Part I

Ceremony and Ceremonial Texts

1. The Mythology of Empire: Imperial Russian Coronation Albums (With Edward Kasinec)[1]

The official descriptions (*Opisaniia*) of the coronations of Russian emperors and empresses, published in sumptuous albums, represent a valuable source for understanding the culture and mentality of Russian monarchy. While the events and personages are amply if dryly summarized in other accounts, the descriptions give a unique account from the point of view of the monarch and the court. They present the coronations as the rulers wished them to be seen, by contemporaries as well as by posterity. Richly illustrated with engravings and (or) lithographs, they provide visual as well as verbal statements of the evolving mythology of monarchy and empire. Although the religious ceremonies remained basically the same over this period, the performance of the rituals and the secular celebrations changed and assumed different meanings with each reign. These are revealed in the representations of the coronation displayed in the albums.

There were a total of eight official albums published to commemorate coronations in imperial Russia. The first was issued by Peter the Great to justify and celebrate the crowning of his wife, the Empress Catherine Alekseevna (Catherine I) in 1724. The first deluxe volumes that warrant the name album were published in 1730 and 1745 to commemorate the coronations of the Empresses Anna Ioannovna and Elizabeth Petrovna. Preparations for a similar volume after the coronation of Catherine II

1 We wish to thank Jeannette M. Harper of the Hillwood Library Museum, David Kraus of the European Division of the Library of Congress, and Robert H. Davis Jr., Librarian of the Slavic and Baltic Division of the New York Public Library, for their assistance in the preparation of this article. Mr. Benjamin Goldsmith deserves special thanks for his help in compiling a census of coronation albums.

were halted, perhaps due to considerations of cost; the *Opisanie* appeared later in the *Kamer-fur'erskii zhurnal* for the year 1762 as a historical document, while the illustrations by de Veilly were printed in the 1790s and in separate editions during the nineteenth century.[2] The practice of issuing published *Opisaniia* then fell into disuse until the publication in 1828 of an album to mark the coronation of Nicholas I in Paris. The coronations of Alexander II in 1856, of Alexander III in 1883, and Nicholas II in 1896 were all commemorated with albums, each of which gives characteristic expression to the new tsar's rule.

Scholars are fortunate to have at their disposal several excellent collections of Russian coronation albums in the United States. The Slavic and Baltic Division of the New York Public Library and the Hillwood Museum Library in Washington D. C. have complete or nearly complete collections. The Library of Congress and the Getty Center Library have several albums, while individual albums may be found at Columbia University, Princeton University, Cornell University, and the University of Wisconsin.

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The *Opisanie* that Peter the Great issued in 1724 for the coronation of the Empress Catherine represented as much of an innovation as the crowning of an empress and the new European style regalia introduced at the ceremony.[3] It was a secular publication, printed at the Senate presses in Petersburg, as well as the Synodal press in Moscow, that commemorated what previously had been a religious event. Previously, the account of each coronation had taken the form of a *Chin venchania* (Ceremony of Crowning), which included descriptions of the religious ceremonies as well as processions to and from the cathedrals. Peter's volume was the first to describe a coronation that included both religious and secular ceremonies: the arrival of the emperor in Moscow, the promulgation of the date of the crowning, the parades and celebrations after the religious services. It made the religious ritual an event of secular import, justifying and glorifying the power of the all-Russian emperor.

2 *Kamer-fur'erskii tseremonial'nyi zhurnal, 1762* (St. Petersburg: Ministerstvo Imperatorskogo Dvora, 185?).

3 *Opisanie koronatsii e.v. Ekateriny Alekseevny*.... (St. Petersburg: Senate Press, 1724; Moscow: Synod Press, 1725).

In addition, by publishing the account in a volume to be circulated among the public, Peter gave the event an aspect of permanence that the account in the newspaper *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* could not. With it, the coronation became a state act, as well as an ecclesiastical one that figured in the historical mythology of the new Petrine absolute monarchy.

Peter's *Opisanie*, indeed, shows a clear shift of focus from the religious ceremonies to the celebrations surrounding the event. The account of Catherine's procession to the Voznesenskii Convent in the Kremlin to visit the graves of her female "ancestors" takes up almost as much space as the description of the ceremonies in the Assumption Cathedral. It includes precise and lengthy descriptions of the uniforms of the Cavalier-Guards, and the livery of the courtiers, pages, and servants. The account of the feast in the Palace of Facets is just as long as the description of the religious ceremonies and includes mention of the names of the court officials participating in the banquet, a clear sign of their standing at court. The *Opisanie* continues with accounts of the feast for the people on the Kremlin square and the ceremonies of greetings to the empress in the palace. The events concluded with a "great festival" on Tsaritsyn Meadow, celebrated with "magnificence and riches" (*s magnifitsentsieiu i bogatstvom*) and later, "deep into the night, reached its conclusion with the igniting of splendid and really artful fireworks" (77-78).

The text of the description was evidently composed with European readers in mind, though it appeared only in a Russian edition, since it gives elementary explanations of the setting and the character of the decorations of the cathedral. The Kremlin is the "fortress in the center of Moscow," in which the ancestors of the emperor had kept their residence. The cathedral was decorated "in the most costly array allowed by Greek law (for Greek law does not allow images [of] the saints to be covered by any tapestries or other ornaments.)" The descriptions of the regalia at the end emphasized their sumptuousness and costliness with clear reference to western standards. The orb, the *Opisanie* made clear, was patterned precisely on a Roman model. Statements about the lavishness and elegance of candelabra in the cathedral, and the banquet hall in the Palace of Facets, and the scope of the celebrations, showed that the coronation had become a means to show that Russia could rival the west in taste and splendor as well as military power.

Catherine I's coronation album was published to justify Peter's crowning of his wife, the first time a Russian monarch had crowned his consort. In a similar vein, Anna Ioannovna's and Elizabeth Petrovna's coronations helped to legitimize their uncertain claims after Peter had decreed the elimination of heredity as a principle of succession. Their albums justified their rights to rule by demonstrating their dedication to the well-being of the nation acclaimed by general rejoicing.[4] Illustrations now replaced words in showing the resplendence of the regalia, the dress, and the scene, making the album itself a work of art.

The model for the Russian volumes appears to have been the lavishly illustrated account published in 1723 for the coronation of the twelve-year old Louis XV in Paris. Referred to as "*le premier monument d'un règne*," the volume contained engravings of various stages of the ceremonies from la *levée du roi* through the royal feast. It also contained allegorical representations of the meaning of the rituals and depictions of the costumes of the king, the peers, and the guards in attendance.[5]

The coronation albums of the empresses Anna and Elizabeth were also intended as initial monuments of their reigns. The planning and production of the volumes were placed under the direction of the empress's high advisors. V. N. Tatishchev, who had sided with Anna against the wealthy aristocrats in the Supreme Privy Council and was *ober-tseremoniimeister* at her coronation, assumed responsibility for the 1730 volume. Elizabeth's Procurator-General, N. Iu. Trubetskoi, directed the elaborate preparations for her *Opisanie*. The librarian of the Academy of Science, Johann Shumacher, supervised the publication of both volumes as well as the preparation of the engravings executed by the accomplished engravers in Russia.

The *Opisanie* published in 1730 to mark the coronation of Anna Ioannovna was the smallest of the coronation albums, measuring about 32 by 21 centimeters, with 46 pages of text. It was published in an edition

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4 See my article, "The Representation of Dynasty and the 'Fundamental Laws' in the Evolution of Russian Monarchy," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol. 13, No. 2 (Spring 2012): 265-300. Article 2 in *Russian Monarchy: Representation and Rule* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2013).

5 *Le sacre de Louis XV, roi de France et de Navarre dans l'église de Reims* (Paris: n.p., 1723); Rudolf H. Wackernagel, *Der Krönung von 1696-1825* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1966), 160.

of five-hundred copies.[6] The illustrations make clear that the celebration of the empress's coronation was as important as the rites themselves.[7] The text emphasized her claims to the throne by birth. Vignettes on the back of the title page of the promulgation ceremony and the feast for the people indicate the rejoicing that justified such claims. Of the nineteen engravings, ten are of the items of regalia, the procession to the cathedral and one of the crowning itself. The others show the announcement of the coronation by heralds, an innovation of an innovation of Peter II's coronation in 1727, the reception of ambassadors and the fireworks, depicted in two elaborate foldout engravings.

The most striking feature of Anna's album is the prominence of the empress herself. This contrasts with the Louis XV volume, in which the monarch is barely discernible in the midst of his courtiers and guards and the vastness of the cathedral. Anna is shown in full length in the frontispiece engraving by Christian Albert Wortmann, after a drawing of the court painter, Louis Caravaque (Figure 1). She stands in the palace, an imposing presence in her décolleté coronation gown, holding the orb and scepter. A statue of a Cupid or satyr looks down upon her from the wall. The empress, although small in size, is conspicuous in the illustrations of the procession to the cathedral and the crowning, her features highlighted in the midst of the dozens of other small, identical figures surrounding her.

The engravings of the procession from the palace to the Assumption Cathedral and the moment of crowning both give a sense of enormous scale and space. In the engraving of the procession, a large fold-out illustration signed by Ottomar Elliger, the figures, the empress among them, are dwarfed by the expanse of the square and the height of the cathedral. The procession moves in groups across the square, cavalier-guards, deputies from various provinces, courtiers, and high officials. Numbers, discretely placed above the figures, refer to the designations of particular groups and individuals in the text. The square is partly empty. Some spectators stand in the square and others crowd the galleries of the Bell Tower of Ivan the Great.

The engraving of the crowning, the only rite of the coronation depicted, gives a highly exaggerated sense of the spaciousness of the cathedral. The

6 *Opisanie koronatsii e.v. imp. i samoderzhitsy vserossiiskoi Anny Ioannovny torzhestenno otpravlennoi v tsarstvuiushchem grade Moskve* (St. Petersburg: Synod Press, 1730).

7 The illustrations are listed in V. A. Vereshchagin, *Russkie illiustrirovannye izdaniia XVIII i XIX stoletii* (St. Petersburg: V. Kirschbaum, 1898), 168-9.

Figure 1—Empress Anna Ioannovna. *Opisanie koronatsii e. v. imp. i samoderzhitsy vserossiiskoi Anny Ioannovny* (Moscow, 1730). Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

empress is shown on her throne after the crowning, being blessed by the archbishop. All look towards her; she is the cynosure of attention, the center of the expanse. The album also contains illustrations of the various items of regalia and coronation vessels, revealing in images, rather than words, the jeweled resplendence of the ceremony. The last illustration is a vignette of Anna receiving ambassadors.

Elizabeth's coronation album, celebrating the return of Petrine Russia in symbols and displays, is considerably larger, more richly illustrated, and more imposing than the volume published for Anna's coronation. The dimensions are approximately 47 by 28 centimeters and there are 168 pages of text and 52 illustrations. The German version, also available at the New York Public Library, was given exclusively as a gift. The album was initially to be published in an edition of 1,200 copies: 600 in Russian, 300 in French, and 300 in German. Shumacher, however, reasoned that since the plates were ready, the cost of individual volumes could be reduced by increasing the edition to over 2,000. He suggested that they be sent to the colleges, offices, chancelleries and monasteries, "in which these books will be kept for the eternal honor and glory of Her Imperial Majesty." The price would be enough to defray the costs and the delivery.

That the celebrations and particularly the processions were principal subjects of the volume is clear from the title, *Complete Description of the Solemn Ceremonies of the Successful Entry into the Capital City of Moscow and the Coronation of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna*.[8] Twenty-seven of the fifty-two illustrations are of the processions, triumphal columns, celebrations, and fireworks; twenty-five depict the coronation ceremonies, items of regalia, and plans of the cathedral. As in Anna's album, the crowning is the only rite in the cathedral to be depicted.

The album endeavored to encompass the total event of the coronation, the celebration of the return of the Petrine era, the age of gold, of Astraea. In his instruction to the Academy, Trubetskoi indicated that the volume was to begin with a vignette of a view of Moscow, since "by permission of Her Imperial Majesty this celebration was performed in the ruling city of Moscow," and to close with a vignette of the masquerade, "as the conclusion

8 *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie torzhestvennykh poriadkov blagopoluchnago vshestviia v tsarstvuiushchii grad Moskvu i sviashchenneishago koronovaniia imp. Elizavety Petrovny* (St. Petersburg: Imp. Akademiia Nauk, 1744).

of the coronation, since this celebration thus came to a conclusion." Accordingly, the text of the album begins with a miniature scene of the Kremlin, the Moscow river, and surrounding region and ends on page 128 with a witty vignette of the masquerade dance floor, with costumed figures deftly turning legs and torsos.

"This coronation description is the chief masterpiece of Russian engraving under Elizabeth," the jurist and art historian Dmitrii Aleksandrovich Rovinskii wrote, and the engravings are indeed numerous and extraordinary.[9] The album contains the works of several artists and engravers. As in Anna's album, a frontispiece portrait renders an image of the Empress, engraved by Johannes Stenglin after a portrait by Caravaque. She appears in the same pose as Anna in the 1730 volume—décolleté, an angel in the form of a Cupid adorning the wall (Figure 2). For the most part the volume was the masterpiece of Ivan Sokolov, who executed twenty-five of the volume's plates.

Sokolov's four engravings of the processions to and from the Kremlin are tours de force of artistic representation and engraving. The most striking is the immense fold-out illustration of the triumphal entry into Moscow. The first rendering of the entry procession in a coronation album, it alludes to the triumphs of Peter's reign, particularly the Poltava triumph of 1709. The entry, Trubetskoi wrote in his instructions, was to be depicted on a single large sheet, after an engraving of Peter's time "according to the example of the triumphal entry to Moscow after the battle of Poltava of the emperor Peter the Great, whose blessed memory is worthy of eternal glory and other processions similar to this…."[10]

Several hundred tiny figures, all rendered in profile, weave in a snaking line across the space of the fold out from the country palace depicted on the top, through the triumphal arches, towards the Kremlin. There are covered sledges, hundreds of horsemen, carriages, marching guardsmen, noblemen, courtiers, and servants in livery. Perspective was abandoned in showing the soldiers, for it would obscure the "free look of the ceremony." Only the empress is shown full face, through the window of her carriage, and only her escort is presented

9 D. A. Rovinskii, *Podrobnyi slovar' russkikh graverov XVI-XIX vv.* (St. Petersburg: Imp. Ak. Nauk, 1894), 2: 949-52. Rovinskii provides a complete list of fifty-two illustrations.

10 *Materialy dlia istorii Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk* (St. Petersburg: Imp. Ak. Nauk, 1895), 7: 37.

Figure 2—Empress Elizaveta Petrovna. *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie torzhestvennykh poriakdov blagopoluchnogo vshestviia v tsarstvuiushchii grad Moskvu i sviashchenneishago koronovaniia imp. Elizavety Petrovny* (St. Petersburg, 1744). Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

in perspective, according to specific instructions from the editorial committee supervising the publication (5: 1026). The technique set the empress and her entourage apart from the rest of the procession, showing the hierarchy of the court. The next plate shows the empress and her escort in perspective in greatly magnified detail. Again, the text designates the various groups and includes the notable figures in the court by numbers placed on the plate.

There is no background except for the representations of the empress's suburban palaces at the top of the page, the beginning of the procession. The court and the empress constitute the significant presence here; Moscow is invisible, banished from the scene.

The absence of the physical setting is even more remarkable in the illustration of the procession to the Assumption Cathedral. Even the Kremlin is omitted here, as the principal figures and groups, clearly marked, make their way from one significant place—the Kremlin palace, to the other—the Assumption Cathedral. The procession to the Palace of Facets follows the same form. The illustrations are meant to present the important individuals figuring in the new reign. They represent authority in the form of a procession, the elite accompanying their sovereign.

The centrality of the entry procession in Elizabeth's coronation is indicated by the elaborate engravings of the triumphal arches by Sokolov, the only such illustrations to appear in a coronation volume. The album contains full renderings of the four triumphal arches erected along the route of the entry procession in addition to details of the emblems, devices, and allegories decorating the arches. The significance of the various symbols is explained precisely in the text. The volume thus provides an elaborate statement of the pretensions and symbolic content of the monarchy in mid-eighteenth century Russia and the role the coronation was to play.

For example, the principal illustration on the rear facade on the column on Miasnitskii Street depicts Providence as a beautiful woman pointing to the throne, with the inscription "native born." Illustrations on the sides indicate the extent of the realm and the international glory of the empress. On the right, allegorical female figures representing the parts of the empire, Moscow, Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberia hold a map of the empire, with the inscription, "This is your property." On the left, the world, in the person of four allegorical figures of the continents sitting on a globe, rejoices. The explanation states that Europe was most happy of the four, indicating where the ruling empress looked for approval. A picture of Apollo and the muses

on Parnassus had the legend, "Now we will not remain silent." Figures of Mars and Neptune, as well as the Saints Boris and Gleb showing the empress as an exemplification of both pagan and Christian ideals. The album, as the title suggests, commemorated both secular rejoicing, and "the most sacred coronation" of the empress.

The depictions of the ceremonies of promulgation and crowning make rigorous use of the technique of perspective according to instructions from editors, who found the initial drawings lacking. Linear perspective was the technique favored by the absolute monarchs of Western Europe to show the hierarchical gradations of their courts. The lines of perspective converged at the eyes of the monarch; those close to him viewed the world more or less as he did, with important objects appearing large, lesser ones, smaller in the distance.[11] The initial version of the announcement ceremony failed to meet these demands. The editorial committee objected that the figures had no proportions and were so scattered across the square that the "promulgation has nothing to do with them." There should be a great multitude of people who should be disposed in a proper manner. The final version presents a square receding according to the laws of perspective, with the cavalry men arranged neatly into four rectangles while others circle behind them. The heralds are in the front of the picture, while groups of spectators, vaguely suggested in the fore and rear ground, look on.

The members of the committee, seconded by Trubetskoi, also objected to lack of perspective in the preliminary sketches for the engraving of the crowning ceremony. They wanted all attention to focus on the event, in the manner of a theatrical presentation, and requested that the court stage designer, Girolamo Bon, revise the drawings. The engraving uses perspective to good effect, giving a sense, rather exaggerated, of considerable depth and soaring height (Figure 3). The walls of the cathedral appear covered with paintings and the icons on the iconostasis are suggested. In the midst of a vast space, Elizabeth is the cynosure, all eyes focused upon her. As in Anna's album, this is the only moment of the coronation rites to appear in the illustrations.

The incomplete illustrations for Catherine II's coronation had a different character. They ignore the mass of the cathedral and draw the eye of the

11 Roy Strong, *Splendor at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and the Theater of Power* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1973), 73-4.

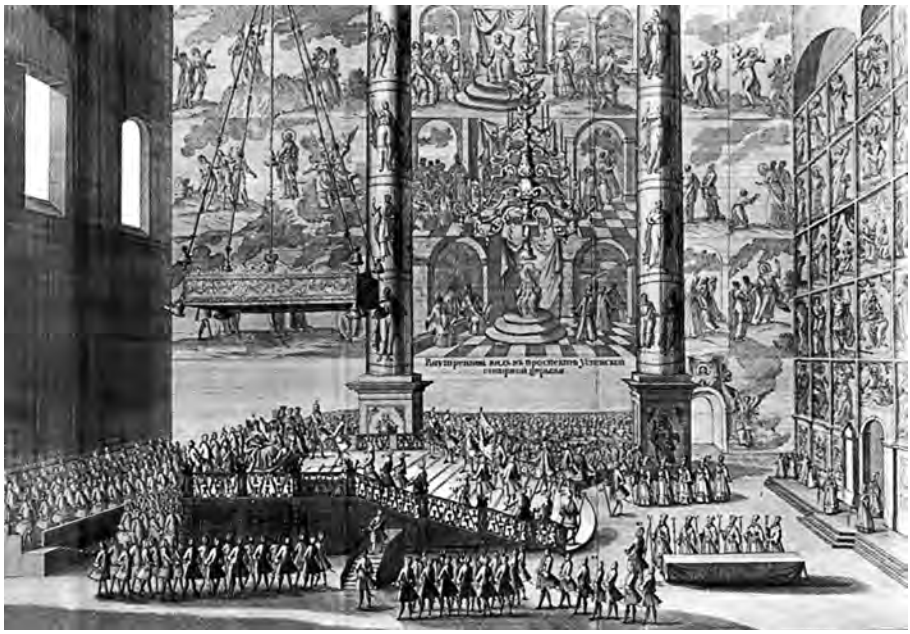

Figure 3—The Crowning Ceremony of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna. *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie* … Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

Figure 4—Empress Catherine II at the "Tsar's Place." Engraving after a drawing by Louis de Veilly, Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

viewer to the few figures engaged in the scene, expressing the personal drama of the ritual rather than the spectacle of the totality.[12] In engravings by several artists after Jean Louis de Veilly, the use of perspective and shading created a more realistic, less otherworldly sense of the proceedings. The drawings emphasize the central importance of the person of the empress and those close to her. The procession to the Assumption Cathedral includes only the Red Staircase (*Krasnoe Kryl'tso*) and the figures in the immediate vicinity. After the crowning, the empress is shown standing proudly in full regalia at the "tsar's place"; her courtiers nod recognition with studied nonchalance (Figure 4). For the first time, the reading of the credo, the anointment, and even the taking of communion within the sanctuary are illustrated. The empress is shown in massive coronation gown and mantle taking communion at the altar as the courtiers peer in. The illustration was meant to make clear to all that the formerly Lutheran princess was being given the clerical status enjoyed by her predecessors. A series of memoranda appended to the coronation description confirmed that the empresses Anna and Elizabeth had followed this rite, with the implication that Catherine should as well.

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Albums were not issued for the coronations of Paul I in 1797 and Alexander I in 1801, perhaps reflecting the elimination of doubts about succession after Paul's restoration of the principle of primogeniture of succession and the more austere attitude towards court festivities that prevailed during Alexander's reign. Nineteenth-century albums present different narratives exalting the rulers of Russia. They argue and demonstrate the vitality and popularity of the principle of monarchy in Russia rather than the virtues of the particular monarch. They celebrate the religious and popular grounding of the dynasty rather than the benefits accompanying the new reign.

12 On the illustrations, which are available in the Slavic and Baltic Divisions of the New York Public Library, see Ia. V. Bruk, *U istokov russkogo zhanra, XVIII vek* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1990), 77, 87; Rovinskii, *Podrobnyi slovar' russkikh graverov XVI-XIX vv.*, 2: 535-36; Vereshchagin, *Russkie illiustrirovannye izdaniia XVIII i XIX stoletii*, 614; N. S. Obol'ianinov, *Katalog russkikh illiustrirovannykh izdanii, 1725-1860* (Moscow: A. Mamontov, 1914-1915), 2: 369.

The publication of coronation albums resumed with Nicholas I's coronation in 1826. The album, published in Paris in 1828 at the house of Didot, sought to portray the stability and popularity of the monarchy to a European audience to quiet the uncertainties over Nicholas's succession and the Decembrist revolt. The volume is extremely modest compared both to Elizabeth's album and the one issued for Alexander II's coronation in 1856. It is 66 centimeters in length and 50 centimeters in width, with only fourteen pages of text and fourteen plates. Russian readers could find more complete descriptions in the newspapers and in the sentimentalist account published by P. P. Svin'in in the journal *Otechestvennye zapiski*.

The author of the brief French language text, one Henry Graf (whom we have been unable to identify), described the coronation from the point of view of a western admirer of Russian monarchy. Henry Graf explained the ceremony's importance and the monuments of the Kremlin to those who knew little of Russia. He presented the coronation as a demonstration of the religious and popular grounding of the monarchy; it appears as a Russian counterpart to the elaborate coronation of Charles X in Rheims in 1825. The coronation of Nicholas I was to redeem the Russian monarchy from the revolutionary efforts of the Decembrists, much as the coronation of Charles X sought to replenish the religious sources of French monarchy after the defeat of the revolution.

The album also marks the return to the emphasis on luxury and magnificence as a sign of autocratic power, after the more austere manner of Alexander. Graf does not spare his rhetoric in describing the magnificence of the setting, the regalia, and the celebrations and fireworks that followed. The French title, *Vues des cérémonies*, makes clear that the plates were of the greatest importance; the picturesque and exotic aspect of the events were to appeal to the European reader and to place the Russian emperor, who had crushed an uprising, in a touching picturesque setting. The scenes were "drawn on the spot by the best artists of the country"—the lithographer Louis Courtin and the artist Victor Adam. The illustrations are of a cruder character than that encountered in other volumes: the figures, even of the tsar and the empress, are somewhat awkward and artless, as if the artists were imitating a popular style.

Only one plate is included of a ceremony in the cathedral: according to the caption, the crowning of the emperor (Figure 5). However, we see not the crowning of Nicholas, but the tsarevich Constantine Pavlovich

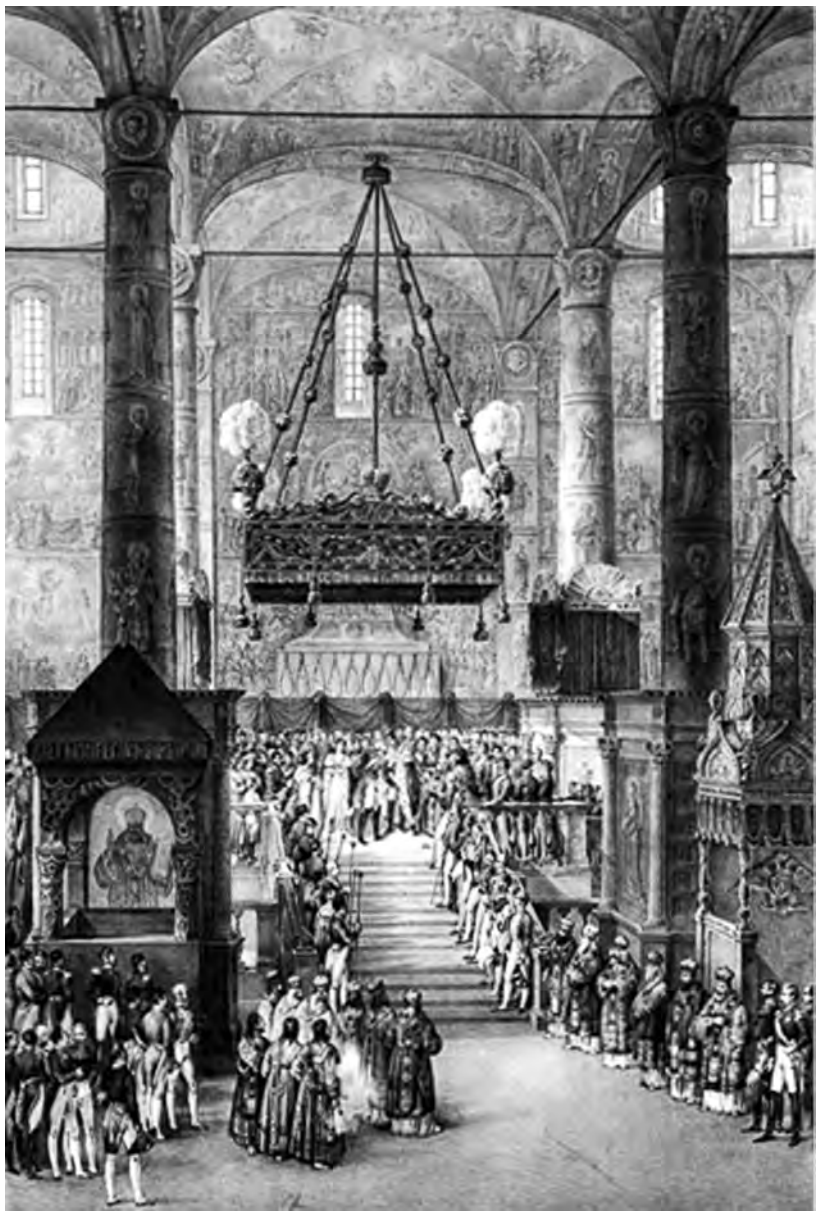

Figure 5—The Crowning of Emperor Nicholas I. Henry Graf, *Vues des cérémonies les plus intéressantes du couronnement de leurs majesties imperials l'empereur Nicholas Ier et l'impératrice Alexandra à Moscou* (Paris, 1928). Library of Congress.

embracing him after the crowning, an act of affection and homage that was meant to dispel lingering uncertainties about Constantine's acceptance of his younger brother's accession. The final illustration, of the emperor's and empress's departure, emphasizes their simplicity and closeness to the people. Nicholas and Alexandra sit in a calèche with only one servant and the coachman in attendance. They are in immediate contact with the people, without the protection of Guards' Regiments, Graf stresses in the text. The picture tried to present a visual answer to the notion of the Russian emperor as a despot and to show him as a ruler beloved by his subjects and secure in their midst.

The description of Alexander II's coronation is the most lavish and ostentatious of all the albums. "The volume is of such immense size," Sacherevell Sitwell wrote, "that the term 'elephant folio' has no meaning, and, indeed, this may be the largest book that ever issued from the printing press." No cost was spared in the production of the book, published by the Academy of Arts and under the direction of its Vice-President, Prince G. G. Gagarin. The title was printed in large old Church-Slavonic script in gold leaf, red, and black. Alexander personally rejected the editor's proposal to use old-Slavonic script in the text. Special large type was cast for the volume. The one-hundred-twenty-five pages of the volume were printed on Chinese paper. The album was prepared not merely for the rich but for the diplomatic elite and the aristocracy of Europe. Four hundred volumes were published, two hundred in Russian, and two hundred in French, to be given to high figures in the court and foreign guests attending the ceremony. The album, which cost 123,000 rubles to produce, was clearly not an instrument of mass publicity, but an expression of the unity of European rulers and aristocracy when Russia was isolated on the international scene.[13]

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13 *Opisanie sviashchenneishago koronovaniia Ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra Vtorago i Imperatritsy Marii Aleksandrovny Vseia Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Imp. Akademiia Khudozhestv, 1856); "Koronatsionnyi sbornik i khudozhestvennyi al'bom," RGIA, 472-65-113, 1. The 1856 publication date is fictional; the work was not published until 1861. "O rasporiazheniiakh dlia sostavleniia opisaniia koronovaniia," RGIA, 472-64-69, 203-04; "O rasporiazheniiakh dlia sostavleniia opisaniia koronovaniia," RGIA, 472-64-67, 60, 139, 428; "O rasporiazheniiakh dlia sostavleniia opisaniia koronovaniia," RGIA 474-64-69, 78; Sacherevell Sitwell, *Valse des fleurs: A Day in St. Petersburg and a Ball at the Winter Palace in 1868* (London: Faber and Faber, 1941), 64.

The album contains fifty-two illustrations, fifteen in color lithography, printed at the house of Lemercier in Paris under Gagarin's careful supervision.[14] The remainder were printed in black and white lithography and engraving. Black and white illustrations in the text reproduce the smaller scenes, following the emperor through the stages of the ceremony. A full black and white engraving, after a sketch by M. A. Zichy, presents a montage of the entry procession—scenes of Alexander's leaving the Petrovskii Palace, the empress in her carriage passing by the grandstand, the Kremlin Towers, Red Square, and the statue to Minin and Pozharskii. The large color illustrations present scenes of the tsar and tsaritsa appearing before inspired spectators. For the first time, considerable space is devoted to showing the empress as wife of the ruler. Alexander II and Maria Aleksandrovna are presented on the second plate, in a painting by Zichy, full-length in separate oval medallions with a lattice design between them. Zichy depicts Alexander's crowning of the empress, but there is no depiction of his own crowning. Zichy succeeds in placing the imperial couple and the spectators in the same frame, capturing the emotions that presumably united Alexander with his elite (Figure 6). We can understand what Sitwell meant when he wrote of these, "Not works of art, but fascinating in their improbability."[15] V. F. Timm's painting of the anointment shows the empress bowing devoutly a few feet behind Alexander as he receives the chrism on his brow.

The large enthralled figures with rapt faces who occupy the foreground several lithographs demonstrate the popular love that was supposed to surround the tsar. Zichy's painting of the entry into Moscow is framed by the grandstand where large figures show animation and excitement at the appearance of the tsar (See Article 8, Figure 5). Facing towards the tsar is a peasant woman in folk dress and a tiara hat. Before the spectators, we see large figures of the last row of the Cavalier-Guards, proud mustachioed men dressed in elegant white uniforms and gold helmets. Alexander appears in middle-ground riding towards us in his green general uniform and cape, the center of the picture, the many blue figures of his suite suggested behind him. F. Blanchard's rendering of the fireworks shows peasants and tribesmen at the side of the tsar's pavilion, marveling at a display of red and white lights

14 Vereshchagin, *Russkie illiustrirovannye izdaniia XVIII i XIX stoletii*, 625; Obol'ianinov, *Katalog russkikh illiustrirovannykh izdanii, 1725-1860*, 2: 384-85.

15 Sitwell, *Valse des fleurs*, 65.

Figure 6—Emperor Alexander II Crowns Empress Maria Aleksandrovna. *Opisanie sviashchenneishago koronovaniia… imperatora Aleksandra Vtorago i imperatritsy Marii Aleksandrovny vsei Rossii* (n.p., 1856). Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

in the sky. A bearded man raises his hand in wonder, a horse rears others look with interest or wonder. Still others mill about and engage in conversation.

Alexander III's coronation album contains more explicit mass and national appeals on behalf of the monarchy. This is the first album published not by the Academy of Sciences, but by the Agency for the Preparation of State Papers, *Ekspeditsia Zagotovleniia Gosudarstvennykh Bumag*, which disposed of more advanced equipment. The format is simple and relatively modest, signaling the more frugal manner of the new tsar. It is smaller, 67 × 54 centimeters, and modestly bound with twenty-six colored plates. The text is brief, sixty-five pages, of which only eleven describe the ceremonies of the coronation themselves. It cost 92,376 rubles to produce the 300 copies in Russian and 200 in French—considerably less than the 400 copies published for Alexander II's coronation.

The title is again printed in old orthography, but in this volume the national elements are more prominent. The brief text emphasizes

the national significance of the event. "It is this sacred, solemn, and all-national act that gives expression to the historical union of the Tsar with his State, his precept with his church, that is with the soul and conscience of his people, and finally, the union of the Tsar and the people with the Tsar of Tsars, in whose hands rests the fate of tsars and peoples."[16] The Slavic revival script now serves less as an exotic flourish of decoration than as a sign of national character. For the first time in a coronation album, there are artistic references to the pre-Petrine coronations—small historical sketches of Muscovite scenes, of the bringing of regalia and the tsar at his coronation feast. The program for the gala performance of *Life for the Tsar*, showing the Kremlin towers, was also in old Russian style.

The color illustrations reproduced by chromolithography, are in the realistic manner favored by the Itinerants (*peredvizhniki*), and several of the painters belonged to the school: K. A. Savitskii, N. N. Karazin, I. N. Kramskoi, V. D. Polenov, V. V. Vereshchagin and K. E. Makovskii. The illustrations focus on the massive figure of Alexander himself; his person becomes the overpowering presence in the album. The full page portrait by A. P. Sokolov of Alexander on his coronation throne in mantle, holding the orb and scepter, was the first of its kind in a coronation album. Sokolov's painting allows no distance between the viewer and the looming impassive figure of the emperor. Kramskoi's rendering of the moment of crowning is also close up, focused completely on Alexander, who occupies almost two thirds of the picture (Figure 7). The emperor dwarfs the clergymen at his side, his beard and balding head dominating the picture. The cathedral is a mere blur in the background. Alexander has an intimidating, crushing aspect but his face is soft and pallid. Kramskoi's painting of the tsar's taking of communion in the altar has a similar ambiguity. Alexander is the central overpowering presence upon whom all attention is focused, but he takes the wafer with caution and humility. His figure is both mighty and feeble.

Other paintings also center on the emperor and empress to the exclusion of the surroundings. Makovskii's painting of the people's feast on Khodynskoe pole shows the reviewing stand, and little of the people. The emperor stands proud in his long boots and Russian cap, while the empress

16 *Opisanie sviashchennogo koronovaniia Ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosiudaria Imperatora Aleksandra Tret'ego i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny Vseia Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Eksped. Gos. Bumag, 1883), 2.

Figure 7—The Crowning of Emperor Alexander III. *Opisanie sviashchennago koronovaniia… imperatora Aleksandra Tret'ego i gosudaryni imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny vsei Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1883). Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

wears a bonnet and bustle. Also notable are the many paintings of military ceremonies, appearing for the first time in a coronation album. They show the emperor at the consecration of the standards of the Preobrazhenskii and Semenovskii Regiments, the religious parade, the parade of the Semenovskii Regiment, and the feast for the regiments at Sokolniki. The paintings display the new simplified Russian-style uniforms that Alexander III introduced. The emperor appears as a commanding figure, in his distinctive military dress, on horseback and wearing Russian boots and hat.[17]

The last coronation album, for Nicholas II's coronation in 1896, was published under the Ministry of the Court and Appanages in the Agency for the Production of State Papers.[18] As its title *Coronation Collection* (*Koronatsionnyi Sbornik*) indicates, the album is not simply an *Opisanie* but an assortment of mementos and illustrations of the events, photographs of the participants, along with the usual accounts of the rituals and celebrations. It fills two volumes, each 43 by 33 centimeters; the same materials appeared in a one-volume French translation. The edition was the largest yet for a coronation album, with 1,300 copies published in Russian and 350 in French, and the cost of 165,905 rubles far exceeding the editors' initial estimates.

The opening 132 pages of the first volume are devoted to an illustrated history of coronation ceremonies. The description of the coronation and the coronation festivities takes up only the second half—272 pages—of the first volume; of these, fewer than fifty are used to describe the ceremonies on the day of the coronation. The remainder present the celebrations around the event and descriptions of the parades. The second volume includes photographs of foreign delegations and estate delegations from Russia and full color facsimiles of several of the menus and theater programs for the event. The *Sbornik* was a souvenir for an international social fête, the occasion for which was a ceremony of coronation. At a moment when the religious consecration of the emperor was assuming increasing importance in official ideology, the celebrations had become a major event in the European social

17 A special album was devoted to the assembling, disposition, and responsibilities of the regiments gathered for the coronation. *Opisanie sbora i zaniatii voisk pod Moskvoiu vo vremia sviashchennogo koronovaniia ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv v 1883 godu* (St. Petersburg: V. Kirshbaum, 1883).

18 *Koronatsionnyi sbornik: Koronovanie v Moskve, 14 maia 1896* (St. Petersburg: Eksped. Gos. Bumag, 1899).

season, an episode in the international competition of spectacle and display, with Nicholas II and the empress Alexandra as the centerpiece.

The styles of the illustrations are varied. As in Alexander III's coronation album, old-Russian or pseudo-Russian motifs were prominent. "Slavonicized" lettering introduces the various sections. The cover by N. S. Samokish has the Russian seal, surrounded with an old Russian floral motif. At the top is a medal showing the profile of the emperor and empress. Victor Vasnetsov designed lettering and floral motifs for a number of the pages, and an old Russian style menu for one of the feasts. A. Riabushkin contributed the program for *Life for the Tsar*.

The historical introduction and the description of the coronation are illustrated profusely with hundreds of drawings and lithographs. Illustrations in the text by E. and Nikolai Samokish-Sudkovskii give rather literal renderings of the particular ceremonies and events. Elena Samokish-Sudkovskaia's black and white drawing of Nicholas and Alexandra preparing to embrace after her crowning reveals the prominence of the marital bond in the ceremonies at the outset (Figure 8). However, the artistic highlights of the volume are undoubtedly the remarkable watercolors, reproduced beautifully in chromolithography, including works by Valentin Serov, Ilia Repin, Albert Benois, Konstantin Makovskii, and Andrei Riabushkin.

The use of watercolor lends an element of lightness and iridescence lacking in the rather monolithic forms of earlier lithographs. Impressionist and Art Nouveau influences are evident, the promptings of artistic expression dominating the figures and ceremonies depicted. The artists present the coronation as a magnificent show of color and light. Serov turns the anointment ceremony into a study of color and form of the white robes of the tsar and the blue of the courtiers, the yellow of the clergy, with patches of red visible from the rear of the cathedral. The flattening of perspective and the glitter of the candelabra produces an effect of airiness and bustle that hardly conforms to the solemnity of the occasion. Riabushkin's painting of Nicholas descending from the Red Staircase (*Krasnoe kryl'tso*) highlights red and brick colors, lending the scene an almost quilt-like appearance, while Albert Benois gives a sense of the shimmering of the water and the colors of the sky during the illumination. Repin captures the stiffness and awkwardness of Nicholas's meeting with the peasant elders (*starshiny*). The peasants stand in a row. The emperor, evidently awkward, looks away from them as if trying to avoid their gaze.

Figure 8—Emperor Nicholas II Crowns Empress Aleksandra Fedorovna. V. S. Krivenko, ed., *Koronatsionnyi sbornik: Koronovanie v Moskve, 14 maia 1896* (St. Petersburg, 1899). Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

Russian coronation albums give us valuable glimpses into the mental world of Russian monarchy. They reveal how the coronation, the principal ceremony of the monarchy, consecrated the dominant political views, religious beliefs, and artistic tastes of each reign as attributes of god-ordained authority. Eighteenth-century albums placed the coronation in a context of secular celebrations for the monarch who promised an era of prosperity and happiness. The albums of the nineteenth century emphasized the historical and religious significance of the coronation, which they presented as a national and religious act. They used art to show the solemn moments of the ceremony and the splendor of the celebrations, to enshrine the event in a book that would preserve a recollection of the ruler during these inspiring moments at the beginning of each reign.

2. Ceremony and Empire in the Evolution of Russian Monarchy

The Roman and Byzantine empires were prototypes for the symbols, myths, and ideology of the absolute state in early modern Europe. Russian monarchs, unlike the kings of France and England, continued to draw their paradigms of sovereignty from the imperial past. The Russian state never evolved a conception of self-sufficient monarchical authority, reinforced with theological and juridical defenses of sovereignty. Russia had no Bodin or Hobbes. Sovereignty was represented by images of empire, and these were elaborated in imperial ceremony, rhetoric, art, and architecture.

In Russia, "empire" recalled the two historical prototypes of absolute monarchical power: Rome and its successor, Byzantium. The concept of empire evoked a cluster of related meanings that exalted the stature of the princes of Moscow and later the emperors of Russia. Empire meant imperial dominion or supreme power unencumbered by other authority. It referred to the Christian empire, the heritage of the Byzantine emperor as the defender of Orthodoxy. Finally, it implied imperial expansion, extensive conquests, encompassing non-Russian lands. These meanings were conflated and served to reinforce each other. The expansion of empire confirmed the image of supreme power and justified the unlimited authority of Russian emperors. The religious, eschatological motif enhanced their moral dominion, a theme emphasized by Boris Uspenskii and other scholars of the Tartu school.

The cluster of meanings connected with ceremonies continued to dominate political symbolism and later thought. When Ivan III rejected the crown of king offered by Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III in 1489, he replied that he "had never wanted to be king by anyone, and that he did

not wish it."[1] A king's crown signified mediated sovereignty, or in the eyes of Russian rulers and their servitors, no sovereignty at all. Sovereignty was and later would be identified with the historical, religious, and symbolic appurtenances of empire. Ivan III, guided by the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church, set about acquiring these appurtenances. The titles of tsar and autocrat, the Byzantine double-headed eagle, and in 1547 a coronation modeled on Byzantine prototypes vested the prince of Moscow in symbols and ceremonies of empire.

Empire was a historical, religious and symbolic construct, dramatized in myth and enacted in ceremony. Religious services, coronation rites, and statements of orthodox clerics identified Moscow as the successor to Byzantium as the protector of Orthodox Christianity. But the Orthodox Church was only one of the signs of empire. In Russian monarchical imagery, religious sanction—the tsar as chosen-of-God and the anointed-of-God—was continually supplemented with demonstrations, actual or ceremonial, of imperial success. Neither religious sanction nor the force of tradition proved sufficient grounds for the secular pretensions of Russian monarchs.

Conquest was another sign of empire, for empires expanded, and expansion was a sign of a powerful flourishing state. Imperial dominion is based on a fact, or myth of conquest. The exercise of force indicates the presence of great might, defying internal or external challenge and establishing authority as uncontested and irresistible. The rulers then are set above and apart from the rule. Military triumph is vested in a cultural and symbolic supremacy, elevating the imperial elite into a higher realm, making obedience akin to worship.

This imperial myth minimizes national differences while magnifying social distinctions. The distinctions are between two sharply separate worlds: those who partake in the exercise of sovereignty and those who submit. The state then follows the pattern of what Ernest Gellner has called an agro-literate society, that is, a traditional society organized horizontally, in which the privileged groups seek to separate themselves as much as possible from the lower classes, rather than to establish ethnic or cultural ties.[2] Russians then

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1 Dimitri Strémoukhoff, "Moscow the Third Rome: Sources of the Doctrine," in *The Structure of Russian History: Interpretive Essays*, ed. Michael Cherniavsky (New York: Random House, 1970), 112.

2 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 11.

are subjects as much as other nationalities, and the elites of other ethnic groups may be coopted into the great Russian nobility (*rossiiskoe dvorianstvo*). There is a rough equality of subjects, and a rough equality of elites.

Ceremonies until the second half of the nineteenth century dramatized this separation. The theater of power was a play performed principally for the participants. It is the various strata of the elite who gather to celebrate their collective domination, justifying it, Max Weber pointed out, first of all to themselves; the myths then would be accepted by "the negatively privileged layers."[3] The elite creates and performs what Marshall Sahlins called their "heroic history," while the masses remain in a state of "historylessness," following the overarching symbolic patterns of their society unknowingly.[4]

Heroic history glorifies domination by conquest. In Russia, the conquest motif played a particularly important role: symbols required more than ecclesiastical confirmation; they also required proof that the tsar embodied destiny, demonstrated by victories on the battlefield and by the recognition of other sovereigns. From the sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, imperial symbol and imperial expansion fostered a mutually self-confirming dynamic. Ceremony sacralized conquest, placing it in the context of myth, stated in the narratives of sacred and secular history. By the same token, conquest provided an ongoing enactment of the myth set in ceremony. This essay examines the conquest motif in terms of three of the ceremonies of imperial Russia—the imperial coronation, the triumphal entry, and the imperial trip. It will conclude with a discussion of the adaptation of the myth to encompass the principles of nation and race in the nineteenth century.

The Coronation

The Russian coronation, introduced in 1547, was a statement of imperial pretensions. The coronation gave ecclesiastical consecration to the sovereign claims of the prince of Moscow. The central legends performed at the coronation connected Russia to both Byzantium and Rome. They were set

3 Max Rheinstein, ed., *Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), 335-7.

4 Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 35-51; Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft : Die Wirtschaft und die gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen und Mächt: Nachlass, Teilband 4: Herrschaft* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 2005), MWG, 1/22-4, p. 147f..

forth in "The Tale of the Vladimir Princes," which was composed by members of the clergy in the sixteenth century.[5] "The Tale" was the counterpart to the mythological genealogies that the Hapsburg emperors and the French and English kings contrived to link themselves to imperial Rome.[6] "The Tale of the Vladimir Princes" introduced into the historical record a brother of Augustus, Prus, who presumably ruled the Prussian lands and was a direct ancestor of Riurik. It then traced the lineage of the Moscow princes back to Riurik. The authors of the "Tale of the Vladimir Princes" also described a long tradition and "ancient" regalia for the newly composed Russian imperial coronation. The second part of the "Tale," "The Legend of Monomakh," drew a direct connection with the Byzantine Empire.

According to the "Legend of Monomakh," the Prince of Kiev, Vladimir Monomakh, wrested imperial regalia from the Emperor Constantine Monomakh—the prince's grandfather, who had actually died before the prince's accession—to forestall an attack against Byzantium. The regalia of Monomakh consisted of the "Life-Giving Cross," a pectoral cross with a piece of the wood from the cross of the crucifixion, the *barmy*, a counterpart to the Byzantine emperors' shoulder pieces, the crown "Monomakh's cap" (which was actually of Tatar origin), and a chain of the "gold of Araby."[7]

The opening, principal part of the early Russian coronation was the conferral of the regalia of Monomakh. The first coronation, of Ivan IV, did not include an anointment ceremony. The rite opened with a dialog between Ivan and Macarius, Ivan asking the Metropolitan to consecrate his hereditary claims to the title of Russian tsar. Ivan stated that since Vladimir Monomakh all his ancestors had been crowned. He also mentioned his father's command that he be crowned, "according to our ancient rite" (*po drevnemu nashemu*

5 R. P. Dmitrieva, *Skazanie o kniaz'iakh vladimirskikh* (Moscow-Leningrad: Ak. Nauk SSSR, 1955).

6 For a study of these myths, see Marie Tanner, *The Last Descendant of Aeneas: the Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of Emperor* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993).

7 Giuseppe Olshr, "La Chiesa e lo Stato nel cerimoniale d'incoronazione degli ultimi sovrani Rurikidi," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* vol. 16 (1950): fasc. 3-4: 283, 292-3; D. I. Prozorovskii, "Ob utvariakh pripisyvaemykh Vladimiru Monomakhu," *Zapiski otdeleniia russkoi i slavianskoi arkheologii Imperatorskogo russkogo arkheologicheskogo obshchestva*, 3, 1882, 1-64; Dmitrieva, *Skazanie o kniaz'iakh vladimiriskikh*, 116-7; Robert Craig Howes, ed., *The Testaments of the Grand Princes of Moscow* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 97-103.

tsarskomu chinu). The Metropolitan replied by confirming the tsar's ancestral rights to the imperial crown. Then he pronounced the benediction and conferred the regalia.[8]

The Legend of Monomakh was the guiding myth of the early Russian coronation, and the regalia of Monomakh became the insignia of power of the Muscovite tsardom. The ceremonies surrounded them with the gestures of liturgical veneration owed to sacred relics, and their conferral remained the central phase of the ceremony. The tolling of the bells of the church, the darkness of the cathedral and aroma of incense, the saints looking down from the walls and the iconostasis, combined to produce an atmosphere of timeless mystery, as if the generations of princes and emperors had joined the living in the consecration of power.[9] Ceremony turned the fiction of imperial succession into sacred truth.

The Legend of Monomakh played much the same role as the legend of the Holy Ampulla in the French coronation ceremony. Both evoked sources of the charisma transmitted to the bearer of power by sacred articles: the regalia in Russia, the oil in France. Both invoked descent to establish the historical connection of the present ruler to the recipients of the initial charismatic gift. However, their individual motifs suggest the different characters of the charisma they bestowed. The vial containing the oil of Clovis, which consecrated the power of Capetian kings according to the French legend, was borne in the beak of a dove sent from heaven. It attested to the providential origins of French monarchy; God bestowed his sanction directly on the clergy and kings, without imperial mediation. The legend expressed an early sense of the continuity of the realm and the unity of the nation around the king.[10]

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8 M. V. Shakhmatov, "Gosudarstvenno-natsional'nye idei 'chinovnykh knig' venchaniia na tsarstvo moskovskikh gosudarei," *Zapiski russkogo nauchnogo instituta v Belgrade*, Vol. 1 (1930): 250-1, 259-60; David B. Miller, "The Coronation of Ivan IV of Moscow," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* vol. 15 (1967): 559-61; Dmitrieva, *Skazanie o kniaz' iakh vladimiriskikh*, 44-52; *Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika* (Moscow: Kompaniia Tipograficheskaia 7 (1788): 1-4; E. V. Barsov, *Drevne-russkie pamiatniki sviashchennogo venchaniia tsarei na tsarstvo v sviazi s grecheskimi ikh originalami* (Moscow: Universitetskaia tip. [M. Katkov], 1883), 72-5; Olshr, "La Chiesa e lo Stato," 295-7.

9 On the early Russian notion of time, according to which "descendants repeat their forbears like an echo," see A. M. Panchenko, "Istoriia i vechnost' v sisteme kul'turnykh tsennostei russkogo barokko," *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury* 34 (1979): 189-99.

10 Ralph E. Giesey, "Models of Rulership in French Royal Ceremonial," in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics since the Middle Ages*, ed. Sean Wilentz

The Monomakh legend accentuated the derivative character of Russian sovereignty: sanction came not from God directly, but through the mediation of the Byzantine Empire, and political and ecclesiastical authority strove to recapture a Byzantine image. The oil of Clovis, descending from heaven, bestowed miraculous powers, like the power to cure scrofula on the French kings. The Monomakh legend was a secular myth; it invoked neither miracle nor pretensions to supernatural powers. Rather, it derived from the Kievan prince's valor in his invasion or threatened invasion of Constantinople. The prince, according to the precept, would rule in heaven as a result of his deeds on earth, his "imperial exploits (*tsarskie podvigi*) and labors."[11] The Muscovite coronation, in this way, gave the image of conqueror religious sanction. It united the destiny of the Orthodox Church with the success of secular empire.

In addition to the claims by mythological descent and the valor of the tsar's ancestors, the coronation introduced concrete confirmation of empire in its statements of expanse and breadth of territory. In the first coronation, Ivan IV stated his claims to the throne "of all Rus'." After the conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan, he began to use the term "*Rossiia*," greater Russia. In future coronations the description of the tsar's realm expanded. By the close of the seventeenth century, the territories enumerated at the coronation gave a forceful statement of the extent of the realm. Tsar Fedor Alekseevich, during his coronation in 1676, used the words "*Velikaia Rossiia*" to describe the extent of the tsar's imperial authority. This change expressed the unity of all the Russian areas, Great, Little, and White Russias, as well as Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia. Fedor's *chin* went a step further and referred to the Great Russian Tsardom, *Velikorossiiskoe Tsarstvie*, a term denoting an imperial, absolutist state, subordinating Russian as well as non-Russian territories.[12]

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 43; Janet L. Nelson, "The Lord's Anointed and the People's Choice: Carolingian Royal Ritual," in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. David Cannadine and Simon Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 137-80.

11 Barsov, *Drevne-russkie pamiatniki*…, 80-84; Miller, "The Coronation of Ivan IV of Moscow," 567-69; Ihor Sevcenko, "A Neglected Source of Muscovite Political Ideology," in *The Structure of Russian History*, 92; Douglas Joseph Bennet, Jr., "The Idea of Kingship in Seventeenth Century Russia" (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1967), 91-94.

12 *Drevniaia Rossiiskaia Vivliofika,* 7: 328-37; Shakhmatov, "Gosudarstvenno-natsional'nye idei… moskovskikh gosudarei," 256-8.

The Triumphal Entry

In fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe, the Roman advent (*adventus*) became an important expression of monarchical sovereignty and independence from ecclesiastical authority. The Roman advent identified the monarch with the original sense of the word *imperator*—the triumphant military leader. Holy Roman Emperors and kings of France rode into cities on horseback, wearing armor, as conquerors, giving striking demonstrations of the capacity to wield force. The Roman advent conferred dominion on the basis of demonstrated prowess. Its consecration of power, the anthropologist A. M. Hocart observed, fulfilled the same function as a coronation.[13] It showed that the monarch owed his power to his exploits on the battlefield, not to divinely ordained traditions of succession. The arches that covered the way also gave the monarch's power new meaning. They marked what Arnold Van Gennep has described as a passage from profane to sacred, the general or ruler entering his own domain, earned by the feat of conquest.[14] Decorated with classical allegories and emblems, they lifted the monarch into a classical pantheon, making his achievements the equivalent of the prodigies of the gods.

The first ceremony resembling a triumphal entry in Russia took place six years after the coronation of Ivan IV, immediately following the conquest of Kazan. Ivan passed through various towns and then entered Moscow with his army. Like an advent, this was an expression of a ruler's claim to conquered territory by making a ceremonial spectacle of force. Unlike Roman triumphs, the ceremony attributed Ivan's successes to God and the clergy. The principal references were to Byzantium and the "Legend of Monomakh." Before Ivan entered Moscow, he removed his armor and dressed himself in the Monomakh cap, the *barmy*, and the Life-Giving Cross.[15]

Peter the Great introduced the Roman *adventus* as a celebration of the secular authority of the monarch at the beginning of his reign. The first

13 A. M. Hocart, *Kingship* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 86-9.

14 Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 15-21; "Triumphus," in *Paulys Encyclopaedie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: J. P. Metzler, 1939), 31: 496.

15 Michael Cherniavsky, "Russia," in *National Consciousness, History, and Political Culture in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Orest Ranum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 125.

took place after the battle of Azov, on September 30, 1696. In the very year of the death of his half-brother, Ivan Alekseevich, when Peter began to rule by himself, he announced a new symbolic language and political imagery. The procession of the armies through the city lasted from nine in the morning to nightfall. The entry celebrated the exploits of the commanders Marshal Le Fort and General Shein, and, by implication, of Peter himself, who appeared as "The Great Captain." Peter walked behind Lefort's sleigh, at the head of the sailors. He wore a black German coat and a hat with a white feather and carried a halberd. Turkish prisoners were displayed along the way.

His armies passed through a classical arch, built at his own command. An enormous relief figure of Hercules held one side of the vault and pediment, under the words "with Herculean strength." On the other side stood a figure of Mars beneath the inscription "with the courage of Mars." Hercules and Mars confronted Russians with the western metaphors of monarch-hero, monarch-god, marking the abandonment of the humble and effacing mien of the Muscovite tsar. Roman allusions were everywhere. The inscriptions on the vault trumpeted the extent of Peter's own superhuman achievement. The words, "I have come, I have seen, I have conquered," were inscribed in three places on the arch, and repeated in the verses read by the Duma Clerk and postmaster, Andrei Vinius from the arch.[16]

In the first decade of the eighteenth century, Peter staged advents into Moscow to mark his successes in the Northern War. These became elaborate displays, with triumphal arches decorated by allegories, explained in texts meant to make the meanings absolutely explicit. The triumph presented after the battle of Poltava in 1709 was the most grandiose of the Northern War. It marked Peter's assumption of the persona of military leader, *imperator* in its original sense, eleven years before his formal acceptance of the title.. Peter entered, now on horseback, not as the captain but as the military leader, behind the Preobrazhenskii Regiment, guarding Swedish captives. The Poltava entry demonstrated that the triumphal entry had displaced the religious procession as the central public ritual of Russian monarchy. During

16 M. M. Bogoslovskii, *Petr I: Materialy dlia biografii* (Leningrad: Ogiz, Gos. Sotsial'no-ekon. Izd-vo, 1940), 1: 344-8; V. P. Grebeniuk, "Publichnye zrelishcha petrovskogo vremeni i ikh sviaz' s teatrom," in *Novye cherty v russkoi literature (XVII-nachalo XVIII v.)* (Moscow: n.p., 1976), 134.

the entry, Peter took over the religious imagery that had been reserved for the Patriarch.[17]

The Petrine imperial advent was a ceremonial expression of sovereignty, of dominion. It was an expression of dominion over Russians—his victories justifying the symbolic conquest of the city of Moscow. The traditions, culture, and religion of Moscow in this respect were subordinated to Peter's western elite, whose center would become the new city of Petersburg. The sovereign authority of the monarch had been reaffirmed, replenished, with new symbols indicating the distance between the ruler and the subject population regardless of national background.

Coronation and Advent

Peter displayed his new, redefined image of empire in the coronation he staged for Catherine I in 1724. He removed "Legend of Monomakh" from the investiture ceremony and replaced the items connected with the Tale with new western regalia. A European crown and mantle replaced the Monomakh cap and the sacred *barmy*.

The coronations of Anna Ioannovna and Elizabeth Petrovna introduced additional modifications in Peter's spirit, and the ceremonies for Elizabeth's coronation in 1742 remained fundamentally unchanged for the duration of the empire. That coronation consisted of far more than the processions and ceremonies of the Kremlin. It was a major celebration beginning with an entry into the capital and concluding with long and elaborate festivities.

The imperial Russian coronation that we know in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries fused the elements of the triumphal entry and western court festivities with the solemn investiture and consecration in the Assumption Cathedral. It consecrated each sovereign who had assumed the throne by celebrating and reaffirming the sacred and traditional character of the Westernized empire. The triumphal entry was a glorification of force, an unambiguous statement that the monarch's power derived from a heroic act of conquest that anteceded consecration. It presented the westernized

17 V. M. Zhivov and V. A. Uspenskii, "Tsar' i Bog: semioticheskie aspekty sakralizatsii monarkha v Rossii," in *Iazyki kul'tury i problemy perevodimosti* (Moscow: Nauka, 1987), 114-5; Boris Uspenskii, "Historia sub specie semioticae," in *Soviet Semiotics*, ed. D. P. Lucid (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 110.

elite of the new capital, to use Clifford Geertz's term, "taking possession" of Moscow.[18] The rows of guards' regiments, the massive array of horses, elaborate sumptuous western dress, and carriages showed the conquest of the old capital by the new. The processions to and from the Cathedral on the day of the coronation also presented a magnificent display of the social and national components of the Russian elite.

The investiture remained the principal moment of the coronation ceremony. Changes introduced after 1724 enhanced the focus on the sovereign as absolute monarch and ruler of the empire. At the coronation of Elizabeth Petrovna in 1742, the empress read the credo, assumed the imperial mantle, and received the benediction from the archbishop, following the order of previous eighteenth century coronations. Then, at her command, the crown was brought to her; she lifted it, and she herself, rather than the archbishop, placed it on her head. After the conferral of the scepter and the orb, she sat on the throne and listened to a protodeacon recite her full title. The recitation included the principalities and lands that made up her realm, a proclamation of the vast extent of her imperial dominion. All future Russian sovereigns would crown themselves, and the recitation of the vast extent of empire remained a central moment in the investiture ceremony, making it clear that the coronation was a consecration of the empire as well as the emperor or empress.[19]

Empire and Subject Peoples: The Imperial Trip

The ceremonies of empire in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century remained expressions of sovereign dominion. The presentations of the myth took on different forms to adapt it to current western conceptions of antiquity, as well as to the circumstances of the moment. During the reign of Catherine II, legislation, literature, and architecture affirmed the imperial theme. At the *Nakaz* commission of 1767, the Moscow Metropolitan declared Catherine the successor to Justinian and Russia the heir to the Byzantine legal tradition. Literary panegyrics and artistic allegories set Catherine in the tradition of Numa and Solon. Such literary devices continued throughout her reign. La Harpe, the tutor of Alexander Pavlovich, thought of himself

18 Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Power Since the Middle Ages*, 16.

19 See *Scenarios of Power*, 1: 89-109.

as Seneca, instructing the future emperor. In Russia, George Knabe pointed out, the image of Rome played a distinctive role, replacing Russian reality with an emblematic reality of classical antiquity.[20]

Meanwhile, the rapid expansion of the empire gave substance to the imperial myth of extent, revealing the Russian sovereign as the ruler of savage peoples—what Victor Zhivov describes as the "ethnographic myth" of empire.[21] Catherine's method of rule in the new territories was to co-opt native elites and to assimilate them into the Russian nobility. The rank and file of the Cossacks were reduced to a condition approximating serfdom, completing a process of differentiation under way since the previous century. This received symbolic expression in the charters and items of regalia—the banners, the staffs, *bunchuki* and the maces, the pernachi, which Peter and Catherine granted to the atamans of the Don Cossacks. Likewise, she granted nobility to the Tatar aristocracy in Crimea, who received the privileges and honors of Russian noblemen.[22]

The imperial nobility was revealed as an association of the powerful and the educated of Russian and other nationalities, who rejoiced in their devotion to a supreme, beneficent ruler. Noblemen displayed their bond in open demonstrations of their western culture.[23] New ceremonies stressed

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20 S. M. Soloviev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen* (Moscow, 1965), 14: 71-3; Stephen L. Baehr, *The Paradise Myth in Eighteenth Century Russia: Utopian Patterns in Early Secular Russian Literature and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 54-5, 113, 120-2; G. S. Knabe, "Rimskaia tema v russkoi kul'ture i v tvorchestve Tiutcheva," in *Tiutchevskii Sbornik: stat'i o zhizni i tvorchestve Fedora Ivanovicha Tiutcheva*, ed. Iu. Lotman (Tallin: Ėėsti raamat, 1990), 255-6.

21 V. M. Zhivov, "Gosudarstvennyi mif v epokhu Prosveshcheniia i ego razrushenie v Rossii kontsa XVIII veka," in *Vek Prosveshcheniia: Rossiia i Frantsiia; Vipperovskie chteniia* (1989): 154.

22 Robert H. McNeal, *Tsar and Cossack, 1855-1914* (New York: MacMillan,1987), 2-3; John P. LeDonne, "Ruling Families in the Russian Political Order, 1689-1825," *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* Vol. 38, No. 3-4 (July-December 1987): 310-1; Bruce W. Menning, "The Emergence of a Military Administrative Elite in the Don Cossack Land, 1708-1836," in *Russian Officialdom: The Bureaucratization of Russian Society From the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Walter McKenzie Pinter and Don Karl Rowney (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 130-61. Alan W. Fisher, "Enlightened Despotism and Islam Under Catherine II," Slavic Review Vol. 27, No. 4 (December 1968): 547.

23 Andreas Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich: Entstehung, Geschichte, Zerfall* (Munich: Beck, 1992), 50-1, 64-5, 135-8.

the multinational character of the elite and the similarity of Russia to Rome. Native elites participated in shows of mutual fealty, expressed as affection for the sovereign. The opening of the description in the *Opisanie* of Catherine the Great's coronation immediately revealed her relationship with the elite and the empire.[24] It told how the elders of the Zaporozhets Cossack host, led by their hetman, Kirill Razumovskii—a former lover of Catherine—greeted the empress at her suburban palace as their source of joy and their "true mother." Deputies of the Zaporozhets, Don, and other Cossack hosts marched to the Assumption Cathedral in the entry procession, making up four divisions of the procession, as did representatives of the Baltic merchantry and nobility. Catherine received congratulations from Baltic, Cossack, and Caucasian deputies, as well as of "Asiatic peoples," at the audiences on the days after the coronation. An engraving of the meeting with Asiatic peoples was executed for the projected coronation album.[25]

Catherine extended the ambit of imperial ceremony by travel, originating what may be called the ceremonial trip, which served as an expression of imperial supremacy and social and imperial integration. In 1764, she visited the Baltic provinces. She received a cordial welcome from the local nobility in the hope of confirmation of their special privileges. The entry was not an advent but a joyous welcome, like European festive entries: triumphal arches, balls, and fireworks presented the Baltic *Ritterschaft* united with the elite of the empire.[26] These displays permitted a show of personal devotion of the local population to their sovereign.

Catherine's journey of 1787 to the newly conquered territories along the Black Sea was a lavish spectacle presenting the imperial myth. The fortress at Kherson carried the inscription "The Road to Byzantium." The city of Ekaterinoslav was to be Catherine's and Potemkin's counterpart to Petersburg, a perfect imperial city, to show the monarch's creation of a realm of cultivation and political order in a "new Russia." In the new territories,

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24 *Opisanie Vshestviia v Moskvu i Koronovaniia Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Ekateriny II*, in *Kamer-Fur'erskii Zhurnal* (St. Petersburg) Vol. 63 (185?); Henceforth *Opisanie Vshestviia*. A brief account appeared in *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, No. 80 (October 1, 1762), pribavlenie.

25 *Opisanie Vshestviia*, 7-11, 59-61, 136-7, 141-2, 146. The *Opisanie* was not published at the time. The illustrations were first issued in 1796.

26 V. A. Bil'basov, *Istoriia Ekateriny Vtoroi* (London: I.N. Skorokhodov, 1895), 2: 290-2; Solov'ev, 13: 315-22.

Catherine staged ceremonies of recognition with the native leaders of the region. At Kremenchug, she met with a delegation of Tatar noblemen, the *murzy*. An escort of *murzy* accompanied her into the town of Bachisarae, where she met the assembled dignitaries of the region. At a banquet, she entertained the Austrian Emperor and the *muftii*—the chief cleric, now recognized as a figure with administrative authority in the territory, along with the highest civil and military ranks. The journey to New Russia arrayed the leaders of the conquered territories with the notables of the court in ceremonial displays of the elite of empire.[27]

The ceremonial trip became a principal form of imperial presentation in the nineteenth century. Alexander I displayed a marked aversion to ceremonies other than parades. But he followed Catherine's example by taking trips to display the multi-national character of the empire. His appearances before the Baltic nobility reaffirmed the special relationship between the throne and the Baltic provinces, which had been breached by Catherine in 1783 and 1785 and then restored by Paul.[28] In the last years of his reign he visited the Urals, Western Siberia, and finally the Caucasus, "the border of Asiatic Russia." The accounts presented Eastern peoples, "*aziatsy*," as little more than ornaments to the rule of the emperor, his noblemen, and officials, who joined the Russian population in their acclaim for the emperor. The article on Alexander's visit to Orenburg in 1824 describes the "foreign and crude peoples"—Kirghiz, Bashkirs, and Tatars—who were enraptured by his "goodness" (*blagost'*). The emperor is greeted by Kirghiz khans, but they are described as natives, "simple-hearted" (*prostodushnye*) as they bring their gifts, and hardly as members of the noble elite. They add color and excitement to the military review. The author describes the scene of soldiers, Cossacks, and Bashkir warriors in battle dress on the field, performing astounding displays of horsemanship, as native Bashkirs, Khivans, Tatars and Kirghiz looked on. The emperor gave the Bashkir riders—along with the lower ranks attending the review—one ruble, a pound of beef, and a *charka* of vodka each.[29]

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27 A.V. Khrapovitskii, *Zhurnal Vysochaishego puteshestviia eia Velichestva Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Ekateriny II Samoderzhitsy Vserossiiskoi v Poludennye Strany Rossii v 1787 g.* (Moscow: N. Novikov, 1787), 75-6.

28 Edward C. Thaden, *Russia's Western Borderlands, 1710-1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 25-7, 98-9.

29 "O prebyvanii Ego Velichestva Gosudaria Imperatora v Orenburge (Pis'mo k izdateliu)," *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1825), 21: 404-27.

Nationality and Empire

In the course of the nineteenth century, representatives of "Asiatic peoples" became increasingly prominent in official and foreign accounts of imperial ceremonies. The extent of territory and the variety of peoples provided crucial signs of sovereign power, as the prestige of the Russian emperor suffered blows from revolutionary challenge and military defeat. The rule of Eastern peoples supported the national pretensions of the autocrat and the westernized elite. Their authority, it was affirmed, derived from the unquestioning faith and devotion of the Russian people. The association between the concepts of empire and nation grew all the stronger in the second half of the nineteenth century, when imperial domination acquired a mass appeal. In this respect, the European model of a great power representing a nation holding colonies of lesser people began to replace the earlier, Roman classical model of an international elite serving a monarch in ruling a subject population of various ethnic backgrounds.[30]

The presentation of exotic figures from the East to elevate the image of the Russian emperor and people is a prominent theme evident in the principal description of the coronation of Nicholas I, written by Pavel Svin'in for his journal, *Otechestvennye zapiski*.[31] Svin'in's account of the throng on the Kremlin square acclaiming the coronation recessional articulates both social and national distinctions. The court elite, officials, and marshals of the nobility, in their western uniforms, accompanied the emperor in full regalia, the empress, and the imperial family on the procession from the Assumption Cathedral to the Archangel and Annunciation Cathedrals and then back to the Red Staircase. Six grandstands, arranged in a semi-circle like an amphitheater on the square, were filled with Senators and officials of lesser ranks, foreign visitors, as well as deputies from the Asiatic peoples. Svin'in elaborated on the beautiful folk costumes of the Russians, the Circassians in their brilliant belts and pearls, the Kirghiz, Kabardins, Georgians, Armenians, Kalmyks, all in military costumes and exulting at the appearance of the emperor.

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30 On the colonial character of nineteenth-century Russian imperial expansion see Kappeler, 174-76.

31 "Istoricheskoe opisanie Sviashchennogo Koronovaniia i Miropomazaniia ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Pavlovicha i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Aleksandry Feodorovny," *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1827), 31: 369-73.

The assemblage was presented as a microcosm of the empire. "It seemed that everything attractive and brilliant in Russia was assembled here." The Russian group was foremost among the national groups, but still subordinate. Svin'in described beautiful Moscow women, in their plumed hats, veils and shawls of other Russian national costumes, and Russian merchants in *sibirki*. Then he enumerated the various Eastern nationalities, whose variety augmented the national myth. All united in their love for the imperial family. Those on the square, dressed in native costumes, bore witness to the supremacy of the imperial elite, whose members wore European uniforms and gowns that set them above nation.[32]

The masquerade revealed the same relationships. The event was attended by nearly 5,000 guests, including members of the nobility, merchantry, and native leaders. Viewing the scene from the balcony, the author saw the ladies' gowns sparkling in silver and gold. The "Asian ladies" wore "sumptuous furs and valuable brocades." But he was most preoccupied by the dress of the Russian women: they wore "Russian sarafans, with Russian bands (*poviazki*) and *kokoshniki* on their heads, bathed, one might say, in pearls and diamonds." As they danced the polonaise, their "patriotic attire" (*otechestvennyi nariad*) transported him back to the times "when Russians were not ashamed of their splendid dress, proper for the climate, having a national character, and incomparably more beautiful than foreign dress." To confirm the universal acceptance of this "truth," Svin'in cited the opinion of an "enlightened foreigner," who declared his preference for these ladies to those dressed in the latest European fashion.[33]

The coronation of Alexander II in September 1856 celebrated the might and extent of empire in the wake of the humiliations of the Crimean War and the Peace of Paris. The national character of imperial dominion was made even more explicit than it had been at Nicholas I's coronation: the Russian people's love for their sovereign infused him with the power to conquer and rule an empire. The spectacle of exotically dressed oriental deputies, paying homage to the Russian sovereign, confirmed the success of the empire.

Russian writers in the official *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, foreign correspondents from the Russian mouthpieces abroad, *L'Indépendance Belge* and *Le Nord*, and William Russell of the London *Times* all reiterated these

32 Ibid., 31: 371-3.

33 "Istoricheskoe opisanie," *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1827), 32: 26-34.

themes. The variety and colorful dress of the peoples marching in the procession demonstrated the might of the imperial state. *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* described the deputies of Asiatic peoples as "tangible proof of the vastness of our state, which some justly call a special kind of planet." Their appearance in the procession "eloquently convinced all of the power of the one, whom they had come from their own lands to greet."[34]

Foreigners' reports cited in *Russkii vestnik* and *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* described the pageant of Eastern types in native costumes, Bashkirs, Cherkess, Tatars, Armenians, Georgians, and Cossacks from various hosts. William Russell of the London *Times* remarked that "the wealth of an immense state was presented for show with eastern luxury, which was combined this time with the taste of the educated west." He marveled, "What a recollection of the majesty and might of Russia will these people bring back to their distant tribes! They flashed by us in all of their brilliance, a dream from A Thousand and One Nights." *L'Indépendance Belge* observed the vitality of the deputies from the Eastern peoples, "these proud warriors, with bold movements, in glittering eastern dress…." Their "half-tamed" horses showed the civilizing forces of the state: they were "a striking symbol of the triumph of the power of the well-ordered over the power of disorder."[35]

The reports affirmed that it was the love of the Russian people for their sovereign that enabled the empire to create such prodigies. A *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* columnist pointed out that all the foreign correspondents were amazed by the ceremony's lavishness and splendor, but, he thought, they had not completely expressed the idea that Russia possessed "secret deposits of gold and gems, unknown to the world." These jewels consisted in the unifying love of the people. The author turned the pageant into a symbolic equivalent of popular sovereignty. "And that is true! Russia has valuables, lost by the decrepit powers of the West. The young feeling of infinite love and devotion for the anointed of the Lord and for the sovereign guardians of the earthly fate of the beloved fatherland has been preserved in Russia." This feeling, moreover, was religious in character. The author quoted William Russell's comment that "the piety and deep religious feeling of the Monarch and his people, their visible humility before God, recalled the faith and

34 *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 29 (October 10, 1856), 1.

35 Cited in "Sovremennaia letopis'," *Russkii vestnik* (September, 1856), 170-1 and *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 27 (September 20, 1856), 1-2.

ceremonies of past centuries, and greatly overshadowed the appearance of military power of this state." It was the Orthodox faith of the Russian people that empowered their sovereign to rule an empire.[36]

The masquerade in the New Kremlin Palace was a festive display of the unity of empire and nation. The correspondent of *Le Nord* described an emperor enjoying a rapport with his people. In no other court, he marveled, would the doors be thrown open to common people. No democratic country would permit such a "mixture of citizens of all estates." Alexander, now described as "the Russian tsar," entered arm-in-arm with the "*tsaritsa*." The crowd momentarily parted before him. The shouts of Hoorah were thunderous, "shaking the ancient vaults of the Kremlin," and Alexander and Maria Aleksandrovna, now the emperor and empress, gave visible signs of their satisfaction.[37]

The correspondent of *Le Nord* presented the diverse attire of the participants as a statement of the democratic and national character of the monarchy. Frock coats were more apparent than uniforms. The ladies of the court wore the Russian gown, with *sarafany* and *kokoshniki*. The emperor and the Grand Dukes appeared for the first time at a major function in the uniform of His Majesty's Rifles, the regiment formed by Nicholas I in 1853 out of the peasant militia from the imperial family's Moscow domains. The uniform of His Majesty's Rifles was in national style: wide *sharovary* over high boots, a Russian style kaftan, a black lambskin cap. "This purely Russian form of clothing very much became the tsar," Count G. A. Miloradovich wrote.[38]

The presence of Asian noblemen attested to their acceptance of the suzerainty of the Russian element in the empire. For the poet Fedor Tiutchev, who attended the ball as a chamberlain of the court, the masquerade expressed the Eastern character of Russia. It allowed him to imagine himself in the realm of dream—it was the dream of Russia embracing the East. Tiutchev saw old

36 *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 31 (November 1, 1856), 1-2; Cited also as part of Russell's report in "Sovremennaia letopis'," *Russkii Vestnik* (September, 1856), 170.

37 Cited in V. V. Komarov, *V pamiat' sviashchennogo koronovaniia Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra III i gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny* (St. Petersburg: Komarov, 1883), 31-2.

38 Ibid., 32-3; Graf G. A. Miloradovich, *Vospominaniia o koronatsii Imperatora Aleksandra II kamer-pazha dvora ego velichestva* (Kiev: Kievo-Pecherskaia Uspenskaia Lavra, 1883), 16-7; On the Imperial Rifles see E. E. Bogdanovich, *Strelki imperatorskoi familii* (St. Petersburg: E. Golike, 1899).

aristocrats in costume he knew, including "quite authentic" Mingrelian, Tatar, and Imeretian princes in magnificent costumes, two Chinese, "living and real." "And two-hundred steps from these halls resplendent with light and filled with this crowd that is so contemporary lay the tombs of Ivan III and Ivan IV." He wondered how they would react if they saw this scene. "Ah, how much dream there is in what we call reality."[39]

The capture of Shamil in August 1859 provided an early occasion to vaunt Russia's success as a western imperial power. The nobility of Tiflis (Tbilisi) heralded the event in an address to the viceroy of the Caucasus, Prince Alexander Bariatinskii, which they presented with illustrations of scenes of the recent campaign. "Europe is astonished to hear of the great deed that has just been achieved. She will appreciate Your works for the good of all humanity and will receive lovingly in her midst hundreds of thousands of people who have lived until now beyond the laws of citizenship and have recognized only one law—the might of the sword and arbitrariness."[40]

The tribal chief was displayed as an ornament of empire, a living trophy of conquest and civilization in well-publicized appearances along his route from the Caucasus to Petersburg. Alexander brought him into his scenario of love, meeting him at Chuguev, embracing and kissed him. He invited Shamil to review troops at his side. In Kharkov, he was entertained with a circus and illuminations. Officials made sure to honor him as well, arranging celebrations of his arrival everywhere. When Shamil reached Petersburg, he was escorted to see the statue of his erstwhile foe, Nicholas I, and the sites of the city.[41]

Shamil and his family were installed at Kaluga, what Thomas M. Barrett describes as "a museum of the East" where Shamil, his sons, and sons-in-law appeared in full tribal dress—wondrous specimens from a lesser civilization, objects of curiosity for anthropological study. At the order of the War Minister, Dmitrii Miliutin, all officers passing through the town were obliged to visit him. *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* printed pictures of Shamil and his

39 I. S. Aksakov, *Biografiia Fedora Ivanovicha Tiutcheva* (Moscow: M. G. Volchaninov, 1886), 262-3; "Lettres de Th. I. Tjutsheff à sa seconde épouse née Baronne de Pfeffel," *Starina i novizna* XIX (1915): 160-1.

40 *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 3 (1860): 7.

41 See the excellent description of Shamil's reception in Thomas M. Barrett, "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity," *Russian Review* vol. 53, No. 2 (July 1994): 355-7.

relatives. An article described the family customs of Dagestani tribesmen and Shamil's efforts to bring order to family relations among his people.[42]

Shamil, Barrett observes, captured the imagination of educated society and became "a striking example of the fruits of tsarist expansion."[43] He represented the new phase of Russian expansion, when the empire evolved from an elite to a mass phenomenon.[44] In the following decades, conquests in Central Asia and the Far East gave substance to the image of a national empire, whose people had a mission to rule lesser races in the East. In this respect, Russia had begun to emulate the colonial powers of the west, which had made empire a sign of national supremacy.

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The interconnection between empire and sovereignty has had several significant implications for development of Russian government and political attitudes in the past century. First, it discouraged compromise in dealing with movements for political reform and representative government. Whereas no ruler easily bows to demands for popular sovereignty, monarchies that develop local traditions of sovereignty have proved more flexible in adapting to the nation-state. The Prussian king, later the German emperor, accepted a constitutional monarchy, which he succeeded in dominating and manipulating. For the Russian autocrat this was unthinkable. The imperial mentality limited his options for monarchical rule and created rigidities of governmental policy. Alexander II regarded representative government as certain to bring the downfall of the empire. He wrote to the heir, Nicholas Aleksandrovich, in 1865, "Constitutional forms on the model of the West would be the greatest misfortune here and would have as their first consequence *not the unity of the State but the disintegration of the Empire into pieces*"[45] (emphasis in original).

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42 Ibid., 357; *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* (1860), No. 9, 27-29, No. 10, 31-33; (1861), No. 5, 17-18.

43 Barrett, "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan," 365.

44 On this development see the discussion by Alfred J. Rieber, "Russian Imperialism: Popular, Emblematic, Ambiguous," *Russian Review* vol. 53, No.2 (July 1994): 331-5.

45 GARF, 665-1-13, January 30, 1865. Alexander expressed the same view in a conversation with D. D. Golokhvastov in September, 1865. S. S. Tatishchev, *Imperator Aleksandr II, ego zhizn' i tsarstvovanie* (St. Petersburg: A. S. Suvorin, 1903), 1: 534.

By the same token, the imperial mentality contributed to a rigidity in dealing with national territories or groups, for the concept of monarchical sovereignty was so intertwined with the notion of the extent of empire that any loss of territory or diminution of control of territory threatened the prestige of the rule, diminishing sovereignty itself. In maintaining its authority over Poland and trying to strengthen its hold over Finland, the emperor was also acting in defense of the principal foundation of his autocratic power.

The identification of sovereignty with empire has made it difficult for Russian rulers, thinkers, and political activists to find a national tradition of Russian sovereignty that did not involve imperial dominion. Many of them have looked back to a Muscovy of the seventeenth century, pictured without conflict and devoid of attributes of empire. It was this type of historical mythology that governed the scenarios of power of the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II. However, a purely national conception of rule has proved difficult or impossible to reconcile with Russian conceptions and traditions of sovereignty. Even today, a national, democratic grounding for political authority—rather than authority used to express the grandeur of vast and irresistible force dominating other peoples—remains elusive and foreign to the Russian political tradition.

3. Signs of Empire: Exotic Peoples at Imperial Russian Coronations

Imperial myths of Russian monarchy from the eighteenth to the twentieth century elevated the ruler and his servitors as bearers of sovereignty in Russia. They established a sacred or heroic origin of an empire, epitomized by a Russian state that absorbed both western and eastern noblemen into its ruling elite. In this way, empire was identified with the monarchical state. Yet imperial myths also projected an image of an empire of vast reaches that comprised a multitude and variety of peoples, what Victor Zhivov has described as "an ethnographic myth of empire."[1] The words "Asiatic" and "exotic" invested these peoples with an aspect of foreignness while they continued to be designated as Russian subjects—"*poddannye rossiiskie*."[2]

The exotic peoples were both part of and foreign to the Russian state order—marginal elements, prompting responses of both fascination and fear, both idealization and disdain. The ambiguity of belonging to a continental empire where the boundaries between metropole and periphery were shifting and ill-defined gave rise to conflicting feelings of pride and unease toward the legacy of imperial rule over exotic peoples. When Peter the Great accepted the title of *imperator* in 1721 at the celebrations of the Peace of Nystadt, he avoided this issue. The historian Olga Ageeva has suggested that at this point "empire" meant little more than a state ruled by a monarch with the status and cultural

1 V. M. Zhivov, "Gosudarstvennyi mif v epokhu Prosveshcheniia i ego razrushenie v Rossii kontsa XVIII veka," in *Vek Prosveshcheniia: Rossiia i Frantsiia; Vipperovskie chteniia* (GMII im. A. S. Pushkina, 1989), 154.

2 Elena Pogosjan, "O zakone svoem i sami nedoumevaiut: Narody Rossii v etnograficheskikh opisaniiakh, sostavlennykh i izdannykh v 1770-1790-e gg." forthcoming, 1.

pretensions of an emperor, with little sense of empire as territorial expanse. Neither the renaming ceremony nor the later coronation album presented references to empire.[3] But other attributes of empire—great extent and great variety of different peoples—figured at the time in sermons and in the performance of Peter's antic pageants, though not in the elevation of the emperor's image.

This paper will examine the interplay of these two themes as they emerged in the representations of the imperial coronation, the central ceremony of Russian monarchy. As I have elaborated in *Scenarios of Power*, these representations displayed the hierarchy of state, designating who belonged to the elite, and dictated the manners, dress, and forms of decorum its members were to adopt. The ceremonies and their representations in coronation albums and official accounts gave a sense of what empire meant and whom it included. The coronation thus at once celebrated and defined the nature of Russian monarchy. Both Russians and foreign observers looked to the coronation as a sign of the nature, stability, and extent of the monarch's power. Such a ceremonial mentality—understanding reality in terms of presentation and representation—persisted in accounts by both native and foreign observers of Russian monarchy, until its demise.

Eighteenth Century Coronations: The Noble, Enlightened Elite

Peter the Great created the Russian imperial coronation in 1724, when he crowned his wife Empress Catherine I and replaced the Muscovite coronation, *venchanie na tsarstvo*, with new rites and regalia borrowed from the west, thus creating the imperial Russian *koronatsiia*. The ceremonies of crowning and anointment were followed by European-style secular celebrations—receptions, balls, and fireworks displays. These innovations gave ceremonial expression and confirmation to the European cultural identity of the Russian tsar, now renamed emperor and the Russian noble elite who served him.[4]

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3 O. G. Ageeva, "Imperskii status Rossii: k istorii politicheskogo mentaliteta Russkogo obshchestva nachala XVIII veka," in *Tsar' i tsarstvo v russkom obshchestvennom soznanii* (Moscow: In-t rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 1999), 120, 123.

4 B. A. Uspenskii, *Tsar' i imperator: Pomazanie na tsarstvo i semantika monarshikh titulov* (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul'tury, 2000), 48.

Catherine I's coronation in 1724 presented the Russian state as little more than the Petrine elite. The procession to the Assumption cathedral, led by a new western style guards' regiment, Cavalier-Guards, comprised leading figures in the court, military, and civil administration, and the "national nobility" (*shliakhetstvo natsional'noe)*, but no representatives of subject nationalities. It was a display of the solidarity of the leading figures of the Petrine state.[5]

The celebration presented a spectacle of uniformity of those who adopted the forms of service, the way of thinking, and the manners and dress of the westernized monarchy. The uniformity of appearance corresponded to the uniformity (*Gleichschaltung*) of institutions, and laws, that Peter contemplated and Mark Raeff has described as the rationalistic ideal of the eighteenth-century cameralism—"the basic social uniformity that was considered necessary for harmony and to assure security and stability."[6]

Coronation ceremonies of the first half of the eighteenth century presented increasingly elaborate displays of the order and uniformity of the Russian state. Few representatives of other national or social groups appeared, and their presence was made inconspicuous. At the coronation of Anna Ioannovna in 1730, the representatives of Baltic Towns and the nobility of Estland and Lifland appeared as a deputation in the procession to the Uspenskii Sobor. The lavish album commemorating Elizabeth Petrovna's coronation in February 1742 mentions the same groups, as well as deputations of Little Russian merchantry, Cossack *starshiny* (elders) and officers in the description of the procession to the cathedral. The engravings of the processions in both coronation albums, however, make no physical distinction between these groups and the others marching in the procession. They are all alike, and all wear European dress.[7] The grand entry of Empress Elizabeth into the city of Moscow, a central festive event in all future coronation celebrations, displays the St. Petersburg elite entering the capital. National delegates do not appear

5 *Opisanie koronatsii e.v. Ekateriny Alekseevny*, 19-25.

6 Marc Raeff, *Political Institutions and Ideas in Imperial Russia* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), 146.

7 *Opisanie koronatsii e.v. imp., i samoderzhtsy vserossiiskoi Anny Ioannovny*…. (St. Petersburg: Senate press, 1730), 8-18; *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie torzhestvennykh poriadkov blagopoluchnogo vshestviia v tsarstvuiushchii grad Moskvu i sviashchennogo koronovaniia imp. Elizavety Petrovny* (St. Petersburg: Imp. Ak. Nauk, 1744), 40-9, Plate 26.

in the illustrations. The elaborate engravings by Ivan Sokolov depict the figures of nobility, court, and state with identical faces and dress, within the individual rank or category. The engraving of the procession to the Assumption Cathedral shows the same uniformity of dress of the highest elite and facial characteristics as they proceed to the coronation rites.[8]

On the other hand, figures of exotic peoples had been prominent and startling in pageants during the reigns of Peter and Anna Ioannovna. The elite onlookers regarded them as amusing and intriguing objects of ethnographic curiosity. The literary scholar Elena Pogosjan has analyzed Peter's pageant on the Treaty of Nystadt and the masquerades Anna staged for the celebration of the 1740 treaty with Turkey after the victory at Khotin. In both cases, an array of "Russian subjects" appeared dressed in native dress—Laps, Samoeds, Kalmyks, Iakuts, Chuvashs, and others, some of them merely performers in the costumes of those peoples. The displays reenacted legends, particularly about Siberian peoples that confirmed tales of Herodotus and Pliny and evoked an imaginary empire composed of strange and wondrous oddities, complementing Peter's museum of monsters and freaks. Many observers took them as attributes of the actual as well as the imaginary empire, confirming the emperor's image of ruler of diverse and numerous peoples.[9]

These figures, imagined and real, were not allowed to intrude into the sacred precincts of the Russian coronation in the first half of the eighteenth century. Exotic peoples are mentioned only in passing in the coronation descriptions (*Opisaniia*), as participants in audiences after the rites to congratulate the empresses. Anna's coronation album describes audiences with Georgian and Militinskii princes, and the (Oriental) Muganskii and Chinese (Kitaiskii) "Khans."[10] Elizabeth held audiences with Asian princes—Kalmyks, Udins, Kirghiz, Bashkirs, and Armenians, Don and Iaik Cossacks with their *starshiny,* in addition to the Caucasian dignitaries mentioned in Anna's album.[11] Their audiences do not appear among the illustrations. The various nationalities were not viewed as constituent elements of the Great

8 *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie… koronovaniia imp. Elizavety Petrovny*, 6-9, Plate 5.

9 Elena Pogosjan, ""I nevozmozhnoe vozmozhno": svad'ba shutov v ledianom dome kak fakt ofitsial'noi kul'tury," *Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii: Literaturovedenie* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2001), 4: 90-109.

10 *Opisanie koronatsii… Anny Ioannovny*, 44-5.

11 *Obstoiatel'noe opisanie… koronovaniia imp. Elizavety Petrovny*, 110-5.

Russian state—*Rossiiskoe Gosudarstvo*—and therefore did not figure in its central, emblematic ceremony.

In the course of the eighteenth century, the image of the empire broadened from a state ruled by an emperor to a land consisting of large expanses, what Willard Sunderland called "territorial consciousness." The numerous expeditions begun by Peter the Great and pursued on a larger scale by Catherine the Great resulted in a mapping of the empire. It also produced a new consciousness of the peoples inhabiting the empire and a growing corpus of information about them.[12] As a result, the participants in the coronation began to include a few representatives outside the core group of the Petrine state who epitomized the East rather than the West, the wild and colorful elements of the border regions who did not belong to the Westernized elite of the empire.

The coronation of Catherine II included a few representatives of empire. Cossack leaders from Little Russia, as members of the Russian nobility, took a prominent part in the proceedings. Cossacks, of course, were Russians rather than "Asiatics," but they were Russians who resembled steppe warriors and their presence as the frontiersman of the empire attested to Russian expansion to the south and the east and later added a dashing and exotic element to the imperial entries. The opening of the description of Catherine's coronation told how the elders of the Zaporozhets Cossack host, led by their hetman Kirill Razumovskii—a former lover of Catherine—greeted the empress at her suburban palace as their source of joy and their "true mother."[13] Deputies of the Zaporozh'e, Don, and other Cossack hosts marched to the Assumption Cathedral in the entry procession, making up four divisions of the procession, as did representatives of the Baltic merchantry and nobility. The *Opisanie* mentions her audiences with Cossack and Caucasian deputies, as well as of "Asiatic peoples," at the audiences on the days after the coronation.[14]

During Catherine's reign, ethnographic information gathered during the various expeditions of Catherine's reign was made known by Johann Georgi

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12 See Willard Sunderland, "Becoming Territorial: Ideas and Practices of Territory in 18th-century Russia," in *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700*-1830, ed. Jane Burbank, Mark Von Hagen, and Anatolyi Remnev (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 33-66.

13 *Opisanie Vshestviia v Moskvu i Koronovaniia Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Ekateriny II*, printed in KFZ, 1762, vol. 63 (St. Petersburg, 185?). The *Opisanie* was not published at the time. The illustrations were published in 1796.

14 *Opisanie Vshestviia….imp. Ekateriny II*, 7-11, 59-61, 136-7, 141-2, 146.

in his landmark four-volume *Description of All Peoples Inhabiting the Russian State* (*Opisanie vsekh obitaiushchikh v Rossiiskom gosudarstve narodov*).[15] Georgi confirmed that the Russian empire was the most diverse of empires. "Hardly any other state in the world possesses such a great variety of different nations, survivals of peoples, and colonies as the Russian state."[16] In Catherine's scenario, the diversity of the population explicitly attested to the imperial character of rule. It was an attribute of the enlightened ruler—the heir to the greatness and might of ancient Rome. Catherine took great pride in citing the numerous territories she ruled. In the preface to the Charter of the Nobility, she enumerated thirty-eight provinces and lands under her rule.[17] The accounts of her trip to New Russia and Crimea, as well as the verse that glorified it, compared Russia to ancient Greece and rhapsodized about the many peoples in the new territories ruled by the Russian empress.[18]

In Catherine's reign, these peoples were understood as objects of the monarch's enlightenment project.[19] Georgi and other scholars of the Academy Expedition believed that all peoples possessed reason, but that reason developed only through education, imposed from above. Enlightenment would bring the elimination of national traits. Those at earlier stages, Georgi wrote, the Tungus, the Chukchhi, were ignorant, simple, and possessed a beguiling innocence. It was "the uniformity of State organization" that could transform all nationalities, including ethnic Russians, into educated, Europeanized Russians. The state, Georgi concluded, was "leading our rude Peoples by giant steps toward the common goal of general enlightenment in Russia, of a wonderful fusion

15 I. G. Georgi, *Opisanie vsekh obitaiushchikh v Rossiiskom gosudarstve narodov* (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1779), 4 vols.; Nathaniel Knight, "Constructing the Science of Nationality: Ethnography in Mid-Nineteenth Century Russia" (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 1995), 32-40; S. A. Tokarev, *Istoriia russkoi etnografii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), 103-10.

16 Tokarev, *Istoriia russkoi etnografii*, 103

17 Andreas Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich: Entstehung, Geschichte, Zerfall* (Munich: Beck, 1992), 99.

18 On Catherine's trip, see Andrei Zorin, *Kormia dvuglavogo orla…: Literatura i gosudarstvennaia ideologiia v Rossii v poslednei treti XVIII—pervoi treti XIX veka* (Moscow: NLO, 2001), 97-156; Andreas Schönle, "Garden of the Empire: Catherine's Appropriation of the Crimea," *Slavic Review* vol. 60, No. 1 (Spring 2001): 1-23.

19 Elena Pogosian shows that Georgi's survey was prompted by the Academy of Sciences program of 1778, which anticipated a process of enlightenment among the various nationalities. Elena Pogosian, "O zakone svoem…," 3-4.

of all into a single body and soul, and of creating, as it were, an unshakable Giant that will stand for hundreds of centuries." It is indicative that the one national group that Georgi omitted from his broad survey was the Russians; they did not represent for him a people "inhabiting the Russian state," nor governed by it, but representing constituents of the Russian state itself. When Russians were introduced in the second edition, apparently not by Georgi himself, they were characterized as a "ruling nation."[20]

The multi-ethnic westernized Russian nobility (*Rossiiskoe dvorianstvo*) exemplified the ruling elite of this nation. Russian noblemen, Baltic Germans, Cossack leaders, Little Russian noblemen, and representatives of Muslim khanates shared a common ethos of service to the Russian monarch and a common European culture that represented the principal bonds uniting the empire.[21] An account of the coronation of Alexander I in 1801 by a nobleman, M. N. Makarov, written in the sentimental mode of the late eighteenth century, expressed the sense that religion and reason were transforming members of the nationalities into loyal Russian noblemen. Makarov observed a Kalmyk deputy crossing himself and weeping at the sight of the Dormition Cathedral. The Kalmyk, Makarov believed, was on his way to becoming an Orthodox Russian and inspired him to think that "the time will come when the light of Christ will dawn upon the wearer of the turban and the heathen."[22]

Coronations as Expressions of National Unity

Eighteenth-century imperial scenarios precluded national distinctions: exotic peoples were objects of curiosity and investigation, to be transformed into subjects once the imperial project of enlightenment had wrought its transformations. Nineteenth-century coronations, beginning with the crowning of Nicholas I in 1826, incorporated them as evidence of the domination of a nation. The distinctive national character of the Russian state

20 *Opisanie vsekh obitaiushchikh v Rossiiskom gosudarstve narodov*, 1: ix; Iurii Slezkine, "Naturalists versus Nations: Eighteenth-Century Russian Scholars Confront Ethnic Diversity," in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1800-1917*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 38-9; Knight, "Constructing the Science of Nationality," 32-40.

21 Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich*, 135-8.

22 M. N. Makarov, "Vospominaniia o koronatsii Imperatora Aleksandra I," *Pamiatniki novoi russkoi istorii* (Moscow: Maikov, 1871), 1: 64, 75-9.

was its command of the obedience of it subjects, whose number and diversity attested to the Russian's tsar's sway. The non-Russian nationalities made their first appearance at Nicholas I's coronation as spectators of the entry procession to Moscow. They participated in the events surrounding and following the coronation, described in the semi-official account published by the artist and travel writer Pavel Svin'in.[23]

Svin'in made clear that the various "Asiatic peoples" remained in the background during the coronation rituals as spectators enthralled by the display of the Russian people's popular devotion to their sovereign. He remarked on the presence of deputies from Asiatic peoples among the Senators and other officials in the grandstands on Kremlin Square. Then he elaborated on the beautiful folk costumes of the Russians, of the Circassians in their brilliant belts and pearls, and the Kirghiz, Kabardins, Georgians, Armenians, Kalmyks all in military costumes and exulting at the appearance of the emperor. Svin'in presented this assemblage as a microcosm of the empire. "It seemed that everything attractive and brilliant in Russia was gathered here."[24]

All of Svin'in's accounts made clear the preeminence of the Russian participants. In his eyes, Russians were distinguished for their exceptional beauty. He described comely Moscow women in plumed hats, the veils and shawls of other Russian national costumes, and Russian merchants in *sibirki*. Then he enumerated the various Eastern nationalities, whose variety augmented the national myth.[25] All united in their love for the imperial family. Those on the square, dressed in native costumes, bore witness to the supremacy of the imperial elite, whose members wore European uniforms and gowns that set them above the national groups.

The masquerade revealed the same relationship between Russians and nationalities. The event was attended by nearly 5,000 guests, including members of the nobility, merchantry, and native leaders. Viewing the scene from the balcony, the author saw the ladies' gowns sparkling in silver and gold. Svin'in

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23 On the symbolic statements of official nationality see my article, "Ofitsial'naia narodnost' i natsional'nyi mif," in *Rossiia/Russia: kul'turnye praktiki v ideologicheskoi perspektive, Rossiia, XVII—nachalo XX veka*, ed. N. N. Mazur, No. 4 [11] (1999): 233-44.

24 "Istoricheskoe opisanie Sviashchennogo Koronovaniia i Miropomazaniia ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Pavlovicha i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Aleksandry Feodorovny," *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1827), 31: 369-73.

25 Ibid., 31: 371-3.

described "Asian ladies" (*aziattsy*), who wore "sumptuous furs and valuable brocades," but he was most preoccupied by the dress of the Russian women "dressed in Russian sarafans, with Russian bands [*poviazki*] and *kokoshniki* on their heads, bathed, one might say, in pearls and diamonds." As they danced the polonaise, their "patriotic attire" (*otechestvennyi nariad*) transported him back to the times "when Russians were not ashamed of their splendid dress, proper for the climate, having a national character, and incomparably more beautiful than foreign dress." To confirm the universal acceptance of this "truth," Svin'in cited the opinion of an "enlightened foreigner," who preferred these ladies to those dressed in the latest European fashion.[26]

The coronation album, published in Paris in 1826, also presented the masquerade as an image of empire. The author, one Henry Graf, wrote, "It seemed to have reunited everything that Europe and Asia had to offer in beauty, wealth, and pomp."[27] A plate showed Muslim delegates from the Caucasus in the stands during the people's feast on the grounds of Devich'e Pole, the first illustration of Muslim subjects in a coronation album (Figure 1).

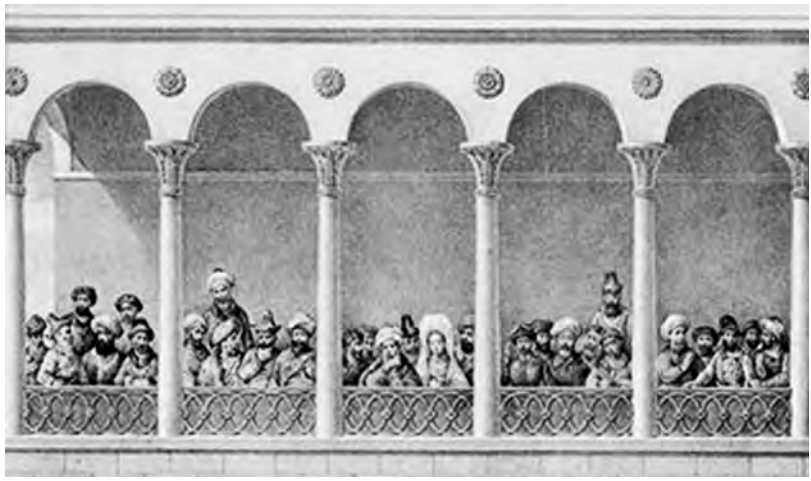

Figure 1—Muslim Delegates from the Caucasus. *Vues des cérémonies les plus intéressantes du couronnement de leurs majesties imperials l'empereur Nicholas Ier et l'impératrice Alexandra à Moscou*. Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

26 Ibid. (1827), 32: 26-34.

27 *Vues des cérémonies les plus intéressantes du couronnement de leurs majestés Impériales l'empereur Nicholas Ier et l'impératrice Alexandra à Moscou* (Paris: Didot, 1828), 11.

Svin'in carried the condescending ethnographic conventions of Georgi into his coronation narrative. The "Asiatic peoples" were charming, diverting primitives, who attested to the variety of the empire and its civilizing mission. The distance remained, if it had not grown even larger between the imperial court, uplifted by the victory over the French and international revolution. In the imagery of Nicholas's reign, the empire was dominated by the image of a mass of Russians, with no distinction between Little Russians, White Russians, Great Russians, and others who had been assimilated into the official elite. Michael Pogodin wrote, "Occupying an expanse that no other monarchy on earth has ever occupied, neither the Macedonian, nor the Roman, Arabic, the Frankish or the Mongol, it is settled principally by tribes who speak one language, have, consequently, one form of thought [*obraz mysli*], practice one Faith, and like an electronic circuit, quaver at a single contact."[28] The monarchy was thus identified with a Great Russian nation and the nationalities reduced to ornaments of its power and glory.

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The coronation of Alexander II in 1856 marks a further development of the image of a national empire, introduced in Nicholas I's reign. The coronation celebrated the successes of imperial expansion in previous decades, compensating for the humiliating Russian defeat in the Crimean War. Now, in the context of Alexander's "scenario of love," the nationalities were as if drawn into the mythical image of a nation adoring the sovereign. The emperor's coronation entry displayed the loyalty and submission of the people Russian armies had succeeded in conquering in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Middle Asia. For the first time, representatives of Asiatic peoples marched with the Russian elite.

The coronation entry showing the multi-national character of the Russian empire was played to an international audience, including the many representatives of the western press attending the event. The coronation album, published in French as well as Russian, described a cavalcade of empire, a display of diversity, color, and extent, departing from the ordered reserve of previous coronations. Behind the horsemen of the "Black Sea Cossacks" rode those from "peoples subject to Russia" (*podvlastnykh Rossii narodov*), the coronation album noted. It then went on to enumerate those who "were

28 M. P. Pogodin, *Istoriko-kriticheskie otryvki* (Moscow: A. Semen, 1846), 2.

distinguished by their picturesque attire": *Gurishtsty*, *Mingrel'tsy*, Kurds, Tatar beks, and representatives of Cherkessian tribes. "The manly look of the riders and the rich saddles of the steeds drew especial attention to this part of the procession."[29] The emphasis was on the colorful warriors, the empire as painting. A print by Vasilii Timm depicts the first part of the procession (Figure 2). "Deputies of Asian peoples under Russian authority" on the upper right follow the emperor's personal convoy, a squadron of Black Sea Cossacks and the "aristocratic nobility" (*znatnoe dvorianstvo*). An inset in the album showed the dashing figures of the Caucasian deputies (Figure 3).

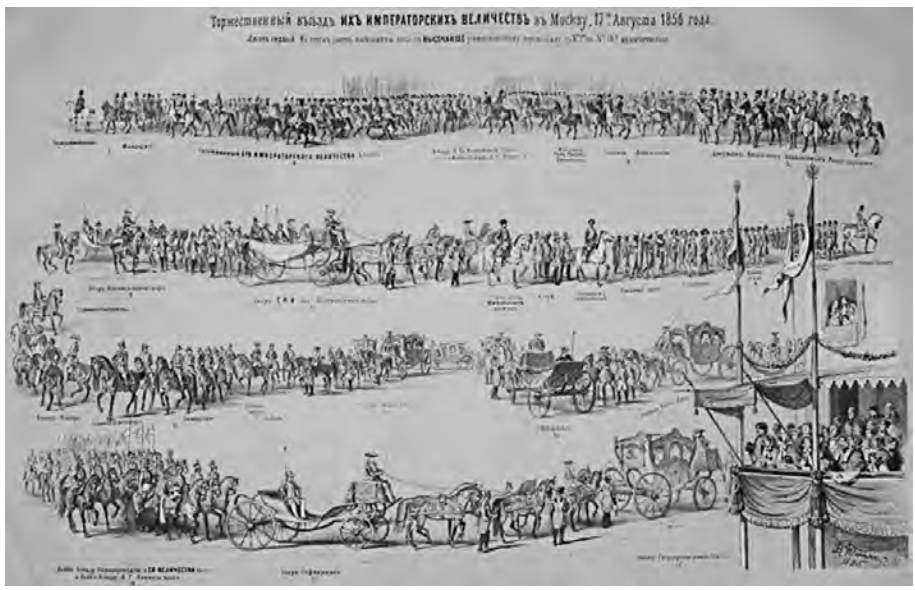

Figure 2—Triumphal Coronation Entry to Moscow of Alexander II and Maria Aleksandrovna. *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, 1856.

The press, both domestic and foreign, took up this theme. The reporters presented the dress and the manner of these horsemen as signs of the varied peoples of the empire, its vitality and vast reaches. Russian writers in the semi-official *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, foreign correspondents from the

29 *Opisanie sviashchenneishago koronovaniia Ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra Vtorago i Imperatritsy Marii Aleksandrovny Vseia Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Ak. Khudozhestv, 1856), 15.

Figure 3—Caucasian Deputies at the Coronation of Alexander II. *Opisanie sviashchenneishago koronovaniia… imperatora Aleksandra Vtorago i imperatritsy Marii Aleksandrovny vsei Rossii.* Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

Russian mouthpieces abroad, *L'Indépendance Belge* and *Le Nord*, and William Russell of the London *Times* reiterated these themes. *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* described the deputies of Asiatic peoples as "tangible proof of the vastness of our state, which some justly call a special kind of planet." Their appearance in procession "eloquently convinced everyone of the one whose power they recognize, whom they had come from their own lands to greet."[30]

Foreigners' reports cited in *Russkii vestnik* and *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* described the pageant of Eastern types in native costumes: Bashkirs, Cherkess, Tatars, Armenians, Georgians, different varieties of Cossacks. William Russell marveled, "What a recollection of the majesty and might of Russia will these people bring back to their distant tribes! …. They flashed by us in all of their brilliance, a dream from A Thousand and One Nights." *L'Indépendance Belge* observed the vitality of the deputies from the Eastern peoples, "these proud warriors, with bold movements, in glittering eastern

30 *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No.29 (October 10, 1856): 1.

dress." Their "half-tamed" horses proved the civilizing force of the state: they were "a striking symbol of the triumph of the power of the well-ordered over the power of disorder."[31]

It was the love of the Russian people, the press emphasized, that gave their sovereign the might to conquer and rule an empire. A *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok* columnist pointed out that all the foreign correspondents were amazed by the ceremony's lavishness and splendor, but, he thought, they had not completely expressed their idea: that Russia possessed "secret deposits of gold and gems, unknown to the world." These jewels consisted of the unifying love of the people. The author turned the pageant into a symbolic equivalent of popular sovereignty. "And that is true! Russia has valuables, lost by the decrepit powers of the West. The young feeling of infinite love and devotion for the anointed of the Lord and for the sovereign guardians of the earthly fate of the beloved fatherland has been preserved in Russia."[32] This feeling, moreover, was religious in character. The author approvingly quoted William Russell's comment that "the piety and deep religious feeling of the Monarch and his people, their visible humility before God, recalled the faith and ceremonies of past centuries, and *greatly overshadowed the appearance of military power of this state*."[33] It was the Orthodox faith of the Russian people that empowered their sovereign to rule and captivate the feelings of an empire.

The masquerade in the New Kremlin Palace was a festive display of the unity of empire and nation. Gone was the condescension of Svin'in's account. The correspondent of *Le Nord* described an emperor enjoying a rapport with all his people. In no other court, he marveled, would the doors be thrown open to common people. No democratic country would permit such a "mixture of citizens of all estates." He presented the diverse attire of the participants as a statement of the democratic and national character of the monarchy. Frock coats were more apparent than uniforms. The ladies of the court wore the Russian gown, with sarafans and *kokoshniki*. The emperor and the Grand Dukes appeared for the first time at a major function in the uniform of His Majesty's Rifles, the regiment formed by Nicholas I in 1853 out of the peasant

31 "Sovremennaia letopis'," *Russkii vestnik* (September 1856): 170-71; *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 27 (September 20, 1856): 1-2.

32 *Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*, No. 31 (November 1, 1856): 1-2.

33 Cited also as part of Russell's report in "Sovremennaia letopis'," *Russkii vestnik* (September 1856): 170. Italics in original.

militia from the imperial family's Moscow domains. His Majesty's Rifles wore a uniform in national style: wide *sharovary* over high boots, a Russian style kaftan, a black lambskin cap.[34]

The love of the Russian people for the sovereign was projected on the other people of the empire, envisioning an empire united by mutual affection. The participation of Asian noblemen at the ball attested to their acceptance of the suzerainty of the Russian element in the empire. For the poet Fedor Tiutchev, who attended as a chamberlain of the court, the masquerade expressed the Eastern character of Russia. It allowed him to imagine himself in the realm of dream—the dream of Russia's embracing the East. Tiutchev saw old aristocrats in costume he knew besides "quite authentic" Mingrelian, Tatar, Imeretian princes in magnificent costumes, and two Chinese. "And two-hundred steps from these halls resplendent with light and filled with this crowd that is so contemporary lay the tombs of Ivan III and Ivan IV." He wondered how they would react if they saw this scene. "Ah, how much dream there is in what belongs to reality," he wrote.[35]

The coronation ushered in a period of good feelings, accompanying the spirit of reforms, expectations that the reforms would heal the rift between state and society, tsar and people, with the deeds of a beneficent monarch. The image of the Russian people united in dedication to their monarch now was extended to include the nationalities of the empire. Indeed, one of the reasons for including the national participants was to encourage their devotion to the emperor. V. V. Grigor'ev, who was serving in Orenburg at the time of the coronation, arranged to have several Kirghiz deputies invited. In addition to the effect of their colorful costumes, he emphasized the "governmental significance" of their presence. "I have no doubt that this measure will be ten times more effective in instilling a favorable disposition towards and respect for Russia in the members of the [Kirghiz] horde than ten military

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34 V. V. Komarov, *V pamiat' sviashchennogo koronovaniia Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra III i gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny* (St. Petersburg, 1883), 31-3; Graf G. A. Miloradovich, *Vospominaniia o koronatsii Imperatora Aleksandra II kamer-pazha dvora ego velichestva* (Kiev: Kievo-Pecherskaia Uspenskaia Lavra, 1883), 16-7; On the Imperial Rifles see E. V. Bogdanovich, *Strelki imperatorskoi familii* (St. Petersburg: R. Golike, 1899).

35 I. S. Aksakov, *Biografiia Fedora Ivanovicha Tiutcheva* (Moscow: M. G. Volchaninov, 1886), 262-3; "Lettres de Th. I. Tjutsheff a sa seconde épouse née Baronne de Pfeffel," *Starina i novizna* XIX (1915): 160-1.

expeditions to the Steppe and all possible circulars from the Commission."[36] The coronation album singled out the Kirghiz for their skills at falconry, which they displayed on a hunt with the tsar illustrated in the album (Figure 4).

Figure 4—Kirgiz Huntsman—Coronation Album of Alexander II. *Opisanie sviashchenneishago koronovaniia . . . imperatora Aleksandra Vtorago i imperatritsy Marii Aleksandrovny vsei Rossii.* Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

The focus on the Caucasian horsemen was indicative of the fascination of the Russian public with the war against Shamil in the Caucasus and the figures of daring, primitive tribesmen fighting for independence and dignity.[37] After Shamil's capture in August 1859, the emperor brought the fierce adversary, the fierce leader of the Chechens and other mountain peoples, into his scenario of love. He received him as a friend and exhibited him at balls and

36 N. I. Veselovskii, *Vasili Vasil'evich Grigor'ev po ego pis'mam i trudam, 1818-1881* (St. Petersburg: A. Transhel', 1887), 146. I thank Nathaniel Knight for this reference.

37 More than thirty books on Shamil and the Caucasus were published between 1854 and 1860. Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich*, 149. On the fascination with the Caucasus see Susan Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Mythologies of Caucasian Savagery," in *Russia's Orient*, 80-99.

parades, as a living trophy of conquest. When Alexander met Shamil at the military camp at Chuguev in Kharkov province, the newspaper *Syn otechestva* reported that he embraced and kissed his captive and invited him to wear his sword during the review of troops at his side. Shamil's biographer wrote, "The former Imam, astonished by this tenderness, this soft, ineffably kind greeting, the like of which he had never heard, understood at this moment, the true majesty of the mighty tsars…." The ruler of Russia "gave the wild man of the mountains a touching example of dealing with one's foe." Shamil later recalled the episode with tears in his eyes.[38]

The sense of imperial unity was a prominent theme in Michael Katkov's *Moskovskie vedomosti*. He described a widespread sense of imperial solidarity awakened by the Polish uprising of 1863. Ivan Babst and Constantine Pobedonostsev, accompanying the heir, Nicholas Aleksandrovich, on a trip through the provinces, described how various national groups joined the Russian people in their support for the emperor. On the steps of the governor's house in Astrakhan, the heir at their side, they beheld a strange motley throng in national costumes, among them Greeks, Armenians, Persians, Kalmyks and Tatars. Though there were few Russian faces in the crowd, the authors still felt themselves in Russia, "in one of the remote regions of a great tsardom, united by the powerful bond of state power and a consciousness of state unity." There, amongst the mixture of "dress, faces, and dialects," the basic tone was provided by the "founding and gathering element of the Russian tribe."[39]

The mission of enlightenment persisted, inspiring the expectation that the education of native elites would contribute to the unity and progress of the state. Rather than an effort to subject all nationalities to the same laws and institutions, assimilation now would take the form of instilling a spirit of imperial citizenship (*grazhdanstvennost'*) in the populations of regions such as the Caucasus, Tatarstan, Bashkiriia, and Turkestan.[40] Officials and generals

38 Thomas M. Barrett, "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity," *Russian Review* vol. 53, No.2 (July 1994): 353-56; M. N. Chichagova, *Shamil' na Kavkaze i v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: S. M. Muller and I. Bogel'man, 1889), 107. See also Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain People and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2002), 110-25.

39 K. P. Pobedonostsev and I. Babst, *Pis'ma o puteshestvii gosudaria naslednika tsesarevicha po Rossii ot Peterburga do Kryma* (Moscow: Grachev, 1864), 356-7.

40 See Dov Yaroshevskii, "Empire and Citizenship," in *Russia's Orient*, 69-71.

sought to spread the ideas of citizenship to the Caucasus by introducing schools, opera houses, and the notion that the natives could be transformed into loyal servants of empire. This policy produced such native leaders as Hasan Melikov-Zardobi and I. Gasprinskii. However, the imperial Russian state soon proved inhospitable to native leaders, who had their own ambitions and lacked the noble credentials and loyalties of earlier members of the elite.[41]

Coronations as Expressions of Colonial Domination

The failure and unwillingness to integrate the national leaders into the Russian governing elite, as well as the refusal of Russian rulers to countenance public participation of any kind, resulted in a new national myth expressed in the scenario of Alexander III. His coronation, dominated by a spirit of hostility toward the reform efforts of the previous decades, presented a third image of empire—Russia as colonial power. Following European and American examples, Russians began to cast themselves as *Herrenvolk*, bringing civilization to those they regarded as lesser peoples, particularly *aziattsy*.[42] The national myth, elaborated at the coronation, elevated a notion of an ethnic, Orthodox, ruling elite, conquerors, and therefore, like other European powers, rulers of native peoples. The emperor appears in the illustrations of these events in the national dress he favored—Russian hat and boots.[43]

The forty-nine foreign correspondents, invited at government expense to attend the festivities, transmitted the images of the national empire to their readers. While watching the entry into Moscow on May 10, 1883, the English correspondent Charles Lowe felt he was witnessing a Roman triumph. He caught sight of a "scarlet crowd" in the distance that looked like

41 Austin Lee Jersild, "From Savagery to Citizenship: Caucasian Mountaineers and Muslims in the Russian Empire," in *Russia's Orient*, 101-14; Edward J. Lazzerini, "Local Accommodation and Resistance to Colonialism in Nineteenth-Century Crimea," in idem, 169-87.

42 Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich*, 264-6; see Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire*, 126-44.

43 *Opisanie sviashchennogo koronovaniia Ikh Imperatorskikh Velichestv Gosiudaria Imperatora Aleksandra Tret'ego i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny Vseia Rossii* (St. Petersburg: Eksped. Gos. Bumag, 1883).

a British regiment. But it turned out to be the emperor's personal convoy, consisting of "three-squadrons of Circassians and Don Cossacks, all finely-made, handsome men, and bravely mounted." He cited the opening lines of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

> What conquests brings he home!
> What tributaries follow him to Rome
> To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels!

Then came deputies from the numerous "Asiatic tribes" and "Cossack tribes." "All eyes turned on these picturesque strangers from the Far East," he wrote, "who pace along on their richly-caparisoned steeds … on they ride before the mighty Monarch."[44] A color lithograph of the painting by Konstantin Savitskii of the entry, with the Asiatic deputies on the right, brings out their variegated dress, distinguishing them from the uniform pattern of the orders of the state.

The coronation played a special role in the presentation of a nationalist imperialism. Not only did the presence of the colorful Asiatic peoples impress foreign observers, but the celebrations also impressed representatives of subject peoples with the power and wealth of the Russian tsar. A delegation of Chieftains from Turkestan invited to the coronation were so overwhelmed with the magnificence of the events and the shows of military might that they decided that further resistance was hopeless. They formed a Russian party that petitioned for admission to the Russian empire in 1884.[45] The coronation descriptions no longer expressed admiration for the Eastern representatives in the entry procession. The "peoples ruled by Russia" are again mentioned in the coronation album, riding behind the Black Sea Cossacks, but without further comment.[46] A coronation volume published by the Pan-Slavist Vissarion Komarov expressed sentiments of national superiority and colonial disdain. The author described the Asian representatives as "a messy crowd, bumping into each other…a murderously funny procession of savages." They

44 *The Times*, May 23, 1883, 5.

45 John Le Donne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press 1997), 132; Prince A. Lobanov-Rostovskii, *Russia and Asia* (New York: MacMillan, 1933), 172.

46 *Opisanie sviashchennogo koronovaniia… Gosiudaria Imperatora Aleksandra Tret'ego i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny Vseia Rossii*, 4-5.

wore "the most motley robes," which were extraordinarily garish and strange costumes in bright colors. "Some dress like women, others tightly like ballet dancers." One could not but "give a good laugh" at a Kalmyk mulla who rode on horseback wearing a wide red robe and a yellow cap, "like those worn by chorus girls in *Russlan and Liudmilla*."[47]

The change in attitude reflected a broader shift in the conceptions of national identity reflected in both official and public discourse. As John Slocum and Paul Werth have demonstrated, non-Russian nationalities began to be characterized in terms of ethnicity, rather than religion or simple backwardness, reflected in a shift in terminology for other nationalities, from *inovertsy*—peoples of other religions—to people of other ethnic stock, *inorodtsy*, or aliens. The new discourse increasingly precluded the possibility of transformation, either the religious hopes for conversion or the secular visions of enlightenment, which had been conflated.[48]

The theme of the Russianness of the tsar and the empire was displayed prominently throughout the coronation ceremonies. Many of those present remarked on the Russian appearance of the tsar. D. N. Liubimov, a secondary school student serving in the "Holy Guard" for the coronation, later recalled the great majesty of Alexander dressed in the imperial regalia. "This extraordinary garb that so befit the holy places of the Kremlin became him perfectly: his enormous height, his stoutness, his great beard. A truly Russian tsar, of Moscow and all Rus'." State Secretary A. A. Polovtsov wrote in his diary, "One felt that here it was not a case of an empty formality, but of a celebration having a national sense and taking place not without a fierce underground struggle." He noted that the courtiers attending to the tsar were nearly all from old Russian families, while the German noblemen were holdovers from the previous reign.[49]

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47 V. Komarov, *V pamiat' sviashchennago koronovaniia Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra III i Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny* (St. Petersburg: V. Komarov, 1883), 56-7.

48 See Paul Werth, "Changing Conceptions of Difference, Assimilation, and Faith in the Volga-Kama Region, 1740-1870," in *Russian Empire*, 171-88; John W. Slocum, "Who, and When, Were the Inorodtsy? The Evolution of the Category of 'Aliens' in Imperial Russia," *Russian Review* vol. 57 (April 1998): 173-90.

49 N. Liubimov, "Russkaia smuta deviatisotykh godov, 1902-1906," Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, 93; A. A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A. A. Polovtsova* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), 1: 95.

The only national delegation marching to the Assumption Cathedral for the rites of coronation was made up of delegates from Finland. In addition to peasant elders, appearing for the first time in a coronation procession, there marched the heads of estate and *zemstvo* institutions, and provincial marshals, as well as a large number of judges and officials from Moscow institutions, indicating the highly Muscovite character of the event. Representatives of all the Cossack hosts attended, among them their atamans, who were admitted to watch the rites in the cathedral.[50]

The post-coronation celebrations emphasized the primacy of Russia. At the banquet, the imperial family and the court witnessed the debut of Tchaikovsky's Cantata *Moskva*, extolling Russia as a great *bogatyr'*. The gala performance consisted of the first and last scenes of Mikhail Glinka's *Life for the Tsar* and a new ballet called *Night and Day*, choreographed by Marius Petipa to the music of Ludwig Mincus. If *Life for the Tsar* celebrated the resurrection of authority, *Night and Day* allegorized Russia as the dominant nationality in a multi-national empire. The ballet returned to the eighteenth-century theme of renovation. The traditional image of the sun represented the monarch, who illuminated and gave warmth to everything. The spirits of night give way to glorious day, with birds, fountains and flowers ushering in the new reign. Butterflies burst from a hive and alight on flowers. "All the nationalities of the Russian empire [*Russkoe tsarstvo*], in holiday costumes"—Finns, Georgians, Don Cossacks, Siberian Shamans, Poles—"unite" to greet the rising light of day." Each group performed its own dance, then all join a general Russian round dance, in the center of which stood "the most beautiful and stoutest woman, that is, Rus'." At the conclusion, they came together while a chorus intoned glory to the "beautiful sun, our tsar on earth."[51]

* * *

Nicholas II's coronation in 1896 was a sumptuous play to an international audience, Russia's engagement in the rivalry of grandiose celebrations among the great powers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The coronation presented Russia as a monarchy with broad democratic support,

50 Komarov, *V pamiat' sviashchennago koronovaniia Gosudaria Imperatora Aleksandra III*, 120-1.

51 Ibid., 308-11.

adapting to the contemporary forms of mass publicity and consumption. It assumed a grander scale than Alexander III's coronation: there were greater numbers of foreign correspondents, guests, and emissaries, whose pictures graced the second volume of the album. The more than three hundred foreign correspondents, artists, and photographers attending the coronation interpreted the variety of national types in the entry as a demonstration of submission to the Russian throne.

The coronation album provides no general montage of the entry. There is a striking portrayal of Nicholas II on horseback, but the photograph of the procession gives an impression of jumble and closeness, a contrast to the idealizations of artistic representation. The Asiatic deputies marched towards the beginning of the procession, an initial demonstration of the variety of the empire, but the coronation album made clear their subsidiary status.

After a detachment of gendarmes, the entry opened with the "Cossacks of the Emperor's own convoy." The album described these "dashing swarthy horsemen" in red Circassian coats, fur hats, brandishing their swords. "At their appearance, the admiration of the crowd burst forth into hurrahs and shouts of pleasure," the *New York Times* correspondent wrote. They were followed by a company of Cossacks of the Guard. The album described them as "Handsome fellows, their *papakhi* cocked to the side, holding frightening lances in their hands like feathers and merrily looking out at God's world." Then came a long line of "deputies of Asiatic peoples under the power of Russia"—representatives of Caucasian peoples, Turkmen, Tekins, Sarts (Uzbeks), and Kirghiz. The description was not without a note of condescension: "original (*original'nye*, i.e. a bit odd) characteristic figures, quaint (*prichudlivye*) clothing, and ornate saddles of these eastern horsemen aroused the special interest of the people." The sketch by N. Samokish shows a group of these horsemen, looking somewhat disheveled and distracted[52] (Figure 5).

Other accounts in the press, however, were more admiring. A report in *Novoe vremia* marveled over the "proud representatives of our Asia." The procession, the original costumes, "carried the spectator to the hot steppes of Asia, to the Ural mountains, to the canyons of Dagestan, to the expanses of Bukhara." The American journalist Richard Harding Davis marveled at the

52 *Koronatsionnyi Sbornik: Koronovanie v Moskve, 14 maia 1896* (St. Petersburg: Eksped. Gos. Bumag, 1899), 1: 209-10; *New York Times*, May 22, 1896, 7.

Figure 5—Deputies of "Asiatic peoples under the power of Russia." *Koronatsionnyi sbornik: Koronovanie v Moskve, 14 maia 1896.* Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

variety of costumes and national groups in a procession that included "the representatives of what had once been eighteen separate governments, each of which now bowed in allegiance to the Russian Emperor." Each of these representatives, he wrote, "bore himself as though his chief pride was that he owed allegiance to a young man twenty-eight years old, a young man who never would be seen by his countrymen in the distant provinces from which he came, to whom the Czar was but a name and a symbol, but a symbol to which they prayed, and for which they were prepared to give up their lives."[53] In photographs of the Bukhara and Khiva delegations, uniformed officials sit side by side with the notables of the protectorate, dressed in traditional attire (Figure 6).

[53] *Novoe Vremia*, May 11, 1896, 1; Henry LaPauze, *De Paris au Volga* (Paris, 1896), 79, 85; Richard Harding Davis, *A Year from a Reporter's Notebook* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1898), 28-34; B. A. Engel'gardt, "Torzhestvennyi v"ezd v Moskvu gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia II," in Sergei Zavalishin, *Gosudar' Imperator Nikolai II Aleksandrovich* (New York: Vseslavianskoe izd-vo, 1968), 23-4.

Figure 6—Deputies from Khiva—Coronation Album of Nicholas II. *Koronatsionnyi sbornik: Koronovanie v Moskve, 14 maia 1896.* Slavic and Baltic Collection, New York Public Library.

The Cantata performed at the banquet, written by Alexander Glazunov and the popular playwright and chief of repertoire for the imperial theaters of St. Petersburg, Victor Krylov, intoned rhetoric about the vast expanse of the empire and Russia's imperial destiny. The singers gave voice to the joy of the parts of the empire, North, South, East, and West at the coronation of its sovereign. "Russia is united in a single feeling," the chorus sang. The mezzo-soprano, in the role of the South, sang of their forefathers' defeat of the Tatars. The basso, as the North, told how nature fell silent before the wondrous celebrations. The East, a soprano, announced that Russia was awakening Eastern nations, while the West, again the mezzo-soprano, told how Europe had shared enlightenment with Russia. Russia was the force of progress in the East.

The Kamchatkian, the Kalmyk, and Sarmatian
Leave their wretched hovels,
And they greet the softening influence of morals,
The mercy and kind impulses,
Like sons, with open arms.

Then Russia, "conscious of its strength," turns in friendship to the West, in mutual love and accord, a reference to the image of Russian tsar as bringer of peace. The empire was a national achievement, dating not from the Petrine reforms, but from the rise of Moscow, whose spirit permeated the coronation. Fittingly, the cantata ended with the chorus's apostrophizing Moscow.

> Moscow of the golden cupolas…
> In your walls was born the start,
> Of all these sovereign labors.[54]

In conclusion, by the second half of the nineteenth century, colorful horsemen and nomads from the Caucasus and Central Asia marked Russia as an imperial nation. They showed the extent of Russia's power, exalting an empire rivaling the west in extending domination over savage and exotic peoples. Over the course of the century, a homogeneous noble elite was increasingly surrounded by shows of diversity, first of national groups, who had come to feel a sense of devotion to the emperor, then of peoples who had been subdued and subjected by the Russian state. In this way, Russian coronations from the time of Peter to the crowning of the last tsar set forth a symbolic program for each reign. They evoked the visions that would define the relationship of each monarch to his subjects and consecrated the truths that would establish both the goals and unbending principles of his rule of a multinational empire. Foreign visitors and correspondents shared this ceremonial mentality, marveling at both the miraculous integrative force of love and benevolence, and the apparent, if illusory, might of the Russian nation and the Russian tsar.

54 *Koronatsionnyi Sbornik*, 1: 280-3.

4. Publicizing the Imperial Image in 1913

New Modes of Representation

From the reign of Peter the Great, Russian monarchs sought to vest themselves in European personas that reflected current western ideals of rulership and culture. At the same time, they presented themselves as embodiments of the Petrine ethos of state service, subordinating the gratifications of private life to the superordinate goals of the imperial state. Nicholas II ascended the throne in 1894 unburdened by the imperative to transcend or deny his self. His model was contemporary royalty, particularly the English royal family and aristocracy, who took on the individualistic tastes of western society. Marriage and the family, his deep personal religiosity, his love for sport and recreation all were of paramount concern for him, competing with and often outweighing his official obligations. His authority, he was convinced, demanded no self-transformation on a heroic mythical pattern. He saw himself as a human being ordained by God and history to rule Russia autocratically. Following the precepts of the national myth introduced during the reign of Alexander III, he believed that the Russian people, specifically the peasants, were devoted to him personally, a conviction that he held tenaciously in spite of the widespread insurrections among the peasants in the first years of the twentieth century.

A disjuncture between the transcendent image of the autocratic emperor and Nicholas's own self-representation was evident from the beginning of his reign. This became particularly acute after the ebbing of the revolution of 1905 and the establishment of representative institutions in Russia. He then began to demonstrate his bond with the masses of the peasants. This bond was not a sentiment of gratitude for a generous monarch bestowing benefactions on the people, as it had been characterized for Alexander II; nor was it the

union of tsar and people, through the Orthodox Church, proclaimed during the reign of Alexander III. It was presented as a spiritual bond between simple religious people—between the tsar who ruled and the peasants who wanted to be ruled without restrictions on the power of their "little-father" (*batiushka*) tsar.

To display this popular support, Nicholas made use of great historical celebrations and mass publicity, following the example of European monarchs and leaders. While he disliked the public functions of the court, he appreciated the mass adulation of crowds of people and publicity of his warm domestic life. At the historical celebrations—the bicentenary of the battle of Poltava in June 1909, the jubilee of Borodino in August 1912, and the tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty in February and May of 1913—he presented himself as heir to the traditions of Peter the Great, Alexander I, and the first Romanov tsars. He stood and chatted with groups of peasants as if they were kindred spirits, evoking a bond between tsar and people that presumably showed him to be a truer representative of their feelings than their elected deputies.

Nicholas's publicity campaign reached its height during the tercentenary of 1913. Pictures of the tsar and the imperial family appeared on new postage stamps, commemorative coins, and kitsch, the souvenirs of celebrations. Films acquainted a mass public with scenes of the imperial family at ceremonies and episodes from Russia's past. Articles in the press and a widely circulated official account of Nicholas's life acquainted a growing reading public with his habits, tastes, and ostensibly democratic predilections.

The new genres of representation assured that the tsar's image would be conspicuous during the celebrations of 1913. At the same time, their coarse forms and context could associate the lofty figure of the tsar with the everyday and commonplace. Mass-produced coins lacked the finish and class of the old limited editions. Stamps were cheap slips of paper that ended in the trash. Actors could give inept or vulgar portrayals of the tsar on the stage. Newsreels were screened in sequence with trite romances and crime stories. Descriptions of the tsar's personal life gave him an aspect of the ordinary, devastating to the worshipful admiration the tsar still hoped to command.

The new genres coexisted with the traditional elevation of the tsar as all-powerful autocratic monarch, working with superhuman effort for the power and expansion of the empire. They introduced a dichotomy into imperial imagery, creating symbolic confusion in the midst of the political

crises of 1913 and 1914. But this problem eluded Nicholas, who saw publicity as a confirmation of his broad popularity and the strength of his alliance with the masses of the Russian people against the educated classes and the institutions they dominated.

* * *

The commemorative rubles issued on the occasion of the Romanov tercentenary demonstrated both the possibilities and the perils of the new forms of publicity. For Nicholas's coronation in 1896, the government had circulated 190,845 commemorative rubles, nearly three times the number of the 66,844 made for Alexander III's coronation in 1883. For the tercentenary celebration, as many as 1.5 million commemorative rubles were issued. The increased numbers brought the commemorative ruble to a broader public, beyond the court, the administration, and the armed forces.[1]

However, the rise in production was accompanied by a noticeable decline in quality. The busts of Nicholas, bareheaded, dressed in the uniform of the imperial rifles, and Michael, wearing the Monomakh cap, decorated the obverse of the coin (Figure 1). A breakdown of a die after the minting of the

Figure 1—Tercentenary Ruble.
Collection of author.

1 Robert G. Papp, "The Road to Chervonets: The Representation of National Identity in Russian Money, 1896-1924," Unpublished paper for American Numismatic Society Summer Seminar, 1996, 10, 16-17, 19.

first 50,000 resulted in a flattening of the image of Michael, giving him a ghostly look. The jeweler F. P. Birnbaum wrote, "the layout of portraits is unsuccessful in both the decorative and sculptural relation," and a polemic in *Novoe vremia* focused on whom to blame for the failure. The numismatist S. I. Chizhov criticized the "market" appearance of the ruble, which was not, in his eyes, "a work of art." He pointed out that "the artist should not have placed a Greek decoration that has no relationship to the Romanov house on both sides of the ruble."[2] The tercentenary medal, which also bore images of Michael and Nicholas, prompted further dissatisfaction. A. I. Spiridovitch, the chief of Palace Security, wrote that it was "as ugly as possible, and one asked, stupefied, how our mint could strike such a medal on the occasion of so memorable a jubilee."[3]

The issue of postage stamps carrying the portraits of Romanov tsars on January 1, 1913 represented a more fundamental break with imperial traditions. In Europe, the faces of monarchs began to appear on postage stamps in the middle of the nineteenth century. The decision to introduce the practice in Russia was certainly made with the consent of Nicholas, who was an ardent philatelist. Of the tsars, Nicholas's portrait was represented most frequently—on the seven kopek, ten kopek, and five ruble stamps. The seven and ten kopek stamps, intended for single-weight letters sent in Russia and abroad, gave his portrait the broadest dissemination. Peter the Great was shown on the one and four kopek stamps, Alexander II on the two kopek, Alexander III on the three kopek. Of the pre-Petrine tsars, Alexei Mikhailovich appeared on the twenty-five kopek and Michael Fedorovich on the seventy kopek.[4]

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2 Ibid., 17; F. P. Birnbaum, "Iubileinyi rubl', medal'ernoe iskusstvo i Monetnyi Dvor," in *Faberzhe i Peterburgskie iuveliry,* ed. T. F. Faberzhe, A. S. Gorynia, and V. V. Skurlov (St. Petersburg: Zhurnal Neva, 1997), 357-60. The article was originally printed in *Iuvelir* in 1913; S. Chizhov, "Iubileinye rubli 1912 i 1913 godov," *Numizmaticheskii sbornik* (Moscow, 1915), 101-2.

3 Général Alexandre Spiridovitch, *Les dernières années de la cour de Tsarskoe-Selo* (Paris: Payot, 1929), 2: 357, 401.

4 Michael Ercolini, "An Introduction to the Stamps of the 1913 Romanov Issue," *The Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately* No. 122 (April 1994): 11-14; *Niva*, January 5, 1913, 20; A. F. Giers refers to Nicholas and stamp collecting: A. F. Girs, "Vospominaniia byvshego ofitsera L-Gv. Preobrazhenskogo Polka i Minskogo gubernatora A. F. Girsa o svoikh vstrechakh s Gosudarem Imperatorom Nikolaem II," Bakhmeteff Archive of Russian and East European Literature and History, Columbia University, 11.

Stamps had to be canceled and devout Orthodox, and supporters of the monarchy condemned what they regarded as a desecration of the sacred image of tsar. The Bishop Nikon, writing in the official organ of the Holy Synod, deplored the number of kopeks printed with the tsars' faces, saying they demeaned the pious tsars worshiped by the people. Worse, he wrote, "these portraits of the tsars must be soiled with a postmark, as if to profane us all the more." Nikon asked himself if he was still living in Russia, "or has the kike come and conquered our tsardom?" The newspaper *Zemshchina*, an organ of the extreme right-wing Union of Russian People, pointed out that the law specified sentences of penal servitude for those who defiled the imperial image. Many postmasters refused to desecrate the face of the tsar with postmarks and left stamps uncanceled. The government suspended the series in February 1913, but resumed printing it later that year.[5]

The mass production of souvenirs with portraits of members of the imperial family troubled the censors in the Ministry of the Court, but apparently not the emperor or empress. The Ministry received applications to produce a variety of household items carrying the portraits of members of the imperial family, among them trays, candy boxes, metal cases, china, and calendars. "The placing of the portraits of imperial personages on objects having a utilitarian character is usually not permitted," an official of the court censorship responded to one such application. All the requests, however, were approved, sometimes with restrictions, as in the case of a request to market scarves with the portrait of the tsar. The censor authorized this "as long as these are of a size not suitable for use as handkerchiefs."[6]

The effort to popularize the image of the tsar in 1913 even led to the lifting of the ban on the presentation of Romanov rulers on the stage, which had been in effect since 1837. Enforcement had been irregular, but the rule had been consistently applied to grand opera.[7] For example, at the end of

5 Episkop Nikon, "Vera Khristova ne terpit dvoedushiia," *Tserkovnye vedomosti* (February 9, 1913), 283-4.

6 "Ob izdaniiakh kasaiushchikhsia 300-letiia Doma Romanovykh," RGIA, 472-49-1083, 70, 134, and passim. The growth of the market, however, exceeded the capacity of the office of court censors, and some items, like a cheap jubilee medal produced by a private firm, had not even been submitted for approval. Ingeborg Kaufmann, "Das dreihundertjährige Thronjubiläum des Hauses Romanov: Russland 1913" (MA Thesis, Humboldt University, Berlin, 1996), 68-9.

7 In the early twentieth century, the censorship permitted three different performances showing Peter the Great, one of them a comic opera, and one play about Catherine

all performances of Mikhail Glinka's *Life for the Tsar*, a procession led the newly-elected Michael Romanov into Moscow, but the curtain always fell before he appeared. The gala performance at the Mariinskii Theater in St. Petersburg in February 1913, however, concluded for the first time with Michael's entry to Moscow. He led a procession of the principal historical figures of the early seventeenth century. Michael, played by Leonid Sobinov, rode in a gilded carriage led by companies of musketeers. With two boiars at his side, he received bread and salt from groups of boiars and a golden goblet from the oldest, Andrei Trubetskoi.[8]

Permission was also extended to the Malyi Theater, in St. Petersburg, which presented tsar Michael in a play of E. M. Bezpiatov, *Oh, Quiet Light* (*Svete tikhii*), about the period of the election. The performance took place only after the censors' objections had been overridden by authorization from the throne.[9] The Ministry of the Court also permitted both the Moscow Malyi Theater and the Alexandrinskii Theater to present three excerpts from Nikolai Chaev's drama *The Election of Michael Romanov*, including the scene of the meeting of the Great Embassy with Martha and Michael in the Ipat'evskii Monastery. When the cast sang "God Save the Tsar!" at the close of the performance, the actor Davydov, who played Michael, amazed the audience by raising his voice above all the others. Shouting the final "Hoorah!," he extended his arms forward and threw his hat into the air, to loud "hoorahs!" from the crowd.[10]

The medium of film was most congenial to Nicholas, for it enabled him to establish direct visual contact with a mass audience without jeopardizing either his privacy or security. It also made his ceremonies and celebrations known to large numbers of his subjects, many of whom were illiterate or who

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the Great. On the other hand, proposals to portray Michael Romanov, Fedor Romanov, and Alexander I in plays marking the anniversary of 1812 were refused. "Po povodu izgotovlennoi Lefortovskim Otdeleniem Damskogo Popechitel'stva o bednykh v Moskve kinematograficheskoi lenty s izobrazheniem sobytii za vremia 300-letiia tsarstvovaniia Doma Romanovykh," RGIA, 472-49-1252, 27.

8 The procession at the conclusion of *Life for the Tsar* reproduced the picture in the 1672 album, reprinted in 1856: *Kniga ob izbranii na tsarstvo Velikago Gosudaria, Tsaria i Velikago Kniazia Mikhaila Fedorovicha* (Moscow, 1856); *Russkoe slovo*, January 18, 1913, 4, February 23, 3; *Birzhevye vedomosti*, February 22, 1913, 5.

9 *Russkoe slovo*, January 18, 1913, 4

10 *Moskovskie vedomosti*, February 23, 1913, 3, March 3, 1913, 2-3.

could not hope to witness them firsthand.[11] From 1911-1914, the censors approved more than one hundred requests to screen newsreels of the tsar submitted by such firms as Pathé, Khanzhonkov, Drankov, and Gaumont. These films gave the public glimpses of Nicholas at various ceremonial occasions, including the Borodino festivities, the tercentenary processions in Petersburg and Moscow, the Blessing of the Waters, military reviews, parades of the play regiments (*poteshnye*), the launching of ships, and receptions of foreign dignitaries. Moviegoers also could see the emperor and his family attending ceremonies in Crimea. A newsreel of his birthday celebration in 1911 showed Nicholas crossing himself continuously during the religious services. Others presented scenes of the empress at the "day of the White Flower" for the Red Cross in Yalta and the family's visit to the estate of Prince Lev Golitsyn, where the tsar examined the prince's vineyards and caves.[12]

The censors tried to ensure that the screening of these films took place with the appropriate dignity, and not in sequence with figures of lovers and bandits. They, in effect, understood the reception of early film programs, discussed by the film historian Yuri Tsivian—that the combination of short film subjects on a single program raised the possibility of associating one with the other. The censors prescribed that newsreels of the emperor and imperial family should be separated from the rest of the program, "not mixed up with the other pictures," and they should be shown without musical accompaniment. The curtain was to be lowered before and after the showing of the imperial family, and films of them were to be projected by hand, "at a speed that ensures that the movements and gait of those represented on the screen does not give rise to any comment."[13]

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11 Court censors freely gave permission to film imperial ceremonies with the tsar, even though the ban on showing films of the imperial family remained in force until 1910 (Yuri Tsivian, *Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception* [London: Routledge, 1994], 126); on the censorship and the film, see Yuri Tsivian, "Censure Bans on Religious Subjects in Russian Films," in *Une invention du diable? Cinéma des premiers temps et religion*, ed. Roland Cosandey, André Gaudreault, and Tom Gunning (Sainte-Foy: Les presses de l'université Laval, 1992), 76-7.

12 "Po voprosu tsenzury kinematograficheskikh snimkov s izobrazheniem Vysochaishikh Osob," RGIA, 472-49-988; N. N. Kalinin and M. A. Zemlianichenko, *Romanovy i Krym* (Moscow: Rurik, 1993), 83.

13 Audiences went to the theater, Tsivian writes, to see an entire program, a show consisting of a series of short subjects, and "the impression made by one picture imposed itself involuntarily on the next" (Tsivian, *Early Cinema in Russia*, 127).

To publicize and associate himself with the great accomplishments of the dynasty, Nicholas encouraged the production of historical films. He personally approved the release of two productions to mark the tercentenary—Alexander Khanzhonkov's "The Enthronement of the Romanov House, 1613-1913," and Alexander Drankov's "Three Centuries of the Ruling House of the Romanovs, 1613-1913: Historical Pictures." Khanzhonkov's film depicted the last years of the Time of Troubles and Michael's election.[14] Only the first quarter of Drankov's footage was devoted to 1613; the remaining sections presented an overview of the principal events of the subsequent three centuries.[15] Both films consisted of a succession of tableaux vivants. Their format, like that of many other films of the time, conformed to the structure of the popular *lubok* literature: the actors struck conventional heroic poses from *lubki* to illustrate the particular historical event.[16]

The semi-legendary context of the *lubok* permitted imaginative portrayals of tsars by actors. The censors accepted the dramatic portrayal of Michael Romanov on the screen, played by the actress S. Goloslavskaia in Khanzhonkov's production and by Michael Chekhov in Drankov's, as well as the presentation of eighteenth century monarchs in tableaux vivants of eighteenth-century courts. Nineteenth-century emperors, however, had to be presented with care and dignity, for their memory as persons had not faded, and therefore they could not properly be portrayed by actors. Drankov used busts to represent Alexander I and Nicholas I, and portraits for Alexander II and Alexander III. Their images alternated with tableaux of the great moments of their reigns, such as the struggle with Napoleon, the emancipation of the serfs, and the court reform of 1864. Nicholas II appeared at the end of the film himself, in a succession of clips of ceremonial occasions—the coronation, the dedication of the Petersburg monument to Alexander III in 1909, Nicholas with his troops and at the Borodino celebrations. Setting Nicholas in sequence

14 The film apparently concluded with a scene of Michael's anointment, which has not survived. *Votsarenie Doma Romanovykh, 1613-1913*, RGAK (Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Kinofotodokumentov), I-12890.

15 "Trekhsotletie tsarstvuiushchego Doma Romanovykh, 1613-1913: Istoricheskie Kartiny," RGAK, I-22645.

16 Many of the authors of *lubok* tales in the penny newspapers became screenwriters at this time: S. Ginzburg, *Kinematografiia dorevoliutsionnoi Rossii* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1963), 114-18; Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 109.

with images of the foremost of his predecessors associated him with their glory and achievement. Showing him at major celebrations recalled the moments of exaltation that confirmed the popular backing of the monarchy.

These films, however, affronted some conservative sensibilities. Prince Kudashev wrote to *Moskovskie vedomosti* that he found Khanzhonkov's presentation of the siege of the Trinity Monastery, which showed the portals as well as the icons painted on the walls, "frightening and unusual." "A place, which as a shrine is dear to the people … has been turned into decoration for the film to be performed." Kudashev not only deplored the showing of the pectoral cross, but also was appalled that actors were dressed up as monks "on this very spot," and that one actually was permitted to play Patriarch Hermogen, whom the people worshiped as a saint.[17]

"The Crowned Toiler"

The most important means to popularize the tsar and the monarchy during the celebrations was the printed word. At the end of 1905, the leaders of the government and Nicholas himself had resolved to create newspapers that could reach the people and argue the government's program against the opposition. The government dispensed large sums to support more than thirty newspapers across Russia. Under the aegis of the Minister of the Interior, the newspaper *Rossiia* was established as a private organ, supported by the government—what was called *ofitsioz*.[18] *Sel'skii vestnik* was made an independent periodical, the change symbolized by the replacement of the former "manager" of the newspaper by an editor who was given leeway to make the newspaper more appealing to mass readership.[19] However, like other government-supported organs, neither of these attracted large numbers of readers.[20] The Assistant

17 *Moskovskie vedomosti*, March 3, 1913, 1.

18 On the official press during and after the revolution of 1905, see A. V. Likhomanov, *Bor'ba samoderzhaviia za obshchestvennoe mnenie v 1905-1907 godakh* (St. Petersburg: Rossiiskaia Natsional'naia Biblioteka, 1997).

19 James H. Krukones, *To the People: The Russian Government and the Newspaper* Sel'skii Vestnick *("Village Herald"), 1881-1917* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), 190-204.

20 In 1906, the numbers of circulated copies of *Rossiia* ranged from 1,037 to 7,217. Likhomanov, 110-11. Circulation of *Sel'skii vestnik* fell from over 100,000 before 1905 to less than half of this. By 1912, it had risen to only 47,500 and was increasing

Minister of Interior, S. E. Kryzhanovskii, explained the failure of official organs in terms of "the nearly complete absence of people prepared for publicistic activity. This is not surprising since newspaper work was the province of oppositional circles that had at their disposal large staffs, mainly of Jewish origin."[21]

Official organs achieved far greater success in their publication of brochures and books. *Rossiia* and *Sel'skii vestnik* circulated brochures in the millions.[22] The peasants, Jeffrey Brooks pointed out, were unaccustomed to newspapers but liked to read chapbooks and popular journals. Moreover, in the words of one student of peasant attitudes, S. A. Rappaport (An-skii), for the peasants, "Printed means it is true, printed means it is just."[23] With the help of Peter Stolypin, *Sel'skii vestnik* acquired a printing press and storehouses. It published books on such practical matters as agriculture and law and also set up outlets at towns along the Trans-Siberian Railway. During the Borodino and tercentenary celebrations, the editors expanded their lists to include works on history and patriotic studies.[24]

These celebrations provided the occasion for a vast expansion and distribution of monarchist literature in the countryside. In 1911, *Sel'skii vestnik* entered into an agreement with the house of Ivan Sytin, the commercially successful publisher of the newspaper *Russkoe slovo*. Sytin commanded a vast distribution network in the provinces. Books and pamphlets were also distributed through the Trusteeships of the People's Temperance, libraries, schools, the Church and the military. During the Borodino jubilees, the books and pamphlets published by *Sel'skii vestnik* jointly with Sytin reached 2,860,000 copies. Portraits of the imperial family and war heroes numbered 700,000.[25] According to Sytin, his house published 3.8 million copies of books

slowly in 1913 (Krukones, *To the People*, 204). This compares to close to four million for *Novoe vremia* in 1912, and close to 300,000 for *Russkoe slovo*. Louise McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass Circulation Press* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), Tables 5 and 8.

21 S. E. Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia* (Berlin, n.d.), 101-2.

22 Likhomanov, *Bor'ba samoderzhaviia za obshchestvennoe mnenie v 1905-1907 godakh*, 112-3; Krukones, *To the People*, 209-10.

23 Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read*, 31-2.

24 Krukones, *To the People*, 208-13.

25 Ibid., 213; On Sytin, see Charles A. Ruud, *Russian Entrepreneur: Publisher Ivan Sytin of Moscow, 1851-1934* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990).

and pamphlets for the tercentenary, while *Sel'skii vestnik* reported 2.9 million books and 1.9 million portraits.[26]

Sel'skii vestnik also promoted and distributed the "Tercentenary Icon," which the Synod had approved in December 1912. The icon featured the likenesses of all the saints whose whose names were borne by rulers of the Romanov house. It came in large versions suitable for churches, schools, state and public institutions, and small ones for private use. The *kiot*, the icon case, could be of wood, marble or silver.[27] The editor of *Sel'skii vestnik*, P. P. Zubovskii, claimed that it was the most popular of the bric-a-brac sold for the Tercentenary. Zubovskii wrote, "The Russian people know how to pray and enjoy praying for what they love."[28]

The very scope of official publications and other items associated with the ruling house confirmed the sense of the popularity of the monarchy for Nicholas and many of his advisors. Such literature made known the tsar's person and life, showing the qualities they thought would strengthen the bond between him and the people. This was the goal of the unprecedented authorized account of the life of a ruling tsar, *The Reign of the Sovereign Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich*, published under the auspices of *Sel'skii vestnik*. The author, Professor and Major-General Andrei Georgievich Elchaninov, was a major-general in Nicholas's suite.[29] Elchaninov's book was released in early 1913, before the February celebrations, and appeared in excerpts or installments in many major newspapers during and after the

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26 Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read*, 314; "Ob izdanii redaktsieiu Sel'skogo vestnika knigi General-Maiora A. El'chaninova, 'Tsarstvovanie Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Aleksandrovicha,' i podnesenii eia Ego Imperatorskomu Velichestvu," RGIA, 472-49-1187, 56-57.

27 *Sel'skii vestnik*, January 18, 1913, 4.

28 Krukones, *To the People*, 214.

29 Prof. A. Elchaninov, *Tsarstvovanie Gosudaria Imperatora Nikolaia Aleksandrovicha* (St. Petersburg-Moscow: Izd. Sel'skii vestnik, 1913). The intermediary between the editor and the tsar was Prince Michael Andronikov ("Ob izdanii redaktsieiu Sel'skogo vestnika knigi General-Maiora A. El'chaninova," passim). Elchaninov was and a Professor of Military Art in the General Staff Academy. He had written specialized books on fortification and cavalry, a biography of the eighteenth-century military hero Alexander Suvorov, and a commemoration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the siege of the Trinity Monastery during the Time of Troubles (*Novyi Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar' Brokgauza i Efrona* [St. Petersburg: n.p.], 17: 474).

events.[30] French and English translations followed in 1914.[31] Elchaninov presented Nicholas to the Russian people and to Russia's allies as a tsar expressing the needs and advancing the interests of his people—a democratic ruler on the Russian throne.

Elchaninov organized his text to permit the broadest possible dissemination in newspapers. The book comprises twelve brief chapters. The themes are set forth in the first chapter, but repeated throughout so that the chapters could stand on their own. The prose is simple, but elevated in tone like a panegyric. It is realistic panegyric, devoid of extended metaphor or allegory. The author depicts Nicholas as a virtuous, exceptionally able and feeling human being on the basis of considerable detail from Nicholas's personal life and recent history. He gives his account a patina of verisimilitude, even if the idealization of his subject deprives the text of credibility. The mixture of panegyric and journalism clearly favors the former.

The book presents a unique statement of how Nicholas understood his office and wished himself to be perceived. Elchaninov gathered considerable material about Nicholas's personal life from observations and impressions of those close to the tsar, who clearly acted with Nicholas's consent.[32] The personal detail prompted the Court Censor to express misgivings about the book's "intimate character." "Similar publications have not been authorized

30 For example, *Novoe vremia*, *Moskovskie vedomosti*, *Russkoe slovo*, *Grazhdanin*, *Kopeika*, and *Zemshchina* printed one or more excerpts from the book. An article in the *New York Tribune* summarizing the sections on the tsar's family life was headlined, "Intimate Details of the Czar's Daily Routine Given in a Book by a Well Known Professor Reveal Him as a Kindly Man of Family" (*New York Tribune*, April 13, 1913, 9).

31 The English version was titled *The Tsar and His People* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), the French version *Le règne de S. M. l'Empereur Nicholas II* (Paris, 1913). Grand Duke Pavel Aleksandrovich wrote to Nicholas on May 29, 1913, that his wife Olga Pistolkors had decided to translate the book into French "so that foreigners, and especially the French, had a correct idea of Russia and her tsar, a country that is a friend and ally" (B. P. Semennikov, *Nikolai II i velikie kniaz'ia* [Leningrad-Moscow: Gosizdat, 1925], 58).

32 Elchaninov remarks in the last lines of Chapter I that the reader should thank not "my humble and unworthy self" but "all those who, standing in close proximity to the throne, have honoured me with their confidence and enabled me to give to the world their observations and impressions" (*Tsarstvovanie*…., 16; *The Tsar and His People*, 9).

until the present day," he observed. When Nicholas reviewed and corrected the page proofs in January 1913, he made one very significant change, which affirmed his absolute unwillingness to cooperate with the Duma. He insisted that Elchaninov delete the sentence, "In his work, the Sovereign Emperor considers his closest assistants in legislative work the reformed State Council and the State Duma, which he has summoned to life."[33] He also requested the removal of sentences describing prayers for the recovery of the heir, which placed undue emphasis on Alexei's recent illness.[34]

The text of Elchaninov's book therefore can be read as an exposition of Nicholas's conception of his own mythical role and it functioned, like previous panegyrics, to confirm to the tsar the truth of his idealized image. In this respect, Elchaninov extols the qualities of heroic self-sacrifice to duty and to the people, characteristic of Nicholas's predecessors. Nicholas's dedication, Elchaninov emphasized, came from his personal designation by God during his coronation. The book opens at the moment after his investiture, when the tsar kneels before the congregation and begs God to help him "in his high service to order all for the good of his people and the glory of God." Nicholas's every word and deed, Elchaninov wrote, was occupied with this "mission, which cannot be compared with any obligation of our own."[35] Heeding his coronation vow, Nicholas is "the true father of his people," who thinks and works only for them. "He never lays down his work, on week days, and weekends, resting only during his short period of sleep, offering in small things, as in great, a lofty example of 'loyalty in the performance of his duty.'"[36]

The conscientious, diligent, and able performance of his duty became the principal sign of the tsar's title to rule. His dedication set him apart from his subjects, but also revealed him laboring like them: he is "the crowned toiler" (*ventsenosnyi truzhenik*), who, "following the precept of the founder of the dynasty…Tsar Michael Fedorovich, ceaselessly devotes himself

33 "Ob izdanii redaktsieiu Sel'skogo vestnika knigi General-Maiora A. El'chaninova," 2, 4, 8. The deleted sentence was on page 97 of the proofs.

34 "Ob izdanii redaktsieiu Sel'skogo vestnika knigi General-Maiora A. El'chaninova," 8. These deleted passages were on pages 34 and 45 of the proofs.

35 *Tsarstvovanie*…., 7-8; *The Tsar and His People*, 1-2. The vow or supplication was introduced at the coronation of Anna Ioannovna in 1730. See *Scenarios of Power*, 1: 101-2.

36 *Tsarstvovanie*…., 8; *The Tsar and His People*, 3.

to serving his people."[37] Like other authors expressing Nicholas's view of the tercentenary, Elchaninov makes Michael's self-sacrifice for his people the central act of 1613.[38] The synchronic mode of the myth is reflected in the persistence of this ethos as the characteristic distinguishing all members of the dynasty.

The title of the first chapter, "The Sovereign Helmsman of the Russian Land" (*Derzhavnyi Kormchii Russkoi Zemli*), sets Nicholas on this timeless plane: Pushkin's image of Peter the Great as helmsman is juxtaposed with the initial designation of Russian unity in the chronicles "The Russian Land." Nicholas is endowed with Peter's traits of absolute control, will, and sense of direction: he acts on behalf of the Russian land, the nation. The concept of nation, however, was not present in the legislation or manifestos of Peter's time. Peter had directed his energies to the organization and strengthening of the Russian administration, the very institutions that now eluded Nicholas's influence and control. Elchaninov gives a picture of one who is sure of himself and is in absolute control of the government. This is clearly an answer to the widespread conception at the time of Nicholas as passive and distant from state affairs.

Like Drankov's film, Elchaninov sets Nicholas in a historical frame with his illustrious forbears, associating him with their glories and heroism. At the conclusion, he draws explicit parallels between the crisis of the early twentieth century and the troubles faced by Romanov tsars in the early seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Each had triumphed by uniting with the people. Michael had received his power from the people and then "with a gentle but firm hand, in unity with his people, led his country back to the path of glory and greatness." Peter had brought Russia out of the chaos left by "the Empress Sophia." Russia was "raised to a greater height than ever before by 'the unity of the people with the Tsar.'" When Napoleon had taken Moscow, "the people with one accord offered their soul, full of love and devotion, to their Tsar, and by a united effort, with the aid of the army repulsed the terrible

37 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 16; *The Tsar and His People*, 9.

38 See for example I. Bazhenov, "Prizvanie Mikhaila Feodorovicha k prestolu," *Iubileinyi sbornik kostromskogo tserkovno-istoricheskogo obshchestva* (Kostroma, 1913), 58-9; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, Feb. 22, 1913, 3; P. G. Vasenko, ed., *Boiare Romanovy i votsarenie Mikhaila Feodorovicha* (St. Petersburg: Komitet dlia ustroistva prazdnovaniia, 1913), 142-52; S. A. Toluzakov, *Podvig 300-letiia sluzheniia Rossii gosudarei doma Romanovykh* (St. Petersburg, Iakor,1913), 3-4, 312.

invasion and soon planted their standards on the walls of Paris." In all three cases, "as soon as the people responded to the Tsar's summons to unite with him, the sun once more shone on the Russian Land!"[39]

Elchaninov places Nicholas within the recurring motif of triumph of tsar and people. He shows Nicholas as leader of his people, taking initiative for the political, agrarian, and military reforms of his reign. He presents tragedies and defeats as minor setbacks on the path to national unity and resurgence. The Khodynka massacre at Nicholas's coronation is mentioned only as an occasion for a show of Nicholas's pity and largesse to the suffering. The Russo-Japanese war is passed over with the assertion, "In spite of the unfortunate war with Japan, our country's international position is stronger than ever before, and all nations vie with one another in seeking to secure our friendship."[40]

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Elchaninov's detailed description of Nicholas at work brings out the tsar's dedication and self-discipline. Chapter Two, "The Crowned Toiler," takes us through Nicholas's usual work day.[41] By nine in the morning, the tsar finishes his breakfast, "a simple frugal meal in keeping with his whole way of living," and is at work in his study. From ten to eleven, he takes walks, alone or with the tsarevich, but usually, he forgoes this to receive reports from high officials of the imperial court, ministers, or other "less exalted personages." At eleven, he tastes the soldiers' rations from His Own Infantry Regiment and the Imperial Escort, usually with the tsarevich. From twelve to two, he takes lunch—ample but simple, then holds audiences from three until four. From five to six he has tea with the family, though sometimes this hour too is devoted to business. At free moments, he would exercise—walking, bicycling, or canoeing—often with his children. He works from six until dinner at eight, sometimes giving audiences to officials. At nine-thirty, he returns to work until he retires at 12 or 12:30, "and often much later." According to the author, the tsar spent ten to twelve hours working each day.

Following the image of helmsman, Elchaninov shows Nicholas taking charge of everything personally. He gathers information himself and reads all correspondence. Nicholas trusts no one to make decisions, delegates

39 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 132-4; *The Tsar and His People*, 145-8.
40 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 14-16; *The Tsar and His People*, 6-9.
41 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 17-31; *The Tsar and His People*, 9-28.

no responsibility, and does not even allow a secretary to help him. This section makes clear Nicholas's complete independence from the institutions of state—the Ministries and the Duma. Thus he remains true to the myth of all-competent absolute monarch, without concession to the complex demands of modern leadership. In most cases, the tsar thinks through a problem by himself, grasps its import, and composes the answer. When the tsar needs assistance, he turns not to government officials but to "heads of the various departments of the Palace, members of the Imperial suite, and others." He attentively studies the bills submitted to him by the State Council—more than 900 from 1909-1911. The tsar annotates reports in his own hand, and the author cites several of his notes. For example, "I am persuaded of the necessity of a complete reform of our law statutes to the end that real justice should at last reign in Russia."[42]

Much of the tsar's time is spent attending audiences, with ministers, ambassadors, officials and private individuals. He held these frequently, sometimes receiving several hundred people in his day. "Courteous, attentive, and with a full and exact knowledge of every subject dealt with, the Tsar goes straight to the heart of the question, with a rare skill in anticipating a speaker's train of thought."[43] Private audiences last three to four minutes, those with ministers and ambassadors longer, but the tsar quickly understands the thread of all conversations and treats all according to their merits. All feel the tsar's proverbial charm. He gives pecuniary aid justly to supplicants. He knows exactly what to say, speaks concisely, but always finds sympathetic words and is informed about the life and work of all those he speaks to. He makes no distinction according to status. "The humblest person is honored by the Tsar's knowledge of his past and services and by his inquiries after his family and relatives." Elchaninov presents a tsar who both displays his concern for his people and serves as a model for them. The chapter ends with Nicholas's own words, "I do the work of three men. Let every one learn to do the work of at least two."[44]

Three of the twelve chapters of the book are devoted to Nicholas's family life. Elchaninov makes it clear that the family is a separate and even superior field of the tsar's virtue. Nicholas is a model father. He has few friends. The

42 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 25, 31, 123-31; *The Tsar and His People*, 18-21, 28, 133, 141-4.
43 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 24; *The Tsar and His People*, 17.
44 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 29, 31; *The Tsar and His People*, 28.

family is Nicholas's favorite company. Nicholas, the worker-tsar, "*tsar'-rabotnik*" does not like "worldly pleasures" and "raises His Family in this spirit." "Entertainments at the Palace are comparatively rare. Great balls and processions are presented only when necessary, as a duty of service. A modest, frugal way of life is evident here too…"[45]

The imperial family is an enclosed sphere, completely separate from court and state. The members are united by love and a sense of the significance of every detail of their life, giving the sense of a domestic novel, much as Queen Victoria had been presented in the last decades of the nineteenth century.[46] In this respect, Nicholas II's elevation of the family was quite different from his great-grandfather's. Nicholas I had made his family the symbol of the state, the center of the court and the bureaucracy; Nicholas II kept his family apart from these institutions.[47]

One of the three chapters is devoted to the vigorous outdoor recreation preferred by the imperial family. They enjoy swimming, hunting, tennis, rowing, horseback-riding, bicycling, motoring, and picking mushrooms and berries. The text dwells on their automobile rides in Crimea and their walks and berry-collecting on the Finnish archipelagoes. The involvement of parents and children alike with family life is most strikingly reflected in their passion for photography. "All the Tsar's family have cameras and bring back from every visit numbers of excellent photographs." These are not pictures to be shown to the public, but to themselves and to friends. The imperial family shares the self-absorption of the middle-class family, one of the features that has made them so much more appealing to posterity than they were to their contemporaries.[48]

The recreations present Nicholas as an ordinary man, enjoying the pleasures of nature and sport. But as a Romanov he also must do things better than anyone else. In swimming "he has no equals amongst his suite; he is able to dive and remain under water for minutes together" (*sic*). He is extremely proficient at billiards. The greatest attention is bestowed on Nicholas's hunting

45 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 50, 54; *The Tsar and His People*, 47, 51. The word "*tsar'-rabotnik*" in the original is not translated directly in the English edition.

46 Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 102-3, compares the life at the court of Victoria to a domestic novel.

47 On Nicholas I's conception of the family, see *Scenarios of Power*, 1: 325-42.

48 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 41-4; *The Tsar and His People*, 37-41.

Figure 2—Nicholas II as Huntsman. A. Elchaninov, *The Tsar and His People* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1914).

excursions, which are described in great detail and with illustrations (Figure 2). "Given his excellent marksmanship and his cool self-possession, it is not surprising that the Tsar should generally make the largest bag."[49]

Nicholas also has broad cultural interests. He loves opera, particularly Russian opera, though also the works of Richard Wagner. His favorite newspapers are *Novoe vremia*, the mass circulation conservative nationalist daily, *Russkii invalid*—the military newspaper—and among foreign periodicals, *Figaro* and *L'Illustration*. Nicholas's great passion, however, is for history, and he believes that history is the source of Russia's greatness. "The Tsar brings to the consciousness of Russian society the sense that only that state is strong which respects the heritage of its past and he himself is the first

[49] *Tsarstvovanie*…, 36-8, 50-2, 54-5; *The Tsar and His People*, 33-4, 49, 52. From his youth Nicholas prided himself on his triumphs in these sports and gladly heard flattery about his prowess. He wrote to his father on June 24, 1887, his first year on maneuvers at Krasnoe Selo, about his victories in billiards and boasted that he was considered the best player in his division ("Pis'ma V. Kn. Nikolaia Aleksandrovicha k Aleksandru III," GARF, 677-1-919, 110).

to honor that heritage." Nicholas studies old manuscripts and follows the work of the Alexander III Historical Society. He eagerly studies history, "paying special attention to the reign of the most tranquil Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich." He recites to his children the old Russian folk epics, *byliny*, and tells them tales of the exploits of heroes like the great Russian general, Alexander Suvorov. The breadth and precision of his knowledge is "astonishing."[50]

He has an especially great knowledge of Russian literature. His favorite writers, whose works he reads to his family, are Nikolai Gogol and I. F. Gorbunov, a theatrical monologist who delivered and published sketches from the life of the people. The family also enjoys Cossack songs and dances accompanied by *balalaikas*. The tsar is partial to Russian foods, particularly borsch, kasha, pancakes and the "monastery" kvas, the recipe for which came from the Sarov Monastery. "Only Russian champagne is drunk in the Palace."[51] The palace servants are "for the most part Russians." Nicholas is "careful to notice and support every unique Russian initiative, every manifestation of the Russian national genius. Similarly he likes to have the country's affairs directed by Russians."[52] Such tastes associated Nicholas and the other members of the imperial family with the Russian people as distinguished from other nationalities making up the empire.

The Orthodox religion, Nicholas believed, brought him closer to the Russian people. Elchaninov's chapter "The Orthodox Tsar" describes the imperial family's intense devotion—their attendance of all services and observances of fasts.[53] The tsar's rooms are hung with sacred icons; he loves the old chants and ceremonies, and when he meets priests he kisses their hands. The church and clergy, however, play a minor role, since Nicholas was convinced that he had a direct relationship to God. "In all his work, he seeks the instruction and support of God, from whom he derives his power as 'the Lord's anointed.'" Nicholas's religious observance expressed the bonds he felt between himself and God and between himself and the people, not between himself and the clergy. Much of the chapter is dedicated to his appearance in July 1903 at the canonization of Serafim of Sarov, which he and Alexandra promoted with little support from the church hierarchy. "The worshipers

50 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 34, 54; *The Tsar and His People*, 31, 34, 51-3.
51 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 38, 55; *The Tsar and His People*, 34; 52-3.
52 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 26, 38; *The Tsar and His People*, 22, 34.
53 The chapter title is misleadingly translated "The Tsar and the Orthodox Church."

were deeply impressed by the sight of the Emperor and Empress in their midst as simple pilgrims, unattended by any suite or high officials." A photograph shows Nicholas carrying relics of Serafim at the Sarov observance. The tsarevich Alexei, who was conceived soon after the visit, also loves to read the saints' lives, particularly Serafim's, we are told.[54]

Elchaninov briefly describes the warm and helping relationship between Emperor and Empress and gives details of his daughters' education and tastes. But it is the tsarevich who is at the center of the tsar's attention. "The Tsar's relations with his son are extremely touching, their love for one another is extraordinarily deep and strong." Nicholas takes Alexei with him when he reviews the troops, and when possible "spends three or four hours a day with him in healthy outdoor work…."[55]

To the emperor and the empress, the tsarevich of course represented the continuation of the dynasty within the family. The next year, a luxury edition of a book on the childhood and upbringing of Russian emperors was published to mark Alexei's tenth birthday. The cover carries an inset of Alexei in Russian hat and early Russian costume. At the sides are griffons—from the Romanov Coat-of-Arms, holding shields.[56] Elchaninov presents the heir as a symbol of the rejuvenation of the Russian army and nation, "the future hope of the Russian people." Alexei is described as "thoroughly proficient in rifle exercises (with a wooden gun), skirmishing order, the elements of scouting, the rules and requirements of military discipline and performs the exercises correctly and smartly." He "delights in gymnastic exercises," and participates in the activities of the *poteshnye*, the Russian equivalent of Boy Scouts, in Crimea, made up of soldiers' sons.[57] Alexei appears in eleven of the forty-seven photographs in the volume, more than any member of the family except the tsar himself. We see him selling flowers in Yalta, and held by his father, who is wearing "the full military outfit of a soldier of low rank"[58] (Figure 3). He stands at his father's side on the yacht "Standard," and in the ranks of his unit of *poteshnye* (Figure 4).

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54 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 66-72; *The Tsar and His People*, 62-9.

55 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 36; *The Tsar and His People*, 31-2. *Tsesarevich* is the legal term for the heir, officially designating that he is next in line to the throne.

56 I. N. Bozherianov, *Detstvo, vospitanie i leta iunosti Russkikh Imperatorov* (St. Petersburg: A. Benke, 1914).

57 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 14, 60; *The Tsar and His People*, 7, 56-7.

58 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 45; *The Tsar and His People*…, 38.

Figure 3—Nicholas II in Soldiers' Uniform holding Tsarevich Alexei.
A. Elchaninov, *The Tsar and His People*.

Figure 4—Tsarevich Alexei Nikolaevich among the *Poteshnye* (third from left). A. Elchaninov, *The Tsar and His People*.

* * *

Russian emperors were traditionally presented as paternalistic defenders of all estates of the realm and Elchaninov does not fail to characterize Nicholas in this manner. But he devotes little space to the tsar's relations with the nobility and the merchantry, and the new classes of Russia; the professions and the industrial workers are ignored. These groups, along with other nationalities, clearly do not fit his image as people's tsar. For Nicholas, the Russian peasants are the Russian nation.[59] Elchaninov writes, "The emperor devotes much attention and care to the welfare and moral improvement of the weakest of the estates in their economic condition, if also the most numerous—the peasantry." To demonstrate this point, he describes Nicholas entering peasant huts "to see how they live and to partake of their milk and black bread."[60] He enumerates the agricultural reforms that the tsar presumably initiated in their interest—the abolition of mutual responsibility for taxes in 1903, of corporal punishment in 1904, and in 1906 of redemption payments and civil disabilities such as those connected with the passport system. The list

59 This theme is captured better in the English title *The Tsar and His People*, than in the Russian *The Reign of the Sovereign Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich*.

60 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 76-80; *The Tsar and His People*…, 73-8.

concludes with statutes introduced by Stolypin to permit the dissolution of the peasant commune and to create a class of independent peasant proprietors, though there is no reference to Stolypin in this context. The tsar, Elchaninov emphasizes, is a "firm upholder of the new system of land tenure" and had introduced it on his Peterhof estate. A photograph shows Nicholas examining a new model of plough at Peterhof.[61]

The lower ranks of the Russian armed forces were made up of peasants, and Elchaninov emphasizes the tsar's personal rapport with the common soldiers. Nicholas, he asserts, felt particularly close to the "Rifles of the Imperial Family," which comprised peasants from the imperial estates, and he preferred to wear their uniforms, particularly when traveling abroad. Elchaninov also cites the details of a highly publicized episode of the tsar hiking with the weight of the backpack of a rifleman of the sixteenth rifle regiment. He goes on to point out that Nicholas not only takes "every opportunity of seeing the army at close quarters," at reviews, and maneuvers, but also on such occasions "converses personally with the men, gives them fatherly advice, thanks them for their service, praises them for their smartness, and gives them monetary or other rewards." Nicholas displays the same concern for the lower ranks of the navy. In photographs, he tastes the sailors' rations on the "Standard" (Figure 5), kisses, chats with, and decorates Sub-Ensign Shepel for bravery in the Russo-Japanese War.[62]

Through these descriptions, Elchaninov tries to give Nicholas the features of Peter the Great as he was presented in the popular literature—"as a Westernized gentleman, but also as a good comrade who does not recognize class distinctions."[63] Nicholas, like Peter, is portrayed as a military leader and reformer. The opening sentence of the chapter on the armed forces states that the tsar "personally directs all military affairs." Elchaninov attributes recent reforms of the military to him, among them increases in pay and pensions, the reform of the General Staff Academy, and other improvements in the recruitment and education of the rank and file. Nicholas, he claims, also promoted the production of airplanes, the construction of fortresses, and the rebuilding of the Baltic, Black Sea, and Pacific fleets.[64]

61 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 80-2; *The Tsar and His People*, 79-81.
62 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 92, 96-102; *The Tsar and His People*, 97-8, 103-8
63 Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read*, 79.
64 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 87-92; *The Tsar and His People*, 91-7.

Figure 5—Nicholas II Tastes Sailors' Ration on the Yacht, *The Standard*.
A. Elchaninov, *The Tsar and His People*.

The lasting bond between tsar and the Russian peasantry is revealed most vividly at national celebrations, which are mentioned throughout the book and treated in a separate chapter as well. Elchaninov describes Nicholas's conversations with peasants at Poltava, Chernigov, Grodno, and Borodino, and their tearful exclamations when they hear his simple and kind words. He cites their speeches of gratitude at length, as expressions of the feelings of the people as a whole. For example, at Chernigov, a peasant from Liubech by the name of Protsko, proclaims, "We have come to you our Father, not alone, but with our children '*poteshnye*,' future heroes and defenders of Tsar and country, and to bless your future exploits." Protsko then presents the tsar with an icon of "the first Russian monk," St. Antony of Pechersk, who came from Liubech. He continues, "In Your reforms we see the prosperity of Russia. Follow bravely in the footsteps of your ancestors, the Tsar-Liberator, Alexander II of blessed memory, and the Tsar-Peacemaker, Alexander III, of blessed memory; fear no foe—God and Russia are with you."[65]

At meetings with the peasants, Nicholas shows that he is one of them, sharing common Russian traits and interests. They need no deputies to voice their point of view, for the tsar has a special, abiding rapport with them. They have given their assent not at the ballot box, but at celebrations, where they reveal the unspoken ethnic, personal bonds, "the invisible threads," which linked them to him.

> Thousands of invisible threads center in the Tsar's heart which is, as in the words of the Scripture, "in the hand of God"; and these threads stretch to the huts of the poor and the palaces of the rich. And that is why the Russian people always acclaims its Tsar with such fervent enthusiasm, whether at St. Petersburg in Marinski Theatre, at the opera *A Life for the Tsar*, or at the dedication of memorials to Russian glory at Borodino, or on his way through towns or villages.[66]

This bond with the people allows Elchaninov to minimize the importance of the State Council and the State Duma, which stand between tsar and people. He construes the establishment of representative institutions as the tsar's own initiative, and the institutions themselves as extensions of the imperial will. As evidence of the tsar's early constitutional intentions, Elchaninov cites

65 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 82-3; *The Tsar and His People*, 82-3.
66 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 115; *The Tsar and His People*, 121.

the evasive manifesto of February 26, 1903. In the spring of 1905, Nicholas decided that over the years following the emancipation of the serfs, "the Russian people had become educated up to and accustomed to dealing with public and political affairs." This conclusion had moved him to "revive in all its original force the custom, practiced by the first Tsars of the Romanov dynasty, of allowing the people, through their representatives, to examine matters of State and to investigate the needs of the State." The revolutionary turmoil of 1905 apparently played no role in Nicholas's decision.

Presenting the tsar as the creator of the Duma, Elchaninov describes Nicholas's reception of the deputies of the first Duma in the Winter Palace and cites his speech welcoming "the best people" of the land. But the ensuing "troubles" showed the tsar that the Duma deputies were not the best people, and convinced him to change the electoral law on June 7, 1907. The new electoral system sharply curtailed the number of deputies of the nationalities, particularly in the outlying areas of the empire. "Aliens (*inorodtsy*)," Nicholas II declared, should not "settle questions that are purely Russian." Elchaninov does not indicate that the new law also reduced representation of the urban population, especially workers and professionals.[67] He emphasizes Nicholas's great concern for peasant deputies, without mentioning that many of them belong to oppositional parties. At his reception for the Duma deputies in December 1912, Elchaninov remarks, the peasants were placed in the rear, but Nicholas "marked them out for special attention, beyond the greeting he gave to all the members."[68]

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Like all his forbears, Nicholas inhabited a realm of myth, validated by ceremonial performances of homage and adulation. As in the past, symbolic agency was invoked when the monarch's preeminence was challenged, and the devices of myth reshaped the appearances of reality to vindicate the tsar's self image. But Russian institutions and society had changed drastically by 1913. The establishment of the Duma and the expansion of a mass circulation press,

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67 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 116-22; *The Tsar and His People*, 123-32; on the expanded use of the term *inorodtsy* in this period, see John W. Slocum, "Who, and When, Were the *Inorodtsy*? The Evolution of the Category of "Aliens" in Imperial Russia," *The Russian Review* vol. 57 (April 1998): 186-90.

68 *Tsarstvovanie*…, 80; *The Tsar and His People*, 78.

which after 1905 thrived under relaxed censorship restrictions, had introduced new competitors for the attention of the Russian public. Nicholas, viewing himself as a democratic tsar, vied with the political parties through the media of publicity.

Alexander II had also claimed the love of the people, but his representations had been directed principally to the elite, and sought to elevate him above his subjects by his supreme benevolence and beneficence. Nicholas addressed the masses directly. He vied with the Duma, and in so doing relinquished the Olympian superiority to politics that had been fundamental to the imperial myth. By bringing his life and rule into a public dialogue, he abandoned the monologic self-sufficiency characteristic of a myth that allowed no response but affirmation in elevating the absolute power of the Russian emperor.[69] At the same time, the modern genres of publicity demeaned his image and associated him with the everyday and ordinary. Such devices may have helped to popularize Victoria's homey, grandmotherly character, but she was not a ruler seeking grounds to restore absolute monarchy.[70] Nicholas's image assumed traits of the European monarchs, whose modus vivendi with parliamentary institutions Russian monarchs had vowed to avoid.

Indeed, Elchaninov's book, with its uncertain genre, veering between grandiloquent panegyric and democratic propaganda, typified the contradictory goals of tsarist representation in 1913. On the one hand, Nicholas is the all-competent monarch, performing prodigies. On the other, the excess of detail about Nicholas's daily life, could only further diminish the super-human image of the Russian emperor. On one hand, he is the epitome of elegant western royalty, the aficianado of tennis, yachting, and fancy automobiles, the recreations of Western high society. On the other, he is the "crowned toiler" sharing a hard life of work with peasants and soldiers. The resulting image lacks coherence and is so at variance with well-known facts that it could hardly have gained the credence of contemporary readers.

The main importance of *The Reign of the Sovereign Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich*, however, was not its influence on the Russian public, but its effect on the tsar himself. The publication of the book presumed a positive

69 See *Scenarios of Power*, 1: 7 on the epic and monologic character of the imperial myth.

70 On the publicity and marketing of Victoria's image see Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, 73-118.

response, and showed his involvement with the masses of the Russian people. It was self-validating, reinforcing Nicholas's idealized conception of himself. It reflected and magnified his belief in his virtues as father and Christian, as well as his capacities as ruler and military commander. It sustained his sense of calling to rule the state and to command the army following the tradition of his forbears, Peter the Great and Alexander I. Elchaninov narrowed the mythical reality of the Russian sovereign to the personal world of the all-competent monarch, isolated from the institutional and social realities of Russia. He glorified him apart from the institutions of the Russian state, and this image distinguished him from all his predecessors, who identified their own supremacy, to a greater or lesser degree, with the supremacy of the state.

The tercentenary celebrations convinced Nicholas that he had the support of the vast majority of the Russian people. Elchaninov's book confirmed his sense of prowess and destiny. In late 1913, Nicholas began to act on his convictions and sought, unsuccessfully, to curtail the powers of the Duma. During World War I, he continued this struggle by refusing to compromise with the Duma, thereby precluding a unified government to cope with the military emergency. In 1915, he realized his fatal dream and assumed the position of commander-in-chief of the Russian armed forces. In this respect, Nicholas utilized the genres of modern publicity to preserve his own mythical construction of reality and his belief in his historical mission to restore autocratic rule in Russia.