circle to start a collective translation of *Werther*.[29] The translation was not planned for publication: the aim of the project was to attune the hearts of the translators such that they were in unison. "The state of my spirit is very much like the one described in *Werther* in the letter you translated,"[30] he wrote to Zhukovskii. A. Turgenev also presented to his friend a copy of *Werther* with the inscription "I can think of nothing better than that I would like to be your friend forever, that our friendship should be strengthened by time, that I would deserve the name of a friend, and of your friend."[31] Taking into consideration the attitude of young people towards Goethe's novel, one can hardly believe Zhukovskii did not possess his own copy. The gift was mostly symbolic; a union of congenial souls was secured by means of this classical text, which served as an emotional standard for all of them.

Reading the same book with the same sort of emotions definitely could symbolize not only friendship, but even more frequently—love. Turgenev himself tried to seduce his beloved by sending her a letter between the pages of *La Nouvelle Heloise*—a novel that describes the fall of a girl from a noble family. In the story "The Rostov Lake" ("Rostovskoe ozero") by Vladimir Izmailov, one of Karamzin's followers, the narrator describes the landscape in the following manner:

> Everywhere I encountered wonderful places, romantic havens of pleasure, blossoming banks that may be nothing compared with those of Leman, glorified by Jean-Jacque Rousseau and the young Vernes, but where I dared to seat new Julia, imagining myself a second Saint-Preux living there in the quiet of solitude.[32]

He comes across a young man weeping over the tomb with the sentence from *La Nouvelle Eloise* engraved upon it. Understanding that he has met

28 A. I. Turgenev, *Dnevnik*, in RO IRLI, f. 309, d. 272, ll. 12-13. Quoted in A. Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia*, 338.

29 See V. M. Zhirmunskii, *Gete v russkoi literature* (Leningrad, 1982), 60-64.

30 A. I. Turgenev, "Pis'ma Zhukovskomu," in *Zhukovskii i russkaia kul'tura* (Leningrad, 1987), 392.

31 Ibid., 368.

32 V. Izmailov, "Rostovskoe ozero," in *Russkaia sentimental'naia povest'*, 144.

a kindred spirit, the narrator convinces the hero to reveal the story of his troubles, and finds out that the poor creature had likewise dreamed of a new Julia and had fallen in love with his now-deceased wife when he saw her reading Rousseau's novel. The author of "The Rostov Lake" himself was an ardent admirer of Rousseau and later started a boarding school for children where he tried to realize the pedagogical ideas of *Emile*.

In *Modest and Sofia* (*Modest i Sofiia*) by Vasilii Perevoshchikov, the hero, disillusioned in love, is living in solitude when he suddenly meets a beautiful girl. After that, "he returned to his solitary abode and began reading. He opened Young, but his eyes wandered around the pages; he took Zimmerman and after several minutes closed the book."[33] New love manifests itself in his loss of interest toward the books that give consolation to the desperate and lonely. The next stage of his infatuation begins when he finds out that the girl he loves is reading *La Nouvelle Eloise*. In another sentimental story, love begins when the hero suddenly extends through the bushes to a passerby—an as yet unknown girl—a copy of Young's *Night Thoughts*.[34]

Karamzin's example unleashed a whole revolution in reading practices. The Russian traveler packaged the emotional models he brought from Europe and distributed them to the readers across the Russian empire. In many ways, the Russian example proves Darnton right: this was the same 'intensive reading' that transferred from religious texts to secular ones. However, the new use of intensive reading suggested many additional situations in which it might be applied, and thus required a significant increase in the number of models that could match the growing complexity and unpredictability of a reality that demanded its spontaneous but well-rehearsed emotional reactions. Karamzin's books produced fertile ground for a paradigm shift in the approach of the general readership that could be still called a revolution—albeit in a sense different than that implied by the concept that Darnton successfully refuted.

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33 *Modest i Sofiia,* Ibid., 292. In the volume this story is not attributed. The author is V. Perevozchikov.

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THE DEPICTION OF READERS AND PUBLICS IN RUSSIAN PERIODICALS, 1769-1839

Bella Grigoryan

What can the interdisciplinary field of Russian imperial cultural studies learn from the periodicals produced roughly between 1769 and 1839? To be sure, the answers to this question are many. This chapter takes as its point of departure the rather straightforward notion that these periodicals can tell us something about the meanings that accrued to reading as a cultural practice in imperial Russia. The pages that follow are devoted mainly to an interpretive survey of the depiction of readers and reading publics on the pages of periodicals. Predictably, reading—as represented in the press—had a broad range of meanings that could be political, social, cultural, literary, aesthetic, etc. Since we are dealing with a lengthy time span of some seventy years, the specific political, aesthetic or socio-cultural meanings that adhered to reading at various historical moments are liable to shift and to change. However, certain tendencies remain stable enough to observe in a systematic fashion.

It is this chapter's chief contention that the periodicals under study—each in its own way and each to a different degree—tell a story about the gradual articulation of the Russian cultural middle understood in multiple keys, as a demographic category, a potential political experience or designation, and an aesthetic or cultural register. In addition to this, in depicting their audiences the periodicals here under study tend to showcase (and, implicitly, to invite) various forms of sociability and participation in the empire's cultural and political life. Reading and the participatory culture that attends it appear to become increasingly democratic. Here it warrants underscoring that all of the constituent elements of my argument about the representation of

reading in the Russian press—e.g., the sense of a lively middling public, the sense of political communities—are to be understood as rhetorical simulations or constructs that developed in the journalistic segment of the period's public discourse, a full exploration of whose no doubt complex, polyvalent and multi-directional relation to a historical or documentary context falls outside the confines of this paper.[1]

Throughout this chapter I have chosen to foreground such concepts as the 'middle' and the 'middling' for these terms' potential to adumbrate, without overlapping, two categories that have been important in discussions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print culture in the European polities to the west of Russia: the middlebrow and the middleclass. Some disclaimers are necessary before going forward. No Russian middle class existed as a legal category. Russian subjects were inscribed into social estates (in Russian, *soslovie*): the nobility, the merchantry, the townspeople (*meshchanstvo*), the clergy, and the peasantry.[2] For this reason the very category of class, indeed the very word class, has been avoided in much Russian literary and historical scholarship. And I am not unsympathetic to eschewing the word "class" itself. Nonetheless, especially in such eminently middlebrow spheres of discourse as conduct books and domestic advice literature, children's books as well as periodicals of various stripes, many major Russian cultural figures described their audiences as middling. Russian studies has done relatively little to acknowledge and to interpret the middling people discussed in Russian public discourse.[3] What might we learn from the Russian middle? With more extensive study than can be accomplished in one essay, whose objective is to provide a survey of a rather long period, the appearance of a Russian middling culture and public—even solely as a discursive simulation—has the potential to make the Russian imperial social and political

1 My understanding of cultural registers and the cultural middle comes, first of all, from various works by Pierre Bourdieu, including *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. R. Nice (London, 1984) and *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, trans. S. Emanuel (Stanford, 1996). My thinking about the rhetorical constitution of the Russian reading public is shaped, in part, by M. Frazier, *Romantic Encounters: Writers, Readers and the Library for Reading* (Stanford, 2007).

2 Lest the impression form that the estates allowed for no social mobility, I should point the reader to Alison K. Smith, whose research shows both the flexibility and the lasting significance of the estates system in Russian imperial life. See A. K. Smith, *For the Common Good and Their Own Well-Being: Social Estates in Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2014).

3 As Julie Buckler points out, "the literary middle has been an object of abuse, reviled as the refuge of vulgar epigones, where 'pure' aristocratic and folk cultures are contaminated by market influences." She continues to note that more generally in Russian studies "the 'middle' represents a kind of conceptual outpost, so vexed is this notion for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature, social life, and urban geography." J. A. Buckler, *Mapping St. Petersburg: Imperial Text and Cityshape* (Princeton, 2005), 5. My preference for the term "middling" is prompted, in part, by Katherine Pickering Antonova, *An Ordinary Marriage: The World of a Gentry Family in Provincial Russia* (Oxford, 2013). All segments of Russian middling culture of the imperial period remain understudied. On advice literature see C. Kelly, *Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Conduct and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin* (Oxford, 2001).

imaginary appear less like a special case in the European context. As will be discussed in greater detail towards the end of this chapter, the simulation of an active middling readership on the pages of Russian imperial periodicals should prompt us to re-think the contours and parameters of the Russian pre-political public sphere and, to a limited extent, also to re-examine scholarly assumptions about the linkage between print capitalism and liberal-democratic political culture. For a range of reasons (censorship, chief among them) Russian public discourse tended to imagine communities of loyal subjects and to cultivate virtual social spaces that had a largely monarchist, not oppositional, orientation towards the state. Despite the limits placed upon public discourse, this quasi- or pre-political public sphere was imagined as a robustly social space. The chief consequence of this process was the rhetorical articulation of a middling cultural sphere. This evolving discursive space also had an impact on the development of various cultural forms. Thus, this chapter may be read in relation to the main milestones of Russian literary history, moving from the breakdown of the neoclassical generic system in the second half of the eighteenth century towards the early glimmers of realism in the late 1830s. In this narrative, too, the middling as a conceptual category—now understood as an aesthetic and cultural register, rather than a demographic designation—will prove helpful.

The chronological boundaries of this essay are determined by two epochal events in the history of Russian periodical publishing: the launch of a generous handful of satirical weeklies in 1769 at Catherine II's prompting at one end and the re-launch of the journal *Otechestvennye zapiski* (*Fatherland Notes*) under Andrei Kraevskii's editorship in 1839 at the other.[4] The first event has been viewed as a watershed moment that inaugurated the first major period in the history of Russian journalism.[5] The re-launch of *Otechestvennye zapiski* is likewise important. The periodical that would come to employ the era's most important critic, Vissarion Belinskii, in a venture characterized by a high level of professionalism and a good deal of commercial success, announced the dawn of the thick journals (*tolstye zhurnaly*), which would reconfigure Russian cultural production for the period between the 1840s and 1880s.

Rather than to provide a detailed, encyclopedic and truly exhaustive study of every journal and newspaper produced between 1769 and 1839, I have opted for a summarizing and somewhat episodic treatment that gives an overview of the main trends that are to be noted during this lengthy period. Following some observations about general trends, the discussion in the pages below commences with the satirical weeklies of 1769 to consider more closely the publics described by Nikolai Novikov and, later, Nikolai

4 Previously, the journal was edited by Pavel Svin'in.

5 G. Marker, "The creation of journals and the profession of letters in the eighteenth century," in D. Martinsen (ed.), *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge, 1997), 11-33.

Karamzin, before moving on to the transformation of the Russian public both during and immediately following the Napoleonic campaigns and the War of 1812. The concluding portion of the essay turns to the audiences cultivated by Russia's first fully professional journalists: e.g., Faddei Bulgarin, Nikolai Grech, Nikolai Polevoi, Osip Senkovskii. I begin with an overview of some of the methodological problems in studying the history of reading during this period, then move on to a summary of some of the available data about periodical readers, then trace the rise of middling culture and middling readers in the Russian press. I conclude with a few words about the significance of these findings for the history of Russian literature and the mutually imbricated rise of the press and the novel as constituents of a discursive sphere that approximated an early iteration of middlebrow culture.

First, a few words about methodology. To speak about *the* Russian reading public during the vast and dynamic period between 1769 and 1839 would be inadvisable for multiple reasons. To begin with, even before one gets to the question of publics, there is the impossibility of defining a representative or average reader across a broad range of reading abilities and practices during this time. It seems reasonable to propose that the person who read a calendar once ought not be grouped together with someone who subscribed to multiple periodicals, bought books, and both lent and borrowed reading materials. But even if we limit the discussion to relatively regular, even something like systematic readers (keeping in mind the limited extent to which such habits can be glimpsed and reconstructed for this period on a large scale), the publics may well remain multiple, if not without areas of overlap among them, since different segments of Russian cultural production served different audiences. For example, were we to take a synchronic view of the Russian book market, say, during the year 1827, we may well wonder whether the readership of lowbrow and popular fare (e.g., chivalric romances, anecdotes, songbooks) should be treated in the same breath with the public nearer the opposite end of the spectrum, the readers of almanacs, the handsome costly booklets purchased by society people of reasonably high erudition and means during the 1820s and early 1830s.[6] Rather than to suggest an ossified division between high and low cultures and their consumers (I lack both the inclination and the data set for such an assertion), I would point out from the start that given the diversity of meanings that could accrue to reading as a cultural practice, in my own discussion of reading and publics, I mean to refer not to some specific, representative or historically verifiable and cohesive social formation, but

6 For essays that offer perceptive interpretive surveys of the place of the almanac in Russian book culture and of lowbrow literature (*nizovaia literatura*) and its public, see A. I. Reitblat, *Kak Pushkin vyshel v genii: istoriko-sotsiologicheskie ocherki o knizhnoi kul'ture Pushkinskoi epokhi* (Moscow, 2001), 70-81, 157-181. As Reitblat points out, by the 1830s almanacs became less a rarified and more a fashionable item and thus approached the middle register of culture. This was part of a broader phenomenon that enabled the rise of the middle.

rather, largely, to a series of rhetorical constructs, whose very relationship to a documentary context is complex, not least for the reasons outlined above.

That all texts have the capacity to shape their audiences has long been a critical commonplace. Periodicals go about the business of forging their readerships in a markedly explicit fashion. The public, or the Russian *publika*, is a frequent topic of discussion. Especially during periods of large-scale transformations in the field of cultural production, journals and newspapers register and address the shifting contours of their audiences directly and sometimes quite systematically. The pages that follow treat the gradual and largely discursive constitution of a middling Russian public to which the main journals of the later years under study explicitly addressed their contents. Although my interest lies with the representation of readers, in the pages that follow I provide an aggregate picture of a data-based history of reading in Russia, using various sources—e.g., circulation figures, subscription lists, paper trails left by readers—to supply a necessarily incomplete and imperfect context for my observations.

The source base for studying reading and readers during this period is rather uneven, especially if one wishes to give a systematic overview. The available data include circulation figures for a good number of journals, fairly detailed lists of subscribers for some of the eighteenth-century publications, the periodicals' own often copious statements about their readerships, and such personal documents as epistolary correspondence, diaries, and reminiscences. None of these source sets provides an unproblematic and complete account of the period's readers. Diaries, correspondence, and reminiscences tend to be heavily inflected by the cultural and generic imperatives of each epoch. Periodicals are liable to describe a hoped-for, rather than an actual state of affairs. Subscription lists, while useful, grant access to what may well be just a small (or, not representative) fraction of a given periodical's readership and an unquestioning reliance on them has the potential to mislead and give a skewed picture. Circulation figures, both when impressive and poor, often have a good deal to do with such institutional circumstances of publishing as the vagaries of censorship, imperial patronage, and the editorial staff's relationship with the authorities. In other words, circulation figures give a sense of the fare that was available (and this in itself is important), but these numerical data may or may not correspond with what readers wished to read or read with interest and gusto or, for that matter, read at all.

How much do we know about numbers? On the whole, it is clear (and wholly unsurprising) that the number of people who read periodicals grew during the years covered by this chapter. In the second half of the eighteenth century the subscriber base of a given periodical was likely to be counted in the few hundreds, and sometimes even numbers in the high teens, approaching one hundred, were deemed something like respectable. Having

some degree of unofficial imperial patronage and state support helped matters, but only to a certain extent. At its inception in 1769 the Catherinean *Vsiakaia vsiachina* (*All Sorts of Everything*) came out in a print run of about 1500 for the first several issues; this number declined to 500 copies for the last six issues. Its contemporary, Nikolai Novikov's *Truten'* (*The Drone*), maintained similar numbers, although its readership appears not to have declined as sharply. The rest of the satirical journals that were founded circa 1769 tended to have smaller subscriber bases, measured in the few hundreds.[7] Most of them were very quick to cease publication. Judging by the available numbers, it seems likely that only a few hundred people could be counted among those who read satirical journals regularly and were willing to pay for the pastime. In fact, something akin to this situation—more reading fare than the period's public was able to purchase and thereby support—will persist, albeit on a shifting scale, throughout the period under consideration.

But the contemporary readers ought not, perhaps, be the only ones to be counted. Periodicals were read by members of subsequent generations. Nikolai Karamzin began his journalistic career under Novikov's guidance, as a member of the editorial staff (along with A. Petrov) of *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* (*Children's Reading for the Heart and Mind*), Russia's first children's periodical, which was appended to the *Moskovskie vedomosti* (*Moscow News*), then under Novikov's editorship. In his novel-memoir *The Childhood Years of Bagrov-the-Grandson* (*Detskie gody Bagrova-vnuka*) Sergei Aksakov recalls reading *Detskoe chtenie* with an almost obsessive enthusiasm.[8] Like his alter ego the young boy Bagrov, Aksakov would have first read *Detskoe chtenie*, which was published in the 1780s, sometime in the early 1800s, in other words about ten to fifteen years after the initial publication of the issues. Such was the popularity of Russia's first children's journal that it saw multiple re-printings. Moreover, re-printings aside, to keep periodicals as part of one's library and to bind them into sturdy and handsome books was a common practice not limited to literary journals. Another contemporary recalled the practice of keeping issues of Andrei Bolotov's agricultural journal *Ekonomicheskii magazin* (*Economic Magazine*) bound into books as a useful reference source for the enterprising landowner.[9] Like *Detskoe chtenie, Ekonomicheskii magazin* was also appended to Novikov's *Moskovskie vedomosti*. It seems reasonable to suppose that these publications—target as they did specific sorts of audiences, children and parents in one case, active landowners interested in agricultural improvements in the other—probably garnered additional readers for many years

7 Marker, "The creation of journals," 18-19.

8 While at work on his novel-memoir Aksakov is known to have borrowed a full set of the periodical and claimed to be disappointed with it. S. T. Aksakov, *Sobranie sochinenii,* 4 vols. (Moscow, 1955-1956), vol. 1, 627.

9 A. Butkovskaia, "Rasskazy babushki," *Istoricheskii vestnik*, 18 (1884), 594-631.

after their initial publication. The longevity of these periodicals as library items should complicate our understanding of a given journal's readership, since once read, what we might call old issues were likely to go *not* to the dustbin, but to the bookshelf.

When it comes, again, to contemporary numerical data, it appears as though the situation did not improve much in the 1790s. Anthony Glenn Cross reports that according to the lists published in *Moskovskii zhurnal* (*The Moscow Journal*), Karamzin had some 258 subscribers in the first year and 274 in 1792. Cross goes on to point out that "[o]f journals contemporary with Karamzin's, Krylov's *Pochta dukhov* (*Spirits' Postbag*) (1789) had some 80 subscribers and his *Zritel'* (*Spectator*, 1792) had 169."[10] Karamzin's next major venture, *Vestnik Evropy* (*The Messenger of Europe*), was first published in 600 copies "but was so successful that the first number was republished and the monthly printing doubled to twelve hundred copies."[11] Just a few years later, Sergei Glinka's *Ruskoi vestnik* (*Russian Messenger*) had some 750 known subscribers in 1811 and just over 500 in 1813, when its popularity began to wane precipitously. The Nikolaevan era witnessed a decisive broadening of the subscriber base. By the 1830s a very small number of privately owned periodicals were able to amass a subscriber base of a few thousand readers.

Who were these readers? When it comes to a data-based reconstruction of this audience, for the eighteenth-century periodicals, published subscriber lists have provided a significant source.[12] Both numerical and qualitative analyses of the available evidence about the reading of journals during the second half of the eighteenth century suggest that the majority of the audience was comprised of the gentry. (Here, again, it would be good to bear in mind that subscriber lists give an incomplete picture).[13] As Gary Marker has put it, judging by the subscriber lists the regular readers of eighteenth-century journals "came from the very ranks of the relatively well-educated, affluent and socially privileged elite that had produced the journalists themselves."[14]

The composition of the reading public likely diversified some in the coming decades, to move beyond the socially privileged elite and to comprise the lower echelons of the gentry, including state servitors and provincial land-

10 A. G. Cross, *N. M. Karamzin: A Study of His Literary Career, 1783-1803* (Carbondale, 1971), 64.

11 Cross, *N. M. Karamzin*, 216.

12 The practice of subscription was not limited to periodicals. Potential readers were invited to purchase by subscription and thus, in a sense, to sponsor, forthcoming books as well as periodicals. For an incisive study of subscription as a cultural practice during the second half of the eighteenth century, see A. Iu. Samarin, *Tipografshchiki i knigochety: Ocherki po istorii knigi v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2013), 52-80.

13 G. Marker, "Novikov's Readers," *The Modern Language Review*, 77, 4 (October 1982), 894-905.

14 Marker, "The Creation of journals," 24.

owners, possibly the upper echelons of the merchantry and even townspeople. The likely make-up of the journals' public expanded both numerically and demographically, which is to say (cautiously) that the narrative below about the rise of the Russian middle may have had a documentary basis that would be better treated by more pointedly historical scholarship.

Nevertheless, the growth and diversification of the reading public should not be overstated. Throughout the years covered by this essay, periodicals remained costly, even prohibitively so, for many if not for most potential readers. The personal correspondence of the educated segment of the population at the turn of the century is peppered with references to subscribing to various kinds of periodicals, as well as to books. The highly prolific writer and agronomist Andrei Bolotov is known to have been frugal in general, but such an avid reader that on books his household spent almost lavishly, especially so for the time period. Bolotov subscribed to a broad range of available periodicals, both Russian and foreign, with a particular preference for German fare. In 1804 he reported to his son that he had finally managed to do something the two of them had long hoped to accomplish. The Bolotovs were about to join two neighboring families with whom they would pool funds, eighteen rubles per household, in order to subscribe collectively to "1) newspapers, 2) a political journal, 3) *vestnik Evropy* [sic, messenger of Europe], 4) *Moskovskii kur'er Merkuriia* [the Moscow courier of Mercury], 5) *vestnik Severnyi* [the northern Messenger]." He also hoped to subscribe to "a Petersburg journal and the new news journal," although about the latter he quipped that "God knows what sort of journal it will be."[15] Bolotov wished to engage a fourth person to take part in the venture, but averred, in the meantime, that even their current set would give the three households plenty to read. Bolotov's example demonstrates that even to one of the century's most avid readers, who was willing to spend a good deal of money, periodicals remained very expensive. Therefore, the practice of subscribing collectively and sharing newspapers and journals was appealing and, judging by the available evidence, quite common.

A roughly analogous case may be observed decades later in the household of a lesser-known but no less interesting nobleman, Andrei Ivanovich Chikhachev of Vladimir province (see Golovina, *Belles-Lettres and the Literary Interests of Middling Landowners*, vol. 2). In a highly engaging micro-historical account of the Chikhachevs' daily life in the first half of the nineteenth century, Katherine Antonova demonstrates that reading occupied a central position in the family's habits. The pater familias and his wife Natalia Ivanovna were avid readers who frequently—indeed, routinely—shared their books and periodicals with their social circle and above all with Natalia's brother, Iakov Chernavin. The two households lived both near

15 Quoted in O. E. Glagoleva, "A. T. Bolotov kak chitatel'," *Rukopisnaia i pechatnaia kniga v Rossii. Problemy sozdaniia i rasprostraneniia. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Leningrad, 1988), 157.

and far enough from each other to warrant the keeping of what they called a notebook correspondence. More generally, in the extensive paper trail they left behind the family members recorded reading everything that came into their hands, as well as matters pertaining to sharing, and sometimes quarreling over, the main periodical publications of their time, including *Severnaia pchela* (*The Northern Bee*), the pater familias's favorite, and *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* (*The Library for Reading*), the mater familias's favorite. Antonova documents family disputes over such questions as who gets to read the latest issue of a given periodical first and who gets it second and for how long each party should be permitted to hold onto the item in question. A year's subscription to *Severnaia pchela* cost fifty rubles. One could subscribe to *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* for the same price. Both periodicals were deemed rather costly. In 1834 Chikhachev and Chernavin considered splitting the subscription cost of *Biblioteka dlia chteniia*. As Antonova explains, there is little reason to think that the Chikhachevs and their circle were extraordinary. If anything, she presents thoroughly convincing evidence to propose that the Vladimir middling nobles (and my own choice of middling is prompted, in part, by Antonova's preference for the term to describe her landowners) were quite unremarkable, even something like average.

All of this suggests that given the common practice of sharing periodicals, both circulation figures and subscriber data may only indicate partly and in an incomplete manner the contours of the actual and likely readers of Russian journals and newspapers. For this reason it is sometimes suggested that the subscription or circulation rates be multiplied by a factor of x (and it should probably be up to historians to set the value of x) in order to arrive at something closer to the size of an actual readership.[16] This means that the circulation figures given throughout this essay should be taken as estimates that, at least in some cases, are quite a bit smaller than a given publication's actual readership.

In addition to the available contextual and numerical information about reading practices at this time, the periodicals themselves provide a good deal in the way of statements if not about their actual, historical readership then about the hoped-for audience that the literati cultivated, simulated or modeled on the pages of their publications. Here we begin to move from data to representations.

What did reading mean in the context of Catherine II's encouragement of the Russian satirical weeklies in 1769? Prompted by royal support and example, a number of journals followed the lead of the empress's *Vsiakaia vsiachina*;[17] several of them imitated its title—e.g., *Smes'* (*Medley*), *I To, i sio* (*This and That*), *Ni To, ni sio* (*Neither This Nor That*), pointing, at least

16 I should mention that I am not including institutional (sometimes charitable) subscriptions in this account. Doing so would complicate things even farther.

17 Although nominally edited by Grigorii Kozitskii, Catherine's secretary, the journal was widely known to belong to the empress.

implicitly, to hodgepodge, varied contents that begin to approximate the middle cultural register. Among these satirical weeklies Novikov's *Truten'* may be singled out for the fact that its title did not allude to *Vsiakaia vsiachina* in the manner of its contemporaries. Instead, Novikov preferred to highlight continuity in the Russian periodical tradition by referencing the title of Alexander Sumarokov's *Trudoliubivaia pchela* (*Busy Bee*) and relying on the erudition of his readership.[18]

The empress's own *Vsiakaia vsiachina* has been read as a "a surprisingly light-hearted but quite legitimate sequel to the *Nakaz*," Catherine's instruction to the Legislative Commission of 1767 and the chief legislative document of the early years of her reign.[19] To a limited degree, both on the pages of *Vsiakaia vsiachina* and elsewhere in the satirical journalistic milieu (notably, in Novikov's periodicals) certain kinds of political preoccupations—processed through the Enlightenment's didactic tools and in the context of polite sociability—loom rather large. By far the best-known content of the satirical weeklies are the discussions of the cultivation of virtue and the eradication of vice that gave rise to the polemics, much discussed in Soviet criticism, between *Vsiakaia vsiachina* and *Truten'*. Above all, however, these journals depicted communication, exchanges, sociability and communities that had various political meanings.

The weekly journal's format may have been well-suited to Catherine's aims of encouraging cooperation between the state and its subjects. This seems particularly significant if we do take the journals of 1769 as, in some sense, a continuation of the *Nakaz* and hence a venture that may be viewed as an attribute or an artifact of state policy, a way to encourage public discourse, to a limited extent. That Catherine's reign (especially in its early years) was characterized by the simulation of scenarios of cooperation and dialog between the ruler and the cultural elite has been shown compellingly by Cynthia Whittaker.[20] The satirical journals then may be viewed as one among many other avenues or sites for state-and-subject cooperation and exchange. (Other such avenues would include, for example, the theater).[21]

More specifically, the journals may be viewed as a way to engage the upper classes in edifying dialog. Russian male nobles had been freed from obligatory state service by Peter III's manifesto of 1762. Service would remain a cultural and social necessity (if no longer a legal obligation) both until and well after Catherine II's 1785 Charter to the Nobility, which confirmed the

18 The journal's epigraph, "They work while you consume their labor," was taken from a fable by Sumarokov and likewise paid homage to Novikov's predecessor.

19 W. G. Jones, *Nikolay Novikov. Enlightener of Russia* (Cambridge, 1984), 19.

20 C. H. Whittaker, *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue* (DeKalb, IL, 2003).

21 E. Kimerling Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas in Russian Enlightenment Theater* (DeKalb, IL, 2003). My preference for the modifier "pre-political" to describe the Russian public sphere during the period under study is prompted, in part, by Wirtschafter.

privileges granted in 1762.[22] In the long aftermath of the nobility's so-called emancipation from service, there arose a degree of anxiety about gentry freedom and about free time as such. The journals of the period, inasmuch as they were to serve an instructive function (recall the neo-classical formulation: *dolce et utile*), may have been responding to a set of fears about potentially unproductive male nobles, by promoting an ethos of usefulness among the elite and by offering what Rodolphe Baudin calls "proper forms of leisure (see BAUDIN, "Reading in the age of Catherine II", in the present volume.")[23]

The journals could serve as an introduction to reading regularly. Because they were short and flimsy, the weeklies were relatively easy to produce and to procure. Their brevity and quite motley contents may have appeared inviting to readers unused to serious fare, a possible target audience.[24] The journals expended considerable textual resources to depict their own (hoped-for) readers. In this, the satirical weeklies followed their predecessors, the most influential among these being Richard Steele and Joseph Addison's *The Spectator*. Additionally, such English periodicals as *The Tatler* and *The Guardian* were widely read by the Russian literati of the mid- and late-eighteenth century and re-workings of articles published in these and other journals abound in the Russian press of the time. Like the English satirical journals the Russian periodicals likewise contained depictions of a simulated, quite lively audience, since the inclusion of an active public as an object of representation was a very common generic feature of the English moral weekly.

Novikov's *Truten'* showcased a purportedly rather diverse readership that included serious, educated men, intelligent as well as frivolous women, provincials, and excitable fops, among others. The editor Mr. Drone [*Gospodin Truten'*] was depicted as an emphatically middling, as opposed to an upper

22 In *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia* Marc Raeff argued that state service remained the nobility's "normal path to status, greater prosperity and full participation in the cultural life of Russia." M. Raeff, *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia: The Eighteenth-Century Nobility* (New York, 1966), 113. Michael Confino, in his critical response to this book, took issue with Raeff's methodology and pointed out that a great deal remains understudied when it comes to the diversity of gentry life and sensibilities in the second half of the eighteenth century. M. Confino, "Histoire et psychologie: A propos de la noblesse russe au xviiie siècle," in *Annales. Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, 6 (1967), 1163-1205. See especially pages 1193-1199 for Confino's discussion of the diversity among the noble estate understood in financial terms, and the implication that Raeff's findings would apply to a rather small elite (Confino puts it at 3%, or the "high nobility," or *haute noblesse*). Debates regarding the effects of the 1762 manifesto persist. Carol Leonard provides a detailed numerical account of nobles residing in specific provinces in order to show that both immediately after Peter III's measure and in the aftermath of Catherine II's provincial reforms during the 1770s "more and more [nobles] lived on their estates after a brief period in service." C. Leonard, *Reform and Regicide. The Reign of Peter III in Russia* (Bloomington, Indianapolis, 1993), 65.

23 See in this volume, BAUDIN, "Reading in the Times of Catherine II".

24 Jones, *Nikolay Novikov*, 20.

crust, nobleman both in cultural formation and fortune. That Mr. Drone is said to have begun his venture, because, as a non-serving nobleman, he hoped to be of service to the fatherland amplifies the earlier point about the Catherine-era periodicals as a means to foster an ethos of civic usefulness among the nobility and, perhaps, well beyond it.

The main vehicle for simulating a readership figured as a community came in the satirical weeklies' most productive generic forms: letters addressed to friends, family, other associates, or to the editor. In such journals as *Truten'* and *Vsiakaia vsiachina* a good deal of the contents were epistolary in form. The journals were organized in such a way that the central editorial personae in charge—e.g., Mr. Drone for *Truten'*, the Editor or "messieurs the authors" (*gospoda sochiniteli*) for *Vsiakaia vsiachina*—acted as a charismatic center around whom the fictitious contributors to the journal gathered, forming a kind of social club (again, as in the case of their English predecessors). As various fictitious contributors were shown to be writing missives to the editorial offices, these journals simulated and modeled forms of polite and enlightened sociability. Novikov's periodicals also contained brief verbal portraits, as if drawn from life. This practice of portraiture yielded a gallery of social types and simulated another sort of community, if not of readers, then more broadly the social world of the period, which was comprised of at least potential readers.

Despite the documentary evidence that these eighteenth-century journals were largely consumed by the upper echelons of the gentry, some journalists tended sometimes to depict their publics as both larger and more diverse than available data suggest. Of Novikov's ventures the journal *Zhivopisets* (*The Painter*) was among the most successful: it went through five printings, a very high number for the period. Novikov explained the success of *Zhivopisets* by claiming, in the foreword to the third edition, that townspeople—members of the *meshchanstvo* estate—liked it; he went on to align his journal with the so-called lowbrow literature or *nizovaia literatura* of the period, which, he noted, boasted many titles that had gone through multiple printings.[25] (And indeed, repeated publication was seen—as it continues to be seen by many scholars today with good reason—as fairly convincing evidence of popularity). Novikov's assertion should not be taken as a statement of fact; again, the available evidence suggests that the readership would have been highly unlikely to include *meshchane* in any significant way. But the gesture itself is interesting for the extent to which it registers the uniqueness of the Russian case in a European context: the reading public for analogous publications in Western Europe was beginning to be predominantly middleclass or bourgeois. (The appearance, much earlier in the century, of such periodicals as *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* responded to the upwardly mobile middleclass readers' need for various sorts of edification,

25 N. I. Novikov, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1951), 96.

not least an introduction to high or aristocratic culture). Might Novikov have been hoping to transplant a similar sort of middling public and culture to the Russian journalistic market by simulating its existence? And, relatedly, might Novikov have been prompted more by his awareness of the situation in Europe, than by a Russian documentary reality? Perhaps. Ultimately, both in the aggregate view of the public as a near-encyclopedic community of social types and in the insistence on the presence of *meshchane* among the readership, Novikov's ventures come very close to depicting various iterations of the cultural middle.

The subsequent generation of journalists would continue, occasionally, to imagine a markedly democratic readership. Some decades later Nikolai Karamzin would write about readers even more democratic than Novikov's *meshchane*. In the much-consulted "About the Sale of Books and the Love for Reading in Russia," a programmatic essay published in his *Vestnik Evropy*, Karamzin reported that merchants and townspeople (*meshchane*) had a particular taste for newspapers. He also described still commoner people, illiterate bakers, who pool their money to purchase a paper and hear news of Austrian and French battles read aloud to them. In inviting commoners to participate in the empire's public and political life Karamzin's rhetoric reaches far beyond the nobility in a way that, again, approximates the demographic middle (merchants, townspeople). Ultimately, it would be prudent to view the rhetorical simulation of both the middling and common readers as a reflection of Karamzin's and Novikov's awareness of the West European preponderance of middleclass readers and their cautious interest in the cultivation of a more democratic enlightenment at home. Lastly, since letters and missives of various sorts figured quite prominently among the contents of *Vestnik Evropy*, including articles that were authored by Karamzin but appeared under various *noms de plume* as purported contributions addressed to the journal or the editor from a relatively ordinary reader, this journal, too, actively produced a discursive simulation of its public.

The tendency to foreground the readership as a rhetorical construct intensified in the coming years, especially with the rise of patriotically minded journals during the Napoleonic Wars. Two journals deserve particular mention here: Sergei Glinka's *Ruskoi vestnik*, which was founded in 1808, and Grech's *Syn otechestva* (*Son of the Fatherland*), which was launched in 1812. In *Ruskoi vestnik* Glinka devoted a good deal of space to letters to the editor and rousing accounts of war-time patriotic acts performed by people from all walks of life, including landowners, merchants, and peasants from various regions of Russia. Again, this multi-estate (in the sense of *soslovie*) aggregate picture of the nation veered (if only implicitly) towards the notion that in sharing the discursive space of the journal these diverse contributors may have co-inhabited middling culture.

It would be difficult to determine whether it was Glinka's insistence on discussing and depicting the Russian provinces that yielded the impressive geographic spread of his readership. Among the roughly 750 subscribers in 1811 fewer than three hundred lived in Moscow, while the remaining five hundred or so resided all over the empire. It will not be surprising that the conservatism of Glinka's *Ruskoi vestnik* was not popular in Petersburg. In 1813, a year during which Glinka printed the ranks of subscribers, the overwhelming majority were nobles, with some merchants, very few clergy and one Siberian townsperson. Alexander Martin, my source for the numbers I have given above, calls Glinka's audience "broadly representative of the literate public, with the exception of clergymen, who (perhaps because the *Vestnik* usually ignored religious topics) ordered only nine subscriptions."[26] Martin also points out that the main ideas propagated by Glinka's journal likely resounded with the provincial conservative nobility especially strongly. Glinka's journal is frequently juxtaposed with his occasional collaborator Fedor Rostopchin's rousing war-time pamphlets that featured crude Gallophobic sentiments and sought to incite the populace against Napoleon's troops and, ultimately, all things French. It is true that there is some overlap in tone as well as in content. And perhaps it is fitting that both were ventures of the moment. After the War of 1812 Glinka's journal began to lose popularity; even by 1813 it is difficult to make a case for *Ruskoi vestnik* as a major force in the year's journalistic milieu.

Whereas Glinka's journalistic career more or less ended with the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars (that is, he continued to work on various projects, but would never regain the prominence of 1808-1813), Grech went on to become one of the most successful journalists of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. And yet their periodicals were, at least initially, quite similar. *Ruskoi vestnik* and *Syn otechestva* shared the task of providing patriotically minded fare in 1812. The journals used quite similar tactics in depicting their audiences. Both *Ruskoi vestnik* and *Syn otechestva* published stories about persons experiencing hardship and announced various charitable causes and listed the names (and sometimes ranks and locations) of contributors towards these causes. Both *Ruskoi vestnik* and *Syn otechestva* printed a good deal in the way of purportedly personal correspondence that dealt in one way or in another with the trials of war. Both asked for epistolary contributions from the reading public. Both journals cultivated an ethos of nation-wide participation in the empire's wartime effort. In this way both *Ruskoi vestnik* and *Syn otechestva* provided on their pages a systematic representation of a reading public avidly engaged in wartime patriotic socia-

26 My numbers above come from Martin. The numbers for 1813 are as follows: 451 nobles, 52 merchants, and 1 townsperson. A. Martin, *Romantics, Reformers, Reactionaries: Russian Conservative Thought and Politics in the Reign of Alexander I* (DeKalb, IL, 1997), 80-81.

bility that took place in the discursive space of the Russian cultural middle register.

Like their predecessors, these periodicals, too, tended to depict a heterogeneous and even a democratic public. Occasionally, *Syn otechestva* liked to imagine even peasants who read a great deal. In an early issue in 1812, there is an anecdote about an officer asking peasants whether they are afraid of the French. The peasants reply guilelessly: they do not fear anyone, because "our *kirilovtsy*" are fighting the French all over the provinces. The editorial voice explains that "the kind peasants, having read in the papers (*nachitavshis' v gazetakh*) a great deal about Spanish guerillas" call the locally formed troop brigades "*kirillovtsy*," in a peasants' colloquial perversion of the foreign-sounding (to the Russian ear) word "*guerilla*."[27] The very fact that they have come up with this linguistic perversion, the very fact that the newspaper's report has entered and altered their peasant vocabulary, means that, however improbably from an historical perspective, these peasant-soldiers are newspaper readers. This gesture may be viewed in the context of Karamzin's note about common, illiterate bakers who gather to hear the paper read. In both cases, the periodicals invite a degree of (thoroughly loyalist) democratic participation in the empire's political life. While it is hard to say just how varied the actual audience of *Syn otechestva* would have been, the fact that the journal is known to have included print reproductions of woodcuts (mainly on the theme of the 1812 war) suggests at least a desire to attract a diverse (and maybe not an entirely literate) public to whom these illustrations might have appealed.

There is memoiristic evidence that the cultural elite read it. Fillip Vigel' writes about *Syn otechestva* with characteristic wit and dismissiveness. He begins by pointing out that the period's extant periodicals did not know how to report, or perhaps did not dare write, about the politics of the moment. To a certain extent, *Syn otechestva* was established in order to fill this gap. Vigel writes:

> In the beginning of December I was already reading greedily [Grech's] weak little booklets (*zhiden'kie knizhki*), which were filled with expressive, even rabid articles. There were some people who found that this was after meat, mustard (*posle uzhina gorchitsa*), but not so for those who burned with selfless love for the fatherland, valued its honor and hoped to see its absolute glory. For their righteous ire this journal provided great sustenance.[28]

27 "Smes'," *Syn Otechestva*, 5 (1812), 212.

28 Vigel's "*posle uzhina gorchitsa*" is the Russian translation of "*C'est de la moutarde après dîner*," meaning, in this context, heated talk when the occasion prompting strong feelings has long passed. F. F. Vigel', *Zapiski* (Munchen, 2005), 183.

Vigel speaks as a literary aristocrat of the Pushkin circle and so cannot help but betray a somewhat condescending attitude towards Grech and, later in the account, also towards his eventual collaborator Bulgarin. However, whatever his reservations (and no doubt his condescension has to do partly with both Grech's and Bulgarin's reputations as writers of a commercial and thoroughly middling orientation, at least one of whom [Bulgarin] was known widely to be an informant for the Third Section), Vigel' admits that *Syn otechestva* filled an important lacuna in the reporting of political content.

Grech's journal had been founded as a political publication: its stated purpose was to report military and, to a limited degree, political news, and thereby shape public opinion. But its contents veered decisively away from politics after the Napoleonic Wars, once the patriotic (and, to a degree, also the political) function of the journal had been exhausted. It became a literary and historical journal. Its evolution issued another invitation to a middling readership. In 1815 Grech introduced an important journalistic genre: the "*obozrenie*" or survey of Russian literature for a given year. Vissarion Belinskii is probably the most famous practitioner of this genre; he produced such surveys in the 1830s and 1840s. It is difficult to imagine Belinskii's career (or, for that matter, the Russian literary culture of his period) without these sweeping reviews. In the 1815 context, the very idea of reviewing the year's literary developments amounts to a gesture that serves a broader, potentially less refined readership, since new readers would stand to benefit a great deal from a systematic overview that may help them navigate a largely unfamiliar book market and cultural milieu.

In the years to come, Grech's long-time collaborator Faddei Bulgarin would underscore his preference for an audience comprised of people of the middling condition, using the phrase *srednee sostoianie* to refer to this segment of the population. In 1826 Bulgarin submitted a note to the Third Section describing the Russian public. He split it into four categories: grandees and wealthy people, middling people (*srednee sostoianie*), the poor (*nizhnee sostoianie*), and lastly academics and writers (*uchenye i literatory*). Bulgarin went on to suggest that when it came to a capacity to purchase and read books, the most important and most numerous among these groups were the middling estate, whom Bulgarin split further into the following categories: (a) well-to-do nobles who either serve the state or live in the country as landowners, (b) poor nobles educated in state institutions, (c) bureaucrats and petty officials, (d) wealthy merchants, industrialists and even townspeople.[29] Bulgarin reported that these people—the middling ones—effectively *were* the Russian public. They tended to do the vast majority of their reading in Russian (unlike the elite who continued to read in European languages) and they read a great deal in the way of periodicals, both newspapers and

29 A. I. Reitblat, *Vidok Figliarin. Pis'ma i agenturnye zapiski F.V. Bulgarina v III otdelenie* (Moscow, 1998), 45-46.

journals. Bulgarin opined that the authorities might make a more concerted effort to shape the opinions of precisely this segment of the population, which he saw as something like a coherent, corporate entity, the people of *srednee sostoianie* or middling condition. His own works—both journalistic and literary—served this population.

No discussion of Grech and Bulgarin would be complete without some treatment of *Severnaia pchela*, the newspaper, which was, for a host of different reasons, among the period's most popular privately owned periodicals. Its circulation is believed to have reached four thousand in the course of the 1830s, a rather high number for a private venture at this time.[30] Its success rested in part with the fact that Grech and Bulgarin were permitted to print political news and that they—in part thanks to Bulgarin's collaboration with the Third Section—were deemed sufficiently reliable to handle such content.[31] Again, this shows the degree to which the Nikolaevan censorship apparatus played a major role in shaping the period's public discourse. That Bulgarin's coziness with the state was far from unusual should be noted. As Abram Reitblat has shown, some form of collaboration with the Third Section was all but unavoidable for any major journalist wishing to report political content throughout the Pushkin period.[32] Additionally, it seems reasonable to propose that the newspaper's success had as much to do with the editors' ties to the Third Section as it did with their professionalism.

Much like the periodicals that preceded it, *Severnaia pchela* depicted its public on its pages. Both the readership and the contents of the paper were described as variously middling. Here is how *Severnaia pchela* wrote about its readership and the business of reading the paper in an article published in December of 1833:

> Who, nowadays, does not read newspapers and journals? From the grandee to the servant, from the director of a department to the lowest scribe, from the first-guild (*pervostateinyi*) merchant to the minor huckster, not to mention old Germans who, since the very creation of the world, or, pardon, since the very invention of newspapers and beer, have been great lovers of both! And then how can one not read newspapers! They have everything

30 N. Schleifman, "A Russian Daily Newspaper and Its New Readership: 'Severnaia pchela,' 1825-1840", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique*, vol. 28, 2 (Apr.-Jun., 1987), 134. Charles A. Ruud puts the newspaper's circulation at 7,000 in the thirties, observes a drop in the forties, and a new rise up to 10,000 during the Crimean War in the mid-fifties. Ch. A. Ruud, *Fighting Words: Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906* (Toronto, 1982), 65.

31 In the early 1830s Pushkin attempted to found what could have been a rival newspaper. Although he obtained official permit to publish, the project came to naught. His correspondence from the period shows the degree to which Bulgarin and Grech were understood to have a kind of monopoly on the publication of political news. See, B. Grigoryan, "The Poet Turned Journalist: Alexander Pushkin and the Reading Public," *Pushkin Review,* vol. 18 (2015-16), 61-84.

32 Reitblat, *Kak Pushkin*, 128-156.

> you want: here is a perfect omnibus et de omnibus. Here you will learn about all of the goings on: which English Minister had breakfast and which one gave a dinner; who has lost a dog; where Don Pedro's troops are headed; who has lost a wallet; who wishes to thank someone and who annuls a letter of authority and urges the public not to trust someone else; here you will hear discussions about Belleville-Oury and announcements about new shoe polish; arguments about the Spanish affairs, and quarrels regarding the Author so-and-so who does not put commas where they are needed; descriptions of virtuous people and estimates for the number of thieves, swindlers, and children of love and Nature in various parts of the world; here, as the Ancients used to say, is a real microcosm.[33]

It will surprise no one that *Severnaia pchela* claims that everyone is reading it. The contrast between high and low, between grandee and servant, suggests both a great demographic sweep and also, implicitly, a middling audience. As the newspaper admitted in the same article, the periodical's most typical reader was the office clerk who studies the paper before showing up at work at some *departament* in Nicholas I's famously bloated bureaucracy. Certainly *Severnaia pchela*'s reputation was that its public was, on the one hand, very much middling (the people of *srednee sostoianie* that Bulgarin had described in 1826, more or less) and also of a rather broad sweep, stretching, as it were, from the tsar himself to the lowest scribe.

This public was imagined to be what I would call pre-political. The same issue of *Severnaia pchela* included the following description of readers at a Petersburg pastry shop:

> Now have a look inside any pastry shop, in the morning, at midday, in the afternoon, in the evening; in particular, go to Wolff's by the Police Bridge one of these days. This is the gathering place of all our news aficionados; in every corner, at every table, by every window, people are sitting, eating, drinking, and reading the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*, *Journal des Débats*, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, *[Severnaia] Pchela*, *Syn otechestva*, [*Moskovskii*] *Telegraf*, *Teleskop*, and every other journal in the world, excepting, of course, those that, due to the vastness and bombast of their ideas, cannot pass the great gates of customs control at the border and must remain at our winter-quarters along with Dutch lace. Admittedly, in our pastry shops it is not customary to discuss, to argue, or even to speak much; people tend to look at each other in a sullen fashion, and for this reason it is rare to find anything

33 "Zhurnalizm," *Severnaia pchela*, December 28, 1833.

> engaging among the readers, other than their appearance, which may be thoughtful, angry, self-important, or egotistical.

To a reader of Habermas[34] and the public sphere scholarship that has followed his work, the over-populated pastry shop where people read without discussing looks almost too perfect in its suggestion of a reading revolution[35] come late and the rise of a resultant pre- or quasi-political peculiarly Nikolaevan iteration of the public sphere. It is a German coffeeshop minus the conversations. Do we take this to be a moment of tacit acknowledgement that the Russian public sphere is less lively, less given to discourse than those of the polities to the west of Nicholas' empire, whence issue the bombastic ideas that "cannot pass the great gates of customs control"? The Russian press at this time betrays a double orientation, on the one hand, for the endorsement of lively public discourse and political participation and, on the other hand, for semi-cautionary statements that seek to rein in the transformation of Russian public culture.

This double orientation is palpable in the article's next scene that describes how the newspaper is read at chancelleries and *departamenty*. The clerks read the paper together. One clerk reads while the others sharpen quills and so forth. We are told that,

> Once the newspapers have been read the debates commence: one [clerk] is willing to stake his own head that the Duchesse de Berry must be on the steamship Carlo Alberto, another keeps saying that Don Carlos will take the Spanish throne, a third is willing to bet that the party of the Carlists in France will be triumphant, everyone supports one side or another, presents his own evidence, and the debate, which sometimes goes too far, is left until the next issue of the newspaper, which will finally undo this Gordian knot.[36]

Thus, albeit rather cautiously, *Severnaia pchela* also simulated a lively culture of public debate about foreign news items. It thus represented a quasi-political public sphere characterized by a great deal of talk and the clerks' peculiar, heated workplace sociability that is both inspired and paced by each subsequent issue of the newspaper. In other words, the proliferation of autocratic print capitalism here is imagined both to enable heated

34 J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Th. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA, 1989).

35 The term "reading revolution" comes from Rolf Engelsing, "Die Perioden der Lesergeschichte in Der Neuzeit. Das statische Ausmass und die Soziokulturelle Bedeutung der Lektüre," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 10 (1969), cols. 944-1002. It has since been recalibrated and revised considerably.

36 "Zhurnalizm," *Severnaia pchela*, December 28, 1833.

political discourse and to set its pace, to delimit it and to contain it, as the clerks sheepishly await the next issue. Nikolaevan print capitalism, then, would seem both to enable the rise of public culture and discourse and to curb or control it.

In addition to explicitly staging the circumstances of its own reading, *Severnaia pchela* depicted its publics in multiple ways. Like other periodicals before it, the paper printed a good deal in the way of texts – reports, observations, letters to the editor – that were, purportedly, sent in by average people. (And in the case of *Severnaia pchela*, it seems likely that a good number of these contributions were authentic).[37] In this way, *Severnaia pchela* represented on its pages a public comprised of active ordinary contributors. Bulgarin himself is known to have written from the position of an average person. His most famous such persona—the Finnish landowner (*Chukhonskii pomeshchik*)—was immortalized in Gogol's Poprishchin's exclamation that "Kursk landowners write well." It will be recalled that Gogol's madman office clerk is an inveterate reader of *Severnaia pchela*, which he calls affectionately "the little bee," as in his pithy report: "*Chital Pchelku*."[38]Although the affectionate diminutive may appear a Gogolian exaggeration, it turns out, in this case, to have at least one historical analog, though certainly not a source.

Like Gogol's Poprishchin, Andrei Ivanovich Chikhachev, the landowner of Vladimir Province to whose family Katherine Antonova devoted the micro-historical account discussed above, likewise called Bulgarin and Grech's newspaper by various nicknames—e.g., little beetle, little bee (*zhuchka, pchelka*)—and went so far as to call Bulgarin himself a "little berry" (*iagodka*).[39] Chikhachev's preference and even something like affection for all things Bulgarin and especially his oft-expressed familiarity with the *litterateur* (familiarity here, in the sense of foregoing ceremony) is symptomatic of perhaps the most important aspect of how Bulgarin built his relationship with the public: writer and reader were to be equals. In fact, as Antonova explains, Chikhachev was ultimately inspired by Bulgarin's example to take up the pen and become a quite prolific contributor to various periodicals. And the Chikhachevs were exactly the sort of family that could be described as people of the middling rank or condition, as Antonova shows with great verve. They were middling nobles who had little in the way of connections to the empire's elite and who spent the majority of their time at their estate in Vladimir province. They were middling readers with a taste for middling fare, served well by *Severnaia pchela's* middling contents: middling in the sense of middlebrow. In the lengthy description of the newspaper's contents

37 I am grateful to Yelizaveta Raykhlina for the observation that many of *Severnaia pchela*'s contributors are verifiably authentic.

38 N. V. Gogol', *Polnoe sobraniie sochinenii v 14-i tomakh* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1937-1952), vol. 3, 196.

39 Antonova, *An Ordinary Marriage*, 214.

quoted earlier, the rather irreverent juxtaposition of what should be incongruous subjects—an English minister and a lost dog, the French-German pianist and composer Anna Caroline Belleville-Oury and new shoe polish—announces the newspaper's pervasive embrace of the middle register. By the mid-1820s and 1830s these sorts of middling or middlebrow contents were understood to help garner a sizable subscriber base. Take, for example, Nikolai Polevoi's *Moskovskii telegraf* (*Moscow Telegraph*), which was launched in 1825 and was perceived by contemporaries to have more startlingly varied contents than any major journal to date: notoriously, everything from a portrait of Byron to fashion plates.

The period's paradigmatic journal for middling contents was *Biblioteka dlia chteniia*, which startled the literary establishment when it amassed a large and growing subscriber base of four, then five thousand in 1834. *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* described its public as well. Once again, letters to the editor and letters exchanged among various fictitious personages loomed rather large; these fictitious persons could be average or anything but, as in the case of the recurrent and rather exotic, clearly foreign-sounding personae of the Baron and Baroness Brambeus, and Tutundzhi-oglu and Kritikzada, for example. The journal's editor created a cast of characters that included both lay readers and critics. The first scholar to read Senkovskii's journal as an expression of a serious aesthetic program, Melissa Frazier, considers *Biblioteka*'s sophisticated play with the dynamic exchanges between writers, readers, and critics as an attribute of Romanticism. When it comes to the documentary circumstances surrounding Senkovskii's career, particularly pertaining to the traffic in books, Frazier rightly points out that a literary market is always at least partly a fiction, inasmuch as the marketplace is constituted in part through rhetoric.[40]

That seems a useful point to bear in mind as one considers the highly anxious responses that *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* elicited from a range of contemporaries, including, for example, Nikolai Gogol, whom the journal prompted to question the very constitution of the Russian reading public. Responses from the period's literati took the form of laments regarding the commercialization of culture; notably, Stepan Shevyrev called Senkovskii's journal a bundle of banknotes, turned into articles or, *puk assignatsii, prevrashchennyi v stat'i*.[41] Perhaps the most influential (or the most oft-cited) among the responses to *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* came from Belinskii who judged that the journal's readership must have been provincial in multiple keys: both in the sense of rural location and in the sense of distance from the cultural values espoused by the highbrow elite. Belinskii wrote (and here I quote his oft-reproduced reaction at length):

40 Frazier, *Romantic Encounters*, especially 15-46.
41 S. Shevyrev, "Slovesnost' i torgovlia," *Moskovskii nabliudatel'*, 1 (March 1835), 5-29.

> Imagine the family of a steppe landowner, a family that reads everything that falls into its hands, cover to cover; they haven't yet had a chance to finish one issue, to re-read where subscriptions are taken and to have a look at the table of contents, but another book is already on its way to them, and [this book] is just as fat, just as beefy, just as chatty, loquacious, just as liable to speak in one tongue and also in many. And indeed, what variety! The daughter reads the poetry of messieurs Ershov, Gogniev, Strugovshchikov and the stories of messieurs Zagoskin, Ushakov, Panaev, Kalashnikov, and Masal'skii; the son, as a member of the new generation, reads the poetry of monsieur Timofeev and the stories of Baron Brambeus; the father reads articles about the two- and three-field crop rotation system and various methods for fertilizing the soil, while the mother reads about a new way to cure consumption and dye thread; and then for those interested there remain the criticism, the literary chronicle, from which it is possible to dig up great handfuls upon handfuls of (often clever and sharp, although seldom fair and scrupulous) judgments about contemporary literature; and [in addition to this] you still have the variegated, motley miscellany; you still have the scientific articles and the news about foreign literatures. Isn't it true that such a journal is a real treasure-trove (*klad*) for the provinces?[42]

"Provinces" here is code for the middle both as a demographic designation and a cultural register. The very speed with which *Biblioteka* is produced, the fact that a new issue arrives before the family has had a chance to properly enjoy the first suggests the disposable, easily reproducible character of modern middlebrow print culture. What Belinskii underscores above all else is the motley nature of *Biblioteka*'s contents, its encyclopedic embrace of the middle register, which attracted the purchasing public.

However, it should be pointed out that despite *Biblioteka's* success, the readership remained too small to support the cultural producers. The second quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed a number of rather nasty quarrels between rival groups and periodical publications. These quarrels were, to a considerable extent, about a purchasing public too small to subscribe to more than a handful of periodicals. Thus, for example, the re-launch of *Otechestvennye zapiski* under Kraevskii's editorship triggered Bulgarin to write notes to the Third Section, denouncing what he claimed was a politically subversive journal. In retrospect, it is very likely that he feared losing readers. In fact, Bulgarin and Grech ultimately did lose their readership both to Kraevskii and, later, to *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*)

42 V. G. Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 13 tomakh* (Moscow, 1953-1959), vol. 2, 20.

once it was under Nikolai Nekrasov's editorship. By the late 1840s both Bulgarin's and Senkovskii's popularity with the public waned, as their readers were replaced by a younger generation with different tastes and interests. Ultimately, one could suggest that what began in the 1760s as a largely rhetorical gesture that delineated an increasingly demographically diverse reading public, by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, became actualized in the audiences served by Kraevskii and Nekrasov, audiences for which the *raznochintsy* (people of various ranks) would, in another decade or so, become a key constituent.

Beginning with *Otechestvennye zapiski* and extending well into the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the so-called thick journals came to dominate Russian cultural production and inaugurated the age of the realist novel, whose very poetics would be determined, in part, by its media context. It is among this essay's implicit contentions that throughout the period under study, the press's cultivation of a middling cultural register aided in the development of novelistic prose and sensibility. The 1769 inception of the Catherinean satirical journals coincided with the early stages in the disintegration of the neoclassical generic system, a phenomenon that had a good deal to do with the development of a middle style or a middling cultural idiom. (This period had an understudied, but lively and popular [and, in some ways, markedly middling] novelistic tradition—e.g., Mikhail Chulkov's *The Comely Cook* [*Prigozhaia povarikha*], Fedor Emin's *Letters of Ernest and Doravra* [*Pis'ma Ernesta i Doravry*]).[43] In the coming decades, a range of periodicals championed the novel as a cultural form. This is apparent on the pages of Karamzin's *Vestnik Evropy*, where the editor all but trains future readers of novels. In a somewhat different, but related vein, Bulgarin and company likewise endorsed the novel as an edifying and a commercial product: witness the veritable advertising campaign they undertook to yield the rather high sales of Bulgarin's own *Ivan Vyzhigin*. Although some contemporaries found Bulgarin and Grech's PR campaign outrageous, in the later decades the reciprocally profitable relationship between periodicals and the novel would become more or less normalized, as serialization in the thick journals took hold. The earlier period treated in this essay paved the way for the familiar mid- and late-nineteenth-century complicity between periodicals and the novel, a complicity expressed in poetics, thematic sensibilities, cultural register, and not least, in readers, publics, and purchasing audiences.

43 D. Gasperetti, *The Rise of the Russian Novel: Carnival, Stylization, and Mockery of the West* (DeKalb, IL, 1998).

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READING THE STREETS: ENCOUNTERS WITH THE PUBLIC GRAPHOSPHERE, C. 1700-1950

Simon Franklin

The history of reading in Russia is mainly considered in relation to books, journals and newspapers, or, latterly, electronic media. Rather little attention has been paid to a very different kind of text, in a very different kind of communicative context. By the late nineteenth century, as Jeffrey Brooks has noted:

> The city with its shop signs and street names, window displays and price tags, newspapers and kiosks, announcements and bookstalls exhibited the written word to all who walked its streets.[1]

Reading the words on the streets is not, by and large, a sustained act comparable to reading a novel or even a newspaper article, yet the study of such reading has its own complexity. Urban graphospheres vary hugely, as do the modes of interaction with them. They can be dense or sparse, homogenous or diverse. The balance of their constituent elements may veer towards the commercial or towards the institutional and official. And in any given place at any given moment there may be multiple nuances in the human awareness and perception of public writing. The texts on display may simply be ignored, or may barely registered as background visual noise, or they may be skimmed for practical information, or scoured as cultural curiosities, or as instruments of expression, or as manifestations of design, or as evidence for social structures and practices, and a great deal more. Although

1 J. Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read. Literacy and Popular Culture, 1861-1917* (Princeton, 1985), 12.

the spread of public writing may, to some extent, both presuppose and be conducive to the spread of literacy, public urban texts are distinctive for the fact that that they are by nature positioned in the field of vision of the lettered and the unlettered alike.

A comprehensive history of Russia's urban textual spaces has yet to be written.[2] The present study focuses on three indicative and contrasting episodes in that history and, in particular, on the evidence for types of reading ('readership texts'). The three episodes are chronologically and culturally some distance apart. The first episode relates to official cultural initiatives of the early eighteenth century, the second episode relates to readings, in the period c. 1835-1850, of texts generated by commercial activity, while the third highlights the re-orientation of public writing away from the commercial and towards the political, and the subsequent (and consequent) emergence of a characteristic Soviet system of shop signage by the mid 1930s. In the first episode public writing was imposed on the urban landscape by the state, and the "readership texts" are those which, likewise "top-down," gave guidance and instruction as to the correct way of perusing and interpreting. In the second episode the public texts were produced independently of the state, and the "readership texts" reflect observers' responses to a phenomenon which they had played no part in creating. In the third episode the balance again shifts towards "top-down," state-imposed street-texts, with different implications for the function of reading. The episodes represent three major phases in the formation and mutations of public verbal display in Russia: from the earliest attempts, under Peter I, at constructing a systematically inscribed cityscape, through the period of the diversification of commercial urban textuality on the eve of the period described by Jeffrey Brooks, to the mid-Soviet project for a new systematisation and standardisation. Each of the three phases implies a distinct dynamic of reading.

1. Before the turn of the eighteenth century displays of writing in Muscovite public spaces had been rare. By contrast with the inscription-rich cities of antiquity, the stones of the medieval city were, by and large, mute. Regular, systematic displays of writing were confined to the interiors of churches, and to some extent to other internal spaces for the performance of ritual, such as the "Golden Hall" of the Moscow Kremlin. Otherwise there were occasional plaques recording the foundation of buildings (particularly churches), plus an assortment of inscribed objects periodically visible in public places (bells, large cannons). The use of urban spaces as settings for the programmatic display of verbal messages began under Peter I. Among

2 For surveys up to the mid nineteenth century, including some of the material covered in the present chapter, see S. Franklin, "Information in Plain Sight: The Formation of the Public Graphosphere," in S. Franklin, K. Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire: Mechanisms of Communication in Russia, 1600-1850* (Cambridge, 2017), 341-367; also S. Franklin, *The Russian Graphosphere, 1450-1850* (Cambridge, 2019), 143-167.

his measures was the significant expansion of the practice of displaying the texts of official decrees as one of the means for their dissemination, especially after 1714 when he insisted that all decrees of general applicability must be printed.[3] However, his most dramatic initiatives related not to flimsy sheets of paper, but to monumental edifices that transformed, albeit temporarily, the urban landscape: triumphal arches.

In Russia the practice of constructing triumphal arches to record victories began in 1696 after Peter's Azov campaign. These were not permanent additions to the city. They were stage props constructed for one-off performances, for the triumphal entries of the ruler and his troops. They were made of wood, painted to resemble marble, and copiously decorated. Though the triumphal arches themselves were transient, Peter made sure that they were recorded for contemporaries and for posterity, both in pictures and in words: in engravings and in published descriptions. The engravings capture the monuments as a whole, the descriptions record their decorations in meticulous detail, scene by scene, line by line.

The Petrine triumphal arches were not just imposing structures to be admired and to create a general sense of grandeur appropriate to the ceremonial. They were texts to be read; or rather they displayed texts to be read. The texts were both visual and verbal: classical, mythological, biblical, historical and allegorical scenes, together with captions or mottoes. The sources for the arches were broadly, in a kind of generic sense, classical: they were reminiscent of Roman triumphal arches. But the more proximate sources were recent and West European. In Russia such spectacles were deeply unfamiliar in virtually all their aspects, from the monumental structures to the pictorial and verbal decoration. To say that they were "reminiscent" of Rome or of Western Europe is fine for those whose cultural horizons extended that far. But in Russia these were cultural texts in a virtually unknown cultural language. It was a complex language whose nuanced decipherment would, in principle, require a range of skills and cultural referents: some knowledge of the ancient tongues, an awareness of classical and contemporary triumphal architectural conventions, familiarity with the visual and verbal conventions of emblems. The spectacle was of course magnificent, and Petrine magnificence was an important message in itself. But if Peter wanted his cultural texts to by understood more specifically, then viewers needed to be educated in their language, needed to be told what they meant, how to read them. Hence the production of written explanations, both in manuscript and in print.

3 See S. Franklin, "Printing and Social Control in Russia 2: Decrees," *Russian History*, 38, 4 (2011), 467-492, esp. 473-481.

Seven extant explanations of the Petrine triumphal arches and ceremonies have been identified, at least six of which were printed:[4]

1. A description of the arch erected at the Slavo-Graeco-Latin Academy, in honour of Peter's entry into Moscow on 11 November 1703 following victories over the Swedes (*Torzhestvennye vrata, vvodiashchaia v khram bessmertnyia slavy*).[5]
2. A description of a new arch at the Academy, in honour of a triumphal entry in December 1704, written in 1704 by Iosif Turoboiskii (*Preslavnoe torzhestvo svoboditelia Livonii*).[6]
3. An explanation of the arch erected in front of the residence of Aleksandr Menshikov, also for the triumphal entry of December 1704 (*Tolkovanie vratam pred dvorom ego prevoskhoditel'stva gospodina Aleksandra Danilovicha Menshikova…*).[7]
4. A very extensive account of the arch erected at the Slavo-Graeco-Latin Academy in 1709 in honour of the victory at Poltava: the idiosyncratically titled *Politikolepnaia apotheosis* (the latter word printed in Greek letters), by Iosif Turoboiskii with Feofilakt Lopatinskii. This was by far the longest in the sequence of works, running to 178 pages in the original edition. It was also among the earliest books to be printed in the Russian "civic typeface."[8]
5. A description of the arch at Menshikov's residence in the same year (*Sostoianie vrat torzhestvennykh, kotorym byt' u ego siiatel'stva svetleishago kniazia Aleksandra Danilovicha ego milosti Menshikova*).[9]
6. A description of another of the triumphal arches erected in honour of the Poltava victory in 1709, the "Merchants' Arch," because funded by St. Petersburg merchants (*Sen' bessmertnyia slavy, torzhestvennaia vrata*).[10]

4 For the list see D. D. Zelov, *Ofitsial'nye svetskie prazdniki kak iavlenie russkoi kul'tury kontsa XVII – nachala XVIII veka. Istoriia triumfov i feierverkov ot Petra Velikogo do ego docheri Elizavety* (Moscow, 2002), 140.

5 In V. P. Grebeniuk, O. A. Derzhavina (eds.), *Panegiricheskaia literatura petrovskogo vremeni* (Moscow, 1979), 135-149. According to the text the arch was completed on 9 November, and the print-run was completed on 10 November. See T. A. Bykova, M. M. Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii, napechatannykh kirillitsei. 1689-ianvar' 1725 g.* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1958), no. 28 (pp. 90-92).

6 *Panegiricheskaia literatura*, 150-180; Bykova, Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii, napechatannykh kirillitsei*, no. 36 (pp. 106-108).

7 Bykova, Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii, napechatannykh kirillitsei*, no. 41 (pp. 110-112); text in E. A. Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat v Rossii pervoi poloviny XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2005), 154-156.

8 T. A. Bykova, M. M. Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii grazhdanskoi pechati, 1708-ianvar' 1725 g.* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1955), no. 26; text in Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, 157-212.

9 Bykova, Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii grazhdanskoi pechati*, no. 27; text in Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, 213-216.

10 Apparently only in manuscript: text in Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, 217-222.

7. A description of four arches erected in Moscow on the occasion of Peter's triumphal entry following the Treaty of Nystadt in 1721 (*Vrata triumfal'nye v tsarstvuiushchem grade Moskve...*).[11]

What did these prescriptive readings of the monuments consist of? Our examples are taken from three of the earliest texts, which describe arches at the Slavo-Graeco-Latin Academy (nos 1, 2 and 4 in the above list). There were arches outside the Academy partly because of its central location at the Zaikonospasskii monastery on Nikolskaia ulitsa, just a few hundred metres to the northeast of the Kremlin (and, as it happens, adjacent to the Print Yard, where the descriptions were published). More important for present purposes, however, is the fact that the Academy was closely involved in the conceptualisation and explication of the project. The printed descriptions were written by teachers at the Academy, who presented and explained, sometimes in very great detail, the schemes of depiction and inscription that they themselves had devised for the purpose. The works were written in the first person plural: "we painted," "we depicted," "we represented," and so on. These were the creators' guides to their own creations, authoritative readings as expounded by the authors. Most prominent among them, as a designer of the motifs on triumphal arches and as an author of their explanations, was Iosif Turoboiskii. Turoboiskii had taught at the Mohyla Academy in Kiev, whence he was recruited by Peter in 1701. From 1703 he was "prefect" of the Moscow Slavo-Graeco-Latin Academy.

The three descriptions of triumphal arches at the Academy proceed in a kind of crescendo of rhetorical elaboration. The first, from November 1703, is the plainest. It begins with a brief preface stating that the arch was created by the teachers in honour of Peter, Russia's "New Hercules." The main text consists of a systematic guide around the depictions on the monument, scene by scene, according to a consistent pattern. First, each figure or location is identified, often with a sentence or two about who they were in history or mythology. Next the relevant inscription is cited, usually in Latin and with a Russian translation; and finally, in several instances the teachers add a brief interpretation of what the scene is intended to signify—that is, of how it was meant to be read—in the context of the celebration of Peter's triumph. This is the basic structure common to all the descriptions.

The immediate precedents for such descriptions were West European. A likely model was the Russian translation, from Dutch, of the detailed account of the triumphal entry of William of Orange into The Hague on 5 February 1691.[12] This work, whose translation into Russian has been attributed to Ilia Kopievskii, describes several triumphal monuments, including

11 Bykova, Gurevich, *Opisanie izdanii grazhdanskoi pechati*, no. 649; text in Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, 223-230.

12 Iu. K. Begunov, "'Opisanie vrat chesti...': a Seventeenth-Century Russian Translation on William of Orange and the 'Glorious Revolution'," *Oxford Slavonic Papers. New Series*, 20 (1987), 60-93.

not only arches but also banners outside specified houses along the route of the procession. The accounts of each of the monuments consist of a fairly standard set of elements: the shape and main architectural features; the pictorial representations, and their accompanying inscriptions. In all the work contains translations of approximately 140 Latin inscriptions.

The basic pattern of description, listing the pictures and their adjacent texts, can be illustrated from the first of the Russian texts, dated 1703:

> On the cornice[13] are the following: first, Mars, with the inscription *ferro metuendus*, which is to say "fearsome on account of his weapon." Next Jason, who with the other Argonauts sailed to Colchis for the Golden Fleece; with the inscription *tulit pretium non vile laborum*, which is to say "he received no mean recompense for his labours." For this signifies our most majestic monarch, who in this age, first among his ancestors, the Tsars of Russia, conquered the Enemy by sea—indeed, the Finnic sea—for which he received as his desired recompense two Swedish ships.[14]

The *Politikolepnaia apotheosis* of 1709 went far beyond this formula. Not only were the Poltava monuments of 1709 themselves far more elaborate and magnificent than their predecessors in 1703, but their rhetorical description was also far more expansive. The *Politikolepnaia apotheosis* was a substantial book, not an occasional pamphlet. Besides the core elements of description, inscription and interpretation, its authors digressed into comparisons, thematic amplification, and further literary allusions and citations. Thus, for example, following the description of the image of Castor and Pollux, the author adds in justification of his version: "I have depicted these two together on white steeds ahead of a chariot, since the ancients believed that they used such steeds, as Pindar writes...," followed by a citation from Pindar in Greek.[15] A detail from the life of Hercules is justified with a quotation, in Greek, of a dozen lines from Theocritus.[16] A symbol of virtues is interpreted with reference to several classical authors including, for example, half a dozen lines in Latin from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,[17] while elsewhere the theme of the virtue of the ruler (*princeps*, rendered into Russian as *monarkh*) is expanded with quotations (in Latin) from Aristotle's *Ethics*, Iamblichus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Carolus Paschalius.[18]

13 *Na gzemze*: *gzymz*/*gezimz* = cornice; from German *Gesims*, perhaps via Polish *Gsyms*: one of many borrowed neologisms that would surely have added to the sense of estrangement.

14 *Panegiricheskaia literatura*, 136.

15 Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, 178.

16 Ibid., 181.

17 Ibid., 185.

18 Ibid., 194.

In the inscriptions themselves, Greek sometimes figures alongside Latin (and Slavonic).[19]

The level of polyglot rhetoric begs the obvious question: for whom were such descriptions written? Not for the masses, of course. If Peter or Turoboiskii had imagined that the printing of the descriptions would release a pent-up flood of demand, they were disabused by the fate of the first in the sequence, which was issued in a print-run of 1200 copies, most of which lay unsold.[20] There were no intellectual, cultural or linguistic concessions to what might be reckoned the average or unenlightened local spectator. How many people in early eighteenth-century Moscow could inspect every Latin motto, scan every hexameter and appreciate every classical allusion *in situ*? Very few indeed, beyond the alumni of the Slavo-Graeco-Latin academy and their teachers. Turoboiskii's implied reader was from his own rarefied cultural milieu. In other words, even the ostensibly outward-facing act of explanation was esoteric.

Within these limits, the descriptions could function on several levels. Insofar as they might indeed have served as practical aids to the viewing and detailed inspection of public monuments, they can be counted as Moscow's earliest printed guide-books. Insofar as they also served to perpetuate the presence of Peter's temporary, occasional edifices, they were verbal equivalents to the engravings that Peter also commissioned to record his triumphs.[21] Moreover, they were perhaps designed to be read not just alongside the monuments themselves, but as supplements to the relevant engravings. There was precedent. The Dutch author of the original of the description of William of Orange's triumph of 1791 stated explicitly that his text was to be read alongside the set of engravings that he had already issued.[22] Insofar as the accounts of the arches were rhetorical texts relating to inscriptions, they also nicely fit the "inscriptional" culture of Russian baroque writing.[23] With the exception of dedicated emblem books, the highly detailed accounts of the decorations on the triumphal arches constitute by far the most extensive Petrine printed descriptions and decipherments of emblems. In their own right, simply as verbal edifices, they add to the store of specimens of westernising, classicising panegyrical composition. On many counts, therefore, they fit nicely into the multi-media rhetoric of the early Petrine project.

19 E.g., Ibid., 193.

20 Zelov, *Ofitsial'nye svetskie prazdniki*, 143.

21 For the engravings see Tiukhmeneva, *Iskusstvo triumfal'nykh vrat*, illustrations between pp. 96 and 97; also M. A. Alekseeva, *Graviura petrovskogo vremeni* (Leningrad, 1990), 72-75, 117-122; M. A. Alekseeva, *Iz istorii russkoi graviury XVII – nachala XIX v.* (Moscow, St. Petersburg, 2013), 142-151, 188-194

22 Begunov, "'Opisanie vrat chesti…'," 71-72.

23 On inscriptional verse see e.g. L. I. Sazonova, *Literaturnaia kul'tura Rossii. Rannee Novoe vremia* (Moscow, 2006), 320-331.

Nevertheless, all of this still skirts round the question of a wider contemporary readership of the Petrine inscribed edifices that so dramatically, albeit temporarily, transformed the urban landscape. Obviously a direct textual reading of depictions and inscriptions was only accessible to a minuscule subset even of the relatively literate. However, unlike a printed leaflet, which potential readers could choose to open or to ignore, the arches themselves were unavoidably open books thrust in the faces of anybody who happened to be on the relevant streets at the relevant periods. I am not aware of a body of direct evidence for wider public responses, but some of the potential readings are refracted in, or were anticipated by, Iosif Turoboiskii. In the second of the three texts here considered, before proceeding to describe and interpret the decorative and inscriptional schemes on the Academy's arch of 1704, he pauses to consider and refute what he reckons to be *mis*readings and *mis*interpretations. He alludes, in effect, to a kind of negative implied reader of the monuments, one who interprets the display in the context of old, unenlightened categories and assumptions.

Turoboiskii warns his own reader against just such an imagined figure:

> You, my honourable reader... do not emulate the ignorant, those who know nothing, who have been nowhere and have seen nothing, but who like the tortoise stay under their shell and never emerge, and who, when they see anything new, are startled and spew forth all kinds of profanities.[24]

Turoboiskii designated such imagined negative readers of the monuments as "the ignorant." The word he uses, *neveglas*, has a particular resonance. Traditionally in Church Slavonic it refers not just to people who happen not to know certain facts, but to people who are ignorant of truth—specifically, ignorant of Christian truth.[25] To be labelled *neveglas* was often tantamount to being called a pagan or a heretic. Turoboiskii's use of the word is surely deliberate. The saturation of public spaces with classical forms, depictions and allusions could obviously be perceived, from within traditional Muscovite culture, as a pagan excrescence (one of Peter's many cultural reversals).[26] In his defence of the pagan imagery Turoboiskii positions himself firmly on the Christian high-ground. It is the critics who are the *neveglasy*.

What, specifically, were the potential misreadings that Turoboiskii was so keen to deflect? Part of his argument was a defence of allegory. He announced his intention to explain "all these pictures with their symbols and

24 *Panegiricheskaia literatura*, 156.

25 *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XI-XVII vv. Vypusk 11* (Moscow, 1986), 27.

26 On perceptions of Peter's "anti-culture" see e.g. B. A. Uspenskii, "Historia sub specie semioticae," in Idem, *Izbrannye trudy. Tom 1. Izd. vtoroe, ispravlennoe i pererabotannoe* (Moscow, 1996), 71-82.

emblems, [...] for you should know, dear reader, that those who strive for wisdom often depict one thing by means of a different image."[27] His larger point, however, was about categories of culture. He insisted that such images and edifices, though not in themselves Christian, had an honourable place within Christian cultures. His implied negative reader was assumed to believe, first, that monumental public buildings should serve religious functions (as, in Muscovy, had generally been the case) and, second, that a religious building that is not Christian must be heretical or pagan. Turoboiskii introduced a different contrast, which by implication may have been unfamiliar to his wider Muscovite audience: not the contrast between Christian and heretical or pagan, nor even a contrast between the religious and the secular, but a contrast between the devotional and the civil:

> This [arch] is not a temple, or a church built in the name of some saint. It is a political, which is to say a civil, tribute (*politicheskaia, siest' grazhdanskaia pokhvala*) to those who have laboured for the integrity of their fatherland and who by their labours have, with God's help, conquered their enemies. [Such arches] have been set up from ancient times (as in Rome when the Emperor Constantine defeated Maxentius) among all civilised rather than barbarian peoples (*vo vsekh politichnykh, a ne varvarskikh narodakh*), in order that virtue, thus praised and honoured, may grow.[28]

Turoboiskii exploits the semantic slippage between cognate forms. The triumphal arch is not a pagan affront to Christianity. It is a civil homage to a Christian ruler; and furthermore, in marking out a civil sphere of prestigious culture it is also a mark of a civilised people. Let the erudite delight in their erudition (as Turoboiskii certainly does), but the larger statement, for all to see and understand, lay not in the micro-reading of the images and inscriptions but in the physical and rhetorical declaration of a new kind of cultural space with its own unfamiliar but entirely legitimate visual and verbal and pictorial idioms sanctioned by prestigious Christian precedent. For Turoboiskii, the monumental triumphal arches were both embodiments and symbols of the creation of a new, civil space for prestigious culture. They were, in the most literal sense, part of a process of making civil: that is, of civil-isation.

We cannot know how many people responded the arches and their depictions and their inscriptions in the ways imputed to Iosif Turoboiskii's implied negative reader. In their day such display in Russia was radically innovative, and the effort expended on interpretation suggests an expectation

27 *Panegiricheskaia literatura*, 154-155.

28 Ibid., 154. For these meanings of *politicheskii* and *politichnyi* see *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XVIII veka. Vypusk 21* (St. Petersburg, 2015), 171-172.

of widespread misinterpretation (that is, of interpretation according to a different cultural paradigm). Nevertheless, in common with several of Peter's initiatives, their contemporary dissonance did not necessarily impede their longer-term resonance. Strange and esoteric in the age of their introduction, decorated and inscribed triumphal arches became, over the following decades, traditional and habitual, alongside firework displays, among the public rituals of imperial display, of the performance of power.

These works by Turoboiskii and others were instructions on how to read. They assume an audience (or readership) deeply unfamiliar with the idiom and interpretation of the monumental texts that suddenly appeared in public spaces. They expound the meanings as intended by the authors. In this they are integral components of the 'top down' cultural project. They seek to create and shape a readership, not to reflect one.

2. Our second episode involves a quite different dynamic of 'readership texts': the emergence of autonomous, articulate responses to public writing from those who have no role or stake in the processes of its production. It coincides with the proliferation of a different type of public text: not the official messages of grand monuments, but the self-promoting initiatives and incursions of trade and commerce.

The chronology of the spread of shops signs and trade signs cannot be tracked precisely. Early concerns about unsightly signage were expressed in decrees from the mid eighteenth century, as were instructions for the precise wording displayed by establishments selling tobacco and alcohol.[29] However, contemporary illustrations of street scenes suggest that the main period of rapid proliferation and diversification of signs covered roughly the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Approximately from the mid 1830s, having emerged as a phenomenon, street signage became an object of description and reflection, of cultural "readings." 1835 saw the completion of the popular and widely admired lithographed panoramas of Nevskii Prospekt in St. Petersburg, derived from the slightly earlier watercolours by Vasilii Sadovnikov. Reviewers at the time were especially impressed by the accuracy and precision of its representations of the shop signs,[30] and even today the panoramas (one of the "sunny" side, one of the "shady" side) can still serve as useful sources for their subject.[31]

Our focus here, however, is not on pictures of words but on words about words. The earliest detailed description of shop signs in Russia was published in Moscow in 1836. It was written by Fedor Distribuendi—presumably a pseudonym—about whom nothing appears to be known apart from

29 *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii* (St. Petersburg, 1830), nos. 8674, 9350, 10032.

30 Originally in *Severnaia pchela*, June 14, 1836; cited in G. Kaganov, *Images of Space. St. Petersburg in the Verbal and Visual Arts*, transl. S. Monas (Stanford, 1997), 82.

31 See K. Bowers, "Experiencing Information: An Early Nineteenth-Century Stroll Along Nevskii Prospekt," in S. Franklin, K. Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire*, 369-407.

his authorship of a 68-page booklet entitled *A View of Moscow Signs*.[32] The archives of the Moscow Censorship Committee reveal that the manuscript was submitted in September 1835 by a certain Ensign Brazhnikov, which possibly gives us a name if not a biography.[33] Distribuendi was aware of being the pioneer of a new sub-genre in the literature about Moscow:

> Much has been written about the white-stoned city of Moscow, about its memorable monuments and the diverse curiosities that can be found there. Much has been written about its golden-domed churches, about its ancient monasteries, about its walks and its varied views. Praises have been sung to its boulevards, and to the parks that adorn Russia's first capital city. Yet nobody, until now, has directed their curious gaze towards the *signs*, whose colourful diversity (*pestreiushchie*) lines Moscow's streets. [...] This is what has prompted the publication of the booklet that is here offered for the delectation of curious readers, be they inhabitants of Moscow or, in particular, inquisitive visitors from other cities.[34]

Distribuendi makes it clear that, by the mid 1830s, shop signs and trade signs in Moscow were no longer just occasional exotic features. They had become widespread on all the main streets of the capital; so widespread and so diverse, indeed, that they could be confusing.[35] Distribuendi represents his main task as providing a clear classification, a systematic guide, since "system is the soul of any scholarly work."[36] For this reason his booklet seems more thorough, objective and reliable than the overtly opinionated works of many of his successors. His declared aim was to impose order on variety, to reveal the regularities behind the motley surface impressions:

> What colourful diversity (*pestrota*), what variety greets you when you survey Moscow's shop signs! You won't find even five of them that are absolutely identical. The tasteful and the tasteless, the rich and the poor, the gigantic and the minuscule all mingle with each other in these indicators to Moscow's commerce.[37]

32 F. Distribuendi, *Vzgliad na moskovskie vyveski* (Moscow, 1836).

33 Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Goroda Moskvy (TsGA Moskvy), f. 32, op. 5, d. 102. I am grateful to Abram Il'ich Reitblat for pointing out this reference, and for the information that in the 1830s "Ensign Brazhnikov" (or "retired Ensign Brazhnikov") also appears to have submitted at least three other works to the Censorship Committee, none of which was published.

34 Distribuendi, *Vzgliad na moskovskie vyveski*, 3-4.

35 Ibid., 25.

36 Ibid., 17.

37 Ibid., 4-5.

Pestrota —variegation, motliness, colourful diversity, a kind of disorderly profusion— is a word which crops up regularly in descriptions of the signs both of Moscow and of St. Petersburg. In the face of such motliness, Fedor Distribuendi attempted to create a taxonomy. He devised two kinds of classification. His most detailed set of categories was tied to content or context: signs were differentiated according to the types of establishment that they adorned. He thus arrived at a list of 25 types of sign, which he further subdivided into two groups, the "numerous" and the "less numerous." The "numerous" types of sign were those which related to: tailors, cobblers, inns and restaurants, barbers, vegetable stalls, bakers, alehouses, taverns and various kinds of drinking establishments, clockmakers, midwives, milliners. The "less numerous" signs advertised apothecaries, makers of musical instruments, boarding houses, jewellers, tobacco stalls, bookshops, glassmakers, painters, locksmiths, carriage-makers, confectioners, bathhouses, plus the purveyors of sundry merchandise.

Distribuendi's second type of classification was aesthetic. The main focus of his work was on what he called "normal" signs (*vyveski obyknovennye*), but he also introduced the categories of "curious" (*kur'eznye*) and of "elegant" (*iziashchnye*) signs. His "curious" signs were either visually grotesque or verbally idiosyncratic and ungrammatical. His "elegant" signs were either particularly skilled or ingenious in design (e.g. with anthropomorphic lettering), or else they flaunted their foreignness. However, Distribuendi allocated rather little space to the curious and the elegant.[38] To be distracted by the deviant would have detracted from his principal aim of ordering what he regarded as the normal.

Fedor Distribuendi's descriptions of "normal" signs favour regular elements and common variants with respect to shape, pictorial representation, and verbal inscription. So, for example, tailors' signs were usually made from square or oblong sheets of metal; they depicted either a pair of scissors in the centre of the panel, flanked by the first name and surname of the craftsman (or with the first name above the scissors and the surname below); or they depicted two pairs of scissors, one down either side of the panel, with the names in the centre; the inscriptions were in gold or silver or in various colours.[39] Or: tobacco booths ("such as one can see at every crossroads") had small, modest, square signs depicting two yellow jars ("which one presumes to indicate snuff"), between which a man dressed like Harlequin sits rubbing tobacco. Beneath the depiction was the inscription "tobacco booth."[40] And so on. Distribuendi allows himself the occasional lyrical digression, as, for example, on how moved he is whenever he sees a sign advertising the services of a midwife—though he would rather

38 Ibid., 54-62, 63-68.
39 Ibid., 26.
40 Ibid., 47-48.

not speculate on the reasons for the recent proliferation of such signs in the Arbat area.[41] For the most part, however, the tone is factual and undramatic.

Orderliness, for Fedor Distribuendi, was important not just in the arrangement of description, but in the appearance of Moscow's streets. His introductory comments might suggest that his work was intended to be a celebration of the expressive variety of Moscow's signs, but this was not the case. On the contrary, it turns out that even his descriptive objectivity is an illusion. He was selective. The overwhelming preponderance, in his text, of "normal" signs reflects his own strong preference, not the actual configuration of signs on the streets. A few examples of the "curious" and the "elegant" were added at the end, although he himself acknowledged that in reality one could encounter "thousands" of them.[42] In Fedor Distribuendi's presentation almost all signs were "normal," almost all were inscribed in Russian, and almost all the inscriptions were factual in their messages and correct in their grammar and spelling. He presented a selective reading of the city as he would have liked it to be, not necessarily as it was.

Eventually Distribuendi brought his opinions into the open. The multifariousness of Moscow's signs was an eyesore, a scar on the beauty and harmony of the city. *Pestrota* was not to be admired but to be overcome. If uniformity could be imposed by regulation, Moscow would only benefit:

> Variegation and ugliness [of shop signs] disfigure Moscow's streets and make them look rather like galleries of caricatures that are wearisome to the eye. Why could one not, as far as possible, harmonize the signs? Why could one not introduce uniformity and consistency? Then the eye would no longer be bedazzled by diversity (*pestret'*), nor would the gaze be wearied by the mixture of good taste and vulgarity, and Moscow's adornment would be yet more beautiful.[43]

I do not see traces of irony here. It is our good fortune that Fedor Distribuendi had somewhat prosaic preferences, that he valued the ordinary above the quirky, that he tried to impose a grid of descriptive regularity on the unspectacular everyday signs. For him, the main function of shop signs and trade signs was that, through their depictions and inscriptions, they should be factually informative. They should show what was being sold, or what services were being offered, and by whom. If they could fulfill that function tastefully, so much the better. Many of his successors were more egregiously tendentious in their readings of the city's commercial textscape.

41 Ibid., 38-40.
42 Ibid., 60.
43 Ibid., 61.

While Distribuendi concentrated on the "normal," others were drawn towards describing and interpreting signs that were, for him, deviations: those which he would have called "curious" or "elegant." Such signs were at opposite ends of a linguistic spectrum: at one end, non-standard, ungrammatical Russian (the "curious"); at the other end, French ("elegant," of course). We begin with readings of the latter.

The prominence of French, or, to a lesser extent, of other foreign languages written in the Latin alphabet, was a *leitmotif* of responses to urban signage. For some it was a delight, for others an abomination. As early as 1811 or 1812 the poet Konstantin Batiushkov, in an essay entitled *A Stroll through Moscow* (*Progulka po Moskve*), noted the combination of French and unsightly disorderliness in the shop signs plastered along Moscow's central streets such as Kuznetskii Most and Tverskaia, with their "French bookstalls and fashion shops, whose monstrously ugly signs screen entire buildings."[44] Shortly afterwards, in the face of Napoleon's invasion, French shop signs were banned on the orders of the military governor of Moscow, Fedor Rostopchin. Twenty one years later, in a letter to his wife, written from Moscow on her 21st birthday (27 August 1833), Aleksandr Pushkin cheerfully conveyed the "important news" that French shop signs were reappearing on Kuznetskii Most.[45]

For some, this was a welcome development. Foreign shops and shop-owners brought multiple benefits. According to Petr Fedorovich Vistengof, who published his *Sketches of Moscow Life* (*Ocherki moskovskoi zhizni*) in 1842, the elegance of foreign shops was contributing to a general improvement in standards of display and presentation in Russian shops as well.[46] Moreover, Vistengof saw a correlation between the quality of the sign (whether foreign or otherwise) and the quality of the goods:

> Have you noticed how, very often, just as you can tell a person by his clothes, so you can tell a craftsman by his shop sign? You should avoid like the plague shops with hideous signs, such as those that depict foppish young men striking peculiar poses (*attitiudy*) with inscriptions like "The Most Modern Tailor from Keresberg."[47] Seek out instead [a sign depicting] plain but respectable scissors [...] If you want the boots that you ordered in Summer to be ready by Christmas, then go to a Russian cob-

44 K. N. Batiushkov, "Progulka po Moskve," in Idem, *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow, 1989), vol. 2, 288.

45 A. S. Pushkin, *Sobranie sochinenii v desiati tomakh*, ed. D. D. Blagoi *et al.* (Moscow, 1959-1962), vol. 10 (1962), 135.

46 P. Vistengof, *Ocherki moskovskoi zhizni* (Moscow, 1842), 130-133.

47 "Keresberg" appears to have been pseudo-Germanism current in the mid 1840s: cf. the "Keresberg" hotel in a provincial town in Aleksandr Herzen's novel *Who is to Blame?* (*Kto vinovat?*), written between 1841 and 1846: A. I. Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh*, vol. 4 (Moscow, 1955), 113.

> bler, and pay no attention to his sign showing a boot of gigantic proportions, with the inscription "Rewarded for Excellence." For this your own reward will be gigantic blisters. [...] If you want a truly well shod foot, go to *Bruno* or to *Pironnet* on Kuznetskii Most, or to *Tacke* on Dmitrovka.[48]

By the later 1840s, however, such delight in francophone visual fashion had become unfashionable among some literati. The prominence or dominance of French on shop signs in some areas was no longer read as a mark of sophistication and taste. On the contrary, it was satirised, even reviled, as a symptom of cultural subservience, almost as a national affront. The spectrum of readings runs from mild irony to biting polemic. At the gentler end of the spectrum was the young essayist Ivan Kokorev, whose collection of sketches on Moscow in the 1840s (*Moskva sorokovykh godov*) included a section on the signs with which central Moscow was saturated:

> House upon house, doorway upon doorway, window upon window, everything from the bottom to the top is strewn with signs, covered in them like wallpaper. Sign links to sign, each pressing on the other...

Apart from the sheer quantity of signs, what particularly struck Kokorev was the impact of the inscriptions, which transformed the Russian city into something quite un-Russian, or transported the viewer into quite another place:

> Inscriptions, inscriptions... That's what makes the heart race. Such progress! Such rapid development! Such precociousness!... You look and can barely believe it, you begin to think and your thoughts scatter at the joy of it! Many a respectable person has been vexed by the spirit of Russia, but here there's no sight or sound of it, and *Baba-yaga* is free to go off wherever she chooses. Paris! Truly, this is Paris! Or rather, Paris's most enticing district, cased and behind glass, to make sure that our northern frosts cannot play havoc with the guests from afar.... *A la mode du jour, au pauvre diable, à la coquête, à la renommêe, à la confiance, à la locomotive, au Rocher de Cancale, à la ville de Paris, à la ville de Lyon, à la ville de Moscou...*[49]

48 Vistengof, *Ocherki moskovskoi zhizni*, 134-135.

49 I. T. Kokorev, "Publikatsii i vyveski," in Idem, *Moskva sorokovyh godov. Ocherki i povesti o Moskve XIX veka* (Moscow, 1959), 73, 74. On attitudes to shops in Vistengof and Kororev see also Alexander M. Martin, *Enlightened Metropolis: Constructing Imperial Moscow, 1762-1855* (Oxford, 2013), 284-289.

Kokorev's rhetoric on the banishment of the "spirit of Russia" from central Moscow is more bantering than polemical. A sharper-edged polemical reading of the French street-texts of central St. Petersburg was launched in a near-contemporary essay by Egor Rastorguev, whose *Strolls Along Nevskii Prospekt* was published in 1846. Rastorguev was of a somewhat older generation than Kokorev.[50] His book begins with several introductory chapters containing background information about Nevskii Prospekt. Then he goes out into the street for a series of walks, during which he records his observations and impressions. And his very first set of impressions, as soon as he embarks on his first stroll, was formed by the profusion of signs. His initial reaction is in familiar mode, as he is struck by their ubiquity and diversity:

> Such a colourful diversity (*pestrota*) of signs! All the private buildings are covered, swathed, strewn (so to speak) with signs, inscriptions, images, figures, frames—high and low, on walls and on doors, over windows and under windows and behind windows.[51]

However, as he progressed from general impression towards specific textual observation, Rastorguev became increasingly distressed; and the cause of his distress was language:

> But the peculiar thing, the offensive thing, is that every single sign on Nevskii Prospekt is in French. Very rarely is there also a Russian translation. Oh, our glorious Russian capital! Does your renown really depend on this?

For Rastorguev the predominance of French suggested neither elegance nor sophistication. It was humiliating. He was indignant at the asymmetry of attitudes: Russians went abroad in the spirit of appreciation, and took pains to learn the relevant languages; these foreign traders came to Russia in order to make profits, and were quite shameless in their ignorance of the Russian tongue:

> When we Russians set off for alien parts, we strive not merely to equal but even to surpass native foreigners (*prirodnye inostrantsy*) in the purity of our language and the correctness of our enunciation. When we travel to Paris or London, it is surely not for the purpose of making profit for ourselves from the local inhabitants. But these Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, these Eng-

50 See the remarks of A. M. Konechnyi in his introduction to *Chuvstvitel'nye progulki po Nevskomu prospektu*, ed. A. M. Konechnyi (St. Petersburg, 2009), 17.

51 E. I. Rastorguev, *Progulki po Nevskomy prospektu* (St. Petersburg, 1846), repr. in *Chuvstvitel'nye progulki po Nevskomu prospektu*, 139.

> lishmen and Englishwomen, these Germans and Dutch, and all the foreign traders who flock to our glorious capital with the sole aim of dealing on credit and enriching themselves without investing—they are utterly unembarrassed by their ignorance of our language.

The longer Rastorguev pondered the implications of this linguistic landscape, the darker his thoughts became. Paris has *no* foreign-language shop signs whatever; St. Petersburg's main thoroughfares have *only* foreign-language shop signs:

> Where in Paris could you find even one shop sign in a foreign language? Yet here, in Russia, in the capital city, and not just on Nevskii Prospekt but on all the main streets of St. Petersburg, all the shop signs are in French. It is as if St. Petersburg is not a Russian city at all.

The spectacle would have been bad enough if it had merely indicated the preponderance of foreigners too arrogant to be bothered with Russian, but for Egor Rastorguev the most galling aspect was that even the Russian traders had become infected by the fashion for the foreign:

> Surely it is both pitiful and absurd to see how even traders in our native Russian goods, traders who know not a word in any foreign language, nevertheless imitate custom and fashion by having their shop signs in French? How can one avoid being both amused and indignant at the sight of signs such as *Tailleur Ivan Moschalof, Boulanger Timofey Ivanof, Magasin du thé par Sidor Blohin, Coiffeur Evgraf Semenof* and the like. [...] Surely it is absurd, the blindness that, out of love for all things foreign, induces us to demean our own language in our own country!

Such abject and in many cases fraudulent francophilia went beyond language. Everything was declared to be *de Paris*:

> Here all the hair stylists turn out to be from Paris, the tailors, shoemakers and bootmakers are from Paris, the dentists and podiatrists are from Paris, the florists and the perfumers are from Paris, the bronze-casters and the clockmakers are from Paris, the upholsterers are from Paris, the lithographers are from Paris. In short: all the artists and craftsmen are from Paris—according to their own shop signs, at any rate.[52]

52 Rastorguev, *Progulki po Nevskomy prospektu*, 141.

In central Moscow in the mid 1830s Fedor Distribuendi had noticed (or had wished to draw attention to) almost exclusively Russian signs, although we know that French signs were there to be described if he had chosen to do so. In central St. Petersburg in the mid 1840s Egor Rastorguev noticed (or wished to draw attention to) exclusively French signs, although we know that the linguistic landscape was not in fact so monoglot, or so mono-scriptal, as he asserts. Each read and responded to the urban text of his choice: in the one case according to his desires, in the other case according to his fears.

At the other end of the cultural spectrum, likewise outside Distribuendi's notion of putative normality, were the signs that he had classed as "curious": signs in non-standard Russian, signs with apparently quirky wording, signs which he had dismissed as tasteless and illiterate. Distribuendi himself admitted that there were "thousands" of such signs in central Moscow. As we shall see, they were no less widespread in St. Petersburg. In a sense, therefore, it was they that constituted the norm, or *a* norm, even if Distribuendi, and Kokorev and Rastorguev, preferred (for different reasons) to treat them as marginal. For more direct, less judgmental readings of the ordinary signage of the city, we have to turn to a different genre of writing: not to the works of the earnest taxonomist or of satirical essayists, but to the "physiological" sketches whose avowed aim was to explore the anatomy of the city as it actually was (albeit—perhaps paradoxically—mainly through the medium of fiction) without hierarchy or pre-judgment. Here, as examples, we can consider the readings of urban signage in two of the works published in the 1845 collection *The Physiology of Petersburg* (*Fiziologiia Peterburga*): "The Recesses of Petersburg," or "Petersburg Nooks and Crannies" (*Peterburgskie ugly*) by Nikolai Nekrasov, and "The Petersburg Side" (*Peterburgskaia storona*) by Evgenii Grebenka.[53] The titles themselves declare a sharp contrast with stories of Nevskii Prospekt or Kuznetskii Most. The "Petersburg Side" was the "other" side of the river, the *un*fashionable side, expressly *not* the place for dandified strutting amid signs of frenchified affectation, while Nekrasov's "recesses" imply precisely those parts which needed to be sought out, which did *not* put themselves on display. Except that, as we discover, display was no less important even in the "recesses." They were not "recesses" for the people who lived there, only for the people who had conventionally written about Petersburg display.

Nekrasov's story begins with a sign: not a brightly painted shop sign, but a simple handwritten note attached to a gateway into a somewhat insalubrious courtyard. In Russian the note reads: *At daetsa vnaimy ugal, na vto-*

53 Cited here from the edition published as *Fiziologiia Peterburga* (Moscow, 1984), 132-152 and 107-131. Note that Nekrasov's story was extracted, with some alterations, from his unfinished and largely unpublished early novel *The Life and Adventures of Tikhon Trostnikov* (*Zhizn' i pokhozhdeniia Tikhona Trostnikova*): see N. A. Nekrasov, *Proza, nezavershennoe 1841-1856* (Moscow, 2014), 104ff.

rom dvare, vpadvale, a o tsene sprasit' kvarternai khoziaike Akuliny Fedotovne.[54] Translation here is a problem. An English rendition can be either literate or literal, not both. A literate rendition might read "Basement apartment for rent, in the second courtyard. Questions about the price should be addressed to the supervisor, Akulina Fedotovna." Or some such. But this version misrepresents the point, for the notice is not literate, or at any rate its spellings are patently non-standard. Unstressed vowels are mostly rendered as they are pronounced, not as they are supposed to be written. A prepositional prefix is written as a separate word (*at daetsa* should be *otdaetsia*), while, conversely, a separate preposition is elided with the following word (*vpadvale* should be *v podvale*). And so on.

A text like this poses intriguing questions for reading. How was it read by Nekrasov's narrator? How did Nekrasov's implied author intend it to be read by the reader of the story? How, extrapolating from text to life, do we think such texts are likely to have been read by those who encountered them on the streets of St. Petersburg? On the one hand, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that there is a hint of condescension and amusement on behalf of the author-*intelligent* who reproduces (or creates) the egregious misspellings. On the other hand, the ostensible stance of the "physiological" writer is objectively ethnographic or anatomical rather than evaluative. We have to be careful, too, about our own categories. The spelling is non-standard. From a normative perspective it might be labelled semi-literate, but this can be inappropriate and misleading. The sign was communicatively adequate for its purpose. Indeed, as we shall see, in this kind of context, away from the bustle of the main commercial thoroughfares, this kind of inscription could even be said—*pace* Fedor Distribuendi—to have constituted a kind of norm. The narrator understood it, and acted upon it. He walked into the yard in search of the advertised lodgings.

The courtyard is no quiet residential enclave. The narrator's first impression is that it mirrors the street outside: not in the form of a swish retail emporium, but as a densely packed hive of workshops, of craftsmen, of individuals offering their diverse services. The scene can be taken in at a glance because of the immediate impact of the main visual marker of such activity: again, the profusion of signs:

> The building was crammed with people working at open windows, and singing. My gaze was struck by the colourful diversity (*zapestreli*) of the fragments of inscription on the signs that festooned the inner façade as prolifically as the outer one: *mourning stuff and coffins made and for hire*; *brass and tin plated*; *Trofimov, from abroad*; *Caterina Bragadini, Russian certificated and examined midwife*; *pension*; *Aleksandrov, in private Kupriianov*. By each

54 *Fiziologiia Peterburga*, 132.

> sign was a representation of a hand pointing to the entrance to the relevant shop or apartment, as well as an image of something to explain what the sign meant: a boot, scissors, a sausage, a leg of meat in bay leaves, a settee, a samovar with a broken handle, a service uniform.[55]

For Nekrasov's narrator, therefore, the shabby courtyard was adorned with trade signs no less liberally than Nevskii Prospekt. The differences were in language (no fancy French here), to some extent in the nature of what was on offer (a preponderance of individual services rather than formal shops), and in the fact that the physical arrangements meant that the signs functioned as pointers to entrance-ways rather than as labels on shopfronts. Even off-street, away from the more ostentatiously commercial hubs, Nekrasov's narrator in the mid 1840s reads the building through perusing the signs by which it is abundantly, albeit somewhat haphazardly, indexed.

The copious signage assumes a sufficient readership even here, although the narrator makes it clear that by no means all his fellow lodgers were literate. A former domestic serf (*dvorovyi chelovek*) objects emphatically when a drunken ex-teacher shows him some verses. Literacy is not for the likes of him—not because he dare not aspire to it, but because he reckons it positively harmful:

> Don't you poke that in my face! Why are you poking that in my face? I'm not one of your gentry folks. I can't read. What's the point of letters for the likes of me? Learn to read and we'd forget how to do our own jobs.[56]

Over on the "Petersburg side" Evgenii Grebenka's narrator was less impressed by the communicative efficacy of signs. He was particularly keen to find notices that, he hoped, may have told him where he could get a decent meal. Usually the quest ended in disappointment:

> On the Petersburg side there is not a single tavern or café or restaurant where one can breakfast or dine. True, on Bolshoi Prospekt or at the Sytnyi Market and on Bolshaia Dvorianskaia there are miscellaneous signs saying "Entrance to Establishment,"[57] but these are just places where coachmen and ordinary folk drink tea. One such "establishment," just near the Sampsonievskii Bridge, calls itself the "Cape of Good Hope."[58]

55 Ibid.
56 *Fiziologiia Peterburga*, 145.
57 *V khod vzavedenie*: again with non-standard word divisions.
58 *Fiziologiia Peterburga*, 123-124.

Nevertheless, his ingenuity did enable him to decode and follow up the promise of one rather unusual sign, a board nailed to a free-standing post on a street corner:

> Travelling along one of the larger streets on the Petersburg side you will see, on the corner of a side-street that leads off at a right angle, a large pole, to which is fixed a dark-blue-greyish-greenish signboard. And on the signboard, in big yellow letters, is written: "*Kukhmister* –ov preparates." Nothing more. What exactly is "preparated" by the *kukhmister*? The object or the victuals preparated by "-ov" remain a mystery to the public. However, the perceptive reader may turn off the main street onto the narrow sidestreet, and will find his way to the abode of the *kukhmister* more by smell than by sight.[59]

There the reader will encounter the heartily patriotic *kukhmister*, who will loudly assure customers that he can "preparate" better than any Frenchman, and who is quite unabashed if they happen to find cockroaches in the soup.

Evgenii Grebenka's Petersburg Side seems like a transitional zone in urban textual display. The signage is less dense even than in Nekrasov's "recesses," let alone in the main shopping streets. And the genre of commercial sign seems less thoroughly embedded. The idiosyncrasy of the wording consists of more than merely quirky spelling. Meanings are implied but not imposed, as if the conventions and methods of advertising have not yet been thoroughly assimilated.

We cannot, at a distance of more than a century and a half, freeze the frame of observation so as to catch the variegated textures of signage across the various zones of the city (or of the two cities). In some respects and in some locations by the 1830s and 1840s traditions had become established, in other respects and in other locations the emergence of signage was still in flux. Thus, for example, in 1848, almost contemporary with the sketches by Nekrasov and Grebenka, a brief anonymous article on "Petersburg signs" appeared in the weekly magazine *Illiustratsiia*.[60] The author, who designated himself simply as "T," seems to have been unaware of previous publications on the subject, and writes with the enthusiasm of a pioneer.[61] "T," like his predecessors, relishes some of the non-standard spellings. However, he also suggests that perhaps the golden age of quirkiness was waning, that signs were becoming more uniform, more standardized, that the glory days of ungrammatical inventiveness now lived mainly in the memory:

59 *Ibid*., 120. The word here translated as "preparates" is *priugotovliaet*.

60 "Peterburgskie vyveski," *Illiustratsiia* 1848, no. 30 (28 August), 81-82; text at http://tiam-tula.ru/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/TIAM_public002.pdf (accessed December 10, 2020).

61 For more remarks on "T" see K. Bowers, "Experiencing Information," 401-403.

> Now we should say a few words about the inscriptions on the shop signs. We can still remember when these inscriptions were written in an illiterate hand. Any long-term resident will recall oddities such as: *V khot, Vkhot v zavedenie, Renskovoi pogreb, Zdes' priugatavliaetsa tobak, Lafka kuptsa Kopustena, Vechnova tsekhu master Ivanov*, and the like. These days educated merchants and manufacturers no longer risk ingenuity either in the depiction of goods or in the composition of inscriptions: their shop signs simply convey their name and the number of the shop.

It is noteworthy that "T" picks out some of the same phrases and habits as were highlighted by Nekrasov and by Grebenka: the separation of prepositional prefixes (compare *V khot* with Nekrasov's *At daetsa*); irregular *a* for *o* in unstressed positions; *-tsa* for *–tsia* in the suffix of reflexive verbs, etc. "T" even echoes some of the same phrases as had been highlighted by Grebenka: the use of the rare imperfective *priugotovliat'* in a non-standard sense; the formulaic *vkhot v zavedenie* (cf. Grebenka's version, *v khod vzavedenie*). Such correspondences between seemingly unrelated texts call into question the notion of the non-standard. Insofar as one can generalise from such a mixture of journalism and fiction, spelling may have been fluid, but the types of fluidity were fairly regular, even predictable. Fluidity according to a pattern, or within identifiable parameters, can be seen as a kind of norm. The non-standard was, in its own ways, relatively standard for this non-elite language of signage. Even "T," in a revealing footnote, points out the paradox whereby initially sub-standard inscriptional versions could become their own conventions, some of which were already accepted as normal through a social acceptance of usage.

We cannot tell to what extent "T" is accurate in his contention that quirky inscriptions were, in general, on the decline. He does not tell us how thoroughly or systematically he had explored. One might imagine a continually recurring cycle of flexibility and normalisation as signage expanded into ever new areas, first in the capitals, then into the provinces and across the empire. If "T" was accurately observing the near-completion of such a process of autonomous, un-legislated homogenisation, at any rate in parts of St. Petersburg, then perhaps the fears of Fedor Distribuendi were being resolved of their own accord.

The literature on reading shop signs had covered a lot of ground, both cartographic and conceptual, since the start of this sequence of texts in 1836. In 1835, the year of the completion of the lithograph panorama of St. Peterburg's main shopping street, and a year before Fedor Distribuendi's pioneering survey of signs, Nikolai Gogol' published his short story "Nevskii Prospekt." The story contains just one reference to the shop signs. At mid-

day the street is populated by tutors walking with their young charges, to whom they explain meticulously that "the signboards over the shops are made so that, with their help, one may find out what is inside the shops."[62] The remark is uncharacteristically deadpan (or characteristically ironic). It represents signs merely as sources of factual information, with no meaning beyond their verbal content. This perhaps makes sense as initial instruction for a child just learning to read, or just learning about basic orientation in urban space, but it is of course a long way from the more aesthetically, culturally and ideologically loaded readings articulated by journalists and essayists over the next couple of decades. But even this brief reference in Gogol's story is already indicative of the fact that, by the mid 1830s, the shop signs were objects that routinely drew the gaze, even for the young as part of their elementary induction into practices of reading the city.

3. Our third episode in this overview of street reading is Soviet. The Revolution of 1917 transformed street *writing* in Russia. There was a radical shift in the balance of production: away from "bottom up" and back to "top down;" away from an urban graphosphere generated by private enterprise, back (or forward) to an urban graphosphere generated by the state. This involved not only a change in the institutional dynamics of production, but a fundamental re-orientation of priorities from commercial advertising to political agitation, education and propaganda. The pre-revolutionary urban textscape was dominated by signs announcing and promoting goods and services. The post-revolutionary urban textscape was dominated by political messaging. This process critically affected shop signs in at least four ways. First, they eventually became a state monopoly, so that private signage shrank almost into non-existence. Second, they became homogenised in form and style. Third, their visibility was hugely reduced, as they were pushed from the foreground to the background. And fourth, in function they focussed only on conveying basic information rather than on brand promotion and competitive advertisement.

These changes were not instantaneous. For a decade after the Revolution, the Soviet urban graphosphere was in some respects still more cluttered and diverse than previously. The new did not immediately supplant the old, but supplemented it and jostled for space with it. Private commercial signage even gained fresh impetus and legitimacy during the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP) from 1921 to 1928. The transition from sometimes raucously polyphonic co-existence to what became the characteristically Soviet configuration can be traced through the early to mid 1930s.

The appropriation of public space for political messages was a vital component of the communications strategy of the Soviet government from its

62 N. V. Gogol', *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 14 tomakh*, ed. V. L. Komarovich, vol. 3 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1938), 11.

very earliest days.[63] Main streets became saturated with posters and placards, banners and billboards and newspaper stands ("wall-newspapers" - *stengazety*) and murals, some bearing verbal texts alone, others with punchy combinations of text and image. From civil war to public hygiene, from electrification to sovietisation, from railway stations to factories, from parades to facades, fixed in place or travelling the country on the slogan-emblazoned agit-prop trains, the messages were on show—rhetorical, brash, unmissable. Anniversaries and public celebrations prompted the particularly dense and intense saturation of outdoor spaces with temporary, mock-monumental, message-bearing structures. The scale and ambition can be seen, for example, in the 1918 Petrograd festivities marking the first anniversary of the Revolution. These were devised and planned months in advance. Over 150 artists and designers were involved in the preparatory work. Nearly 90 streets, squares, buildings and bridges were earmarked for decoration.[64] Over 300 of the sketches and drawings for the various installations are preserved in the collections of the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg.[65]

Peter I himself would have recognised the triumphal genre, though the specific idiom was of course new. By contrast with the eighteenth-century precursors, the balance of visibility between monumental edifice and text-bearing image had shifted a long way in favour of the latter. Eclectic in its sources and references—drawing on such diverse traditions as, for example, religious iconography, emblems, or popular *lubok* prints—current and urgent in its messaging, futurist in its orientation and energy, for a while this early Soviet explosion of public image-making and text-making engaged and was visually shaped by some of the most innovative and talented artists of the Russian avant garde. Not surprisingly, it is this aspect of the Soviet public graphosphere that has been of particular interest to historians of art, textuality and visual culture, and indeed of politics. It has stimulated exhibitions, collections, popular and scholarly publications.

Also not surprisingly the other side of the equation—the downgrading of the commercial, the shrinkage into homogeneity of the humble shop sign—has receded into the background of historiography and cultural awareness, as it receded into the background of the living street. After the brief revival of commercial signage during the NEP period, Soviet shops no longer had cause either to advertise their owners (all were owned by the state) or to compete with rivals for custom (all were assumed to be meeting shared needs). Hence the reversion to shop signs that were reduced to plain statements of what was on offer: "BREAD," "VEGETABLES," "FURNITURE"

63 See e.g. S. White, *The Bolshevik Poster* (New Haven, London, 1988); V. E. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power. Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1997).

64 L. Vostretsova, "Iskusstvo na ulitsu!," in *Iskusstvo v zhizn', 1918-1925* (St. Petersburg, 2017), 5-11.

65 Over 150 of them are illustrated in the catalogue *Iskusstvo v zhizn' 1918-1925*, 30-83.

(*KHLEB, OVOSHCHI, MEBEL'*). If the political posters and placards were a medium for loud and dynamic self-assertion, Soviet shop-signs can seem like a medium for almost wilful self-denial. The political posters contribute to one cliché of the Soviet streetscape, an image of bombastic propaganda. The new shop signs contribute to a contrasting image: the cliché of Soviet visual drabness and uniformity. On special occasions even the political placards and slogans on the outside of a labour camp could be far more copious, varied and eye-catching that the signs on a shop.[66]

Here we focus on the latter, on the more reticent genre of Soviet street writing. The visual, rhetorical and ideological boldness of Soviet political signage has tended to distract attention from the transformation in shop signage that was, in a different way, no less dramatic in its effect on the experience of visible words in public spaces. Indeed, one could argue that Soviet political posters and slogans, for all their inventiveness, were actually less innovative, less transformative. Political street writing could be said to have emerged in some respects from the commercial, appropriating and expanding its spaces, developing its techniques. Soviet shop signs, by contrast, represent a radical break. They are surely at least as significant as their more brash political conterparts in creating the distinctive character of the Soviet urban textscape.

After a brief outline of how and when Soviet-style shop signage became established as the norm, we will consider the peculiar problems of studying how it was, or might have been, read. As in the previous two episodes, we cannot extrapolate a general reader. In each case the particular nature of the material and its contexts, together with differences in the types of available sources, requires a shift in method and perspective in the approach to the problem of readership.

The typically laconic Soviet shop sign developed in two stages: first, in practice, then in law. The shift in practice was a characteristic feature of the changing public graphosphere in the late 1920s following the abandonment of NEP and the consequent collapse of private retail. The close regulation of such shop signs dates from the mid 1930s.

Writers are readers, and responses to the emergence of the Soviet shop sign can, to some extent, be tracked in literature. Among the most popular evocations of late-NEP and early post-NEP commerce are the two satirical novels by Il'ia Il'f and Evgenii Petrov, *The Twelve Chairs* (*Dvenadtsat' stul'ev*) and *The Golden Calf* (*Zolotoi telenok*). Like Fedor Distribuendi, they wrote pseudonymously: their "real" surnames were Fainzilberg and Kataev. Unlike Distribuendi, Il'f and Petrov became household names, and their two novels about the arch-wheeler-dealer (a rough translation of his self-designation

66 E.g. *Red Star Over Russia. A Visual History of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the Death of Stalin. Posters, Photographs and Graphics from the David King Collection* (London, 2009), 260-261.

as the *velikii kombinator*) Ostap Bender were among the classics of Soviet satire.

The two novels straddle the process rather neatly, and suggest a chronology of awareness or response. *The Twelve Chairs* was written in 1927 and published in 1928, *The Golden Calf* was completed in 1931. Thus *The Twelve Chairs* is a NEP novel, while *The Golden Calf* is set in the age of collectivisation. Ostap Bender is a kind of parody of a quintessential "nepman," an entirely unscrupulous philosopher-spiv. In *The Twelve Chairs* he is, so to speak, in his element, while in *The Golden Calf* he and his associates are already relics, trying to survive against the tide of change.

In the two novels of Il'f and Petrov, shop signs matter. They are not just background details. They are prominent, thematic, sometimes even highlighted typographically in the design of the printed page. Moreover, of particular relevance to the present topic, there is a clear progression from the first novel to the second, a reflection of the fundamental change in circumstance and setting, and hence of "reading." *The Twelve Chairs* opens with a shop sign. In the third paragraph of the novel we are introduced to the sight of a patch of wasteland where a calf is "tenderly licking" a rusty sign propped up against a gateway:

FUNERAL PARLOUR
"MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME"[67]

In *The Twelve Chairs* shop signs can be amusing, incongruous, pathetic or neutral, but in general they reflect the coexistence of state and private enterprise: a state insurance office, an Odessa bakery, B. M. Polesov's hats and fashionable attire, a primus repair shop.[68] The profusion of mixed Soviet and private signs was a fact of the urban scene, colourful and contradictory. For a contemporary visual evocation one could cite, for example, the shots of signs plastered like external wallpaper—above, below, around and between shop windows—in Dziga Vertov's 1929 film *Man with a Movie Camera* (*Chelovek s kinoapparatom*).[69]

The later novel, by contrast, regularly draws attention to the transition from the mixed economy of NEP to the dominance of generic Soviet signs. The change becomes thematised, focuses attention on itself, intensifies the act of reading. A haberdasher by the name of B. Kulturtriger lives through the whole sorry process. Once the proud occupant of his own shop, he is first squeezed by a series of other small businesses, until all of them are superseded by a Soviet organisation. The transitions are reflected in the sequence of signs. The first stage is a kind of hybridisation, as parodic

67 I. Il'f, E. Petrov, *Dvenadtsat' stul'ev*, in I. Il'f, E. Petrov, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1994), 27-28.

68 Il'f, Petrov, *Dvenadtsat' stul'ev*, 51, 81-82, 88.

69 *Chelovek s kinoapparatom*: e.g. at 18 minutes and 57 minutes.

Soviet-style stump compounds are added to the signs alongside the names of the owners: "Purveyor of haberdashery. GALANTPROM. B. Kulturtriger" (a stump compound from which one extrapolates an assumed full form *galantereinaia promyshlennost'*); "KANTSBUM. Everything for the artist and the office worker. Lev Sokolovskii" (from a notional full form *kantseliarskie bumagi*).[70] One by one the various enterprises collapsed or were inspected out of existence until, in their place, "above the former ark of private traders, there appeared a small, neat sign: 'The Black Sea Section of the Arbat Office for the Preparation of Horns and Hooves'"[71] —also a racket, but an official-sounding racket. Eventually this is translated into yet more solid officialese: "The State Company (*gosob"edinenie*) Horns and Hooves," now a large sign spanning the width of the building.[72]

One of the central characters, Aleksandr Koreiko, mourns the passing of the old economic order (that is, the New Economic Policy):

> But he already knew that in the *Soviet* land to strive openly for enrichment was unthinkable. And with a smile of superiority he contemplated the pathetic remnants of *nepmen* rotting away under the shop signs: "For sale: Products of the B. A. Leibedev Worsted Company," "Brocade and Utensils for Churches and Clubs," or "Kh. Robinson and M. Piatnitsa, Grocery Store."[73]

The monarchist Fedor Nikitich Khvorobev laments the impossibility of escaping from the ubiquitous reminders of the Soviet system, and he wanders the streets looking mournfully at the Soviet placards and signs.[74] Ostap Bender himself looks at nothing mournfully, but always has an eye for the profitable opportunity. So, naturally, among the 400 schemes that he ponders for potentially "honest" profiteering (none of which satisfies him) is the idea of obtaining a concession for the removal of old shop signs.[75]

The writer Iurii Olesha wrote a brief fantasy recollection about his attempt to open a metaphor shop. Eventually the shop had to close because customers were not prepared to pay for the high-quality but expensive metaphors. They snapped up the cheap clichés, but nobody could make ends meet by trading in such shoddy goods (shoddy as the phrase "to make ends meet," or indeed to "snap up"). But what Olesha recalls most wistfully is the sign, painted by

70 Il'f, Petrov, *Zolotoi telenok*, in Idem, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1996), 135-136. On the spread of stump compounds in signs see G. M. Pospelova, "Moskovskie vyveski v poslerevoliutsionnoe vremia," *Russkaia rech'*, 2013, 5 (2013), 90-97. For a classic example from around the time of *The Golden Calf*, see the large PRODMAG (*Prodovol'stvennyi magazin*) on the Arbat in Moscow: *Vse na prodazhu! Istoriia russkoi vyveski* (Moscow, 2013), 161.

71 Il'f, Petrov, *Zolotoi telenok*, 136

72 Ibid., 298.

73 Ibid., 52.

74 Ibid., 76.

75 Ibid., 134.

an artist friend of his, in deep red lettering on a light blue background such that, when viewed from an angle, it looked as if someone in a blue dress was eating cherries.[76] By the mid 1930s such individuality was explicitly banned and Olesha would not have been able to put up his sign in the first place. Signwriting workshops closed.[77] Standardisation needed little creativity.

Thus faded the "colourful diversity" (*pestrota*) of shop signs that had by turns intrigued and irritated "readers" of Russia's urban shopping streets since the early days of commercial signage, from Catherine II through Fedor Distribuendi to the "physiological" writers and journalists of the mid nineteenth century and beyond. *The Golden Calf* captures through parody a moment of change in the city textscape, a moment of defamiliarization that cannot but draw attention to itself. However, over time the unfamiliar becomes familiar, becomes the norm. And when it becomes the new norm, even small deviations can, in their turn, draw attention to themselves. In the mid 1930s it was not enough for the norms merely to have emerged. They were still read (from "above") as too messy. They needed to be formally normalized. In the view of the central authorities, standards should be made explicit; norms should be defined through normative regulation.

On 25 July 1935 the USSR Commissariat of Internal Trade (Narkomvnutorg) issued an instruction on the form and content of shop signs and shop windows. It decreed that, by 15 August (that is, almost immediately) all regional and district trading authorities were to ensure compliance with the stated regulations for signs and windows, as specified in the Appendices to the instruction.[78] The appended set of fourteen rules for shop signs included stipulations regarding their contents, their location relative to the entrance, their minimum dimensions, the permitted materials, uniformity across each trading organisation, and on cleanliness. Rule 3 permitted (but did not require) that signs could include an "elegantly made depiction of the goods traded in the relevant shop." Rule 5 insisted that signs should be designed attractively (*krasivo*), with clear lettering, and—perhaps with the dangers of parody in mind—that abbreviations and stump compounds were to be used only when already well known to potential customers.[79]

The rules of July 1935 were not, in a sense, breaking new ground. Generically they are eerily reminiscent of the rules on the shape and appearance of shop signs promulgated by Catherine II in 1770.[80] The difference is that Catherine had been fighting against the rise of diverse commer-

76 Iu. Olesha, *Izbrannoe* (Moscow, 1987), 419-420.

77 V. Sazikov, T. V. Vinogradova, *Naruzhnaia reklama Moskvy. Istoriia, tipologiia, dokumenty* (Moscow, 2013), 197.

78 Narkomvnutorg Instruction no. 660: text published in Sazikov, Vinogradova, *Naruzhnaia reklama Moskvy*, 346-350.

79 On criticism and parody of unfamiliar abbreviations well before Il'f and Petrov, see Pospelova, "Moskovskie vyveski v poslerevoliutsionnoe vremia."

80 *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, no. 13,421; cf. Franklin, "Information in Plain Sight," 362-363.

cial signage which eventually overwhelmed attempts at regulation, while Narkomvnutorg was on the other side of history, mopping up pockets of residual laxity after the private shops and signs had already been vanquished from the streets. In the following year the legislative standardisation was pressed to its logical conclusion. On 3 May 1936 the head of Narkomvnutorg issued a decree "On the Change of Shop Signs."[81] This decree did not merely require, in general terms, that the signs should indicate the type of goods on sale in the relevant shops. It appended a table that specified exactly what each sign was to say. The first column consisted of a list of types of combinations of goods that might be on sale. Next to this, in the adjacent column, was the appropriate wording of the sign for shops with each set of goods. The list consisted of 45 permitted types of sign, from *Univermag* through *kul'ttovary*, *Sport-okhota* and *Moloko* to the humble *Produktovaia lavka*. No further variations were envisaged.

The brave new world of shop signs, so curiously explored by Fedor Distribuendi, was formally brought to an end. The Soviet regulation isolated and foregrounded the plainest informative function of signs as articulated in Gogol's "Nevskii Prospekt" almost exactly a century earlier: "the signboards over the shops are made so that, with their help, one may find out what is inside the shops."[82]

There is an apparent paradox here. If one were to judge from the evidence of shop signs alone, one might suppose that the mid 1930s was a period of an increasingly austere and puritanical attitude to consumption; as if shopping was merely a necessity, not an activity to be encouraged or celebrated. In fact, the opposite was the case. Through the 1930s consumption was actively promoted by the state.[83] Post-NEP rationing, instituted in 1931, was phased out in the mid 1930s.[84] The number of "open" shops—not limited either by rationing or by closed distribution—grew significantly through the decade.[85] In 1935 Narkomvnutorg removed consumer cooperatives to the villages and brought all urban shops under its own control. In a speech to a convention of Stakhanovites in November of that year Stalin uttered his famous declaration that life had become better, more cheerful. The mid 1930s was the period of the legitimation of an approved culture of consumption—indeed, of Soviet consumption as a means of developing an appropriate mode of culture (*kul'turnost'*). And as part of the policy, consumer advertis-

81 Text in Sazikov, Vinogradova, *Naruzhnaia reklama Moskvy*, 352-355.

82 See above, note 63.

83 See J. Gronow, *Caviar with Champagne: Common Luxury and the Ideals of the Good Life in Stalin's Russia* (Oxford, New York, 2003); A. E. Randall, *The Soviet Dream World of Retail Trade and Consumption in the 1930s* (Basingstoke, 2008).

84 On the phasing out of rationing and its associated problems see E. Osokina, *Our Daily Bread. Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927-1941*, ed. and transl. K. Transchel (Armonk, London, 2001), 133-154.

85 Randall, *The Soviet Dream World*, 26-28, 62-63; also S. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford, 1999), 54-58, 90-93.

ing flourished. Catalogues of advertisements show an abundance of bright posters of happy shoppers.[86] On 29 December 1935 Narkomvnutorg issued a document "On the use of Advertising Techniques in Order to Increase the Turnover of Goods." It asserted that "all forms of advertising, such as price-lists, leaflets, prospectuses, labels, posters, announcements, window displays, radio etc. should be filled with content that makes manifest, in graphic and generally accessible form, the qualities and features of the relevant goods." [87] A special agency, Torgreklama, was created for the purpose.

The paradox, therefore, lies in the fact that the shop sign regulations of 1935 and 1936, which in retrospect look like officious attempts to impose a drab and somewhat puritanical austerity through centralised uniformity, can in context be interpreted almost as the opposite: as measures to ensure the consistent quality of signage while urban retail outlets proliferated. The unified system of signage emphasized the establishment of a unified network of state shops, replacing the mixture of cooperatives, closed-distribution stores and "open" state shops, Yet, regardless of intention, the result was plain (in all senses). Soviet consumer advertising of the 1930s emerged in a distinctive spatial pattern. The interior spaces of the shops could be densely hung with placards and posters,[88] and newspapers were strewn with consumer-related announcements.[89] However, consumer advertising made strikingly few incursions into public open spaces. Some influential voices did advocate its wider display. In February 1936, for example, M. I. Khlopiankin, the deputy commissar at Narkomvnutorg, argued that, if it was to be optimally effective, advertising had to be ubiquitous.[90] But the prevalent view seems to have been that consumer advertising belonged in shops or in newspapers and magazines, not in the streets. Exterior consumer advertising could be read as vulgar, bourgeois, to be tolerated (or even encouraged) within limits in the ambiguous space of the shop window display (an interior space facing outwards), but rarely beyond. The larger consequence was a reconfiguration of the ecology of the urban graphosphere, a shift in balance between the commercial text and the political text, between the functional label-sign as everyday necessity (*byt*) and the vast rhetorical texts and images of political campaigns or factory hoardings or anniversary parades. The public graphosphere was generally the preserve of the political, and to some extent the cultural (theatre posters, cinema posters). Shop interiors became spaces for the active promotion of the

86 See the copious reproductions in A. E. Sopkov, P. A. Sopkov, A. F. Shkliaruk, *Sovetskii reklamnyi plakat 1923-1941* (Moscow, 2013).

87 *Ob ispol'zovanii metodov reklamy dlia rasshireniia tovarooborota*: extracts in Sazikov, Vinogradova, *Naruzhnaia reklama Moskvy*, 350-351.

88 E.g. Randall, *The Soviet Dream World*, illustrations on pp. 34, 35, 39.

89 R. Cox, "All This Can Be Yours!: Soviet Commercial Advertising and the Social Construction of Space, 1928-1956," in E. Dobrenko, E. Naiman (eds.), *The Landscape of Stalinism. The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space* (Seattle, London, 2003), 125-162 (esp., 134-141). On newspaper advertising in particular see Gronow, *Caviar with Champagne*, 79-86.

90 Cox, "All This Can Be Yours!," 136.

culture of material consumption. The modestly functional shop sign mediated the liminal space between the two.

But what of reading? What did the standardized signs mean for those who encountered them in daily life? How were they viewed or discussed? Here there is a problem of sources; or rather, of a lack of sources. Until the mid 1930s signs and advertising were topics of public debate in journals and newspapers. From the mid 1930s open discussion appears to have ceased, giving way to a public near-silence that lasted for two decades.[91] Diaries, correspondence, and archival records of committee meetings, may perhaps reveal more, but for broader debate the question of shop signs was closed. And that was the point. It flowed from the reorientation of the function of shop signs. They were no longer media of advertisement in a world of competitive commerce. Their purpose was to inform, not to promote. They had no need to draw attention to themselves.[92] In the transition from NEP, the spread of Soviet-style signs had still stimulated a degree of active reading through unfamiliarity. The regulations of the mid 1930s assumed the desirability of familiarity, of habit. The shop sign, like the street sign, was a routine reference point of urban topography. It was *not* to be made strange, perhaps not even to be made interesting. It was designed for automatised recognition rather than for active reading.

For one type of reader, however, the system was indeed strange and curious: the foreign reader. Foreign residents writing for outsiders knew that the Soviet shopping experience needed to be explained. Explanations mostly involved the various categories of shops, and the complexities of multiple pricing and exchange rates,[93] but the signs, too, presented mysteries of their own. Peter Frances spent seven months working in the Soviet Union in 1937. Despite the simplifications decreed in the previous year, the decipherment of stump compounds was a particular enigma:

> Shopping in foreign countries is always a difficult business at first, but Soviet Russia has invented a few special difficulties of her own. I first tried shopping on my third day in Dubrovka. [...] The weather was so bitterly cold that the shop windows were all frosted over and I couldn't see what they sold. There was, admittedly, the name of each shop on top, but НАРКОМПИЩЕПРОМ left me about as wise as when I had started to decipher it. I had to peep into each shop till I found what I wanted. I first looked for a baker's, imagining that I should see "B. Bunn, Baker," over the door. But when I eventually found one it was called "The

91 E. Glinternik, *Reklama v Rossii XVIII – pervoi poloviny XX veka. Opyt illiustrirovannykh ocherkov* (St. Petersburg, 2001), 298.

92 Sazikov, Vinogradova, *Naruzhnaia reklama Moskvy*, 197.

93 See e.g. P. Frances, *I Worked in a Soviet Factory* (London, 1939), 64-77; A. Smith, *I Was a Soviet Worker* (London, 1937), 127-130.

> Central Bread Trust of the People's Commissariat of the Provision Industry." They sold bread.[94]

In advertising, too, outsiders could pick up nuances of local cultural readings. For example, despite the official acceptance of in-store advertising both as a fact and as a concept, another anecdote from Peter Frances catches the hint of fastidiousness about how to interpret what might appear to be advertising in public spaces. Just because something *looks* like an advertisement doesn't mean that it should be *read* as such:

> Competitive advertising campaigns are not allowed as they are considered unproductive expenditure. I saw some posters which I should have called advertisements in England and asked [my interlocutor] whether they were or not. "Oh no," he said, "those are not advertisements at all. You see, we are putting on the market many goods which the Russian people have never known before, new foods, different types of clothing and suchlike things, and we must *enlighten* them as to their use." I pointed out an *enlightenment* for butter in one of the Metro stations, and he told me that the Russian peasant had always used sunflower seed oil.[95]

A slight shift in the direction of more deliberately alluring (if not more informative) signage began from the late 1940s, with the practice of labelling organizations with evocative names, such as the names of places, flowers, trees, precious stones, stars—anything except personal names, which might suggest private ownership.[96] This was an acknowledgement of the "brand" principle, with names intended to be atmospheric rather than simply descriptive. Such names were informative only to those who already knew, such as the "Berezka" ("Birch tree") brand for shops with restricted, privileged access.[97] There was also more encouragement for aesthetic components of signage, made more striking by the spread of the use of neon. However, not until the post-Soviet era was there a decisive re-orientation of the urban textscape away from the political and towards re-saturation with commercial signage.

This survey has focused on three sample episodes—perhaps indicative, but far short of comprehensive. There is, as yet, no substantial history of the *production* of Russian street writing, let alone of its reception, of its reader-

94 Frances, *I Worked in a Soviet Factory*, 65. The compound *NARKOMPISHCHEPROM* is printed in Cyrillic, including the misprint "–ПИЩ-" for "–ПИЩ-."

95 Frances, *I Worked in a Soviet Factory*, 73-74.

96 G. M. Pospelova, "Moskovskie vyveski 40-50-kh godov," *Russkaia rech'*, 5 (2014), 88-95.

97 A. Ivanova, *Magaziny "Berezka." Paradoksy potrebleniia v pozdnem SSSR* (Moscow, 2017).

ship. It would in any case be near impossible to encapsulate adequately the subjective responses of those who, with hugely varying degrees of engagement, may have encountered, observed, admired, been outraged by, interpreted, misinterpreted, ignored or in other myriad ways "read" the street texts across the centuries. The three selected episodes highlight moments of critical change in the existence and infrastructural dynamics of the urban textscape: first its initial emergence through the "top-down" state-directed projects in the early eighteenth century; then the "bottom-up" rise of commercial signage in the first half of the nineteenth century; and finally the re-assertion of the political dominance of street texts, along with the concomitant relocation of sales advertising to interior spaces. For each of the episodes we have considered different types of evidence for different modes of reading. With regard to the Petrine celebratory structures we looked at the official texts that explained how the street-writing was *meant* to be read. The proliferation and—most notably, in the accounts of contemporary commentators—the variety of commercial signage in the second third of the nineteenth century provoked a range of literary and journalistic readings. The transition from NEP to post-NEP signage was a conspicuous change that left its traces in literature, but, once established, the standardised state versions were not for discussion and gave little scope for reading beyond their function as labels (except for outsiders, for whom they constituted an unfamiliar and hence informative Soviet cultural text).

Patterns of reader response do not always map neatly onto the patterns of production. Aesthetic fashion can move in different cycles, depending on the balance of competing notions of what the urban graphosphere ought properly to look like. Some were exhilarated by the dynamism of colourful diversity (*pestrota*), others regretted any threat to good order. Among the latter one can count not only Catherine II and Narkomvnutorg, but the enigmatic Fedor Distribuendi himself. And the struggle between order and diversity continues, even amid the seemingly irrevocably variegated graphospheric profusion of the post-Soviet era. In April 2013 a design firm produced a report commissioned by the Committee on Architecture and Construction of Moscow City Council. The report analysed the "external appearance" of the city.[98] In fact, it was almost entirely about the design and positioning of signs—above all, shop signs—and was extensively illustrated with examples of what its authors regarded as good or bad practice. The purpose was, yet again, to inform new planning regulations.

98 Arkhitekturno-khudozhestvennaia kontseptsiia vneshnego oblika ulits, magistralei i territorii goroda Moskvy, vypolnennaia v pilotnom rezhime (v chasti razmeshcheniia informatsionnykh konstruktsii) (Moscow, Studiia Artemiia Lebedeva, for the Komitet po arkhitekture i gradostroitel'stvu goroda Moskvy, April 2013):
https://img.artlebedev.ru/moscow/design-code/documents/mka-design-code-00-general-guides.pdf

Notes on contributors

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Simon Franklin is a Professor of Slavonic Studies at the University of Cambridge. Main research interests: medieval and early modern Russian culture, in particular the social and cultural history of writing, and the history of material texts and technologies of the word. Principal publications include: *Sermons and Rhetoric of Early Rus'* (Harvard UP, 1991); (with Jonathan Shepard) *The Emergence of Rus, 750-1200* (London, 1996); *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus, 950-1300* (Cambridge, 2002); (ed., with Emma Widdis) *National Identity in Russian Culture: an Introduction* (Cambridge, 2004); *The Russian Graphosphere, 1450-1850* (Cambridge, 2019).

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Ekaterina Kislova graduated from Moscow State University in 2003. Her PhD (2007) is devoted to the language of the 1740s court sermons in Russia. She works as an associate professor at Moscow State University (department of Russian language, Philological Faculty). She teaches the history of Russian language and culture. Her recent research deals with the languages and the culture of the eighteenth-century Russian clergy.

Gary Marker is Professor of History Emeritus at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA. His fields of scholarship are seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Russia and Ukraine, primarily focusing on print culture, education, religious discourse, gender, and visual texts. He is currently completing a study on Ukrainian monastics of the Petrine era, in particular their homiletic and epistolary writings, tentatively entitled, *Mazepa's Preachers, Peter's Men*. Future projects include a study of the cosmology of the Petrine era heretic, Grigorii Talitskii.

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Andrei Zorin, Professor, Chair of Russian University of Oxford. Graduated from Moscow State University. Taught in Russian State University for Humanities, Harvard, Stanford, NYU, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor amongst others. He works on the history of Russian literature and culture of XVIII-XIX centuries. Published *Kormia Dvuglavogo Orla. Russkaia literatura i gosudarstvennaia ideologiia posledneii treti XVIII – pervoi treti XIX veka* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2001) (English translation: *By Fables Alone. Literature and State Ideology in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2014), *Poiavlenie geroia. Iz istorii russkoi emotsional'noi kul'tury kontsa XVIII – nachala XIX veka* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2016), *On the Periphery of Europe 1762-1825: The Self-invention of the Russian Elite* (with Andreas Schonle. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018), *Leo Tolstoy* (London: Reaktion books, 2020) (Russian version: *Zhizn' L'va Tolstogo. Opyt prochteniia*. Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2020), editions of I. Barkov, I. Batiushkov, L. Ginzburg amongst others, and more than 200 articles in Russian, English, French, German, Italian and Finnish.

Daniel Waugh is Professor Emeritus in the Department of History, the Jackson School of International Studies, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Washington (Seattle, USA). He has written extensively on Muscovite texts and manuscripts, significant portions of his work appearing in Russian publications. Apart from work cited in his contribution to this volume, he compiled a valuable finding aid, *Slavianskie rukopisi Sobraniia F. A. Tolstogo* (Leningrad: BAN, 1980; first edition, Zug: IDC, 1977). In the final stages of preparation is a book (co-authored with Prof. Ingrid Maier, Uppsala University), tentatively titled

Cross-cultural communication in Muscovite Russia: foreign news in context, which will appear in the series *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis: Studia Slavica Upsaliensia*. His ongoing research interests have broadened to encompass the historic Silk Roads, concerning which for over a decade he edited and produced a substantial annual. Also related to his Central Asian interests is work on an edition of the writings of C. P. Skrine, the British Consul in Kashgar (western China) in the early 1920s.

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