"Spreading the Light": European Freemasonry and Russia in the Eighteenth Century

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation attempts to determine the intellectual, cultural, and social contributions of the European Freemasons who corresponded with, traveled to, or lived and worked in Russia. My study is based on the assumption that eighteenth-century Freemasonry was one of the structures through which the ideas about nature, social order, and science contributed to the formation of a public sphere. Despite Freemasonry’s well-established presence and, as I argue, instrumental influence on Russia, no academic study along the lines of contextual intellectual history has been undertaken for the study of the transmission of ideas between the European and Russian lodges.

Freemasonry, an institution that found response and operated in both European and Russian contexts, provides a unique vantage point for a reconstruction of the intellectual milieu of the society, within which people discussed, disputed, and put into practice ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment. Freemasons in Russia “worked” to adapt various Western models to fit the Russian developmental needs. This fusion of different traditions and concepts is the most original aspect of the Russian movement.

In my analysis of several interconnected themes — the creation of a public sphere, Westernization, transmission of ideas, and the transition from the Enlightenment to Romanticism — I organize the chapters of this dissertation around two most important transformations: of Russia and of the Enlightenment. During the course of the century, Freemasons in Russia departed from the original cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment,
chose different forms of Freemasonry, and gradually became more involved with in the concept of Russia as a separate national entity. By the end of the eighteenth century, while being closely allied with the intellectual and educational strivings of the Enlightenment, they began producing their own negations of some Enlightenment ideas, providing a transition to the sentimentalism.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the archivists and librarians who helped me navigate the fascinating world of eighteenth-century documents on Freemasonry, especially the staff of the Archive and Library of the United Grand Lodge of England and the Archive and Library of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh.

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This work is dedicated to my pillar of strength: my family who supported and cheered me every step of the way. My parents, Svetlana and Gennadii, and Luba, my mother-in-law, have always shown confidence in me and offered their unconditional love. My friends Tanya Dunlap and Connie Moon Sehat have given me a sense of belonging when I desperately needed it.

To Slava, my husband and best friend, I am indebted most deeply.
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## Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AQC</td>
<td><em>Ars Quatuor Coronatorum. Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUA</td>
<td>Aberdeen University Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHL</td>
<td>Archive and Library of the United Grand Lodge of England</td>
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<tr>
<td>GARF</td>
<td><em>Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii</em> [State Archive of the Russian Federation]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVVA</td>
<td><em>Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs</em> [Latvia State Historical Archive]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAS</td>
<td>National Archive of Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIOR RGB</td>
<td><em>Nauchno-issledovatel'skii otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki</em> [Manuscript Division of the Russian State Library]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLS</td>
<td>National Library of Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPI GIM</td>
<td><em>Otdel pis'mennykh istochnikov gosudarstvennogo istoricheskogo muzeia</em> [Division of Written Sources of the State Historical Museum]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR NRB</td>
<td><em>Otdel rukopisei Natsional'noi rossiiskoi biblioteki</em> [Manuscript Division of the Russian National Library]</td>
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<tr>
<td>rev.</td>
<td>reverse/back side</td>
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<tr>
<td>RGADA</td>
<td><em>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov</em> [Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGALI</td>
<td><em>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva</em> [Russian State Archive of Literature and Art]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGIA</td>
<td><em>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv</em> [Russian State Historical Archive]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGVA</td>
<td>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv [Russian State Military Archive]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZfO</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung</em></td>
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Introduction

A Mason is sometimes called a "traveling man." In terms of Masonic symbolism, this phrase is usually understood as an allusion to the journey that the new Mason undertakes in acquiring knowledge. The history of European Freemasonry in the eighteenth century presents us with yet another, more direct context. In the world opened up by communication with distant parts, travels became an important factor in the formation of the European social, cultural and intellectual milieu.¹ At one point the symbolic notion of travel as a metaphor for acquiring and propagating knowledge and the actual act of travel converge. This dissertation is an attempt to determine the intellectual, cultural, and social contributions of European Freemasons who corresponded with, traveled to, or lived and worked in Russia and supported the development of that country during the eighteenth century. It is a study of ideas and European Freemasons that traveled across borders to Russia and of the organization that facilitated this process.

For the Russians, the eighteenth century started with the "Great Experiment" of introduction of Western science, technology and values to Russia. For philosophers, an "unexplored country," a "Tabula rasa," in Leibniz's words, Russia represented a curious case of developmental potential.² For hundreds of German, English, Scottish, French and Italian officers, engineers, scholars, teachers and representatives of other middle-class professions, a newly opened Russia was an exciting and exotic land of opportunity.

¹ Larry Wolff in his Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), considers what he terms the "invention of Eastern Europe" in the eighteenth century, and correlates this event in intellectual history with the alignment of Europe according to east and west during the age of the Enlightenment, while reducing the significance of the Renaissance alignment according to north and south.
² Throughout my work, I use the term philosopher in the broad eighteenth-century sense of the educated individual interested in a variety of domains.
As a result of their collective efforts, as a Masonic commentator pointed out, by the end of the century, [th]e arts of Europe were transplanted and bloomed both on the shores of the Neva and those of the Irtysh; a new world was opened to commerce, and the sciences, the manners, the luxury, the virtues, and the vices of Western Europe have found their way into the deserts of oriental Asia, and to the inhospitable coasts of the Frozen-ocean.\(^3\)

In eighteenth-century Russia, Freemasonry was inseparably intertwined with a crash course of Westernization and became its active agent.\(^4\) In the exaggerated rhetoric of a later commentator, if Peter I “hewed a window into Europe,” Freemasons “built the foundations of this window and the supporting pillars, bringing the whole building of the empire to the future.”\(^5\) However overstated, this characterization goes in the right direction of connecting the project of Westernization and the efforts of Freemasons.

After foreign travelers introduced the fraternity in the first half of the century as one among many European imports, it became an important channel for the transmission of ideas from Europe to Russia and a means for the construction of a public sphere. European Freemasonry was one of the ways in which Europe provided an example for Russia to follow. Russian Masons as individuals and as a group were incorporated into the European public. Actively shaped by European ideas, taste, and manners, the Russian public started sharing European social activities, cultural practices, and overall mentality.

\(^3\) William Tooke, Russia: or, a Compleat Historical Account of all the Nations Which Compose that Empire, vol. 1 (London: J. Nichols, 1780), vi.

\(^4\) While the term “Europeanization” requires defining whether Russia is an Asiatic or an European country, and “modernization” implies more practical implications of the borrowings, “westernization” can define the transformation of the social structure, political organization and ideology, as well as cultural standards, literature, art, and most other aspects of an individual’s life and his relationship to the state. See, for instance, Arcadius Kahan, “The Costs of ‘Westernization’ in Russia: The Century and the Economy in the Eighteenth Century,” Slavic Review 25.1 (March, 1966), 40-1. For the purposes of this discussion with its special emphasis on the introduction of intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic trends, the term “Westernization” will be used.

As I establish, Russian Freemasons obtained guidance, direction, and encouragement from their Western brothers. “Not a single country has ever received the support of the society as much and as quickly as Russia,” a German Freemason in the service of Russia noted in his diary.6

It is usually assumed that in the eighteenth century the spread of Freemasonry into Europe was not planned or controlled by the Grand lodges.7 In the case of the Grand Lodge of England, British Freemasons presumably took little interest in founding Masonic Lodges overseas. But some members made special effort to spread the Craft. Thus, for instance, in 1731 a mission was undertaken to initiate the Duke of Lorraine, by sending to the Hague a deputation that involved Desaguliers. Sending a deputation from the Grand Lodge of England to a country where at that time there was no lodge, and forming it as a “movable lodge” to initiate the first European prince can be considered as one of the first instances of being interested in augmentation of the reputation of Masonry overseas.

Another example of an early rhetoric of the dissemination of Freemasonry to foreign countries can be traced in the song that proclaimed:

...Ye Garter’d Heroes, who the Craft approve
Whom Britain Honours, or whom Masons Love,
Thro’ either World, - assert our Noble Cause
Whilst Missionary Brothers, Spread our Laws,
And lead in Pomp, to Montagu’s mild Reign,
The Feather’s Indian, and the Furry Dane.
No more shall Nation, be from Nation, hid,
Or unknown Accents, intercourse forbid:
But by new signs ally’d, and Tokens joyn’d,

6 P. P. Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia k istorii masonstva v Rossii XVIII stoletia (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademii nauk, 1869), 85.
Friendship shall form the Language of Mankind.⁸

Being in complete harmony with the main Masonic tenets of spreading Masonic Laws and cosmopolitan Friendship, this song mentions a reign of "Montagu." If the Montagu mentioned in the song was John, Duke of Montagu, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England in 1721-22, this would date the song and the "missionary" overtones of the activities of the British brothers to before 1722. It is more likely that the mentioned Montagu was Viscount Montague, the Grand Master in 1732, so that the date shifts to before 1732, still documenting an early interest of the Grand Lodge in the spread of the Craft and the foundation of lodges abroad.

A copy of a short letter to the Grand Lodge at Calcutta contained among the Rawlinson documents in the Bodleian library adds another dimension to this interest. Pointing out that the Calcutta lodge was situated

... near those learned Indians that affect to be called Noachida, the strict observers of his Precepts taught in those parts by the Disciples of the Great Zoroastres the learned Archimedes of Bactria or Grand master of the Magians, whose Religion is much preserved in India, (which we have no concern about) and also many of the Rituals of the ancient Fraternity used in his Time.⁹

The author of the letter makes it the lodge’s "Business" to discover in those parts the "Remains of Old Masonry, and transmit them to us ... but especially the learned Brothers, who grasp at New Discoveries from Ancient Nations that have been renowned

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⁸ [Anon.], "Prologue," Bodleian, MS Rawlinson, C. 136, 147 [81].
⁹ Bodleian, MS Rawlinson C. 136, 193-193rev. The letter is signed by the secretary of the lodge, who, as he admits, was ordered by the Grand Master Lord Weymouth. Given that Lord Weymouth was the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England in 1735-36, the date of the original letter can be assigned accordingly. The first lodge in Calcutta was established in 1730, followed by the opening of lodges in Madras and Bombay.
for Arts and Sciences, and must have some valuable Remains amongst them still," thus contributing to the spread of the Craft.\textsuperscript{10}

Whether the Grand Lodges operated according to the articulated strategies of expansion of the Craft cannot be established with certainty. However, it is clear that from the very beginning of the eighteenth century Freemasonry developed in two main dimensions: elaboration of grades and expansion to as many countries as possible.

Being "one of the most debated, and debatable subjects in the whole realm of historical inquiry," the origins of Freemasonry, both in its operative and speculative form, have preoccupied historians for centuries.\textsuperscript{11} While there is no uniform, undisputed answer to the questions of who the original Freemasons were, where they started from, and when, most accounts refer to the year 1717 as the beginning of the official history of Freemasonry. In 1717 a new organizational Masonic structure known as Grand Lodge of England was formed in London.\textsuperscript{12} Already in the first edition of Anderson’s

\textsuperscript{10} Bodleian, MS Rawlinson C. 136, 193-193rev.


\textsuperscript{12} This date is known from the history of the first six years of the society presented by Dr. Anderson in the second edition of \textit{Constitutions} published in 1738. James Anderson was a contemporary of all the events he described some twenty years later in his account, which is the only history of that period recognized by the Grand Lodge of England. Hamill, \textit{The Craft}, 42-44.

1723 was also the first year the Grand Lodge of England started its official minutes. In 1723, the Grand Lodge of England published its first constitution, \textit{The Charges of a Freemason, Extracted from the Ancient Records of Lodges Beyond the Sea and of Those in England, Scotland and Ireland, for the Use of Lodges in London} prepared by Rev. James Anderson with the help of Dr. Jean Théophile Desaguliers, which was substantially revised for the second edition of 1738 (\textit{The New Book of Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of free and Accepted Masons}... For the Use of the Lodges, by James Anderson,
Constitutions, Freemasonry is defined as a “Center of Union and Harmony” that aims at creating a universal society of Freemasons.\textsuperscript{13} Although the Grand Lodge of England started as a local institution limited by the boundaries of London and its precincts, the Grand Lodge of England set about disseminating the Craft in Great Britain, Europe, and the colonies in the decades after 1717.

Conflicts about the principles of Masonic hierarchy followed almost immediately. As early as 1724, the Grand Lodge of England came into conflict with a lodge at York on the issue of the degrees. In the Grand Lodge of England, John Théophilus Desaguliers\textsuperscript{14} and the first Grand Master George Payne introduced the three-tiered hierarchy of Apprentice, Fellow Craft (Companion), and Master that Anderson made axiomatic in the Constitutions.\textsuperscript{15} As evident in the conflict with the old York lodge, starting from the late

\textsuperscript{13} Anderson’s Constitutions (1723), 50.


\textsuperscript{15} Some Masonic scholars believe that there were only two degrees during the 1720s and that the third degree was added as an honorary degree during the early 1730s (for instance, Henry W. Coit, Freemasonry Through Six Centuries, 2 vols (Fulton: Ovid Bell. Press, 1966-67), I. 163-65). Others claim that three degrees were established as early as 1723 (for instance, Bernard Jones, Freemasons’ Guide and Compendium (London: George G. Harrap Ltd. & Company Ltd., 1950), 274-43). The first three degrees of Freemasonry are known as the Blue Degrees. Lodges that confer the first three degrees are called Blue lodges. On the symbolic meaning of the first three degrees, see Oliver Street, Symbolism of the Three Degrees (Southern Publishers, Inc.; Kingsport, TN; 1923); Albert Mackey, Symbolism of Freemasonry: Its Science, Philosophy, Legends, Myths, and Symbolism (Chicago, Illinois: Charles T. Powner Company, 1975), 142-143, 100-101, 92-95, 223-224, 232-234, 251-254; and Jones, Freemasons’ Guide, 274-275, 294, 289-90, 305-306.

To denote the body practicing only the first three degrees, the phrases “St. John’s lodge” and “Blue lodge” are often used in the literature. However, to avoid confusion, I use the terms “English” Freemasonry or “English” system throughout this work to signify the work in the three-degree system, while calling all high-degree versions according to their most common names. A further account of the differences may be
1720s, the development of the systems above the three degrees led to a deep ideological chasm that can be traced in all subsequent schisms, upheavals, and disputes between Masonic bodies. At the same time that the Grand Lodge of All England was established on the basis of the York lodge around 1725, the Grand Lodge of Ireland was founded, followed by the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736.

In France, Andrew Michael Ramsay ("Chevalier de Ramsay") established the basis for a system of high degrees, the so-called "degrés ou Grades Ecossais" or the "Scottish Rite" in 1737.\textsuperscript{16} As opposed to the three-tiered system of the Grand Lodge of England, by the end of the century Scottish-Rite Freemasonry had complicated levels of initiation and secrecy.\textsuperscript{17} A faithful Scottish Jacobite, a Christian mystic, and a "true and good" Mason, Ramsay claimed that Freemasonry started in the fourteenth century as a chivalric Order and was maintained in Scotland.

Like the members of the English system, supporters of various high-degree systems started actively spreading Freemasonry all over Europe.\textsuperscript{18} While Hanoverian

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\textsuperscript{16} Besides being an influential Freemason, Ramsay had an honorary degree from Oxford and was a novelist, historian, religious philosopher, and translator of several books. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Roman Catholic and a Jacobite, he tutored the eldest son of James Stuart, the Old Pretender, and was offered the same position by George II to tutor his son, the Duke of Cumberland. On Ramsay, see Albert Cherel, \textit{Un aventurier religieux au 18 siècle Andre-Michel Ramsay} (Paris: Librairies Académique, 1926); Eliane Brault, \textit{Le Mystère du Chevalier Ramsay} (Paris: Éditions du Prisme, 1973); G. D. Henderson, \textit{Chevalier Ramsay} (Aberdeen, 1952); C. N. Batham, "Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay: A New appreciation," \textit{AQC} 81 (1968): 280-315; Lisa Kahler, "Andrew Michael Ramsay and his Masonic Oration," \textit{Heredom: The Transactions of the Scottish Rite Research Society} 1 (1992).

\textsuperscript{17} Ramsay's famous \textit{Oration} that he wrote for the presentation to the Grand Lodge of France in 1737 (printed later under the title of \textit{Discourse Pronounced at the Reception of Freemasons by Mr de R., Grand Orator of the Order}) formed the foundation of the rite.

Britons were primarily responsible for bringing Masonry to the Low Countries, Jacobites tended to be more active in Catholic states. It appears that the first lodge on the continent was established in Rotterdam in 1721 or 1722. Although lodges were banned in the Netherlands in 1735, by the 1740s, the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland were overseeing the creation of the lodges throughout that country. By 1756, the date of the foundation of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands, some dozen active lodges already existed. The first known Masonic lodge in France was called *L'Amitié et Fraternité* and operated in Dunkirk since 13 October 1721. In 1725, Lord Derwentwater organized a lodge in Paris with approval of the Grand Lodge of London. In 1736, a Grand Lodge of France was formed, and in 1766 a new *Grande-Loge Nationale* of France was created (the title was subsequently changed to the Grand Orient), together with a representative system for the various lodges to be brought into a degree of subordination to the central and authoritative body. In the Swiss Confederation, British expatriates established a lodge in Geneva in 1736.

In Germany, in addition to the extensive connections with British lodges, Freemasonry also made its way via the expatriates from France and the Jacobites. While it is not clear whether the first German lodge was founded in Hamburg in 1729 or in

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Charles Radclyffe (1693-1746), the Fifth Earl of Derwentwater and an illegitimate grandson of Charles II, was a prominent Jacobite and a colleague of Chevalier Ramsay in creating the Scottish rite. It is notable that the Duke of Richmond, Duc d’Aubigny, another illegitimate grandson of Charles II and Radclyffe’s cousin, was Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1724-25. Eliane Brault, *Le Mystère du Chevalier Ramsay*, 81.
1737, it is clear that it was established by English merchants and operated under the supremacy of the Grand Lodge of England. Other parts of Europe received Freemasonry just as the movement was spreading in Germany. A member of Berlin’s *Drei Weltkugeln* (Three Globes) probably founded Denmark’s first lodge in Copenhagen in 1743. A second Danish lodge was founded in 1754 by German Masons with links to Masonic circles in Hanover. As I pointed out earlier, Austrian Freemasonry began with the initiation into the brotherhood of Francis, duke of Lorraine, the future husband of Empress Maria Theresa, in The Hague in 1731. Austrian officers organized the first lodge in Prague in 1762, in Hungary in the 1760s, and in Galicia around 1775.

Freemasonry made its way to Russia in the 1730s. As I demonstrate in the chapters that follow, once established, the Craft enjoyed immense popularity in Russia. According to recent estimations, there were more than 3,000 active foreign and Russian Freemasons in the country in the eighteenth century.21

Due to its popularity, secretive nature, and rumored influence, Freemasonry has attracted a lot of attention in Russian history. Listing only the pre-1917 works without mentioning a massive body of contemporary literature on the subject, Bourychkine refers to some 1,030 secondary sources on Russian Freemasonry.22 However, most historians of Russia tend to either downplay the influence of foreign Masons and therefore neglect its international implications or, in a vein of conspiracy theories, attribute all problems in the subsequent development of the country to the “evil” nature of forced foreign

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20 See Chapter 1 for details.

21 The number grew to 5690 during the period of 1800-1861, according to the estimations of Andrei Ivanovich Serkov. *Istoriia russkogo masonstva* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel’svo imeni N. N. Novikova, 2000); Serkov. *Rossiiskoe masonstvo: Slovar’-spravochnik* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2001).

influences. Within the limits of the Soviet interest in history, research into Freemasonry was fine-tuned to claim that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Freemasons opposed the ideas of the Enlightenment or that in the twentieth century they supported international imperialism. While the old propaganda is still thriving after the fall of Communism, modern Russian scholarly historiography prefers to dismiss the study of Freemasonry or gloss over the issues of intellectual borrowings.

In this light, three serious studies on the topic of Russian Freemasonry that appeared recently -- Douglas Smith’s *Working the Rough Stone* and Andrei Serkov’s three-volume study *Istoriia russkogo masonstva* and *Rossiiskoe masonstvo: Slovar’-spravochnik* -- present an important step forward in the study of Russian Freemasonry.23 Serkov’s work is an invaluable source of information. In its encyclopedic length, it spans three hundred years and systematizes thousands of primary texts, membership reports, developing a concordance of lists of names and dates. But at the same time, as an archivist, the author is not interested in the ideological and intellectual content of Freemasonry and does not consider its international dimension.

Smith, on the contrary, devotes his book to the consideration of the social milieu and intellectual pursuits of the Russian intelligentsia merged in the Masonic movement in the eighteenth century. He extensively shows that in their search for new ethical models within the boundaries of the absolutist state, Freemasonry “offered Russians the opportunity to shed their Asian manners for those of the European, to smooth their barbaric coarseness into a civilized polish.”24 However, with his focus on Russian

23 Smith, *Working the Rough Stone*; Serkov, *Istoriia russkogo masonstva; Rossiiskoe masonstvo: Slovar’-spravochnik*.
Freemasonry, Smith does not go into an analysis of international/transnational intellectual interchange. He presents an ethical system without tracing its origins or tracking its transformation. As a result, these books do not touch on the issues of transmittion, adoption, negation or modification of Western ideas. Without accounting for cultural backgrounds of Russian and Western Freemasons, these works do not explain what connects or separates them.

I believe that Freemasonry should be considered against the background of both European and Russian Enlightenments. Conventionally, there are two different interpretations of Enlightenment in Russia. The first, the least popular one, identifies Enlightenment with a general trend toward literacy, social and cultural mobilization, and national assertion. This sweeping interpretation makes Freemasonry in Russia fit into the "national awakening." The second definition, in the vein of Leninist-Marxist ideology, equates Enlightenment with "rationalism, instrumentalism, scientism, universalism, abstract rights, eurocentrism, individualism," and sees eighteenth-century Freemasonry as an expression of counter-Enlightenment.

For historians of Europe, the question of the role of Freemasonry in the eighteenth century is a complex and multifaceted problem. Following Jürgen Habermas’

*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Margaret Jacob in her *Living the*
Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe and The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans showed how European Freemasonry actively constructed a public sphere by promoting a new form of sociability that affirmed man’s natural inclination toward fellowship and articulated a discourse of politeness. Other historians, notably Reinhart Koselleck in his Critique and Crisis, attributes to Freemasonry the beginnings of revolutionary and democratic activism leading to the French Revolution.27 While some argue that Masonic modes of thought and practice were central to the Enlightenment, with the organization as a tool promoting Enlightenment ideas, others see Freemasonry as an inversion of Enlightenment views of human nature, social institutions, and social processes, a reaction against the Enlightenment.28

In response to the discussions in the scholarly literature, this study is based on the assumption that we will not have an adequate understanding of the impulses, the concepts, and the ways in which the exchange of ideas worked in the Enlightenment until we come to terms with the role of Freemasonry in its context. At the same time, without appreciation of the complex fabric of Enlightenment theories that supplied Freemasonry


with its content and structure, we will not be able to grasp the history of European Freemasonry. Only by demonstrating the mutual relationship between Freemasonry and Enlightenment ideas can this work fulfill its promises.

In discussing a relationship between the Enlightenment and Masonry, I maintain that during the eighteenth century European Freemasonry was one of the most important channels through which Enlightenment ideas spread to Russia. In the 1760s and 1770s the Masonic lodges in Russia were closely allied with the intellectual and educational strivings of the Enlightenment. Simultaneously, Freemasonry began producing its own negations of some Enlightenment ideas, by the end of the century providing a transition to Romanticism. If we consider the evolving exchange of ideas between Russia and the West in relation to such developments, we can gain new insights into its historical significance.

The changing role of Freemasonry in society and the changing ideas of Freemasonry concerning society can thus become a means to explore some of the practical devices by which the problems of High Enlightenment were negotiated and popularized in a Westernizing society. Instead of asking whether Freemasons were the prime supporters and propagators of the Enlightenment or its main opponents, this work tries to “find the bridge between the two enlightenments, the Enlightenment of the philosophes and the popular Enlightenment” in the ideas and the practices that were brought to and developed in Russia. More particularly, Masonic lodges not only acted as vehicles for the transmission and sharing of the new philosophical ideas and its applications. Encompassing all the intricacies and contradictions of the Enlightenment,

\[29\] Jacob, Living, 224.
they “worked” to adopt Western models to their own purpose of civilizing man, reaching personal perfection and collective betterment (turning “the rough stone” into the “smooth ashlar” as they phrased it).30

This fusion of different traditions and concepts can be considered as the most original aspect of the Russian movement. Russian Masons became European by making Western ideas their own. Coming to terms with a range of ideas that the Enlightenment produced, Freemasons in Russia turned to intellectual currents that were new to them, including neo-stoicism, various trends of Christian traditions, Renaissance thought, Hermeticism, Cabalistic thought, Pythagorean and Newtonian science. In Russia, Freemasons tried to assess the spiritual legacy of the Orthodox Church, interrelating it with both ancient and modern Western philosophic traditions. They fitted their own diverse bits and pieces with the ideas of the High Enlightenment, which resulted in creation of a body of thought plagued with contradictions. Without reference to Freemasonry as a means for understanding the interactions between the High and the popular Enlightenments, the fact that the seemingly anti-rationalist tradition and rationalism could go hand in hand and were often seen to fuse in the rhetoric of the same Freemasons, can seem incoherent. But in their stand against the French Enlightenment with its Voltairianism, one of the many forms the Enlightenment took, Freemasons in Russia used references to other, no less “Enlightenment” ideas. As Nikolai Karamzin, a famous Russian historian educated in the Moscow Masonic circles, characterized the

30 See Smith, Working the Rough Stone.
spirit of the eighteenth century, "[w]e borrowed [ideas], but somewhat reluctantly, applying everything to our own thoughts and combining with the old traditions."\textsuperscript{31}

Lodges in Russia aimed at spreading enlightenment, but the ideas first needed to be sifted through Masonic rhetoric and then transformed to fit the Russian conditions. Through Freemasonry new developments in the West found almost immediate reflection in Russia. But the Enlightenment that the Freemasons spread was rather their own interpretation of it. Considered from this standpoint of constant borrowing, adapting, and blending together different ideas and traditions, the inability to uncover a singular source of ideological uniformity of the Russian Masons, despite the clarity of its general spiritual positions, attests to the fact that Freemasonry grew from the Enlightenment but prepared the ground for Romanticism, Slavophilism, and, in general, the revival of religion in nineteenth-century Russia.

Despite Freemasonry's well-established presence and, as I argue, instrumental influence on Russia, the international communication/transmission of ideas between the West and Russia through Masonic interactions has not yet been considered. The issues of whether the brotherhood contributed to the mechanisms of spreading the enlightenment ideas or how Masonic ideas affected development of intellectual life in Russia have not received proper attention. Standard texts on the eighteenth-century international relations involving Russia concentrate on political and economic history and spend little time considering cultural institutions and their intellectual and social aspects, including

\textsuperscript{31} Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, Zapiska o drevnej i novoi Rossii v ee politicheskom i grazhdanskom otnosheniakh (Moscow: Lit. ucheba, 1991), 31. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.
Masonic fraternity.\textsuperscript{32} Even those works that are devoted to cultural manifestations of international relations overlook Freemasonry.\textsuperscript{33}

No study along the lines of contextual intellectual history has yet been undertaken for the analysis of the interactions between the Russian and European lodges. In the case of Freemasonry, the integration of the history of ideas into the history of events is complicated by the lack of proper recognition of Western influences on Russian thought. The complication also arises from the concentration of the historians of European eighteenth century on the aspects of rationalism and empiricism.\textsuperscript{34} Moreover, the student of intellectual influences and Masonic intellectual trends in Russia encounters a plethora of diverse and overpowering problems such as the need to consider the often contradictory and invariably diverse nature of various Masonic systems; the interdisciplinary character of the inquiry that encompasses not only histories of the


\textsuperscript{34} Zdenek David, “The Influence of Jacob Boehme on Russian Religious Thought,” 43.
countries that influenced Masonry in Russia, such as England and Scotland, Germany, Sweden, and France, but also Russian history, philosophy, religion, literature, and sociology; the highly politically charged and somewhat self-conscious reaction to the very idea of Russian intellectual “borrowing”; and the recovery of information from disjointed, incomplete, often unreliable sources wherever they are accessible.

Direct exposure to the Masonic collections in Russian and Western archives, which became available only relatively recently, helps to overcome some of the problems associated with the research of Freemasonry that is tailored to intellectual history. However, important methodological issues intertwined with the nature of Freemasonry remain. Blurring the boundary between history and myth, Freemasonry created a number of rites with varying ceremonies and numbers of degrees. As the history of the spread of Freemasonry in Russia demonstrates, the differences between the rites, often identified with national allegiances of its propagators, became increasingly muddled by the end of the century. Following these national influences, Russian Freemasons had a vast and nuanced variety of models to choose from: from the English version of Freemasonry, with its support of political and religious order, to the political radicalism of the Illuminati.35

Accounting for the differences in the rites helps to identify to which type of lodge each social, intellectual, professional, and age grouping gravitated and for what reason; how this pattern evolved over the years; and how Russian Freemasonry differed from or resembled other European Masonic organizations. In most instances, changes in Russian Freemasonry followed similar transformations on the Continent. The consideration of

35 On the differences in rites, see Chapters 1 and 2.
the evolution of values brings together the external transformations that follow the
genral European intellectual developments with the internal modifications of the
imported ideas that reflect the character and situations faced by the importing groups. At
the same time, it is possible to argue that the principles, rhetoric, and practices of the
European Freemasons “varied little from country to country, although lodges could have
vastly different rituals, social mixes, financial means, and ethos,” and support an
argument for treating eighteenth-century Freemasonry as a coherent movement.36

Just as the discussion of contemporary scholarship of Enlightenment as a whole
and the Enlightenments in national contexts contributed to achieving a more nuanced
understanding of that phenomenon, in the study of Freemasonry, shifting attention back
and forth from an analysis that generalizes to an analysis that identifies particulars can
shed light on intellectual trends and assess specific national features. Discussing the
intellectual and practical impact of Freemasonry with its implications for Russian society
and its members, I consider Freemasonry as a unified movement with a common agenda
which allowed Masons to cooperate and function as a fraternity all around the world.
Differing rites often had their own particular systems of values and ways to express
them, but it is possible to consider a collective outlook that can be called “Masonism”
despite all the differences.37 No matter which system Freemasons supported, the basic
principles underlying the systems were the same, with a varying emphasis on the
elements of the overall eclectic system.

36 See, for instance, Margaret C. Jacob, “Money, Equality, Fraternity,” in The Culture of the Market:
Historical Essays, ed. Thomas L. Haskell and Richard F. Teichgraeber (New York: Cambridge University
Press, 1993), 113.
37 “Masonism” is a term proposed by a French Freemason Oswald Wirth. Paul Naudon, Freemasonry: A
In response to methodological problems and the shortcomings in historiography, I put forward several broader arguments in the field of European intellectual history. First, we need to understand the role of cultural institutions in contributing to the transmission of the Enlightenment ideas in different countries. Until recently, historians of the Enlightenment focused their attention on individual histories of the development of ideas in particular contexts, i.e. national Enlightenments. While these studies provide vital insight, they do not tell the whole story of the interrelationships and interdependencies of the national Enlightenments. We also need to assess the roles of foreign cultural institutions in the functioning of Russian intellectual movements and trends, the establishment of the public sphere there, and Westernization. By studying the transmission of ideas we will better understand how the Enlightenment context worked with local situations.

Investigation of the role of Freemasonry in the transmission of ideas helps bring together the fields of European and Russian history that are presently seen as completely separate domains. While historians of Russia are mostly preoccupied with “filling gaps” in particular areas of history without consideration of the broader context, historians of European Enlightenment often neglect the impact that Enlightenment ideas had on the countries not traditionally included in the Enlightenment studies. Thus, the Western and the Russian research trajectories in general and on international intellectual exchanges in particular hardly ever intersect. As a result, both sides face an incomplete framework for looking at the eighteenth century. To integrate both studies, we need to examine Europe and Russia through the same lens, asking the same questions, and paying attention to the similarities and differences in local developments. An institution that found response
and operated in both European and Russian contexts, Freemasonry, as the chapters that follow show, provides a unique vantage point for a reconstruction of the intellectual milieu of the organization, within which people discussed, disputed, and put into practice ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment, making some of them their own, while refuting others as dangerous.

With these points in mind, I introduce the following chapters. In Chapter 1 I lay down the background for my two main research issues: the beginnings of interactions between the West and Russia and of Freemasonry in Russia. Throughout the history of Russia, especially since the time of Peter the Great, one of the central problems for the state and its people has been the relationship with that part of the world which the Russians have consistently referred to as “the West.” The interest developed from the Middle Ages, but it was only in the eighteenth century that the debate about the significance of Russia, its culture and the relationship with the West started to form into coherent views. The reforms of Peter the Great, Anna’s dependence on foreign counselors, and the reign of Catherine II were the great landmarks for intellectual relations between Europe and Russia, and the age of the Enlightenment therefore occupies a central position.

While the state was responsible for the main efforts of bringing Russia into Europe, the interactions between the West and Russia occurred not only when they were brought about by the personality of the ruler. In the case of Freemasonry, intellectual and cultural interchange was the result of the efforts of individuals who belonged to the society of Freemasons. As a philosopher and Slavophile, Ivan Kireevskii

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38 For example, the Russian Academy of Sciences was a public institution sponsored by the Crown and responsive to its expectations.
aptly summarized the results of the Masonic efforts of the 1780s, “Then our fatherland witnessed, at least for a while, the events that are unique in our annals: the birth of public opinion.”39 Unlike other institutions brought by Westernization, Freemasonry was “the only cultural and social movement, whose importance was immense ... the first truly independent self-organized movement in Russia, the only one that was not forced on [people] by the authorities.”40

Without addressing the beginnings of the process of Westernization and the simultaneous beginnings of Freemasonry, the role of individuals in both, accessing the extent and nature of involvement of the foreigners in it from the 1730s to the 1770s, the intellectual relations of Russia with Europe by the end of the century, the dynamics of group formation and social identity, and the nature of Freemasonry in Russia in a comparative structure cannot be comprehended. In the first chapter I consider the beginnings of Westernization and Freemasonry in Russia and specifically the role of individual propagators from many countries who traveled to Russia seeking employment, enjoyment, an escape from poverty, from their family or the wrath of authorities, and who happened to be among the first Freemasons in Russia.

In the second chapter I analyze the mechanics of Masonic interactions during 1770-1800, the thirty-year period that encompassed both the heyday and the beginning of a temporary downfall of Freemasonry in Russia. These three decades of most intensive interactions between the European and Russian lodges constituted the time that revealed the complexity and the contradictory nature of the movement. The diffusion of Masonic

39 Ivan Vasil’evich Kireevskii, Izbrannye stat’i (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1984), 42.
ideas in Russia was fostered by economic, political, social, and cultural connections with such centers of Masonic activity as Königsberg, Riga, Berlin, London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Paris. Lodges in European centers had direct contacts with Russian lodges through visitors, correspondence, and exchange of literature. By the 1770s, Russia’s lodges included representatives from England, Scotland, France, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Austria, Germany, Poland, Italy, Hungary, and Greece. Meetings were conducted in Russian, English, German, French and even Italian. As Douglas Smith points out, this fully reflects the scope of international interactions in Russia and Freemasonry’s essential cosmopolitan nature.41 In the course of the second chapter I consider the questions of who and how established different “national” versions of Freemasonry in Russia, and why Freemasons living in Russia applied to European Grand Lodges for warrants.

In the milieu of international exchange, Russian Freemasons were concerned with overcoming a heartfelt sense of backwardness.42 Their cosmopolitanism was a reaction to certain social, religious, economic, and political realities of Russia that they considered parochial and confining. While men in Scotland and Germany viewed practicing the Craft in a similar way, Freemasons in Russia were even more acutely aware of a “Westernizing” aspect of the Masonic project. Having a heightened sense of being on the periphery of civilized Europe, they chose to emphasize their own developmental inadequacy (which later was transformed into the idea of Russian distinctiveness) and qualify their own efforts as overcoming the situation. Russian Freemasons believed they were capable of becoming more civilized and cultured -- like

42 As Douglas Smith extensively demonstrated in his Working the Rough Stone.
their brothers in the West -- through "work" in the lodges and educational projects. They believed themselves to be as engaged in the process of the improvement of self and the country that could bring them closer to the norms of the refined world.

Not only Russians participated in these processes. Europeans actively shaped Russian society and its intellectual activities. They saw their efforts as bringing Russia to a new stage of development, justifying their own participation as fulfilling the mission of reforming the country by the means of education, broadly understood. Analysis of the problems that Russia had and identifying an array of solutions offered by the eighteenth-century intellectual developments preoccupied many Freemasons. By transmitting and adapting the rich tenets of European Enlightenment, they wanted to translate them into the new cultural vocabularies and "implant" new values of toleration, freedom, and education. My third chapter analyses Masonic identifications of and responses to specifically Russian problems.

Examination of the proposed theoretical and practical solutions forms basis for the next two chapters that analyze the intersection of Masonic and Enlightenment agendas. As I establish, Masonic theorists attempted to work out the methods, modes of knowledge, conceptual possibilities and language to overcome the overly materialistic, rationalized individualism that was introduced to Russia with the beginning of Westernization. In this, Masonic rhetoric parallels the attempts of understanding Man against the patterns of social and economic change developed by the Enlightenment movement.

Freemasons applied various theories about Man and Nature to the project of the betterment of the humanity, and by disseminating and adapting Enlightenment ideas they
contributed to the common eighteenth-century enterprise of studying the human nature. There are more than passing similarities between the working and social ethos of Freemasonry and the general Enlightenment emphasis on "the science of man."

Freemasons studied old and looked for new ways of finding a meaning for human life in a mechanized or decadent and immoral world. They were interested in the same interplay between passions and interests that stimulated the Scottish Enlightenment, for instance. Considering the theoretical framework of a Masonic "science of man," I focus of the three-fold Masonic agenda of learning about "self, Nature, and God" expressed in the development of self-knowledge, world-knowledge, and virtues in every member of the society.

It is of course unlikely that every Freemason in Russia, foreign or local, was familiar with and subscribed to all the theoretical ideas that circulated in the Masonic milieu. But the knowledge was available and was being developed for an interested member concerned with his own contribution to the progress of his country and humankind. Bringing together their daily experiences, Christian and humanistic culture, Newtonian science, and developing aesthetics, Masonic ideologues emphasized the wholeness of human existence and tried to form a more or less coherent moral and ethical system. Freemasonry offered an ethical system that was practical, responded to real problems, and reflected an array of solutions presented by eighteenth-century thought.

Freemasons identified the need to solve the problems of Russian development on two levels: within the lodges by developing the science of man and propagating self-betterment, and within Russian society as a whole through education. They emphasized
that knowledge should have social and cultural implications and applications. Efforts of
the Freemasons in Russia, particularly through the established printing companies,
translators’ academies, networks of booksellers and societies for printing of books,
became the first contribution to the creation and growth of a Russian reading public tha
was not associated with the state. Both foreign and Russian Freemasons were engaged in
practical projects that benefited Russia, and by the 1780s these functions of a private
organization interfered with the efforts of the state. In the fifth chapter I turn to the
consideration of the tension between the Masonic rhetoric and practical “pursuits” and
Catherine the Great’s vision of the state-sponsored reforms.

Two most important themes that organize the chapters of this dissertation are the
stories of two transformations: of Russia and of the Enlightenment. Through
Freemasonry, a changing Russian society manifested its concern with the problems of
identity, social status, and group affiliation and searched for new ways to define itself.
Social, intellectual, group, personal, and national identities were formed in major part
through the importation of foreign ideas. In this process, Masons departed from the
original cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, chose different forms of Freemasonry,
and gradually became more invested in the concept of Russia as an organic and separate
national entity. Freemasonry became one of the vehicles by which sentimentalism
started undermining the cosmopolitan rationalism of the Enlightenment and replaced it
with a romantic sensibility glorifying Russian customs, traditions, history, and
individuality.
Chapter 1. Beginnings of Freemasonry in Russia in the First Part of the Eighteenth Century

...And in the moonlight’s pallid glamour
Rides high upon his charging brute,
One hand stretched out, ’mid echoing clamor
The Bronze Horseman in pursuit.
- Alexander Pushkin, “The Bronze Horseman”

With the publication of Pushkin’s poem “The Bronze Horseman” in 1837, the famous sculpture of Peter the Great not only acquired its name, but also has permanently attached an image of an apocalyptic figure galloping through St. Petersburg to the Tsar-reformer. From the moment Catherine the Great unveiled the equestrian statue of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg in 1782 to celebrate the first centennial of Peter’s accession to the throne, the monument gave a dramatic new focus to the city and captured public imagination. A towering idol on a horse rearing high above the pedestal, the “Bronze

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44 Just like the equestrian statue of Peter the Great that came to life to chase the protagonist of Pushkin’s Bronze Horseman Eugene, the problem of Peter’s legacy continues to haunt historians. Starting with the first reactions to his figure and reforms, since the beginning of the eighteenth century the myth of Peter the Great grew to legendary proportions. The bibliography on Peter the Great, his reforms, and impact on Russia is immense. To escape the fate of poor Eugene, who goes mad after not being able to escape Peter’s statue and is never able to face him (and his legacy) again, my discussion of the legendary Russian Tsar is limited here. Instead, like Eugene, who even in his madness recognized the extent of what the “wonder-worker” Peter established, I concentrate on Peter’s achievements in modernization of the Russian Empire.

“Horseman” stands on a solid piece of rock shaped as a wave that, according to the legend, had broken off a larger ledge in a thunderstorm. With Peter’s name signifying “rock” in Greek, a block of natural stone that was found on the shore of the Gulf of Finland (for the access to which Peter fought with the Swedes for more than twenty years) came to symbolize the raw, unformed nature of the Russia that Peter had inherited.

Just as Peter aspired to build a Western city from the ground, “almost everything was still to be done” in eighteenth-century Russia. The first Russian Emperor was the first Russian leader to recognize that making Russia a European power would entail

45 For the story of the creation of the monument, the epic search for a natural stone for the pedestal, and its transportation to St. Petersburg, see Alexander M. Shenker, The Bronze Horseman: Falconet’s Monument to Peter the Great (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

46 The words of Vasilii Ruban vigorously expressed the belief that a Russian monument could outdo all the triumphs of art created by earlier civilizations:

Colossus of Rhodes, subdue your proud look!
And buildings of the lofty Pyramids on the Nile
No longer consider yourself wonders!
You were made by the perishable hands of mortals.
Here is a Russian mountain not made by hands.
Heeding the voice of God out of the lips of Catherine
It came to Peter’s town across the deeps of the Neva
And fell beneath the feet of Great Peter.

V. Ruban, Nadpis k kamnu, naznachennom dla podnozhiia statui Imp. Petra Velikago (St. Petersburg: n. p., 1770), cited and translated in Lindsey Hughes, “Monuments and Identity,” National Identity in Russian Culture, eds. Simon Franklin and Emma Widdis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 178. As N. M. Karamzin pointed out in his Pis’ma russkogo puteshestvennika (Moscow: Nauka, 1984), 198-99: “[t]he idea of putting Peter the Great’s statue on a Rough Stone is, to me, a wonderful, incomparable thought because this stone serves as an indication of Russia’s situation ... before the times of its transformer.” [М]ысл’ postavit’ statuu Petra velikogo na dikom kamne, est’ dla menia prekrasnaiia, nesrvannaiia mysli’ – ibo sei kamen’ služit ... pokazatelem togo sostoiainia Rossii, v kotorom byla ona do vremen svoego transformatora.]

In terms of Masonic symbolism, which was well known to Mason Karamzin, the pedestal in the shape of an unformed natural rock bears special significance. I consider the problem of turning “the rough stone” into the “smooth ashlar,” as Masons phrased it, the issue of “polishing” their fellow Russian Masons, in Chapter 4.

However, the metaphors of creating new edifices from raw, unfinished stone, of crafting and transforming the world to create new structures, were not exclusively confined to Freemasonry, but intertwined with the whole spirit of the Enlightenment. For details on the image of rough stone in Russian Freemasonry, see Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 39.

replicating and adapting many trends of Western developments, and the first one to do so in such a scale.\textsuperscript{48} For Peter, modernization of Russia meant Westernization. He consciously chose Europe as Russia's model to learn from "the wiser and more polite nations," and to arrive at their level at an accelerated pace.\textsuperscript{49} As a result of Peter's triumph in the Great Northern War (1700-1721), Russia suddenly emerged on Europe's radar as a power that claimed the rank of empire and the lineage of Rome. In Pushkin's words, with his military and diplomatic successes, Peter "broke a window through to Europe," and put Russia on the course of profound reforms that went far deeper than external manifestations of modernization: changes in calendar and alphabet, adoption of Western clothing or shaving beards. During Peter's reign, Russia made a dramatic turn to the West by implementing Western models in the modernization of the social hierarchy, education system, army, navy, Church, and state structures.

In 1702, there were only marshes at the site of St. Petersburg. But when in December of 1764 Casanova arrived in Peter's city, he immediately found himself among the things he was accustomed to in Europe: at a masked court ball the conversation was in German, the dances were French, and he recognized a fellow

\textsuperscript{48} As it was expressed in the Diderot's and d'Alembert's Encyclopédie, in the article on Russia written by Jaucourt, Russia as a whole was both European and Asiatic. But

[u]nder the reign of Peter, those Russians who valued Europe, and who lived in the large cities, became civilized, commercial, curious about the arts and sciences, fond of spectacles and ingenious novelties... He [Peter] introduced into his estates the arts that were completely perfected among his neighbors; and it came about that these arts made more progress in 50 years among his subjects, already disposed to taste them, than anywhere else in the space of three or four centuries...


The conscious break with Russian tradition and established patterns of development is traditionally seen as largely the work of Peter and his close associates, who forcibly pushed Russia closer to the West. Voltaire, in his own Peter the Great, made the Tsar-reformer into a great hero of the Enlightenment, the Prometheus who single-handedly enlightened his people. "Peter was born, and Russia was formed," pronounced Voltaire. Voltaire, "Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand," in Oeuvres completes de Voltaire, Vol. 16, 377, 427, quoted in Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe, 200.

Venetian and an old female acquaintance from Paris.\textsuperscript{50} By the time Catherine celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of Peter's accession, Russia had already undergone a vast transformation through the Westernizing efforts initiated by the Tsar-reformer.

In this chapter, I show how Peter the Great and his heirs' official orientation to the West led to the introduction of Freemasonry in the country. In my consideration of the stages of the relationship between the state and Freemasonry, I focus on the reign of those Russian rulers who were in power for periods long enough for their policies to be reflected in the development of the Craft. The reigns of Catherine I (ruled 1725-27), Peter II (1727-1730), and Ioann IV Antonovich (ruled 1740-1741) are omitted because in their internal and external policies they did not introduce any measures that affected the progress of Freemasonry.

Paralleling Russia's Westernization, the development of Freemasonry was greatly dependent upon the attitudes and policies that Russian rulers adopted towards the West and Western influences. Starting the century with Peter I (ruled 1682-1725) and his consistent efforts of bringing Russia closer to the West, Freemasonry was imported and fell onto a fertile soil. Although in the early stages, almost exclusively limited to foreigners, who found in Freemasonry an opportunity to stay connected to one another and to their home countries while living in Russia, the progress of Freemasonry continued during the reign of the Empress Anna (ruled 1730-40), who notoriously depended on her foreign councillors, many of whom were identified as Masons. Peter III (ruled 1761-62) himself was rumored to be involved in the Craft, and the Russian nobility started following the trend. The development of the Craft continued under the

virtual rule of the Germans during the reign of Empress Anna. The *Bironovschina* was the rule of the coterie of the Germans, including the Court Chamberlain Ernst-Johann Biron, Field Marshal Burkhard Münnich, and Foreign Minister Andrew Ostermann. After Peter II, the Empress Elizabeth (ruled 1741-61) initiated policies aimed at counteracting foreign influences, and it is not incidental that she launched the first official investigation into the principles of the Craft and the personal connections of individual brothers and lodges.

Although starting with Elizabeth’s reign, Russian nobles “tended to crowd off foreigners from the front stage,” it does not mean that Westernization stopped its course.51 By the middle of the century, the Russian educated elite had access to a wide range of Western models, which they tried to make their own later in the century. The development of alternative versions of Freemasonry, combined with the growth of a nascent intelligentsia, who concentrated on conscious intellectual advancement, signified the end of the early stage of the introduction of Freemasonry to Russia. Coincidentally, the conclusion on the Seven Years’ War “marked the end of the first phase in the Enlightenment’s discovery of Eastern Europe, and the opening of a new phase of even more dynamic interest, in international affairs and in cultural construction, focused above all on the fascinating figure of Catherine herself.”52

Catherine the Great (ruled 1762–96), a foreigner herself, was a true heir of Peter the Great in the course of Westernization. At the same time, she was by no means

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51 Martin Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999), 39.
52 Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 198, combines the conclusion on the Seven Years’ War with the completion of Voltaire’s second volume of his *Peter the Great*. 
consistent in her attitudes to Freemasonry and her treatment of Freemasons.\textsuperscript{53} Initially, she looked favorably (though, with a hint of irony) at Russian lodges. But when the maturing Russian elite became more receptive to Western ideas and the developing public society was gaining power, which coincided with troubling political and social developments abroad and in Russia, Catherine proclaimed that Freemasonry was dangerous for the state and the people.\textsuperscript{54}

**Peter I and Freemasonry?**

If education and instruction could be taken as the banners of Freemasonry, then “Freemasonry was essentially equally new in the terms of civilization as the reforms of Peter.”\textsuperscript{55} The myth of Peter-the-Westernerizer and the myth of Peter-the-first-Russian-Freemason intersect. For centuries, Masonic historians readily reiterated a myth of Peter the Great being the first Freemason in Russia who founded a lodge there.\textsuperscript{56} It is

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\textsuperscript{53} I consider these changes in Chapter 5.


\textsuperscript{55} A. N. Pypin, “Russkoe masonstvo do Novikova,” *Vestnik Evropy* (June 1868), 548, and “Zapiska o masonstve L-ra,” *Rossiiskaia starina* (September 1882), 534.


The question of the beginnings of Freemasonry in Russia is as complicated and uncertain as the beginnings of Freemasonry in general. The widely used line that the history of Freemasonry and its beginnings are “shrouded by myth and allegories” can be applied to the history of the society in Russia. Allegedly, it was Christopher Wren who was considered as the best-qualified representative of both working and speculative Masonry to initiate Peter in Deptford in England in 1698. As Anthony Cross in “British Freemasons in Russia during the Reign of Catherine the Great,” *AQC* 84 (1971): 239, points out, in their identification of Christopher Wren as “the famous founder of modern English Freemasonry” Russian historians traditionally rely on German sources. For a discussion of Wren’s alleged Masonic eminence, see Robert Freke Gould, *The History of Freemasonry*, 3-55.

Although Peter’s stay in England had been the subject of much intensive study, there is still no complete and detailed knowledge about Peter’s life and activities during his stay. Peter was in England for 105 days, but only 52 of them are documented in the semi-official *Journal* (the original of which is in Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi archiv drevnikh aktov (RGADA, Russian State Archive of Early Acts), fond. 9, Kabinet Petra I, otd. I, kn. 25, II, 55rev-61rev. The Russian original published as *Pokhodnyi zhurnal 1698 goda* (St. Petersburg, 1910), 1-15, is available in English in Simon Dixon et al (eds.) *Britain and Russia in
undeniable that Freemasons started claiming one of the most prominent Russian rulers for alliance to gain acceptability by association with him. But along with the issue of acceptability and the obvious interest of Peter in clubbing, the fact that the majority of his close associates were foreigners greatly fosters the myth of Peter as a Freemason.

Borrowing ideas for Russian Westernization from various European countries, it was Peter who made a conscious effort of inviting foreign workforce to carry out his practical reforms. While skilled and educated foreigners were welcome in Russia since the seventeenth century, Peter established a sound basis for the influx with his manifesto on the invitation of foreigners drafted in German by the Livonian J. R. Patkul in April of 1702. According to one of Peter’s biographers, the manifesto “unfolded the program of the reign and pointed the way to its realization.” In the words of the Russian enlightener Mikhail Lomonosov (1711-1765), Peter provided as a matter of absolute necessity for the dissemination of all kinds of knowledge in the homeland, and also for an increase in the number of persons skilled in the higher branches of learning, together with artists and craftsmen… there were the wide gates of great Russia opened up; then over the frontiers and

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*the Age of Peter the Great: Historical Documents* (London: School of Slavonic and East European studies, 1998), 21-24).

Because there is no evidence or references to Peter’s meetings with such figures as Sir Christopher Wren, Isaac Newton, or Edmond Halley, it has always been attractive to assume that the first Russian Emperor would have met with at lest some of the greatest scientists, mathematicians, or craftsmen to whom he would have looked for guidance. The gaps in Peter’s itinerary during his trip to England tempt one to presume that the Tsar, who was deeply interested in architecture and was planning to build his Europeanized capital, might have met with the Master architect Christopher Wren and been initiated to Freemasonry by him. Extensive literature in English on the subject of Peter’s trip includes Anthony Cross, *Peter the Great Through British Eyes: Perceptions and Representations of the Tsar since 1698* (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Ian Grey, “Peter the Great in England,” *History Today* 6 (1956): 225-34; *Peter the Great, Emperor of All Russia* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1960), 114-24; Leo Loewenson, “Some Details of Peter the Great’s Stay in England in 1698,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 40 (1962): 431-43; Janet M. Hartley, “England “Enjoys the Spectacle of a Northern Barbarian”: the Reception of Peter I and Alexander I.” in *A Window on Russia*, eds. Maria di Salvo and Lindsey Hughes (Rome: La Fenice Edizioni, 1996), 11-18.

57 Especially during the reign of Peter’s father Tsar Aleksei (1645-76). Also, during the regency of Peter’s half-sister Sofya Alekseevna (1682-1689), the order of 26 January 1689 invited the French Huguenots to Russia with a guarantee for complete religious freedom.

through the harbors, like the tides in the spacious ocean, there did flow in constant motion, in one direction, the sons of Russia... and, in the other direction, foreigners arriving with various skills, books, and instruments...\(^{59}\)

There is no documentary evidence to prove that Peter -- or any of his close associates -- was directly connected to Freemasonry, but it is undeniable that he made a substantial contribution to the development of the Craft in Russia by opening up the country to foreign influences and making them not only possible but also desirable.

Many of the foreigners, who came to Russia as a result of "Russia’s Great Enlightener’s"\(^{60}\) orientation to the West, were Freemasons. With the explicit demand for Western-type education and instruction and in consequence of the ever-increasing communication with Western Europe, Freemasons naturally went to Russia in greater numbers after the 1720s. François Lefort\(^{61}\) and Patrick Gordon,\(^{62}\) two most intimate


\(^{60}\) Lomonosov, “Panegyric to the Sovereign Emperor Peter the Great.” 35.

\(^{61}\) Admiral François (Francis or Franz Jakovlevich) Lefort (1656-1699), was the first Russian admiral and the closest advisor to Peter the Great. Swiss by birth, he entered Russian service in 1678. Lefort took part in Russian-Turkish War of 1676-1681, Crimean Campaigns of 1687 and 1689, and was active in reorganization of Russian regular army and navy. He commanded Russian Navy in the Azov campaign of 1696. Lefort accompanied Peter on his first European tour, the so-called “Great Embassy.” On Lefort, see Basseville, Precis historique sur la vie de L. (1784); Ivan Golikov, Istoriicheskoe izobrazhenie zhizni Leforta i Patrika Gordona (Moscow, 1800); G. A. W. Helbig, Russische Guntstinge (Tubingen, JG Cotta, 1809), with Russian translation in Russkaia starina 4 (1886); M. Posselt, Tagebuch des Generals Patrik Gordon, I - III (St. Petersburg, 1851); M. Posselt, General und Admiral Franz Lefort, sein Leben und seine Zeit, I - II (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1866); M. Possel'it, “Admiral russkogo flota F. Ia. Lefort i nachalo russkogo flota,” in Morskoi Sbornik 3 (1893); Korba, Arkhiv kniazia Kurakina, I, 1890; Pis’ma i bumagi Petra Velikogo, I, 1887.

\(^{62}\) General Patrick Gordon (1635–1699) was born in Scotland. He entered the Jesuit College in Prussia, but instead of studying enlisted in the Swedish army in 1655. In 1661, after serving alternately on both sides in the war between Sweden and Poland (1655–60), he entered the Russian army. In 1665, Gordon was sent on a diplomatic mission to England by Tsar Aleksei I and had a chance to return to England and Scotland in 1686. Upon his return, he participated in military actions in southern Russia and rapidly rose to the rank of General. In 1689, Gordon suppressed Sophia Alekseevna’s (Peter the Great’s older sister and regent) attempt to overthrow Peter, thus becoming the Tsar’s lifelong friend and confidant. On Gordon, see [Patrick Gordon], The Diary of General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries in the Years 1635-1699 (London: The Spalding Club, 1859); G. P. Herd, “General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries - A Scot in Seventeenth-Century Russian Service,” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1995); Ivan Golikov, Istoriicheskoe
friends and influential counsellors of Peter, are said to have been members of a lodge in Moscow that Peter set up upon his return and in which he served as a mere Junior Warden. A few years later, Peter is rumoured to have been Warden in another select and secret club, known as the “Neptune Society” at the Moscow School of Mathematics and Navigation. Lefort is named as a possible Master (or president) of this society, with Feofan Prokopovich being the Orator. Other members included prominent Russian nobles Princes Men'shikov, Cherkassky, Apraksin, and Golitsyn and three Scots: Jacobite Generals Patrick Gordon and James Bruce, who had the reputation of a sorcerer because of his interest in chemistry and astronomy, and Henry Farquharson, the mathematician brought by Peter to head the Moscow School of Mathematics and Navigation.

izobrazhenie zhizni Leforta i Patrika Gordona (Moscow, 1800); Aleksandr Brikner, Patrik Gordon i ego dnevnik (St. Petersburg, 1878).

64 F. Veselago, Ocherk Morskogo kadetskogo korpusa (St. Petersburg: n. p., 1852), 22.
65 Feofan Prokopovich (1681-1736) was a Russian orthodox theologian designated by Peter to carry out ecclesiastic reforms against scholasticism and clerical ignorance. Prokopovich actively propagated toleration within the limits of Christendom. He wrote fiction and theological works, including the influential Spiritual Regulation (1721) that advocated state control over the church. A highly educated person, he established the Greco-Slavonic Academy, the first institution of high education in Russia.
66 James Bruce (in Russia often referred to as Jakov Villimovich Brius) (1669-1735) was one of Peter’s scientific advisors and Russia’s first astronomer. He constructed the first observatory and printed Russia’s first almanac, which, together with astronomical information, contained astronomical predictions commonly found in European almanacs. According to W. F. Ryan, “Magic and Divination,” in The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture, ed. Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press: 1997), 43, the last almanac with Bruce’s name, Briusov kalendari na 200 let, was published in St. Petersburg in 1912. For an account of Bruce in English, see Valentin Boss, Sir Isaac Newton and Russia: The Early Influence, 1698-1796 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

Henry (Andre) Farquharson (1698-1739) was a tutor in mathematics at Marischal College in Scotland. After an interview with Peter the Great during his visit to London, Farquharson was invited to participate in the creation of the School of Mathematics and Navigation in Moscow. After the school was established, with 300 advanced students, he moved to St. Petersburg to head the newly opened Naval Academy. During the Moscow period (1701-15), nearly 1,200 young specialists came out of the School of Mathematics and Navigation, and between 1717 and 1725 alone 215 officers joined the ranks of the Russian navy.
The Neptune Society is customarily characterized as an organization similar "to secret clubs of virtuosi, or alchemists so popular in contemporary England," an opinion which feeds without any evidence the conjecture that the Neptune Society "... quite possibly ... had Masonic connections." While the Neptune Society did not leave any papers, activities of a contemporary semi-secret society, the so-called "Bungo-College" or "Glorious British Monastery" which existed in Moscow around 1706, are well documented. Its written regulations of 1720 testify that among the Bungo-college's 30 "crazy brethren" and 25 attendants there were the alleged Freemasons Emperor Peter, Henry Farquharson, and a Jacobite Henry Stirling.\footnote{Farquharson continuously corresponded with Peter, especially about his astronomical research. His works include \textit{Tables of Logarithms} (1703; published in Russian in 1716); \textit{Euclid's Elements, Selected from the Twelve Books of Newton and Abbreviated to Eight Books}, translated from Latin into Russian (1719 or 1739); \textit{Tables of Horizontal North and South Latitude}, translated from Dutch, (Moscow, 1722); \textit{Trigonometry, Plane and Spherical and Seventeen Lectures on Astronomy} (1730); and the manuscript \textit{Algebra, Navigation. A New Invention for Avoiding the Influence of Rolling During Observations and a Treatise of the Sector}. The Russian-language translations of the first two books became the first math-related publications in Russian. Farquharson, along with Dr. Erskine, corresponded with the "Committee for Russia" founded within the Royal Society of London 1713 by 16 members, including Isaac Newton, Edmund Halley, James Petiver, and Richard Mead. Farquharson was also a correspondent of Leibniz.


\footnote{Nicolas Hans, "The Moscow School of Mathematics and Navigation (1701)," \textit{Slavonic and East European Review} 39, no. 73 (1951), 535.}\ 68 \footnote{Especially since the archives of the Naval academy and the Moscow school of Navigation perished in fire.}\ 69 \footnote{S. Platonov, "Bungo-Kollegia ili Velikobritanski Monastyr' v Sankt-Peterburge pri Petre Velikom" in \textit{Izvestii AN SSSR} no. 7-8 (1926): 527-46, quoted in Dmitry Fedosov, "A Scottish Mathematician in Russia: Henry Farquharson (c. 1675-1739)," \textit{The Universities of Aberdeen and Europe}, 114.}
the Gordons, were identified as Scottish and Jacobite. After the defeat of the uprising of 1715, large numbers of Jacobite exiles infused communities of European states.

While it is established that Scottish Freemasons who followed the Jacobite court into exile played significant role in spreading Freemasonry on the continent, the exact correlation between Freemasonry and Jacobitism, between covert societies and the Stuart court, is a problematic question. Many Jacobites were Freemasons and many Freemasons were Jacobites who used Masonic networks to further the Stuart cause.

Immediately before and after 1715, the Jacobites involved in Masonic or near-Masonic circles made efforts to interest Peter in the Jacobite cause and involve him in the problems of the English succession by playing on the clash of interests between him and

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71 The Scots Magazine wrote in 1739 about the contributions of Scottish expatriates into Russian and navy:

We may surely be indulged to take a little rational pride; in finding no action of consequence performed in which Gentlemen in this nation are not in particular manner distinguished for their bravery and resolution: At the head of the Russian fleet we find a Gordon; in the highest rank of the army a Keith, and Douglas, Lesley, and many more, send their names from the extremities of that vast empire, and even from the inmost plains of Tartary.


According to these studies, most Irish participants ended up in France, Spain and the Habsburg Empire, while the Scots migrated to Scandinavia and Eastern Europe with several communities settled also in France and the Netherlands.


73 For an inconclusive attempt to directly connect Freemasonry with Jacobitism, see Norrie Paton, The Jacobites: Their Rebellions and Links with Freemasonry (Fareham Hampshire: Sea-Green Ribbon Publications, 1994), especially pages 38-39 on the alleged Russian connections of Jacobite Freemasons.

74 Dmitry Fedosov, "A Scottish Mathematician in Russia: Henry Farquharson (c. 1675-1739)," The Universities of Aberdeen and Europe, 103. Also see David Dobson, Scots in Poland, Russia and the Baltic States, 1550-1850 (Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 2000).
George I in the designs for Baltic supremacy. In 1732, for instance, the alleged Freemason Admiral Thomas Gordon carried out the correspondence that reveals possible links between a secret society and the Stuart cause. Gordon received two rings of the “Order of Toboso,” one for himself and another for Henry Stirling, who acted as a liaison of James Stuart in Russia. The letter mentioned that the two young Stuart princes were protectors of the Order and also wore similar rings. The same letter sends greetings to “all our Brother Knights” and refers to two other members of the Order of Toboso in Russia, William Hay and John Hay. Another letter was sent to Thomas Gordon, Henry Stirling and Admiral Thomas Saunders and signed by Don Ezekiel Del Toboso, “Don Ezekiel Hamilton Grand Master of the Most Antient, the most Illustrious and most noble order of Tobosso.”


78 John Hay, a Scottish Jacobite who arrived at Catherine I’s court and contacted Admiral Gordon, granting him “full power to treat and conclude with the Empress of Russia’s ministers what you may think for the advantage of the King’s [meaning the Stuart accession] interest.” Eggleston Papers, 176. Letter is dated 15 December 1725.

79 Eggleston Papers, 183-84. Letter dated 28 January 1733. “Don Ezekiel Del Toboso” is a pseudonym of Ezekiel Hamilton. Letter (dated 22 April 1734) to Gordon opposing acceptance of James Murray to the Order is in Eggleston Papers, 184.
First Foreign Lodges on the Territory of Russia

Accompanied by the advances in commerce and aided by external political events, like the Jacobite rebellions, Peter’s reforms (and his trip to Europe) fostered increase in contacts between Europe and Russia in the first decades of the century and contributed to the influx of foreign population in Russia. At the early stages of the development of Freemasonry in Russia, ports became the first and the main centers of Masonic activity, mostly because of the foreign, especially British and German, influence. By 1710, Russia had replaced Sweden along the whole stretch of the Baltic coast from Riga to Vyborg and gained control of the Northern trade. The commercial treaty of 1734 provided a steady flow of northern raw materials to Great Britain from Russia and of Western manufactured goods from Britain to Russia, and Britain became Russia’s main trading partner. British Trade Companies had their connections established in several Russian cities, including Arkhangel’sk, Riga, Cronstadt, and Narva. According to the remark made by an eighteenth-century observer, “... Great Britain, having always taken about three fourths of the productions of that country, and furnishing the necessary advance for raising them, naturally enjoyed great and exclusive advantages of Trade...”

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80 It is generally accepted that the access to the Baltic was one of the most important among Peter’s legacies. See, for instance, L. R. Lewitter, “Russia, Poland, and the Baltic, 1697-1721,” Historical Journal 2 (1968): 3-34.

81 Bodleian Library, Burges Papers, MSS Dep. Bland Burges, 58, Joseph Ewart Esq. His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinaire and minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Berlin, “Observations on the Nature of the Connection, which has Hitherto Subsided between Great Britain and Russia; on their relative situation with regard to other powers; and on the circumstances and consequences of the present crisis,” April 1791, 45.

Estimations made by A. V. Demkin, Britanskoe kupechestvo v Rossii XVIII veka, (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Nauk, Institut Rossiskoi Istori, 1988), 13, show that during the eighteenth century, St. Petersburg had 204 established British trading companies; Archangel’sk and Riga – 13; Cronstadt – 11; Narva – 6; and Moscow - only 5 (the number of the companies in Moscow is suspiciously
On the Baltic, Riga became a foremost trading center of the Russian empire, second only to St. Petersburg, and maintained its position in the wider Baltic world.\textsuperscript{82} During the eighteenth century this popular commercial destination attracted foreigners from different countries, cultures, and religions who could become long-term residents and active contributors to the city's public and social life, creating a diverse cosmopolitan population.\textsuperscript{83} British presence in Riga was significant. In 1765, for instance, the British Consul-General in Russia (and a Junior Warden at the Perfect Union lodge in St. Petersburg\textsuperscript{84}) Samuel Swallow pointed out, “[i]t will appear that near one half of all the Exports of Riga to all Parts, are shipt by the British residing here.”\textsuperscript{85} By the 1780s, William Coxe commented that Riga’s trade was “chiefly carried on by foreign merchants, who [were] resident in the town.” The merchants of the local English factory enjoyed “the greatest share of the commerce,” and lived “in a very hospitable and splendid manner.”\textsuperscript{86} An anonymous Masonic source reported that already in the 1740s


\textsuperscript{83} C. Mettig, Geschichte der Stadt Riga (Riga: Jonck und Polieisky, 1897).

\textsuperscript{84} On the lodge of Perfect Union, see p. 93ff.

\textsuperscript{85} Quoted in Herbert Kaplan, Russian Overseas Commerce with Great Britain During the Reign of Catherine II (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1995), 95.

there were lodges that included foreign traders and several Russian officers in the commercially significant port cities of Arkhangelsk (Archangel) and Königsberg, reflecting the British presence in the eighteenth-century Baltic and participation in Northern Trade. The Arkhangelsk lodge of Sv. Ekateriny (St. Catherine) is mentioned in the documents since 1766, and although it apparently worked in German, it had several British merchants as its active members.

In addition to trade, another channel for broadening contacts between Great Britain and Russia was military recruitment. By recruiting from sixty to as many as five hundred British subjects to enter Russian service as naval captains, lieutenants, bombardiers, shipbuilders, smiths, and gun-founders on his visit to Britain, Peter made a major contribution to the development of the Russian navy, creating the foundations, at

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In Königsberg, the long-settled Anglo-Scottish community was united in a “Brotherhood of the Great Britanic Nation.” In St. Petersburg, the British factory was a significant presence. Karl-Heinz Ruffmann, “Englander und Schotten in den Seestädten Ost- und Westpreussens,” in ZfO 7 (1958): 17-38.

88 After February of 1775, the lodge is mentioned as the lodge of Sv. Ekateriny trekh podpor (St. Catharina zu den drei Säulen). Serkov points out William Gunnion, a British ship-builder, who built six ships for Russia in 1772-1774, Arthur Keily (Kelly), and John Poll (Paul) as early members of the lodge. Serkov, Entsiklopedii, 282, 386, 656.
the same time, for the beginning of the long-standing tradition of the British presence in
the Russian navy, many of whom, as we will see later, were Freemasons.89

It is not surprising that the first Provincial Grand Master of Russia was an
English-speaking soldier. According to the minutes of the Grand Lodge of England in
London, on 24 June 1731 the Grand Master Lord Lovel (Lovell) appointed captain John
Philips (Phillips) to be the Provincial Grand Master of “Free and Accepted Masons
within the Empires of Russia and Germany, and Dominions and Territories thereunto
belonging.”90

The appointment of the first Provincial Grand Master for Russia (and Germany)
coincided with important developments in the Grand Lodge of England. As the network
of the domestic and foreign lodges under the English jurisdiction grew, it became more
important for the Grand Lodge to establish its authority. In addition to internal pressures
to regularize Masonic activity, there were external pressures of active and powerful rivals
abroad and in England. Responding to the rapid growth of the lodges outside of England
and faced with a growing dissention from those who were dissatisfied with only three
degrees, the Grand Lodge of England needed to find strong leadership and an appropriate

89 The estimates of how many British navy specialists Peter recruited vary widely. See, for instance,
Anthony Cross, By the Banks of the Neva: Chapters from the Lives and Careers of the British in
Eighteenth-Century Russia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 159-65, 174-6: Peter the Great
Through British Eyes, 37.

90 Freemasons’ Hall, Library and Archive in London, Grand Lodge of England, Minute Book of the Grand
Lodge of England, no. 2, part I (27 March 1731 to 12 December 1739), Minutes on 24 June 1731, 209.
Also, Anderson’s Constitutions (1767) in RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 254 (1), 363:
Then the Grand Master and his General Officers signed a Deputation for our Rt. Worshipful Brother
John Philips Esqr. to be Grand Master of free and accepted Masons within the Empires of Russia and
Germany and Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging, and his health was drank wishing
Prosperity to the Craft in these parts.
administrative structure to regulate and direct the lodges. In the 1730s, the Grand Lodge started creating a system for securing the allegiance of existing lodges, constituting new lodges, and ensuring adherence to the regulations of the English system. This led to the introduction of warrants to distinguish the lodges or individuals belonging to English or high-degree systems and the Ancients, rapidly becoming an influential Masonic trend. Formally, only the properly warranted three-degree lodges could be acknowledged as “regular.” All societies which constitutions did not follow the rules of the Grand Lodge were considered irregular, and their members were banned from visiting regular lodges. With the spread of Freemasonry abroad, the Grand Lodges needed the warrants to keep track of all the lodges under their jurisdiction and for lodges to prove their belonging to a particular system.

The Provincial Grand Master, the chief Masonic authority in the region, played an important regulating role. Grand Provincial Master had extensive powers to establish lodges in his jurisdiction and oversee the development of Masonic networks. He had responsibilities of collecting fees, corresponding with the Grand Lodge, and regularly sending the lists of lodges under his control to the Masonic metropole. In general, there were three different types of Provincial Grand Lodges at that time. The first denoted the

91 Such issues as a tendency to change the Grand Masters almost yearly made it difficult to stabilize the brotherhood. In the course of the eighteenth century, there were 38 Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of England, as compared to only five Grand Masters in the nineteenth century.

92 On the differences in spelling between “Antients” and “Ancients,” see Ivor Grantham, “The Titles of United Grand Lodge: Antients and Moderns,” AQC 64 (1951): 76-78. Ancients are also known as Athol Masons, the name coming from their first Grand Master, the Duke of Athol.

Provincial Grand Lodges in the territory of Great Britain, for example, the Provincial Grand Lodge of North Wales, granted in 1727. The second type included the Provincial Grand Lodges in colonies such as those in Bengal or New Jersey, granted in 1730. The third category incorporated Provincial Grand Lodges in independent non-English-speaking countries such as Holland or Portugal.

The Provincial Grand Lodge established in Russia with the appointment of the first Provincial Master belonged to the third category, but we do not know any particulars concerning the lodges in Russia at that time. It is not clear, for instance, whether Philips’ jurisdiction included the inhabitants of the countries or involved mostly British subjects who lived in Russia temporarily or permanently. It is not possible to even say for sure who this John Philips was. In the list included in the minutes of the Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge on 27 November 1725 a John Philips is shown as a member of the lodge meetings at the Sun Tavern and the Three Tunns in London. However, if we take into consideration the fact that customarily the first Grand Provincial Master in Russia is referred to as “captain,” for instance, in the 1738 edition of Anderson’s Constitutions, we can find mentioning of a “captain Phillips” at the meetings of the lodge in the Rumner Tavern in London as early as 1723.94 We cannot conclude whether these listings refer to one and the same person, or whether any of the Phil[l]ipses attending London lodges had any connection with Russia and/or Germany, or what kind of activities the first Provincial Grand Master carried out abroad on behalf of the Grand Lodge of England. In Russia, John Philips was not recognized as the propagator of

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Freemasonry, probably because during his Mastership, participation in lodges remained limited to foreigners.

It is James Keith (Iakob Keit, as he was called in Russia), the second Provincial Grand Master of Russia, who is generally recognized as a leading propagator of Freemasonry in Russia. He was celebrated as the first Masonic authority in Russia in a hymn as early as 1761:

Then [after Peter I] Keith, enlightened, came to the Russian empire,
And, full of zeal, lit up for us the sacred fire.
A Temple of Wisdom he erected, and its spark
Showed Virtue, Brotherhood to Masons, still in dark.
He was an image of the Sun whose rise, so bright,
Is message of the shining dawn of the Queen of Light.95

In a letter to the international Masonic convent in Wilhelmsbad in 1782 held under the presidency of Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick and Prince Charles of Hesse, "Les Membres de la Commission nommée pour l'établissement d'une maçonnérie nationale de

The Russian version reads:
Po nem (po Petry Velikomu) svetom ozarennyi
Keit k rossianam pribeg;
I userdiem vospalenny
Khram premudrosti postavil.
Ogon' svichennyi zdes' vozdvig.
Mysli i serdca ispravl
I nas v bratstvo utverdil.
Keit byl obraz toi dennitsy,
Svetyi koeia voskhod
Svetlozarnye tsaritsy
Vozveschait v mir prihod...
la Russie" evaluated Keith’s role in the introduction of Freemasonry to Russia in exalted tones:

Nous sommes convaincus que l’origine de la vraie Maçonnerie principalement des trois premiers grades, remonte a une haut antiquité, & surtout aux premiers siècles du Christianisme. Vérité qui ne put échapper à nos esprits judicieux, des qu’ils nous surent communiquées par M. Le Marshall de Keith, qui les porta dans nos climats.96

In the next letter, several Freemasons from Russia reiterated that

… Unser großer Monarch, der Russland umschuff, der nur Grosse des Geistes und Wissenschaft schätze, hatte wirkliche Schottische und Italienische Maurer an sich gezogen, und in diesem Reiche eine wahre Schotten (löge) errichtet. Der Lord Keith, und mehrere suchten uns zu wahren Maurern zu bilden, aber wir verkannten diese Maurer, und vergebens predigten sie uns vor dass sich die Natur durch eigene innere Kraft, und stufenweise vervollkommne.97

Not only Freemasons in Russia recognized the significance of Keith’s activities.

A song published in 1758 in Edinburgh dwells on the importance of the spread of the Craft in foreign countries and mentions Keith’s name along with the King of Prussia in this regard:

Whilst Vice lies bound in chains,
True Worth exalted reigns,
By Heav’n restor’d:
Discord resigns her sting,
Bright Peace and Freedom sing,
Keith and great Prussia’s King
Bearing their sword.98

96 RGAVA, fond 1412 k, opis’ 1, folder 11397, document no. 78, “Copy of the Decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, 1782,” 31.
97 RGAVA, fond 1412 k, opis’ 1, folder 11397, document no. 80, “Copy of the Decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, 1782,” 33. The letter is dated 3 March 1782 and signed by “Untertänigste treuehorsame Os. Bruder Petrus Alex. Tatischtschew, qua Praef. Christianus; Fridericus Mathaei, qua Commiss; Chariton Audreades Tschebotarew, qua Ceancella.”
98 James M. M Callendar, A Collection of Free Masons Songs Containing Several New Songs Never Before Published. For the Use of the Lodges (Edinburgh: Br. A. Donaldson and Company, 1758), 81-83. This is a song by Bro. Robert Colvill on the Earl of Leven’s taking the chair of St. David’s lodge, after his election as Master on 27 December 1757.
For Russian historians of Freemasonry the second Provincial Grand Master of Russia is somewhat of a mystery figure, but archival sources relating to his life can be found in Scotland.\textsuperscript{99} James Keith was born in 1696, the younger son of the Earl Mariscal of Scotland, “Marishal” being an hereditary office held by the Keiths. Soon after entering Marischal College, founded by his ancestors, to study law, James Keith became involved in the Jacobite Uprising of 1715, fled to the continent and entered the service of Spain.\textsuperscript{100} As a Protestant, Keith did not see himself making a career in a Catholic country, so with the support of Duke of Liria, James Francis Fitzjames, a grandson of King James VII, Charles’ cousin and one of the most prominent Jacobites who was sent by Spain as an ambassador to Russia, in the beginning of 1728, Russian Emperor Peter II commissioned Keith as Major General.\textsuperscript{101} James Stuart took personal

\textsuperscript{99} Aberdeen University Archive (AUA), MS 2709, Keith, James Francis Edward: Correspondence with Chevalier John Drummond, Lord Edward Drummond, Her Imperial Majesty Empress Elizabeth of Russia, James Baldwin to John Drummond. Photostat copies of MSS in Berlin State Library. 1748-56: AUA, MS 3500.1 and MS 3500.2, Keith, Correspondence to Scotland. Letter, Moscow, July 1733. Found in the papers of John Douglas, merchant of Aberdeen; National Archive of Scotland (NAS), GD 156/60, Elphinstone’s papers, Keith’s correspondence; GD 156/62, Elphinstone’s papers. Keith’s papers (almost all of the documents were printed in \textit{Elphinstone Papers}); National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. MS 3287, \textit{Memoirs of Field Marshal James Keith written by Himself 1714-1734; A Fragment of a Memoir of Field-Marshall James Keith, Written by Himself, 1714-1734} (Edinburgh: Spalding Club, 1843), presented to the Spalding club by Thomas Constable.


\textsuperscript{100} AUA, MS 2707 and MS 3163 \textit{A Fragment of a Memoir of Field-Marshal James Keith} and two typescript biographies of James Keith, n. d., by Adrian Keith-Falconer and H. Godfrey.

\textsuperscript{101} NAS, GD 156/60, Elphinstone’s papers, Keith’s correspondence. \textit{Le Certificate D’Admission au Service}, in Russian. Signed by
interest in Keith’s advancement. In Russia, Keith rose rapidly because “he always did his duty as a brave officer, without intermeddling with any State intrigues,” received a prestigious appointment as lieutenant colonel in the new regiment of guards overseeing the personal bodyguards of the Empress Anna, and participated in the Polish war of 1733, the German war, and then fought against the Turks in Ukraine. Keith was wounded in the knee at Ochakov in 1737, an event that allegedly prompted a famous quote from Empress Anna: “I would better lose ten thousands of my best soldiers than Keith.”

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[Prince Ivan Scherbatov, minister of his Imperial Majesty on the day of the eighteenth of March 1728 … his Excellency Great Chancellor Count Gavril Ivanich Golovin and Vice-Chancellor Baron Andrei Ivanovich Osterman … minister Keith, who is a Scotsman … employ on service as General-Major of the army [with] the annual salary starting from his departure from Madrid … and oversee him on the same conditions as other General-Majors of the foreign Nations on the service of His Imperial Majesty].

About these events in detail see A Fragment of a Memoir of Field-Marshal James Keith, 77.

102 Four letters sent from James to Keith are published in Elphinstone Papers. For instance, Elphinstone Papers, 216, in the letter no. 257 from Bologna to “Mr. Keith,” dated 26 June 1728:

I am glad to find by yours of the 23 May that you are pleased with the post you have gott in the Moscovic service, and most sensible of the zeal you express for mine. I here send you a Commission of Major General dated the 10 January this year, as what might be most agreeable to you to have it thus antdated [sic]; I heartily wish you a good journey and all satisfaction in that country where my particular regard and kindness will ever attend you. James R.

During his lifetime, Keith carried out correspondence with several members of prominent European royal families. The list of royal correspondents of Keith includes: “James King of Great Britain”; “Frederick King of Prussia”; Prince Peter, afterwards Peter III of Russia; Anton Ulrich, husband of Princess Anne of Russia and father of Emperor Ioann Antonovich; and Jacques Louis Prince, Duke of Pologne. NAS, GD 156/60, Elphinstone’s papers. Keith’s correspondence. folder 3 (partly published in Elphinstone Papers, Division III.

103 NLS, Acc. MS 3287, A Fragment of a Memoir of Field-Marshal James Keith, 80-81.

104 J. Grant, The Scottish Soldiers of Fortune, 18.

105 Hill Burton, Scot Abroad, 107-108. This phrase has often been attributed to Field Marshal Count Lacy (1678-1751) who was commander-in-chief of the Russian army in the war with Sweden (1741-1743) together with General Keith. Also mentioned in Sergei M. Soloviev, History of Russia, vol. 38 (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1997), 255.
Traditionally, it is implied that Keith was allowed to go to Paris via Berlin to seek help for his wounded knee. It is less known that Keith’s trip was also related to the issues of his inheritance in Scotland. On 18 February 1738, Empress Anna asked the King of Great Britain George II “to aid” Keith, the General-Lieutenant on Russian service, with the matters of his “inheritance in England.” In 1740, while in Europe, Keith received a new appointment to go to London on a diplomatic mission. This time he traveled around Europe not as a Jacobite exile, but as a great General in Russia’s service, an accredited envoy to the court with diplomatic immunity. Upon his return to Russia, Keith received the one-year governorship of Ukraine in 1741, actively participated in the Swedish campaign as the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces and minister-plenipotentiary to Sweden for a year and also was involved in the Prussian campaign in 1745.

Keith’s military service was highly appreciated in Russia. In 1742, for instance, he received an estate in Livonia. But despite his career success, Keith was continuously apprehensive about living in Russia. In 1733, he wrote to a correspondent in Scotland:

In a word could I forget that I was born in Scotland I shou’d be very happy here [in Russia]... I see foreigners of all nations, who are content with their fortune,

106 Otdel pis’mennykh istochnikov Gosudarstvennogo istoricheskogo muzeia (OPI GIM, Written Sources Division of State Historical Museum), fond 3, staraia opis’, folder 185. N. Bantsh-Kamenskii, Sokraschennoe izvestie o vzaimnykh mezhdyu Rossiiskimi i Evropeiskimi derzhavami posol’stvakh, perepisakh i dogovorakh, khraniaschkhsia v Gosudarsvennoi Kollegii Inostrannykh Del v Moskovskom Arkhive s 1481 po 1812 god, part 1, 170rev.
107 Hill Burton, Scot Abroad. 107-108.
108 AUA, MS 3064/B, 146. A partial photocopy of a charter of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia confirming a grant of land in Livonia to Lieutenant Colonel Keith (1742). The original is in Leeds University Library, GB 0206 MS 919, Papers relating to Field Marshal Francis Keith.
and are wise enough to make a virtue of necessity but ... for my own part to be
quietly at home is the utmost wish.\footnote{AUA, MS 3500.1 and MS 3500.2, Keith, Correspondence to Scotland, letter from Moscow, July 1733 (found in the papers of John Douglas, merchant of Aberdeen).}

In his Memoirs, Keith painted a picture of endless aristocratic cabals of the
Russian court and complains about the problems he encountered upon his exit from the
Russian service. When his brother, a famous Jacobite whose presence in Russia could
negatively influence tenuous Russian-British relations after 1745, was not allowed to
enter the country, Keith, with many difficulties, received his permission to leave Russian
service:

\ldots all the chicannes I went through \ldots on the refusal you [Keith’s older brother]
met with I resolved absolutely to quit the Russian service\ldots I could not receive a
congé, til I had signed some paper\ldots If I refused to sign it the resolution was
taken to arrest me.\footnote{Letter from Field Marshal Keith on his entering the Prussian service, to his brother the Earl Marischall, Potsdam 28 October 1747, in Elphinstone papers, 82-84, document no. 319. Also, in NAS, GD 156.62. For the Russian side of the story, see Soloviev, History of Russia, vol. 40, 230-231.}

As Keith explained later in a letter to the Earl of Kintore,

\ldots the ridiculous jealousy of those where I then served made a crime to me of
the most innocent letters I could write so far that I could hardly ever get one even
from my bother or be allowed to write him\ldots the refusal to allow my brother to
pass the rest of his days with me in Russia made me take the resolution of
quitting\ldots [and] forced me to leave a country dangerous to all foreigners, and
where innocence is no security against punishment, and to change masters very
much to my advantage.\footnote{AUA, MS 3064/B 335, letter to John, the third Earl of Kintore, 4 March 1749. Also cited in Paul

In 1747, Keith “changed masters” and settled in Prussia because Frederick the

Great had previously accepted his elder brother, whom he made Governor of
Neuchatel.\textsuperscript{112} James Keith became Frederick's Field Marshal, governor of Berlin, and military advisor.\textsuperscript{113} Keith's memoirs do not include the period of his service in Prussia, and the sources on his last ten years of life are scarce.\textsuperscript{114} Russian historians often describe Keith as a person deeply involved in the relations between the Russian and Prussian courts even after his departure to Berlin. Sergei Soloviev, in his monumental \textit{History of Russia}, points out that James Keith had many Russian-based informants and received "... precise information about everything that was going on by almost every post."\textsuperscript{115} These claims are not documented. The last known fact about Keith's life is that he died at the battle of Hochkirchen, 14 October 1758, in the service of Prussia.

It is not clear when and where Keith was initiated into Freemasonry. Sources present no veritable information about his Masonic activities before coming to Russia or after his appointment as the Provincial Grand Master during his stay in London from February 1740 till May 1741: on 28 March 1740 James Keith, "Esq; Lieutenant General in the Service of Russia" was present at the meeting "with the Masters and Wardens of fifty-eight lodges in the Devils's Tavern [when] John Keith, Earl of Kintore, was elected

\textsuperscript{112} Keith's brother, the Earl Marischal of Scotland, was the first to gain Frederick II's patronage. On James' reaction to the Keiths' brothers involvement with Frederick, see the letter "for the Earl Marshal of Scotland," from Rome on 21 February 1752 in Elphinstone papers, 70, document no. 259:

... I was not only glad of it on yours [account], but I was much pleased that so great and wise a Prince as the King of Prussia should give such marks of his favour and confidence to one who had so distinguished himself in my cause... James R.


\textsuperscript{113} A. F. Steuart, \textit{Scottish Influences in Russian History. From the End of the Sixteenth Century to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century} (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1972), 112.

\textsuperscript{114} NAS, GD 156/60, Elphinstone's papers, Keith's correspondence, General Field Marshal's Patent by Frederick King of Prussia to General von Keith, Berlin, September 20, 1747; Governor's patent by Frederick King of Prussia to Field Marshal Keith, November 29, 1749; Diploma admitting "de Keith" to be a member of the Royal Scientific and Literary Academy of Prussia, 3 September 1750.

\textsuperscript{115} Soloviev, \textit{History of Russia}, vol. 41, 13.
the Grand Master.”¹¹⁶ It is reported that Keith attended a lodge in St. Petersburg in 1732, during the term of captain John Philips, the first Provincial Grand Master.¹¹⁷ In his Materialien zur Organizieren [sic], a leading nineteenth-century Freemason in Russia Johann Friedrich Ungern-Sternberg mentions that “Sir James Keith” had connections with lodges in Russia since 1732.¹¹⁸ Some Masonic historians claim that Keith was involved with the German lodges in St. Petersburg even before coming to Russia.¹¹⁹ There is also unproven information about Keith’s Masonic activity in Sweden in 1744 when he was an envoy there.¹²⁰ Describing diplomatic intrigues between Sweden and Russia in 1746, the famed Russian historian Soloviev mentions that Keith was “a Freemason and involved with Swedish officials, particularly Nolcken, who were by no means sympathetic to the Russian party.”¹²¹ Without any reference to his sources, Soloviev points out, “Nolcken informed Keith in April that the crown prince joined a lodge [in Sweden], and expressed hope that this would strengthen the movement’s influence in Sweden.”¹²² Given Keith’s possible relations with the Prussian court and his visits to Berlin even before his relocation there in 1747, it would seem probable that Keith, a fervent Jacobite, was involved with the Grand Lodge of England only during the

¹¹⁶ RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 254 (1), Anderson’s Constitutions (1767), 229-230.
John Keith, third Earl of Kintore (1696-1758), James Keith’s cousin, was elected the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland on 30 November 1738 and the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England on April 22, 1740.
¹¹⁸ RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5286, 58-65, esp. 60.
¹¹⁹ For instance, Pypin in Russkoe masonstvo.
¹²¹ Baron Erik Mattias Nolcken (1694 - 1755) was a Swedish ambassador in St. Petersburg in 1738-41 and the secretary of state in Sweden since 1745.
¹²² Soloviev, History of Russia, vol. 38, 140-141.
one-year term of the Grand-Mastership of his cousin, turning later to Berlin lodges for guidance. One source mentions that it was General Keith who founded a lodge in Halle in December of 1756.

It is often assumed that Keith was such an important figure in the history of Russian Freemasonry because during his Mastership in the 1740s Russians started to be initiated into Freemasonry on the same footing as the members of foreign communities. But in fact, despite his presumed vital role in Russian Freemasonry, little is known about his actions as the Provincial Grand Master. We do not know whether Keith presided over a lodge or lodges or had established a structured hierarchy of the Provincial Grand Lodge. James Keith’s papers at the National Archive of Scotland contain a letter with

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123 Pypin, *Russkoe masonstvo*, 90.
NAS, GD 156/60, Elphinstone’s papers, Keith’s correspondence, folder 7, contains a letter written from London, on 9 May 1738. This document was sent by Earl of Kintore, the future Grand Master of England who bestowed Provincial Grand Mastership on John Keith. Although the letter itself is devoted to the issues related to the fate of the Keiths’ family estate after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715, it also gives clues as to how the correspondence between Britain and Russia was maintained.

“[T]his comes to you under the Prince Cantimire’s Cover,” writes Earl of Kintore referencing to Antiokh Kantemir (1708-44), a figure seminal for the beginning of the Enlightenment in Russia. In 1730, Kantemir attempted to publish his translation of Fontenelle’s *Sur la pluralité* in Russian which was suppressed by the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church as a consequence of the publication of Kantemir’s first satire *Na huliaschik uchenia (To the Detractors of Learning)*, in which he regards the clergy as hostile to new ideas and which is customarily considered as the first example of modern Russian poetry. In the 1730s, Kantemir was very close to the circle of Feofan Prokopovich and V. N. Tatishchev, allegedly among the first Freemasons in Russia. In 1731, Kantemir was appointed ambassador at the court in London; in 1738, he served as ambassador in Paris where he befriended Montesquieu and attempted to translate The Persian Letters. Kantemir was a great admirer of Locke, and introduced some of Locke’s ideas on education in his *Sed’moе chuvstvo (Seventh Sense)*, paragraphs of which are borrowed from Locke’s *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*. Further on Kantemir, see R. Sementkovskii, *A. D. Kantemir: Ego zhizn’ i literaturnaja deiatel’ nost’* (St. Petersburg: F. F. Pavlenkov, 1893); V. N. Aleksandrenko, *Russkie diplomitcheskie agenty v Londone v XVIII v.* (Warsaw: n. p., 1897), 384, n. 1; I. M. Kumok, “Rossiiskii poslannik v Anglii A. D. Kantemir,” *Voprosy Istoriи* 2 (1987). A copy of the letter from James Erskine to the Prince Cantamir [sic], London, 15 April 1738, shows close involvement of Kantemir and Lord Kintore with the Jacobites Hay, Erskine, and the Keiths.

124 *Allgemeines Handbuch der Freimaurerei*, I, 404. NAS, GD 156/60, Elphinstone’s papers, folder 3, Royal Letters, there is a letter in Swedish (and from Stockholm) signed “Friedrich” and countersigned “E. M. Nolcken” dated 13 June 1744. In the letter, Frederick, king of Sweden, addresses “Elizabeth, the Czarina of Russia” and states that though he has already thanked the Empress for her help, he avails himself of General Keith’s return to Russia to repeat his thanks. By the same opportunity he expresses his thanks to General Keith and the Generals serving under his command for the order they kept in their encampments while within the Swedish territory. The King adds that it would be a great pleasure to him if he could by his letter contribute to their advantage. On Nolcken, see further.
new information relating to the time of Keith’s Mastership. The letter dated March 11, 1743, signed by “Ja. Hewitt” of St. Petersbg and addressed to Keith, states:

    I recommend myself to your Excellency’s favour, and if I have done less or more, in my Function, that I ought to do, you’ll be so good to give me a hint of it, for my future government. I don’t perceive that our Lodge has any Enemys, nor do I see any reason for it. Since it is known to your Excellency, that our Institution consists in charitable Acts, and never midles [sic] in religion, Laws, or Polities [sic] of any Nation, but behave ourselves dutifully, as true and Faithful servants to that Gracious Monarch under whose protection we are.

    I heartily wish you Excellence a prosperous Campaign, being always sincerely & intirely [sic], with the greatest Respect.125

Possibly, this James Hewitt was a temporary replacement for Keith when the Provincial Grand Master for Russia was called out of St. Petersbg. He could also be an official Deputy Master in a St. Petersbg lodge. While it should be emphasized that not a single Russian lodge is reported to have received a warrant and/or a book of Constitutions or sent a list of members and communication reports to the Grand Lodge of England during Keith’s Mastership, this letter not only testifies to the existence of a lodge, but also, though Hewitt vehemently denies it, informs us of the fact that this lodge could have been (or rumoured to have been) under attack of its “Enemys.” Accordingly, the date when the critical consideration of Freemasonry started in Russia could be shifted from 1746-7 to 1743, supporting some claims that a possible participation of several prominent Freemasons in the revolt of 1742 attracted Empress Elisabeth’s attention to Freemasonry for the first time.126

125 NAS, GD 156/60/8/14, Elphinstone’s papers, Keith’s correspondence, letter from St. Petersbg on 11 March 1743.
126 Elizabeth, Peter the Great’s daughter, became empress overnight as a result of a palace revolt in 1742. In his analysis, a twentieth-century Freemason Kandaurov points out possible connections between this revolt and influential foreign Freemasons. See RGAVA, fond 730, opis’ 1, folder 172, 7.
Despite the prominent role that the British played in the introduction of Freemasonry to Russia, the most influential group of foreigners in Russia in the eighteenth century was the Germans.\textsuperscript{127} The German influence and the development of Freemasonry in Russia are often linked to show that possibly Freemasonry was introduced via Germany,\textsuperscript{128} and some researchers go as far as to claim that from the very early involvmentenets "Russian Freemasonry is at the same time a picture of German civilization."\textsuperscript{129} The earliest activities of German Freemasons quite possibly started during the reign of Empress Anna’s reign, who was notoriously dependent on German advisors.\textsuperscript{130}

The frontier of Russia with the German states provided especially fertile soil for the development of Freemasonry. The earliest known lodge on the territory of the Russian Empire was located not in St. Petersburg but in Vishnevets, in Volhynia (Wolin). This lodge had at least eight members as early as 1742. Among the earliest lodges, according to Serkov, there were two established in Belostok (Bialstok): one, the lodge

\textsuperscript{127} Politically, because of Sweden's struggle with Russia over the dominance in Northern Europe, Swedes were equally important, especially in the first half of the eighteenth century. However, as we will see in the next chapter, they played an important role for the development of Freemasonry only after the foundation of the Swedish system (see p. 80ff).

We do not hear about the English lodges in Russia up to 1771. Only in 1771, 40 years after Philips' appointment and 30 years after Keith's, did the Grand Lodge of England recognized as regular its first lodge in Russia, the St. Petersburg lodge of Perfect Union (A. N. Pypin, Kryptonologicheskiy uakazatel' russkikh lod' ot pervogo vvedeniya masonstva do zapreschenii ego. 1731-1822 (St. Petersburg: n. p., 1873), 8). In “Zapiska o masonstve L-ra” in Rossiiskaia starina 9 (1882), 534, Pypin presents an opinion that the lodge Skromnost' (Zur Verschwiegenheit) established by Elagin in 1768 was the first English lodge, but there is no factual basis for this. According to Pypin, Zur Verschwiegenheit was established in 1750, while Ernst Friedrichs, Geschichte der einstigen Maurerei in Russland (Berlin: Ernst Friedrichs Mitler und Sohn, 1904), 43, establishes that this lodge worked in Strict Observance and then joined the Melissino system, finally transferring its allegiance to the union of Elagin's and Reichel's lodges in 1776.

\textsuperscript{128} Nauchno-issledovatel'skii otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki (NIOR RGB, Manuscript Division of Russian State Library), fond 14 (V. C. Arsen'eva), folder 618, Sbornik molitv, izrechenii, vypisok iz besed I. A. Pozdeeva i I. E. Schwarza (1806-09), 5.

\textsuperscript{129} Friedrichs, Geschichte, 4. Emphasis is mine.

Trekh Belykh Orlov (of Three White Eagles), was founded on 20 September 1747; another, the lodge Trekh Serdets (of Three Hearts) was created around 1750 as a sister-lodge of a St. Petersburg lodge. Another early lodge, Dobrogo Pastyria (of Kind Shepherd) was active in Vil’na around 1750. The Vil’na lodge Sovershennogo Soglasiaia (of Perfect Amity) might have been created on 12 December 1751. In 1760, we find mentioning of a St. Petersburg lodge giving permission to establish a temporary military lodge during the winter stay of the Russian army in Mal’brok (Malbrok). In Riga, the first lodge in the city and one of the first in the Russian Empire, Nordstern (North Star), was set up in 1750 by the merchants Johann Dietrich von der Heyde and Johann Zuckerbecker, who had become Freemasons under Danish patronage. In 1765, Nordstern pledged allegiance to the Strict Observance system and took name of zum Schwert (to the Sword). Other lodges that appeared in the 1770s, like Apollo (1773), Kastor (with a corresponding Pollux in Dorpat, 1778), Astraea (1787), as we will see in Chapter 2, chose to come under the patronage of the British Grand Lodge and the Provincial Grand Master of Russia appointed by it. As a result of increased interactions of Russia with the German states, by the 1770s, Riga had at least eight lodges; in St. Petersburg there were seven active lodges; Vil’na had six; Reval had four;

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131 The Russian officers and local Freemasons revived this Mal’brok lodge four years later, in 1764. Serkov, Entsiklopediia, 950.
132 Pypin, Masonstvo, 499.
133 On Strict Observance, see p. 77ff.
Mitau had three; and Arkhangelsk – two.135 There were also several lodges in the naval garrison of Cronstadt.136

The role of Königsberg in transmitting Freemasonry to Russia rose tremendously during the Seven Years’ War and immediately after it. A borderland between Germany and Russia, the city transmitted different versions of Freemasonry through hundreds of officers, engineers, scholars, teachers and representatives of other middle-rank professions involved in dealings with Russia. As a result of the expansion of Western borderlands of Russia, it was in Königsberg that the contacts of Russian officers with local lodges introduced many Russians to the Craft. Thus, for instance, from the list of the Königsberg lodge Trekh Koron (Zu den Drei Kronen or Three Crowns) sent to Berlin’s Three Globes in 1761, we learn that a future Russian Field Marshal Aleksandr Vasil’evich Suvorov (identified in the list as “Oberleutnant Alexander von Suworow”) was welcomed into the lodge as a mason of the St. Petersburg lodge Trekh Zvezd (Aux Trois Etoiles or Three Stars) on 16 January 1761.137

Several historians point out the existence of relations between a lodge in Petersburg and the Berlin lodge Drei Welikugeln (Three Globes) as early as 1738-1744.138 But it is more probable that the supposed relations between a St. Petersburg lodge and the Three Globes started in 1762-63. Most likely, this St. Petersburg lodge

135 Serkov, Entsiklopediia, 19-20.
136 Serkov, Entsiklopediia, 776-77; Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 19-20.
137 The same day he advanced to the degree of Scottish Master, and in this capacity visited the lodge until 1762. T. A. Bakounine, Znamenitye russkie masonry (Moscow: Interbruk, 1991), 13-14; V. A. Levshin, Sobranie pisem i anekdotov, otosiaschikhsia k zhizni Aleksandra Vasilievicha kniazia Italiiskogo grafa Suvorova-Rymnikskogo, v koikh izobrazhaetis isinnyi dukh i kharakter sego geroita (Moscow: n. p, 1809), 166-68.
138 Joseph Gabriel Findel, Istoria frankmasonstva, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1872), 216. But since the Three Globes was founded not earlier than 1740, any relations between Russian and this lodge could start only after 1740. A. N. Pypin, “Russkoe masonstvo do Novikova,” Vestnik Evropy 6 (1868), 550.
was the lodge of Schastlivogo Soglasia (or der Glückschen Eintracht, of Happy Amity) that boasted a Courlander Biron,\textsuperscript{139} the favourite of the Empress Anna, as its founder and a prominent member. Established on 15 December 1762, Happy Amity was recognized as a sister-lodge of the Great Berlin Mother-Lodge of Three Globes on 7 April 1763 and obtained its patent from Three Globes in May of 1763. Papers in the Russian Archive of Early Acts (RGADA) testify that a lodge named der Glückschen Eintracht received a letter from the Three Globes’ secretary Carl Weisse, praising the achievements of the “lawfully” established St. Petersburg lodge in “their common [Masonic] work” and urged his brothers in Russia to remain in touch with Berlin. Weisse also asked Freemasons of this lodge to use “Pflicht” instead “Eid” in their official correspondence because Freemasons “never acknowledge taking an Oath.”\textsuperscript{140} The papers are signed on the “11th day of the 5th month 5763” by “Rossmeister, Regierender Meister, gewisser Ritter, Vorsteher, Redner, Secretair, Schatzmeister und Schaffner der gerechten und vollkommene Mutter [Loge] zu den 3 Welt-Kugeln in Berlin.” On 20 May 1763, a letter

\textsuperscript{139} Traditionally, Ernst Johann Biron (Biren) (1690-1772) is considered the real ruler of Russia during Anna’s reign (hence the term Bironoshchina to describe this period). But modern historians differ as to the extent of his actual influence. In 1737, Biron was made Duke of Courland, and on Anna’s death he was regent to the infant tsar Ioann Antonovich for three weeks, but later was arrested and exiled. Catherine II restored Biron to his duchy in 1763 in which he lived till his death in 1772.

\textsuperscript{140} RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, Bumagi i manuskrpity Ivana Perfil’yevicha Elagina, folder 216, part 6, 97. It is notable that already in 1763, German Freemasons were so cautious in using the word “oath.” The problem of the so-called Freemason’s Oath, an oath of secrecy that is given upon entering the Society, has been a controversial issue for centuries now. As members of secret society, Freemasons were supposed to remain true to their oaths, following the lead of Hiram Abiff, who was murdered for keeping a Masonic secret. Referring to the penalties for telling Masonic secrets that were graphically described, opponents of Freemasonry insisted that Masonic oaths were in conflict with the oaths established by the Church and the state and were, in their essence, extra-judicial oaths. Anti-Masonic theories claim that Masonic oaths forbid citizens from divulging any criminal act or behavior (except for murder or treason) under the threat of cruel penalties. For an example of an anti-Masonic analysis of the issue of Masonic oaths, see John Quincy Adams, \textit{Letters on the Masonic Institution} (Amherst, MA.: Acacia Press, 1996) in relation to the Morgan Masonic scandal of 1826.
from a certain Berendt, a tuileur,\textsuperscript{141} Ecosse [sic] Knight of the Lodge de l’Union and
custos berolinensis\textsuperscript{142} reminded the St. Petersburg lodge to send him one louis d’or for
his work in preparing a patent for their lodge and for covering his copying fees. Berendt
also offered his services as a middleman for buying and transmitting Masonic jewels,
aprons, and regalia to Russia because, as he explained, he was the main provider of the
lodges of Hamburg, Braunschweig, Dresden, and Greifswald.\textsuperscript{143}

The German influences on the development of Freemasonry in Russia intensified
during the reign of Peter III.\textsuperscript{144} According to historians of Freemasonry, the Craft in

\textsuperscript{141} Tuileur, Tailleur, Tyler, or Ziegel Decken is an officer of the lodge who serves as an outer
guard, supervising entrance to the lodge and granting access to it only to the members.

\textsuperscript{142} A Berlin superintendent.

\textsuperscript{143} Cited in Pekarski, Dopolnenia k istorii masonstva v Rossii v XVIII veke (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia
Akademia nauk, 1869), 8.

\textsuperscript{144} The death of Empress Elizabeth on January 5, 1762 led to the accession of her nephew, the prussophile
Peter III, who was also pro-English in sentiment and drew close to the British ambassador Robert Keith.
(Robert Keith (died 1774) was British ambassador to Vienna, 1748-1757, and to St. Petersburg, 1758-1762.
Boris Bashilov, Istoriiia russkogo masonstva, vol. 3 (Buenos Aires: n. p., 1950?), 47; vol. 4, 3, points
out that the diplomat Robert Keith played an important role in Catherine II’s coming to power. Bashilov
mentions that Robert Keith belonged to a “Masonic family of the Keiths” and corresponded with Frederick
II. On page 6, Bashilov calls the English diplomat “Frederick’s spy” and a “mason” who “loaned money to
Catherine to dethrone her husband.” Origin of this confusion is, probably, in Soloviev’s History of Russia,
in which the difference between Robert Keith and Jacob Keith is not clearly established. For a more reliable
treatment of ambassador Robert Keith’s activities in Russia, see: Karl W. Schweizer, “Scottish Diplomats in
the British Diplomatic Service 1714-1789,” Scottish Tradition: Journal of the Canadian Association of
Scottish Studies (1978): 115-36; G. Smyth, Memoirs and Correspondence (Official and Familiar) of Sir R.
Murray Keith (London, 1849).

The brief period of Peter III’s rule, from January to July of 1762, marked the highpoint of British
influence, a position which declined dramatically, never to be completely recovered, during the years after
1763 (Karl W. Schweizer, Carol S. Leonard, “Britain, Prussia, Russia and the Galitzen Letter: A

Peter III’s reign emancipated nobles from obligatory service to the state and abolished the Secret
Investigatory Chancery and torture of witness. He also prohibited non-noble ownership of serf villages. He
was much acclaimed by the nobility because he strengthened noble privileges and secularized ecclesiastical
Peter III encouraged religious toleration and favored Lutherans and, in an unprecedented leniency toward
the non-Orthodox population of Russia, on 29 January of 1792, he issued an edict of toleration for Old
Believers, thus attempting to resolve the issue about which Freemasons in Russia felt very strongly. Later,
in the second half of the century, Masonic representatives in Russia would passionately support toleration
towards the Old Believers. Senator Ivan Lopukhin, an ardent and vocal Masonic activist and a judge at the
Criminal Court, considered the Old Believers and members of any religious sect as lawful and loyal
subjects of the state, even though they did not nominally belong to the Orthodox Church. [I. V. Lopukhin],
Russia greatly benefited from the reverence of Peter III towards Frederick of Prussia, who, as it was widely known at the time, was a Freemason himself. Imitating Frederick, Peter allegedly patronized the brotherhood and gave a house in St. Petersburg as a gift to the lodge of Postoianstva (of Constancy) that worked in St. Petersburg and its suburb Oranienbaum since 1762.\footnote{There is some possible confusion as to whether the lodge of Perfect Constancy was the same as the lodge of Constancy. The lodge Zur Wahren Beständigkeit (of Perfect Constancy) worked in St. Petersburg in 1760-1769. According to another source, the lodge was founded in 1762 and was revived in 1769 to join the Elagin (i.e. English) system.} It is often assumed that Peter III not only sympathized with Freemasonry but also was a Master at a lodge in Oranienbaum (probably, the lodge of Constancy).\footnote{Allgemeines, II., 551.} This story is indirectly supported by the reference to Peter III’s involvement with a lodge in Oranienbaum by Volkov, Freemason and Peter’s confidant. Volkov was questioned by Catherine II’s orders to find out “who during the reign of the previous monarch was with him in the Masonic lodge and what is the aim of this sect disagreeable with God and where are the printed books and who is known to him as a member of this sect.”\footnote{Quoted in Pekarskii, Dopolenienie, 5.} As an alleged eighteenth-century Freemason Andrei Bolotov testified in his memoirs, because “across-the-board reports stated that the heir (future Peter III) was a mason, very many of our [officers] entered this society, and we never had as many masons as then.”\footnote{[A. Bolotov], Zhizn’ i prikluchenija Andreiia Bolotova (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1986), 400: Mnogie govorili toga, chto pomoglo k tomy mnogo i voshedshee v togdashnie vremena y nas v sil’noe upotreblenie masonstvo. On [Peter III] vveden byl kak-to l’stetsami i soobschnikami v nevodorzhanostiakh svoikh v sei orden, a kak korol’ Prussikii byl togda, kak izvestno, grand-metrom sego ordena, to ot samogo togo i proizoshla ta otmennaia sviat’ i druzhba ego s korelem Prusskim, pospeshstvoyavshaia potom tak mnogo ego neschastiu i samoi pagube. Chto molva siia byla ne sovsem nespravedliv, v tom sluclilos’ mne samomyi udostoverit’sia. Buduchi esche v Kenigsberge i zashled odnanzhdy k luchzemu tamoshnymi glazami pozdravit’noe k nemy pis’mo, pisannoe toga ili}
seemed so likely to Freemasons and non-Freemasons alike that Andrei Bolotov, who communicated with many Prussian brothers, witnessed how a delegation of Königsberg Freemasons sketched a letter to Peter III at a local bookbinder.

Peter III’s sympathy towards Prussia and his involvement with Freemasonry were even rumoured to turn the course of the Seven Years’ War. Bolotov, who participated in the war and was stationed in Königsberg during the Russian occupation, hints that many of the Russian military failures were believed to “partly stem” from a possible Masonic friendship between Emperor Peter III and Frederick the Great that “was known … on hearsay.” After the death of the Empress Elizabeth in 1761, Peter III decided to make peace with Frederick the Great. This move was greatly facilitated, as

[many rumored ... by Freemasonry which then started to come to fashion. He [Peter III] was initiated by some cajolers and abettors in his incontinence into this society, and since the King of Prussia was then … the grand-maitre of this society, this resulted in his friendship with the King of Prussia.”

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Andrei Bolotov (1738-1833) was a naturalist, writer, an educator, and the founder of the Russian agricultural science. Because of his impeccable German, during the Seven Years’ War he was sent to Königsberg to the Chanceller of the Russian Governor of the East Prussia. He worked closely with General Lieutenant Baron Korff, whom he mentions as the connecting link between Friedrich and Peter III in the Masonic affairs. Bolotov stayed in East Prussia from 1758 until 1762. In his memoirs, he repeatedly stressed that his experiences in the Baltic Sea provinces and the interactions with their German inhabitants played decisive role in his life. Later, during 1776-1796, he managed the Bogoroditsk region. Active participant of many intellectual activities, founding member the Free Economic Society and editor and publisher of The Country Dweller (Sel’skii zhitel’, 1778-1779) magazine, Bolotov contributed to The Economic Magazine (Ekonomicheskii magazine, 1780-1789) published by the leader of Moscow Freemasons and his one-time friend N. I. Novikov. It is not clear whether Bolotov himself was a Mason, but he certainly personally belonged to the same social circles as many leading Freemasons in Russia. In his Entsyklopediia, 128, 990, Serkov mentions Bolotov as a possible member of the Königsberg military lodge of Ioanna Krestitella (John the Baptist) working in Elagin’s system around 1773.

149 [Bolotov], Zhizni i priklucheniiia, 400.
First Russian Involvements in Freemasonry

While Peter I, Empress Anna, and Peter III were actively engaged with the West during their reigns, Empress Elizabeth (1741-1762), a daughter of Peter the Great, was a vocal opponent of foreign influences. Her accession brought an end to the supremacy of the so-called “German” party at court.\textsuperscript{150} As a part of her campaign against excessive dependency on foreigners, she initiated inquiry into a foundation and membership of a “Massonic [sic] sect” in St. Petersburg in 1747. A state official Mikhailo Olsuf’ev was embedded into the lodge. From his report, it is clear that there were some 35-40 people involved in this lodge, including high-ranking nobility from the families of the Voronzovs, Golitsins, and Trubetskies.\textsuperscript{151} Of 35 named people, only ten seem to be of foreign origin. Moreover, while military nobility (mostly officers of the Cadet Corps, and Preobrazhenskii, Semenovskii, and Ingermanland regiments) heavily represents the Russian side, foreign members are middling-sort professionals. It is notable that the officers of the Cadet Corps, P. I. Melissino (1724? 1726-1797), T. I. Osterwal’d (1729-179?), P. S. Svistunov (1732-1808), and S. V. Perfil’ev (1734-1793) belonged to the same group of men who helped to build the first Russian theatrical troupe in 1750. These men’s contacts with the entertainment circle explain the inclusion of three court musicians and the dance master of the Cadet Corps in the lodge. At the same time, it is

\textsuperscript{150} Senior Courlanders, such as Ostermann, Biron, and Munnich, were stripped of their high rank and office, and sent into exile.

\textsuperscript{151} OPI GIM, fond 398 (P. P. Bektova), opis’ 1, folder 20, 50-51. The list of \textit{Granmaître} and Masons includes: I. Vorontsov, A. Sumarokov, Captain Milisino [sic], Osterwald, Svistunov, and Perfil’ev. From Preobrazhenskii regiment there were two people; from Semenovskii regiment -- nine (including Princes V. and A. Galitsyns; from cavalry -- seven (including Prince Sergei Trubetskoi, Prince Fedor Galitsyn, Nikolai Apraksin); from Ingermanland regiment -- six. Notably, the list also includes four musicians -- Madonis, Vil’da, Shnurfel’d, and Vakari (Italian). -- a Cadet Corps dance master Pele, and merchant Miller.
the same group of well-educated aristocrats who were the first to appreciate all other aspects of European culture and actively involved in the first attempts at Russian belles lettres. Among the members of this lodge we find the famous Russian poet A. P. Sumarokov, and four future historians: Prince Scherbatov, Ivan Nikitich Boltin, Feodor Mamonov, and P. S. Svistunov.

Despite initial suspicions about possible foreign liaisons of the lodge, Olsuf’ev’s report established “... with clear evidence that this [sect] is nothing but a key of friendship and brotherhood, which is everlasting and grants to its members enlightenment.”152 A Governor-General of Moscow Prozorovskii’s later report to the Empress Catherine II supports the suggestion of lodges’ essentially harmless nature stating that during Elizabeth’s reign Masonic lodges were responsible only for “some different pranks and tricks.”153 As a result of the investigation, the St. Petersburg lodge inspected by Olsuf’ev was allowed to continue under police supervision. But it did not change Empress’ attitude towards Freemasonry.

The interrogation of Prince Golovin, who returned from Germany in 1747, proves that Russian authorities were seriously concerned about Masonic international ties. Since Frederick’s sympathy towards Freemasonry was well known, many questions during Golovin’s interrogation on February 25, 1747 were focused on his affiliation with Frederick and Freemasonry. Elizabeth thought of Golovin as being in “dubious relations

152 OPI GIM, fond 398 (P. P. Bektova), opis’ 1, folder 20, 9 (49). Also, RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 207. Doklad Mikhaila Olsuf’eva o masonskoj lozhe v St. Peterburge (Report of Mikhail Olsuf’ev about a Masonic lodge in St. Petersburg). Printed in Letopisi russkoj literatury i drevnostei 4 (1862), section 3, 49-51. The report is not dated. According to the suggestion of Longinov, the date should be around 1756, the year when Sumarokov, one of the people named in the report, received the rank of Colonel. M. N. Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty (Moscow: Tipografia Gracheva, 1867), 92-93.
153 Pekarskii, Dopolenenia, 127: “iz zhizh lozh vykhodili nekotorye raznye shalosti i shutki.” Prince A. Prozorovskii was the Governor-General of Moscow during Catherine’s reign and one of the main figures in the prosecution of Novikov’s Masonic circle during the 1780-90s.
with the Prussian King.”

Admitting his own belonging to the fraternity, Golovin also
named Princes Zakhar and Ivan Chernyshevs as “living in the same Order,” but he did
not testify about his connection to the Prussian lodges. Looking back at the
interrogation, General Prozorovskii pointed out that early lodges in Russia did not seem
to have any serious intellectual interchange with foreign lodges, mentioning that the
loges he inspected “did not have any correspondence with the lodges in other places.”

Prozorovskii’s underestimation or unawareness of early international Masonic
activities involving Russia can be attributed to the fact that the first Freemasons in Russia
did not leave any significant documentary traces of their activities. During Elizabeth’s
reign, Freemasons were so cautious that they “met only occasionally, by stealth, and not
in a regular house but often even in an attic of a remote building.” Allusions to some
possible Masonic activity were documented only in several instances, including the
Olsuf’ev’s report, Golovin’s interrogation, and later, the trial documents related to the
unsuccesful plot of Vasilii Mirovich in 1764.

154 Letopisi russkoi literatury i drevnosti, 4 (1862), 52. Pekarskii, Dopolneniia, 3.
155 OPI GIM, fond 398 (Fond P. P. Beketova), opis’ 1, 51. Also, RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1. Kalinkin dom i
dela o prestupeniakh protiv naravstvennosti (1741-1851), folder 206. O Grafe Nikolae Golovine i prochikh
litsakh, k masonstvu prinadlezhchikh. 1747 (About Prince Nikolai Golovin and other persons belonging
to Freemasonry, 1747). Published in Letopisi Russkoi literatury i drevnosti, ed. N. Tikonravov, 4 (1862):
149-52.

This incident also testifies to the fact that Freemasonry was brought to Russia not only by foreigners,
but also via Russians who came in contact with the Craft while living abroad. Douglas Smith mentions
several names of Russians who, like S. K. Naryshkin, ambassador to England, were initiated into
Freemasonry abroad before the 1750s. See Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 19.

156 Pekarskii, Dopolneniia, 127: “nikakogo soobscheniia s uchrezhdennymi v prochikh mestakh ne imeli."
157 I. V. Beber as quoted in A. N. Pypin, “Russkoe masonstvo do Novikova,” Vestnik Evropy 6 (1868),
556. Ivan Vasil’evich Beber or Johann Jacob Böber, (1746 – 1820), an expatriate from Weimar, was an
active member of five Masonic lodges in Russia and Master of the lodge Mildthatigkeit zum Pelikan in
1780.

158 Before her death, Empress Anne chose her grandnephew and the son of Prince Anthony Ulrich of
Brunswick-Lunenburg, Ioann Antonovich (1740-1764), as the successor to the throne. Being only two
months, as Ivan VI, he was made the Emperor. His mother Catherine-Elizabeth-Christina, who was named
in orthodoxy Anna Leopol’dovna, became the regent. As a result of the coup of 24-25 November 1741,
Although early investigations of Masonic organizations in Russia did not find Freemasonry-related activities dangerous to the state and society, it is precisely during Empress Elizabeth’s reign that we find instances of the increasing involvement of Russian educated elite in the brotherhood. In the first half of the century, maintained and disseminated by the enthusiasm of foreigners and some Russians who used lodges as private spaces for own individual betterment, Freemasonry remained a foreign import. As Freemasons were coming to Russia from Britain, German territories, France, and Sweden, lodges’ membership was initially based exclusively on foreigners and Russian nobility who interacted with them. Freemasonry was regarded as a fashion brought by the initial Westernizing efforts and not considered critically within the context of specifically Russian agenda.

By the middle of the century, Russian affiliation with Freemasonry becomes more widespread. For example, Ivan Perfil’evich Elagin, the first Russian Provincial Grand Master appointed by the Grand Lodge of England in 1772, was initiated as early as 1750. In his memoirs, Elagin points out that initially curiosity and vanity attracted him to Freemasonry. On the one hand, he was intrigued by Masonic secrecy; on the other, he wanted to reap the benefits of mingling with the people “who … accomplished

Elizabeth, Peter’s daughter, became Empress. The infant Emperor Ioann Antonovich was arrested and secretly kept in the Schlüsselburg prison in St. Petersburg (M. Semevskii, Ivan VI Antonovich (St. Petersburg, 1866); A. Bruckner, Imperator Ivan VI i ego sem’ia (Moscow, 1874)). On 5 July 1764, one of the officers in the prison, a sub-lieutenant Vasilii Mirovich, organized a coup and unsuccessfully tried to proclaim Ioann the Emperor. Ioann was killed in the commotion. Being accused of an attempt to give throne to Ioann Antonovich, Mirovich pointed to lieutenant Apollon Ushakov as his accomplice. Examination of Ushakov’s belongings brought a list of paper with a picture of ceremonial carpet, an inscription of “d’aprentif maçon,” and the titles of “Venerable,” “Metr Ecosse,” and “Ecosse grades” in hand-written Catechesis of Apprentice, which possibly indicates a French-language influence of the Scottish rite. Cited in Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 8-11. Besides this reference and occasional mentioning in Serkov’s Entsiklopedia, we do not know anything about functioning and dissemination of the high-degree lodges in the first stages of Freemasonry’s existence in Russia.

159 Transliteration of Elagin’s name varies greatly. In non-Russian sources, the most commonly used versions are Yelagin, Yelagin, Elagin, Gelagin, or even Gelagin. On Elagin’s role as the Provincial Grand Master, see Chapter 2.
a lot” and were superior in their “rank, stature, and recognition.” As Elagin put it, by participating in a lodge, he “conceitedly hoped” to enlist “friends who could assist in reaching his happiness.” But soon he became disillusioned with the brotherhood in Russia as it existed in the 1750s and made another attempt at discovering the secrets of the Craft under the guidance “of people well-versed in Freemasonry” only in the late 1760s. In the 1750s, Elagin could not find “any avail” in early Freemasonry in Russia because there was “no trace of any learning or moral advancement,” but only “inapprehensible things, weird ceremonies, [and] irrational actions.” During the lodge meetings, he “heard inconceivable symbols, absurd catechisms, stories contrary to any reasoning, [and] explanations not understandable by common sense, all of which was taught by tasteless and ineloquent Masters who did not want to explain or did not know anything themselves.” To him, lodge meetings seem to be “an amusement for people who want to entertain themselves, sometimes inexcusably and indecently, at the expense of a newly initiated member,” when everyone could “joke with a respectable exterior at an open meeting, shout unintelligible songs in dissonance at the ceremonial banquet, drink good wine in excess at the expense of others, and end this dedication to Minerva

160 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 3-6. Also, “Novye materialy dla istorii masonstva: zapiska I. P. Elagina “Povest’ o samom sebe,” Russkii arkhiv 1 (1864): 591. Throughout his life, Elagin was consistently successful in court politics and in making right connections. He began his court career in 1758, when he was arrested on accusations of aiding Catherine (the future Catherine the Great) to correspond with the Polish Stanislaw-August Poniatovskii and was sent in exile to his estate. With Catherine’s accession to the throne, Elagin instantly rose to power. Another prominent Freemason who helped Catherine to get the throne was Count Panin. (David L. Ransel, The Politics of Catherinian Russia: The Panin Party (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).


162 Elagin, Zapiska, 593-594: “...ni teni kakogo-libo uchenia, nizhe predpissaianii ravstvennykh ...”, “... predmety neudob’ postizhimy, obrady strannye; i slyshal simvoly nerassuditel’nye, katekhisy, umu ne sootvetstvusche; povesti, obschemu o mire povestvovaniu prekoslovnye, ob’iasnenia tennye i zdravomu rassudu protivnye, kotorye ili ne khotevshimi, ili ne znauymiki masterami bez vsiakogo vkusa i sladkorechii prepodavalis’. “
with a worship of Bacchus.” \textsuperscript{163} Along with other reports, Elagin’s testimony about the unfortunate state of Freemasonry in the 1750s reflects the author’s personal attitude regarding the Craft. But if in the 1750s, Elagin considered activities in the lodge to be “a mere joke intended only for spending time,” \textsuperscript{164} by the 1770s he was ready to lead Masonic activities, facilitating the integration of intellectual endeavors in Russia into the overall Western movement. The fact that his second attempt at Freemasonry was so successful can be taken as a telling sign of the transformation that Freemasonry and Russian society would undergo in the second part of the century. \textsuperscript{165}

Although by the middle of the century Freemasonry was increasingly taking roots on Russian soil and feeding the minds of the young Russian intellectuals, only by the end

\textsuperscript{163} Elagin, Zapiska, 593-594:

…igrou ludei, zhelauschikh na chet vnov’ priemlemogo zabavljet’ sia, inogda nepozvolitel’no i nebiagoprizonio … so stemennym vidom v okrytvoi lozhe shuti’ i pri torghestvennoi vechere za trapezou nesoglasnym vopliem neponiatiie revet’ pesni i na schet blizhnogo khoroishim upivat’ sia vinom, da nachatoe Minerve sluzhenie okochnitsia prazdnestvom Bakhusu.


\textsuperscript{164} Elagin, Zapiska, 593-594: “raboty v nikh [lozhakh] pochital sovershennoi igrushkoy, dlia preaprovodzenia prazdnogo vremeni vydumannogo.”

\textsuperscript{165} Elagin was by no means the only one who did not take early Freemasonry seriously. The general spirit of socializing and clubbing at the time is captured in Robert Fergusson’s “Auld Reekie” (1773):

> Now mony a Club, jocose and free,
> Gie a’ to Merriment and Glee,
> Wi, Sang ang Glass, they fley the Pow’r
> O’ Care that wad harass the Hour:
> For Wine and Baccus still bear down
> Our thwarted Fortunes wildest Frown:
> It makes you stark, and bauld and brave,
> Ev’n when descending to the Grave.

of century did Freemasonry in Russia start appealing to the elite who already possessed the ability to absorb and challenge its ideas on a much broader scale and a deeper level. Several important elements of the Russian development after the Petrine reforms contributed to the Masonic boom among the Russians in the second half of the century: the isolation of educated persons in Russia from the West; the relatively small public sphere in Russia; the conflict of Western values with Russian reality; the decay of religion among the educated and the search for political and spiritual substitutes; and repression by the government of free political and social activity. Combined, all these factors influenced Russian cultural and intellectual development and drew the Russian educated elite, who set its stamp on Russian intellectual and cultural development, to Freemasonry.

The problems encountered by Elagin and other early Russian "seekers of truth" in understanding the "proper" role of Freemasonry can be partially attributed to the lack of instructions and explanations from foreign Masonic governing bodies. No official rules, instructions, or rituals were published or approved by the Grand Lodge of England. The first printed official rituals of the Grand Lodge of England date from the late 1820s. As we will see in the next chapter, this peculiarity hindered the progress of the English version of Freemasonry and greatly attracted Freemasons in Russia to various high-degree modifications. Unlike the Grand Lodge of England, other rites often transferred their warrants or books of Constitutions in foreign languages to Russia, but there were no

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concrete instructions on how to manage a lodge, properly conduct the ceremonies, or understand Masonic ideas.\textsuperscript{167}

Without proper practical and theoretical guidance, Masonic rituals and the whole purpose of lodges often seemed absurd. But the problem of the relative isolation of Masons in Russia from major Western developments of the Craft ran much deeper. Many Masonic commentators emphasized the correlation between the "spread of civilization and refinement" and the level of the development of Freemasonry, condescendingly speculating whether Russia would eventually catch up with Europe.\textsuperscript{168}

If early Freemasonry in Russia seemed to be insufficiently developed, it was taken to be a reflection of the general problems with Russia's transformation. Almost a century later after Elagin, a conscientious anonymous English Masonic commentator analysed the insufficient depth of Craft's development in Russia in the eighteenth century and expresses the same sentiment:

\begin{quote}
... Upon the whole, it appears that education had not sufficiently progressed to admit the Russians generally into the Craft. The Lodges were for pleasure only, and Masonry became an expensive toy wherewith to kill time. The use of trinkets and ornaments, in the higher orders of the Craft, served to embellish the persons of the superior classes. Candidates were admitted without sufficient inquiry and caution, and initiations were regarded as a necessary measure of finance, which, indeed, was carried to an enormous extent.\textsuperscript{169}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Russian Education and Intellectual Milieu before the 1770s}

Growth and development of the educated elite in Russia in the eighteenth century was a direct by-product of the Petrine reforms. Even though the two main directions that

\textsuperscript{167} Brodsky, \textit{English Freemasonry in Europe in 1717-1919}, 55.

\textsuperscript{168} For Western patronizing attitudes to the development of Russia, see D. von Mohrenschütz, \textit{Russia in the Intellectual Life of Eighteenth-Century France} (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936).

\textsuperscript{169} "Freemasonry in Europe in the Past Century with a List of Continental Lodges," extracted from the \textit{Freemasons' Quarterly Review} (London, 1846), 11.
Peter's reforms took -- secularization and Westernization -- had already been at work under his predecessors, Peter's utilitarian concerns in providing the country with the professionals, combined with his encouragement in adopting European social etiquette, established the necessary basis for the creation of an educated elite. In Russian historiography, the Enlightenment movement in Russia has often been termed an "intellectual upheaval," indicating the speed of the changes in style of thinking and outlook on the world. It is certainly true that the vast country was radically transformed in a brief period during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{170} The feeling of urgency for the transformation from above made Russia develop "not in centuries but in decades."\textsuperscript{171} However, many consequences of this break from the tradition started to be evident only in the in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century when the Enlightenment reached its height. Although Peter's Westernizing efforts were the keynote of Russian cultural and intellectual life throughout the eighteenth century, the views identified with European Enlightenment developed into a dominant trend of cultural and social life of educated Russia considerably later in the century.\textsuperscript{172} In the words of an eighteenth-century observer,

\begin{quote}
If the Creator of worlds, according to great Euler, should decide to kindle a new star in the boundless spaces of heaven, general years would elapse before its rays reached us. In the same manner, the lamp of enlightenment lit by the benevolent
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{170} Historians of Russia continue to assess the role of continuity in Russian history. While the revolutionary aspects of the Petrine reforms cannot be overlooked, they should not be overemphasized to overshadow certain progressive developments before Peter's reforms.


\textsuperscript{172} In the eighteenth century, the process of cultural Westernization was limited and affected primarily the educated elites.
hand of the wise legislator [Peter I] will not illuminate the moral sphere with its radiant glow until a long time has passed.\textsuperscript{173}

Though early educational practices gave the Russian nobility an ambience of European manners, for the most part of the eighteenth century even the highest nobility of the country had “that superficial Aeducation from Swarms of French Teachers who know little more than their native toungue… A French Taylor or Shuemaker has a better address and man[ners] … than many of you[r] Learned Senators.”\textsuperscript{174} Count de Ségur, a French ambassador to the court of Catherine the Great, saw St. Petersburg as a confused blend of “the age of barbarism and that of civilization, the tenth and the eighteenth centuries, the manners of Asia and those of Europe, coarse Scythians and polished Europeans.”\textsuperscript{175}

Due to the practical nature of Petrine educational reforms, education was considered to be a form of service to the state.\textsuperscript{176} Many of the writers and journalists in the eighteenth century and the leading Freemasons, such as Sumarokov, Kheraskov, Elagin, Nartov, and Melissino, were graduates of the Cadet Corps, an institution established by Peter for the compulsory education of the service gentry. According to Douglas Smith’s evaluations, in the eighteenth century, approximately 1,100 Masons came from the ranks of the officer corps of the army and navy and from the state civil

\begin{footnotes}
\item[174] NAS, GD 24/1/846, John Mounsey’s letter, 18 June 1762. A native of Scotland, Mounsey was a Privy Councillor, first Physician, and Architect of all medical affairs in Russia.
\end{footnotes}
Despite the inadequacies of the institutional framework that implemented the government’s education policy, Peter’s determination to provide compulsory education for the gentry had begun to change the intellectual interests of the service nobility. Peter’s educational policies aimed at professional education, opened wider opportunities not only for the service nobility, but also for the country’s minute professional class of commoners (raznochintsy).

Only in 1755, with the establishment of the Moscow University did Russians gain access to an education that was broader than a professional training. The first Russian university combined the training of civil servants – bureaucrats, physicians, or teachers, children of raznochintsy of various sorts -- with the gentlemen’s training aimed at cultivation of intellectual and moral faculties. Before the emancipation of the nobility and the foundation of the university, children of aristocrats studied with private tutors and entered distinct elite establishments such as the Guards or the Cadet Corps. Their learning was comprised of independent reading, conversations, and, increasingly, travel abroad. After Peter III’s emancipation of the nobility from the service to the state, educated gentry obtained leisure and an independent economic position. These conditions led to the creation of more sophisticated intellectual inquiries that involved religion, morality, and rudiments of national consciousness. The emergent ideal of a gentleman as a man of culture who is able to free himself from the immediate problems of livelihood and who shows interest in common concerns of mankind such as friendship, love, God, or the education required a new educational framework. The new university quickly responded to the demands of the Westernizing generation and became the earliest

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cradle of the Russian intelligentsia, “whose mentality was the exact opposite of conscious professionalism.” It is not coincidental that during Catherine’s reign many leading Freemasons were in one way or another connected to Moscow university, which, like Freemasonry itself, attracted new generations of young people not only by opportunity to study and freely socialize but also to develop intellectual systems that could answer questions posed by Westernization.

One of the major consequences of Petrine reforms was the disruption of the wholeness of the way of living and thinking dictated by the Russian Orthodox Church. Peter abolished the Russian Orthodox patriarchate, took much of the church’s wealth, and extended his predecessors’ policy of freedom of religion for non-Orthodox foreigners. While the disruptive dynamics of Petrine reforms attempted to uproot the old Russian culture, the majority of the population continued to rely on the Orthodox Russian Church as an important force for cultural stability and social integration. William Coxe, a traveller and a Freemason, was one of many who commented on the traditions and beards in Russia, pointing out that “notwithstanding the rigorous edicts issued by Peter I the far greater number still wear beards; being scarcely less attached to that patriarchal custom than their ancestors.” This led him to the conclusion that “the peasants, who form the bulk of the nation, are still almost as deficient in the arts as before the reign of Peter.”

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178 In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation,” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1967), 47. Also, on the role of foreign Freemasons in Moscow University, later in Chapter 5.
180 Coxe, Travels in Poland and Russia, 152-53.
With Western education and manners in different degrees of polish taking roots throughout the highest strata of society, the generations of the Russian elite who grew during and after Peter I’s reign were, in a sense, foreigners to the rest of the country. But the conflict between the intellectual and cultural life of the minority and the inhumanity of the social system as a whole had been “a growing force in Russian society since the emancipation of the gentry” undertaken by Peter III.\footnote{Martin Malia, \textit{Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism: 1812-1855} (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 18.}\footnote{\textit{Letopisi russkoi literatury i drevnosti}, ed. N. Tikhonravov, II, pt. 3 (Moscow, 1859-1863), 13.}

In the problematic existence of “the two Russias,” this tension between a “traditionally Russian” way of living and thinking and foreign institutions introduced by the “forced” process of Westernization led to the situation when a very limited the European-educated minority circle opposed the traditional culture of the common people. The small group of Russian elite considered their foreign contacts and the acquisition of Western knowledge to be a necessity for national survival. This was in sharp contrast with the rest of the society which feared everything foreign as a potential threat to the traditional values and spiritual identity. The prevailing mood of xenophobia and isolation was reflected in the warnings of the clergy against foreign influences, which for the most part were ignored by the upper strata of Russian society. In the 1740s, the Orthodox Church had deplored the influx of Freethinking and “epicurean views” of the “lovers of this world,” speaking of the phenomenon as something new, foreign, and destructive.\footnote{Martin Malia, \textit{Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism: 1812-1855} (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 18.} A court sermon delivered in the 1740 inveighed with equal vehemence
against “animal-like, godless atheists, heretics, renegades, schismatics and Armetians,”
foreigners of various faiths, and “Epicurean and Freemasonic morals and spirit.”¹⁸³

To be attractive to a wider circle, Freemasonry had to find a receptive audience
and plant ideas into a prepared intellectual soil. The results of Peter’s practical reforms
were reflected in the direction cultural and intellectual transformations took during the
reign of Catherine the Great. As the Russian elite matured and received access to a wider
range of Western ideas and values, it became more receptive to foreign intellectual and
cultural influences. For the Russian elite, the Enlightenment brought a general
secularization of the philosophical image of man, society, and the world as a whole, thus
creating the theoretical foundations for a modern attitude of rational criticism toward all
elements of culture. This intellectual emancipation and tension that opened the
possibility of critical reflection led Russian intellectuals into a continuous identity crisis.

Failure to provide a unified outlook on life was combined with ambivalent
attitudes towards Western values in Russian society. Reminiscing about his father, a
nineteenth-century publicist Alexander Herzen describes him as a “grim, half-frozen
human being,” the product of “the encounter of two such incompatible things as the
[Western] eighteenth century and Russian life” -- a collision of cultures that had
destroyed a good many among the more sensitive members of the Russian elite,
especially when “in union with a frightful stimulus of personal caprice – the idleness of
the Russian serf-owner.”¹⁸⁴ Wondering whether Russia was a part of European

¹⁸³ Letopisi russkoi literatury i drevnosti, II, pt 3, 22.
As a sizeable collection of anti-Masonic songs dating from this period show, all sorts of rumors circulated
about the strange beliefs and practices of the Freemasons. Some anti-Masonic songs are published in S. V.
Eshevskii, Sochinenia po russkoi istorii, 173-75.
civilization or destined to follow its own historical path, the eighteenth-century Russian intellectual community has posed issues of cultural self-identity that became its main preoccupation in the nineteenth century. How the Russian elite posed and resolved the problem of Russia’s relationship to (and with) the West often determined the direction of their intellectual activities, including, as I consider in Chapter 3, their involvement with different versions of Freemasonry. For some, this identity crisis was resolved in a fervid rejection of all European values. Others enthusiastically adopted everything coming from Europe.

The split was crystallized and reflected in the attitudes towards a phenomenon that in Russia was called Vo’ltianstvo (Voltaireanism). Voltaireanism was used as a term to understand everything from religious freethinking to the imitation of the French fashion. A Freemason, deist, atheist, freethinker or anyone else whose views and attitudes were presumably influenced by Western ideas was often called a Vol’terian, meaning an advocate of the Voltaireanism. Following their disappointment with the Orthodox Church and the growing exposure to Western anti-clerical tendencies, many educated people in Russia attempted to create a worldview that was not based on the authority of the Church. This led to the formation of an intellectual system and a way of living based on the acceptance of the main positions of the radical French Enlightenment. The French Enlightenment had profound influence on Russian intellectual development in the eighteenth century, and since no writer was more widely read in Russia in the eighteenth century than Voltaire, the phenomenon of French intellectual influence was

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185 This is the problem that in the nineteenth century crystallized into the opposition between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers.
synthesized in the name of the most popular French philosophe. It was widely known that Empress Catherine the Great highly esteemed French philosophes and corresponded with many of them. Many times Catherine emphasized that she wanted Voltaire’s works to be “studied, learned by heart so that the minds would be fed by him [Voltaire]; this educates citizens, geniuses, heroes, and authors; this would grow a hundred thousand talents.” She made public professions of her admiration of the French Enlightenment not only in semi-private correspondence but also in her famous “Instruction” to the deputies of the Legislative Commission.

On a more practical side, Catherine encouraged and subsidized the Association for Translation of Foreign Books that translated and published at least 470 titles, 350 of which were from the French. The translations of Voltaire alone numbered 50. As a

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186 It should be emphasized that the general infatuation with French culture and thought was limited to the Russian nobility and the court. Moreover, Marc Raeff’s works establish that French influence was never a monopoly. See, for instance, his “The Enlightenment in Russia and Russian thought in the Enlightenment,” in *The Eighteenth Century in Russia*, ed. J. C. Garrard (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973) and “Les Slaves, les Allemands et les ‘Lumières,’” *Canadian Slavic Studies* I (winter, 1967), 521-51.


188 Quoted in Z. Visher, “Ekaterina i prosvetitel’ skie idei Zapada,” *Mir Bozhii* 12 (1896), 7-8: “... izuchali, chtoby ikh uchili naizust, chtohby umy pitalis’ im; eto obrazuet grazhdan, geniev, geroyev i avtorov; eto razov’et sto tyschih talantov.”

189 [Catherine the Great], *The Grand Instruction to the Commissioners Appointed to Frame a New Code of Laws for the Russian Empire: Composed by Her Imperial Majesty Catherine II* (London: T. Jefferys, 1768).

190 V. Sigovskii, “Filosofskie nastroeniiia i idei v russkom romane XVIII veka,” *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveschenia* (May, 1905), 51. According to the index, in addition to 350 translations of the French books, there were translations of 107 German, 6 English, and 7 Italian books. Voltaire, Maupertuis, D’Alembert, Helvetius, Condillac, Fenelon, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Baumarchais, Marmontel, Mercier, and Buffon were among the translated French authors; and Locke, Hume, Swift, Fielding, and Addison among the English.
result, by the 1770s, Voltaire had become the dominant force in the intellectual and cultural life of the educated elite. Casanova, who travelled in Russia as early as the mid-1760s, noted the fascination with Voltaire on an every-day basis. He pointed out that emulating the Empress, everyone read Voltaire, whose books were “carried around in pockets as if they were prayer books, a source of all the knowledge.” Russians “with pretensions to literature,” according to Casanova, “knew, read, and praised only Voltaire, and after reading of what Voltaire had published, believed that they were as learned as their idol.”\textsuperscript{191} With a cutting irony towards the blind following of the fashion and superficiality of Russian civility, Casanova sneered: “beware of arguing with a person who never read anything but one book,” the one book being a work of Voltaire.\textsuperscript{192} A Russian contemporary reiterates,

\begin{quote}
[h]alf-based dandies preached atheism and swore by Voltaire and Diderot. Sensitive youth, women of second-rate society, and young littérateurs who were alien to high society, were captivated by madrigals and the grimacing smiles of minor French authors.\textsuperscript{193}
\end{quote}

In a country with a majority of population in serfdom, \textit{Voltairianism}, a Western fashion that spread from hearsay and imitation of the high society had a relatively limited influence. However limited, Catherine’s admiration for all things French had a complex impact on intellectual activities for those who followed her. While some Russian intellectuals turned to the \textit{Voltairianism} and radical freethinking, for others French Enlightenment ideas became a means of testing their faith, a “school of moral

\textsuperscript{192} [Casanova], “Zapiski venetsianska Kasanovy,” \textit{Russkaia starina} 9 (1874): 540-41.
strength.” Confronted by the variety of new Western tendencies, only by the middle of the century did Russian society start attempting to reconcile them with a traditional Russian worldview. The disappointment with Voltaireanism, combined with a new search for the lost spiritual and moral values, took the most dramatic turn. Intellectuals who experienced a severe spiritual crisis tried to return to religion and passionately embraced faith. Often, those who were under the great influence of the French Enlightenment philosophy eventually became its most vociferous critics. Reaction to extreme rationalism was a general European phenomenon in the second half of the century.

On the one hand, the appearance of the fashion for Voltaire in Russia can be considered as an indication that by that time educated Russian society had already reached a level of intellectual maturity and critical consciousness which manifested themselves in the creation of the whole array of ideas and attitudes in the ranks of former Voltaireans. On the other hand, the response and reactions of Russian society to the philosophy of the Enlightenment also revealed that much of this reaction stemmed from a failure to understand the essence of that philosophy. As Kluchevskii puts it: “An unexpected and sad spectacle emerged: new ideas of the Enlightenment philosophy became justification and reinforcement of the old home-grown ignorance and moral inertia.” In any case, the reaction against Voltaireanism led to the realization that the needs and problems of Russia were unique, and that its national heritage might offer the

195 In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation,” 97.
solution that the imported philosophy of Enlightenment rationalism failed to provide. In his memoirs, an eighteenth-century Russian observer noted:

... let us be sincere: a Russian nobleman by his vocation, obligations and rights does not at all resemble any European nobleman, just as the merchant, tradesman and peasant are not in any way equal to their foreign counterparts. However common pure morality may be, each land has its own composition of societies, morals and customs, and by these, peoples maintain their uniqueness.\(^{197}\)

The coming to terms with epistemological crisis by the means of reconciliation of reason and faith manifested itself in attempts to find the lost values in Freemasonry. Many Russians turned to Freemasonry as a result of a positive or negative reaction to the Voltaireanism.\(^{198}\) Those fascinated by the Voltaireanism were attracted to the freethinking and libertarian elements in Freemasonry. Others, reacting to the French Enlightenment concepts, turned to more conservative versions of Freemasonry that emphasized the role of religion and faith and tried to combine Christian love, moral values, and new scientific discoveries. Through different systems of Freemasonry that were introduced to Russia in the second part of the century, Russian elite received a wider exposure to different versions of Enlightenment which allowed them to make a selection conditioned by its own cultural background and particular needs from the rich variety of ideas.

**Internal Developments in Freemasonry by the 1770s**

These internal Russian developments coincided with the ongoing modifications of the Craft in Europe. Several important eighteenth-century high-degree modifications

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\(^{197}\) Vinskii, “Zapiski Vinskago,” 88.

\(^{198}\) About influence of Voltaireanism on the development of Freemasonry in Russia in more detail see Chapter 4.
of Freemasonry that started by the middle of the century played a vital role in the development of Freemasonry in Russia after 1770. A high-degree system that later became known as Strict Observance, a fusion of a French system and Chapter of Clermont, was a rite that aimed at the restoration of the Order of the Temple. Its founder, baron Karl Gottlieb von Hund, became a Freemason in Frankfurt. In 1742-43, he travelled to Paris, where, as he insisted later, he was introduced to the so-called “Templar Freemasonry” and initiated into “higher degrees.” Carl Heinrich Jacobi, Strict Observance’s secretary corroborated that 1740s Hund frequented Jacobite Paris lodges. He thought that Charles Stuart himself was among the “unknown superiors” who participated in the initiation. This ceremony, Hund claimed, was performed in the presence of, among others, a certain Lord Clifford and the earl of Kilmarnock.

Despite his introduction to high-grade Freemasonry in the early 1740s, Hund started to carry out the directives of his unknown superiors only in the 1750s. It is unclear what kept Hund from pursuing his Masonic career for seven years between 1743 and 1750. Jacobi testified to that only in 1750 or 1751 a certain Scottish officer named “o Keith” spent several days with Hund in Germany possibly to give more clear

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200 Possibly, it was Lord [George?] Clifford of Chudleigh, a Jacobite in Paris and a distant relative by marriage to Charles Radclyffe. See footnote 19 on page 8.

201 Probably, William, Fourth Earl of Kilmarnock, Grand Master Mason of Scotland (1742-43), who was subsequently executed in 1746 for his support of the Stuart cause.
directions about the establishment of the rite.\textsuperscript{202} It is possible that this “o Keith” was the Provincial Grand Master of “all Russias and Germany” or his Jacobite brother, both of whom were at the time in Prussia in the service of Frederick. As Alain Bernstein points out, this meeting of Hund with Keith might have been an inspiration and explanation of Hund’s return to Masonic scene in 1751.\textsuperscript{203} In the 1750s, the system of Strict Observance spread like fire all over Europe. Already in 1755-56, there was a Strict Observance lodge in St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{204}

European success of high-degree Strict Observance inspired Petr Ivanovich Melissino,\textsuperscript{205} an expatriate Greek, who graduated from the Russian Cadet Corps to become general of the artillery and its chief inspector, to create his own high-degree system which is often referred to as the only “Russian” high-degree system of Freemasonry. A close acquaintance and a defender of Casanova during his visit to

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\textsuperscript{204} The lodge minutes are in RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5289.

\textsuperscript{205} Petr Ivanovich Melissino (1726(1724?)-1797) was a Greek expatriate, whose name is associated with the eighteenth-century advances in Russian artillery. He led the artillery efforts during the First Turkish Campaign (1768-74) and participated in the Seven Years’ War (1756-1762). In 1783, he was appointed the director of the Artillery and Engineer Corps. Petr Melissino is often confused with his brother, Ivan Ivanovich Melissino (1718-1795), who also was an influential Freemason, author, publisher, theatre enthusiast, and Curator of the Moscow University. Further on the relations of the lodges of Melissino system with European and other Russian lodges, see Chapter 2. C. Lenning, \textit{Encyclopädie die Freimaurerei}, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Brockhaus. 1822-28), 460ff and In-Ho Lee Ryu “Moscow Freemasons and the Rosicrucian Order: A Study in Organization and Control” in \textit{The Eighteenth Century in Russia}, 202; Serkov, \textit{Entsiklopedia}, 535-36.
Russia in 1764-1765, and later a personal friend of Cagliostro, Melissino apparently occupied an important place in the Russian Masonic milieu. As the reports to the Empress Elizabeth indicate, Melissino was a Mason since the 1750s. His system, “[o]ne of the very strange systems with higher degrees,” had four higher degrees above the English three degrees and a secret eighth chapter. The four higher degrees above the three St. John’s degrees -- bearing the names of “the dark vault,” “The Scottish Master and Knight,” “Philosopher” and “Magnus Sacerdos Templariorum or the Clericat” -- were in form a slight modification of the Strict Observance and Knights Templars degrees. Melissino’s original contributions lay in the “Conclave,” a secret chapter above the seventh degree, which presumably contained the hermetic secret of making gold. Worked in the St. Petersburg lodges of Skromnosti’ (of Modesty) and Marsa (Mars), this generic system had broad cosmopolitan appeal, and the lodges were conducted at least in four languages.

Closely related to the Strict Observance and Melissino’s version of it was a system founded by Johann August Starck, a doctor in theology who studied Eastern languages with Michaelis at the University of Göttingen. Starck became a mason in a

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206 See, for instance, pp. 59-60 in relation to the Olsuf’ev’s report.
208 Lenning. Encyclopädie der freimaurerei, vo. 2, 460ff.
French military lodge in 1761, while still in Göttingen. He first appeared in St. Petersburg as teacher of oriental languages at St. Peter's school (St.-Petrischule) and a student of theology and philosophy in 1762-65. During his stay, he came in contact with the Masonic system of Melissino. While extensively travelling around Europe (and serving as an interpreter of Oriental Manuscripts at the Royal Library in Paris), in 1767 Starck introduced himself to Hund as a former officer of a lodge familiar with the innermost secrets of the Strict Observance. Starck claimed that the mystic traditions of the Knights Templars were preserved and transmitted to him by certain spiritual superiors (Geheime Obern) and proposed to Hund to establish a branch of the Strict Observance known as Clerical Kapitul. According to Starck, who in Strict Observance was known under the name of Archimedes ab Aquila fulva, the Clerical Knights of the Kapitul needed to be distinguished from the Secular Knights of von Hund.

In 1768, Stark returned to St. Petersburg as private secretary to Prince Viazemskii and insisted that he had found a genuine source of Freemasonry in St. Petersburg. As I establish in

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211 I. Iversen, Das Lehrerpersönel der St.-Petrischule (Zur Geschichte der St.-Peterschule in St. Petersburg) (St. Petersburg, 1887).

212 RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folders 5289 and 5295 contain protocols and rituals of a St. Petersburg Strict Observance lodge (or Melissino system?) that in 1768 mention brother Archimedes ab Aquila, Masonic name that Starck customarily used. According to Serkov, Entsiklopedia, 906, Starck was a member of the Melissino system as early as 1763-1765.


214 Pypin in “Russkoe masonstvo do Novikova,” 501, and Russkoe masonstvo v XVIII i pervoi chetverti XIX vekov, 153, points out that a Scot Lord Williamson aided Starck in the creation of a chapter which became the basis for the Clerical Knights of Templar Masonry. Later, on the recommendation of Büsching, Starck was appointed professor of Orientalium and then professor of theology at Königsberg. As a result of attacks on his theological writings, Starck left Königsberg in 1777 and taught philosophy at the Swedish College of Mitau. In 1781, he became first preacher at the court of Darmstadt where he spent the rest of his life.
the next chapter, both the Strict Observance and Starck’s system of Clerical Kapitel became popular on the Continent, and especially in Russia, during the 1770s.

The so-called Swedish Rite and the Zinnendorf system were two Masonic organizations that exerted substantial influence on Freemasonry in Russia. The Swedish Rite can be considered a mixture of the French (or rather Scottish) high-degree Freemasonry and the Templarism of the Strict Observance.\footnote{The information about the Swedish and Zinnendorf systems presented here comes from: Bro. Kupferschmidt, *Notes on the Relations Between the Grand Lodge of England and Sweden in the Last Century* (Margate, 1888); Telepneff. “Swedish Freemasonry in Russia,” *AQC* 39 (1926): 174-196; A. J. B. Milborne, *Overseas Development and the Military Lodges in Grand Lodge, 1717-1967* (Oxford, 1967), 233-234; Albert G. Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (Richmond, Virginia: 1966), 997; Henry Wilson Coit, *Coit’s Masonic Encyclopedia* (Macoy Publishing, Virginia: 1995), 556.} Freemasons initiated in France founded the first lodges in Sweden. By 1750s, some Swedish Freemasons, unsatisfied with the workings of France-related lodges, applied to the Grand Lodge of England to establish an English Provincial Grand Lodge in Sweden, and the request was granted in 1765. However, it was the high-degree lodge *St. Jean Auxiliaire* that the Swedish King declared the Grand Lodge for all the Swedish lodges in 1753. After the foundation of this first high-degree Scottish lodge in 1756, the transformation of the Swedish lodges into a nine-degree system triggered the establishment of the Swedish Rite Chapter by 1759.\footnote{Later, due to the efforts of the Swedish King Karl, the first ten degrees were expanded and added by an eleventh degree.} In 1760, *St. Jean Auxiliaire* was replaced by the Swedish Grand Lodge working according to the Swedish Rite.

By 1766, Johann Wilhelm von Zinnendorf obtained parts of the Swedish rite rituals and used them in founding the *Grosse Landeslodge* upon leaving the Berlin’s Three Globes in 1770. As a Masonic rite, Zinnendorf’s system challenged Strict Observance’s claim of having Templar origin and maintained that neither the Swedish
system nor the Zinnendorf system had any relation to the rival high-degree Strict
Observance. Named after its founder, the Zinnendorf system aimed at the restoration of
medieval mysticism in the form of a Masonic spiritual order of knighthood.217 The
Swedish-Zinnendorf system strengthened its influence after the formation of the National
Grand Lodge of Germany in Berlin by Zinnendorf on the basis of the Swedish system in
1770. Effective actions were undertaken by Freemasons to introduce both the Swedish
and the Zinnendorf systems into Russia. After 1771, these two rites played defining roles
in the development of Freemasonry in Russia and actively jostled with other systems for
control over Russian Freemasonry.

As I establish in the next chapter, the second period of the development of
Freemasonry in Russia in the eighteenth century was characterized by the organized
efforts on the part of European governing Masonic bodies in spreading Freemasonry and
its various modifications in Russia.

217 H. Schneider, Quest for Mysteries: The Masonic Background for Literature in Eighteenth-Century
Chapter 2. Mechanics of Interactions: 1770-1792

Spreading its sweet influences in the universe, [Freemasonry] brings men nearer to men despite the rivalries of nations... But if those truths are obvious, Freemasonry having all men as its concern, without regard for their religious denomination, the land of their birth or where they live requires one center, one meeting point where all its rays may converge.

- The Grand Orient of Poland, 1784

With these words in the letter to the Grand Lodge of England, eighteenth-century Polish Freemasons captured one of the main tenets of Masonic movement: an aspiration to bring all the lodges together despite national and religious differences. Throughout the eighteenth century, whether they traveled to Moscow, corresponded with London, or received Masonic regalia from Berlin, Freemasons considered themselves as belonging to a global brotherhood that transcended the differences imposed by ethnicity, culture, and religion, and described all members as essentially equal before God. The ability of Freemasonry, a worldwide institution, to provide a bridge between the communities was especially important for Westernizing Russia. For German, English, Scottish, Swedish, French, and Italian Freemasons in Russia, the vastness, difference, and unfamililiarity of the Russian empire necessitated the development of assistance networks among soldiers, merchants, teachers, and officials. Masonic lodges formed a network, far-reaching in geographic scope and broad in the privileges to which its members were entitled.

By the mid-eighteenth century, various Masonic organizations were developing centralized authorities in the form of Grand Lodges and spreading Freemasonry to distant

parts of the world, including the territories of the Russian Empire. Following the desire to unite all Freemasons, each Masonic system tried to assert its superiority in Russia.219 While it is impossible to establish whether there was a detailed strategy for exporting and administering Freemasonry globally, governing Masonic bodies used every opportunity to extend their particular versions of the institution abroad. In this chapter, I show that to the extent that eighteenth-century communications allowed, various “national” Masonic bodies kept track of their subordinate lodges, closely monitored the expansion of the fraternity in Russia, and adjusted their operations to the international context. Competing forms of Freemasonry in the forms of Mother-lodges, National lodges, and Grand Lodges willingly accepted their position as centers of an expanding Masonic empire and propagated branches at the peripheries.220

The successful functioning of the whole mechanism of spreading Freemasonry abroad demonstrates the intimate connection between Freemasonry and Russian internal development. With the growing inclusion of Russians into the lodges, Freemasonry in Russia was increasingly becoming an institution that contributed to the process through which Europe and Russia became interconnected. The transmission of ideas through personal visits of foreign Freemasons, correspondence between individuals and lodges, and exchange of literature demonstrates how institutions created global networks that transcended vast distances, linked people around the world, and furthered the processes of Westernization for Russia. Masonic networks contributed in both indirect and direct

219 For more on the conflict between the Moderns Lodge, the Scottish-system, and the Templar-based systems concerning the lodges in Eastern Europe, see L. Hass, Wolnomularstwo w Europie Środkowo-wschodniej w XVIII i XIX wieku (Wroclaw-Warszawa: Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1982)
220 Throughout the dissertation, I follow the distinction between the languages of the dominant Masonic systems. For instance, as a first Grand Provincial Master in Russia, Elagin is called Master (English) to identify his adherence to the Grand Lodge of England. Alternately, as I consider further, Reichel is often identified as Meister (German), while the Swedish system often used French titles of the offices.
ways to the ongoing Westernization, becoming a reliable means of negotiating traditional and new values in Russia and of strengthening the ties that connected Europe with Russia. For Russian Freemasons, the second part of the century started with the inclusion into several prominent Masonic systems and ended in an attempt at overcoming foreign dependencies. Operating with multiple rites and borrowed systems, Russian Freemasons could reach the desired uniformity only through the organization of a "national" lodge with a central administration. For foreign Freemasons involved in Masonic affairs in Russia, this meant not only overcoming competition in capturing the imagination and minds of the Russian educated society but also dealing with nascent national impulses.

"Several excellent lodges at St. Petersburg and elsewhere": The Grand Lodge of England

Although by the middle of the century Freemasonry in Russia had already developed through a great number of foreigners and Russian aristocracy had embraced various versions of the Craft, the Grand Lodge of England was inactive since James Keith’s appointment as the second Provincial Grand Master of Russia in 1740. Only in 1772, the dramatist Vladimir Ignat’evich Lukin,221 secretary of Privy-Councilor Ivan

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221 Vladimir Ignat’evich Lukin (1737-94) was a writer and playwright, who participated in the Seven Years’ War before becoming the secretary for the cabinet-minister Elagin in 1764. In 1767-68 he traveled to France; and in 1771-1772 – to Britain. In his literary work, Lukin was one of the first among Russian writers to oppose the classicism and extreme imitations of the Western literature. He was also an active Freemason in five lodges and Meister in the Reichel lodge. On Lukin, see Serkov, Entsiklopedia, 496; P. N. Berkov, Vladimir Ignat’evich Lukin, 1734-1794 (Leningrad, 1954); V. P. Stepanov, “Novikov i ego sovremenniki,” in XVIII vek, vol. 11, 211ff.
Perfil'evich Elagin,²²² went to London to secure Elagin's patents as the third Provincial Grand Master of Russia and the first Russian to hold this post.²²³

To the Grand Lodge of England, the aristocratic Elagin seemed like a proper candidate to breathe new life into English Freemasonry in Russia. After the slump of the 1730-40s, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England James Heseltine pointed out that Freemasonry "flourished ... which is in a great measure owing to the many noble personages who have joined ... within these few years."²²⁴ The official documents of the Grand Lodge of England testify to Elagin's importance as the first Russian Provincial Master by pointing out that "his Excellency John Yelaguine [sic], Senator, Privy Councillor, Member of the Cabinet, &c. to Her Majesty the Empress of Russia" was directly responsible for the establishment of "several excellent lodges ... at Petersburg and elsewhere." In the words of London officials, Elagin created a space where "the first nobility in the Empire have not only countenanced the Science, but acted as Officers of the Grand and Private Lodges." As a result of his activity, "the Provincial Grand Lodge

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²²² IvanPerfil'evich Elagin (1725-1794) was a Privy Councilor, Senator, and member of the Imperial Cabinet, writer, translator, author of the Opyty povestovat'ia o Rossi, and Catherine's stats-secretary. Patron of many writers and a writer himself, in 1766, he was appointed the director of the court theatre and later became the founder of the first public theatre and theatre school in Russia. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, he was involved with Freemasonry in Russia since the 1750s.

²²³ While Russians were customarily admitted in English lodges both as visitors and as full members, as happened at the Arthur lodge in Oxford with the students Nikitin and Suvorov and the visiting engineer officer Nikolai Korsakov, Lukin's visit to London on a specifically Masonic business is an intriguing event in the history of Freemasonry in Russia. However, as Anthony G. Cross, "British Freemasons in Russia during the Reign of Catherine the Great," 241-2 points out, this trip was not generally mentioned in Soviet historiography (for instance, in the seminal work of P. N. Berkov, Vladimir Ignat'evich Lukin, the only reference to Lukin's visit is in passim on page 607). The only other direct evidence of a Russian Mason sent from Russia to London on Masonic business dates from 1774, when Ivan Vasil'evich Raznotovskii, a member of the lodge of Urania, arrived with letters of introduction to the Somerset lodge.

²²⁴ Freemasons' Hall in London (FHL), Grand Lodge of England, Moderns' Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775) [copies of the letters sent out by Heseltine], 32.
of Russia, though so lately established, [was] at that time, in imitation of our Grand Lodge, building a Hall for the purpose of holding their general assemblies."\textsuperscript{225}

What this official report omits is as important as what it says. There is no mentioning of either John Philips or James Keith as Elagin's predecessors. Even if the Grand Lodge of England relied on the Russian account,\textsuperscript{226} it is doubtful that Elagin or his Masonic companions in Russia did not know of Philips or, especially, Keith, because Elagin and his closest Masonic associates were involved with Freemasonry in Russia long before the 1760s. It is even more doubtful that the officials of the Grand Lodge of England could overlook two well-documented appointments of previous Provincial Grand Masters for Russia. More probably, by the 1770s, Grand Lodge officials preferred to associate the developments of Freemasonry with a noble Russian rather than with foreign expatriates of a somewhat lesser standing and, in case of Keith, dubious political sympathies.

Several important points stand out in Elagin's appointment as the Provincial Grand Master. First, while trying to ensure its control over the subordinate Masonic bodies by insisting that only the Grand Lodge itself had the right to appoint the Grand Masters and that Provincial Grand Lodges were not allowed to elect their own Grand Masters, the Grand Lodge of England did not formally "choose" Elagin. His candidacy

\textsuperscript{225} "Some Account of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia, acting under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England," \textit{The Freemasons Calendar for 1777} (being the first after leap-year) (London, 1777), 38.

\textsuperscript{226} In his letter to Elagin on 25 June 1778, one year after the first publication of "Some Account of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia, acting under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England," Heseltine explained:

... as we are intent to give some ac[oun]t of the lodges abroad in our Free Masons calendar each year. And as the situation of masonry in Russia would be particularly pleasing I am to request of Your Excellency to favour me with an acc-t of the state of the Lodges in the extensive Empire of Russia as far as the proceedings of your Prov[incial] Gr[an]d Lodge will admit, w[hi]ch will be considered, I'm sure, as a very valuable testimony of your Excellency's peculiar attention to the wished of Our Supreme Gr[an]d Lodge.

was offered for consideration of the Grand Lodge from within the ranks of Freemasons in Russia and only approved by the Grand Lodge. In fact, Elagin was, in a way, “chosen” by the Russian side. Second, by appointing the first Russian Provincial Grand Master, the Grand Lodge validated the candidacy of a leader of Freemasonry in Russia and, with the formal re-establishment of the Provincial Grand Lodge, the structure of the lodges and governing bodies that had existed prior to the application.

It is much less clear why Elagin decided to apply for the patent from the Grand Lodge in London.\textsuperscript{227} According to his unpublished memoirs, after the initial disappointment with Freemasonry in Russia as it existed in the 1740s, he decided to return to active participation in Freemasonry after meeting “an elderly Englishman.” The traveling Englishman reignited Elagin’s interest with the information that Masonry [was] a science which [was] revealed to few, that England never communicate[d] in writing anything about it, that the secret [was] kept in London, in a particular Lodge, called “the Ancient,” that few brothers knew about this lodge, that it was extremely difficult “to locate and gain admittance to this Lodge and even more difficult to be initiated into its secrets.\textsuperscript{228}

After this revelation, Elagin “endeavored, with constant determination, to try … [and] open to himself this unknown [secret] hidden in the shadows of doubt.”\textsuperscript{229} It is probably by following his new mentor’s definition of the Craft that Elagin tried to establish ties with the Grand Lodge of England located in London. As Anthony Cross

\textsuperscript{227} Raffaela Faggionato, Rosicrucian Utopia in Eighteenth-Century Russia: The Masonic Circle of N. I. Novikov (The Netherlands: International Archives of the History of Ideas, Springer, 2005), 16, correlates the dominance of English-style Freemasonry in Russia in the early 1770s with the Turkish War. She point out that during this time it was in Russia’s interest to maintain good diplomatic rapport with Britain to assure its neutrality or assistance.

\textsuperscript{228} RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, Elagin papers, 94-100. The document was partly published in [Elagin], “Zapiska,” Russian arkhiv 1 (1864), 596.

\textsuperscript{229} “voznameril’sia s postoiannou tverdost’u starat’ sia ... otkryt’ v sebe siu vo make prekosloviya krounychusia neizvestnost’.” RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, Elagin papers, 94-100; “Zapiska Elagina,” Russian arkhiv 1 (1864), 597.
points out referring to Vernadskii, this Englishman could be a “Jacobite in German service, who was involved in setting up the first Chapter of Strict Observance in St. Petersburg in 1763.”

However, A. Semeka, A. N. Pypin, and G. V. Vernadskii present different interpretations of the story. Semeka takes the mentioning of the lodge in London as a simple reference to the Grand Lodge of England, while Pypin identifies this “Ancient” lodge in London as a “Lodge of Antiquity” different from the Grand Lodge. In Elagin’s desire to find an “Ancient” lodge, Vernadskii sees the evidence of Elagin turning away from the Grand Lodge of England even before he received his warrant as Provincial Grand Master, to the rival Masonic organization of the Ancients. On the other hand, Pekarskii testifies that the Englishman responsible for Elagin’s renewed interest was “some Lord Peter” whom Pekarskii takes to be Lord Robert Eduard Petre, the Grand Master of the London Grand Lodge 1772-1777. The granting of Elagin’s warrant in 1772 would support the thesis that Elagin did not know that the “Ancient” lodge in London was not, in fact, the Grand Lodge of England. If so, the fact that Elagin contacted the Grand Lodge of England, the Moderns, while the story told him by the Englishman had references to an “Ancient” lodge, testifies to the fact that Elagin was not very well informed about the peculiarities of Masonic struggles between the Moderns

232 Pekarskii, Dopolenienia, 31-32. Elagin himself did not provide us with the Englishman’s name. It is unlikely that the Grand Master of the Moderns ever visited Russia. Elagin specifically states that his mentor was traveling in Russia and did not have much time to tell Elagin more about Freemasonry. RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, Elagin papers, 94-100; [Elagin], “Zapiska,” 597.
and the Ancients. Otherwise, he would have contacted the Ancients to whom he was
directed by his mysterious mentor.

It is also possible to provide some documentary evidence for Elagin’s interest in
British Masonic governing bodies other than the Grand Lodge of England in the
beginning of the 1770s. The Minutes of the Ancients’ Grand Lodge for June 30, 1773
reveal that Elagin had been in correspondence with the Grand Lodge of Scotland:

... heard a letter from G. Sec. M’Dougall, setting forth that an application had
been made to the G.[rand] Lodge of Scotland for them to confer a masonical
mark of distinction on his Excellency the Senator Yellagan [sic], Grand Master of
Russia, and requesting the opinion of this Grand Lodge to be transmitted, with
any Forms they may have made use of the like occasions. Resolved, that the
Grand Lodge of Scotland had power to confer such distinction.233

Whether or not this application was followed by any action from either side is
unknown. Elagin received his Grand Mastership from the Grand Lodge of England in
1772 and made his application to the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1773, already under the
title of the Grand Master of Russia. It is possible that Elagin made this application to the
Grand Lodge of Scotland because he was eager to receive more written instructions or
direction as a reaction to the fact that “England never communicates in writing anything
about it [Freemasonry].” However, in Elagin’s personal papers, there is no indication
that he regularly corresponded with the Ancients, the Grand Lodge of Scotland, or any
other Masonic institution on the British Isles besides the Grand Lodge of England. There
is no indication of Elagin’s petition -- which was supposed to be received in 1772 -
beginning of 1773 -- in the Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.234 The reference to

233 FHL. Copy of the Minutes of the Ancients, vol. 1, 1752-1761, 107[157]-111[161], published in Gould,
Elagin’s petition in the Ancients’ Minutes is certainly the only evidence of a possible direct contact between Russian lodges and the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The desired warrant from the Grand Lodge of England was issued to Elagin on 28 February 1772 and brought by Lukin to St. Petersburg along with other papers. Lukin received a current edition of the Book Containing the Laws and Regulations (the Constitutions) signed by the Grand Secretary James Heseltine, bearing “the Public Seal” of the London’s Grand Lodge and containing lists of all the regular lodges under the English authority in 1772. While in London, Lukin was also allowed to attend several lodges’ meetings and later testified that with the exception of “one little difference in the manner of ornamenting & decorating the Lodges,” lodges in Russia were following the same ritual as the Moderns did. The Russian Masonic envoy had also been received into the fourth degree, the Royal Arch, which, as Heseltine explained to Elagin, was “the chief or superior degree known to or at least practiced by us.”

Emphasizing his “happiness that … Brethren of Russia are become a part of our Body and it is with the utmost satisfaction I have now the honour of commencing a correspondence with and of saluting you as P[rovincial] G[rand] M[aster] of that Empire,” in his first letter to the new Provincial Grand Master of Russia, the Grand Secretary Heseltine assures him that “every information that could be communicated during his [Lukin’s] short residence here hath been communicated.”

235 The Patent was signed by Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England from 1767 till 1772. The original Diploma of 1772 from the Grand Lodge of England is in RGADA, collection of Elagin’s documents and personal papers, fond 154, opis’ 3, folder 209.
236 As mentioned in FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 88-89. The letter from Heseltine to Elagin is not dated, but most likely it was written after 28 February 1772. The book of Constitutions is currently among Elagin’s papers in RGADA, fond 8, 254 (1).
James Heseltine was instrumental in establishing and maintaining contact with the lodges under the English jurisdiction in Russia. As a Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England, he was responsible for achieving a degree of uniformity and maintaining identifiable basics of English Freemasonry in the expanding fraternity by creating and keeping up an elaborate system of regular inter-institutional communication. Much of the correspondence between the Grand Lodge of England and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia is concerned with the issues of legitimacy of other Masonic affiliations, international influences in Russia, and maintaining the exclusiveness of the office of the Provincial Grand Master. Borrowing from the model of a lodge, Provincial Grand Lodges were structured in pyramid-like fashion, with the Grand Lodge at the top, mother-lodges following, and regular lodges connected with each other with horizontal ties of brotherhood, love and recognition.

Tightening the structure on the level of every Provincial Grand Lodge meant consolidation of the English Craft, which inevitably placed special emphasis on the figure of the Provincial Grand Master. Thus, for instance, construction of the new Masonic Hall coincided with an important shift in delegation. While before “[a]ll Business relative to Masonry,” according to the Quarterly Communications, was supposed to be addressed and directed to James Heseltine, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, starting from 22 February 1775 all Freemasons, within Great Britain and abroad,

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238 James Heseltine was the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England during 1769-1780. In 1781-1783, he shared his ever-expanding responsibilities with William White, as the Grand Lodge needed two Grand Secretaries.

Not only had the Moderns place special importance on the role of the Grand Secretary. In their preoccupation with the spread of their system in Britain and abroad, the Ancients defined the importance of the Grand Secretary who “must keep a general Correspondence both Foreign and Domestic, he therefore though it necessary that such a person should be a tolerable Grammarian…” in FHL, Minutes of the Ancients, vol. 1 (1752-1761), 41 (49-51).
were advised to “write to your Provincial Grand Master; or, where no Provincial Master is appointed, to Brother Heseltine, G[rand] S[ecretary], Doctors Commons … upon all Business respecting Masonry,” reflecting the shift in the role of Provincial Lodges.²³⁹ Every new Provincial Grand Lodge received the Constitutions and was introduced to regular correspondence, the two instances of a wider system of communications that monitored and served the membership throughout the world. On a local and practical level, successful functioning of the branches of this global Masonic network depended on the dissemination of a fairly standardized Masonic language that was comprised of rituals, symbols, and landmarks. Through the Constitutions, the Grand Lodge of England provided Freemasons in the distant parts of the world with a basic statement of Masonic ideology and rules. More up-to-date information about the Craft was available from printed circulars and Masonic periodicals issued by the Grand Lodges and transmitted to the lodges. A means of communication between the Grand Lodge authorities and their Provincial Lodges, these documents related news, issued instructions on particular issues, warned about impostors, and informed lodges about changes in regulations or leadership.

However, despite the weight that Masonic authorities placed on the need for standardization, paradoxically, many lodges in Russia, even being under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England, were working in more than three degrees and could be considered irregular.²⁴⁰ Cross points out that Perfect Union recognized and possibly even worked not only the three degrees (Apprentice, Fellow Craftsman, and Master) associated with the Grand Lodge of England, but also three more (Scottish (or Scotch) Master, Elu, and Philosopher) belonging to the higher degrees of the so-called “Scottish”

²³⁹ FHL. Moderns’ Quarterly Communications, 22 February 1775, 43.
²⁴⁰ Cross, “British Freemasons,” 244.
or "Ecossais" Masonry practiced by many continental systems, including those in formal contact with the English Grand Lodge. Even though from afar the Freemasons' Calendar characterized Elagin's lodges as "established with great regularity," it does not necessarily mean that their policies were regular.

John Robison, in his famous work Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, provided evidence of the irregularity of the English lodges in Russia. Robison was in Russia until the end of 1773, while he was an Inspector and Professor at the Naval Academy at Cronstadt. He visited Perfect Union early in 1771 and was initiated as a "Scotch" Master on St. John's Day of 1771, having first undergone the "Trials and Formalities requisite thereto." At that time, still a visitor, he was proposed for membership only at the meeting of 24 October and accepted on 27 October. As Anthony Cross points out, Robison was probably acquainted with Ecossais Masonry before coming to Russia, but his initiation into the degree of Scotch Mason dates from his stay in St. Petersburg. However, Robison was not wrong in

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241 Cross, "British Freemasons," 244.
242 "Some Account of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia, acting under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England," 38.
244 On Robison in Russia, see also P. P. Zabarinsky, Pervye "ogneye" machiny v Kronshtadskom portu (Moscow-Leningrad, 1936), 150-51.
245 FHL, Journal of Perfect Union, 1.
246 FHL, Journal of Perfect Union, 10.
suggesting that the degree of Scotch Master was not given in the English lodge. He could not have “remained in the English Lodge, content with the rank of “Scotch Master,” received from another lodge because the regulations of Perfect Union specifically state: “if any Member of our Lodge should take a higher Degree in any other Lodge and afterwards return to us again we will not acknowledge him but in the degree he received from us.”

It is not clear how many degrees Elagin was allowed to practice in the lodges belonging to the Provincial Grand Lodge when he received his patent. Despite the information that the lodges under him could have worked in seven degrees, he was pretty content with the three-degree system stating in 1786 that “only three [degrees] are enough … for the real learning” and that no one “accepted any degree higher than the fourth” from him. In respect to high degrees, eighteenth-century lodges can be divided into two main categories. First, there were the “symbolic” masons, adherents to the three-degree English system on which Elagin’s lodges were established. These first three degrees, the “Symbolic” or “Craft” degrees, extensively used symbols and imagery of architecture and masonry. The degrees were also commonly called “Primitive” or

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249 “... k deistvitel’nom ucheniu ... tokmo trekh [stepenei] dovleett” [is inclined for the valid teaching ... of only three degrees], “... nizhe chetvertoi stepeni ne vosprinial” [has not adopted degrees lower than the fourth one].

“Zapiska o masonstve L...ra” terms Elagin’s system a neo-English, or York, system which corresponds with the information about the seven-degree system as widely spread among the lodges of the Elagin coalition in Pekarskii, Dopolneniya, 96-101. In 1775, Novikov, for instance, wrote that he knew “only four degrees of this system [English Freemasonry] ... and [he] did not know the higher fifth, sixth, and seventh or any other degrees that were [used] there” [Ia po semu masonstvu (angliiskomu) znal to’ko chetyre gradusa ... a vyshikh po tomu masonstvu 5, 6 i 7 ili esche kakie byli, ia ne znal]. Quoted in A. V. Semeka, “Russkoe masonstvo v XVIII veke,” footnote on page 185.
“Scottish” because of their supposed ancient Scottish origin, or “St. John Degrees” after the patron saint of Freemasons.250

The second trend was related to the adherence to the highly ritualistic and ceremonial “knightly” degrees that were higher than the initial three. By the middle of the century, the Grand Lodge of England, the main regulating and propagating body of the three-degree system, found itself in opposition to the high-degree European versions of Freemasonry and the rival British organizations like the Ancients and the Grand Lodge of Scotland. In its correspondence, the Grand Lodge of England insistently warned the affiliated lodges about the Ancients and the irregularities of the Strict Observance lodges that Heseltine presented as “a sect” with “the most absurd, vain soiling jumble of inconsistencies that ever were formed and totally inconsistent with the true Masonry and every part of our Laws and Constitutions.”251

Heseltine’s correspondence with Elagin indicates that a significant portion of this activity was directed at maintaining regular communication with foreign lodges. Not only did Heseltine took time to point out “the very great and rapid increase of Our Society in Russia” and express hopes “of establishing the Order upon a firm and lasting Basis under your P[rovincial] L[odge],” but he also addressed whether the register of lodges and the Grand Officers that Elagin transmitted to London were “regular & proper” and whether the Grand Officers could act as Officers of the private lodges while officiating in Grand Lodge.252 The Grand Secretary duly informed Elagin of the latest

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news about the Grand Lodge of England, including elections of the Grand Masters and the Grand Officers. 253

The function of maintaining contact with the lodges went together with another task that was vital for the existence of the international network of lodges: collection of fees and dues. The requirement of warrants and dues and the emphasis placed on "regularity" ensured that lodges kept in contact with the metropolitan authorities. The Heseltine-Elagin correspondence reflects the Grand Lodge's interest in receiving regular dues from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia. Heseltine was not only routinely informed about the "flourishing state" of Freemasonry in Russia, he also received money from Russia. While the schedule of fees for Provincial Grand Lodges varied over the time, the basic policy required one-time payment of a fee with the appointment of a Provincial Grand Master, establishment of a Provincial Grand Lodge, and foundation of a new lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England. There were also regular yearly fees from the Provincial Grand Lodges as long as they were affiliated with the English Craft. Via Lukin, Elagin paid the first fee for his office at the moment of appointment. As the documentation of the Grand Lodge testifies, "His Excellency M. Yelaguine [sic], on being appointed Provincial G.M. for Russia, by Brother Loaquin [sic] - 20 pounds" on 28 February 1772. 254 Lukin also paid five pounds towards "the Fund for purchasing Furniture, Jewels, &c for the Grand Lodge." 255

While the Grand Lodge applied much of the money it received to administering the expanding Masonic bureaucracy, from the very beginning it was also committed to

254 FHL, At a Quarterly Communication of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Freemasons (Quarterly Communications), 32-32rev (28 February 1772).
255 FHL, Quarterly Communications, 32-32rev.
providing assistance to needy brethren as indicated by the name of the general fund to which the money paid by Lukin went -- “the General Fund of Charity” -- and the wider community. Another important purpose for money collection was the need to build a Freemasons’ Hall in London. On 19 November 1773, the Grand Lodge resolved to establish a fund for building the Freemasons’ Hall and approved a new regulation administering the fees for the building fund. They also provided a special addition that extended the regulation to all the lodges abroad, including the Provincial Grand Lodges. Considering the distance of many lodges from London, it was established that “twelve months be allowed to the Lodges in Europe, America, or the West Indies to transmit their first accounts; and Two Years to the Lodges in the East Indies.”

On 9 May 1774, Heseltine wrote to Elagin to report about the money received from Russia and pointed out that while “several lodges contributed by you have been duly registered in our Books, and Mr. Baxter has paid into my Hands the sum of Money mentioned by you for the Constitutions,” the money towards the charity fund “has not yet been paid into the Grand Treasurer’s Hands, by reason that the Grand Mas[te]r first wished to state to you the situation of our Funds, and then to request your permission to appropriate this sum of Money towards a different Fund than that you sent is for...” Informing Elagin about a “flourishing state” of the charity fund, Heseltine explained that the money-collection effort had been redirected to the increase and extension of the fund for building a Hall. Enclosing the plans of the future Hall and emphasizing the urgent

256 FHL, Moderns' Quarterly Communications, 37 (19 November 1773): ... for each Person becoming a Member, Two Shillings and Six Pence, for registering their Names, &c in the Grand Lodge Books, agreeable to the Regulations. And that no Person, made a Mason subsequent to the 29th October 1768, at which time the regulations took place, shall be intitled [sic] ether to receive charity from the Grand Lodge, or to partake of any other Privilege of the Society, unless his Name, &c be regularly registered, and the Fees paid.

need to cover the expenses inflicted by the building effort, the Grand Secretary asked Elagin’s permission “to appropriate the 20 pounds 9 ster[ling] towards the Fund for building a Hall instead of the Charity Fund.” At the same time, he made it clear that with the first sign of objection from Elagin, the money would be immediately used according to Elagin’s desire. Elagin obviously did not object, and Russian dues went to the Freemasons’ Hall fund.

By June of 1778, according to “a General Account of the Subscriptions … from Noblemen and Gentlemen, who are members of the Society, and from Provincial Grand Lodges,” Russian monetary involvement in the dealings of the Grand Lodge was still relatively low, especially compared to the amounts coming from other Provincial Lodges. For instance, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia contributed only 20 pounds, while the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bengal donated 97 pounds. If we compare the contributions of individual members, the Grand Master Lord Petre’s donation amounted to 325 pounds, which was 65 times more than the 5-pound payment of the Provincial Grand Master Elagin.258 At the same time, if we look at the list of the contributors, it is obvious that the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia was one of the few international contributors not affiliated with the British colonies. Recognizing the contribution that

258 FHL, Quarterly Communications (1767), 75rev:
Provincial Grand Lodges:
Of Bengal 97 1 [pounds] 17 s[hillings] 4 d[enarius]
Of Hampshire 2 2 0
Of Russia 20 0 0
Of Antigua 10 10 0
Of Francfort 30 0 0
Of Gibraltar 4 10 0
Of Kent 3 3 0
Grand Lodge Germany 50 0 0
...
His Excellency M. Yelaguine 5 0 0
Lord Petre 325 0 0
Rowland Holt, Esq. 142 11 0.
the Russian Provincial Grand Lodge made to the building of the Hall, in his letter to Elagin on 15 June 1776 Heseltine took time to describe the dedication ceremony of 23 May and enclosed a copy of the ceremonial of the day "with the order of the processions and different pieces of poetry which were set to Music in a very capital style, and performed on the occasion." He expressed his enthralment with the Hall which itself was "a Master piece [sic] of taste and elegance," and used this opportunity to inform Elagin that "the Brethren present at the Dedication subscribed 550 pounds sterling towards ornamenting & furnishing" the Hall and remind the Russian Provincial Grand Master that the Grand Lodge was "still wanting a considerable Sum of Money to complete the Ornaments."  

James Heseltine corresponded with Elagin and Lukin on official Masonic business, transmitted news about new appointments, oversaw payment of dues, and asked for regular reports from Russia to bring to the attention of the Grand Master of England. At the same time, his letters to Russia indicate that the Grand Secretary was intent on establishing a very close personal rapport with the Provincial Grand Master. In every letter, we can find instances of a developing relationship. In his letter on 9 May 1774, Heseltine expressed his hopes "to be honoured with your [Elagin's] correspondence as often as possible to which the utmost attention will be on all occasions paid by Our Grand Lodge." By 1776, the Grand Secretary explicitly stated his intent of "being ranked among the Friends of His Excellency Mr. Yelagiun [sic]" and promised to

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embrace “every opportunity of conveying it.”

Besides Freemasonry-related organizational issues and news, we learn that Heseltine knew of his “noble friend’s” private life, including his health. Elagin presented Heseltine with “the elegant pistols” that were, in Heseltine’s words, “particularly admired by every person here who has seen them.” A token of their friendship, this act of giving was considered by Heseltine as a “conqr[matio]n of those sentiments [of friendship and esteem],” indicating that the very form of exchange created a spirit that could be seen as both the environment in which the exchange occurred and, ultimately, the most important thing that was exchanged.

Heseltine also regularly corresponded with Lukin whom he personally met and interacted with at the Somerset House Lodge during Lukin’s stay in London. Although the Grand Secretary was aware of the limitations of this friendship by correspondence, he wished it “to continue for Life” despite the fact that the friends’ “distance of situation indeed is such that I therefore made great allowances in the score of Friendship, and was desirous of persuading myself that some unexpected event had prevented your attention to me.” Heseltine paid a lot of attention to the state of his friendship with Lukin, with the regularity of their interaction testing the strength of their friendship.

In the absence of regular and trusty channel of transmitting the correspondence, every letter from the Provincial Grand Lodge in Russia, obviously, lessened the anxiety and doubts that the Grand Secretary might have had. Heseltine’s hopes that that “nothing

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263 Heseltine, for instance, was deeply concerned with the healing progress of Elagin’s broken leg. FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 116 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 9 May 1774).
264 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 28 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 20 December 1777), also mentioned on page 56 (the letter on 25 June 1778).
will interrupt it [their correspondence] in future," 265 especially considering the distance between London and St. Petersburg, brings out the preoccupation with preserving this special relationship with his Masonic friends in Russia. His concerns of not receiving any communication highlight temporality and the deleterious effects that time and distance could have on a friendship and the effort to actively instigate friendship and guarantee its permanence.

Maintaining official and friendly correspondence with Russia was a challenge for the Grand Secretary. The beginning of the communication problems between the Grand Lodge of England and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia to which Elagin bitterly attested in his memoirs, 266 can be traced in Heseltine’s concern with the regularity of the communication in his 1774 letter to Lukin and attributed to the very establishment of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia. 267 By 1776, Heseltine was eager to restore Elagin’s confidence despite the “abstraction of those sentiments of Friendship and esteem which I [Heseltine] have on all former occasions with great truth” professed to the Grand Provincial Master of Russia and “the rest of the Gentlemen in Russia who are Brethren of our ancient Masonic Institution.” 268 Transmitting the next portion of the documents and the accounts for Elagin to “observe the flourishing state of the Society,” the Grand Secretary explained that one great cause of delay in correspondence “has been owing to a

266 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 6rev.
267 It is usually assumed that the speed of regular international postal communication in the eighteenth century was slow, especially on the territory of the Russian Empire (I. Ia. Gurlans, *Iamskaiia gon'ba v Moskovskom gosudarstve do kontsa XVII veka* (Iaroslavl’: Iaroslavl’, 1906); M. N. Vitashevskiaia, *Starinnaia russkaiia pochta* (Moscow: Sviaz’izdat, 1962)). However, on the basis of the calculations of the speed of the information sent from different countries of Western Europe in reaching Russian cities, B. V. Sapunov established that an average time passed from sending to delivery was five-six weeks (B. V. Sapunov, *Nemetskii knigi i gazety v Moskve v XVII veke*, vypusk 68 (Moscow, 1994), 298-301).
Friend of mine who is also a Brother, & who the latter end of last summer went abroad
and proposed taking Petersburgh [sic] in his way but was prevented from going wither.”
Heseltine sent the papers with this person, but they were returned to London because the
courier was not able to “forward them w[i]th safety.”269 The unnamed courier was
probably not Mr. Alexander Baxter, a Mason whose regular trips to St. Petersburg
enabled the Grand Lodge of England and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia to
correspond during 1774-1777, as Heseltine’s letters indicate.270

In his letter on 20 December 1777, Heseltine expressed his greatest concern with
the news that Elagin had not received any of his letters for nearly a year, especially when
Heseltine “had in fact written since in the course of half a year then last past and had
transmitted our Gr[and]. Lodge acc[ount]s with an explanation of the ceremony observed
at the Dedication of our new Hall &c.” He then went on to repeat the information that
was contained in the letters that were “miscarried through some unforeseen cause.”271
The next letter to Russia that Heseltine wrote in 1779 indicates his growing concern with
the lack of communication with the Provincial Lodge in Russia. He did not receive any
reply to his letter on 25 June 1778.272 However, in 1780 the contact was reestablished
with Elagin’s letter, to which Heseltine replied with relief and enthusiasm despite the fact

270 Baxter is mentioned as a courier in FHL, Moderns’ Letter Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 116, 118 (letter
from Heseltine to Elagin, 9 May 1774); Moderns’ Letter Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 19 (letter from
Heseltine to Elagin, 15 June 1776) and 28 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 20 December 1777).

In his Letters of a Russian Traveller, 1789-1790: an Account of a Young Russian Gentleman’s Tour
through Germany, Switzerland, France, and England (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 278-
279, Nikolai Karamzin, a prominent Russian historian and writer and a Masonic student sent abroad,
mentions that on his trip to England, he dined at a house of a “wealthy Englishman, a consul…” This
Englishman was Alexander Baxter, whom Karamzin possibly knew since Russia or had letters of
recommendation from common Masonic friends.

271 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 27 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 20 December
1777).

272 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 72 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 29 June 1779).
that the contents of the letter "respecting the state of Masonry in Russia," gave him much concern.273 Unfortunately, there is no copy of Elagin’s letter to identify the problems to which he attested. Nevertheless, from Heseltine’s response it is known that the letter was troublesome enough for the Grand Secretary to lay it before the officers of the Grand Lodge. As he reported to the Grand Provincial Master of Russia, although the Grand Lodge “lament[ed] the great change which has happened in the state of Masonry in Russian Empire through the ambition and invention of individuals pleased with novelty and trifles,” the Grand Lodge supported Elagin’s intentions to pursue the “genuine [M]asonry” “in conjunction with the efforts of the remain[in]g few … Brethren.” From this passage, it is clear that in his letter Elagin complained about the difficulties in competing with other Masonic systems spreading in Russia at the time. In his reply, the Grand Secretary did not add anything of substance that could help Elagin resolve the situation. He only informed the Grand Provincial Master of Russia that the Grand Lodge “will excuse your non contrib[utio]n to the Fund of Charity, and under the circumstances in your Lodges do not expect any thing until a favourable alteration happens.”274

The official and friendly correspondence between Heseltine and his Masonic friends in Russia explicitly defined their relationship in contractual terms. Contractual parameters of the friendship between Heseltine and Elagin established a precise set of expectations and duties from both sides. With any failure to answer letters promptly, there was a danger of this being interpreted as a violation of a bond, which, inevitably, led to elaborate apologizing from the side responsible for the delay. If we analyze the dates of the letters sent out by Heseltine to Russia and the dates of the letters, as he

274 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 93 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 28 April 1780).
mentioned, he received from Russia, we can see that the correspondence was increasingly irregular despite Heseltine’s efforts to transmit letters at least two times a year.\footnote{From Heseltine to Russia three letters (via Lukin) in the beginning of 1772 (not dated): one to Elagin, and two to the St. Petersburg lodge of Perfect Union; - From Elagin (delivered via Baxter?) on 12 February, 1774 – Heseltine answered (delivered via Baxter) on 9 May 1774 and one letter to Lukin on the same date; - From Elagin (delivered via Baxter) on 23 March 1776 – Heseltine answered on 15 June 1776 (delivered via Baxter); - From Elagin on 13 May and 24 October 1776 – Heseltine answered on 20 December 1777; - No response from Elagin – Heseltine wrote on 25 June 1778; - No response from Elagin – Heseltine wrote on 29 June 1779; - From Elagin 1\textsuperscript{st} [month of?] 1780 – Heseltine answered on 28 April 1780. On the basis of the correspondence in FHL, Moderns’ Letter Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775) and vol. 3 (1775-1791).} Elagin’s alarming letter in the beginning of 1780 was obviously the last one received by the Grand Lodge of England from the Grand Provincial Lodge of Russia. In 1788, the Grand co-Secretary William White wrote that since he assumed his office in 1781, he never received any information concerning the lodges in Russia.\footnote{From 1781 to 1783 he shared his responsibilities with James Heseltine as a joint secretary.}

Despite the problems in communication, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia obviously played an important role in the London Grand Lodge’s claims for international influence. In 1777, the Grand Lodge published “Some Account of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia, acting under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England” in \textit{Free Masons’ Calendar},\footnote{FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 3 (1775-1791), 58 (letter from Heseltine to Elagin, 25 June 1778).} which, together with the similar report on the situation of Freemasonry in Germany, remained one of the favorite pieces being printed in 1778, 1779, and 1780.\footnote{\textit{The Freemasons Calendar} (1777), 38-39; (1778), 40; (1779), 42; (1780), 45.} Even though there were periods when the Grand Lodge of England did not receive money or information from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia before 1780 and nothing after, Elagin’s name as the Provincial Grand Master for Russia remained on the lists of Provincial Grand Masters acting under the authority of the Grand
Lodge of England for 26 years (1773-1800). He was still on the list in the calendars for 1787, 1790, and even 1800; and one Moscow lodge and four St. Petersburg lodges were among foreign lodges indicated as belonging to the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England in 1792, 1793, and 1800, while other Provincial Grand Lodges were customarily promptly deleted from the lists in the same situation.

279 Freemasons Calendar: or, an almanac, for the Year of Christ, 1775, and Anno Lucis MMMMDCCCLXXV, being the Third after Bissextile, or Leap-Year: Containing besides an accurate and useful Calendar of all Remarkable Occurrences for the Year, many useful and curious Particulars relating to Masonry (London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1775), 28-29; 34-35.

280 # 466 - Nine Muses, St. Petersburg
   # 467 - Urania, St. Petersburg
   # 468 - Bellona, St. Petersburg
   # 469 - Mars, Jassy, Moldavia
   # 470 - Clio, Moscow,


The numbers are those given to the lodges on their first appearance in the lists. The Lodge of Perfect Union at St. Petersburg was kept on register until 1813, and then erased. The St. Petersburg Lodge of the Nine Muses, No 1 was also erased only in 1813 (Lane, 191). All eight lodges were erased from the lists in 1813, the year in which the Grand Lodge of England was merged with the Ancients' Lodge, although by this time all the Russian Lodges had stopped functioning.

Elagin was not the only Provincial Grand Master who complained about the lack of communication with Masonic metropolis. Complaints by provincial Freemasons of neglect and lack of responsiveness on the part of the Grand Lodge pepper the written exchanges between Provincial Grand Lodges and the Grand Lodge.

An example of how easily a Provincial Grand Master could be dismissed from his responsibilities by the Grand Lodge of England for the lack of the effort, is in FHL, Moderns' Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-75), 19rev-20, in a letter written by Heseltine to Wm. Jarvis Esq-r P.G.M. for Antigua on 6 September 1769:

Sir, In the Year 1758 you were appointed Provincial Grand Master for the Island of Antigua by the Lord Aberdour then Grand Master of England. In virtue of such appointment you were directed to keep a regular correspondence with the Grand Lodge here & c. But it does not appear by any Papers now in the Grand SecretaJry Possession, that you have ever corresponded with the Grand Lodge, or (otherwise - inserted) attended to the duties of your office. And as the most noble Henry Somerset Duke of Beaufort, Our present Grand Master, is determined that no Gentleman shall be continued in office who does not choose to attend to the duties thereof, & cultivate the Royal Art in its most extensive sense, which attention is particularly requisite in the Office of Prov. Grand Master. I am directed to transmit you this resolution, & to acquaint you on the contrary either find the necessary attendance inconvenient, or disagreeable, be pleased to acquaint me therewith as soon as possible, in order that some other gentleman may be appointed in your place...


A letter in the Moderns' Letter Book, vol. 2, 7-9, written by the Grand Secretary Heseltine on 12 July 1769 to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada testifies that Russian concerns about problems with regular communication and problems with proper establishment of the lodges and interactions with only "regular" lodges were not uniquely Russian per se. Lodges both in Britain and in the world were at the time
Even though his correspondence with the Grand Lodge was not maintained regularly, Elagin did not remain inactive in his capacity of the Provincial Grand Master. In terms of numerical strength, the mid-seventies was a period of great prosperity for English Freemasonry in Russia. The relative novelty of the lodges, Catherine’s tolerant attitude toward them, and lack of sharply defined ideological direction helped to draw all kinds of men into Elagin’s lodges. The Provincial Lodge under the English jurisdiction was thriving. With Elagin’s title, the stamp of the member of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia automatically conferred its rightful place in the network upon a Russian lodge. The main strength of the Provincial Grand Lodge was concentrated in St. Petersburg and the Baltic Provinces. In 1774, Elagin opened the St. Petersburg lodges of Deviat’ Muz (Nine Muses), Muza Urania (Muse Urania) and the military lodge of Belonna. In Moscow, he organized the lodge of Klio (Clio) and oversaw the establishment of the military lodge of Mars in Iassy. By 1774, Elagin’s lodges had a membership of over 200 people, made up of Russian nobles and foreigners from all levels of civil and military service. In that year, all five of Elagin’s lodges were added to the Grand Lodge of England’s lists. By 1776, in addition to the lodges in Moscow and St. Petersburg, there were three lodges in Riga, two in Reval, one in Dorpat, one in Libau, one in Kiev, one in Arkhangel’sk, and one in Mogilev.

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preoccupied with the same questions of the competence and rights. It is interesting, though, to see the Canadian brothers trying to “elect” their own leader every year, and not to have him appointed - striving for a degree of independence from the Grand Lodge of England – which was refused. On the other hand, the marquis de Gages built a well functioning Provincial Grand Lodge in the Austrian Netherlands, though the correspondence shows that his payments for charity were also not forthcoming regularly.

281 On the Masonic dynamics in the Baltic Provinces, see Chapter 3.

282 Although nominally, the lodges of Skromnosti or Molchaniiia (Modesty) and of Mars operated within the Elagin system, they were, in fact, the facades for Melissino to develop his own system.
It is important to point out that while Freemasons of British nationality remained active in Russia, especially in the 1770s and 1780s, the lodges included in the lists of the Grand Lodge of London did not necessarily orient themselves to all things English. Thus, for instance, members of the English lodge Urania were exposed to a whole array of the multifaceted life of foreign Freemasonry in Russia. Although Urania may itself have accepted British Masons, it used English as a second language to German in the 1780s.\(^{283}\) Also, the English-system lodges in Russia did not necessarily maintain contact only with the lodges in England. On 15 March 1772, the Urania members wrote to Berlin to *Royal Yorcke d’Amitie* (Royal York Lodge of Friendship),\(^ {284}\) the English-system lodge with the constitution from the Grand Lodge of England, to establish a close correspondence. As we learn from the inclusion to the actual letter, Brother Grodard was a treasurer of Royal York appointed to be the main link between the lodges of the English system in Russia and Berlin.\(^ {285}\) In the letter signed by “W. Louquine, Maître en Chaire; Carl Kniper, Premius Surveillant; Nicalii Graan, Premier Stuart; Balsch: Bergmann, Second Stuart; B.C. Von Essen, Trésorier; Pierre Barts, Maître des Cérémon[ies]; Henry Hessen(II) secrétaire,” Grodard is named the representative of the

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283 Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo*, 12.
285 Otdel pis’mennykh istochnikov Gosudarstvennogo Istoricheskogo Muzeia (OPI GIM), fond 17, opis’ 2, folder 406, 4; 12rev. But the letter with the requests was sent much later. The first one was dated 10 July 1773 and read at the lodge meeting on 3 August 1773.
lodge. When the member of the Urania lodge Andrei Raznotovskii traveled abroad, the lodge made a special point of giving him letters of recommendation to “the somerset lodge” in London as well as a lodge in Berlin on 1 February 1774. Urania also had contacts with the military lodge of Minerva in Sadogury (Moldavia) that the Grand Lodge of England warranted by in 1772. This lodge, though formally remaining in the English system, transferred its allegiances to the Berlin-Swedish system by 1777.

Another active correspondent of Urania was the Arkhangel’sk lodge of St. Catherine (St. Catharina zu den drei Saulen) that consisted mainly of foreign merchants. General Petr Melissino and his lodge of Mars in Iassy also corresponded with Urania in 1773.

“A Gentle Instruction” From the Landesloge: The Zinnendorf and the Reichel’s Systems in Russia

Because of their exposure to the multitude of international variations of the Craft, Russian lodges often did not automatically regard the English Grand Lodge as the only source of legitimacy and the three-degree system as the highest point of Masonic knowledge. In the conditions of Russia, to bring all Russian lodges under the jurisdiction

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286 OPI GIM, fond 17, opis’ 2, folder 406, 12-13. Characteristically, the letter of the lodge predominantly German in its membership to the Berlin lodge is written in French, with identification of the titles of the lodge officers the French and English terms are mixed together.

287 Probably, not the actual Somerset House Lodge #4 in London, but the Grand Lodge of English called “somerset” in Russia by the name of Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, who was elected the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England in 1767.

288 OPI GIM, fond 17, opis’ 2, folder 406, 29 (1 February 1774); 30 (15 February 1774). Andrei Raznotovskii (Reznotovskii, Raznatovskii), translator, writer, and enthusiast of the new methods in agriculture, was an active Freemason in at least three Russian lodges in Russia. Serkov, Entsiklopediia, 681.

289 According to Serkov’s Entsiklopediia, 943, the St. Catherine lodge worked in Swedish-Berlin system already in 1766 and asked the St. Petersburg Grand Provincial Lodge for the warrant in February of 1775. While the lodge joined the union of Berlin National Grand Lodge in 1777, it is often mentioned as an English lodge.

290 OPI GIM, fond 17, opis’ 2, folder 40, 44-63.
of the Provincial Grand Master and the Grand Lodge of England had to deal with international Masonic issues. In the first letter written by Heseltine to Elagin, there is a reference to the information received from Lukin that “a person of the name of Reichel appointed Provincial Grand Master for Russia, ... [who] acts under an authority granted him by one, Zinnendorf291 of Berlin, which Zinnendorf is authorized by the Provincial G[rand] M[aster] of Sweden.”292 However, as Heseltine emphasized in his letter to the Master of the Royal York lodge at Berlin, “one Dr. Zinnendorf of Berlin” was not authorized by the Grand Lodge of England to assume the title of Provincial Grand Master for Prussia, equally as the Provincial Grand Master of Sweden was not allowed to appoint Provincial Master for Prussia, thus urging to treat this appointment as “illegal, unconstitutional, and absolutely invalid.”293 Lukin was also provided with a letter to the Count de Scheffer, Provincial Grand Master for Sweden under the authority of the Grand Lodge, in which Heseltine informed Scheffer of “an imposition formed by Zinnendorf” through which “one Dr. Zinnendorff [sic] of Berlin pretends that he is appointed P[rovincial] G[rand] M[aster] for Prussia by virtue of an authority from you [and - inserted] that such his authority extends to the Constituting of other P[rovincial] G[rand] Lodges in different Kingdoms - and in consequence thereof he has appointed one Reichel of St. Petersburgh [sic] P[rovincial] G[rand] M[aster] for Russia.”294 Commenting on

291 Johann Wilhelm Kellner (Ellenberger) von Zinnendorf (1731-1782) served as the Surgeon General in the Prussian Army and became the Master of the National Grand Mother Lodge of the Three Globes in Berlin (of Strict Observance), but later invented his own high-degree system, the so-called Zinnendorf or Swedish-Berlin system.


293 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 93 (letter from Heseltine to the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Upper and Lower Rhine & Franconia, Frankfurt, 8 December 1775).

the conflict about the Provincial Mastership of Russia, Heseltine also wrote to the lodge of Royal York of Friendship that worked under the Grand Lodge in Berlin that “esteemed Br. Louquin [sic] who will deliver this to your Hands, and who is now possessed of a Patent from us appointing a Prov[inci]al G[rand] M[aster] for Russia can further satisfy you with respect to the truth of this letter.” From these letters, it is clear that the both sides, Lukin and Heseltine, were concerned about the most powerful rival of the Elagin’s Provincial Grand Lodge: the so-called Zinnendorf (Swedish-German) system in Russia and the activities of its leader Zinnendorf and his protégé Baron Georg von Reichel.

As opposed to Strict Observance, the seven-degree Zinnendorf system was often called Weak Observance. According to the historian A. Wolfstieg, the Zinnendorf system was “a unique, fanciful compilation of Freemasonry, French knightly degree, German Templarism with a splashing of Rosicrucianism, alchemy and Renaissance

295 FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 90 (letter to the Master of the Royal York Lodge from Heseltine, no date, early 1772). This also testifies to the fact that Lukin visited not only the English Grand Lodge but had also been to Berlin at least on his way back to Russia and was received there.


Vashego Siatel’sva edinstvennaiia rekomendatsia o g. professore Reichele zasluzhivat k nemu otmenniee vnimanie; no kak sei chevolok, po dolgovremennomu moemu pri universitete prebyvanii, i mnoou zavsegda byl uvazhaem, to ia za osoblivoe udovol’stvie pochitau imet’ uravnitel’noe s Vashim Siatel’stvom popeczenie o blagosostoianii sego poleznago nashemu uchilischo chlena. [Your Highness special recommendation for professor Reichel calls for our protection to him [Reichel]; but during my long-term involvement with the university this person was always highly respected by me, that is why it is my special pleasure to care for this member so useful to our institution in manner comparable to yours. Your Highness].

According to Schröder’s diary, Reichel was initiated in English Freemasonry in the lodge of General Kingsley [during the Seven-Year War?], RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, part 4. Schröder’s diary was also partly published as “Dnevnik Barona Shredera,” in Ia. Barskov, Perepiska moskovskikh masonov XVIII veka, 1780-1792 gg. (Petrograd: Imperatorskaia Akademiia nauk, 1915), 215-234 and “Dnevnik neizvestnogo nemtza-rozenkreitsera,” in Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 76-91.

297 On the system of Strict Observance, see Chapter 1, pp. 77ff.
mysticism.”

In 1770, by uniting twelve lodges under his system, Zinnendorf established a body called the Grand (or National) Lodge of Germany. The system was at its height when Prince Hesse-Darmstadt became its Grand Master.

Reichel introduced the Zinnendorf system to Russia shortly after he entered the Russian service in 1770. Before leaving Berlin, he is said to have consulted with Zinnendorf himself who ordered him “to do everything in his power for the dignity and spread of the royal art in those parts. Reichel’s first lodge of the Zinnendorf system, the lodge of Apollon (Apollo), was opened on 3 March 1771 in St. Petersburg. Initially, the lodge of Apollo consisted of fourteen members: thirteen foreigners and one Russian noble. Despite its small size, the lodge committed to building a house for meetings, which inevitably brought about financial disputes. Moreover, apparently, Apollo members resented Zinnendorf’s ban on the Scottish high degrees which they previously acquired from the Strict Observance lodges. Eventually, the lodge of Apollo was closed, and the lodge of Garpokrat (Harpocrat[is]) led not by foreigner Reichel but the Russian Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi, was opened on 15 May 1773. Reichel still played an important role in the lodge, but the majority of the members were Russian nobles who associated themselves with the Zinnendorf system.

298 Cited in Faggionato, Rosicrucian Utopia, 21.
299 Semeka, “Russkoe masonstvo v XVIII veke,” 186.
300 RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4754, contains one letter from Freiherr von Reichel, Maître en Chair, and Mikhail Kheraskov, Maître député, of the lodge Apollo (1771), pp. 1 (7) – 2 rev (9rev); and one letter from Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi, Maître en Chair, and Mikhail Kheraskov, Maître député, of the lodge Garpokrat (Harpocrat) (1773), pp. 11–12 rev. The response from the National Lodge of Germany, Louis de Hesse (Maître nationale) and Jean Quilaume de Zinnendorf (député) advise their Russian brothers to ask Elagin, the Grand Provincial Master of Russia and his London superiors for the legal installation documents.
301 Friederichs, Geschichte, 27, states that the lodge of Harpocratis was established on 15 May 1773. Pypin, Khranologicheskii ukazatel’ russkih lozhe, 9, mentions 1772 as the year of the lodge’s foundation. It is important to emphasize that in his book Friederichs does not use any Russian-language sources even though
Although the Zinnendorf system is frequently described as “Berlin-Swedish,” indicating the geographical centre of its activity, it became formally linked with the English system at the end of 1773, when Zinnendorf managed to obtain recognition from the Grand Lodge of England. A condition of this recognition, however, was the agreement for the Berlin National Lodge (Landesloge) not to open any lodges except in German territories, and for the Grand Lodge of England not to open any lodges in Germany. In a letter in the Archives of the Grand Lodge of England, dated 9 May 1774, the Grand Secretary Heseltine writes to the Grand Provincial Master of Russia Elagin:

The Prince of Hesse & Darmstadt having united with the Prince of Prussia & other persons of distinction in Germany, all regular Masons, applied to us lately for a confirmation of their authority as a National Grand Lodge under such restrictions and conditions as might be agreeable to us, which proposal was

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he claims on the cover “nach dem Quellenmaterial der Grossen Landesloge zu Berlin, sowie der Petersburger und Moskauer Bibliotheken,” contains many factual errors and almost never gives references to his sources.

In September of 1776, the lodge of Harpocratis included 22 Master Masons, 5 Fellow Crafts and 4 Entered Apprentices. Master of the lodge was Ivan Artem’ev, a high government official, chief secretary of the ruling Senate; his deputies were Rosenberg and Baron Reichel (the latter was considered to be the founder of the lodge). Among the members were such high nobles as Princes Nikolai and Alexander Trubetskies. Five members of the lodge were German by nationality (Archives of the Estonian History Museum, Fond 128. Register (R.) 1. Storage Item (L.) 56, pp. 30-31, 42-49, quoted in Johan G. Hakman, “The First Freemasons in Estonia,” http://www.biblio.ee/hakman_eng.html, visited on 27 February 2007).

303 The text of the agreement between the Grand Lodge of London and the Grand Lodge of Germany was published in the Freemasons Calendar (1777), 35-38.

On 30 November 1773, Heseltine writes a letter to Monsignor Poivrier [?], “Chirurgien Major du Armes du roy [sic] à Berlin” (possibly at the lodge of Cassel) in which he announces that “The Grand Lodge … unanimously resolved that the proper compact with the Prince of Hesse was highly proper & might tend to the Fraternity in the Empire of Germany and that therefore it sh[oul]d be immediately [sic] completed and carried into execution, w[hil]ch has been done accordingly and the Prince of Hesse is now by us acknowledged Grand Master of the Empire of Germany.” Accordingly, by the compact no new lodges could be constituted by the London Grand Lodge in Germany and therefore all applications for new Lodges must be made to the grand Lodge at Berlin under the Prince of Hesse (FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 107-108rev). In another letter, Heseltine explains to John Peter Gogel, Provincial Grand Master of the Upper and Lower Rhine and Franconia, that the English Constitution cannot be granted to the brothers at Stuttgart because “that district and every other part of Germany except Brunswick & Lunenburg [sic], Hanover, and your province, being added [sic] to the Prince of Hesse and Darmstadt as Grand Master of Germany, who in return for this cession pays an Annual & considerable stipends to our Grand Lodge for the charitable Fund,” FHL, Moderns’ Letter-Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 115-115rev. (25 March 1774).
approved of in Our G[rand] Lodge; and the Prince of Hesse is the pres[en]t Grand M[aste], and Mr. Zinnendorf who was heretofore looked upon as a very irregular Br[other], has conformed to all our regulations & is now an officer under the Prince of Hesse.\textsuperscript{304}

Furthermore, Elagin was assured that the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Germany were “very regular” and advised to keep up “a friendly correspondence with their G[rand] Lodge situated in Berlin” which, as Heseltine explained, was “very agreeable to us, and we hope, not disagreeable to yourself.”\textsuperscript{305} So, supposedly, as long as Zinnendorf was on friendly terms with the English Grand Lodge, Reichel’s Masonry was not supposed to present a serious challenge to Elagin’s leadership.

According to the agreement between the Grand Lodges, if Zinnendorf’s officials decided to oppose the Grand Lodge of England in the spread of Freemasonry in Russia, they would endanger their own progress on German territories. When the Grand Lodge of England promised not to establish lodges within the German Empire, if the full right was allowed it to do so in other territories (including Russia), the Berlin National Lodge was forced to stop any formal support of its lodges in Russia and turn down significant opportunities of including Russian lodges in the sphere of influence and direct those who were interested in opening lodges to its rival, the Grand Lodge of England.\textsuperscript{306}


\textsuperscript{305} FHL, Moderns’ Letter Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 117rev. (letter from Heseltine to Elagin on 9 May 1774).

\textsuperscript{306} At the same time, not all English lodges in Germany agreed to come under the jurisdiction of the National Grand Lodge of Berlin. Thus, after the agreement between the Grand Lodge of Germany and Britain, English lodge Royal York of Friendship in Berlin was supposed to come under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Germany, as Heseltine suggests in the official letter on 21 September 1773. However, the Royal York of Friendship did not agree to do so. As stated in Heseltine’s letter to this lodge, the refractory improper conduct of the Lodge Royal York of Friendship, toward them [the Grand Lodge of Germany situated in Berlin], and their authority as being in strict alliance with us [the Grand Lodge
When the Harpocratis officers wrote to Berlin with an application for the official approval of their new lodge and asked for a new *Book of Constitutions*, they did not receive the support they hoped for. On 31 August 1773, Prince von Hesse, the nominal leader of the Zinnendorfian Freemasonry, rejected Harpocratis' application and advised the lodge to contact the Grand Provincial Master of Russia Elagin or directly the Grand Lodge of England.\(^{307}\) In a letter from the reestablished lodge of Apollo to the Berlin Grand Lodge, Reichel explained that in choosing between the systems, Russian brothers feared that the *Constitutions* from Stockholm were false. They sought "a gentle instruction" and wanted to know whether the Berlin *Landesloge* was in any way connected to the Grand Lodge of England, because English Freemasons had "an exclusive right to constitute lodges all over the world."\(^{308}\) As Reichel's letters point out, apparently, the London Grand Lodge had sent the constitutive documents of the lodge Apollo to the Berlin *Landesloge* that was supposed to transfer them to St. Petersburg. Thus, it was the Grand Lodge in London, and not the National Grand Lodge in Berlin, that acted as Apollo's Mother-Lodge under the categorical declaration "that the London Grand lodge had the exclusive right of constituting other Lodges in the whole world."

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\(^{308}\) "Eine gültige Belehrung," RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis' 1, folder 4754, 1rev. (letter without a date, most likely around 1771).
However, in relation to the lodges already established in Russia before 1773, the National Lodge in Berlin often continued to consider Russia as a territory under its jurisdiction. In the letter to the Landesloge from Harpocratis signed by the master Prince Nikolai Troubetskoï and his deputy Mikhail Kheraskov on 20 May 1773, Russian brothers reported that Reichel organized Harpocratis according to the Swedish statutes approved by the Grand Lodge of Germany.\textsuperscript{309} In response, maître National d’Allemagne Prince von Hesse and his deputy Zinnendorf informed the members of the lodge about the recent agreement with the Grand Lodge of England, but insisted that the National Lodge of Germany still had the freedom to act in Russia.\textsuperscript{310} It is with the support from the National Grand Lodge of Germany that Prince Trubetskoï and Reichel established the lodge of Oziris in Moscow; Gorus (Horus), Latona (Latonia), and Nemesida (Nemesis) in St. Petersburg; Izida (Isis) in Reval and Apollon (Apollo) in Riga, as well as reestablished the lodge of Apollo in St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{311}

Even though the English encouraged Elagin to communicate with the National Grand Lodge in Berlin, Elagin’s Provincial Lodge of Russia did not acknowledge Reichel and his lodges of the Zinnendorf system as regular until 1776. The key to the rivalry between the lodges that are known as the Reichel and the Elagin systems (although neither Reichel nor Elagin elaborated anything new, the systems were customarily called by the name of their nominal leaders in Russia) does not seem to lie in

\textsuperscript{309} RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 11-12rev. (letter from the St. Petersburg loge Harpocratis to the Grand Lodge of Germany in Berlin (Grande Loge d’Allemagne), in French, dated 20 May 1773. It is not clear whether this is the date the letter was received in Berlin or signed in Russia.

\textsuperscript{310} RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 13-13rev. (letter from Berlin to the St. Petersburg lodge of Harpocratis, 31 August 1773).

\textsuperscript{311} RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 18 (letter from Moscow to Berlin, Grande Loge Nationale d’Allemagne on 2 March 1776). Additional copies on pages 20-23.
any significant difference but rather in the allegiance to different national Grand Lodges.312

Sending the first Constitutions of the lodge of Apollo to St. Petersburg in 1771, Zinnendorf wrote to Elagin trying to win him over and aiming at “strengthening, as much as possible, friendship and concord between … brothers” and recommending “reputable brother Reichel and the lodges (that are to be established in the Zinnendorf system) to your and all your brothers’ in Petersburg patronage, trust, and benevolence.”313 This letter dated 15 October 1771, well before Elagin was appointed the Provincial Grand Master. This testifies to that Elagin, in fact, was highly reputed not only in Russian Masonic milieu but also known outside of the country, which helps to understand why his candidacy was offered to the Grand Lodge of England. At this early stage, instead of developing relations with the Zinnendorf (Swedish-German) system, Elagin applied for the establishment of the first Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia to the Grand Lodge of England.314

At the same time, Reichel’s lodges in Russia were in no way acknowledged by the English. Supported by his friend Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi, with whom he had

312 For a discussion of the turbulent relationship between Reichel and Elagin, see Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 32-6.
313 Semeka, “Russkoe masonstvo v XVIII veke,” 186: S isel’u ukrepl’t, naskol’ko vozmozhno, druzhbu i soglasie mezhdyu vashimi brat’iami … ia schel svoeu obiazannost’ u soobschit’ vam ob etom [ob uchrezhdении lozhi Apollon] i osobennо rekomen dovat’ pochтенного брата Reichelia, a такzhe i lozhi vashemu pokrovitel’stvu, doveriu i blagosklonnosti, tak zhe, kak i vsem vashim bratiam v Peterburge.
[“With the purpose of strengthening, as much as possible, of the friendship and the consent between your brothers… I take it to be my duty to inform you about it [the establishment of the lodge of Apollon] and especially to recommend you and all your brothers in Petersburg the respectable brother Reichel and his lodges to your protection, trust and benevolence.”]
314 Friederichs, Geschichte, 27, mistakenly asserts that Elagin sent the original patent from the Grand Lodge of England to Berlin’s Landesloge. In fact, he sent only a copy.
founded many lodges including the so-called Princes’ lodge of Oziris,\footnote{The lodge was nicknamed a “Princes’ lodge,” because the majority of its members were of Russian highest nobility.} Reichel entered into correspondence with Elagin. In his attempts to gain recognition from Elagin, Reichel had found a strong support in Count Nikita Panin, one of Catherine’s ministers who, as ambassador in Sweden, had become attached to the Swedish System.\footnote{It is important to point out that Russian Masonic requests for affiliation with foreign lodges were surprisingly similar in their stance to the foreign policy choices made by the Court and the College for Foreign Affairs, which was headed by Nikita Panin from 1763 till 1781.} The negotiations initiated by Reichel must have been carried out in an extremely convincing manner. While the English Grand Lodge revoked its agreement with Zinnendorf and the Berlin National Lodge by 1775, Elagin made a decisive turn towards a union with Reichel in 1776.\footnote{On 20 January 1775, Heseltine writes to the English Lodge of Royal York in Berlin, … [T]his alliance alarmed the Strict Observance, who had already seduced the Prince of Brunswick from his duty as a Provincial Grand Master under our authority, … and they elected him their Grand Master and by his influence & persuasion the Prince of Hesse resigned his office of Grand Master and thereupon applications were made to us to revoke our alliance with Berlin… [I]t is our intention to abide by our compact with Berlin, of which Grand Lodge the Prince of Saxe Gotha [sic] is at present Grand master. The conduct of the Prince of Brunswick was very extraordinary -- for at his appointment as Prov[incial] Gr[an]d Master by us he promised [by writing -- added] under his Hand & Seal, to conform to the regulations of Our Grand Lodge -- which were sent to him. Notwithstanding which he soon afterwards under our sanction became the strenuous supporter of the Strict Observance. And is now exercising a pretended authority over your Lodge -- which is certainly an infringement of your Rights… With respect to your question as to which party you shall support -- Brunswick or Berlin -- I present the sentiments contained in this letter will sufficiently point out our wishes upon the subject. With Berlin therefore you are requested to side...} In a letter on 3 September 1776, Elagin, Baron Ungern-Stenberq, and General Melissino proclaimed the decision of the Russian lodges to come under the authority of the Berlin-Swedish system and follow brother Reichel. They stated,\footnote{RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 31-32 (letter from St. Petersburg to Berlin, in French. 3 September 1776).}

Nous soussignés attestons et prouvons par ce ai que nous avons reçus tous les Actes complètes de trois premiers grades du Système Suédoise dans la Maçonnerie. Nous Promettons d’en faire jamais l’Obligation maçonnique.\footnote{RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 31-32 (letter from St. Petersburg to Berlin, in French. 3 September 1776).}

On 2 October 1776, Elagin reaffirmed his commitment to the unifying effort under the pretext of having “only one pastor and only one flock” in Russia.\footnote{RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 4754, 31-32 (letter from St. Petersburg to Berlin, in French. 3 September 1776).} The
lodges of the Elagin-Reichel alliance that continued to call itself the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia, included eighteen lodges, among which were ten in St. Petersburg, three in Moscow, one in Revel, one in Arkhangel'sk, one in Polotsk, and one military lodge in Khadogury in Moldavia (perhaps it was Melissino's military lodge relocated from Iassy).\textsuperscript{320} To prove his and his Provincial Lodge's eligibility and answering to the request made from Berlin, on 3 January 1778 Elagin sent a copy of the 1772 warrant from the Grand Lodge in England and the current list of lodges in Russia.

For Reichel and Zinnendorf, the influential Elagin was a desirable ally. It is less clear why Elagin, who earlier had been hypersensitive about a possible contamination of his own lodges by the Reichel "heresy," was eventually willing to compromise and accept the alliance. This union with Reichel and the Swedish-Berlin system went against Elagin's obligation towards the Grand Lodge of England. Having the authority of the Grand Lodge of England under his belt, Elagin and his lodges could and did effectively compete with Reichel's Zinnendorf system. On the other hand, as a result of the alliance, Elagin's power and authority were increased by the acquisition of the Reichel lodges. Given that the lodges under Elagin practiced higher degrees long before that,\textsuperscript{321} accepting the alliance with Reichel, Elagin could cease to worry about the defection of Masons from his own lodges to Reichel's lodges. The alliance contributed to Elagin

\textsuperscript{319} Quoted by E. Friedrichs, \textit{Geschichte}, 38. The same wording ("...with the intention of reuniting the Brethren under a single flock" [imeia v mystiakh soedinenie brat'ev vo edinoe stado]), RGADA, fond 8, folder 255, 1-2.


disposing of his powerful rival Reichel, who virtually disappeared from the Masonic scene after 1776.

From Reichel, Elavin also acquired the complete set of rituals of the Zinnendorf system, which seemed especially important to him considering the lack of direction from the Grand Lodge of England. The lack of knowledge about ritual was embarrassing to Elavin, as he pointed out in his Memoirs, “the English Grand Lodge ... only distributed constitutions for the erection of Lodges and instructions to work the three degrees of St. John, but transmits nothing in writing about how to work with them.”

Judging by the number of different systems’ rituals, random documents, constitutions, and their translations in the personal archive of Elavin, he paid special attention to adding some substance to the information received from the Grand Lodge of England.

As Novikov put it, workings of the English system lodges in Russia, “even though [English-system Freemasons] have explanations about the degrees, morality, and self-knowledge, ... were insufficient and inadequate.” As a result, to many Russian Freemasons the English-system lodges seemed to be an assembly of the people who “… dined, and had fun; they accepted anyone without any questions, talked a lot, but knew little.”

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322 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 6rev.
323 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216. Also published in Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia, 22ff.
324 Longonov, Novikov i moskovskie martiniy, 75.
325 N. I. Novikov, Izbrannye sochineniiia, ed. G. P. Makogonenko (Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvenoe izdatel’stvo khudozhhestvennoi literatury, 1951), 627; and Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martiniy, 75: “… sperva, pokuda uprazhnilis’ v angliiskom masonstve, to pochti igralis’ im, kak igrushkou; sobiralis’, prinimali, uzhinali i veselilis’; prinimali vsiakogo bez razboru, govorili mnogo, a znali malo.” […] at first, while exercising in English Masonry, almost played with it, like with a toy; came together, organized receptions, dined, and had fun; initiated [into Freemasonry] everyone without any consideration, talked a lot, but knew very little.

This comment can be compared with the observation of a German Freemason from Frankfurt, who complained that English Freemasons were mainly given to wining and dining, leaving nothing but the husk, the ceremonial part, of English Freemasonry. Quoted in K. Bergmann, Festgabe für die erste Säcular-Feier der ger. u. voll. St. Joh.-Loge "Der Pilger" No. 238, 3-4.
The Introduction of the Swedish System in Russia

After 1776, the majority of the lodges in Russia worked under one or another form of the high-degree Freemasonry while formally being under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England. The diversity of foreign rites and systems available to the Russians corresponded with their constant search for new Masonic knowledge. By the mid-1770s, the first three degrees of the English system did not seem to satisfy the needs of Freemasons in Russia anymore. In these conditions, the union of all the lodges under the guidance of the highest officials, including Elagin, minister Count Nikita Panin, Prince Gavrila Petrovich Gagarin, and General Petr Melissino, showed signs of power and prosperity. Drawing on the knowledge and the ambitions of foreign expatriates, these Russian nobles considered it to be their duty to appear before the world as the backbone of the country, and took the development of Freemasonry in their hands.

Searching for the “true” Masonry and a “proper” Masonic system for Russia, Russian brothers turned to the Swedish system that was closely related to the Zinnendorf system already known to them. With its emphasis on self-knowledge and morality, the

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326 Count Nikita Ivanovich Panin (1718-1783) was a statesman, political advisor of Catherine II during the early years of her reign, the main aid in education of Catherine’s son, Grand Prince Paul. An influential politician, who helped Catherine to overthrow her husband and the person directing Russian foreign affairs, Panin was also an important Freemason involved with high-degree Swedish rite. [D. Fonvizin], Anonimnaiia zhizn’ grafa N. I. Panina (St. Petersburg, 1787); “Politicheskaiia Perepiska,” Rossiiskoe Istoricheskie Otechestva, ix (St. Petersburg, 1872); V. A. Bilbasov, Geschichte Katharina II. (Berlin, 1891); A. Bruckner, Materialy dlia biografii grafa Panina (Petersburg, 1888); A. V. Gavriushkin, Graf Nikita Panin: iz istorii russkoi diplomatii XVIII veka (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1989); Werner Krumel, Nikita Ivanovic Panins aussenpolitische Tätigkeit: 1747-1758 (Breslau, 1941); David L. Ransel, The Politics of Catherinein Russia: The Panin Party (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975); N. V. Minaeva, “Nikita Ivanovich Panin,” Voprosy istorii 7 (2001): 71-91, Serkov, Entsiklopedia, 624.

327 Gavril (Gabriel) Petrovich Gagarin (1745-1808) was a writer, translator, senator, president of the Commerce-Collegium 1799-1801, and one of the leaders of the Swedish rite in Russia.

328 The turn to the Swedish system can be correlated with the cooldown of Russian-British relations in connection with Catherine’s refusal to support the English navy against the American colonies or the blockade of the Mediterranean. Faggionato, Rosicrucian Utopia, 23, also emphasizes Panin’s efforts in organizing an alliance of neutrality and including Sweden in it.
hierarchical Swedish system was considered an essentially Christian-oriented system and fit Russian elaborate structures of rank.329

In 1776, Freemason Prince Aleksandr Borisovich Kurakin330 was conveniently sent by Count Panin on a diplomatic mission to Stockholm to announce the Grand Duke’s second marriage.331 Fortified with letters from leading Russian Masons, Kurakin and his companion Prince Gagarin had the assignment of obtaining a charter of the Swedish system.332 As Kurakin reported from Stockholm to Count Panin on 11 November 1776, he “continuously discussed all the sciences and the issues related to the well-being of Europe in this century” with high-ranking Swedish officials, connecting the development of those “sciences” to the much-needed peace between Sweden and Russia.333 Although the details of the Masonry-related part of the mission were not directly disclosed in his papers, Kurakin’s trip was a success.

329 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 75.
330 Prince Aleksandr Borisovich Kurakin (Kourakine) (1752-1818) was a diplomat, member of the State Council, and head of the Senate’s Third Department of State Revenues. He was educated along with Grand Prince Paul and studied in Leiden University. When Paul I came to power, Kurakin became the envoy in Vienna, senator and vice-counselor, after the Napoleon war becoming the envoy to Paris.
331 In Arkhiv kn. F. A. Kurakina: Bumagi kniazia Borisa Ivanovicha Kurakina i ego predkov. Famili'nye dokumenty i perepiska s raznymi litsami kniazia Aleksandra Borisovicha Kurakina (1763-1770): Souvenirs De Voyage en Hollande et en Angleterre par le Prince Alexandre Kourakin. A sa Sorties de l’université de Leyde durant les années 1763-78 (1894), vol. 8 (1775-1777), 167-169 (1419), there is a detailed description of the “reconnaissance des Écossais entre eux” (Tire des papiers du Prince Kourakin, 1776), including secret handshakes, passwords, and ceremonies, which supports the suggestion that Kurakin was intimately involved with the high-degree Scottish Freemasonry before his visit to Sweden and initiation to the Swedish rite.
333 - Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 283 (1507): “…ot vsiaikih nauk i do suschestovaniia Evropy v nyneshnem veke kasauschikcia materiikh neprestanno so mnou razgovariva’ai izvolit.” [... constantly favor me with the discussions about different sciences and Europe’s development in this century].
   - Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 295 (1514):
Frederik uverial menia, chto voinu schitaet on neschastiem dla vsiakogo gosudarstva, osoblivo dla slaboii i razorennoi Shvetsii, ... chto pomyshl’ sebe nikak ne pozvoliat ni o vozvrashchenii svoemu gosudarstvu ot onago prezhnimu mirnymi traktatamoi otshestikh provintsii, a esche menee o novyh
Already in December 1776, Count Adam-Louis de Lewenhaupt\textsuperscript{334} wrote to Kurakin asking for additional information about family genealogies of those who were to be involved with the lodge in Stockholm to become the future leaders of the Swedish rite in Russia: Prince Gagarin, Elagin, and Kurakin himself.\textsuperscript{335} After giving detailed instructions on how to compile and transmit those genealogies together with the family heraldry via brother Count de Stenbock\textsuperscript{336} from Russia to Sweden, Lewenhaupt assured Kurakin that he was charged “...de ce détail a la loge, et il ne manque actuellement que

\textsuperscript{334} Count Adam-Louis de Lewenhaupt (1725-1755), an heir of the famous Swedish General Lewenhaupt who was instrumental in leading the Great Northern War (1700-1721) between Sweden and Russia.

\textsuperscript{335} Archiv Kurakina, 8: 301.

\textsuperscript{336} Since the full name of the Count Stenbock is not mentioned in the letter, it is not clear who this person responsible for the communication between the Swedish and the Russian brothers was. In the list of the lodge of Izidy (Izis) in Reval on 12 October 5786 (1786) in RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216. “Jacob Wilhelm Graf von Stenbor(c)c Kays[erlich] Rus[sisch] Coriner bei der Garde in Pferde St. P.[etersburg]” is mentioned as an Abwesende Bruder. This is the same lodge which “Johann Fried. Emanuel Baron von Ungern Sternberg Actuarius im Oberlandgericht und Ritterschaft Secretaire” as its member.

While we can find the references to the Colonel Count Stenbock, commander of Kargopol regiment during 1802-1803 who died in March 1803 (Aleksandr Podmazo, Shefy i komandirnykh polkov russkoj armii (1796-1825) (http://www.museum.ru/museum/1812/Library/Podmazo/index.html, visited on 27 February 2007), the indirect evidence suggests that it was the Count Jakob Pontus (Jacob Fedorovich) Stenbock (9 October 1744 – 23 September 1824), a relative to the Swedish noble family of Stenbrock which actively participated in the Great Northern War and a direct heir of Jakob de la Gardie (1583-1652), administrator of Estonia during the Swedish reign. With the establishment of the regency administration in the Baltic provinces in 1783, Stenbock, as brigade general and a landlord of Hiiumaa Island, participated in the intensive uniting of the Estonian and Livonian provinces to Russian Empire. In 1787, he oversaw building of a famous courthouse in Reval that nowadays bears the name Stenbock’s House and houses the Government and the State Chancellery of Estonia. In her Memoirs (part 1, Chapter 2), Catherine II mentions her stay in spectacular Stenbock’s manor not far from Reval. There is no direct evidence that Jacob Stenbock was a Freemason, but it is well documented that he was a close friend of the family of Ungern Sternberg, the influential Baltic Freemasons. Serkov, Entsiklopedija, 768, identifies Jacob Wilhelm as a Mason in two Russian lodges -- the lodge of Belonna in St. Petersburg and the Revel’s lodge of Izida -- and one unidentified foreign lodge.
ces trois-la pour que ça soit complet." Lewenhaupt also expressed his hope that the arrival of

... notre monarque dans votre pays, contribuera beaucoup à vos travaux maçonniques ainsi que l'aide et les éclaircissements que vous pouvez tirer du très éclairé frère comte Stenbock qui, certainement, s'y prêtera avec une entière confiance.

Pointing out that Kurakin had a colossal task in hand (the establishment of the Swedish rite in Russia) and the enthusiasm to match the scale of the project, Lewenhaupt charged him with being “le restaurateur de notre St-Ordre” in Russia. Several important points stand out in this letter. First, the need to present heraldic banners of the Masonic leaders’ families explicitly refers to the bias of the Swedish rite based on the Templars’ myth towards the military nobility. In addition, Lewenhaupt emphasized the exclusiveness of the Order, stating that

[l]e vulgaire est bien malheureux d’être prive de notre satisfaction, mais finissons ces réflexions, ils [elles] me mèneront dans des détails aussi constants pour nous autres qu’affligeants pour le reste de l’humanité.

He unambiguously relied on “une liaison au delà de l’expression” that was established between the brothers of the Order because of their submission to the rule of the unknown superiors in pursuing common goals. Presumably, this liaison could only be furthered by the special protection from the Royal family that the Order enjoyed in

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337 Archiv Kurakina, 8: 301 (1517).
338 Gustav (or Gustavus) III of Sweden (1746-1792), a cousin of Catherine II, and an ardent Freemason visited St. Petersburg in 1777.
339 Archiv Kurakina, 8: 302 (1517).
340 Archiv Kurakina, 8: 302 (1517): “Vous avez, mon cher frère, une grande tache à remplir, avec le zèle que je vous connais il n’y a point de doute que vous ne réussissiez entièrement.”
341 Archiv Kurakina, 8: 302 (1517).
Sweden. As we will see further, this connection to Swedish Royalty and Russian nobility was one of the key factors in the eventual downfall of the Swedish rite in Russia.

The Swedish system was formally established with the opening of the Grand National Lodge (Grande Loge Nationale) of the Swedish system called Kaputul Feniksa (Phoenix) in St. Petersburg house of Gagarin in February 1778. In its essence, Kaputul was a secret chapter used by the Swedish superiors to control the Russian brothers. One of the prime duties of Gagarin, as head of both the overt National Grand Lodge and the secret Kaputul, was “to guard the secret concerning the establishment of

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342 Karl, Duke of Sudermania, brother of King Gustav III, in 1773 succeeded the Count Scheffer as Grand Master in Sweden, an office which he retained until 1780, when on 15 March he was installed with great pomp by the king himself as “Vicarius Salomonis,” of which ceremony the supplement of the Utrecht Gazette, No. 98, of Friday, 7 April 1780, gives the following description:

From Stockholm, 21st March. The 15th of this month will ever be a solemn day for the Freemasonry established in this kingdom, for on that day the Duke of Sudermania, brother of the King, was installed Grand Master over all lodges in this kingdom, as well as over all those of St. Petersburg, Copenhagen, Brunswick, Hamburg, etc. For this purpose the Lodge of St. Petersburg had sent a deputy here, and the others had remitted the Diploma of the Installation to the Baron de Levenhaupt, who had gone for this purpose last year to Copenhagen and Germany; this installation took place with much pomp. The assembly consisted of over four hundred members, and was honoured by the presence of the King, who deigned to accord to the Lodge a Diploma, by which he assures the same of his protection, and who robed the new Grand Master with a mantle lined with ermine... It is though that the King will accord revenues for the Commanderies and that this Royal Lodge, acknowledged by the others as Mother Lodge, will receive from each of them an annual tribute. This solemnity has rescued the order of the Freemasonry from a sort of oblivion into which it had fallen.

As Kupferschmidt, Notes on the Relations between the Grand Lodge of England and Sweden in the Last Century (Margate, 1888), 4-5 points out, this passage created a great sensation in Germany. The lodge of Royal York complained that nothing about this event had been communicated to it, although Baron Horn was their acknowledged representative at Stockholm. The Duke of Sudermania himself, having seen the printed report, sent a corrected report of it to Brunswick, in which he stated that on March 15, 1780, he had been installed Vicarius Solomonis of the IX Province, just then restored, and that he had been proclaimed head over all Freemasons in Sweden.

343 Thus, for instance, even the fact that the discussed letter was written by Levenhaupt from the military family with a long history of fighting with Russia can be looked upon with suspicion by the Russian authorities.

344 In Russian Masonic lexicon, “Kaputul” meant Chapter (English), Capitolo (Italian), Chapitre (French), Kapittel (Dutch), or Kapitel (German).
the Chapter Phoenix against the Masonic crowd and to communicate its existence only to
the most reliable supporters of the new system and selected enlightened brothers.”

After the foundation of the Kapitol, its officers started negotiations to involve the
existing Elagin lodges with the new system. Kurakin reported to Duke of Sudermania
that his first efforts went in the direction of attracting the highest Freemasonry-related
officials, including Senator Elagin, Prince Gagarin, Generals Ungern-Sternberg and
Melissino, and also Mr. Yäger, an English merchant. In order to qualify as officers of
the Kapitol Phoenix, proof of at least four generations of noble ancestry was
necessary, and because Yäger was not a “gentilhomme,” Kurakin extensively
explained the benefits of having a respectable member of the English community and a
long-term Freemason among the supporters of the Swedish system in Russia. With
time, all the links between Russian and Swedish lodges were concentrated in hands of
“digne frère Rosenberg, qui... s’est acquis l’amitié et la confiance de ... tous” who, as
Zinnendorf warned, was an adept of the Strict Observance system.

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345 Vernadskii, Russkoe massonstvo, 44.
346 RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5300, 8-8rev. This might be the same Yäger that was one of the
officers of the English lodge of Perfect Union.
347 Sokolovskaia, Kapital Feniks, 10.
348 RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5300, 10.
349 Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 320 (2022): Le Comte Frederic Horn - au Prince Alexandre Kourakine
(Stockholm, 26 avril (7 mai) 1778); Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 319 (2019): Le Comte Louis de Lewenхват - au
Prince Alexandre Kourakine (Stockholm, 26 avril (7 mai) 1778); Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 331(2033): M.
Rosenberg - au Prince Alexandre Kourakine.

Georg Rosenberg, formerly the Meister von Stuhl of Reichel’s lodge of Apollo, refused to join the
Reichel-Elagin coalition. When Elagin writes to Zinnendorf about this, Zinnendorf replies, “Mr. Rosenberg
the elder ... as a result of traitorous, defiant and other kinds of inappropriate behavior is pronounced as a
person not worthy of the name of Mason and excluded [from the list of Zinnendorf Freemasons]. He
supports the Strict Observance... we are warning about him and ask not to let him into your lodges”
(Friedrichs, 45-46). With the support of King Gustavus III of Sweden, Rosenberg’s lodge of Apollo
abandoned the Swedish-Berlin (Zinnendorf) system, and passed over to the Swedish System on 25 May
1779.
Although formally the Kapitol leadership was in the hands of the Russian nobles, an envoy of the Swedish brothers, Count Kaunitz-Rietberg (Ritberg), le Grand Bailif du Temple, was responsible for installation of most of the officers of the National Lodge and elevation of its members to higher degrees. His three letters (1777) to Prince Kurakin are among Elagin’s papers in RGADA. In the first letter on 2 June 1777, Kaunitz mentions that he forwarded some papers from the King of Sweden to Prince Kurakin in hopes of getting an audience with Count Panin. The second letter dated 23 August/3 September and also, apparently, addressed to Kurakin, implies that Kaunitz sent a letter to the Duke of Sudermania, and received a reply from him in the hands of Prince Aleksandr Belosel’sky. As a result of this transmission through multiple hands, the letter from Duke of Sudermania was supposed to be disclosed to Elagin and Gagarin, while General Melissino needed to be informed of the letter’s content.

From the lodges involved in the system, the Swedes required an absolute obeisance. Kurakin received detailed instructions for the establishment of the Kapitol, including the amounts of money Russian brothers were supposed to send to the Swedish Grand Lodge and the sitting chart for the lodge meetings. He also had very specific

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350 RGAVA, fond 1412k, folder 5300, 4ff (Instruction Selon laquelle le grand Bailif de Comte Kaunitz Ritberg doit por constituer et creer le Chapitre de St. Petersburg lois le nom Distinetif de l’Union Parfait le au nom du Grand maire et Directoire de Stockholm).

Most probably, the Kaunitz Ritberg mentioned was a son of the Austrian Cancellor Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg. Kaunitz the Younger, who was an Austrian ambassador to Russia in St. Petersburg in the 1780s.

351 Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Belosel’sky(-Belozersky) (1752-1809), diplomat, composer, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Freemason, writer, and philosopher whose Dianyology ou tableau philosophique de l’entendement (1789) was praised by Kant. In 1778, he was the Russian envoy in Dresden, and in 1789-93 the envoy in Turin.

directions for transmitting these documents to Russia and opening packages.\textsuperscript{353} At the same time, it was emphasized that even in the rigid hierarchical structure of the lodges the Grand Masters needed to be elected “pour le conservation de l’égalité” among the brothers.\textsuperscript{354} In May 1780, Karl of Sudermania sent the Instruction pour le Directoire établi à St.-Pétersbourg in which the Kapitul’s offices were described in detail. He made sketches of the heraldry of the St. Petersburg lodge of the Sphinx (led by Prince Gagarin) and Kapitul.\textsuperscript{355}

On 5 January 1780, the Kapitul laid down the laws that implied appointments of two local Grand Masters (one – for Russian, another – for German lodges); two Grand Supervisors (Russian and German); two Grand Secretaries (Russian and German); and two Grand Rhetoricians (Russian and German). According to the regulation #23, the dinner lodge was supposed to honor the Royal family and the noble patrons of the order with its first toast, while the second toast praised the Honorable Swedish lodge and its Great Master.\textsuperscript{356} Among the requirements, there was an obligation of the Kapitul to inform the Grand Lodge of England (la Grande Loge d’Angleterre) about the progress and the situation of Freemasonry in Russia and deliver the membership lists and the names of the lodges’ officers.\textsuperscript{357} In his letter, Duke of Sudermania mentioned that if the the National Lodge in Russia was established according to the instructions, the Grand Lodge of England would not have any reservations in granting an appropriate status to it. Obviously, the approval of the Grand Lodge of England was still important because the

\textsuperscript{353} RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5300, 5-6rev.
\textsuperscript{354} RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5300, 12.
\textsuperscript{355} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 339, 9-12 (9 May 1780).
\textsuperscript{356} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 34, no. 23.
\textsuperscript{357} RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5300, 6.
Grand National Lodge of Sweden itself had its constitution from the Grand Lodge of England. But even though Elagin, the Head officer of the Grand Lodge of Englad in Russia, initially fostered this new link with Sweden and, as we can see in Lewenhaupt’s letter and Kaunitz’s correspondence, was named among the leaders of the Swedish rite from the beginning of the project, he balked presumably after learning that the movement would owe allegiance to a foreign leader, Duke Karl of Sudermania, King Gustav III’s brother.

Nevertheless, many former Elagin lodges joined the Swedish system and the Kapitul, which, as David Ransel points out, “plainly represented a social extension of the Panin party.” In 1779, it included “[l]e Prince Kouraquin, Grand Prierur de l’Ordre representant du Vicaire de Solomon;” “le Prince Gagarin, Grand Prefet, Grand Maitre national;” “le Comte Stroganoff, le comte de Bruce, le comte Pierre de Rasoumovtsky [sic], le Prince Neswitsky,” and one “Ilgin” [Elagin?] By 1780, the Swedish coalition boasted fourteen lodges: seven in St. Petersburg, four in Moscow, and lodges in Reval, Cronstadt, Kinbourne, and Penza.

One of the most prominent lodges in Russia under the Swedish jurisdiction was the Cronstadt lodge of Neptun (Neptune), which received its warrant at the end of 1779 from Prince Gagarin, Kapitul’s Grand Master. Although the Neptune was notably

359 Ransel, The Politics of Catherinian Russia, 257.
360 RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 5297, 34-34rev.
361 Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 10-11, 40-44, 49. On Elagin’s opposition to the spread of the Swedish system, see Sokolovskaiia, Kapitul Feniksia, 232-33.
British in its membership, unlike Perfect Union, it had no pretensions to be a British lodge.363 Led by the famous Scotsman on Russian service, Sir Samuel Greig,364 this naval lodge worked the ten degrees of the Swedish rite. According to the three lists of members of the lodge for the years 1780-81, over 88 percent of Neptune members were in one way or another connected with the Naval Academy. In addition to Greig, other British members were all naval officers: Captain-Lieutenant Francis Denison, who died in the battle of Svenkund in 1790; Captain-Lieutenant Robert Wilson, who rose to be Vice-Admiral; Lieutenant Charles Newman, and Captain James Nasse.365 Among the

and documents reproduced on pages 237-38)). We can compare with the standard English sequence published in the Freemasons Calendar (London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1775), 52:

1. The King and the Craft;
2. The Grand Master;
3. The Deputy Grand Master and Grand Wardens;
4. The past Grand Master;
5. The King of Prussia;
6. The Dukes of Gloucester and Cumberland;
7. All the noble patrons of the Art of Masonry;
8. The Master of the lodge.

363 As Cross, “British Freemasons,” 248 points out, at no time did British Masons represent more than ten percent of the total membership, which grew from fifty-two in 1780 to sixty-two at the end of 1781.
364 Sir Samuel Greig (1735-88) was born on 30 November 1735 in Inverkeithing in the family of a captain, who traded frequently with Russian Baltic ports. After thirteen years of service to the British navy, he received permission from George III to transfer to the Russian navy in May of 1764. On 18 June 1764 Graig was already captain of the First rank that gave him right to hereditary nobility. In Russia, he married Sarah Cook, sister of William Cook, the British consul in Cronstadt. In the war with Sweden Greig became the head of the Russian navy in Baltic and the only defender of Cronstadt and St. Peters burg.

365 Cross, “British Freemasons,” 249. All names are recorded in Bakounine, but only Nasse appears to have been recognized as British. Denison is identified as Frants Mikhailovich Denisov. Newman as Karl Ivanovich Numan, and Wilson as Roman Romanovich Will’son.
honorary members of the Lodge was John Stranack, the captain of a British merchant ship that frequented the port of Cronstadt.\textsuperscript{366}

Admiral Graig, a Scotsman in command of the Russian navy, a Freemason believing in international brotherhood and Master of a lodge practicing Swedish rite in Russia, is a figure indicative of the international dimension and an amalgamation of national and international influences of Freemasonry in Russia. He was Senior Warden in 1780 and became Master of the Neptune lodge in 1781, a position he retained until his death in 1788.\textsuperscript{367} Although nothing is known of his Masonic career before 1780, the respect he held as a Mason is apparent from two funeral orations that were delivered at special memorial lodges.\textsuperscript{368} Both orations praised Graig for his public and private life, his services to Russia and to Freemasonry.\textsuperscript{369} Freemasons praised Graig for those “great

\textsuperscript{366} According to Cross, “British Freemasons,” 249, Greig’s circle at the Naval Academy also included a small number of the Russian officers who had been trained in England at an early stage of their careers, e. g. Ivan Osipovich Selifontov (1744-1822) and Petr Ivanovich Khanykov (1743-1813), and that the Masons from the Academy included two teachers of English: Proktor Ivanovich Zhdanov and Ivan Nikolaevich Shishakov.

\textsuperscript{367} T. O. Sokolovskaia, Materialy po istorii russkogo masonstva (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia istoricheskaia biblioteka, 2000), 8-10.

The Cronstadt lodge of Neptune was one of a few lodges that continued to work the Swedish rite after the majority of the Russian loges abandoned it. It joined the second Elagin union in 1786, a year before hostilities broke out with Sweden, but, nonetheless, was closed shortly afterwards (Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 49).


\textsuperscript{369} Not only his Masonic brothers, but also the Empress sincerely mourned his death. One of Catherine’s secretaries, writer A. V. Khrapovitskii, who was the translator of Catherine’s anti-Masonic play Taina protivo-nelepego obshchествa, otkrytaia ne prihastnim onomu (Société Antiabsurde (St. Petersburg, 1759)) from French to Russian, in his diary writes about Catherine’s reaction on the news of Graig’s death on 18 October 1788. Not only she emphasizes that Graig’s death “c’est une grande perte, c’est une perte pour l’Etat,” but cries in a state of sorrow (A. V. Khrapovitskii, Dnevnik Khrapovitskago, 1782-1793, ed G. N. Gennadi (1862, reprint, Moscow: V/O Souzteatr STD SSSR, 1990), 174-175).

Despite Khrapovitskii’s insistent attempts to distance himself from Freemasonry in his diary (Dnevnik, 6, 399-400, 437), we find his name in the two 1776 lists among Elagin’s papers: the lists of the persons preparing to receive the degree of the Scottish Master and in the registry of those who became the Scottish
and attractive qualities which adorned our lamented and esteemed Brother, which did credit to mankind and made him a God-fearing, wise, generous man, in a word, a true Mason.”\textsuperscript{370} The German orator of the lodge Urania portrays Graig as an idealist who strove for perfection.\textsuperscript{371} In his exchange of letters with Duke Karl of Sudermania, Greig’s Masonic friend, Swedish-system supervisor, and (paradoxically) enemy in the war, about the alleged use of fire-shells at the battle of Hogland in 1788, Greig wrote, “[it is] my sincere desire is to reduce the ferocity of war, as far as compatible with my form of service.”\textsuperscript{372}

Despite the initial enthusiasm with which lodges in Russia turned to Sweden, from their Swedish superiors they hardly received any direction that went further than the detailed administrative instructions. As Prince Trubetskoi wrote, “despite all the promises and the efforts..., she [Sweden] does not tell us anything... the letters that are written from there are full of political correctness and nothing else...”\textsuperscript{373} The Swedish acts which the Russians had procured independently through the Rosenberg brothers at a cost of 1,400 rubles revealed nothing new in comparison with the Reichel Acts.\textsuperscript{374} At the moment, the Swedish rite and, consequently, its Russia-based brothers were under the direction of the Duke Karl of Sudermania, who was going through leadership struggle

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\textsuperscript{370} Pypin, \textit{Russkoe masonstvo}, 166.
\textsuperscript{371} Pypin, \textit{Russkoe masonstvo}, 162-3.
\textsuperscript{373} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, letter 3, 6: “ne smotria [sic] na vse obeschaniia Shvetsii, i na vse staraniia ... ona nam nichego ne soobschait; i chto pis’ma, kotorye ottuda pishut, napolnennyy politicheskih uchtivstv, a bol’she nichem...”
\textsuperscript{374} Pekarskii, \textit{Dopolneniia}, 41.
with the leader of the German Strict Observance, Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick.\textsuperscript{375}

During the period of this tension between the Swedish and German Masonic leaders, as we learn from the letter of Count de Lewenhaupt to his “Très cher et très éclairé frère” Kurakin,

\begin{quote}
Des affaires et intérêts politiques entre les frères de mon pays et ceux des pays étrangers, surtout ceux de l’Allemagne ont fait émaner un ordre de notre supérieur d’interrompre tout commerce de lettres avec tout frère étranger ayant des grades supérieurs, et cela, sous peine de désobéissance.\textsuperscript{376}
\end{quote}

By the time the letter was written in 1778, Lewenhaupt and his superiors felt it was safe to reestablish their liaison with Russian brothers. However, almost immediately, by 1779, Russian authorities started looking with suspicion at the relations between the lodges in Russia and Karl of Sudermania. As Russian Freemasons explained in their letter to Duke of Brunswick,

\begin{quote}
… many of our brothers entered with obligations and made a union with Swedish brothers, the union that led to the saddest consequences when the creation of the nine provinces was published carelessly in the gazette… Catherine considered this close union of Her subjects with the Swedish Duke of the Royal Family indecent. We should admit her concerns were very justified.\textsuperscript{377}
\end{quote}

The situation worsened when, in one unexpected sweep, Karl declared Sweden the ninth province of the Strict Observance and made himself Master of Sweden, Finland, and Russia, as well as a separate province in north Germany, from Elbe to

\textsuperscript{375} The documents of the correspondence between “Mrg Duc Frederic August de Brunswie” and “Mrg le Duc Ferdinant de Brunswie” (the Duke of Brunswick and the Duke of Sudermania) concerning the Wilgelmsbad Convent were hand-copied well into the nineteenth century in Russia. The Duke de Sudermania insists on the legitimacy of the Templars’ claims saying Je fus asses heureux d’entrer en correspondance avec quelqu’un de ces Venerables Inconnus, qui ne respiirent que le bien du genre humain, en capable de tromper personne; qui bien loin d’avoir aucune vue politique, tachent uniquement d’Exirper le Vice par tout, ou ils peuvent le faire, et d’enseigner.

\textsuperscript{376} Arkhiv Kurakina, 8: 318-19 (2019), la Comte Louis de Lewenhaupt - au Prince Alexandre Kouriaikne (Stockholm, 26 avril (7 mai) 1778).

\textsuperscript{377} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 35rev-36. Published in Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 169.
Oder. Even before this event, Swedish-system lodges were suspected of trading the highest degrees for political support. But Karl’s decision, in the eyes of Russian authorities, was a direct indication that Sweden, through Duke of Sudermania, was attempting to exert influence on Russian nobility. According to Sokolovskaia, the real purpose of the Swedish system in Russia was to “assist the union of the nobility of the two northern states by bringing together the most prominent families – both Russian and Swedish – on the basis on Freemasonry and by subordinating them to the will of the Order.” Although it is impossible to sustain this claim with direct evidence, in general, judging from the lack of direction from Sweden and confusion in Stockholm and St. Petersburg, there was a great deal of conscious manipulation on all sides. In preparing the union with the Swedish Freemasonry, the Brunswick leaders of the Strict Observance, while planning to keep the province under their own control, appeared to be using the Swedes to draw in the Russian lodges. The Swedes seemed to hold out the possible incorporation of Russia as an enticement in bargaining for Duke Karl’s pretensions for European leadership in high-degree Freemasonry.

In this situation, Catherine could not remain unconcerned about Paul’s possible Masonic connections. After the chief of Petersburg police was ordered to visit the Swedish-system lodges twice to check whether they had any correspondence with the Swedish Duke, many Freemasons realized how suspicious their subordination to the

378 But this drew so much protest from the Danish and some German brothers that Karl abdicated his position in April 1781.
379 Sokolovskaia, Kapitol Feniksa, 5.
Swedish system might have looked to the authorities and closed the majority of the Swedish-related lodges in St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{380}

The Prussian Guidance of the Novikov-Schwarz\textsuperscript{381} Moscow Circle

The reaction of the officials to Masonic connections with the lodges abroad and particularly with the Swedish court and overall tightening of control over social activities by Catherine in the beginning of the 1780s led to the shift of the Masonic center from St. Petersburg to Moscow.\textsuperscript{382} Since the foundation of St. Petersburg by Peter the Great in the beginning of the eighteenth century, a strong antipathy had prevailed between the court nobles of St. Petersburg that was naturally evolving into a seat of the military and

\textsuperscript{380} On Catherine's suspicions about Paul's involvement in more detail, further in Chapter 5.

Longinov, Novikov, 110; Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 227. Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 221, emphasizes that Catherine "was especially distrustful of Swedish Freemasonry and its alliance with Russia's lodges" which led to closing the Sweden-related lodges. As N. S. Ivanin, "K istorii masonstva v Rossii," Russkaia starina 35 (September 1882): 542-43, points out, some of the Swedish-rite lodges were revived several years later. It is known that St. Petersburg lodge of Aleksandr continued to work with Swedish rite, as well as the lodge Dubovoi Doliny (Zum Eichental) and Apollo did in the 1780s.

\textsuperscript{381} In the literature, especially the Russian historiography, the customary name of this Moscow Masonic group is the "Novikov circle." By referring to it as the "Novikov-Schwarz" circle I emphasize the vital role of Schwarz.

\textsuperscript{382} Most scholars see two phases in the development of eighteenth-century Russian Freemasonry, the rationalist stage, centering on St. Petersburg, and the mystical Moscow period (see, for instance, Vernadskii on Voltairianism and Freemasonry, in Russkoe masonstvo, 96-116). As In-Ho L. Ryu, "Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation," 9, points out, this is a confusing oversimplification. In Freemasonry, especially in the versions popular in Russia, rationalism and mysticism were mixed in various proportions, so that the oppositions between lower/higher, rational/mystical, St. Petersburg/Moscow versions of Freemasonry are misleading:

The later struggle between "Westernizers" and "Slavophiles": is anticipated in the difference of perspectives between lower and higher order Masonry. In both cases the Westernized activism of St. Petersburg contrasts with the more contemplative Eastern preoccupations of Moscow. But in both cases, there was a close bond between the parties.


Compare to "Petersburg Masonry always sought to unravel the Masonic secret; Moscow Masonry in the '80s strived toward the world" (V. Tukalevskii, "Iz istorii filosofskikh napravlenii v russkom obschestve XVIII veka," Zhurnal Minesterstva Narodnogo Prosvescheniia 5 (1911): 1-69).
service nobility, and the rich Moscovite nobility without service ties to the court.\footnote{383} If St. Petersburg was the capital for the government and bureaucracy, Moscow was relatively independent and free-spirited city. The first and the only Russian university of the time was located in Moscow.\footnote{384} By the 1780s, twenty-five years since its foundation, Moscow University and its three departments (jurisprudence, medicine, and philosophy), two gymnasiums (colleges), and an independent publishing house became the trendsetters of intellectual developments in the country and the hotbed of Russian intellectual activity.\footnote{385} Combined with the rapidly developing trade and manufacture-related occupations in Moscow, this relative freedom of intellectual expression made Moscow University especially attractive to foreigners and to Freemasons.

It is in Moscow and in relation to Moscow University that two influential Enlighteners and Freemasons in Russia -- Nikolai Novikov\footnote{386} and Johann Georg

\footnote{383} On his visit in 1773, Diderot expressed concern about the manners (moeurs) of Petersburg, a “confused mass of all the nations of the world,” which gave the city “the manners of Harlequin” (Denis Diderot, “Entretiens avec Catherine II” (1773) in Oeuvres politiques, ed. Pal Vernière (Paris, 1963), 475-76). quoted in Larry Wolff, Inventing Eastern Europe, 227.

\footnote{384} In the directive announcing the decision to establish a university in Moscow, the government explained the choice of the location: “1) the great number of the gentry and raznochintsy living in it; 2) its position in the center of the Russian state which is easy to reach from the surrounding places; 3) low cost of living; 4) almost everyone has relatives and friends with whom he can obtain room and board; 5) a great number of teachers maintained by the landowners at high cost are not only incapable of teaching learned subjects, but they themselves do not have any education.” The clear exposition of Moscow’s importance for Russia’s education, this document testifies to the fact that from its establishment Moscow University was set in a city whose mood answered its own. Ezhegod. sochinenii k pol’ze i vneseniui sluzhaschiia, 1, 101-102, quoted in In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation,” 47.

\footnote{385} Despite the fact that, as I consider in Chapter 5, in the eighteenth century Moscow University was not a particularly good university. Too many professors were either second-rate Germans or their still poorly educated Russian students.

\footnote{386} Nikolai Ivanovich Novikov (1744-1818) was an active publisher, writer, educator and philanthropist. After being educated at Moscow University, he served as a member of the exclusive Izmailovskii regiment that had put Catherine on the throne of the Russian Empire. After Catherine’s accession, Novikov became involved in Catherine’s Legislative Commission. He gained notice as the publisher of a series of satirical journals in St. Petersburg in the 1770s. At the same time, he made important contributions to Russian historical scholarship with his Opyt istoricheskago slovaria o rossiiskikh pisateiakh (1772) and the collection Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivilofika (1773-1775). In 1779 he moved to Moscow and obtained a ten-year lease of the presses of Moscow University. During this time his Typographical Company published the
Schwar(t)z\textsuperscript{387} -- met in 1779. With the help of Mikhail Kheraskov,\textsuperscript{388} the curator of
Moscow University and ardent Mason, Novikov leased the printing house of Moscow
University for ten years. Already known as the author and a publisher of the popular
Opyt istoricheskago slovaria o rossiiskikh pisateliakh (Experience of historical
dictionary of Russian writers, 1772), multi-volume Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika
(Ancient Russian Library, 1773-75), and several magazines including satirical Truten'
journals Moskovskie vedomosti (1779-1789), Detskoe chtenie (1785-1789, the first Russian children’s
magazine) and altogether one third of all books printed in Russia in that decade, including numerous
mystical works translated from western and eastern languages. Novikov was also active in opening
grammar schools for children and various philanthropy-related enterprises. I consider these projects in
relation to Masonic activities in detail in Chapters 4 and 5. Novikov was arrested by Catherine in 1792, and
was freed by Paul I in 1796. I analyze the issues surrounding Catherine-Novikov conflict in Chapter 5.

Into Freemasonry Novikov was initiated in Elagin’s lodge Astreia in 1775 in St. Petersburg following
an intellectual crisis of reaching a “parting of the ways between Voltaireanism and religion, had no bearings
or foundation on which [he] might build spiritual peace.” However, the activities of the lodge, which
typically devoted much attention to ritual and Masonic lore, left Novikov unfulfilled in his search for a
rational yet spiritually uplifting philosophy. Hoping that the Berlin-based Zimmendorf system, he founded a
new lodge with several friends in 1776, directed toward moral growth and self-knowledge. Novikov
became keenly interested in finding the “true” Masonry, which to him meant a system “consonant with
Christian teachings, which would lead us by the most direct path to spiritual self improvement through self-
knowledge and education.” (McArthur, 365). In 1776, Novikov met with Prince Petr Ivanovich Repnin who
reported that all types of foreign Masonry that he had seen were false. After moving to Moscow and
meeting with Schwarz, Novikov organized a close-knit Moscow Masonic circle.

Novikov is one of the most researched figures of the second half of the eighteenth century in Russia and
the Russian Enlightenment. Historians place special emphasis on Novikov’s relations with Catherine II and
a seeming contradiction between Novikov’s interest in mysticism (manifested through Freemasonry and
his Enlightenment posture. Madariaga, Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great, 522-31; W. Gareth Jones,
Nikolay Novikov, Enlightener of Russia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); P. N. Berkov, ed.
Koshelek, 1774, ed. (Moscow, 1951); J. G. Garrard, ed. The Eighteenth Century in Russia (Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1973); V. P. Semennikov, Knigoisdat’eskaiia deiatel’nost’ Nikolaiia Ivanovicha Novikova
(Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo, 1921); Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty; Vernadskii,
Russkoe masonstvo.

\textsuperscript{387} As Novikov described the first meeting, “Once a German came to me with whom after talking I
became, for the rest of life, till his death. inseparable” [Odnazhd’y prishel ko mne nemchik, s kotorym ia,
pogovoria, sledal’sia vsu zhizn’, do ego smerti, nerazluchnim], quoted in OPI GIM, fond 17, opis’ 2, folder
361, 6, in a biographical essay on N. Novikov written by an unknown author, printed in Sionskii vestnik
(February, 1818), 222; and U. Veselovskii, N. I. Novikov: zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’ (Moscow: Vvezda, 1911),
40. Despite established close friendship, Novikov initially distrusted Schwarz’s adherence to Strict
Observance (Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 078).

\textsuperscript{388} Mikhail Matveevich Kheraskov (1733-1807) was a leading Russian poet of the time, dramatist, and
curator of Moscow University. He was initiated into Freemasonry while an administrator of the college in
St. Petersburg in 1771, and it was his decision to lease Novikov the press at Moscow University in 1779.
Kheraskov’s best-known poems, Rossiaida (1779) and Vladimir Reborn (1785), are about the introduction
of Christianity in Russia. His Kol’ slaven nash gospod’ vo Sione (How Glorious is our Lord in Zion) became
the hymn of the imperial family.
(The Drone, 1769), Pustomelija (The Blabber, 1770), Zhivopisets (Painter, 1772-73), and Utrennii svet (Morning Light, 1777), Novikov was instrumental in leading Freemasonry and developing its social and spiritual agenda in Russia.

Johann Georg Schwarz (commonly called in Russia Ivan Grigorievich or Ivan Egorovich), the influential German professor at Moscow University, ultimately became Novikov’s mentor in Freemasonry. Schwarz’s life before coming to Russia is almost a blank slate.\(^{389}\) It is reported that he was born in 1751 (calculated from the fact that at the time of his death in 1784 he was 33 years old). In the official certificate given to him by the officials of Moscow University in 1780, Schwarz is identified as a native of Semigrad (or Transylvania in the Latin version of the document). Some report that before coming to Russia, he served as petty officer in the Dutch East Indian Company and visited East India.\(^{390}\) There are some indications that Schwarz received a law degree from Jena University. In the certificate issued by Moscow University Schwarz is identified as “the Candidate of both laws” and “a member of the Jena Society for Latin Language.”\(^{391}\) In 1776, Count I. S. Gagarin, while traveling abroad, met Schwarz and invited him to move

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Although so little is known and written about Schwarz, his influence on the development of Freemasonry and education of the Russian society was tremendous (see more on Schwarz’s intellectual activities in Chapter 4 and educational projects in Chapter 5). Upon his death, Russian Freemasons composed an ode that lamented “the loss of the mentor and the friend.” Quoted in Tukalevskii, “N. I. Novikov i I. G. Schwarz,” 308-309.


\(^{391}\) OPI GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 217.
to Russia to become a tutor in the family of a fellow Mason and chairman of Mogilev’s
criminal court A. M. Rakhmanov. As a family teacher to the Rakhmanovs, Schwarz
spent several years in provincial town of Mogilev, quickly learned the language, and
established a Strict Observance lodge under the name of Hercules in the Cradle. It is
probable that the lodge had direct contacts with the Courland Freemasons. In 1779,
Schwarz moved to Moscow, and with the help of his Masonic patrons at the Moscow
University, secured a place of an “extraordinary professor” in philosophy and belles
lettres at Moscow University.\footnote{Madariaga, \textit{Russia in the Age of Catherine}, 522. Otdel pis’emnikh istochnikov Gosudarstvennogo
Istoricheskogo Museia (OP) GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 217, Certification for Jörgann [sic] Georg
Schwarz. According to the certificate, on 21 August 1779 Schwarz was made an Extraordinary Professor of
Moscow University for teaching German language. On 13 November [1779] was made Inspector of the
Pedagogical Seminary, and on 5 February 1780 was made Public Ordinary Professor of Philosophy. Finally,
on 1 July [1780], Schwarz was made Inspector of both Gymnasia. The certificate is dated 1 September
1780, in Russian and Latin, signed I. I. Shuvalov, M. Kheraskov, and M. Priklonskii.}

Together, Novikov and Schwarz played defining roles in the foundation of the
lodge of Garmonia (Harmony) established by Prince Nikita Trubetskoi as a “scientific”
lodge in the search of “true” Masonry. Members of this “secret” lodge included
representatives from a variety of rites, including Zinnendorf, Swedish, and Strict
Observance. The members of Harmony cultivated the rhetoric of searching for “true”
Freemasonry and put forward the idea of seeking independence for the Russian lodges
from the Swedish domination and establishing a direct connection with German high-
degree Masonry.\footnote{To apply for his temporary leave from the university obligations, Schwarz pleaded ill health and at
length discussed advantages to be derived from his establishing contacts between the Moscow University
and the learned circles in the German states. During his trip, Schwarz presumably fulfilled his promise to
the University by meeting with various prominent figures in Germany, such as Jerusalem, Bernoulli, Count
Sacken, Busching, and Count Anhalt of Saxony. When Schwarz was criticized upon his return for not
having entered into relations with other luminaries recommended by Prince Dolgorukii, he excused himself
by saying that his interest was in observing the new pedagogical principles on practice in Germany, and
French literature did not particularly interest him (Tikhonravov, \textit{Socheniia}, III, p. 69).}
In 1781, the Moscow Masonic community entrusted Schwartz with a mission to Prussia to seek for "the true acts" and learn "where to find the true Freemasonry." The Novikov group provided Schwarz with two unaddressed letters to be given to whichever source of true Masonry he was to discover, 500 rubles for expenses, and additional 500 rubles for the purchase of books. There is no indication that any of the Moscow Masons, with the possible exception of Schwarz, who was in contact with foreigners in Russia and abroad, was aware of the true state of affairs in the Masonic world outside of Russia. That is why Schwarz was only vaguely instructed to

... seek and try to obtain the acts of the Freemasonry, the principle of which we received from Reichel, but should not accept the Strict Observance, French or any other system possessing a political character; but if he could not find it [true Masonry] there, then he should try to discover where it might be found.

Schwarz's route took him through Courland, the corridor that the Russians used to communicate with the Masonic world in Germany. In Courland he used the contacts that he had as the founder of the Strict Observance lodge in Mogilev and obtained letters of recommendation to Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, the Provincial Grand Master of Strict Observance in Europe. Schwarz also secured meeting with the Duke's deputies Wöllner and Theden in the Berlin lodge of Three Globes. By the 1780s, Wöllner

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394 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 79-80.
395 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 079-080.
396 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 080.
397 Johann Christoph von Wöllner (1732-1800), a former student of theology, who made a career at the court of prince Henry of Prussia, was born in Gavelland in 1732, and died on 11 September 1800 (Joh. Ch. Gadice, Freimaurer Lexicon (1818), 50). In 1775, he was appointed head of the Scottish Masters, the first Knight degree above the first three degrees of St. John's Masonic degrees (R. Gould, History of Freemasonry, III, 166). Around 1779, he was attracted to the group that claimed connections with the mystical society of Golden Rose Cross and was active in southern Germany and. Taking advantage of the confusion in the Masonic world, Wöllner and Johann Christian Anton Theden (1714-1797), another adept of hermetic sciences attached to the Prussian court as a surgeon, were in the process of creating a new, more secretive "inner order." They tried to attract followers by promises of higher knowledge and secret power over nature hidden in their secret inner order. Wöllner is identified as the member of the Berlin Three
and Theden were involved with organizing a new, more secretive “inner order” of Freemasonry under the name of Rosicrucians on the basis of existing Masonic structures.399 There is no direct evidence as to how Schwarz approached the Wöllner group.400 Only a patent dated 1 October 1781, and signed by Theden under his Knights


In the answers to the interrogation carried out by General Prozorovskii, we find that Russian Freemasons “did not appreciate this connection [with the Duke of Brunswick], and instead supported the link with Wöllner via Schwarz, considering this connection useful and removed from any political considerations.” (Mason Turgenev, quoted in Tikhonravov, Letopisi russki literatury i drevnosti 5: 85, 87). It is clear from the Novikov’s file that Moscow Freemasons ceased their relation with the Duke of Brunswick almost immediately after the Wilhelmsbad Convent, fostering, instead, the link to the Three Globes and Wöllner. See, for instance, the letter signed by Wöllner, “Gr. Mre depute de la Loge des Trois Globes, ci-devant In O. Temp. d. F. Ioannes, E. a Labo. Prepositus praefecturae Templinis, Comendantor in Altholm” on 25 May 1782.

399 Joh. Ch. Gadicke, Freimaurer Lexicon (1818), points out that Freemason Johann Christian Anton Theden (1714-1797), was a surgeon. In 1786, his name is in General- und Spezial- Listen aller Mitglieder der vereinigten Logen unter unmittelbarem Vorsitz des durchlauchtigsten Provincial-Grossmeisters, Friedrich August, Herzog von Brunswick-Luneburg, angefertigt (Berlin den Oktober 1786 von ehemaligen B. Grosseezaire, jetzigen Vorsitzenden Meister der Loge Friedrich zu den drey Seraphinen. Gedruckt bey George Jacob Decker, Königlichen Hofbuchdrucker), 125. “Joh. Christian Anton Theden, König. Erster General-Chirurgus. Meister vom Stuhl der Mütter-Loge” is identified as the member of the Berlin Three Globes. In 1787, Masons celebrated the 50-year anniversary of his service to Prussia and made a special medal with his portrait for this occasion. Theden’s letters to Tatischev on the changes in the structure of high-degree Russian Freemasonry, NIOR RGB, fond 237, karton 33, folder 10.

399 The Rosicrucian system, the most esoteric Masonic-style organization, like many Masonic high-degree systems based on a story about “unknown superiors,” the “true successors of Jesus Christ,” heavily relied on occultism, alchemy, and magic as the highest means available towards the attainment of secret knowledge. Rosicrucians considered Freemasonry a stepping-stone to the threshold to the nine degrees of the Rosicrucian temple, which was open to only the worthiest Masons and pursued a much more secretive and restrictive course in their recruitment and organizational policy. Underneath the level of Provincial Rosicrucian leaders, there was a semi-secret Masonic level, which operated under the Strict Observance system.

In their communication with Berlin and within Russia, Masonic officers were supposed to follow a rigid structure even in their messages: “The message sent from [the officers] above [in the hierarchy] is called order, the letter sent from below [in the hierarchy] is called the notification. You are supposed to write following the points 1, 2, 3, and so on. If you are answering, you are not supposed to remind what is contained in a point, but simply answer...” If the content of the letters exchanged by the high-ranking Masonic officers were known only to the high-ranking officers, the content of the low-ranking members’ letters was known to the high-ranking officers.

400 It is not a coincidence that Schwarz did not leave any trace of his Rosicrucian transactions. The Theoretical brothers were supposed to burn their papers periodically so that nothing ever should fall into anyone’s hands. Wöllner told Baron Schröder, Schwarz’s successor as the Rosicrucian liaison between Berlin and Moscow, that when a Rosicrucian is dying, his [ritual] coat of arms should be sent back [to Berlin], and every Rosicrucian should, during every minute of his life, take such extreme care of his secret papers that not a single piece of them should fall into a foreign hand in case of his sudden death. If they are not completely disposed of, they can even disturb the peace of the soul. Even every Junior [the lowest
Templar name, *Johann Christian Eq. a. Tarda*, grants Schwarz the “Theoretical degree of the only true order” on several conditions:

1) [Schwarz] should give this degree to no one but Old Scottish masters, and even then only to those who, imbued with true piety, fear of God and love of mankind are worthy of recognition.

2) This degree and the instruction attached to it may be read only in the presence of Schwarz. No brother, whatever his rank, may be, should be allowed to copy them.

3) He should try, as far as his intelligence permits, to explain it to the brothers in the best manner.

4) He should keep this degree completely secret. And therefore be extremely cautious in selecting members.\(^401\)

By agreeing to these conditions, Schwarz was appointed “the only supreme director of the Rosicrucians in the Russian empire with the obligation of sending the lists of the names of the brothers admitted upon his own judgment each year, so that they could be brought into the order’s network of Theoretical brothers.\(^402\) The conditions upon which Schwarz was appointed testify to the fact that the ties binding the newly admitted Theoretical brothers to the order were not only abstract ties of loyalty. The patent specifies the considerations of a more practical nature:

Brother Schwarz is also obliged to send each year ten roubles for each brother admitted, in good notes of exchange, for the benefits of our treasury for the poor. Each brother pays before admission seven thalers, out of which four remain at the disposition

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Rosicrucian degree, below the Theoretical) should be told of this, and Garganus [Schwarz] should send over his coat of arms.


“Theoretical Degree of Solomon’s Sciences” was an introductory step into Rosicrucianism. The description of the degree, including laws for “theoretical philosophers,” “questions to the beginning of the meeting of the brothers belonging to the theoretical degree,” “instruction for theoretical brothers” can be found in written form, in NIOR RGB, fond 147, folders 100 and 101; fond 14, folders 227, 228, 229, 239, 247.

According to Serkov’s calculations, at least 85 Moscow Freemasons were admitted into the Theoretical Degree in the eighteenth century. Also, see Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo*, 369.
of supreme director Schwarz for acquisition of necessary supplies and other things. In this he is responsible to no one but me.403

This patent of supreme directorship of the Theoretical degree in the Rosicrucian order gave Schwarz a dictatorial power over his Russian subordinates on condition of his obedience to Theden and became the cornerstone of organization and ideological reform of Moscow Freemasonry which followed Schwarz’s return home. The Rosicrucian group of Theden and Wöllner regarded Strict Observance as the necessary façade and recruiting ground for their secret inner order. On the surface they continued to recognize the supreme mastership of Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, the Grand Master of Strict Observance in Europe.

After making arrangements with the Rosicrucian circle in Berlin, Schwarz went to Brunswick to ask the Duke to take the Moscow lodges under his protection and help the Russians in organizing a Masonic prince independently of the Swedish Grand Lodge.404 As In-Ho Ryu points out, significantly enough, the memorandum to the Duke, dated 22 October 1781, was almost a month after the date on which Theden signed the patent of Theoretical degree for Schwarz.405 On the same day Schwarz wrote a report to Duke of Brunswick about the situation in Russia which was followed with a short overview of the high-degree Freemasonry that pointed out that the “Templar Freemasonry [i.e. Strict Observance] exists in Moscow since 1776 when it was brought

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403 Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masonry,” Sochineniia, vol. 3, 216. According to a different testimony, the candidate had to pay seven roubles for admission into the Theoretical degree. Novikov mentions the payment of seven roubles, but Theden’s patent to Schwarz mentions seven thalers. Funds were entrusted to Schwarz, who sent part of money to the Rosicrucian superiors in Berlin in accordance with the provision in the patent of the supreme director signed by Theden on 1 October 1782. (Longinov, Prilozenie, 099) Novikov estimated that Schwarz sent 300 roubles in all (Longinov, Prilozenie, 0118). When Schwarz died in February of 1784, he was penniless (Barskov, Perepiska, 58). Moscow Masons took on an obligation to financially support his children (Barskov, Perepiska, 134-180).


405 In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation,” 226.
there via famous Baron Benniks." According to Schwarz’s report, when brothers in Russia "started doubting the legitimacy of Benniks’ foundations, they, with the help from Mother-Lodge of Three Globes, transferred allegiance to Your Highness [Duke of Brunswick]." Schwarz emphasized that Moscow brothers established connections with the "Ancient Scottish Lodge" in Mitau because this lodge was under the direction of the Duke. The letter confirms the Moscow Freemasons’ interest in sustaining the relations with the lodge in Courland, because "its [geographical] situation facilitates the common link and correspondence." He mentioned the relations that the Moscow Masons had entered into with the Old Scottish lodges in Mittau, but not a hint is given of the arrangements he made in Berlin with the Rosicrucian group.

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406 Baron Benniks (Bennigsen, Benigson) General Ludwig (Leonty Leontyevich) (1745-1826) was a member of the Hanoverian army since 1755 until 1764, joining the Russian Army in 1773 as a field officer, fighting against the Turks both in 1774 and 1778. He was promoted to colonel in 1787 and participated in the Russian suppression of the Polish uprising in 1793, as well as in the Russian campaign in Persia in 1796. He opposed the policies of the Emperor Paul I (reigned 1796-1801), and may have been active in the conspiracy that led to Paul's assassination (on 23 March 1801). He subsequently was appointed Governor-General of Lithuania (in 1801), Military Governor of Vil’na and Grodno, and General of the Cavalry of all the Imperial Armies (in 1802) by the new Emperor Alexander I (reigned 1801-25). After Russia joined the third coalition against Napoleon in 1805, Bennigsen was made Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Russian Army in Poland and successfully defended Pultusk (near Warsaw) from the French. Appointed Commander-in-Chief of the entire Imperial Russian Army, he inflicted losses upon Napoleon at Eylau, but was defeated at the Battle of Friedland. Russia signed the Treaty of Tilsit with France on July 1807, and Bennigsen retired for the first time. When the war with France resumed in 1812, he came out of retirement, and again played a leading role as Chief of Staff for the supreme Russian commander, General Mikhail Kutuzov, commanding the Russian centre at the Battle of Borodino, and he also defeated the French at Tarutino. A dispute with General Kutuzov forced him into retirement, but after Kutuzov died in 1813, Bennigsen was called to duty and participated in the Battle of Leipzig. The first Count von Bennigsen, was created a Count of the Russian Empire by Emperor Alexander I in an Imperial order dated October 19, 1813, for his services to the Russian Empire during the Napoleonic Wars. After fighting the French in northern Germany, he retired for the last time, at the age of 73, settling on his estate of Banteln near Hildesheim, Hanover.

In Russian Freemasonry, Bennigsen is known as a founder of the lodge Chistiserdechiia (Candeur) in 1775(76) on the basis of the Templars’ legend. In 1777, Candeur joined the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Swedish-Bern system. Bennigsen, as the lodge Master, signed the constitution of Elagin-Reichel union in behalf of his lodge in 1777. Serkov, Entsiklopedia, 103-04; V. I. Baushev, “Graf Leontii Leon’evich Bennigsen: Biograficheskii ocherk,” Russki arkhiv (1868), 1837; P. Dolgorukov, Rossiiskaia rodoslovnaiia kniga, vol. 2, 231; Micropedia Britannica, vol. 2, 106.

407 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 1-2 (letter from I. G. Schwarz to Brunswick, 22 October 1781, in Russian, translated from a German original); published in Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masonry,” 472-76.

408 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 2 (letter from I. G. Schwarz to Brunswick, 22 October 1781, in Russian, translated from a German original).
Stating that the society in Russia could be "of equal value as anywhere else," Schwarz pointed out the ardent desire of Russian Freemasons to establish one or two Provinces on the territory of the Empire and that they might include Courland. Schwarz positioned himself as a mere envoy authorized by Peter Tatischev and Nikolai Novikov, whom he named as the "chief Masters" of the lodge Harmony. The note from the Brunswick Castle translated from German and dated 22 October 1781 indicates that "Professor Schwarz" who "on behalf of Moscow brothers of the so-called lodge of Harmony and ... its masters Petr Alekseevich Tatischev and Nikolai Ivanovich Novikov" presented a petition to the Duke for the Moscow Brothers to be recognized as "regular and lawful Strict Observance Masons." The Duke promised to inform Moscow lodges of any events in the society and, according to the already existing agreement between the Moscow and Courland brothers, provide information via Mitau or directly to Moscow.

Upon his return to Russia in 1782, Schwarz reorganized the lodge of Harmony into a Rosicrucian center, Rosicrucianism being the "true Masonry," which Schwarz is said to have "discovered" while abroad. According to Novikov's confessions to Russian authorities ten years later, the Moscow Masons were on the whole not pleased with the result of Schwarz's trip because of the relationship he had entered into with the Duke of Brunswick, the leader of the Strict Observance, the system that was already well known and discredited in Russia. As Lopukhin and Turgenev testified to Russian officials later, "Wölner's circle (or the Berlin Rosicrucian lodge) and the Duke of Brunswick's circle are of different systems [and] were not in accord with each other." Russian

409 Eshevskii, "Moskovskie masonry," 207.
410 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 6-8 (letter from the Duke of Brunswick on 19 September 1781).
411 Longinov, Prilozenie, 081-084.
Freemasons pointed out that they did not attach importance to “this relation [with Ferdinand of Brunswick]” and thus used every occasion to “leave the Templar Order … [and] choose the Order of the Rosicrucians and the guidance of Wölner.”⁴¹²

Rosicrucianism was accepted by Novikov and Trubetskoi as the one true form of Freemasonry, and became a highly secretive practice directly subordinated to Wölner and Theden and operating under the façade of the lodge of Harmony that officially belonged to the Strict Observance system. The elite of Russian Masonry was enrolled in the exclusive “theoretical degree of Solomonian sciences” (ranking above three regular degrees), the Constitutions of which were obtained by Schwarz from the Three Globes in Berlin in 1781.⁴¹³ Novikov administered this organization and Schwarz provided intellectual guidance, but the control over the organization came directly from Berlin.⁴¹⁴

At the same time, while the exclusive mysticism of the Rosicrucians was appealing to a limited circle of Masonic intellectuals in Russia, the Strict Observance system found a wider reception. The reasons for the Strict Observance being so readily adopted were presented by the Moscow circle in response to Ferdinand Brunswick’s invitational circular letter for participation of the General Congress of Strict Observance Freemasons in Frankfurt-on-Main (1780):

Lavish ceremonies of the knights, crosses, rings, shell jackets, and genealogical trees were supposed to make great impression on a military nation in which only the high nobility was envolved in our work... Among us, such military opulence cannot be unpleasant; for all our members were leading battalions and whole armies! These crosses are very appropriate to persons who in life are decorated

⁴¹² Letopisi russkoj literatury i drevnosti, vol. 5, 81. In fact, as a result of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, Wölner’s Grand Lodge of Three Globes declared its independence from the Strict Observance on 30 January 1784.
⁴¹³ Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 67ff.; Barskov, Pereriska, 266-267.
⁴¹⁴ As I establish in Chapters 4 and 5, through educational societies and publications, the Rosicrucians left mark on the ideas of many Freemasons in Russia.
with distinctions of honour or who do not greedily desire more than receiving these [distinctions of honor].

The Templar-based system of Strict Observance was appealing to the specifics of Russian-based Freemasonry by the opulence of its rituals and external manifestations of a high-degree system, because, as Moscow Freemasons explained, it concurred with the highly structured system of the society and the leading role of (military) nobility.

On the other hand, after Peter the Great’s reforms, the new system of marking social boundaries and ascribing social status was introduced. In the “Table of Ranks” (1722), Peter attempted to replace birth with state service as the foundation for social standing. In reality, although education, dress, and manners became the primary criteria for assessing the worth of an individual, people with rank were mostly officials with money and noble background. Nevertheless, after the establishment of the system of the Table of Ranks, acquiring a rank became the only way of acquiring status and importance in a society for those who were not of noble birth. A person without a rank did not “seem a man to ... all.”

As Marc Raeff puts it, “in the moral and spiritual spheres Masonry offered a parallel or equivalent to the Table of Ranks in the public service.”

The high-degree Strict Observance with its elaborate rituals expressed real-life distinctions of birthright, not the simple leveling of three degrees based on merit. On

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415 In Russian, in NIOR, Fond 147, folder 5, 31, quoted in Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masonry,” 484. In French, in RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 11397, 31rev. (Decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, July-August 1782, letter no. 78)

People have all gone mad about ranks.
Tailors and joiners, merchants and cobblers —
All share one faith and strive to become officers.
And he who passes his dark life without a rank
Does not seem a man to us at all.

417 Marc Raeff, Origins, 161.
the other hand, a climb in Masonic grades allowed those who did not or could not obtain a service rank to express their own dignity and worth in a lodge.\footnote{The elaborate rituals of the Strict Observance seem inadequate to some people: “ridiculous ceremonies” of high-degree systems were looked down on by Elagin, the Grand Provincial Master of Russia appointed by the Grand Lodge of England. For Elagin, Strict Observance was as part of “Hund’s truly doggish” system. “Gundovoi, podlinno sobach’e,” - word play with the literal meaning of the name “Hund” translated from German as “dog” and a Russian meaning of the adjective “doggish” as characterized as scornful and low-class, cited in Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 113). Novikov, being from the raznochints itself, was suspicious even towards his closest friend and companion Schwarz with whom the only subject Novikov was on guard was the Strict Observance (Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinity, 79). Because of adherence to opulence and decadent manifestation of wealth associated with Masonic rank, meetings of the Strict Observance lodges often slipped into being “loud feasts” that Elagin used to characterize as a degradation of Masonic purpose. Despite, or rather because of that as we pointed out in the first chapter, in the first decade after the introduction of the system to Russia many lodges turned to the Strict Observance. In the 1760s, we can identify only the Kapitul Feniksa (of Phoenix) in St. Petersburg and Mecha (of Sword) in Riga that worked according to the Strict Observance regulations. However, already in 1776, many Freemasons in Russia were warned to beware of the fact that “the Lernean Hydra of the Strict Observance that raised her head in Russia again” (“lerneskoi gidry “Strogogo Nabludenii,” vnov’ podniasheii svoi golovu na Rossii,” Vestnik Evropy 6 (1868), 563-568 and Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masonry,” 448. Quoted in Semeka, “Russkoe masonstvo,” 181. \footnote{Five templar provinces were represented at the congress that lasted from 16 July till 29 August 1782. There were 35 representatives present at this meeting of the various bodies working the Strict Observance system of degrees. Only those who had attained the rank of Masonic Knighthood could vote. Among them, Baron von Knigge represented the Bavarian Illuminati. During the Convent, the following questions had to be answered: “Does the order truly originate from an ancient society, and if so, which? Are there really Unknown Superiors, keepers if the ancient Tradition, and if so, who are they? What are the true aims of the order? Is the chief aim to restore the order of the Templars? The questions also included the problem of whether the order should concern itself with the occult sciences,” in Fond 1412k, folder 11394, Kopii materialov po podgotovke k sozivu Vil’gel’mbadskogo konventa lozh sistemi Strikt Obzervants za 1782 god.)}
public in general; 4) economic foundations of the society. Involvement of the Freemasons from Russia in the preparation and the Convent was a major indication of the inclusion of Russia in the European community of secret societies and manifestation of a special attention to its developmental needs. Fulfilling his promise to Schwarz, Ferdinand lobbied the interests of the Russian Freemasons not simply as a representative but as a sponsor, and at the Convent Russia became an independent Province in the structure of the Strict Observance lodges.

420 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 6-8 (letter from the Duke of Brunswick on 19 September 1781): 1) naruzhiyi vid i poriadok pravlenia tak kak podchinennost’ i otoshchenie raznykh mezhdru soboi chastei i masonstva; 2) oбриady i obychnoi ravno kak i blgorazumnnoe i s izvestnym kontsom raspolozhenie onykh; 3) povedenie nashe protiv gosudarstva i publikii voobsche; 4) neobkhodimoe dlia nashego obschestva i buduschim obstoiatel’stvam masonstva sorazmerno ekonomicheskoe rasporiazhenie. However, there is evidence of an even earlier interaction in the patent to Petr Tatischev for the foundation of the Moscow lodge Trekh Znamen (Three Banners) on 18 August 1779, in German, signed by Ferdinand Brunswick in NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 349.

421 Although Serkov (“Rossiiskoe masonstvo. Chast’ pervaia. Vosemnadtsatii vek,” in Zvezda 8 (2000), http://magazines.russ.ru/zvezda/2000/8/mason.html, visited on 27 February 2007) claims that Schwarz, P. A. Tatischev, and maybe Boeber participated in the Convent, published proceedings of the Convent make it clear that Russian brothers did not have time and money to prepare the delegation. “La situation intérieure de nos affaires aussi bien, que nos facultés ne nous permettent pas d’envoyer, en un si court délai une députation à une distance si considerable,” write the members of the commission for the establishment of the National Province of Freemasonry in Russia to Ferdinand (RGVA, fond 1412k, folder 11397, 32, Decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, letter no. 78).

422 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, letter on 22 October 1781, 3-3rev.

423 In total, nine Provinces were established:
I Arragonia
II Alvernia
1. Prioratus Lugdunensis
2. Franciae
III. Occitania
1. Prioratus Aquitaniae
2. Septimanie
IV. Legio
V. Burgundia
1. Prioratus Austrasiae
2. Helvetiae
VI. Britannia
VII. Germania inferior
Prioratus Daniae
VIII. Germania Superior
1. Prioratus Germ.
2. Hollandicus
After the success at the Convent, Moscow brothers established the Provincial Kapitul and Directory to preside over all Masonic lodges belonging to the eighth Province of the Strict Observance. Four of the lodges — Trekh Znamen (Three Banners or Zu den Drei Gekreschen Fahnen), Oziris (Osiris, Prince N. N. Trubetskoi), Latona (Novikov), and Sphinxsa (Sphinx, Prince Gagarin) — became Mother lodges with the permission to establish lodges. Inspired by the recognition of Russia as an independent Masonic province, with the number of lodges under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Kapitul growing, Moscow Freemasons tried to establish relations with the St. Petersburg lodges under the banner of uniting all lodges in Russia and spreading the “true” Freemasonry of high-degree Strict Observance. The Moscow circle also actively prepared a union of the remaining lodges of English and Swedish systems to join them in one Russian Province. The creators of all-Russian coalition possibly counted on the Baltic Freemasons to join. On January 5, 1783,

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IX. Italia  
X. Austria  
1. Prioratus Aucricus  
2. Flandriae  
3. Lombarde  
XI. Russia  
XII. Suecia.

RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 11397, 95rev. (printed copy of the decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, no. 146). Printed resolutions of the Convent, Règle Maçonniqne a l’usage des Loges réunies et rectifiées arrêtée [approuvée] au Convent Général de Wilhelmsbad first edition (5782 (1782)); second edition (LaHaye, 5787 (1787)).

The fate of the Russian province was decided on 29 August 1782 (RGVA, fond 1412, folder 11395, printed documents from the Convent). In Russian, mention of the provinces established, in NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497 (copies); published in Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masony,” 466-67.

424 S. V. Eshevskii suggests that the lodge Zu den Drei Gekrönt Fahnen (of Three Crowned Flags) joined the lodge Zu den Drei Fahnen (of Three Flags). However, it is also probable that these names are the alterations of the name of the same lodge. Patent for the establishment of the lodge Zu den Drei Gekrönt Fahnen in Moscow on 15 October 1781 from Ferdinand Brunswick und Luneburg on the name of Peter Tatischtschew, in RGAVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 9098.

425 According to Novikov’s calculations, the Provincial Kapitul established its power with over nineteen lodges all over Russia during the period 1782-1786, Sbornik istoricheskogo obschestva, vol. 2, 152; quoted in Semeka, “Russkoie masonstvo v XVIII veke,” 233.

426 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, list 6-6 (rev.), Pis’ma N. I. Novikova, 24-25.
Novikov wrote a letter to Rzhevskii asking him to transmit the papers and the correspondence to Baltasar Bergman, who could lead the unifying effort on the Baltic.

Hoping to build a strong and independent Russian National Province, Freemasons asserted that Russia is a [Masonic] province now; we do not depend on anyone and have everything that [any] Order [has]... Sweden does not have what Russia does. It took a lot of effort to get the [establishment of the] province because Holland and Poland asked for the same province, but ... we overcame all the obstacles and were anonymously recognized and pronounced as the eighth province.

The story of the development of various systems of Freemasonry in Russia highlights an important transition in the second half of the eighteenth century. Freemasonry as a movement was constantly changing, beginning with the transformation made by the English on Scottish Freemasonry in the late seventeenth century. Later, the transformations were related to the attempts to establish, or rather, return to the “authentic,” “genuine,” “ancient” Freemasonry. Especially popular on the Continent, these new versions, such as the Scottish rite, had an intricate hierarchy that reflected the changes in social, cultural, and intellectual preoccupations of the lodges. The most esoteric version of Freemasonry, the Rosicrucian Order, gained popularity in many European countries by the end of the eighteenth century. A more secretive and

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427 Baltasar (Boris) Bergman (1736-1789) was a writer educated in Weimar and in Jena universities. Since 1763, Bergman was a secretary of the Count Lestocq. After 1764, he was associated with Justice-Collegium of Lifland, Estland, and Finland. Bergman moved to Riga in 1773, was a bureaucrat there, and in 1787 was elevated to the status of nobility. In Masonic circles, especially in Petersburg and Riga, Bergman was extremely influential. In 1778, he participated in the first World Masonic Convent.

428 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 500; also copies in NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497; fond 17, folder 6; fond 14, folder 378.

429 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497, 23rev. (letter from Andrei Rzhevskii in St. Petersburg to Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi in Moscow, dated 25 February 1780). The date is misleading, because Russia was established as an independent province only in 1782.
restrictive course in its content, organization, and intellectual overtones, the
Rosicrucianism that appeared in Russia by very end of the century was different from the
low-degree systems that had prevailed in Russia before the 1760s. In the 1780s, Russian Freemasonry's most illustrious period, several Russian lodges formed a close
association with the Berlin lodge of Three Globes, headed by J. C. Wöllner, and
dedicated their work and studies to theosophical mysticism.

The mutable character of the institution itself mirrored the evolution of
intellectual, social, and cultural orientations in each country and of the Enlightenment
movement as a whole. These transformations and shifts in relationships between
individuals, Grand Lodges and Provincial Grand lodges, propagators and different
systems present an important factual basis for analyzing the course of the development of
Freemasonry in the later half of the century and a picture of cosmopolitan international
exchange in the age of Enlightenment. The history of Freemasonry reveals that during
the age of Enlightenment, an international network connected Russia and the West. But
the question of how this network came into being and functioned requires paying
attention to national factors. The importance of the divisions between the systems needs
to be considered against the intellectual, cultural, social, and political contexts of each
country. The primary uniting force, the cosmopolitan impulses, helped to connect
members from all over Europe into an amalgamated institution they called Freemasonry.
However, when trying to find a "universal center" and unite various lodges under the

\[431\] I consider these issues throughout the dissertation, with special emphasis in Chapter 3.
banner of one system, the differences between systems and national rites immediately become pronounced in Masonic rhetoric and activities.

Considering European Masonic interactions with Russia, it is clear that the main driving force for the Russians in contacting European lodges was that Freemasonry’s ideas, structure, and rituals struck a chord with very specific emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social needs of nascent Russian intelligentsia. In the next chapter I investigate the reasons that foreign Freemasons used for spreading the Craft into Russia.
Chapter 3. Assert our Noble Cause: Foreign and Russian Interactions

... a Giant, imposing in the distance by enormity of its mass, but in proximity rather shapeless by report of its dimensions. It is a rather strange construction... But what strikes one’s eye more particularly is the amount of disgraceful elements... The dilemma is: should we abandon virtuousness or respect for this kind of monstrosity?
- Anonymous, *La Russie*

The private papers of Marie-Daniel Bourree, Chevalier de Corberon, secretary to the French minister at St. Petersburg during 1775-77, *chargé d’affaires* in 1777-80, and author of the diaries *Journal Intime*, contain a document entitled “La Russie.” The undated and unsigned eighteenth-century document represents a contemporary figurative

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432 Bibliothèque Municipale, Avignon, collection no. 3060 (Recueil de Corberon), f. 122. Published by A. Lentin, “Corberon, La Russie -- un Colosse Déformé,” *Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia Newsletter*, no. 19 (September, 1991): 39-41:

Figure Vous un beau bloc de marbre sure lequel plusieurs ouvriers avaient sculpté des Bas-reliefs, sans ordre, tourné le bloc, travailla sur la surface apposée. Fit voler a grands coups de marteau des éclats a droite et a gauche; et forma un Colosse, imposant dans le lointain, par l’énormité de sa masse, mais de près, assez difforme par de rapport de ses dimensions. Il est difficile a dire ce que cette besogne ne serait enfin devenue, si Pierre eut vécu plus longtemps. Les successeurs de ce monarque se sont évertués diversement sur le colosse. L’un lui a fait la taille, l’autre s’est énervé sur la jambe, un troisième sur la physionomie. Tous ont opéré sur les muscles au point de leur former une tension éraillée. Il en est résulté un ensemble assez bizarre, comme Vous voies, surtout si Vous parlez les antiques bas-reliefs du revers, toujours subsistants. Mais ce qui frappe plus particulièrement la vue, c’est la proportion des parties honteuses, Aucun des successeurs de Pierre n’y a touche. Le problème est: si cet abandon de pudor, ou de respect pour cette sorte de monstruosité.

[Imagine a nice block of marble from which several workers had sculpted Bas-reliefs; confusedly turned the block, worked on the appended surface, made blows of brightness with big hammer right and left; and formed a Giant, imposing in the distance by enormity of its mass, but in proximity rather shapeless by report of its dimensions. It is difficult to say what this work would finally have become, if Peter [the Great] had lived longer. The successors of this monarch had different aspirations for the giant. The one made him bigger, another got worked up on the leg, a third [worked] on face. All operated on muscles so as to relieve them from an irritating tension. It is a rather strange construction, as you see, especially since the results [of the work] remind you of the antique bas-reliefs that will always remain within. But what strikes one’s eye more particularly is the amount of disgraceful elements. None of the successors of Peter [the Great] has a lead there. The dilemma is: should we abandon virtuousness or the respect for this kind of monstrosity?]

description of eighteenth-century Russia as “a Giant, imposing in the distance by
evermortality of its mass, but in proximity rather shapeless by report of its dimensions.”
Throughout the eighteenth century, the “Colosse déformé” was in the process of gradual
rise to power. But no matter how powerful the country became through the “hewing” of
the “civilizing” process, for the majority of the outside observers the Giant remained a
rude, barbarous, and outlandish creation. By the end of the eighteenth century, the
dynamic impact of Peter the Great and numerous attempts of his successors reshaped the
country, but did not completely change it. Formed as a result of many contesting multi-
directional efforts from above, the Giant seemed to be a “rather strange construction.”
However, what the author of the document emphasizes is not the Giant’s eclectic nature
or the country’s enormous size. What struck the author’s fancy is that, as a result of the
Giant’s formative history and discrepant nature, Russia’s “amount of disgraceful
elements” was disproportionally high in the eighteenth century. The key question,
which interests the observer of the Giant’s rise to power and its downfall in morality, is
whether the outsiders should abandon “virtuousness or the respect for this kind of
monstrosity.”434

Although the document is not written by Corberon’s own hand, the French
chargé d’affaires and an ardent Freemason who lived in Russia and played active role in
the Masonic milieu, shared such critical views at the start of his sojourn, though later
modifying his views considerably. The whole idea that Russia was “hewn” from “a nice
block of marble” by the hands of the country’s willful rulers is a very fitting one for
eighteenth-century Masonic thought. Unformed, stone is “heavy, extended, shapeless,

colored, partly dull, partly shiny,” but in potential it possesses certain important qualities, functions, and beauty. A “nice block of marble” can be transformed from being a “mere thing” into a work of art, exposing what exists within. It must, however, be carefully “hewn” or formed in order to expose its texture and serve its functions.

In relation to Russia’s transformation in the eighteenth century, the image of hewing the stone captures an image of a society with its form representing physical stability and eternal transformation or renewal. By using the imagery of hewing a stone, the author reflects on the relative nature of the country’s transition. The metaphors of creating new edifices from raw, unfinished stone, of crafting and transforming the world to form new structures were the themes that intertwined with the whole spirit of the Enlightenment, and especially Enlightenment in Russia. These are the same metaphors that were applied to the creation of St. Petersburg or a moral advancement of a Freemason. Just like the author of the document, many Freemasons in Russia considered a lack of “moral” advancement and insufficient “refinement” of Russian people to be the main hindrances of the country’s overall development. Just like the author of the document, the foreign Freemasons who resided in, traveled to, or thought about Russia’s contemporary situation and destiny debated whether the standards of “virtuousness” that were developed in the West should or could be applied to the particulars of Russian life.

As I establish in this chapter, Freemasons were preoccupied with analyzing Russia’s problems and identifying an array of solutions offered by the eighteenth-century intellectual developments. Being outsiders in Russia, a country “outside” of Europe, the members of the exclusive society of Freemasons posed the problems of whether the

cultural mainstream was homogenous, its lessons truly universal, and its character flexible and inclusive.\footnote{Esther Kingston-Mann, \textit{In Search of the True West: Culture, Economics, and Problems of Russian Development} (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), preface, ix.} By doing so, they tried to find a place for Russia in the developmental scheme of “civilizations” and the contemporary world map. Measuring Russia with a European yardstick,\footnote{Given that there were yet many “Europees” for Russia to choose from.} many foreign Freemasons emphasized two important conclusions relating Russia: 1) Russia is a \textit{Tabula rasa}, a blank slate and a perfect proving ground for Masonic moral and educational ideas; 2) Russia is a bridgehead between the West and the East.

As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, as German diplomats and officers, Baltic merchants, Jacobite exiles, French aristocrats, and Dutch sailors extended their contacts with Russia in the course of the century, Masonic systems of different national allegiances – English, Scottish, German, and Swedish – started to jostle for control over Russian Masonry. However, even belonging to lodges with diverse rituals, social mixes, and intellectual structures, foreign Freemasons and Russian Freemasons justified their own Masonic and non-Masonic work in Russia in strikingly similar terms. By transmitting and adapting the rich tenets of the European Enlightenment to the conditions of contemporary Russia, they wanted to translate them into new cultural vocabularies and “implant” new values of toleration, freedom, and education. By “hewing” the “\textit{Colosse déformé}” they aspired to try and turn it into the “perfect stone.” With intellectual isolation being not necessarily a Russian problem,\footnote{In his letters to different correspondents, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England James Heseltine, whose responsibilities included interchange and regular check-ups with foreign brothers, emphasized that the differences in the rites “… may probably not be utterly applicable to the Country in distant parts, where the Brethren are unacquainted with all these particulars,” thus pointing out that many lodges and Freemasons in distant parts were confused about recent European developments. In FHL,} Russian Freemasons, for their part,
made every attempt to learn the intricacies of different rites and make sense of multiple developments of European Freemasonry. They contacted European lodges, bought, transmitted, translated, printed, and hand-copied books and manuscripts related to Freemasonry. They also regularly exchanged letters, sent visitors and students, and participated in European congresses and meetings. But by the end of the century, after repeated disappointments encountered in the English, Swedish, German, Scottish, and French variations of the Craft, many Russian Freemasons were drawing the conclusion that they could find genuine Freemasonry only through a search carried out independently of any guidance provided by foreign Grand Lodges.

Russia’s Need for Enlightenment

Compared to many European countries, eighteenth-century Russia was a Colosse déformé. It is in the eighteenth century that the foundations of an antithetical distinction between Russia and “the West” were laid and the cultural categories for such a distinction were beginning to form. In this process of defining the polarity between

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439 Thus, for instance, an article on the current conditions of the lodges in Germany was translated as Dolzhnosti brat’ev Z[lato] R[ozovogo] K[resta] drevniiia sistemy, govorennye Khrizofironom v sobraniiakh uniatskichh s prisovokupleniemi nekotorykh chelei drugikh brat’ev (Moscow: Lopukhine Printing House, 1784) published, and copied from the 1782 edition of Die Pflichten der G. Und R. C. alten Systems in Juniorats-Versammlungen, abgehandelt von Chrisophiron nebst einigen beigefügten Reden anderer Brüder (Berlin: n. p., 1782).

440 On 5 May 1792, Prozorovskii reports to Catherine, “It is clear from the printed documents in French and German that in 1780 and 1781 they [the Novikov Masonic circle] corresponded with the French, Italian, Austrian, Swiss, and the Dutch lodges.” Quoted in N. Tikhonravov, “Novye svedeniia o Novikove i chlenakh kompanii tipograficheskoi,” Letopisi russkoi literatury i drevnosti 5 (1863), 29.

441 In his Russia under Western Eyes, Martin Malia paints a picture of Europe’s generally favorable reaction to Russia and correlates Russia’s “fall from grace in Western eyes” with the Congress of Vienna in 1815 (especially, on pp. 75-87). However, such a view does not account for a generally negative evaluation of Russia’s position in the world in comparison to other European countries that eighteenth-century Freemasons made.
Russia and Europe and finding Russia’s place in Europe, Europe was understood not as a place but a civilization. When Frederick the Great maintained that by the middle of the century Prussia had barely reached the level of civilization of Richelieu’s France a century earlier, he compared “civilizations.” By the same token, Russia seemed to be half-barbaric and no more than marginally European to him. Here, civilization is understood as an advanced level of material, intellectual, and moral development, the culmination of mankind’s ascent from the “savage” state.

Throughout the eighteenth century, subjective and diverse images of Russia changed according to its evaluation of Russia. Because socially Russia developed along lines different from those of Western Europe, the country often was viewed as an “outsider.” Peter the Great’s and his followers’ efforts in opening “a window to Europe” for Russia were interpreted as actions of a cultural inferior trying to enter the Western cultural mainstream. The language of initiation, enlightenment, and inner re/birth was an especially fitting apparatus for reflecting Russia’s coming to the international arena in the eighteenth century for both foreigners and Russians alike. When Antiokh Kantemir announced that through Petrine reforms “we [Russians] suddenly became a new people,” he was voicing a theme that would echo throughout eighteenth-century Russian and European thought – the idea of a Russian cultural rebirth and new

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443 Frederick the Great, Œuvres, vol. 2 (Berlin: Imprimerie royale, 1846-1857), 23-34.
444 The process to which Martin Malia fittingly refers as entering “European cultural escalator” (Malia, Russia under Western Eyes, 32).
445 On Kantemir, see Chapter 1, footnote 123 on page 52.
beginnings for Russia. Just like there was an “illumination,” the process of becoming a “son of Light” for a Freemason, rebirth from a life of darkness to the life of light, the rhetoric of Russian development is fused with the language of new beginnings. Peter the Great and his followers were deemed to be responsible for Russia’s (re)birth. The epigram on “Peter the Great, Czar of Russia,” in the *Freemasons’ Magazine* published by the Grand Lodge of England supports the popular image of Peter as a first “civilizer” of Russia:

T’adorn with arts a rough barbarian race,  
And polish them with ev’ry manly grace;  
To change the shades of ignorance profound,  
And spread the beams of knowledge all around;  
To brighten and exalt the human soul,  
And still consult the welfare of the whole;  
If these be arts more worthy of applause  
Than with wild havoc in ambition’s cause  
To conquer kingdoms, to lay waste and burn,  
And peaceful states with restless rage o’erturn;  
Then Russia’s Czar with great glory reign’d  
Than was by Philip’s son or Caesar gain’d.  

By portraying Russia’s coming to an international arena as a “beginning” or using imagery of birth, spring, or resurrection to describe it, an unnamed Masonic poet tapped into the universal idea of perfection and thus idealized and mythologized the event of Russia’s rebirth. Continuing this theme, the newborn Russia was being nursed and raised by knowledgeable foreigners. As one of the eighteenth-century Russian students of Moscow University wrote,

... Putting our hand on our heart,  
We shall tell, to the credit of foreigners,
Would the Russian newborn be alive
During its first days without his wet-nurse - foreigners?
They took cream off
The arts and sciences long before us,
And the Russian child
Took nappies only out of foreign hands.448

Despite Russia’s introduction to a “civilized” world, eighteenth-century
commentators on Russia, including those who were Masons, realized that the country
developed along lines very different from those of Western Europe. A perceived general
backwardness of Russian society, particularly evident in the dominance of agriculture
and enslavement of the peasantry, contrasted sharply in the eyes of the outsiders with the
rise of modern state in the countries of the West. While serfdom disappeared in most of
Western Europe by the thirteenth century,449 Peter the Great strengthened the serf ties in
Russia in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Simultaneously, he bound Russia’s
nobles to lifetime service, thus delaying the formation of a civil society until Peter III’s
decision to introduce voluntary military service for the nobility. This, combined with
Peter the Great’s practical innovations, required the assimilation of European higher

448 Cited in F. A. Petrov, Nemetskije professora v Moskovskom Universitete (Moscow: Khristskoe izd-
vo, 1997), 150:
  ... k serdtsu ruku prilozhiv,
  my skazhem k chesti inozemtsev,
  mladenets russkoi byl by zhiv
v dni pervye bez mamok - nemtsev?
  Do nas zadolgo sniali penki
  Oni s khudozhestv i nauk
  I russkoe ditia pelenki
  Bralo lish’ iz nemetskikh ruk.
Here, the author uses the word “nemtsy” (nemets) to signify a foreigner, “one who cannot speak the proper
language” (i. e. Russian). Up to the nineteenth century the word, which has the same root as the modern
Russian word “mute,” was applicable to any foreigner. Later the meaning was limited to signify only one
particular national group of foreigners – the Germans. The usage of the word nemets in this piece is both
characteristic and symbolic: in eighteenth-century Russia, Germans were the most influential and
widespread type of foreigners.

449 Beginning in the sixteenth century, a “second serfdom” was established in all of Europe east of the
Elbe. In the eighteenth century serfdom remained untouched in Russia, but also in republican Poland or the
German Old Regimes.
culture to produce its full effect. Only by 1762 did the Russian nobility achieve complete "emancipation," while retaining lands and serfs as private property. Catherine the Great solidified the gentry's rights with the Charter of the Nobility of 1785, which gave it the status of an estate. Thereby the Russian dvorianstvo at last became a nobility that approximated a Western model, and despite the drawbacks of serfdom, delays in the development of the third estate, and relatively small social base for a civil society, Russia acquired the prerequisites for it.450 Russia is part of Europe, Catherine decisively proclaimed in her Nakaz (The Grand Instruction) in 1768.451

However, for the West, forming a representation of Russia was a process, and the ideas of what was wrong or right with Russia were constructed and imagined, becoming facts of culture and comparison.452 In the case of foreign commentators, including Freemasons, comparisons were conducted in historical categories specific to European institutions and culture. If judgments of Masonic foreigners were mostly critical of Russia's present, it was because they pointed out the problems that were relevant at the time for Europe, especially concerning education and the development of public and private spheres. Defining characteristics of the transition from traditional to modern society, Freemasons designated Russia a place (and time) that was backward, underdeveloped, uneducated, or unenlightened. Russia was sacred, hierarchical, and

450 For the analyses of Russia's institutional convergence with Europe, see Marc Raeff, Well-Ordered Police State Social and Institutional Change Through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800 (New York and London: Yale University Press, 1983) and Raeff, Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia.
452 Malia, Russia under Western Eyes, 12.
monarchical, with no (or significantly delayed) transition to secular, liberal, and
democratic order. The beginnings of the exposure to “Western” culture brought
questions about Russia’s destiny to the forefront of eighteenth-century intellectual
debates.

Freemasons, foreign possessors of “the true” knowledge, considered Masonic
Craft to be an essential part of the “civilization.” As the theorists of Freemasonry
pointed out, “[n]othing is more observable in the history of mankind, than that Masonry
and civilization, like twin sisters, have gone hand in hand together.” Here, the reference
to “Masonry” plays out into the allusion of the Craft as the Art of Architecture, since
“The very orders of architecture mark the growth and progress of civilization.” From
this point of view, a largely wooden-built Russia was at the very bottom of the
developmental hierarchy. But the major lessons that Masons gained from a
comprehensive study of history conformed to the Enlightenment’s idea of continued
progress. Freemasons believed themselves to be living in “the most enlightened period
of mankind...” and Freemasonry was clearly contributing to the enlightenment by
“gradually dispelling the gloom of ignorance and barbarism.”

453 See, for instance, “An Oration Delivered at the Dedication of a New Free-Mason’s [sic] Hall,” in
William Hutchinson, The Spirit of Masonry in Moral and Elucidatory Lectures, the second edition,
(Carlisle, MDCCXCV (1795)), 213:

...Ye Garter’d Heroes, who the Craft approve
Whom Britain Honours, or whom Masons Love,
Thro’ either World, - assert our Noble Cause
Whilst Missionary Brothers, Spread our Laws,
And lead in Pomp, to Montagu’s mild Reign,
The Feather’s Indian, and the Furry Dane.
No more shall Nation be from Nation hid,
Or unknown Accents, intercourse forbid:
But by new signs ally’d, and Tokens joyn’d,
Friendship shall form the Language of Mankind.
As numerous examples of the rhetoric of dissemination of Freemasonry to foreign countries demonstrate, Masonic ideas of cosmopolitanism were in a complete harmony with the main Masonic tenets of spreading the Laws of the Brotherhood as a part of “civilization” onto as many lands as possible.\textsuperscript{454} The “missionary” role of Freemasons was not only in connecting people throughout the world with brotherhood bonds. Their “noble cause” consisted of providing other countries with Masonic laws, the ways of living and thinking like a Freemason. From the heights of what European Freemasons thought was their own “superior civilization,” they could afford to be rational, comprehending, and even sympathetic in observing crisis-racked Russia’s struggle to climb to Europe’s level.

In application to Russia, activities of Freemasons were considered as bringing a “light to Russian darkness.” A well-known adage of German Rosicrucians stated that the devil himself counteracted their actions in Russia to keep the “dark” country in perpetual darkness.\textsuperscript{455} As an early nineteenth-century document reiterated, “[t]he true light [of Freemasonry] will be preserved and disseminated in Russia despite the darkness that aims at devouring it [the light], but which is not able to envelope it, let alone triumph over it.”\textsuperscript{456} Although it is not clear what the Masons making this reference to Russian “darkness” meant -- the general state of the Craft in Russia; confrontation between different Masonic systems jostling over for the control of Russian Freemasonry; or Catherine’s and Paul’s repressions of Freemasonry -- these statements acutely contrasted with the eighteenth-century official representation of Russia as the kingdom of light.

\textsuperscript{454} Bodleian, MS Rawlinson C. 136, 47 [81] (\textit{The Weekly Journal: or, British Gazetteer. Being the Freshest Advices Foreign and Domestick} (1724)).
\textsuperscript{455} E. Lennhoff, \textit{Die Freimaurer} (Zurig-Leipzig-Wien: Amalthea-Verlag, 1929), 204.
\textsuperscript{456} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 564, 11rev-12.
In the eighteenth century references to light abounded as they were used rather extensively to refer to Masonic spiritual and scientific knowledge. Light became synonymous with truth and knowledge, and darkness with falsehood and ignorance. "With its radiant beams" knowledge led to progress as it "...promotes a free and manly spirit...leads men to think for themselves; to found their ideas on fair inquiry...to look forward [to] the rapid progress of human perfection."\textsuperscript{457} The juxtaposition of light and darkness comes to life during the initiation ceremony of any Masonic ritual when a candidate for the first degree is blindfolded and left alone to contemplate his condition of spiritual darkness and ignorance. So when the candidate strives for light, it is not merely for that material light to remove a physical darkness. His instruction in spiritual matters begins with the lifting of the blindfold in a lit lodge room. From this point, the candidate proceeds through two additional steps of greater subtlety, refinement and self-knowledge, until as Master Mason he has experienced the death of his former self and takes on a new life. This process was one of the essential meanings of the term "enlightenment" for Masons.

A Freemason craves an intellectual illumination and spiritual enlightenment that will dispel the darkness of mental and moral ignorance, and bring to his view the sublime truths of religion, philosophy, and science, which are the subject of Freemasonry. Masons are expected to follow the light of knowledge and be benevolent and virtuous to symbolically climb the winding stairs of Solomon’s Temple in their search for knowledge and to use reason and math to understand the laws of gravity and motion, the moral principles associated with the circle, square, and triangle, and the deistic principles

attributed to higher degrees. Freemasonry transferred and taught a “Secret divine,” “the Truth” revealed to its members “[b]y a Light from above” and elucidated many of the problems of the world.458

Through the ceremony of initiation that climaxed with the “illumination” of the newly admitted brothers, Freemasons become “the Children of Light” obligated “by ... practice and conduct in life” to turn their “backs on works of darkness, Obscenity and Drunkenness, Hatred and Malice, Satan and his dominions,” bringing “Charity, Benevolence, Justice, Temperance, Chastity, and Brotherly Love” into the world.459 Masonic duties imply that Freemasons need “to subdue [their] passions, and improve in useful scientific knowledge; to instruct the younger brethren, and initiate the unenlightened,” these were principal duties of Freemasons instilled in every Europeans lodge.460 Since “without Light we [Freemasons] cannot perceive the beauty and excellency of Truth,” “the pursuit of Truth and Goodness” are main Masonic attributes, and “no man can be a worthy Brother” if he does not want either. Freemason is thus the person “[w]ho walks in Light and does the Truth.”461 As a popular early nineteenth-

459 William Hutchinson, The Spirit of Masonry in Moral and Elucidatory Lectures, the second edition (London: printed for J. Wilkie and W. Goldsmith, 1775), 56-57. In his Masonic verse, Robert Burns points out,
Oft have I met your social band,
And spent the cheerful, festive night;
Oft, honoured with supreme command,
Presided o’er the sons of light.
century motto "Lux e tenebris" implies, Freemasons professed to bring "Light out of darkness" by enlightening their fellow brethren and spreading useful knowledge to the society as a whole.\textsuperscript{462}

\textbf{William Tooke and William Richardson on Russia}

Throughout the eighteenth century, the West reacted to Russia with amusement rather than genuine interest, let alone understanding. For the most part, it was an amusement mixed with condescending pride, as if to say, "look how well they have learned from us, how fast they are becoming civilized!"\textsuperscript{463} Masonic ideas about Russia and its progress, too, did not escape the tone of the benign and patronizing praise of an older relative for the good progress of a child.\textsuperscript{464} And although Masonic views of Russia were often patronizing, foreign Freemasons could also perceive Russia's development with a new clarity in the reflected light of Europe's own process of self-civilization. In Masonic and non-Masonic literature alike, three most often repeated identifications of Russian problems were that Russian society was immobilized by 1) the restraints of state service affecting the upper class; 2) the bonds of serfdom involving the peasantry; and 3)

\textsuperscript{462} The motto is recorded as being in use in the Scottish rite around 1802. As I analyze in the next chapter, eighteenth-century Freemasons worked out theories about the relationship of man to God, man to nature, and men to each other. They insisted that knowledge incapable of helping mankind had no value. Science shut off from the people in their language is useless, hence the emphasis on language so evident in the practical activities of the Moscow Masonic circle, which is addressed in Chapter 5.


\textsuperscript{464} For general perceptions of Russia's backwardness, see D. von Mohrenschmidt, Russia in the Intellectual Life of Eighteenth-Century France (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936).
the perpetuation of the traditional structures of family and clan which resulted in a narrow clientele system within the government establishment.465

Many foreigners who traveled and lived in Russia viewed the country primarily through the prism of Enlightenment and liberal sociopolitical thought and criticized Russia as a dark and oppressive place. William Tooke (1744-1820) and William Richardson (1743-1814), two most important British commentators on Russia at the end of the eighteenth century, were intimately familiar with the realities of Russian life. They were Freemasons whose views on Russia mixed fascination, critique, and hopefulness.

Tooke arrived in Russia to become chaplain to the British congregation at Cronstadt in 1768. Later he moved to St. Petersburg after being elected as chaplain of the congregation there.466 While in St. Petersburg, Tooke was introduced to the English lodge of Perfect Union. The first visit of “Rev. W. Tooke” to Perfect Union is recorded on Thursday, 12 January 1771.467 On Monday, 6 February 1772, Tooke received the third Masonic degree in Perfect Union. Since no initiation of receipt of the first two degrees is recorded in the lodge journal, most probably Tooke was initiated into Freemasonry before his first visit to the English lodge in Russia.468 The chaplain became an important member of the British community in St. Petersburg and its environs and a connecting link between fellows of the Royal Society and many members of the

467 FHL, Journal of the Lodge of Perfect Union (Lodge of Perfect Union #414, minutes 1771, SN 809), 17.
468 FHL, Journal of the Lodge of Perfect Union (Lodge of Perfect Union #414, minutes 1771, SN 809), 22.
Russian Academy of Sciences. Tooke's intimate knowledge of Russia was enriched by "many years with the friendship and intimacy of two successive directors of the academy [Russian Academy of Sciences], with free access to its libraries and collections," and personal acquaintance with other foreign travelers in Russia, including "[Peter Simon] Pallas, [A. J.] Guldenstaedt, [Johann Gottlieb] Georgi, Ivan Lepechin, [Johann Peter Falck] Falk, the Gmelins [Johann Georg and Samuel Gottlieb], [G. von Waldheim] Fischer and others."

The chaplain incorporated his knowledge and personal views on Russia into several publications, such as translations of Johann Gottlieb Georgi's Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reiches, and four dissertations of Russian history written by August Ludwig Schlotzer. Upon his return to Britain in 1792, Tooke wrote his three-volume View of the Russian Empire that became one of the main sources of information on Russian Empire for the English-language readers.

William Richardson (1743-1814) resided in Russia for four years, 1768-1772, while accompanying Lord Cathcart, England's ambassador extraordinary to Catherine, as his secretary and tutor to his sons. Upon return to Scotland, Richardson received a

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470 Georgi (1729-1802) was a professor of natural history at Moscow University.
471 Schlotzer (1735-1809) was a professor of history in the Imperial Academy of Science at St. Petersburg.
position of the Chair of Humanity in the University of Glasgow that he occupied until his
death in 1814. Richardson’s *Anecdotes* (the first edition published in 1784-86) is
culled from the actual letters written by Richardson during his residence in Russia.

Besides being authors of definitive eighteenth-century works on Russia, Tooke
and Richardson share several important similarities. Both had more time and
opportunities to acquaint themselves with Russia than any rich tourist on his Grand Tour
of Europe had. Their livelihoods in Russia did not depend on Russian support, as they
were not answerable to Russian authorities or public. They also did not anticipate that
their stay in the country would be permanent. Both Tooke and Richardson, by the nature
of their occupations and social ties, were more involved with the foreign community in
St. Petersburg than they interacted with the Russians. Like Tooke, Richardson was
involved in Perfect Union. According to the lodge journal, Richardson was a visitor at
the lodge on 12 January 1771, the same day that Tooke was present.474

The St. Petersburg lodge of Perfect Union is one of the most remarkable
examples of the English-system lodge in Russia with predominantly foreign membership.
Even though the Grand Lodge’s official report on Freemasonry in Russia stated, “the
Master and most of the Members of this lodge were English merchants residents there [in
St. Petersburg],” from the very beginning the lodge was distinctly international in its

*History* (Glasgow: Jackson, Son and Co., 1954); Robert Chambers, ed., *A Biographical Dictionary of
Eminent Scotsmen* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1835).

474 While Tooke was introduced, among other visitors, by “Bro.[ther] Master of Ceremonies, Richardson
was introduced by the Master of the Lodge, “the Right Worshipful William Gomm.” FHL, Lodge of Perfect
Union #414, minutes 1771, SN 809), 17 (Journal of the Lodge of Perfect Union).

In his article on British Freemasons in Russia, A. G. Cross mentions Richardson’s name in relation to
the Feast of St. John, organized by Perfect Union held at the English Playhouse. Cross, “British Freemasons
in Russia,” *AQC*, no. 2076:04 (1971), 245.
membership. The lodge’s first Master was an Italian, and William Gomm Jr., who replaced him, appointed four Britons, one Russian, one German, one Dutchman, one Frenchman, and one Italian to be the lodge officers for 1771-2 (they were also reelected for 1772-3). In this international community, the British were among the most influential figures, including Samuel Swallow, British Consul-General and agent of the Russian Company; a position which John Cayley, a partner in the firm of Thornton, Cayley & Co., was also to hold from 1787 until his death in 1795; both Gomm and Timothy Raikes were noted merchants and bankers. Dirk Jäger was a merchant, and Sebastian de Villiers may have been in either commerce or the diplomatic service. De Villiers was responsible for sponsoring both the leading French merchant in St. Petersburg, Joseph Raimbert le Sage, and the French chargé d'affaires, Sabatier de Cabre, for membership in Perfect Union. Although throughout the year 1772-3 there were numerous changes in the lodge’s membership, about half of the members remained British, lodge officers were not necessarily the British citizens.

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476 FHL. Journal of the Lodge of Perfect Union (#414), from the 13th June 1771 to the 30th May 1772, 1: "Ivan Aleksandrovich Golovkin, Senior Steward; Dirk Jäger, Junior Steward; John Cayley, Senior Warden; Francois van Zanten, Secretary; Brigonzi, Master of Ceremonies; Timothy Raikes, Treasurer; Sebastian de Villiers, Orator."
477 Cross, "British Freemasons,” 246.
478 Cross, "British Freemasons," 246, points out, Jäger’s death at the age of forty-nine was entered in the British Church Register on 22 October/2 November 1777, therefore he was "the Dietrich Jäger, whose death was mourned in an oration by C. G. C. Beer in the lodge Zur Verschwiegenheit on 4/15 November 1777."
officer, Ivan Golovkin had been a deputy of the Vyborg nobility to Catherine’s Legislative Assembly in 1767 and at some point was also attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As Cross points out, Golovkin was well known for his strong English sympathies.480

Without being significantly influenced by the treatment they received in Russia, but familiar with Russian life, both Tooke and Richardson considered the nature and implication of Russian social order in depth, and compare them with the British social system. By the end of the century, as Tooke pointed out, the Russian Empire “has for several years been the subject of a multitude of investigations and writings, by which the knowledge of that country is considerably improved and enlarged.” But even so, the country was still “a sort of terra incognita” prior to 1762.481 Like Schloetzer, whose dissertation Tooke translated for the English readers, he was fascinated with the “country that comprehends the ninth part of the inhabited earth, and is twice as large as Europe; a country twice as extensive as the old Roman Empire.”482

480 Azbuchnyi ukazatel’ imen russkikh deiatelei dlia Russkogo biograficheskogo slovaria, ii (Vaduz: Kraus reprint, 1963), 164.
481 William Tooke, View of the Russian Empire, vol. 1, iii.
482 Obviously, references to the territory that Russia occupied served an important role in providing arguments of Russia’s importance. In his letter to Wilhelmsbad Convent, Schwarz’s starting in claiming the need for an independent Masonic province in Russia is that this country is not “simply a nation, it is the nation that occupies one fifth of the earth.” In RGVa, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 11397, 33rev. (Decisions of Wilhelmsbad Convent, July-August 1782, letter no 81, 3 March 1782).
In his analysis, Tooke moved from a history of a *terra incognita* to the history of the country “that already for nine hundred years has played a conspicuous part on the theatre of the globe.”\textsuperscript{483} It is “a history of a larger compass,” since it “is not so properly the history of a country, as of a division of the globe; not of a nation, so much as of a multitude of nations, all of them distinct in language, religion, manners and descent, united together under one government by conquests, fate and fortune.”\textsuperscript{484} He used references to Russian history and descriptions of Russia’s “mingled mass of people, so extremely numerous,” its “physical, civil, and moral state,” to draw

... a grand and instructive picture, in which are seen all the modifications whereof this state, by the most various causes and operations, is susceptible: a commentary on the history of mankind, illustrative of the gradual development of civilization by the most lively and striking example.\textsuperscript{485}

Using this “spectacle which must be highly interesting to every reflecting observer,” Tooke traced the whole scale of human nature, from rude and brutal conditions to the summit of sensible and intellectual refinement on the example of the development of one country.\textsuperscript{486} It is this history that Tooke used to see the transformation during which

The arts of Europe were transplanted and bloomed both on the shores of the Neva and those of the Irtysh; a new world was opened to commerce, and the sciences, the manners, the luxury, the virtues, and the vices of Western Europe have found their way into the deserts of oriental Asia, and to the inhospitable coasts of the Frozen-ocean...\textsuperscript{487}

However, despite many positive changes,


\textsuperscript{485} Tooke, *View of the Russian Empire*, 116-17.


\textsuperscript{487} Tooke, *View of the Russian Empire*, vi.
... the greater part of this country [i.e. serfs] is still immersed in the profound barbarism... there, peasants, and even in many places inhabitants of towns, slaves to a thousand prejudices, languishing in bondage to the most stupid superstitions; brought up, besides, in severest servitude, and, being accustomed to obey by no other means than blows, are forced to submit to the harshest treatment: none of those affectionate admonitions, those prudent and impelling motives, which usually urge mankind to action, make any impression on their degraded minds; they reluctantly labour in the fields of a hard matter...\textsuperscript{488}

In general, references to backwardness and serfdom were important for establishing a relative distinction of civilizations in Western and Eastern Europe. Russia has been often used to highlight the distinctiveness (and superiority) of the West. This difference was highlighted by the association of serfdom with despotism. Another English Freemason familiar with Russian reality, William Richardson, reiterated Tooke’s words about Russian serfdom:

The peasants in Russia, that is to say, the greatest part of the subjects of the empire, are in a state of abject slavery; and are reckoned the property of the nobles to whom they belong, as much as their dogs and horses.\textsuperscript{489}

Through expressing their moral preoccupations with current state of Russian serfdom and nobility, corporal punishment, despotism, national character, and social system, Tooke and Richardson arrived at comparison between societies at different stages of development, and question the gains and sacrifices made as a society becomes more advanced.

Both rigorous moralists in their appraisal of historical development, they derive their notions from an unbound confidence in the values of their own society. A correlation between being more civilized, advanced, and morally superior because of being free, reflected the new emphasis on the possibility of individual moral and material

\textsuperscript{488} Tooke, \textit{View of the Russian Empire}, ix-x.
\textsuperscript{489} William Richardson, \textit{Anecdotes of the Russian Empire: In a Series of Letters Written, a Few Years Ago, from St. Petersburg} (London, 1784; rpt. London: Frank Cass, 1968), 193.
improvement. Richardson, for example, wrote of “that small portion of the human race [in Britain] that enjoys real freedom.” In Britain, as Tooke and Richardson saw it, the organization of human society reflected the divine order and harmony of the universe. In Russia, ill treatment from above added a more general deficiency to the national character. Russians placed little emphasis on the importance of the human being as an individual; they were defenseless and seemed almost to invite the inhuman treatment received from above. The majority of Russians were forced by circumstances to live without any purpose, which inevitably led to the insecurity and impermanence of the people’s position, and ultimately to what Richardson refers to as “ill-regulated sensibility”:

Poor abject slaves! Who are not allowed the rights of men – hardly those if irrational creatures! … Those who survive become little better than savage. In their earlier years, no tender affection softened or humanized their hearts.

The weakness of the “national character of Russians” is not in the absence of an emotional life. The problem is that the majority of Russians cannot employ “reason” to form “general rules of conduct” and thus regulate “variable and shifting emotions.” This was “extreme sensibility, unsubdued or ungoverned by reason,” manifesting itself in excess of passion and deceit, violence, and despondency. Russians “seldom look back on the past, or anticipate the future,” and this was what made them into “bearded children; the creatures of the present hour.” Despotism and serfdom were the main causes of the delayed progress of sentiments in Russia, and sentiments become a measure of civilization:

491 Richardson, Anecdotes, 240-41.
Exposed to corporal punishment, and put on the footing of irrational animals, how can they possess that spirit and elevation of sentiment which distinguish the natives of a free state? Treated with so much inhumanity, how can they be humane? I am confident, that most of the defects which appear in their national character, are in consequence of the despotism of the Russian government.492

Russia’s major problem was the lack of security in personal and property rights,493 but this did not mean that the writers dismissed Russia’s prominent features as being simply barbaric. Russians possessed an undeniable quality of sociability and good humor, but the inadequacy of their sentiment becomes an issue of civilization. At one point, Richardson describes the Russians as “bearded children.” The peasants – “bearded children” – were “even infantine in their amusements.”494 They were incapable of taking care of themselves individually because their life was decided for them. Instead of thinking for themselves, Russian peasants, just like children, had the habit of obeying and being ordered.

Referring to infancy was one way of addressing the idea of backwardness, but there was also hope that these “children” would eventually mature. Richardson is

492 Richardson, Anecdotes, 197. This sentiment infuses not only the works of Freemasons. For instance, see William Coxe, Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark, 3 vols. (London, 1784-90, reprinted in New York: Arno Press and New York Times, 1970), III, 156: “How can a country be said to be civilized, in which domestic slavery still exists?”

493 For the school of thought from which both Tooke and Richardson came, the issue of private property rights was directly linked with the ideals of individual freedom and civilization. In his Essay on the History of Civil Society (1767), Adam Ferguson contrasted civilized peoples with the barbarous nations, which paid “little attention to property, and have scarcely any beginnings of subordination or government... mankind in its rudest state, is not yet acquainted with property.” British theorists established that freedom was particularly manifest in the individual owner’s right to dominate and exclude the claims of others. According to the famous opening of book II of William Blackstone’s Commentaries of the Laws of England (1765-1769) (a work that greatly inspired Catherine’s Nakaz in 1767), “There is nothing which so strikes the imagination and engages the affections of mankind, as the right of property; or that sole and despotic dominion which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe.” Quoted cited in Esther Kingston-Mann, In Search of the True West (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 20.

494 Richardson, Anecdotes, 68-70, 215, 247.
persuaded that if it were possible to “teach them to act from fixed principles,” the
Russians might someday become “a respectable people”:

[G]ive them steadiness, give them firmness of mind, either by moral
considerations, or by a regard to their own interests; teach them to act from fixed
principles, and as they are an animated, you would soon see them a respectable,
people. 495

The “irregular sensibility” of the Russians could be “corrected” either by “the
strictest discipline” or if the Russians had “entire security for their persons and
possessions,” that is, when serfdom was abolished. 496 The true transformation of the
color character could come about when a sovereign decided to “restore above twenty millions
of men to the rights of intelligent and rational beings.” But this change need not happen
immediately because the emancipation might “let loose on mankind so many robbers and
spoilers.” Richardson advises that “[b]efore slaves can receive freedom in full
possession, they must be taught to know, relish, and use its blessings.” 497 A popular
Masonic magazine reiterates the same idea by stating that

She [Catherine the Great] wished, soon after her accession to the throne, to
introduce civil liberty among the great mass of the people, by the emancipation of
the peasantry. It was found impracticable to emancipate their bodies, without
enlightening their minds. 498

Considering Russia’s progress to date, Tooke, too, is cautiously optimistic about
the country’s future. Because Russia is “nearly the last in Europe in order of time,” 499 it
is imperative that the development of the country follows positive examples established

495 Richardson, Anecdotes, 253-54.
496 Richardson, Anecdotes, 244-49.
497 Richardson, Anecdotes, 253-54. This idea is a characteristic indication of an ambiguity that many
Enlightenment thinkers had towards lower orders.
498 “Continuation of the Brief Memoirs of Her Late Imperial Majesty, Catharine II, Empress and
Autocratrix of all the Russians, The Scientific Magazine and Freemasons’ Repository (former The
Freemasons’ Magazine: or, General and Complete Library), vol. 8 (February, 1797): 81-84, 83.
499 Emphasis is mine.
by "more advanced" countries. Having before them "the abundant stories of foreign experiments for the last three hundred years," Russians need to do

... as much in twenty years, by a methodical industry, as has scarcely been executed in two hundred years elsewhere... without either plan or example, and in manner by nature left entirely to herself, it may be expected of them that they cautiously keep clear of all faults, which, however, easily to be avoided at the outset, and yet incredibly difficult to be corrected afterwards...\textsuperscript{500}

This approach to Russia's history relieved Tooke and other like-minded observers from the need to idealize their own countries' present or condone Russian's current situation. They were optimistic about Russia's ultimate fortunes because they believed that time guaranteed the country's ultimate redemption despite all present faults. An underlying premise was that Russia, though backward and corrupt, was an exciting and exotic land of opportunity because of the combination of native talent and European enlightened absolutism, extending Herder's argument that although the Russians may have come on the scene late, they will go further than Western nations, whose history has almost run its course.\textsuperscript{501}

\textsuperscript{500} Tooke, \textit{Selections from the Most Celebrated Foreign Literary Journals and Other Periodical Publications}, vol. 2 (London, 1798), 432.
Leading Russian Freemasons, like Novikov, also thought that the key to understanding Russia's present conditions was chronology:

Every nation would have been truly happy if it emerged from the shadows of ignorance and cruelty by accepting at first the virtues and eventually the sciences, arts, and enterprises of that people from whom its own enlightenment was borrowed. But it should be said that nothing can be perfect in the beginning... Serious vices are already being eliminated everywhere while the minor ones will go out of fashion with time ([N. Novikov], \textit{Zhitopisets} (1773), 38).

\textsuperscript{501} The idea of the advantage of Russia's backwardness was expressed by Professor Johannes M. Schaden (1731–1797), a German who taught philosophy, languages, rhetoric, poetry, and mythology at Moscow University and was a rector of its academic gymnasia. In his reading, Russia's stability and moderation represented a positive contrast with the caustic, chauvinistic radicalism of the French. In an address given in June 1770, "On the Right of the Ruler with Respect to the Education of the Subjects by Sciences and Arts," which was printed in Novikov's Printing House, Schaden said, reiterating the idea put forward by Leibniz:

Russia is such a country which no seeds of prejudices inimical to the arts and sciences have poisoned fatally or harmed. In her there is not a single law which might obstruct the spread of wisdom and no difficulties from any inexpert, past legislations with which other countries are still struggling. In her the only thing needed is a gardener who understands the good quality of the seeds and soil.
Foreign Opposition to Russian Dominance in Freemasonry: The St. Petersburg Lodge of Perfect Union, Lodges in the Baltic Provinces and in Poland

If spreading their own versions of Freemasonry meant spreading “light,” “no country received so much and such swift benefit from the Order as R[ussia] did,” one high-ranking Prussian Masonic official in Russia pointed out in his diary. As I established in the previous chapter, dissemination of different (national) versions of the Craft was a high priority for many European organizations. In the beginning, the spread of the Craft in Russia depended solely on foreigners, and only a few Russians who were informed about recent Western intellectual and cultural developments participated in the lodges. Belonging to a “more advanced” Western civilization gave foreigners in Russia


On Leibniz’s ideas on Russia and its development, see Liselotte Richter, Leibniz und sein Russlandbild (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1946); W. Guerrier, Leibniz in seine Beziehungen zu Russland und Peter dem Grossen (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1873); V. Ger’e (ed.), Sbornik pisem i memorialov Leibniza, otnosiaschikhsia k Rossii i Putru Pervomu (St. Petersburg, 1873); V. Ger’e, Otmoshenie Leibniza k Rossii i Putru Velikomu po naizdannim bumagam Leibniza v Gannoverskoi biblioteke (St. Petersburg, 1871); V. I. Chuchmaren, Leibniz i russkaya kul’tura. Iz istorii mezhdunarodnikh nauchnikh i kul’turnikh sviazey (Moscow: Vysshaya shkola, 1968).


502 Pekarskii, Dopolnennia, 85: “Ni odna strana ne poluchila ot ordena tak mnogo i tak bystro podderzhki, kak Rossii.”
what Said called “a positional superiority” enabling them to have an upper hand in their relationships with even the most educated Russians.

As I established in Chapter 1, the first lodges in Russia operated mostly as clubs for foreigners. As Freemasonry spread and its influence deepened, Russian nobles started to be admitted in the brotherhood. Despite the important role that the foreigners played in bringing Freemasonry to Russia, it is virtually impossible to establish with certainty whether they outnumbered Russian members in the lodges on the territory of the Russian empire at any point of the eighteenth century.

As it is the case with any surviving statistical data, when dealing with the information about Masonic membership in the eighteenth century, we encounter a wide array of problems. Obviously, membership in a secret society is one of the hardest pieces of information to find out. Not all Freemasons’ names are in the membership lists, and only a small portion of membership lists is available for analysis. Another specifically eighteenth-century Russian problem is that it is virtually impossible to distinguish between foreigners who arrived and lived in Russia temporarily or permanently and those whose relatively recent ancestors were foreigners.\(^ {503}\) In addition, many names of foreigners were transcribed in Cyrillic and modified to sound more

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\(^ {503}\) Because of the influx of foreigners that started in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the personal level of assimilation varied greatly. Also, Russia’s expansion on the Baltic makes it difficult to distinguish between Baltic/German/Polish/Russian Freemasons. It is impossible to establish whether a Freemason was born on the territory of the Russian empire only on the basis on his name. And it is very rarely that we have other bits of personal information.
Russian. That is why the numbers represent only those Freemasons whose names
appear in the documents. This is only a minimum estimation for a rough proportion.

According to Bakounina’s estimation, by the 1780s, foreigners represented about
50 percent of all membership. However, she notes that among these only about one third
had arrived to Russia previously and were not born on the territory of Russia into a
family of non-Russian parents. As we pointed out earlier, the most numerous and
influential group were the Germans. More than 70 percent of foreign Freemasons were
of German descent, followed by the Polish Freemasons.

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504 For instance, in the membership lists of Neptune in Cronstadt, among all the foreigners, only Nasse
appears to have been recognized as British. Denison is identified as Frants Mikhailovich Denisov, Newman
as Karl Ivanovich Numan, and Wilson as Roman Romanovich Will’son.
505 Another problem in trying to understand the commonalities of a group is whether the membership in
Freemasonry had the direct influence on person’s life path and views. In most cases, we cannot establish
that a person who was a Freemason did necessarily subscribe to Masonic ideas or interests and have to
revert to Sherlock Holmes’ observation in “The Red-Haired League” (1892): “Beyond the obvious fact that
he has at some time done manual labour, then he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in
China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else.”
506 RGVA, fond 730, opis’ 1, folder 200, 30. Typescript “Predislovie T. A. Bakuninoi k Istoricshkomu
slovaru russkikh masonov (XVIII i XIX vv.),” March 1937.
In the eighteenth century the Russian Empire was multi-national. The first National Census in 1897
that recorded statistical data about the inhabitants of the Empire did not have the section on nationality. The
nationality was determined on the basis of the declared native language and faith.
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<td>1130</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1536</td>
<td>1729</td>
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However flawed, this estimation presents a complex picture of foreign Freemasonry’s social composition.\textsuperscript{507} When foreigners connected with Russia are

\textsuperscript{507} Based on RSMA, fond 730, opis’ 1, folder 200, printed text of the introduction to T. A. Bakounine “Historical Dictionary,” March 1937, with the author’s remarks, 29. Additions come from Serkov, Entsiklopedia.
divided into different occupational groups, it becomes clear that over 80 percent of foreign Freemasons were engaged in military and various branches of state and local government.

In his * Entsiklopedia*, for the eighteenth century Serkov identifies 3,093 active Freemasons, both Russian and foreign, more than 1,100 of whom came from the ranks of the officer corps of the army and navy and from the state civil service. Since Peter the Great's introduction of the Table of Ranks in 1722, a person's status was determined on the basis of his service to the state. Military, court, and civil servants were included and ranked from the first to the fourteenth grade. A non-noble civil servant reaching a certain level in the Table was qualified for personal nobility. In contrast, military offices enjoyed the privileges of hereditary nobility starting with the very bottom, the fourteenth rank. Since Russian soldiers were drawn from among the serfs and could not qualify for any promotion, only the members of Russian nobility served in the officer corps.

However, this situation does not apply to foreigners who came to Russia to serve in the military. Often coming from very humble backgrounds, when recruited by the Russian army, they incorporated into the Russian system of nobility. On the one hand, if compared to the social composition of European lodges, the proportion of

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508 See Serkov, * Entsiklopedia*.
511 For instance, Admiral Samuel Graig, son of a Scottish sailor, commanded the Russian navy and was an influential Freemason. See chapter 2, pp. 128-130.
foreign Freemasons of the “middle bourgeoisie,” the bureaucracy and military including, seems to fit the general pattern of Freemasons being literate and fairly well-to-do men. Margaret Jacob, for instance, points out that Freemasons of “liberal professions, small merchants, higher level public officials, army officers,” prevailed in the lodges in the 1770s Belgium.\textsuperscript{512} So when we compare the social composition of Freemasons in Russia and Europe as well as occupational groups of Russian and foreign Freemasons, we need to keep in mind this peculiarity of the Russian system because it might account for a high number of nobility in the ranks of Russian Freemasons.\textsuperscript{513} Higher level public officials and army officers, who in Europe can be considered as a “middle bourgeoisie” by the end of the century, in Russia could have belonged to the nobility.

For foreign and Russian members, Smith identifies the positions of more than eight hundred Freemasons in the Table of Ranks. There were approximately sixty Freemasons in the highest ranks of the social ladder and the first three ranks in the Table of Ranks. Members of the most powerful aristocratic families, including brothers N. I. and P. I. Panin; and I. G. and Z. G. Chernyschev; K. G. Razumovskii, and Prince A. B. Kurakin, belonged to the brotherhood. We find active Freemasons in the families of Golitsyns, Naryshkins, Saltykovs, Trubetskies, and Vorontsovs that epitomized Russia’s ruling elite.\textsuperscript{514} It means that around 750 of the rest of these Freemasons with identifiable positions belonged to the ranks four through fourteen, with at least 460 being in the ranks four through eight.\textsuperscript{515}

\textsuperscript{512} Jacob, \textit{Living the Enlightenment}, 227.
\textsuperscript{513} For instance, Margaret Jacob, \textit{Living the Enlightenment}, 227 (notes), identifies 31 percent of aristocracy in the Belgian lodges by the end of the 1780s.
\textsuperscript{514} Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 24.
\textsuperscript{515} Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 24.
As we can judge even by these very minimum numbers, Freemasons occupied every level of the state apparatus of the Russian empire.\textsuperscript{516} Another important consideration is that medicine, education, and arts also formally belonged to state service. The doctors, pharmacists, teachers, professors, musicians, actors, and assessors, at least 50 percent of whom were foreigners by a very modest estimation, also need to be added to the picture of the interweaving between the state and Freemasonry. Smith, for instance, in evaluating the share of these occupations, puts the total for those active in state service at approximately 1,240, or 41 percent of all Freemasons, and 61 percent of Freemasons with known preoccupations.\textsuperscript{517} If we consider these numbers through the prism of Bakounine’s estimation of foreign participation in state service at 80 percent, the picture of foreign influence becomes even more pronounced.

The next large occupational group, the merchants, was comprised of at least 300 Freemasons, according to Smith’s estimations. They, along with lawyers, bankers, manufacturers, innkeepers, and bookkeepers, were not included in the Table of Ranks and account for almost seventeen percent of the 2,020 Freemasons identified by occupation. The remainder of the Masonic community was divided among individuals from wide array of occupations and groups, including private tutors, students, writers, publishers, sculptors, architects, private physicians, surgeons, pharmacists, ministers and

\textsuperscript{516} By the end of the century lodges existed not only in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and cities in western borders. The provincial town all around the empire had organized Masonic groups. There were lodges in Arkhangel’sk, Belostok, Vil’na, Vishnevets, Vyborg, Grodno, Gazenpot, Derpt, Dubno, Zhitomir, Kazan’, Kinburn, Kamenets, Cronstad, Libava, Mitava, Mogilev, Oranienbaum, Riga, Sadogury, Tul’chin, Shklov, Vladimir, Iaroslavl’, Vologda, Nizhni Novgorod, Penza, Simbirsk, Kazan’, Perm’, Irkutsk, Tula, Orel, Khar’kov, Kiev, and, according to the police reports, somewhere in the Don region. See Serkov, \textit{Entsiklopedia}, 943-995; Vernadskii, \textit{Russkoe masonstvo}, 18; Friendrichs, \textit{Geschichte}, 43, 88; Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 19-20.

\textsuperscript{517} Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 189-90 (footnote).
priests. There was a small number of craftsmen and several former serfs.\footnote{Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 24.} The orator of Moscow’s Three Banners pointed out “the order contained in its composition a great number of members from all estates.”\footnote{[Johann Philipp Wegelin], “Pis’mo neizvestnago litsa o Moscovskom masonstve XVIII veka,” Russkii arkhiv, kn. 1 (1874): 1032.} Georg Reibeck, a German traveler to Russia in the early nineteenth century, provided a similar assessment of the social makeup. The society of Freemasons was very popular with men from a wide range of social backgrounds, a state of affairs that he saw as a corruption of the Craft in the hands of the Russians: “The nation... embraced Freemasonry with enthusiasm, but the object of the society was perverted. Everybody was admitted without scrutiny for the sake of the fees. Still this had one good effect, that of bringing the different ranks of life nearer to each other.\footnote{Georg Reibeck, “Travels from St. Petersburg through Moscow, Grodno, Warsaw, Breslaw, etc. to Germany, in the Year 1805,” in A Collection of Modern and Contemporary Voyages and Travels, ed. Richard Phillips, vol. 6 (London: R. Phillips, 1807), 128.}

Although by the end of the century the number of Russians in the lodges both in Russia and abroad increased significantly, Freemasons in Russia still could not help but rely on foreigners, a dependence that ultimately became one of the reasons for the downfall of the Craft by the end of the century. Many foreigners, however, were skeptical whether Russians were ready for conscious acceptance of Masonic knowledge. As Kotzebue, who lived in Russia 1781-1800 and was an Orator in a Russian lodge, emphatically stated that in Russia there was “a numerous body of enlightened men,” but these people suffered from the “state of servitude.” From his experience in Russia he concluded that those “who possesses them [light and truth] ... are so far from daring to
open their hands to spread them abroad ... for they who have knowledge are the only persons interested in maintaining ignorance."  

Like Tooke and Richardson, Freemason Reichel, for instance, believed that Russia was "a camel laden with costly treasures but that does not know [it] itself." He also believed that people in Russia were not mature enough to fully comprehend Freemasonry. For Reichel, Freemasonry was a path open only to mature men in whom fire has been quenched, and as he insisted, "it is too early for Russia to understand it [Freemasonry]." An active propagator of the Zinnendorf (Berlin-Swedish) system and a co-creator of the Elagin-Reichel union, in 1776 Reichel decided to withdraw completely from direct involvement in the Masonic organizations in Russia after repeated disappointments in his initial efforts to "enlighten" the country by the means of Freemasonry.

-- The St. Petersburg Lodge of Perfect Union

One of the earliest examples of the opposition to the domination of Russians in the development of Freemasonry in Russia was the St. Petersburg lodge of Perfect Union, the lodge with predominantly foreign membership that boasted Tooke and Richardson among its members. Perfect Union insisted on its identity as not only an English-system lodge but as a British lodge and persistently refused to acknowledge

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522 On Reichel's role in the development of Russian Freemasonry, see Chapter 2, p. 108ff.
523 Barskov, 215.
524 Barskov, 216-17.
Elagin’s Grand Mastership. The situation analyzed in detail by Anthony Cross testifies to the resistance of foreign Freemasons to come under the jurisdiction of the Russian Provincial Grand Master. Although the Grand Lodge of Great Britain granted Perfect Union its Constitution in 1771, after making Elagin the Provincial Grand Master of Russia in 1772, the Grand Lodge sent the Master of Perfect Union a letter calling for the lodge’s submission to Elagin’s authority. Heseltine insistently

525 Despite unsuccessful attempts of Perfect Union to act as an independent lodge responsible directly to the Grand Lodge of England, there is evidence to suggest that a large group of workmen imported from Scotland in the 1780s by the architect Charles Cameron to help with the construction of the Empress’ summer residence at Tsarskoe Selo constituted an “Imperial Scottish Lodge of St. Petersburg” that was, in fact, an independent entity directly under the jurisdiction of another British Masonic body – the Grand Lodge of Scotland. It was a lodge consisting of operative masons (actual stonemasons), a closely-knit circle of Scottish stonemasons, bricklayers, and plasterers tied by language and humble origins. This guild was isolated from the general life of Russia and did not seem to establish any connections with other lodges or to have influenced the development of Freemasonry in Russia.

For a thorough consideration of the circumstances related to the establishment of the working lodge of Freemasons from Scotland, as Cross puts it, “Scottish Masons - Scottish by birth and by allegiance to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and not by adherence to “Scottish” ritual” and on the particulars of the lodge, see Cross, “British Freemasons,” 248-58; “Charles Cameron’s Scottish Workmen.” Scottish Slavonic Review (Spring, 1988), 51-74; David Dobson, Scots in Poland, Russia and the Baltic States, 1550-1850 (Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 2000).

The documents relating to this lodge can be found in Grand Lodge of Scotland, Chartulary and List of Lodges and Members from Institution of Grand Lodge 1736 to 1762 no. 1, Imperial Scot’s Lodge of St. Petersburg, Constituent members. Payment of the dues by the separate members 1784-1791. Also, there are several references to the Imperial Scots Lodge in the documents of the Records of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, 1765 to 1795, vol. II. 3 May 1784; 5 November 1787; 15 November 1790; 26 November 1790.


526 Cross, “British Freemasons in Russia,” Oxford Slavonic Papers, 49-58. Elagin is sometimes mistakenly described as the Grand Master of Perfect Union and P. I. Melissino as the lodge’s Master. See, for instance, N. S. Ivanin, ed. and trans., “K istorii masonstva v Rossii (perevod s nemetskoi neizdannyi rukopisi),” Russkaia starina 35 (September, 1882), 535.

recommended the “unity in the two lodges (of Perfect Union and the one that nominated Elagin for the position) and a joint petition agreeable to both as the most likely means to succeed.”528 From the Grand Secretary Heseltine’s documents, it is known that already in 1769 Perfect Union had recommended a person to the Office of Provincial Grand Master, who, as it seems, was not Elagin. Members of Perfect Union drew a letter offering their congratulations to Elagin on his appointment. But they also voiced their concern with the need to pledge allegiance to the Russian Provincial Grand Master:

... that with Respect to the fundamental question, suggested by the Letter from the Grand Lodge, it has been unanimously resolved, that this Lodge shall exert its utmost Efforts, in order to preserve the privilege, which it derives from the Constitution, of having no dependence, nor official Correspondence to that Effect with any other than the Grand Lodge in London.529

The lodge decided to send a copy of its complete Minutes, beginning on St. John’s Day of 1771, to support its petition to remain “a British Lodge whose Foundation & Existence is national, immediately and directly depending on Your Grace alone [the Duke of Beaufort, the then Grand Master of England], and consequently not subject to the control of anyone else.”530 Despite the resistance, by 1776, the lodge was under Elagin’s authority and the name of its Master at that time, John Cayle, appears on a list of Masons designated by Elagin for higher degrees.531 However, no member of Perfect Union held any office in Elagin’s Grand Provincial Lodge in 1773-4, and an entry in the

530 FHL, Moderns’ Letter Book, vol. 2 (1769-1775), 44 (letter from Heseltine to Perfect Union on 10 November 1769).
531 Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia, 52.
Minutes of the lodge Urania for 10 May 1774 would seem to provide evidence of Perfect Union’s continuing resistance to the Russians’ domination.532

--- Baltic Provinces

Lodges on the Baltic were among the strongest bastions of the opposition to Russian authority in Freemasonry in the region in the eighteenth century. Formally a part of the Russian Empire after 1721, the Baltic provinces presented a unique mixture of German, Lithuanian, Estonian, Latvian, Polish, Swedish, English, Scottish, Danish, and Russian population. The meeting point of many foreigners, Riga was also a meeting point of Masonic rites. The history of Riga’s lodges fully reflects this complexity, and by the end of the century the city became a capital of shifting Masonic allegiances and national identities in Freemasonry.533 The first Masonic lodge in Riga and one of the first in the Russian Empire, Nordstern, was set up in 1750 by the merchants Johann Dietrich von der Heyde and Johann Zuckerbecker, who had become Masons under

532 G. V. Vernadskii, Russko massonstvo, 19-20, n. 7: Brother Meyer reported that the merchant Ovander, whom he had proposed at the last meeting as a candidate for membership of our society, had meantimes been accepted by some English brothers, about whom it is well known that they no longer have a constitution from our mother Grand Lodge of England; consequently he is prevented thereby from being received into our regular and authorized Lodges.

533 Members of the Riga lodges included leading names of the province: Johann Gottfried Herder, who spent in Riga his early years (1764-9); the printer and bookseller Johann Friedrich Hartknoch (on the Hartknochs, see Henryk Rietz, “Johann Friedrich Hartknoch 1740-1789,” in Wegbereiter der deutsch-slavischen Wechselfeitig, eds. Eduard Winter et al (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1983), 89-100 and Henryk Rietz’s article in Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici, Historia XX. Nauki humanistyczno-społeczne, no. 158 (1985). Also, E. A. Savel’eva and A. A. Zaitseva in Latvijas PSR Zinatnu Akademijas Vestis, no. 4 (1990), 40-4, 45-52; the painter Woldemar Freiherr von Budberg; Pastor Liborius von Bergmann (Bergmann was a member and Orator of a Leipzig lodge in the 1770s: August Wolfstieg, Bibliographie der Freimaurerischen Literatur, (Burg, 1912), nos. 3294, 11169, 13936-7.

Danish patronage. In 1765, Nordstern, as well as two other lodges, Pelikana and Zolotogo iabloka (1768-69), shifted its allegiance to the Strict Observance system and changed its name to zum Schwert. Among Riga’s lodges of Strict Observance we also find the lodge of Zolotogo roga izobilita which worked in 1768-69, and then is mentioned as an “Ancient Scottish” lodge under the number 121 in 1790.

Lodges’ confusion with different Masonic systems was especially evident during the 1780s when a host of lodges appeared, including Apollo (1772), Castor (with a corresponding Pollux in Dorpat, 1778), Astraea (1787), and zur kleinen Welt (officially installed by the Grand Lodge of England in 1791). The lodge of Apollo opened in 1772, and after 1773 worked according to the Zinnendorf system on patent received from a Berlin lodge. However, some of Apollo’s members founded the lodge of Astrea on the basis of acts sent by Elagin in 1785. The Grand Lodge of England included the Astrea in the list of lodges in 1787 under number 413. Other members of Apollo received the patent for the foundation of a lodge called Castor (sometimes called the lodge of Duba) from the Berlin Landesloge in 1778. On 2 November 1785, Castor’s Master Baron Ungern Sternberg pointed out the fact that Riga belonged to Russia, “als einer Vaterländischen zu begeben,” and notified the Landesloge that Castor would be

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534 Pypin, Masonstvo, 499. Officers of the lodge zur kleinen Welt in 1793 included Zuckerbecker, listed as consul of the Dutch Estates General. Latvia State Historical Archive (LVVA). Riga, 4038 fonda, 2 apraksts, 1394 lietas, 12 lapuse.
535 On zum Schwerti, see p. 53.
536 Serkov, Entsiklopediia, 984.
537 We find references to Apollo well into 1794.
538 Membership list for 1785 is in RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4762, 3.
subordinated to the English system of the Grand Lodge of England and its Provincial Grand Master for Russia Elagin.\textsuperscript{539}

Since Castor members opposed the Swedish system,\textsuperscript{540} in protest they left the Landesloge which patented the lodge originally, and joined the Elagin system. It is not clear whether they realized that Elagin’s lodges at the time also toyed with the Swedish system. It is notable that among the fifty-one members of Castor recorded in 1784, we find British-sounding names of Benjamin Whisker, Thomas Gardyne, Gregory Wale, and George Friedrich Collins, all merchants; and the merchant William Collins is noted as “departed deputy Master.” When the lodge reopened in 1797, the name of another British merchant, William Petrie, who managed the British poor fund in Riga, was added to the list of forty-nine.\textsuperscript{541}

The lodge \textit{zum Schwerdt} was a Strict Observance lodge that stemmed from the earliest Riga’s lodge, Nordstern.\textsuperscript{542} For fifteen years, 1775-1790, \textit{zum Schwerdt} was related to Berlin’s \textit{Drei Weltkugeln} and customarily worked in German. In January 1790, as \textit{zum Schwerdt’s} membership list indicates, out of sixty members, nineteen were born in Riga, five in Liefland, five in Ahrensburg, three in Courland, two in Magdeburg, two in Berlin, one in Russia, and the rest in German territories.\textsuperscript{543} However, in 1781, \textit{zum Schwert’s} fifty-three members included English merchants R. King (from Hull) and G. Veston (Wenston?), and the Scots J. Cumming and R. Jobson, all listed as Anglicans.

\textsuperscript{539} RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4794, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{540} Which is surprising since their Master, Ungern Sternberg, was (or was related to) one of the founders of the Swedish system in Russia.
\textsuperscript{541} Bartlett, 54.
\textsuperscript{542} In 1778, at Wolfenbuttel Masonic Convent, the French, English, Italian, and Swedish lodges acknowledged the lodge.
\textsuperscript{543} RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4794, 15.
Despite the number of British members, in 1791 Zum Schwerdt denied the invitation to participate in the foundation of the Riga’s lodge Malogo sveta (zur kleinen Welt) that worked under the Grand Lodge of England.

The Grand Lodge of England received zur kleinen Welt’s application for the patent after 1788 and officially installed the lodge in September 1791. The lodge’s name was entered into the list of English lodges under the number 73. As William White, a Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, pointed out on 17 September 1788, the Grand Lodge was “in a total state of Ignorance concerning their [Russian Mason’s] Masonic proceedings for … not a single Line had been rec[ieve]d from them.” That is why upon the application of “W. Collins of Riga (who is now here [in London]) & a petition from the Brethren,” a warrant of Confirmation was granted to the lodge at Riga with “permission to assemble in the Dominions of the Duke of Courland.”

Although in the list the Riga’s lodges are mentioned as belonging to the Russian Empire, the Grand Secretary’s reference to “the Dominions of the Duke of Courland” is not coincidental. Zur kleinen Welt had a very small number of Russian names in the lodge list, and initially worked in German. Only after 1790 did it add Russian-language meetings. Georg Ludwig Collins was the master of the lodge for many years, and his deputy, Martin Mikhailov, “Imperial Russian provincial secretary,” was one of the few Russian members. The lodge actively corresponded with the Provincial Grand Master

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545 In the membership list compiled on 17 August 1789, out of fifty-five members of the lodge only one was of the Greek Orthodox religion. However, among honored members we find Elagin and seven people with the residence in St. Petersburg. RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4794, 3(4).
for Russia Elagin. However, the subordination to Elagin and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia did not seem sufficient to some of Riga’s Freemasons. *Zur kleinen Welt* was established, as the members wrote in a follow up to the introduction letter to the lodge *drei Kleeblätter* in Anschersleben on 6 February 1794, “for the enlightenment of their mind and the refinement of heart.” The lodge officials made every effort to receive instructions on how to reach these goals in Freemasonry. When *zur kleinen Welt’s* members could not find them under the guidance of Berlin’s *Drei Weltkugeln*, Elagin’s Provincial Lodge of Russia, or the Grand Lodge of England, they, via William Collins, who was in London on business to the Grand Lodge of England in 1787-88, made an attempt to establish an independent Baltic Masonic province under the Royal Order of Scotland.

The name of William Collins is associated with several Riga’s lodges, including Astrea, Castor and *Zur kleinen Welt*. On 10 May 1787, in a letter from

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547 LVVA, 4038 fonda, 2 apraks, 1394 lietas, 18-18 lapsule. A list for *Zur kleinen Welt* for 1793 includes a Lutheran Matthew Benjamin Iork [York?] and, in a later entry, the reformed Charles Clark, both merchants; Emmanuel Friedrich Groot, lawyer and accountant of the Riga six-deputy city council (also honorary member). “Master of the chair and Scottish Grandmaster” of the lodge is Georg Ludwig Collins. LVVA, 4038 fonda, 2 apraks, 1394 lietas, 12-13 lapsule, 1, the printed 1793 list gives 56 members, 14 honorary members, and 5 serving brothers. Undated handwritten additions make totals respectively 75, 15, 5. Other lists are in RGVA, fonda 1412k, opis’ 1, folders 4353 and 4794.

Elagin’s correspondence with the Baltic lodges, particularly with *zur kleinen Welt*, as well as the lodge journal (1790-91, 1792) are in RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, part 10 (1).

548 RGVA, fonda 1412, folder 4353, 1 (2):
für die Aufklärung ihres Geistes und die Veredelung ihres Herzens.” The Anschersleben lodge obviously denied the recognition of *zur kleinen Welt* at first (nähere Verbindung mit Kalte zurück weisen), the members of *zur kleinen Welt* insist that *drei Kleeblätter* embraces their Riga colleagues with brotherly love: “*eine kleine Welt* mit Bruderliebe zu umfassen.

549 It is not clear whether it was William Collins the elder or his son, William Collins the younger.

550 At the meeting of the Excellent Grand & Royal Chapter in London on 11 January 1788, William Collins, a visitor from “The Chapter of Astrea at Riga” is mentioned. FHL, [BE 348 GRA], Minutes of Excellent Grand & Royal Chapter, Book III, Part 1 (January 1776-1788), 152. The typescript of the minutes is not paginated. Numbers in brackets are of mine pagination, starting with the first page. Also, RGVA, fonda 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4762, 2rev. (letter from William Collins and Johann Valentin Holst to Elagin on 28 July 1787). The attached list of the members indicates only 12 members.
London to Edinburg he expressed his "wish to propagate so noble a Society as the Royal order, in our parts," proposed establishment of "the Grand Chapter," and asked to be appointed the "Vicar of the order in the Northern Provinces and Provinciall [sic] of the Third Province being the Domminions [sic] of the Empress of Russia & of the Duke of Courland." Collins referred to the proposed province as the third one supposing Scotland to be the first province, and France being the second one. The conditions that Collins offered the officials of the Royal Order were bold: not only did he want to name his own successor (instead of the standard practice of lodge elections), he also wished to have the authority to grant constitutions in any land where no Provincial Grand Master has previously been appointed. In return, he offered to pay to the Grand Chapter of Edinburgh two guineas at the opening of "his" Provincial Chapter; one guinea for every constitution granted by him; and also payments for constitutions granted to the lodges out of his jurisdiction where no Provincial Grand Master was currently appointed. Collins insisted that "the promised instruction, ... Certificate & ... note of Charges [were delivered to him] as soon as possible."552

Obviously, Collins' ambitious plans did not go well with the Edinburgh Masonic officials. He repeated the content of his letter on 18 June 1787, and then in another one on 5 July 1787, choosing different addressees.553 Finally, on 16 July 1787, Collins

551 In the membership list of the lodge Castor in Riga on 28 September 1781, William Collins is identified as "kaufmann, deputirten Meister." The list was sent to Berlin Landesloge. RGVA, fond 1412k, opis'1, folder 4763, 25-37rev., contains correspondence that Collins carried out on behalf of the lodge Castor with the Berlin Landesloge in 1784-85. In a letter on 8 January 1785 (37-37rev), for instance, Collins communicates the decision of the lodges Apollo and Castor to join the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia led by Elagin.

552 FHL, [BS 624 ROY], Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 56 [76]. Top copies are in English in the original letter-book. Carbon copies are translated from the French in the original letter-book.

553 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 57 [77]. The letters on 10 May and 18 June are addressed to Mr. William Gibb, while the letter on 5 July is for "his Majesty's Genl. Post Office, Edinburgh." Collins
wrote a letter to "brother Richmond" thanking for the received certificate and promising to transmit the fee for it as soon as possible. As is evident from this letter, Collins did not receive the power of granting constitutions, which left him inquiring whether "the grand Chapter will grant me the Chapter I asked for with leave to erect a Prov[incial] Chapter, which ... would be absolutely necessary for the better Govern[men]t of the Brethren in those parts." Collins was worried that the fact that he was not granted absolute powers in the "third province" would mean for him the necessity to regularly send correspondence to Edinburgh for approval. If this was the case, Collins insisted, he would "beg leave to decline the Honour for the office [that] would in that case involve me in too much Correspondence & trouble." Collins was not ready to be bound, like "Mr. Yelagerin [sic] the Prov. G.M. of Russia for the 3 degrees of St. John's Masonry" with the obligation to "transmit annually to the G[rand] L[odge] of England ... an account of the Constitutions he has granted within his jurisdiction & 5 guineas as registering fees for every new Lodge constituted within the year." Speaking about Elagin and the application to the Grand Lodge of England, Collins mentioned that even "though we [Riga's Freemasons] had friends here & would have paid double fees we could not get a constitution from England but were obliged to apply to him [Elagin]."

Even after receiving his certificate, Collins was left with the desire for more authority and access to Masonic knowledge. In the letter on 16 July 1787 to Richmond, he lamented the "refusall [sic] of the promised instructions." This situation, in his thinking, attested to "the fears of some Brethren who did not knoe [sic] that I am the only person possessed of the Cypher & acquainted with the different variations of it, and of

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begs that an enquiry be made whether these letters have been delivered to the person they were intended for, and offers to pay the fee for making the enquiry.

554 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 61 [86].
course the only one who could understand the instructions.” He wholeheartedly desired not to be “as ignorant as if I had not been admitted into the order.” Not to put the transmitted secrets at risk, he was ready to learn all the instructions by heart and burn them immediately after that because of the security considerations.\footnote{FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 62 [87].} However, by 1 September 1787, the silence of the Royal Order’s officials made Collins understand that he was not going to receive anything he strived for

\[ ... \text{I am almost enuced [sic] to believe that the Gr[and] Ch[al]p[e]r does not wish to appoint a P[rovincial] G[rand] M[aster] for Russia & the Courish Dominions, or at least that it is not their intention to entrust me with that office.} \footnote{FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 72 [104].} \]

He, nevertheless, continued to insist that

\[ [i]f I did not know that several [sic] respectable people would join with me to erect Chapters and propagate the Order in a becoming manner I should not have applied for a prov[incial] Chapter, nor should I have done it if I was not convinced that the Order can in no other way be introduced into the country upon \ldots \text{permanent footing}. \footnote{FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 72 [104].} \]

In this letter Collins himself pointed out a major obstacle for the foundation of any Masonic organization in Russia in the late 1780s, mentioning “an ordinance of some standing has lately been renewed in Russia enjoining all Societys, Fraternitys Clubs or any other bodies of men not to be dependant upon or pay any tribute or tax to any foreign prince, states or \ldots \text{subjects, threatening severe penalties against the transgressors.”} Because of this state regulation, Collins decided not to accept the Provincial Charter, if granted at all. In an attempt to receive as much independence from the “foreign authority” as possible, he offered the Royal Order to establish the province and transmit
the money “for every constitution I grant within the Russian Dominions,” but without any other obligations to Scotland.558

Collins expanded on this idea in the letter on 28 September 1787. The obligation to “obey the laws of their country” (his country being the Russian Empire) precluded Collins from forming “a connection” with foreigners because it can “dishonour” him, just as was the case in the scandal caused by “a connection between a set of Masons in Russia & the Swedish Masons.”559 And again, Collins reiterated his proposal in yet another letter on 28 September 1787, stating that since “a Law in Russia particularly orders that no men or body of men assembling under the name of Lodges, Clubs or Fellowships & should acknowledge a foreign power or State or any subject or subjects thereof for their superior, be dependant upon them or pay them any tribute under any denomination,” he needs to have the right to be the highest authority of the province.560

Collins’ pleas went unanswered. Assuming that he met refusal because his proposal was “too vague & unlimited,” another Freemason from Russia, one P. Baesunin (Lunin? Loukine?) wrote to the official of the Royal Order “Mr. James Hume” with hopes of receiving permission “to erect a constitution in Russia.” Being “ardent in wishing my countrymen [Russians?] to reap the advantages to be derived from this institution,” the applicant put forward a request with some variations from Collins’ propositions. The main change consisted in the insistence on acknowledging the dependence on the Grand Chapter of Scotland. In contrast with Collins, this new pretender agreed that no Charter granted by him “shall be valid until ratified by the

558 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 72 [104].
559 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 73 [106].
560 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 80 [118].
Grand Chapter" and that "this confirmation must be necessary consequence of the
payment of the Erection fees [of] . . . 100 Roubles equal to nearly 20 pounds." The
very fact that in 1788 Astrea came under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England
and finally made itself subordinate to Elagin and the Grand Lodge of England testifies to
the fact that the persistent attempts of the Baltic Freemasons to receive any degree of
independence were largely unsuccessful. Despite all the attempts, the Baltic lodges had
no choice but to stay subordinated to the authority of Russian Freemasons.

-- Poland

The situation with the lodges in Poland presented a similar dilemma to
Freemasons. The eighteenth-century imprint of the Warsaw lodge Catherine à l'Etoile
du Nord features a man standing between two pillars, reflecting how the members of this
Polish lodge found themselves in search of own their place between the East and the
West, Russia and Europe and oscillating between different "national" systems. Although
it is often claimed that the first lodge in Poland came into existence as early as 1729,
throughout the eighteenth century the development of Freemasonry was hindered by
organizational confusion and political instability. In 1772, the first partition of Poland
happened when the neighboring countries divided Poland. Coincidentally, it is after
1772 that Polish Freemasonry entered a period of expansion and proliferation, first with
the dominance of the Strict Observance system, which established the eighth diocese in
Poland under Count Aloysius Friedrich Brühl and King Stanisław August Poniatowski
(who went by the Strict Observance name of "Salsinatus Eques a Corona vindicata").

561 FHL, Royal Order of Scotland, Letter-Book, 81 [119]. The document is marked with "date uncertain."
Nevertheless, other systems, including English Freemasonry, French (Ancient Scottish), and influences from Russian high-grade Freemasonry were widespread by the 1780s. In 1779, the members of the lodge *Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord* located in Warsaw refer to themselves as an English-system lodge that values “the sentiments of Freedom and Wisdom” expressed by English Freemasonry.\(^{562}\) Polish brothers considered the Grand Lodge of England to be the “Centre of the Universality of the True Brothers.”\(^{563}\) They emphasized that the “true freemason owes himself and devotes himself to his motherland without ever as a mason ceasing to be a citizen of the universe,” but believed, nevertheless, that organizationally Freemasonry required “one center, one meeting point where all its rays may converge.” For the members of *Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord*, the Grand Lodge of England was this center and the point of reunion for all Freemasons. Polish brothers aspired to create a new point of reunion, “a new centre where the rays of the orients of the Kingdom of Poland and of the G[rand] D[uchy] of Lithuania must converge and stop” by forming the Grand Orient of Warsaw.\(^{564}\) With Poland being torn between the influences of Prussia, Austria, and Russia, the officials of the Warsaw lodge could not decide which mother-lodge was eligible to establish the Polish Province. Freemasons in Poland vacillated between the Grand Lodges and National Lodges in Prussia, Russia, and England.\(^{565}\)

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\(^{562}\) RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 5 (Minute de la Lettre à le prince Stanislas Poniatowski, Berlin, 3 December 1779): “…Sentiments de Liberté et de Sagesse… d’après l’ancien et vrai Système anglaise.” References to *Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord* as an English-system lodge are also in the letters to Loge Royale York de l’Amitié in 1779, 1; and 3 December 1779, 4.


\(^{564}\) Brodsky, *English Freemasonry*, 75-76.

\(^{565}\) RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 13 (letter on 8 January 1780).
Brothers at Catherine à l'Etoile du Nord fostered the relationship with the Berlin lodge Royale York de l'Amitié, the “Ancient Scottish Lodge” that “wanted to bind herself to the Scottish Grand Orients,” and was essentially “a Scottish lodge, which afterwards annexed the three first degrees of Masonry according to the sublime Grand Lodge of London - general list in 1767 number 350.” With the affiliation with - or, as they phrased, it “protection” of -- the Royale York, the lodge of Catherine à l'Etoile du Nord hoped to establish a “National Polish Lodge.” At the same time, from its foundation, Catherine à l'Etoile du Nord had the orientation to Russia that was evident even in the choice of the lodge’s name. Polish brothers emphasized that by using Catherine’s name, they payed “tribute to the relics, sublime talents, to heroism of Catherine II.”

The main contact in Russia was the St. Petersberg lodge of Skromnosi (or Molchalivosti, Discretion), a part of the Elagin system which was led by count Melissino. By correspondence, the St. Petersberg Masons fought the battle of words with the Berlin lodge Royale York de l’Amitié to win over the Polish brothers. In his letters to Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord, Melissino tries to prove that Russian brothers not only had legitimate authority to be the connecting link between Poland and England, but also possessed “flashes of enlightenment from the highest degrees of Masonic knowledge.” Once Russian brothers were students of other Masonry-savvy nations, now “we are

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566 FHL, 103 (143), Berlin, 31 August 1797, signed by Fessler, Deputy Grand Master. Cross, By the Banks of Neva, calls Fessler an enlightened and rational reformer.
567 RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 5 (Minute de la Lettre à le prince Stanislas Poniatowski, Berlin, 3 December 1779): “une Loge Nationale Polenaize.”
568 RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 24-25rev. (copy of the letter written to baron Heyking on 7 (9) February 1780). Another copy is on page 22.
569 This opposition is especially intriguing given the fact that Elagin’s second union applied and received a patent from Royale York de l'Amitié later, in 1786, when Elagin’s correspondence with the Grand Lodge of Eniligand was disrupted.
ourselves the professors,” claimed Melissino.\textsuperscript{570} In his correspondence with Warsaw, the Master of the Russian lodge acknowledged that the confusion with different rites was a Russian problem, too. But now, when Russians “saw the Light,” they opposed the expansion of “some parasitic branches” and insisted on the legitimacy of their practices.\textsuperscript{571}

In the next letter, in 1780, \textit{Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord} informed \textit{Royale York de l’Amitié} that the members of the Polish lodge had asked a Petersburg lodge, the lodge of \textit{Discretion}, to apply to the Grand Lodge of England with the request for constitutions. Members of \textit{Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord} sent baron Heyking\textsuperscript{572} to St. Petersburg as their Masonic envoy and entrusted him with the mission of uniting all “English” lodges under the Orient of Sweden, acting against the warnings of the Berlin lodge \textit{Royale York de l’Ametié}.\textsuperscript{573} The Berlin lodge reacted almost immediately. In the letter to the Polish lodge, Berlin brothers emphasized that the Swedish rite practiced by Elagin’s lodges was not ancient and true Freemasonry. They expressed their doubts about legitimacy of the Russian brothers who claimed to work under the guidance of the Grand Lodge of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{570} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 117 (letter from Melissino, \textit{Maistre en Chaire de la loge Discretion} to the Warsaw lodge \textit{Catherine à L’Etoile du Nord} on 15 July 1780): “nous sommes ici professeurs.”
\item \textsuperscript{571} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 135rev. (Minute de la réponse du S.C. des H.S. à la planche à tracer du v-ble Fr de Melessino M-e en Chaire de la V-ble (loge) de la Discrétion à Orient de Petersbourg): “quelques branches parasites.”
\item \textsuperscript{572} Karl Armand Heyking (1752-1809) was born in Mitau but later moved to Warsaw. From 1777 until 1785 he was in Russian military service. When retired, he became a delegate of the Couralnd nobility in Poland. Heyking was a member of two lodges in Vil’no, one lodge in Mitau, the Moscow lodge of Clio, and an unnamed foreign lodge.
\item \textsuperscript{573} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 137rev. (Au T.S. Conseil et Chapitre Modérateur du Temple et des Travaux de la Vble Juste et Parfaite (Ic) la Royale Yorck de l’amitié à l’or de Berlin, 14 September 1780).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
England because Russian brothers practiced high degrees characteristic of the Swedish, not the English, system.\textsuperscript{574}

At the same time, a member of \textit{Catherine à l'Etoile du Nord}, count Poninski, maintained that he would be able to establish legitimate relations with the "Scottish" Directory in Strasburg (which was the high-degree French system).\textsuperscript{575} In February 1780, the opposition between the proponents of different systems within the lodge \textit{Catherine à l'Etoile du Nord} heated up to the degree that counts Heyking and Poninski decided to settle the dispute in a duel. An ultimate act of "unbrotherly love," this duel was "une affaire prophane," as the lodge members had defined later.\textsuperscript{576} Tired of all the "distasteful plots"\textsuperscript{577} and desperate to establish their own National lodge, the Polish lodge sent count Hülsen,\textsuperscript{578} its current Master, on a mission to obtain patents directly from London.\textsuperscript{579}

The Grand Lodge of England received the letter from Count Palatine Hülsen (also known as Count Mscislaw) via the Duke of Manchester, the British ambassador in Paris. Hülsen, who identified himself as resident of Paris at that time, applied for Provincial Grand Mastership of Poland. The list of the members dated 24 September 1779, and attached to his application, contains 35 names, the majority of which belonged to the

\textsuperscript{574} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 148-148rev. (Minute de la lettre du S.E. de la (l) R.Y. au (l) Catherine, on 16 November 1780).
\textsuperscript{575} RGVA, fond 1412k, opis' 1, folder 4860, 47-49rev. (copy of the letter sent to the Grand Lodge of England, 1781).
\textsuperscript{576} RGVA, fond 1412k, folder 4860, 50-55rev. (letters on 26 February 1780 to the Grand Lodge of England, Royale York, and the St. Petersburg lodge of Discretion).
\textsuperscript{577} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 65: "les assertions calomnieuses."
\textsuperscript{578} Count Hülsen was the Polish Minister of Education.
\textsuperscript{579} RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 139rev. (Au T.S. Conseil et Chapitre Modérateur du Temple et des Travaux de la V[enera]ble Juste et Parfaite (lc) la Royale Yorck de l'amitié à l'or de Berlin, 14 September 1780).
highest Polish nobility.\textsuperscript{580} In addition, eight lodges in Poland and Lithuania that worked under Catherine à l’Étoile du Nord were ready to work in the English system. As Michel Brodsky identifies, the titles of the officers of the lodge are alien to the usual practice of the English system and more in tune with high-grade Freemasonry.\textsuperscript{581} Despite the irregularities of Catherine à l’Étoile du Nord’s structure and ritual, the attached letter from Count Melissino, Master of the St. Petersburg lodge of Discretion, dated 18 February 1780, insisted on the urgency of granting a patent of Provincial Grand Master of Poland to count Hülsen. In the hopes that the Polish lodge would receive the patent but would be put under the jurisdiction of the more experienced Provincial Lodge of Russia, Melissino emphasized that

\begin{quote}
... the number of zealous brethren increases from day to day, but they have to suffer a lot from the other Lodges which will not recognize them [as brethren and Freemasons]. Every day comes a proposal to unite their lodge with the grand orient of France, the lodge of the reform of Brunswick (Strict Observance) of Sweden or of Burgundy [a French version of the Scottish rite?] they refuse all accommodation and pretend quite rightly for a warrant from our old English Rite.\textsuperscript{582}
\end{quote}

While Hülsen waited for the decision of the Grand Lodge of England, the fight for influence over the lodge continued. The establishment of the independent Polish Masonic Province was not in the plans of Prussians or Russians. In a twenty-page letter, Royale York called Catherine à l’Étoile du Nord “la loge scandaleuse,”\textsuperscript{583} while the St. Petersburg lodge of Discretion castigated it for insubordination.\textsuperscript{584} In the meantime, the officials of Catherine à l’Étoile du Nord continued to insist that “the true enlightenment

\textsuperscript{580} RGVA, fandel 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 39 (Tableau des freres).
\textsuperscript{581} Brodsky, \textit{English Freemasonry}, 47.
\textsuperscript{582} Brodsky, \textit{English Freemasonry}, 47.
\textsuperscript{583} RGVA, fandel 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 87-89rev.
\textsuperscript{584} RGVA, fandel 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 112 (23 May 1781).
was preserved in the Ancient Metropole of the Society in London.”

The members of the Polish lodge endlessly speculated about the silence of the “Métropole” (the Grand Lodge of England) and attributed it to the possible involvement of the Russians or the general confusion about Polish territories being an independent state.

Hülsen had to wait for his patent until 1783, when the Duke of Manchester delivered it to Paris. However, it was Hülsen’s successor, Count Ignatii (Jan) Potocki (1761-1815), a novelist and printer with extensive connections in France and Prussia, who was able to unite thirteen Polish lodges in an independent Grand Orient for Poland under the French high-grade guidance in 1784.

**Russian Opposition to the Foreign Leadership of the Lodges: Schwarz, Schröder, and Cagliostro**

The feeling of resentment between Russians and foreigners was often mutual and enforced by the actions of both sides. Bitterly commenting on the fortunes of the foreigners who lived and worked in Russia, Baron Reichel pointed out,

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585 RGVA, fond 1412k, opis’ 1, folder 4860, 116: “le vray lumiére conservez en l’ancienne Métropole de la Société à Londres.”
586 RGVA, fond 1412, folder 4860, 198-200. As I established earlier, this was not a unique occurrence. Elgin waited two years for an answer to his letter to the Grand Lodge of England.
587 Jan Potocki is the author of *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1996). He was also the chief architect of the Polish-Prussian Pact of 1790 which ultimately led to the Second Partition of Poland in 1792.
588 The union included four lodges in Warsaw Catherine à l’Etoile du Nord, Sviatini Izidi, Severnogo schita (Tarczy polnocnej); four in Wil’na: Sovershennogo soedinenia (Doskonalej jednosci, die Vollkommene Einigkeit), Revnostnogo litwina (Orliwego litwina, der Eifrage Litauer), Dobrogo pastiria (Der Gute Hirn), and Khrama mudrosti (Kosciola madrosci, der Tempel der Weisheit); three in Poznan’: Uvenchannogo Postoianstva (Statecznosti uwienszonej), Orla belogo and Shkoly mudrosti; one in Duben’ – Sovershennoi tainy (Doskonalej tajemnicy); and one in Grodno – Schastlivogo osvobozhdenia.
If a German distinguished himself by service, he was hated by the entire [Russian] nation, if he remained humble about his success, he was only despised. A bad German could make a fortune [in Russia] but never an honorable one.589

As if in response, Novikov’s magazine Koshelek (The Purse) published an anecdote that allowed the readers to eavesdrop on a conversation of two émigrés: a Frenchman and a German. Both foreigners lament that fate has been unkind by bringing them to Russia and they commiserate with one another. Each has forsaken a career and the privileges that they had at home to become tutors of young Russian nobles. While expressing disdain for their Russian students, the tutors point out that “the difference between a Frenchman and a Russian in the appreciation of the sciences consists entirely in the fact that one undertook the sciences a great deal later than the other.” They also predict that Russia would eventually become the center of Europe’s attention, and in passing admit that, as tutors, they substitute pretensions for knowledge and deceive gullible Russians.590

-- Schwarz

When in 1783 Russian lodges acquired the independent status of the Strict Observance Province and the members of the Harmony lodge quickly drew up an organizational hierarchy of the lodges in Russia, Moscow Freemasons did not seem to have recognized the incongruity of the situation in placing themselves in subordination to some unknown superiors in Berlin. In his letter to St. Petersburg, prince Trubetskoi expressed his joy in Russia’s obtaining a status of an independent province:

589 Barskov, Perepiska, 216-217.
590 [Anonymous], Koshelek (1774), 28-29.
... it was shameful that Russia, occupying a greater part of Europe in its territory, should be dependent on a state smaller than she... with the help of God, Russia is not only a [Masonic] body now but a province, recognized not only by one person but by an entire congress of all provinces. And this... what was made by all the provinces together can be changed neither by the Duke of Brunswick nor by anyone in the world; and insofar as we made the search only for the Russians, so all your effort should be directed toward unifying only Russians; it is not for us to look for foreigners, but they should look for us. Foreigners living in Russia are honored by their union with us, but such unions do not bring any benefit to us. This opinion is necessary so that Russian brothers impress it into their heart and stop trailing after every kind of vagabond, who, being nothing in the order gives themselves for something great.591

The façade of an independent Provincial Grand Chapter was retained for the time being only because it served the important function of appeasing the national pride of the patriotically conscious Masons. Unlike foreign adventurers, the actual leader of the system, Schwarz, was singled out as the person truly devoted to the development of the Craft in Russia.592 When Schwarz died on 17 February 1784, his death was greatly mourned. Invariably, he was praised as the “mentor” and the “shepherd” of Russian Freemasonry.593 Previous Masonic leaders, Elagin or Reichel, did not fully understand the potential power and responsibility that their position as heads of an organizational network composed of semi-secret lodges bestowed upon them. They simply regarded themselves passive transmitters of knowledge that they in vain anticipated would come from their superiors in England, Sweden, or Germany.594 Schwarz, on the contrary, became an embodiment of a Masonic leader. He actively sought and constructed the

591 Barskov, Perеписка, 254-55; NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497 (copies).
592 That “many idle persons travel about the country... under the sanction of certificates, and pretending to be different masons, impose upon the benevolence of many lodges and brethren: the Committee, therefore, wishing to discountenance such practice, as disgraceful to the society and bothersome to the fraternity” was not peculiarly “Russian” problem, see, for instance, At a Quarterly Communication of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, under the constitution of England, 3 (4) (22 November 1786); announcement repeated on 10 April 1793 and 8 May 1793.
593 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 97, Pesnia na smert' Schwarza (Moscow: Lopukhin Printing House. 1784), 4-4rev.
necessary knowledge himself. But even extolling Schwarz's service to Russian Freemasonry, Trubetskoi did not indicate that Schwarz's position was higher than that of any Masonic officer:

... brother Schwarz, who rendered us such great services and was the instrument through which we received everything, was admitted to us in reward for his services, and was made an officer in the province; but except for him, without services similar to his, no foreigner will be allowed into the administration of the province, and thus, my friend, despite everything which Ribases, Rosenbergs, and Frezes, and others like them do.595

Such distinction on the basis of nationality helped to prevent Russian Masons in St. Petersburg from falling into the hands of Schwarz's foreign rivals, such as Ribas,596 the head of the Cadet Corps, who also claimed the possession of genuine Freemasonry. Ribas, who had a lodge at the Military Cadet Corps, also apparently challenged Schwarz by claiming that he possessed genuine Freemasonry.597 In the letters written during the winter of 1783, both Novikov and Trubetskoi mentioned Dr. F. P. Freze as a most reliable candidate, but Trubetskoi classified him as being in the same category with Ribas and Rosenberg as a disgraceful deceiver in a July letter.598

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595 Barskov, *Perеписка*, 255; NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497, 75 (copy of a letter from N. N. Trubetskoi from Moscow to A. A. Rzhevskii in St. Petersburg on 23 July, 1783); also in NIOR RGB, fond 17, folder 6, letter 14.
596 José (Osip Mikhailovich) de Ribas (Deribas) (1749-1800), was born in Naples. In 1772 he entered Russian service during Russo-Turkish wars 1768-1774 as a soldier of fortune, traveled around Europe and participated in the Princess Tarakanova (presumably an illegitimate daughter of Empress Elizabeth and Count Razumovskii) affair. Participated in Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792 and in 1791 became a Counter-Admiral. Ribas was a founder and governor of Odessa, the major Russian port on the Black Sea. Member of the St. Petersburg lodge *Bлаготворительность к пеликану (Mildthatigkeit zum Pelikan)* that worked as the Elinin (English) lodge in 1773-1777, and joined the Reichel union moving to the Swedish system after 1777. As a Freemason, Ribas was very close to the Panin circle. According to Serkov's * Entsiklopedia*, Ribas was also a member of a "French" lodge and the Swedish-system based Kapitul *Feniks*, GARF, fond 1137, opis' 1, folder 78, 40; RGADA, fond 11, folder 1120 (correspondence); RGVA, fond 1412, opis' 1, folder 5297, 34rev; folder 14386, 91rev.
598 Barskov, *Perеписка*, 255; NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 497, 75 (copy of a letter from N. N. Trubetskoi from Moscow to A. A. Rzhevskii in St. Petersburg on 23 July 23, 1783); also in NIOR RGB, fond 17, folder 6, letter 14.
On his part, Elagin was continuously distrustful of Schwarz and considered him a clever manipulator behind the scenes. In a straightforward manner Elagin wrote of Schwarz: "The wanderer Schwartz some time ago asked me for permission to establish a lodge in Mogilev, and was, with my permission, admitted to the fourth degree by P. B. Reichel." 599 Reichel himself did not always approve of Schwarz's activities and even singled out that the state of the secret German press in Russia was "scandalous: by its poor choice of books it was doing more harm than good." 600 Another notebook among Elagin's papers contains an accusation that Schwarz, after collecting "a great sum of money from the Moscow brothers, especially from Tatischev and other wealthy persons, deceived [them]." He went to Carlsbad as their plenipotentiary, and brought "a great deal of meaningless charters and acts, together with the promise to receive further secrets from unknown superiors" from there. As a result, at the expense of the Russians, Schwarz "was able to enrich those unknown foreigners and himself." 601 In the spring of 1785, Elagin lamented:

I am amazed by the blindness of some of the most sensible and enlightened men, learned not just in the science of Freemasonry but in the secular sciences, and in particular the moral sciences. By what fate did they become seduced? How, if they regarded our old teachings as unimportant, or a meaningless waste of time, can anyone with healthy common sense understand the condescension they showed in accepting the new... exclusively relying upon the promises of persons unknown to them, living in unknown places. How could they subordinate themselves to strict regulations of such a leadership which, except for some moralizing admonitions, revealed no secret whatever to them? ... But who knows if these Carlsbad pundits themselves know the first precepts of our holy and ancient science? ... Who knows whether they, even if the truth were known to them, which you doubt, would transmit it to the society of our Russian brothers without money, because, as far as I hear and can gather, all their traditions are nothing but papers printed on parchments in big letters with the signature of the

599 Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 102.
600 Barskov, Perepiska, 218. On publishing activities of Freemasons in Russia, see Chapter 5.
601 Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia, 102.
unknown persons... All these, for a great deal of money, they send into the province generously, instructing in addition that all the money collected in the prefectures from the individual lodges should not be spent without the permission from above... In addition, these superiors command [the Moscow Masonry] to exercise constantly in the reading of the Old and New Testaments. This command is holy and it should be fulfilled, but if they do not provide any key to understanding of the Holy Scripture, ... then it is clear that they are not masons, but fanatics, or false devotees who undertook to render the persons under their power incapable of thinking.\textsuperscript{602}

Elagin also believed that “the German students [of Freemasonry]” only diverted their Russian brothers from “the true path.” Those Russians who “have been in enlightenment for some time” should preclude Germans from “putting the dark band over out eyes and guiding us from one unfamiliar place to another!” He was concerned that the deceived brothers did not receive any knowledge from the deceivers. What they received was not “useful for the people, society, fatherland, and the Emperor.”\textsuperscript{603} As a result of these considerations, Elagin started wondering whether it was a Jesuit conspiracy\textsuperscript{604} that stood behind the activities of many “German students” and especially of Schwarz:

Isn’t this [the system that Schwarz organized in Russia] really a reaching of the extinct Jesuit Order? The power, unlimited but hidden from the brothers, testifies to it... In it, establishment of schools is ordered on condition that the readers come from the brotherly society, similar to those Jesuit schools out of which came Voltaire or Raval’iaks [sic]. In it one is advised above all to take measures so that the brothers who are known as notables in society could take part in the education of young rulers and [be stationed] at the court.\textsuperscript{605}

\textsuperscript{602} Pekarskii, \textit{Dopolneniya}, 102-103.
\textsuperscript{603} It is not clear why Elagin mentioned “Emperor,” not “Empress.” Pekarskii, \textit{Dopolneniya}, 113: Nas-li, v prosvescheniyu uzhe davno byvshikh ... nalozhiv mrachnu na glaza nashi poviazku vodit’ iz odnogo v drugoe nevedomoe mesto! Chto novago prel’schennym nashim brat’iam oni otkryli? Chto otkryli im poleznoe dla nas, dla obschestva, dla otechestva, dla Gosudaria nashego?
\textsuperscript{604} On the eighteenth-century conspiracy theories and their interconnections, see Steven Luckert, “Jesuits, Freemasons, Illuminati, and Jacobins: Conspiracy theories, secret societies, and politics in late eighteenth-century Germany” (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1993).
\textsuperscript{605} Pekarskii, \textit{Dopolneniya}, 103-104. Elagin was not the only one who connected the Rosicrucians with the Jesuits. At the same time, in Germany, Nikolai was especially vocal in his accusations against the Rosicrucians as paid agents of the Jesuit underground network.
In the 1780s, the idea of the Illuminati conspiracy against Christian faith and speculations about their possible connections to Masonic lodges became a common theme throughout Europe, and it is not surprising that activities of Schwarz, a

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Russian knowledge of the Illuminati was actively shaped by the information received from foreign lodges. Thus, Schröder announced the beginning of the sīlanum (a period of temporary “silence” when all the correspondence and all the official work of the organization are supposed to suspend their activity) because of the fear of the Illuminati. The sīlanum disrupted the work of the majority of lodges in Russia in 1784. Schröder’s superiors in Berlin enforced the interruption of all the correspondence, internal and external, by the end of 1786 (Longinov, *Novikov i moskovskie martynisty*, 088, 0135). In a circular letter from a German lodge received around 1787, Illuminati were identified as

... a very harmful sect opposing the Kingdom of Christ and the true Order... they are trying to catch the souls by any available means and distract them [souls] from the true Christian Religion and destroy all the connections necessary for the pious order in societies that requires love and loyalty to Rules and authorities; and want to instill the evil aspiration to unlimited independence from the secular and spiritual.

Russian Freemasons invariably were advised “to oppose this enemy.” (NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 458, 2-3. Copy of the letter made in the 1830s, the letter is dated 1787. Another copy is in NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 77, 117-119. Possibly a part of *die Einige Originalschriften des Illuminatenordens, welche bey dem gewesenen Regierungsrath Zwack durch vorgenommene Hausvisitation zu Landshut den 11 und 12 oct. 1786 vorgefunden worden. Auf höchsten Befehl Seiner Churfurstlichen Durchlaucht zum Druck befördert München 1787*: “Nachtrag von Originalschriften, welche die Illuminatensekte überhaupt, sonderbar aber... Adam Weishaupt... betreffen” (München, 1787). As Maksim Nevzorov, a Russian Mason sent abroad by the Moscow circle to study medicine indicated, Lopukhin urged him and his friend to avoid any introduction to enter unknown foreign lodges because these lodges could be “debauched and corrupt.” Nevzorov insisted that he had followed this advice, and in 1791 when he was approached with a proposition to enter the lodge lead by a “reputable Professor and poet Bürger” in Göttingen, he refused. Later he, to his dismay, learned that the Grand Master Professor Bürger “made a speech in support of the French equality.” Presumably, after Lopukhin’s recommendation not to go to the revolutionary Paris, the two Russian students followed the advice. However, in Russia it was rumored that they “were in Paris... and were among the Russian deputies to the French National Assembly with congratulations to the French on their revolutionary deeds” (OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 24, 16-16rev. (letter from M. I. Nevzorov to O. A. Pozdeev on 23 June 1817, Moscow). On their arrival to Russia, Masonic students were interrogated on Catherine’s orders about “the French revolution, this horrible result of the blood-thirsty
foreigner at the very top of Masonic hierarchy who was very closely involved with foreigners abroad and in Russia, fed the rumors. In his memoirs, German Pastor Wigand, Schwarz’s associate at Moscow University, on the whole spoke highly of Schwarz. But he also made an assumption that Schwarz had been sent to Russia by Prussian secret societies specifically to annihilate Christian faith under the banner of high-grade Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism:

The leader of this society, Professor Schwarz, showed me full confidence and revealed to me the hidden purpose of the society, aiming at nothing else but the subversion of the Orthodox faith in Russia; I advised him to act more cautiously, to abandon mysticism, and not to mix his own aims with the aims of the enlightened philosophy [and politics], against which our benevolent teachers and mentors Freemasons went with their teaching, examples, and all establishments went…” (OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 24, 17 (letter from M. I. Nezvoro to O. A. Pozdeev on 23 June 1817, Moscow). Correspondence reflecting Russian Freemasons’ concern about Nezvoro and Kolokol’nikov’s safety during events in France, copies in NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, letters from Lopukhin in Moscow to Kutuzov in Berlin on 5 December 1790 and 7 November 1790. Published in Barskov, Perepiska, 5-6, 29, 99, 108, 197, 199, and in “Russkii vol’nodumtsy v tsarstvovani Ekaterni II. Sekretno-vskritiaia perepiska (1790-95),” Russkaiia starina 9 (1874), 57-72, 258-276, 465-72; continued in “Tovarischii i pentsy N. I. Novikova (ikh vzaimnaiia perepiska),” Russkaiia starina 88 (October, November, December 1896): 321-365).

Lopukhin was terrified by the revolutionary events in France no less than the Russian authorities were. He writes, “[the devil], via the so-called philosophes, prepares minds of the French to overthrow the religion, and when he succeeded in this, he blinded their reason to overthrow the power of the king…” (“diavol’ priugotovliaet umi frantsuzov chrez tak nazivaemykh filosofov k nizverzhenu s sebia religii, i kogda emu eto udaloso’, to on osleplil ikh um k nizverzhenu vlasti tsarskoi”) (NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 88 (letter from Trubetskoi in Moscow to Kutuzov in Berlin, no date); published in Barskov, Perepiska, 5-6, 29, 99, 108, 197, 199, and in “Russkii vol’nodumtsy v tsarstvovani Ekaterni II. Sekretno-vskritiaia perepiska (1790-95),” Russkaiia starina 9 (1874), 57-72, 258-276, 465-72; continued in “Tovarischii i pentsy N. I. Novikova,” 321-365).

While the majority of the members of the Moscow circle considered Schwarz as a saint, the rhetoric of the lodge of Trekh znamen testifies that Schwarz was “stern, gloomy, very strict, never laughed; even his smile was forced and artificial… In addition to that he was [a] secretive [person] and, as I believe, a clever hypocrite. This person was, in fact, a despot, who did not tolerate any opposition or doubt… He never lost sight of Freemasonry’s goal, and used all the means available to him indiscriminately to reach this goal.” “… surov, sumrachen, ochen’ strogo, nikogda ne smeialia; dazhe ulybka ego byla prinuzhdennoi i neestestvennyoi… Ko vsemu etomu on byl skryten, i, ia smee dumat’, chto eto byl iskusnii litsemer. Eto chelovek byl, v sobstvennom smisle slova, despot, ne terpevshii nikakogo protivorechiia ili somnenii…

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608 Johann Wigand (1744-1808), German pastor and a Herrnhuter, arrived in Russia as a tutor, moving in 1782 to the professorship at Moscow University where he taught history (V. V. Timoschuk, “Pastor Wigand. Ego zhizn’ i deiatel’nost’” (1744-1808), Russkaiia starina 74, no. 6 (1892), 561-562.
community [Herrnhutter community], so that they would not hurt each other. In regard to religious reform, Schwarz had already progressed very far and his plan was near accomplishment, but his extraordinary labors soon brought him the ordeal of sickness; I visited him every day, and he always asked me to talk about the Savior to him, but we could not speak freely, since Freemasons were always eavesdropping on us, fearing lest under the influence of a spiritual mood so new to him, he might give away their secrets. I also tried to avoid this [awkward situation] in every way, but once he spoke out that “this is a diabolical order and that if the Lord sends him the cure, then he will join the community [Herrnhutters’].”

-- Schröder

In any Masonic rite, a hierarchy built in a pyramid-like fashion -- with the Grand Lodge (or, depending on the system, Landesloge or Grande Loge Nationale) at the top, mother-lodges following, and regular lodges connected with each other by horizontal ties of brotherhood love and recognition – placed special significance on the figures of Masonic officials. If the lodge of Perfect Union, the Baltic and the Polish lodges, which all had predominantly foreign membership, refused to come under the authority of the Russian Grand Master, the most significant opposition between a foreign leader at the top of Masonic hierarchy and his Russian subordinates was the case of Baron Schröder.

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609 The roots of the United Brethren (Moravian, Herrnhutter) movement go back to the fifteenth-century religious movement of the Bohemian and Moravian brethren, the followers of which founded the Herrnhut community. Zinzendorf revived the movement in the eighteenth century. In the Baltic provinces, the Brethren were active since 1739. In Russia, the Herrnhut brethren were officially permitted to live and establish colonies since 1763. Catherine the Great signed the permission on 22 December 1763, and received Exposition de l’origine, de la doctrine, des constitutions, usages et cérémonies ecclésiastiques de l’Église de l’Unité des Frères Evangéliques as a gift from the community. In 1765, in provincial Saratov region there was established a colony of German-speaking herrnhutters that received a name of Sarepta. In general, one of the characteristic features of the Herrnhutter movement was active missionary work. The success of the Herrnhuter missionaries depended largely on the support of the local Lutheran clergy and German expatriates. The Brethren did not set up an independent church in Russia, remaining, according to their leaders’ wishes, within the framework of the Lutheran Church. Most of the Herrnhuter missionaries arrived in Russia by the end of the eighteenth century, preparing the ground for the extensive religious awakening. The history of the Herrnhutter community in Russia is yet to be written.

610 Cited and translated in In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 90.

611 Baron Heinrich-Jacob von Schröder (1757-1797), a captain in Prussia in 1778, entered Russian service in 1783. After being dismissed from the service in 1784, he lived in Berlin. In 1786 Schröder returned to Russia. In his diary, he indicates that he was initiated into Freemasonry in Rostok’s lodge of Three Stars
and the Moscow Masonic circle. Until his death in 1784, Schwarz was indisputably the administrative and intellectual leader of the union of Russian lodges under the guidance of the Moscow circle. His death coincided with the beginning of the divide between Moscow and St. Petersburg Freemasons and brought about significant problems in leadership. Schröder, the new Masonic leader who was an acquaintance of Schwarz, was sent from Berlin to replace him. As Schröder described in the letter to N. N. Trubetskoi on 16 January 1792, he arrived in Russia not to make himself rich with the Russian money... but to sacrifice [his] body and life to your [Russian] fatherland.” He also claimed that while his initial intention was to serve Russia as a soldier, it was the late Schwarz who

... upon long-term efforts, against my will, diverted me from this path, for which I am eternally grateful to him. Of course, he [Schwarz] did not think that I would become as unhappy as I did, that I would lose my health, my honor, and what remained of my possessions, and would subject myself to the danger of begging... 612

The letter of introduction which arrived with Schröder and was signed by Theden, focused on his role as a curator of the work in German language, with Lopukhin presiding over Russian brothers. 613 However, soon Schröder became the nominal leader of Rosicrucians (and all Masons under them) in Russia. While a secret head of the

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612 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 131ff (translation of the letter from Schröder to N. Trubeskoi on 16 January 1792):

[Nle priekhal ia v Rossiu v namereni obogatit’ sebia rossiiskimi den’gami... no priekhal ia c tem, chtoby pozhevtvovat’ vashemu otechestvu telom i zhizniu... Schwarz, po dolgovremennomu usil’stvovanu protiv moei voli, ovtlek menia ot sego puti, za cto ia emu dolzhen blagodarit’ esche v vechnosti. On konechno ne dumal, chto sdelans’ stol’ ne schastlivim [sic] kakovim ia sdelalsia, chto lishus’ zdrov’ia, chesti i ostatka moego imeni ia i podvergnu sebia opasnosti prosit’ milostnymi!]

613 Theden’s letter in Russian is in NIOR RGB, fond 237, cardboard 33, folder 10, 1-6; published in Russkii vestnik 8 (1864), 396-97.
Moscow Masonic circle and the official leader of the Strict Observance system in Russia, Schröder was at the same time an envoy of the Berlin Rosicrucians, instrumental in the distancing of the Moscow circle from Duke Ferdinand and Strict Observance.⁶¹⁴

Schröder’s diary is an essential source that documents the tensions that arose between German Masonic superiors and their Russian followers. From the diary, it follows that Schröder’s attachment to his Russian friends was an obstacle from the point of view of the Berlin Rosicrucians. Schröder recorded Wöllner’s words concerning his disappointment in Russian brothers: “God took Schwarz too early for the Russian brothers because B[aron] v[on] Schröder is zealous and energetic but too kind. He knows the Russian nation so little. I wish he were better acquainted with Russian names.”⁶¹⁵ Schröder needed to be instructed not only about Russian surnames. His superiors tried every means to awaken in him anti-Russian sentiments and warn him against being too open-minded with his Russian charges. From the beginning, Schröder was instructed to “tell the Russians that they should simply become pious people and relinquish leadership” and “explain clearly to the Russians that the superiors of the order can restore health with their shadow, and can say as well as the apostles, “rise from among the dead” when they find it in accordance with God’s plan.”⁶¹⁶ Schröder wrote in his diary, recalling his conversation with Wöllner and mixing his own ideas with those of Wöllner:

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⁶¹⁴ NIOR RGB, fond 237, cardboard 33, folder 10, 1-6 (letter from Theden (from Berlin?) to Tatischev, Moscow, 1784). The Moscow Directory was established on 30 April 1784.

⁶¹⁵ Printed in Barskov, Perepiska, 215-234: 221. A German-language copy of the diary of Schröder is in Elagin’s papers in RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, part 4. It was also partly published as “Dnevnik Barona Shredera,” in Barskov, Perepiska, 215-234 and as “Dnevnik neizvestnogo nemtsa-rozenkreitsera” in Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 76-91. Pekarskii’s version is the earlier of the two, and is incomplete, with several mistranslated places.

⁶¹⁶ Barskov, Perepiska, 223 and 228.
We should not introduce the brothers in the Theoretical degree into the mystical degrees too eagerly so that we may never have to answer for their souls. The Russian people are inclined to all sorts of extremes, and my position is more critical than my enthusiasm for them allows realizing. I should not trust them [the Russians]; they are a treacherous nation like the French. The more aristocratic, the more indolent and corrupt they are. They hate every German and they never loved me either. Wöllner knows them better.617

A member of Wöllner’s coterie, Simson, “regards them [the Russians] as always false.” Wöllner told Schröder to fear “that you will become their [the Russians’] victim because you are and always will remain a German and a canaille in the eyes of that nation.”618 In another conversation reported in Schröder’s diary, the author stated:

No land received so much and such swift benefit from the Order as R[ussia]. If these seigneurs-princes [sic] would only realize and recognize this, they would soon renounce their earthly pride and begin to lend a helping hand. Otherwise, we cannot go on. S[chwarz]’s experience proves this. He died within a couple of years and they will think that a German must always die like a dog before them. No, with you young man, I do not give up; I am only a muzhik and they are grand seigneurs.619

The frequent references to the “haughtiness” and “treachery” of the Russians in Schröder’s diary indicate that wealthy Russian aristocrats offered a lot more of a resistance to Wöllner’s attempts to subjugate them to the command of the “unknown superiors” of the Order. Wöllner’s group went to such extremes in their anti-Russian invective that Schröder, who seems to have had genuine good will towards his Masonic friends in Russia, was provoked to comment:

[i]t is an injustice to the Russians when one blames them for a hatred of foreigners and Germans imbibed through mother’s milk... Pride and haughtiness rule the entire world; one man despises another; why should one expect all the good things from the Russians alone?620

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617 Barskov, Perepiska, 223.
618 Barskov, Perepiska, 227.
619 Barskov, Perepiska, 229.
620 Barskov, Perepiska, 229.
Schröder’s reference to the “treachery” of the Russians is indicative of his eventual disappointment about his life in Russia. As Novikov testified during the trial, Schröder put 3500 rubles for the foundation of the Moscow Printing Company in 1784.\textsuperscript{621} He was the only foreigner among fourteen founding members of the Printing Society, some of whom were accepted without any investment. In 1785, the circle bought a spacious house in Schröder’s name (and as the baron claimed later, with his money) which could, after substantial renovations, accommodate several Masonry-related enterprises. When Schröder decided not to proceed with the deal and asked his Russian brothers to return his share of investment, he was refused after several rounds of unsuccessful negotiations with Novikov. This led Schröder to a complete financial ruin. He claimed that he spent nearly all of his inheritance to buy the house and, as a citizen of Russian Empire, avoid being called a “foreign deceiver.”\textsuperscript{622} As baron explained in the letters to his Russian associates, he had also sold his family jewels to take care of the Masonic drugstore in Moscow.\textsuperscript{623} After Schröder left Russia in 1787, he continued sending letters with Kutuzov’s mail. The letters are full of pleas for money.\textsuperscript{624} Schröder insistently blamed Novikov for his misfortunes, and still intended to be useful to his

\textsuperscript{621} Novikov, \textit{Izbrannye sochineniia}, 618ff. On Printing Company (\textit{Tipographiceskaia Komnaniia}), its educational activities, and guidance from Berlin, see Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{622} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 132rev. (letter to N. Trubeskoi on 16 January 1792): “Frenkel’ znaet, chto ia na tot konets kupil dom, chtoby ne schitali menia inostrannym obmanschikom i chtoby sluzhit’ suschestvennee ordenu.”

\textsuperscript{623} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 135rev. (letter to N. Trubeskoi on 16 January 1792)

\textsuperscript{624} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, contains two letters from Schröder to P. Tatischev, probably the richest person in the Novikov circle, on pages 36-45rev; 47-47rev. and two letters from to N. Trubeskoi: on 24 December 1791 (page 126rev.) and 16 January 1792 (pages 130-135rev.).
Moscow friends by the only means available to him: translation of “useful” books from German into Russian.\textsuperscript{625}

--- Cagliostro

Confusion and speculations about the “real” goals of the secret society of Freemasons developed in the situation when foreign Freemasons became part and parcel of the parade of distinguished philosophers and opportunistic crackpots who traveled to Russia because they believed or pretended to believe that as Voltaire put it, “reason was coming from the North.”\textsuperscript{626} A sense of puzzlement and mystery was associated with the country, which did not fit into a nascent Western mental geography. This contributed to the development of a peculiar trend in Masonic mythology that viewed Russia as a special destination because of the belief that Freemasons’ predecessors

\begin{quote}
... brought the knowledge from the East,
And as they made the nations yield,
They spread it thro’ the North and West,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{625} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 126rev. (letter to N. Trubetskoi on 24 December 1791). Schröder proposes his services as a translator in exchange for money. He suggests that the books, money, and translations to be sent via the Nürnberg merchants who have an extensive trade with Moscow.


Masonic pretenders were not a specifically Russian problem. Masonic communications of many systems in European countries are peppered with warnings about frauds of non-Masons who wanted to gain access to the funds of Masonic charity. See, for instance, “Quarterly communication of the most ancient and honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, under the Constitution of England,” 3 (22 November 1786): “In consequence of information having been given to the Committee of Charity, that many idle persons travel about the country (some particularly in the dresses of Turks or moors.), and, under the sanction of certificates, and pretending to be different masons, impose upon the benevolence of many lodges and brethren.” The same announcement is reiterated on 10 April 1793 and 8 May 1793.

In general, by the end of the 1780s, an array of charlatans who presented themselves as wise men appeared in Russia. The Freemasons and the Russian educated society as a whole faced the steady flow of charlatans of all sorts. For instance, one Russian Mason tells a story of meeting with Khariton Tsitseronov[nia], a Greek who claimed to be a Rosicrucian, in 1786 in his memoirs (NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 90 (M. 1967), II, 19-19rev. Mentioned in Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 155). In another instance, Novikov writes to A. Rzhevskii in St. Petersburg celebrating the fact that Moscow Freemasons “finally got rid of all charlatanism and will free themselves from the occasionally self-interested, occasionally ambitious, and occasionally erroneous aspects of certain brothers” (Barskov, \textit{Perеписка}, 241).
And taught the World the art to build.  

Situated in the East and in the North, Russia fitted the description, and Russian Freemasons only reinforced the image of Russia as a possible new East. In an ode devoted to the 1782 inauguration ceremony of the Friendly Learned Society\textsuperscript{628} aimed at education of the Russian public and directed by Freemasons, an unknown Russian poet proclaimed:

She [Russia] is restored by Peter,  
She is revived by Catherine,  
She soars in zenith with her eagle,  
And aims at Sun after him;  
The whole universe will be amazed,  
And will see an east in the north!\textsuperscript{629}

\textsuperscript{627} RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 254 (1), 352. The reference is made in \textit{The Book of Constitutions} (1767) transferred to I. P. Elgin when he was appointed the Provincial Grand Master of Russia. As William Hutchinson, \textit{The Spirit of Masonry in Moral and Elucidatory Lectures}, 147, establishes, the notion of East had a special significance to those Freemasons who correlated Freemasonry and Christianity:

We Masons profess that we are pilgrims in progression from the east. The Almighty planted the garden in the east, wherein he placed the perfection of human nature, the first man full of innocence and divine knowledge, and full of honour, even bearing the image of God. Learning had its first progression from the east after the flood. In regard to the doctrine of our Savior and the Christian revelation, it proceeded from the east. The star which proclaimed the birth of the Son of God, appeared in the east. The east was an expression used by the prophets to denote the Redeemer.

\textsuperscript{628} On the Friendly Learned Society and its relations with Moscow Masonic circle, see Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{629} Printed in M. Poludenskii, “Materialy dlia istorii Druzheskogo Obschestva: 1782 g.,” \textit{Ruskii archiv}, book 3, (Moscow, 1863), 215:

\begin{verbatim}
Petrom ona vosstanovlena
Ekaterinoi ozhivlena,
V zenit s orlom svoim parit,
I k solntsu v sled za nim stremitsia;
Ie vsia vsejenlennu udivitsia,
I v severe vostok uzritel

In a Russian lodge song Freemasons assert that
... The Darkness is deep in the west,
If the sun does not rise;
Receiving a ray of light from the East,
You [wardens of the lodge] pour light on us.
\end{verbatim}

OPI GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 1179, 18rev. (A Collection of Masonic Songs in Russian, watermarks 1819): “... T’ma na zapade gluboka, Eslil solntse ne vzoidet; Luch priemlia ot Vostoka, Vi na nas liete svet.” It is in Russia that “the Brothers were revived with this feeling [of Masonic love], and built a temple in the North.” OPI GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 1179, 33rev. (A Collection of Masonic Songs in Russian, watermarks 1819): “Sim chuvasvom brat’ia ozhivlenny, Na Severe vozdvigli khram; Premudrost’ est’ ikh tsel’ sviaschennuy, Lubov’ i druzhba fimiam.”
On the one hand, Russia ought to be in the West in that, like European countries, it was an heir to the traditions of Christianity, and after Peter’s reforms it has been a participant in the Western path of cultural development. Yet, it was not Western enough. located predominantly in Asia, it was mystical and authoritarian in its approach to religion, and despotic in its governance. However, it was not quite the East either.

Several dubious public affairs involving foreign Freemasons who claimed to bring light to Russia or were searching for the secret knowledge in Russia affected Freemasonry’s public image and influenced the development of the Craft in the second half of the eighteenth century. Count Giuseppe Balsamo Cagliostro’s visit contributed immensely to the growing identification of Freemasonry with shady machinations, alchemy, and magic. Cagliostro, the founder of the Egyptian rite, visited St. Petersburg and the Baltic provinces in 1779-90. Elisa von der Recke, lady-in-waiting to Catherine II, for several years had carried on a rather polemical correspondence with Johann Kaspar Lavater on physiognomic questions and views on religion and was the

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630 Masonic lodges were among many eighteenth-century societies interested in mysticism and occultism. But Freemasonry cannot be directly identified with them. As In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 112, points out, many of most effective proponents of esoteric doctrines, including Swedenborg, Saint-Martin, and Lavater, preferred to operate outside the organized Masonic systems and found other vehicles for the transmission of their doctrines. Others, such as count Zinzendorf and Saint-Martin’s mentor Martinez de Pasquales, succeeded in organizing their followers into special orders close to Masonic circles (H. Schneider, Quest for Mysteries: The Masonic Background for Literature in Eighteenth-Century Germany (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1947), 107.

631 Cagliostro founded the so-called Egyptian rite of Freemasonry around 1776 and adopted the title of the rite’s Grand Kophta. He claimed that his life in Egypt, association with the Temple-priests, and his initiation into some of the Egyptian mysteries allowed him to create a system for moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind. Egyptian rite was open to women.

632 On Cagliostro’s visit to Eastern Europe, see V. Zotov, “Cagliostro, ego zhizn’ i visit v Rossii,” Russkaya starina 12 (1875), 64ff; B. Ivanov, “Cagliostro in Eastern Europe (Kurland, Russia and Poland),” AQC 11 (1927): 45-80. In the diaries of the contemporaries connected to Freemasonry: A. M. Gribovskii, Vospominaniia i dnevniiki (Moscow, 1899); Khrapovitskii, Dnevnik Krapovitskago; Lopukhin, Zapiski; Baron Karl Heinrich Heyking, Aus Polenz und Kurlands, letzten Tagen, Memoren des Baron Karl Heinrich Heyking (Berlin, 1897).

633 Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801) was a poet, physiognomist, and author of influential Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe (1775-1778).
first among those who attempted to unmask Cagliostro for the Russian-speaking audience. She considered Cagliostro a dangerous swindler who played on the superstitious and impressionable minds of Russians trusting in the knowledge and the Masonic expertise of the foreigners. As von Recke pointed out in her *Nachricht von der beruechtigen Cagliostro* (1779), Cagliostro’s trip to Russia was well planned. She insisted that the main reason for his stay in Courland was acquiring the necessary connections and preparing the ground for his visit to St. Petersburg where he hoped to interest the Empress in his Egyptian Masonry and get her protection and support for it. According to Recke, in Mitau Cagliostro became close to several prominent persons, and especially a local Masonic leader Graf von der Hoven, who provided him with the letter of introduction to the Freemasons in Russia, more specifically to Baron Henry Charles von Heyking in St. Petersburg.

The adventurer arrived in St. Petersburg in the fall of 1779 and stayed there until April 1780. His first visit in the capital was to Heyking, to whom he had a warm letter of introduction from von Howen. Heyking, Major of a Russian Guards regiment, was a high-degree Mason in the Strict Observance system, who prided himself on his education.

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636 This is the same baron Heyking who propagated a close relationship between Russian and Polish lodges.
in materialistic philosophy. He met Cagliostro with certain hostility, especially after
Cagliostro’s announcements about his grandiose mission in Russia and expressions of
hope to reach it with Catherine’s patronage:

I am delighted to see the Great Catherine, this Semiramis of the North, and to
spread the great Light here [in Russia] openly. Educated in the pyramids of
Egypt, I have learned there the “occult” sciences and am the Grand Master of the
Roscicrucons.638

Not all Freemasons in Russia were skeptical of Cagliostro and his
performances.639 Despite the unfavorable characterization given to Cagliostro by Baron
Heyking, the adventurer seemed to have soon acquired quite a number of influential
friends in St. Petersburg, leading Masons searching for “higher Masonic knowledge,”
including Elagin, Melissin, and Count Alexander Stroganov.640 In his memoirs, for
instance, Baron Schröder reports that Elagin enthusiastically supported the adventurer
because he “wanted to learn from Cagliostro how to make gold. The latter promised to

638 Heyking. Memoren, 223ff:
... ich [Cagliostro] bin gegommen, um die große Katharina, diese Semiramis des Nordens, zu sehen
und um das große Licht hier im Offen zu verbreiten. Erzogen in den Pyramiden Ägyptens, habe ich
dort die “okkulten” Wissenschaften erlernt und bin der Chef der Fürsten [rose]Cruciocian.

639 A. F. Moshchinskii, Kalloistr pozannyaiy v Varshave, ili Dostovernoe opisanie khimicheskikh i
magichekikh ego deistviei protivodmykh v sem stolichnom gorode v 1780 (Moscow: Senatskaia
Tipografia, 1788); Professor Gilbo Alkhimist bez maski, ili otkrytoi obman umovobrachatel’nago
zlatodelantia (Moscow: Universitetskaia Tipografia, 1789); Karmanna knizhka, dlia
raznoshitelshikh lunoshei, sluchashchiala priiatnomu i poleznomu ikh uprazhneniiu (Moscow:
Gubernskia Tipografia, 1800), 339-51; and the Russian comedy by N. F. Emin, Mnymyi mudrets (St.
Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1786). The fashionable curiosity for mysticism and magic
that were significant among Freemasons was touched upon in A. I. Klushin’s play “Alkimist,” in
Russkaia komedia i komicheskaiia opera XVIII veka, ed. P. N. Berkov (Moscow-Leningrad: Iskusstvo,
1950), 465-83. Other critical and satirical works include Mops bez osheinika i bez tsiepi ili Svobodnoe i
tochne okrytie tainstv obschhestva imenuishchagosia Mopsami (St. Petersburg: Christopher Henning,
1784), which was a translation of a part of G. L. Perau’s L’ordre des francs-macons trahi, et le secret de
Mopses revele. Among famous non-Russian critiques of Cagliostro as a charlatan, see Goethe, Italienische
Reise (1816).

640 When William Tooke defines the notion of “dervish,” he uses examples of men “of the same class and
brotherhood with a St. Germain, a Schroepfer, a Dr. Graeme, a Cagliostro, or, which is the same thing to
me, the Armenian in Schiller’s spirit-seer... These gentlemen (whose aim, as is well known, is solely
directed to the ennobling of human nature as well as stones and metals, and which has already been
declared by the Rosencreutzians...) have formed ... a kind of invisible church or republic” and used many
means to “entice proselytes,” in [Anon.], “Whether There be Means for Prolonging Human Life far
send him all the necessary ingredients from Poland, but never did.”641 The nature of the
relations between Cagliostro and Elagin was also corroborated in a pamphlet published
by Andrei Krivtsov, Elagin’s secretary. Krivtsov considered Cagliostro to be “a vulgar
and ignorant charlatan” and ended up hitting Cagliostro in the face after learning that
Cagliostro had obtained a considerable sum of money from Elagin.”642

Given that Elagin always cautioned his followers against being deceived by
foreign adventurers who styled themselves as adepts of mysticism, his involvement with
Cagliostro is peculiar. As it is clear from his diary and the remnants of the manuscript
library, a perusal of Masonic documents which Elagin collected over the years of his
involvement with the Craft, led him to believe that “Freemasonry, judging by its ancient
origin, its spread from people to people, the respect it gained from all enlightened
languages, must contain something superb and beneficial to mankind.” “What this
something is,” he concluded, “cannot be understood without a key.”643

While Elagin expected to establish an alchemical laboratory or find a “key” to
Masonic knowledge with Cagliostro’s help, other Russian aristocrats hoped to receive a
cure from him. The pamphlet, Ein Paar Tropflein aus dem Brunnen der Wahrheit
ausgegossen, published in Frankfurt in 1781 reports that while in St. Petersburg,
Cagliostro cured assessor Ivan Isleniev when all hope had been abandoned by the doctors
and that this cure was recorded by a special certificate given to Cagliostro. Chevalier de
Corberon, a French chargé d’affaires in Russia, made the following entry in his diary on
2 July 1781: “At St. Petersburg, Cagliostro cured Baron Stroganov, who had attacks of

641 Cited in Pekarskii, Dopolneniia, 78.
642 A. Viedemeier, Dvor i zamechatel’nie ludi v Russii vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka (St. Petersburg,
1846), 196-198.
643 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, Elagin papers, 105; Elagin, “Zapiska.” 597.
lunacy, caused by his nerves, Yelaguin [sic], Mme. Bouteurlin, etc.," and remarked with cutting irony that "Cagliostro cured, not everybody, but many." 644

In popular imagination, Russia’s Westernization and dissemination of Freemasonry went hand in hand. Before the first Freemasons appeared in Russia, the country was in the darkness, and the beginning of Westernization, in Masonic philosophy came to signify the rebirth as the moment of conversion and the subsequent spirituality. To remedy Russia’s problems, Freemasons endeavored to educate its people about the value of “Light” by employing the means of private education and moral instruction; development of free associations; and propagating access to the secrets of Nature, removal of social disabilities and distance limitations, and ministry to the sick and injured. In the world of uncertainty, Freemasonry offered hope of enlightenment, tolerance, and reason and provided a potential solution to the world’s unbalanced and sick moral and social state. It created a sense of order for the world. Without downplaying the practical side of Masonic association, with lodges being a part of social networks of support and patronage, there is no doubt that among the prime motives which drove many Masonic associates into Freemasonry was a genuine concern for Russia’s moral wellbeing and the proliferation of the Craft. In Russia, participation in Freemasonry was justified by the rhetoric of fulfilling the mission of reforming the country by the means of education and “enlightenment.” Masonic rhetoric of the

644 Corberon, *Journal intime*, I, 105ff. Corberon’s diary makes it clear that not only Russians but also foreign dignitaries visiting or residing in Russia, Count Lassy, Count von Brühl, Prince of Anhalt, and Prince Henry of Prussia, all were involved in Freemasonry and interested in Cagliostro’s affairs and gold-making. Corberon mentions Freemasonry a lot. These allusions to Freemasonry were edited out of the two volume published edition. But the electronic “Journal (Paris-St. Pétersbourg-Paris: 1775-1781),” Édition électronique, texte produit et réalisé par Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire et Dominique Taurisson, édité par Éric-Olivier Lochard selon la méthodologie Arcane, URL: [http://melior.univ-montp3.fr/col/egeDoc/Corberon/PageAccueil.htm](http://melior.univ-montp3.fr/col/egeDoc/Corberon/PageAccueil.htm) (last visited on 27 February 2007) has a more extended version. This point comes from Margaret Jacob.
universal conflict between light and darkness reflected the idea of “enlightening” 
Russia’s people. Not directly related to the efforts of the state in educating its 
subjects and modernizing the country, Freemasonry provided a unique outlet for unified 
individual action in the country where the private sphere was in a rudimentary state. This 
made Freemasonry alien to the majority of the Russian population and, with time, 
inevitably suspicious to the authorities.

While the differences in national allegiances were enforced by foreigners, and preventive involvement of the authorities crippled their effort, as I establish in the next chapter, Freemasons’ activities brought about a shift in consciousness that implied a strengthened emphasis on national identity and patriotism with broader rethinking of self-identity and national interests. For many Freemasons in Russia, making sense of this confusion and creating their own theories became a matter of rethinking their own place in Europe. Without choosing between “abandoning virtuousness” and “[abandoning] respect for this kind of monstrosity,” foreign and Russian Freemasons made their attempt at hewing the “disgraceful elements” of the “Colosse déformé.”

645 Masonic concern with light went much deeper than the mere absorption of the rhetoric of the Enlightenment. The early expositors of Freemasonry regarded the Latin word LVX, “Light,” as synonymous with their science. It is also not coincidental that the beginning of Masonic era has always been styled Anno Lucis, “the Year of the Light,” which is distinguished from Anno Mundi and dates from 4000 BCE. to suggest that Masonic Craft had its starting point in the first dawning of the Light. The idea of the Great Architect of the Universe (G.A.O.T.U.) as a being who indwells the Light, and was Himself the “Light,” Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient, underlined Masonic ceremonies of various systems.
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“Spreading the Light”: European Freemasonry and Russia in the Eighteenth Century

by

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Chapter 4. "What do you seek from us? Wisdom, Virtue, Enlightenment?" Inventing a Masonic Science of Man in Russia

Perplexed, Pierre peered about him with his shortsighted eyes, without obeying, and suddenly doubts rose in his mind. "Where am I? What am I doing? They are making fun of me, surely? Will the time come when I shall be ashamed of all this?" But these doubts only lasted a moment. He looked at the serious faces of those around him, thought of all he had just gone through and realized that there was no stopping halfway. He was aghast at his hesitation, and trying to summon back his former feeling of devotion cast himself down...
- L. N. Tolstoy, War and Peace

One of the most well known paths of a Russian intellectual to Freemasonry is described in L. N. Tolstoy’s epic War and Peace. Pierre Bezukhov, being “at war with himself,” meets a charismatic Mason Bazdeev who invites the receptive Pierre to become a member of the society of Freemasons, give up his parasitic way of life, purify his soul through solitude and self-contemplation, and then devote himself to serving humanity. Searching for answers to the quintessential questions about the meaning of

647 Especially part V, chapters 3 and 4. According to L. N. Tolstoy’s letter to his wife on 15 November 1866, in preparation for the War and Peace Tolstoy used the collections of the eighteenth-century Masonic documents in the Moscow-based Rumiantsev Museum that are now stored in the NIOR RGB:

After drinking coffee I went to the Rumiantsev Museum and sat there till three o’clock, read very interesting Masonic manuscripts. I can’t describe to you why the reading produced in me a depression I have not been able to get rid of all day. What is distressing is that all those Masons were fools.

The information that Tolstoy used the eighteenth-century documents for his novel when depicting Pierre’s involvement with Freemasonry, lodge rituals, and the general outlook of the Craft in Russia in the beginning of the nineteenth century was also corroborated by his acquaintance, American Consul and Freemason Eugene Skyler. In the Tolstoy archive there are copies of several Masonic manuscripts, one of which describes the Masonic initiation ritual, parts of which appear almost word for word in Tolstoy’s description of Pierre’s initiation. On Freemasonry in The War and Peace, see RGVA, fond 730, opis’ 1, folder 161 (P. A. Buryshkin “Doklad po romanu Tolstogo “Voina i Mir” i chernovye materialy na temu,” November 1937).
life and frustrated by his current spiritual and emotional life, Pierre readily turns to Freemasonry.

Placed by Tolstoy in the beginning of the nineteenth century, Pierre, in fact, belongs to several generations of Russian intellectuals who tried to reconcile traditional Russian values with the confusing stream of ideas coming from the West in the eighteenth century. These Freemasons lived through the crisis of discord between reason and spirituality, pursued common goals in Freemasonry and followed strikingly similar paths in their conversion to the Craft.

The Concept of Self-Betterment as Reflected in Masonic Degrees

By the middle of the eighteenth century, confronted by the stream of various ideas coming from Europe, many educated Russians could not help but feel “a difficulty of their cultural situation.” The traditional way of living and thinking familiar to the members of the Russian educated elite from their childhood now seemed old and irrational. To escape this embarrassing feeling of inadequacy, the intellectuals turned to intense scrutiny of their own moral and intellectual development. It was Freemasonry that offered them an ethical system that was practical, responded to a real agenda, and reflected an array of solutions presented by the eighteenth-century thought. Morals, passions, vices, refinement and self-education, perfecting self and society (country, humanity), devotion to the Great Architect of the Universe, fatherland, and one’s fellow man – these are the themes that found expression in Masonic system of degrees and were

contained in the lectures, lodge sermons, publications, speeches, and memoirs of Freemasons in Russia.

The early Russian Masonic lodges based on the rationally-minded English Masonic system were created to unite people who considered themselves the preachers of the non-religious morality.\textsuperscript{649} Taken together, the degrees of speculative Freemasonry embodied important enlightenment tenets of gradual self-betterment on the way to ultimate moral perfection. For a Freemason, morality represented the highest point in spiritual life and was justified by a transcendent regulative principle epitomized in the idea of the Great Architect of the Universe who gave meaning to reality.\textsuperscript{650} The catechisms for each of the three degrees, all written in a symbolic language, touch on the issues of practical morality and ritualistic practices. They were arranged in different degrees so that the novice would progress in his knowledge with each step and learn the increasingly complex set of notions and values. A high-ranking Russian Mason explained to his audience in Moscow that since all the degrees “of our highly respected order are interconnected, the highest [degrees] are based on the lower [degrees], so that the lower serves as a foundation to the external knowledge, and external knowledge explains the essence of the inner [knowledge].\textsuperscript{651}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{649} Vernadskii, \textit{Dopolnenii}, 153.
\textsuperscript{650} The first charge of Anderson’s \textit{Constitutions} (1723) pronounces that “[a] mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious libertine...” In 1738, this statement was altered to include the freedom of consciousness making the connection between free will and morality more prominent: “A mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious libertine, nor will he act against the dictates of his conscience.” The \textit{Constitutions} that were transferred to Russia contained only the second statement, and Russian Masonic translators of the principles of English Freemasonry struggle with the definition of “consciousness.”
\textsuperscript{651} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 1 (“Rech’ govorennaya A. Kutuzovym v X stepeni,”):
\ldots
\begin{align*}
&\text{… iibo vse stepeni wysokochitimoego ordena nashego nahodiatsia v tesnoi sviazi, chto vysshie osnovania na nizhnikh, chto na svoem fundamente, nizhnii otverzaet nam vrata k vneshnim, a vneshnie ob} \\
&\text{niasniat soderzhanie vnutrennikh.}
\end{align*}
\end{flushright}
In the Apprentice degree, which centered its rhetoric on the building of King Solomon’s Temple, allusions were made to the Newtonian laws of gravity and motion with reference to the movements of planets. But even more importantly for us here, the educating materials for the first degree emphasized that the operations of the lodge were to be identified with those laws governing nature and society. During the initiation ceremony, the novice heard about what a Freemason was in a ceremonial exchange of questions and answers between the Master of the lodge and other officers:

- What is a Freemason?
- He is a free man, who knows how to overcome his inclinations, is capable of moderating his desires, and is able to subordinate his will to the laws of reason.

It is in this degree that Freemasons were taught about “the horrible state of man living wrongly and thus degrading his feelings,” so that the first work of the Apprentice was to purify and transform his feelings.

Even if a Mason had formally obtained the highest degrees but had not faced his weaknesses, he had yet to make the first step in the Craft. Self-knowledge was one of the first issues being raised with the novice. In the directions on how to study yourself (Ukazaniiia na to, kak nado poznavat’ sebia), Russian Masonic readers were advised to be attentive to “the source of our actions and feelings,” “relive the previous day every

652 As Albert Mackey, Symbolism of Freemasonry, 92-3, indicates, the tools of the operative craftsman were used as symbols of significant ethical and classical architectural principles. The square and plumb bore symbolic representations of proper moral conduct as they were applied to the building of the three great pillars of King Solomon’s Temple to depict the moral teachings of wisdom, strength, and beauty.
654 Albert Mackey, Symbolism of Freemasonry, 100-101, 142-143.
655 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 2 (‘Rech’ govorennaia A. Kutuzovym v X stepeni.”): … uzhasnuye sostojaniia cheloveka zhivuschego nepravil’nym obrazom i razvrashchuschem svoi chuvstva… perv’ia tsel’ raboty nashei sostojala v ochischenii i ispravlenii nashikh chuvstv, nam povelevaial’s ochishchat’ i obesyvat’ dikii kamen’ … my poznam, chto sotvoreny Bogom, i poznav sie, k nemu edinomu ustremim vse svoi chuvstva.
evening,” “check how you fulfill your obligations as father, servant, officer and so on, study other people because self-knowledge and knowledge of others are inextricably intertwined,” and analyze his faults in thorough comparison with the way others lived. By learning about his flaws, a new Freemason was prepared for cleansing himself from his sins, then advancing self-betterment by the means of repentance and acceptance of the Art of Freemasonry. To prepare himself for this work, an initiate was taught to “feel, see, and hear, and for this we needed to work, obey, and be silent.” In other words, at the first degree Freemasons tried to free themselves of excessive self-love.

Once “the necessity to purify and change their feelings was established, and the means of doing so were offered,” Russian Freemasons were admitted to the second degree. The second degree, the Fellow Craft, was particularly distinguished by the abundance of enlightenment concepts. The “cleansed” feelings were to be “ordered and harmonized according to reason, which equally requires cleansing.” The significance of studying the liberal arts and physical sciences was emphasized for the Fellow Freemasons. They were expected to follow the light of knowledge and to be benevolent and virtuous. In their search for knowledge they symbolically climbed the curved stairs of Solomon’s Temple and were required to use reason and math to understand the laws of gravity and motion and the moral principles associated with the circle, square, and triangle. In the quest to harmonize feelings and cleanse reason the second degree was to demonstrate that “Man is not following the right path if he acquires knowledge only for himself. Our duty is to acquire knowledge that could benefit our neighbors.”

NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 2 ("Rech’ govorenniaia A. Kutuzovym v X stepeni."): “pouchali nas ochischeniem chuvstva privodit’ v stroinos’ ili garmoniu, soglasuia i s razumom, kotoryi ne menee chuvstv ochisit’ dolzhno. K semu predlozheniu byli sredstva.”
first degree the Apprentice learned about himself, the second degree taught ideas about
the interconnections between people and the laws of society.657

The Master Mason’s degree was centered on the symbolic completion of
Solomon’s temple. Only after cleansing and harmonizing his feelings and reason could a
Freemason be admitted to the third degree. Based on the knowledge of the
correspondence of self with God and with other people, in this degree the Freemason
could finally learn to “thoroughly examine” himself.658 Temperance, prudence, and
justice were described as cardinal features of the true members of the order. Speculative
Masons also learned in this degree that reason and the five senses, which were
emphasized by Enlightenment thinkers, were essential for understanding the laws of
nature and the moral principles of society. Since for Freemasons reason was the “ruler of
... will, this reason needs to be healed and enlightened.”659 Furthermore, this degree
helped to define the concept of virtue. The third degree established with certainty that
Newtonian mechanistic laws revealed much about the orderliness of nature and that they
might help to define tenets appropriate to moral conduct in society.

657 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 3 (“Rech’ govorennaia A. Kutuzovym v X stepeni”): “chelovek ne na
istimmon obretaetsia puti ezheli priobretennyie im znaniia sokhraniat dla sebia odnogo, no chto dolg nash
– priobretat’ onyia dla pol’zy blizhnikh nashikh...”
658 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 4 (“Rech’, govorennaia A. Kutuzovym v X stepeni”): “rassmotrite
prilezhno samikh sebia.”

After his initiation and the first lodge meeting, Pierre “felt as if he had returned from a long journey on
which he had spent dozens of years.” He had not only traveled the rooms and corridors of the Petersburg
Masonic lodge. He had experienced the whole range of emotions, doubt, guilt, and self-assurance, and his
devotion was tested several times. In other words, by his initiation and Masonic work, Pierre was inspired
to undergo a long journey inside himself (Tolstoy, War and Peace, 394).
659 OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 17, 33, Signed by Petr Tatischev, lodge of Sphinx from the
Mother-lodge of Trekh Znamen (Drei Fahnen):
Chtob nauchit’ sia pobezhdat’ svoi strasti, nadlezhit prezhdhe uzhat’ i priznat’ ikh v sebe, chtob umeriat’
svoi zheleniia, potrebeno nauchit’ sia prezhdhe upotrebliat’rasuddka. Pravitl’ voli nashei, razum sam
dolzhen bit’ prezhdhe izchelen i prosveschen... Dlia priugotovleniia vas k semu vazhnому trudy chrez
priniatiie v uchenicheskiiu stepen’ staralis’ nauchit’ vas chuvstvovat’, videt’, i slyshat’, i dlia togo
poveleno nam bylo rabotat’, povinovat’ sia i molchat’.
Paths to Freemasonry: Through Voltairianism and a Crisis of Faith

As we established in the second chapter, in the 1770s, the majority of Elagin’s English-system lodges practicing three degrees were nothing but social clubs that flourished as “excellent places to dine and enjoy good company.” 660 Many expatriates treated lodges as a “meeting-place for a society of exiles,” 661 and many Russians, who imitated everything distantly European, joined the lodges to follow the fashionable trend.

However, in the late 1760s rational Freemasonry all over Europe faced a serious crisis related to the active proliferation of high-grade systems. Masons operating in Russia tried to keep pace with the changes. But due to the nature of specifically Russian intellectual concerns and insufficient communication with Western lodges, high-grade systems were even more confusingly diverse in Russia. Driven by the severe spiritual and intellectual crises without concrete practical guidance from the English Masonic metropolis, Russian intellectuals turned away from the rationalism of the three-degree system to the search for mystical secrets in the variety of high-grade Masonry.

The development of the Masonic interests of Ivan Elagin, the Provincial Grand Master, exemplifies the confusion and continuous search which was indicative of the general intellectual and emotional turmoil experienced by many Russian Masons in the second half of the eighteenth century. During a period of his infatuation with Voltaire, which followed Elagin’s estrangement from three-degree Freemasonry in the 1740s, he reasoned himself into atheism and “laughed at Newton” for refusing to renounce his

661 Jones, Nikolai Novikov, 129.
Christina faith. “Boulanger, D’Argens, Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, … along with the French, English, German, and Latin, and Italian false legalists with their sweet talk” captured Elagin’s “heart [and] filled it with bitter poison.”\(^{662}\) To his dismay, however, Elagin soon discovered that not only God and Newton, but also even Voltaire could not be exempt from the cold sneer and ridicule of the skeptics and atheists:

> [This] harmful reading had such corruptive effect on my soul that even the divine Newton himself seemed absurd to me because he tried to interpret John's revelations or the Apocalypse... his work, according to my then-belief and the current conviction of many [people in Russia], was absurd and worthy of only an unreasonable creator.\(^{663}\)

Confused by the conflict between traditional values and fashionable theories, Elagin was thankful that

> God’s grace did not allow... [the] writings of Voltaire and other so-called New philosophers and Encyclopedists to transform my soul: God did not let me... forget the faith in which I was born [i.e. Russian Orthodox Church] and the teaching that I was showed when I was a student at the school [i.e. Freemasonry].\(^{664}\) By the 1770s, the power of reason that Voltaire proposed and, in a way, served Russian Freemasonry in its early stages, became synonymous with moral nihilism and depravity. This was precisely the time when Voltaireanism turned from fashion to the “science of life” and social tyranny:

> Without being enlightened by the fashionable

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662 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 4: “Bulance, Dargens, Volter, Russo ... kak frantsuzskii, anglitsski, tak i nemetski i latinski i italianskiiia Izhezkonniki, pleniv serdse moe sladko sloviem, pagubnogo iada gorest’ v nego vilili.”

663 Elagin, “Zapiska,” 96, RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 4-4rev: “Zlovrednoe chlenie tak razvratilo dushu mou, chto i sam bozhestvennyi Newton smeshnym mne po etomu kazalsia, chto on prinialsia tolkoval’ otkrivenia Ioannoj i Apokalips ego: sochimenie, po togdashnemu moemu mnenu i po nyneshnemu mnogikh, nelepeoe, i sumnashheshnego tvortsa takoby dostoinoe.”

664 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 216, 4rev: “... blagost’ Bozhii nepopustila [sic] volei, pisani Volterovy i prochikh, tak nazyvaemikh Novylikh filosofov i Entsikhopedistov, preobrazit’ mou dushu: ne popustil gospod’ do togo, chtob, oznadzhenyi propovedovaniem ikh, derznut’ by zabyt’ i veru, v kotoroj rodilsia, i uchenie, kotoroe mne pri vospitanii v uchilischakh prepodanno.”
Moral philosophy,
You may not in public appear to be noble-born,
Reject all knowledge and all sciences
Call everything perishable...
Either call the soul, sometimes by the name of “body,”
Or give it the name “spirit” out of pity...
Say that God does not exist...
That faith is deceit…665

Many Russian intellectuals feared that Voltaire’s philosophy would undermine the moral values and bring society to total depravity, and this was the common concern for the Russians who turned to Freemasonry after their spiritual and intellectual crisis.

Like Tolstoy’s Pierre Bezukhov in the War and Peace, who lives through the crisis of faith to find in the society of Freemasons the emphasis on morality that he sought in vain, many Russians were drawn to the brotherhood for these reasons. With the help of Freemasonry, they aspired to build “the inner temple” and search for a “true meaning of belief.” When life seemed meaningless to Pierre, immediately before his chance meeting with Mason Bazdeev, he asked himself in vain: “What is bad? What is good? What should one love and what should one hate? What does a person live for, and what am I? What is life, and what is death? What power governs all?”666

Everything within and around Pierre seemed alien to him, “senseless and repellent,” and the impossibility of finding a meaning in Pierre’s own life in atheism led him in the direction of broader philosophical inquiry.667 After their contact with Freemasonry, members of the Russian educated elite finally had something to latch on to and to “firmly

665 Vecherniaia zaria 3 (1782), 70. Quoted and translated in In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation.” 80.
667 Tolstoy, War and Peace, 379.
believe in the possibility of the brotherhood of men united in the aim of supporting one another in the path of virtue...”

As the majority of Russians who found Freemasonry to be more in concord with their spiritual needs than Voltaireanism could ever be, the future leader of the Moscow Masonic circle Nikolai Novikov, “being at the crossroads between Voltaireanism and religion,” did not have “any support or pillar on which [he] could establish peace of mind,”669 and that is why he “unexpectedly ... found [himself] in a society [of Freemasons].”670 As was the case of many Russian intellectuals, Novikov’s doubts about the primacy of reason were put across earlier than the 1780s. In 1773, for instance, on the occasion of Diderot’s visit to Russia and his reception at Catherine’s court, Novikov pointed out that this “French fellow is a smart guy, but it is impossible to trust him because he is a non-believer: he is bankrupt in humanity.”671 As early as 1773, Novikov publicly sounded a warning in his journal Zhivopisets, and advocated the need to work out a synthesis between science and faith. He opposes the “cold” materialism and “narrow” empiricism and the evil authors of all these things, the French, in the best romantic fashion:

After moving away from those gardens I saw in the distance huge temples: but as soon as I came near one of them, I and others who were going there to worship God were met with extraordinary friendliness by wise men, who sometimes in French and sometimes in Russian, demonstrated, relying on physics, that the sun, moon, stars, earth, and every structure of the world in general could acquire its

668 Tolstoy, War and Peace, 385.
669 Novikov uses the Russian phrase “peace of soul” that is equivalent to the English “peace of mind.”
670 “[N]jahodias’ na rasputi mezhdu vol’terianstvom i religiei, ia ne imel tochki opory, ili kraeugol’nogo kamnia, na kotorom mog by osnovat’ dushevnoe spokoistvie, a potomu neozhidanno popal v obschestvo...” Quoted in Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie marxisty, 99.
own existence even without the intervention of God. Many of those who knew French very well accepted their proofs as correct, and without entering into the temple returned home with heavy hearts and bad memories, and seething with hatred toward their friends and enemies alike. Others, on the contrary, did not listen to their nonsensical and blasphemous proofs… With these latter I also went in and having a heart submissive to the Being unattainable to human reason, surrounded by an abyss of errors, asked Him with tears, to return my erring compatriots to the truthful path. I came out of there following an unknown old man, who walked on mumbling to himself the following: “is it really possible that fruits such as these grow from sciences in all countries?” Not at all! Sciences bring to the society great benefits and connect it with the foremost bridles of healthy reason (razсудка): they teach us to live virtuously and pay due respect to God. People, without investigating fully that which is always in their view, wish to know also that which is hidden from their weak sight by the dark veil, for which their own lack of intelligence is to blame. “So, really so,” he continued, “these infections can be forestalled by no other means than by frequently reminding young people that he who forgets God will surely bring into Him righteous anger.”

Novikov’s friend Andrei Bolotov experienced a severe spiritual crisis already in the early 1760s when he read Wolff and persuaded himself that no sphere of knowledge was now cut off from the penetration of his reason. Characteristically, he began to doubt the truth of revelation, but instead of experiencing freedom from the constraints of faith, he spent sleepless nights being tortured by doubts and uncertainty. Bolotov was able to recover from his crisis only after a chance discovery of a book by Kruze that convinced him of the danger of religious doubts and helped to recover his lost faith. During this period he was also drawn to Freemasonry.

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French philosophy was blamed not only for atheism, but also the French revolution. See, for instance, a footnote on page 206 on Lopukhin’s attitude to the French Revolution. NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, (a copy of the letter to A. M. Kutuzov from N. N. Trubetskoi, without a date, between 1/12 November 1791 and 24 December 1791).

673 Bolotov, Zapiski, II, 55ff.

674 On Bolotov’s place in Russian Freemasonry, see Chapter 1.
But the most dramatic incident of the conversion of a former Voltaireian into a morally inclined Freemason is described in the autobiographical account of Ivan Lopukhin. A well-educated aristocrat with a passion for reading, he devoured books available to him, including Voltaire’s anti-clerical writings and Rousseau’s refutations. In 1780, he finished his own translation of d’Holbach’s *Système de la Nature* and was greatly satisfied with the result. Realizing that the translation could never pass through the censorship of the Church and be published, he started making a copy for his friends’ reading pleasure. At this moment a great remorse overcame him. Lopukhin burned his translation, and could not think of anything else until he composed an anti-philosophe treatise, *Discussion of the Abuse of Reason by Certain Modern Writers*. His booklet, which was published by Novikov at the University press in 1780, is one of the earliest critiques to appear on the Russian market. Characteristically, the purpose of this book was to refute atheism and materialism. Lopukhin’s work criticized the philosophes who “make their mind into a weapon for destroying people.” In an outburst of noble indignation directed at those who “devote all their works to seducing people and spend all the powers of their mind in finding a better way to pour poison into ... the souls,” Lopukhin repeated Elagin’s words almost verbatim.

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676 I. Lopukhin, *Razsuzhenie o zloupotreblenii razuma nekotorymi novymi pisateliami i oproverzhenie ikh vrednykh pravil* (Moscow: printed at the University Press, 1780).
677 But the proof of God the author could offer was no more than the standard deism argument testifying that God’s existence was proved by the “orderly and lovely harmony presiding over the world.” Man, as Lopukhin insisted, was “the precious creature capable of penetrating into the secrets of the celestial world.” Lopukhin, *Razsuzhenie*, 9.
678 Lopukhin, *Razsuzhenie*, 5-6, 8: “razum svoi sodelivat oruidiem pogublenia ludei ... vse svoi trudy posvischat’ razvrashcheniu ludei i vse sily razuma istoschat’ na sniskanie udobneishego sposoba vlit’ iad v ... dushi...”
By the second half of the century, for many Freemasons in Russia the “limits of reason” seemed “too narrow to embrace the mystery.”⁶⁷⁹ This intellectual search for the ways of “embracing the mystery” characterizes the efforts of Freemasons in Russia after the 1770s. As we established in the second chapter, the lodges formed by Elagin in the 1770s followed mainly English and Swedish models. But the Provincial Grand Master who received a patent from the Grand Lodge of England tried establishing contact with the Grand Lodge of Scotland; was regularly corresponding with the Berlin center of Strict Observance; and directed efforts for obtaining the particulars of the Swedish system, even though he thought that the true Freemasonry was preserved in England and Scotland (while “the passionate French, and then the foolish Germans … came running to the various fabrications, which displayed the vanity and splendor of the French in the innumerable higher degrees, and the haughty self-interest of the Germans in the creation of the systems”).⁶⁸⁰ At the same time, Elagin joined his efforts with Reichel hoping to create a synthesis between the two systems. Translating Saint-Martin’s Des erreurs et de la verite as per Panin’s request, he criticized the Rosicrucian system introduced by Schwarz as “superstitious and avaricious.”⁶⁸¹ While condemning Masonic systems that

⁶⁷⁹ Russkii arkhiv 4 (1916), 444: “Uma predelye tesny, Chtob tainstva ob’iat’…”
⁶⁸⁰ RGADA, fond 8, folder 255, 1. 122: “v nachale pylkie frantsuzy, a potom glupye germantsy probegli odni, gordias’ ostrotou razuma, drugie omrachaia’ koryst’ u k raznoobraznym vymyslam, kotorye pokazuut odnykh vo mnogochislennosti vyshikh stepenei suetnost’ i pyshnost’, drugikh v sooruzhenii sistem gordelivoi koristolubii…”
⁶⁸¹ Cited in Pekarski, Dopolnenia, 100. In Russkii arkhiv 1 (1864), 98-100; Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinskiy, 078. Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinskiy, 102, suggests that the Karlsbad system is the Zinnendorf system, given Elagin’s episodic tensions with Reichel specifically and other leaders of the Zinnendorf’s seven-degree rite in general. However, as we establish, Elagin’s lodges also worked in seven-degree systems, which, combined with the clear reference to Schwarz, suggests as Pypin, “Russkoe masonstvo do Novikova,” 213-214, did, that the Karlsbad system introduced by Schwarz can only be the Rosicrucianism that Elagin confused with the system introduced by the Wilhelmshad Convent.

In terms of goals and methods, it is difficult to distinguish between the eighteenth-century aspirations of Freemasons and Rosicrucians. As we established in the second chapter, Rosicrucians used Masonic hierarchy to develop their own system in Russia. What is important for us in this chapter is that both
gave "advantage to evil foreigners and money-loving nomads," he was fascinated with the claims about Cagliostro’s ability to make gold. Lamenting that Russians were seduced by nonsensical rituals and degrees practiced by "the French cooks calling themselves Knights Ecosse," he tolerated the practice of selling higher degrees for money.

Similarly, Novikov became involved in the search for a system of Freemasonry suitable for specifically Russian conditions immediately after his own crisis. A member of Urania lodge working under the authority of Vladimir Lukin, he quickly became disappointed in the English three-degree system as it existed in Russia and supported the Elagin-Reichel union of high-grade Freemasonry. Assuming that the exclusive primacy of reason was a mistake and that more room should be allowed for sentiment and faith, he insisted that Freemasons in Russia "observed a great difference between these [Reichel’s] rituals and the former English ones, because in them everything was directed towards morality and self-knowledge." Besides the Reichel system, he also toyed

Freemasons and Rosicrucians were driven by the same intention to discipline social life with laws and spreading enlightenment, as they understood it. In this sense, the ideas propagated at the meetings of the Friendly Learned Society or the Typographical Company, founded by the Rosicrucians and the Society for the Translation of Foreign Books with predominantly Masonic membership were similar.

682 Cited in Russkii arkhiv 1 (1864), 93-98, mentioned in Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia, 99.
683 RGADA, fond 8, folder 216, part 7, letter on the page 11-12; cited in Pekarskii, Dopolneniiia, 118-119. Thus, for instance, on 25 February 1787, members of the seven-degree Kapitul and members of the lodges Skromnosti (Verschwiegenheit) and Urania reported to Elagin that "other lodges (especially Concordia and Hygaea) establish capituls and use their powers to lure the newly-initiated [Freemasons] into paying money for raising them into higher degrees …which harms the image of the society."
684 The St. Petersburg lodge Urania was #467 on the lists of the lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England.
685 "Materialy o presledovani Novikova, ego areste i sledstvi.,” in N. I. Novikov, Izbrannye sochineniiia, 607: “Mezhdu simi aktami i preznimi angliiskimi usmotreli my veliku raznost’, ibo tut bylo vse obrascheno na naravstvennost’ i samopoznanie.”
with the Swedish and Scottish Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism. Under the influence of his German friends, he shifted his allegiance from one rite to another.

In their intellectual and spiritual journey, leaders of different Masonic branches were not as distant from each other as it is usually assumed: actively making unions and pacts, they often worked together. Concerned with the common problems, they created their intellectual systems using similar premises and ultimately directed at the same goals.

Creating the Science of Man in Russian Freemasonry

Distrustful of many Western ideas that Russian Freemasons saw as perpetuating such human deficiencies as selfishness, greed, and desire for power, they turned instead to the idea of personal betterment, which they understood in terms of cleansing themselves of original sin and thus returning to paradisal innocence and perfection. Freemasons’ writings reveal the “pathos” of their moral concern for man, a belief in the individual’s dignity and right to spiritual and material progress. The goals of “knowing thyself,” “building an inner temple,” and finding a meaning of life while approaching the evangelical ideals by means of self-improvement became the main problems in the creation of the science of Man for Masonic theorists in Russia.

The enterprise of studying Man was a topic on which the widest spectrum of opinion could agree. Despite various purposes that eighteenth-century writers had, and various contents that were attributed to human nature, the category of human nature set

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686 Marxist historians, to whom religion and mysticism are reactionary forces by definition, find this incompatible with the “enlightening” activities of many eighteenth-century Freemasons, and notably Novikov. See, for instance, G. Makogonenko, Nikolai Novikov i russkoe prosveschenie XVIII veka (Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo khudozhestvennoi literature, 1951).
the terms in which intellectuals contested what it was to be human and correlated it with various social arrangements. At the same time, a Masonic project of building a science of man belonged to the whole of the Enlightenment movement. In eighteenth-century Russia a characteristic and distinctive fusion of the ideas about Man became a means for the Masonic philosophy to popularize many Enlightenment ideas. As opposed to the seventeenth-century moralists’ idea that man’s primary duties were to be directed towards God, their eighteenth-century successors, including Freemasons, fostered directing all efforts towards man.

Posing and attempting to resolve the questions of what man was, Freemasons based their theories on Christian and humanistic traditions, the newest Enlightenment theories, and their daily experiences in Russia. But if for the majority of Freemasons in the West the problem of Man was transformed into a question of how manners and morals could be prevented from falling prey to the corruption of luxury, the degeneracy of self-interest, and the danger of moral atomism, for Freemasons in Russia the problem of Man crystallized into the need for comprehensive education and moral instruction.

To counteract corruption and depravity and lead to perfection, Freemasonry in Russia offered its members a philosophy687 of life and ethics with a developed system of values that converged into an image of moral man. Freemasons, foreign and Russian,

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687 This “philosophy” was by no means homogeneous, immutable, or complete.
“Opyt o tainstvakh i podlinnom predmete Svobodnogo Kamen’ schichestva,” Magazin vol’nokamenschiceskii, soderzhashchii v sebe: rechi, govorennye v sobraniakh; pesni, razgovory i drugie raznye kratkie pisania, stikhami i prozoi, vol. 1, part 1 (Moscow: Lopukhin’s Printing House, 1784), 28:

Prosveshchenie stoletiia nashego dovol’no nauchaut nas, chto chelovek razvraschen, i chto prichinu sego nadlezhit iskat’ v obschestvennom sostojanii. Pogreshnosti pervogo vospitaniia, uzhasnoe razlichie blag schast’ia, a sverkh sego esche i strasti, ot moguestscha i rozgdauschiesia, isportili pervanachal’noe chuvstovanie natyri v chelovecheskom serdce… Po semu osnovateli masonstva glavnou tseliu svoeu postavili sebe to, chto vozvratit’ chelovekov k pervoi ikh natural’noi dobrote i zastavit’ zakony natury proziabnyt’ paki v seradsakh ikh v velichaishem sovershenstve. Sia byla tsel’ religii i grazhdanskikh zakonov vsekh vozmozhnykh obrazov pravleniia.
focused their efforts on moral education. For Masonic theorists, the interest in creating the science of Man manifested itself through the ideas about character and character building, the preoccupation with self-knowledge, and study of Man from both a spiritual and a physical perspective.

Although many eighteenth-century Masonry-related works and lectures in Russia provide a precise practical philosophy regarding man, his nature, and his aims that attempts to define the constituent elements of a moral man, Masonic practical anthropology is not confined to simple ethical self-improvement. Their theories (or science, as they defined it) of Man did not reduce everything to ethics. By delineating their own image of Man, Freemasons in Russia had purposely involved themselves in an investigation into all of man’s possible aspects, and especially his ability for moral improvement. Manifestations of the emphasis that Freemasons in Russia placed on man are endless. From its beginnings in Russia, Freemasonry prized the idea of Man as the highlight of the Creation: “Science of Man and Universe is the highest of all,” the lodge Master was supposed to teach his initiates.

The most sublime of all the sciences  
Of which the learning never ends  
For any human being is the study of Man.  
He is a perfect microcosm  
From the entire universe reduced...  
... He is the center point,  
He is the heart of Nature,  
He is from air and soil, and fire and water,  
And elements of all the creatures he contains.

689 Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Tverskoi Oblasti, fond 103, opis’ 1, folder 1169, 2rev.
690 M. M. Kherakov, Vladimir vo rozhdenyi (Moscow: izd-vo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1785), 107: Trudnee vsekh nauk, neskonchimaia v veke.
Lists of the eighteenth-century Freemasonry-related books translated, published, or manually copied in Russia during the century are peppered with the titles “What is man? Where is he from? Where does he go?” “Who am I? Why? And who am I going to be?” or “Know thyself.” “Who am I?” and “What is man?” were related questions. “What is man?” is a scientific question asking about the relation of the human species to the world. An instance of such question is the psalmist’s “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” “Who am I?” includes “What is the human being?” But in addition, “Who am I?” locates the individual person in the total environment of realities and values. Self-knowledge seeks both information about the human species and insight into the unique individual who asks the question. So when Freemasons asked themselves “what is man?” and looked for an answer, they searched for information on human nature, man’s place in the world and the sense of his being. Directed at perfection, this

Dlia cheloveka est’ nauka, chelovek; 
Iz mira tselogo Vsevyshnim sokraschennyi, 
On sam vo suschestve mir malyi, sovershennyi; 
Iz tvarei vsekh izvelek chistineehe Gospod’ 
I vduul dukh zhivoi v ego nebesnu plot’; 
On tochka sredniiia, on serdtsve vsei prirody, 
V nem vozdukh i zemlia, v nem tvari, ogon’ i vodi.

691 For instance, see printed documents and manuscripts in NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 275, “Kto ia? Zachem? Chem budu?” (28 pages); folder 276, “Kto ia? Zachem? Chem budu?” (14 pages, 1783, 1784); folder 277, “Chto est’ chelovek? Otkuda? I kuda on poidet?” (12 pages); folder 278, “Kto ia?” (6 pages); folder 1785, “O raznosti mezhdu chelovekom i zveriami” (1793, 6 pages); folder 1820, “Rassuzhdenie o chelovecheskoj prirode” (in Russian and French, 10 pages). Especially popular was the insistence on knowing thyself. For instance, see fond 147, folder 242 “Znai Seiba.” parts 1-2 (67 pages); fond 14, folder 1435-36, “Otkrovennoe pokazaniiia i poznaniia samogo seiba” (translated in 1792, 47 pages); folder 1437, “Poznai samogo seiba” (1798-1799); folder 1438, “Vstupenie v nauku o poznaniia samogo seiba” (50 pages); folder 1439, “Rassuzhdenie o poznaniia samogo seiba v suschestve” (11 pages); folder 1440, “nechto otnosicheesia do poznaniia samogo seiba” (2 pages).

Despite their wide popularity for the Freemasons, eighteenth-century questions about self were not something new. Heraclitus summed up his philosophy in one sentence: “I sought for myself,” similarly to the famous Delphic maxim “Know thyself.” In China, all philosophy began as self-examination. Confucius praised Tseng Ts an for having said, “Daily I examine myself” (Confucius, Analects 1.4 (trans. James R. Ware)). Lao Tzu praised the knowledge of others, but reserved a higher acclaim for knowledge of one’s self:

He who knows others is wise;
He who knows himself is enlightened (Tao The Ching (trans. Wing-tsit Chan)).

692 Psalms 8:4 (King James).
Masonic worldview was not limited to describing man as he was in reality, but as he ought to be with regard to the aims he should pursue, which represent the ideal point of reference of ethical self-improvement.

**Perfectibility: Personal and Collective**

The concept of perfectibility informed much of eighteenth-century philosophy. Although studying human nature had long been central to culture, the Enlightenment project, postulated as “a science of man,” 693 reconstructed a new view of human nature. In the eighteenth century, the idea that the material and immaterial frameworks within which people lived were established not by the will of God, but by the changeable conventions created by the interaction of their own passions and interests, posed a serious problem. The idea of man as a creature that can and should be changed for better inspired thousands of competing theories, manuals, and schemes to improve on existing practices. Whether intellectuals speculated on the history of an entire country or compared different forms of society around the globe, it was widely believed that societies and individuals could achieve cultural and moral perfection through the cultivation of the arts, sciences, and diverse forms of industry. 694

Freemasonry was considered “a preparatory step or a school” for “inspiring notions about perfectibility of man.” 695 Any person can be perfected and motivated to “augment his perfections.” There is nothing in human beings, no innate depravity, to

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693 In referring to “man” as a male, I follow eighteenth-century language and Masonic rhetoric.
695 Quoted in A. Semeka, “Russkie Rosenkreitsery i sochinenia imperatritsy Ekateriny II protiv masonstva,” *Zhurnal ministerstva narodnego prosvesheniia* (February, 1902), 351: “podgotovitel’nyi shag ili shkola” dla “vozboxhdenii poniati o ispravlennii cheloveka.”
prevent them from being morally and culturally improved. Having the dormant seeds of perfection within himself, the person takes on the road of either perfectibility or depravity. And the choice between the two roads depends solely on education of the person.696 It is to harmonize mind, imagination, and body that the young generation needs to study "belles lettres, music, art, investigate the harmony of nature... that raises their thoughts to the origins of its order, and finally ignites ... a pure love to God."

Realizing this drive for ultimate self-betterment, a person strengthens and enriches his memory with different sciences, expands the power of his reason, clears his mind, Lightens his imagination with kindness and love of the Creator, spreads the radius of knowledge ... and thus [in his heart] finds conscience that leads him to the desired perfection.697

Already during his initiation, Pierre is presented with a formal statement of the goals of Freemasonry. He learns that the brotherhood aims at 1) "the preservation and handing on to posterity of a certain important mystery... which came down to us from the remotest ages, even from the first man – a mystery on which perhaps the fate of mankind depends" 2) self-purification and a quest for enlightenment on the part of each

696 NIOR RGB, fond 178, folder 9179, Schwarz’s lectures, 83-85:
... razshirenii svoikh sovershenstv... [T]ainaia pruzhina, kotoraja Tvorcem dana chelovekam dla pobuzhdenia ikh k dostizhenii sorkotogo v nikh padeniem sovershennago obraza Bozhi ego. Vo vsemiakom cheloveke est’ sila pruzhina k sovershenstvu... kotoroe razshiriets’ sposobnosti i umnozhat’ onyia. – Chelovek im’eia silu siiu, obyknoveno nachinaet ispravliat’ sia sperra v organizatsii, potom lubopytstvom ukrepliaet i obogaschaaet pamiat’ raznymi naukami, razshiriets silu razuma, ochischaet um, vosplameniaet voobrazhenie dobrov i Luboviu k Sozdatelu, rasprostraniaet radius poznanii ... dokhodit do svoego serdca k ispravleniu i ochischeniu kotorago obraschaaet nakonets vse svoi sposobnosti, i v nem nakhodit sovest’ ili putevodcta, kotoroi dovedet ego do togo sovershenstva kuda on stremitsia... ... Mladenets uzhe imeet v sebe semena sovershenstva, no ezheli poveden budet lozhnym putem, ezheli pamiat’ ego otiachchiat’ nenuzhnni i bespoleznymi znaniami, ezheli voobrazhenie ego priuchat’ k odnim bezdelkam i k vneshnim ukrasheniam tela, to semena sovershenstva budut podavleni terniam i nikogda ne proizvedet zhelannogo ploda.

697 NIOR RGB, fond 178, folder 9179, Schwarz’s lectures, 89:
... nuzhno ... molodykh ludei uprazhniat’ v slovystykakh naukakh, v musyke, v zhivopisii, i zanimat’ ikh garmonii priody, kotoraja krasotami svoimi, privilekaia chuvstva chelovecheskie, delaeikh nezheishimi i udobneishimi k chistoi lubvi, i privodia v priiatnoe voskhischenie, zastavliaet primechat’ deistviia priody, privodit’ ikh v udvlenie ot poriadku onoi, vozvishaet ikh mysli do istochnika priody, i nakonets vosplameniiaet v nikh chistuu lubov’ k Bogu.
member of the order; and 3) the improvement of all mankind. Of the three stated goals the last one seemed the most important to Pierre. He was given a chance to act out his humanitarian impulses. He imagined giving spiritual advice to the unfortunate people who were living in the same state of depravity that he had experienced before learning about Freemasonry. As for the first goal, it aroused his curiosity, but did not seem essential. The second goal, that of purifying himself, hardly interested Pierre because he already felt cured of his former faults by the mere fact of belonging to Freemasonry.

Many Freemasons in Russia correlated the idea of self-betterment with improvement of all mankind and considered their principal obligation as personal betterment and social progress intrinsically tied together. This is the category of Freemasons to which Pierre adhered. According to the Russian-language Freemasons’ Magazine printed by the Novikov circle in 1784, leaders of Freemasonry made it their main goal to “return men to their first natural kindness and make nature’s laws grow into

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698 Tolstoy, War and Peace, 389-90. The acts used in the lodge of Apollon (Apollo) in the 1780s resemble very closely Tolstoy’s picture of Pierre’s initiation. The first revelation of the meaning of Freemasonry is given by the rhetor before the admission: the warning that neither virtue not wisdom is the true aim of Freemasonry: if virtue is what the novice seeks, he can find that “through faith and civil legislations”; or if he wants wisdom, “then may he not find it in the schools?” The true aim of brotherhood is shown to be the “preservation and transmission to the posterity of a certain important secret, which came down to us from the most ancient times, and even from the first man...” Prerequisite to the unraveling of this secret is a moral self-perfection of man and, therefore, the second aim of Freemasonry is to “improve all mankind.” After the novice is led to the lodge, he is told about the seven virtues required of a Mason: humility, obedience, good morals, love of the fatherland and brother, constancy and courage, generosity or selflessness, and love of death. In Pekarski’s, Dopolnenia, 50. Freemasons acknowledged that the idea that Freemasonry protected a “secret knowledge” contributed to the attraction of many members to it:

The mind of man is kept in a perpetual thirst after knowledge, nor can he bear to be ignorant of what he thinks others know. Any thing secret or new immediately excites an uneasy sensation, and becomes the proper fuel of curiosity, which will be found stronger or weaker in proportion to the opportunities that individuals have for indulging it. It is observable further, that, when this passion is excited, and not instantly gratified, instead of waiting for better intelligence, and using the proper means of removing the darkness that envelops the object of it, we precipitately form ideas which are generally in the extremes (Freemasons’ Calendar, vol. 10 (1798), 182).
their hearts for a great perfectibility. This was also the goal of religion and civil laws of
the all possible systems of government." 699

The idea of perfectibility of people as a group suggests that there were secular
processes, controllable by people, by which they could bring about moral improvement
of their fellow men, particularly through the process of education. 700 This had opened
up, in principle, the possibility of perfecting humans by the application of readily
intelligible, humanly controllable mechanisms. All that was required was an educator
able and willing to teach what to pursue and what to avoid. As I show in the next
chapter, Russian Freemasons readily took on the role of educators. For instance, by their
efforts during 1750-99 there were published 31 books on moral education (as compared
to 39 in 1800-50) and 62 books on moral instruction (as compared to 36 in 1800-50), and
7 on practical ethics (3 in 1800-50). 701

In the eschatological scheme Masons thought of themselves as a group of people,
in a way, chosen to save humanity and return the brothers and the rest of the people to
the lost paradise of the Golden Age of Astrea. Memories about the lost knowledge were
saved and preserved in the selected circle of intellectuals which included Freemasons.

699 "Opyt o tainstvakh i podlinnom predmete Svobodnogo Kamen'schichestva," Magazin
vol'nakamenschicheskii, soderzhashchii v sebe: rechi, govorennye v sobraniakh; pesni, razgovory i drugie
raznye kratkie pisania, stikhami i prozou, vol. 1, part 1 (Moscow: Lopukhin's Printing House, 1784), 28:
Prosveshchenie stoletia nashego dovol'no nauchat nas, chto chelovek razvraschen, i chto prichinu sego
nadlezhit iskat' v obschestvennom sostojanii. Pogreshnosti pervogo vospitania, uzhasno razliche blag
schast'ia, a sverkh-sego esche i strasti, ot mogushestva i rozgdauschiesia, isportili pervanachal'noe
chuvstvovanie natury v chelovecheskom serdce... Po sevu osovateli masonstva glavnou tseliu svoeu
postavili sebe to, chtob vozvtit' chelovekov k pervoi ikh natural'noi dobrote i zastavit' zakony natury
proziabnut' paki v seredakh ikh v velichaischem sovershenstve. Sia byla tsel' religii i grazhdanske
zakony vsekh vozmozhnykh obrazov pravleniia.

700 In the eighteenth century, the term "education" was used broadly to include teaching of academic and
practical knowledge, sensibility, and manners.

701 Catriona Kelly, Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to
Yeltsin (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), appendix 1, 399. For a select bibliography of
advice literature 1700-1800, see pages 408-412. For a more detailed analysis of Masonic educational
activities, see Chapter 5.
As opposed to the Freemasons, non-Masons had the disadvantage of not being able to devote all their time and effort to perfecting themselves. Unlike profanes, a Freemason learned about his weaknesses, vices, and delusions, and separated himself from those who were “drowning in the worldly futility,” and joined those who were “standing firmly on the path that led to the true light…”

At a funeral lodge meeting, Master Mason reminded his brothers: “[w]e are the salt of earth; we are the light of the world; we are the selected kind; regal initiates; divine language; people of revival.” This distinction between elite and ordinary laymen and the distinction between philosophical goodness and civic goodness appear very vividly in the teachings of Russian Freemasons. In a Westernizing society that exhibited an atomized and fractured character and made social identity indeterminate and problematic, Freemasonry provided the consciousness of social identity, “helped unify Russia’s educated classes and created among them the sense of constituting a discrete social body, a public, separate from the gray masses.” In a way, in Russia this attitude reflected the creation of a new Westernized identity according to which only the literate and educated, it came to be believed, could be trusted to act ethically and think disinterestedly in improving people.

As I established in the previous chapter, according to the evaluations made by foreign eighteenth-century Masons in Russia, its people needed to be reformed and

702 OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1 folder 17, “Dokumenty lozhi voskhodiaschego solntsa.,” 36rev:
Kamen’ schik est’ takoi chelovek, kotoryi poznaet svoi slabosti, poroki i zabluzhdniia, iztorgsiia iz tolp
pogrizhikh v suete mirskoi i prisoedinilsia k chislu tekh, kotorye stoiat na steze, veduschei k istinnomu
svetu, staraetsia s pomoschiu ikh osvobodit’ sebia ot strastei, porokov i zabluzhdenii, uchinit’ sia delami
svoiimi v svetlo chelovekam.
703 OPI GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 178, 36-36rev; I. Lopukhin, “Dukhovnyi rytzar’,” in Masonskie
trudy I. Lopukhina “Dukhovnyi rytzar’”; “Nekotorye cherty o vnretnei iserkii,” 62: “Vy est’ sol’ zemli;
yu est’ svet miru; vi est’ rod izbran; tsarskoe sviaschienie, iazik sviat, ludi obnovleniia...”
704 Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 6.
perfected. Masonic rhetoric about human nature and the project of improvement of the people were historically conditioned. The problem of improvement was a complex and evolving social issue stimulated by specifically Russian problems in the end of the eighteenth century. Understanding man against the framework of social, political, and cultural changes, an anonymous author of the Russian-language Freemasons’ magazine claimed that the “Enlightenment of our time has sufficiently taught us that man is depraved, and the reason for this is the state of society.”705 Analyzing a “corrupted” state of the society, the author pointed out several reasons of the situation: “defects of the early education, terrible difference in the welfare, and, more importantly, passions born from the power and distinction, blemished the initial feeling of nature in the human heart.” If people could overcome these obstacles, their “[w]isdom, knowledge, enlightened reason … not obscured by delusions [would] reign over all other earthly blessings.”706

By the end of the century, the Russian “well-ordered police state”707 needed a new type of man that was characterized by a strong sense of self-control, moderation, obedience, and duty. It is not coincidental that the principal vices in the eyes of Freemasons in Russia become identified with idleness, pretentiousness, indifference to the sufferings of the poor, immorality, careerism, flattery, and ignorance. In comparison, virtues of a true Mason were industriousness, modesty, truthfulness, compassion,

705 Magazin Svobodno-Kamen’schikov vol. 1, part 1 (Moscow: Lopukhin Press, with the permission of the authorities, 1784), 30.
706 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, 2rev-4rev: “Mudrost’, poznanie, prosveschennii razum, kotoroi tsenu vsego znaet, ne podverzhen zabluzhdeniiam i torzhestvuet nad prochimi blagami i chto na sem zemnom share vse...”
707 The phrase coined by Marc Raffa.
incorruptibility, and studiousness. In this sense, Douglas Smith is correct in pointing out the importance of Freemasonry in Russia precisely because it provided the justification and the means for the disciplining of society. In this sense, Freemasonry can be considered as "another expression of this search for a new system of morality."

Additional Sources of the Russian Masonic Science of Man: Religion and Medieval Mysticism

The necessity of cultivation of rational and highly moral Freemasons who enjoyed the conviviality and brotherhood was common to the rhetoric of the majority of European lodges, their system and national allegiances notwithstanding. However, in the second part of the century many high-grade Masonic systems became attracted to Rosicrucianism, mysticism, and the variations of early medieval Christian and Jewish traditions. Interest in medieval mysticism and its fusion with the Enlightenment theories and tenets of the Russian Orthodox Church characterize late eighteenth-century Masonic thought in Russia. From the rich variety of ideas offered to the Freemasons in Russia, they made selections conditioned by their own cultural background and particular

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708 At the first lodge meeting Tolstoy’s Pierre was advised to learn to cultivate in himself seven virtues: discretion, obedience (povinenie), morality (dobronovye), love of humankind, courage, generosity, and love of death (lubov' k smerti). Tolstoy, War and Peace, 389-90.

The love of death always occupied an important place in Masonic rhetoric. According to Schwarz, for instance, during his life on earth man is only a traveler towards his eternal life. His lot is to suffer, recalling his past sins. Through suffering his conscience is awakened, and death only opens up a possibility to be reunited with the source of all things, God.

709 Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 48.

710 Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 50.


712 For instance, Faggionato, Rosicrucian Utopia, 77, reiterates the story of Count Karl Josef von Salm-Reifferscheidt who translated Montesquieu and was a famed connoisseur of the works by Helvétius and D'Alembert. At the same time, like Elagin, he was also very invested in the translation and dissemination of the theosophical treatises, as well as alchemical experimentation. In the meantime, a Masonic circle was meeting at his house to debate the need for political and religious tolerance.
needs. As a Freemason of the Swedish system Kurakin pointed out in 1773 in his letter to princess Dashkova, President of the Academy of Sciences, "les idées transplantées de Paris à Pétersbourg prennent une couleur bien diverse."\textsuperscript{713} The theories that Freemasons in Russia used were not simply a reflection of English or French doctrines. Though foreign influences permeated the country, they nonetheless produced a wholly original crop from this new soil.

The cultural institution in Russia that was least influenced by Voltairianism was the Russian Orthodox Church. However, the crisis of faith and its collision with Voltairianism led very few of the repentant intellectuals into the arms of the official Church. After such psychological and intellectual crises leading to a discord of mind and soul, it was difficult for them to return to the traditional structures of faith. For sophisticated intellectuals like Elagin, Lopukhin, or Novikov returning to the Orthodox Church was not enough.

For want of an alternative, Russian intellectuals turned to Freemasonry instead and tried to develop the existing Masonic cultural and intellectual models in the direction that they needed the most, trying to incorporate Russian Orthodox postulates into modern structures of social organization. In his \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, Smith correctly identifies the heartfelt sense of backwardness and the will to civilize themselves of Russia’s elite as main reasons for the success of eighteenth-century Russian Freemasonry. From this point of view, Freemasonry undoubtedly “offered Russians the

\textsuperscript{713} In \textit{Arkhir kn. F. A. Kurakina}, vol. 7, 144.
opportunity to shed their Asian manners for those of the European, to smooth their barbaric coarseness into a civilized polish."\textsuperscript{714}

However, for many eighteenth-century Freemasons in Russia, self-betterment, work on their own rough stone (i.e. cleansing sins from the soul)\textsuperscript{715} was not only the subject of Masonic degrees, but also was called "a way of the revival in Christ."\textsuperscript{716} Freemasons, as A. Kutuzov emphasized, needed "to cleanse and hew the rough stone... and to realize that [we] are created by God and, after recognizing this, direct all our feelings to Him alone."\textsuperscript{717} Many Russian brothers wanted to retrace their past and their roots in the belief that they held an ancient wisdom, and Russian Orthodox belief system played an important part in their science of man. This insistence on utilizing the authentic tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church in presenting the organic unity of worldview and way of living, theory and practice, is one of the most important characteristic features of moral philosophy of eighteenth-century Russian Freemasonry.

Many Freemasons in Russia considered the "Order of Freemasons" to be the best "school of Christianity," and "with God's grace ... did not want to understand it as

\textsuperscript{714} Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, 52.
\textsuperscript{715} This goes against Smith's understanding of "working the rough stone" as a non-religious activity. When eighteenth-century Russian Freemasons ask their brothers to "Try the inner bends of your heart. Your soul is a rough stone that you need to cleanse" ("Ispytai sokrovennie IGGERby serdtsa tvoego. Dusha tvoia est' dikii kamen', kotoryi ty ochistit' dolzhen" (NIOR, fond 14, folder 1 (1-2), VII), by "stone" they do not mean external representations of the level of refinement, but the spiritual betterment of the inner self understood as a religious illumination.
\textsuperscript{716} Lopukhin, \textit{Nekotorye cherty o vnutrennei tserkvi}, 23: "Put' vozrozhdeniia vo Khriste."
\textsuperscript{717} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 2 ("Rech' govorenaia A. Kutuzovym v X stepenii"): ...uzhasnye sostoiania cheloveka zhivuschego nepravil'nym obrazom i razvraschauschem svoi chuvstva... pervaia tsel' raboty nashe sostoiala v ochischenii i ispravlenii nashikh chuvstv, nam povelevalos' ochischat' i obestyvat' dikii kamen' ... my poznaem, chto sotvoreny Bogom, i poznav sie, k nemu edinomu ustremim vse svoi chuvstva.
anything else but the temple.” The anonymous author of the essay “Vzgliad na filosofov i revolutsiu frantsuzskuu ("A View on the Philosophers and the French Revolution") reiterates, “the Order of the Freemasons is nothing but the true, enlightened, pure Christianity.” In the lodge, the Master constantly reminded his brothers that in Freemasonry there was “nothing that refute[d] God, Orthodox Church, and the teachings of the Church” because the lodge is the “union, enlightened by the teachings of Christ.”

It is important for us to point out that Masonic theories about man were used to justify and support the growing need for moral and, what was considered even more important, spiritual betterment. Trying to make heart and mind into a harmonious unity, Freemasons in Russia aspired to fill their hearts with “the true apostolic faith,” so that “the science that works over the free mind would not be able to arrogantly mock faith.” Freemasons in Russia generally postulated that in order to restore the adjustment of affections, and “render men gentle, charitable, and beneficent to one another,” people needed to rethink Christian religion. It was the Christian religion that was capable of commanding people to “root out of their minds passions that arise from the excess of self-love,” that so they may be united in the “unanimous belief in its

718 OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 24, 6rev. (”Poslanie ubeditel’noe M. Nevzorova k O. Pozdeevu o moskovskoi lozhe, s uproverzheniem knigi Plumenkovoii“): “[O]rden svobodnykh kamen’schikov, v kotorom ia chlenom, dlia menia byl luchschim uchilischem khristianskim, i ia po milosti Boga ne khotel inache ponimat’ ego v suschestve svoem on est’ ne inoe kak khram.”

719 OPI GIM, fond 241, opis’ 1, folder 178, 40rev: “Orden svobodnykh kamen’schikov est’ nichto inoe, kak istinnoe, prosveschennoe, chistoe khristiansko. Zdes’ net i ne mozhet byt’ nichego protivnogo Bogu, pravoslavnoi vere i ucheniu tserkvi, souz, osviashchennyi ucheniem Khristovym.”

720 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 54, 190 (168) (19 April 1819): “… istinnou apostol’skuu verou; i chto nauka, kotoraia obrabotala svobodnyi um, ne nadmilas’ gordonoslenno nad verou.”
doctrines and obedience to its precepts, and thus raised as near as may be to the original rectitude of their nature."\textsuperscript{721}

In Freemasonry many Russian brothers found "a similarity with the ceremonies and rituals of our Church" and rummaged through Orthodox monastery archives and libraries for "the texts of the Fathers of the Eastern Church capable of revealing to the eyes of every man how ancient Masonry is of worthy and venerable origins."\textsuperscript{722} The Novikov-Schwarz circle explained to the delegates of the Wilhelmsbad Masonic Convent their position concerning the origins of "true Freemasonry." By comparing "the likeness" of Masonic goals and rituals to the "Formalities and all Ritual" of Russian Orthodox Church, these Freemasons in Russia found the correspondences "so perfect and remarkable" that they concluded that both Freemasonry and the Orthodox Church stemmed "from the same source."\textsuperscript{723} In the same letter, correspondents from Russia expressed their desire to research further the similarity in the works of fathers of the Orthodox Church, archives of various monasteries and libraries.\textsuperscript{724}

\textsuperscript{721} "Principles of Free Masonry Explained, in a Discourse Before the Very Ancient Lodge of Kilwinning, in the Church of that Place, in the year 1766," Freemasons' Calendar, vol. 2 (1794), 15.

\textsuperscript{722} RGVA, Fond 1412 k, opis' 1, folder 11397, letter no. 78, 31 (printed copies of the decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, July-August 1782).

\textsuperscript{723} RGVA, Fond 1412 k, opis' 1, folder 11397, letter no. 78, 31 (printed copies of the decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, July-August 1782. This letter is signed by the members of the commission for the establishment of a National Freemasonry in Russia):

Nous sommes convaincus que l'origine de la vraie Maçonnerie principalement des tois premiers grades, remonte à une haute antiquité, & surtout aux premiers siècles du Christianisme. Vérité qui ne put échapper à nos esprits judicieux, dès qu'ils nous surent communiqués par M. Le Marshall de Keith, qui les porta dans nos clamatés. Leur ressemblance avec les Cérémonies & tout le Rituels de notre Église, est si parfaite & si frappante, qu'il fallut nécessairement conclure, qu'elles partirent toutes les deux d'une même source.

\textsuperscript{724} RGVA, Fond 1412 k, opis' 1, folder 11397, letter no. 78, 31-31rev. (printed copies of the decisions of the Wilhelmsbad Convent, July-August 1782. This letter is signed by the members of the commission for the establishment of a National Freemasonry in Russia):

Nous regrettons infiniment, que la Lettre Circulaire de Votre Altesse Sérénnissime, nous soit parvenue si tard; autrement nous aurions pu produire des pièces tirées des usages de notre Église des emblèmes, que nous reçûmes anciennement de la Grèce, & des ouvrages des Pères de l'église Esclavonne, qui auraient été suffisantes pour rendre la primitive & ancienne Maçonnerie, respectable aux yeux de tout
Many Freemasons in Russia considered mankind as being in a state of depravity. However, Masonic theory did not strive to root out the excess of self-love. Instead, Masonic ideologues proposed measures to hinder self-love from hurting the society and directing selfish passions for the benefit of an individual and humanity. At one point, the Novikov circle emphasized the need to destroy the corporeal Adam and liberate man from the passions. Many Russian Masonic works went as far as to state that passions killed the divine spark in people. Although the examples provided here might be on the extreme side of the spectrum, all eighteenth-century Masonic rhetoric in some way or another revolved around passions and the need to control them. And if Schwarz and his fellow Moscow Masons strongly condemned passions, it does not mean that they did not think passions were, in a way, what made people human. As Tolstoy’s Pierre Bezukhov states in his lodge speech, “it is impossible to eradicate the passions; but we must strive to direct them to a noble aim, and it is therefore necessary that everyone should be able to satisfy his passions within the limits of virtue.” In doing so, unlike any religion, Freemasonry united people not because of the agreement of opinions and principles, “but to bear easily with the particularities of one another; not to raise them to

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726 Lopukhin, Masonskie trudy, 31: “strasti ubivaut iskru bozhestvennuu v cheloveke.”

727 For instance, in the translation of John Pordage, NIOR RGB, f. 14.

728 Tolstoy, War and Peace, 477.
the original rectitude of their nature, but to render their turbulent passions as harmless as possible.”

Russian Freemasons argued that while religion set to change people by reforming their nature, Freemasonry attempted to control the unhealthy passions and encourage convivial feelings.

As a potential bearer of higher truth and a connecting link to his Creator, every “man had a divine right in imitating his maker in the government of the world of his own.” Building himself up to an ideal moral man (Bildung), every human being needed to strive to be “reborn” and remedy his fall from the pure state. Man could put things right. In a hand-written eighteenth-century Russian Masonic collection, “the subject of the Freemasons” was defined as making

... man kind and happy through the intensifying [his] feelings, powers and knowledge, to lead [him] to the original source of all things and return to him his previous likeness to God that was lost by his loss of Grace, and, most importantly, grow in his the feeling of love.

In order to reach that state of happiness it was necessary to purify and renew a Freemason’s inner person, and so before he could know, it was required that he perfected

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729 “Principles of Free Masonry Explained, in a Discourse Before the Very Ancient Lodge of Kilwinning, in the Church of that Place, in the year 1766.” Freemasons’ Calendar, vol. 2 (1794), 15.
730 FHL, Classmarks 1130 STU, vol 1, 26 (William Stuckeley, Creation: A Collection of Discourses on the Creation, Solomon’s Temple, Anatomy & other (1717).
731 Semeka, “Russkie Rosenkreitsery,” 351:
... predmet vol’nykh kamen’chikov sostoi v tom, chtoby sdelat’ cheloveka dobrym i blagopoluchnym cherez vozvyshenie chuvstv, sil i poznaniia, daby privesti k pervonachal’nomu istochniku vsekh veshei i vozvrati’ prezhnee ego podobie Bozhie, utrachennoe grekhopadieniem, vskorenit’ emu pache vsego chuvstvo lubvi. Tolstoy, War and Peace, 477.
731 “Principles of Free Masonry Explained, in a Discourse Before the Very Ancient Lodge of Kilwinning, in the Church of that Place, in the year 1766.” Freemasons’ Calendar, vol. 2 (1794), 15.
731 FHL, Classmarks 1130 STU, vol 1, 26 (William Stuckeley, Creation: A Collection of Discourses on the Creation, Solomon’s Temple, Anatomy & other (1717).
731 Semeka, “Russkie Rosenkreitsery,” 351:
... predmet vol’nykh kamen’chikov sostoi v tom, chtoby sdelat’ cheloveka dobrym i blagopoluchnym cherez vozvyshenie chuvstv, sil i poznaniia, daby privesti k pervonachal’nomu istochniku vsekh veshei i vozvrati’ prezhnee ego podobie Bozhie, utrachennoe grekhopadieniem, vskorenit’ emu pache vsego chuvstvo lubvi.
himself. The main Masonic work was to revive the moral man and return to the forgotten harmony of reason, soul, and will. Only the revived man could make sense of his callings in moral and material spheres; enlighten his mind by the ideas from faith; harmonize the unordered world of matter; and breath life into the soul that was turned to stone (the rough stone). "Be as perfect as your heavenly Father!" Russian Masons appealed to their fellow brothers,\textsuperscript{732} and a process of perfecting themselves formed a basis for the ideas of the Masons about people, Nature, society. In this sense, "nature and yourself" became "the great books in which and through which the duty of man in relation to God, his neighbor, and himself" can be learned.\textsuperscript{733} Since Man, Nature, and God were interconnected, for a Freemason, a deep knowledge of his inner self invariably led to the "highest enlightenment."\textsuperscript{734}

Among the most notable examples of intense self-inspection in an attempt at self-betterment are several reports sent by Nikolai Novikov to his Berlin supervisors. In the series of painfully honest confessions Novikov elaborates on his daily moral struggles:

I sincerely and with a pure heart confess that I have not grasped the meaning of the beautiful columns on which the holy Order rests, \textit{viz.} the love of God and of one's neighbor, or rather I have understood it wrongly by thinking that man of himself was capable of loving God and his neighbor. Indeed, I was blinded to such an extent, that I imagined I fulfilled the commandment of their meaning; but now I thank my redeemer with tears, that He has permitted me to become conscious of my blindness and to recognize it. He has made me comprehend and feel that love, even the blissful sensation of poor sinners, is the gift of God, which He gives to his saints to taste of, and to enjoy. There are moments in which they feel love for their neighbors, and cherish the strong and most blissful confidence that they also love God. But these moments are transitory. Daily when I rise and

\textsuperscript{732} Quoted in Semeka, "Russkie Rosenkreitsery," 351: "bud’te sovershenny, kak sovershnenen Otets vash nebesnyi."

\textsuperscript{733} OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder17, 32rev: "Poznat’ naturu i samogo sebja, iako te velikie knigi, v kotorykh i chrez kotorye poznatsia dolzhnosti’ cheloveka v razsuzhenii Boga, blizhniago i samogo sebja."

\textsuperscript{734} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 594, 21 (N. Novikov, "Razsuzhdenie o poznanii samogo sebja v suschestve": "Kak poznanie sebja est’ vysochaishhee prosveshenie."
when I lay me down to sleep, unworthy though I am, I pray to the Father of the Universe in the name of His Son, Our Redeemer, that He will awaken me this sweetest of sensations, and I will thank my merciful Redeemer for having not infrequently granted me in His mercy to cherish the ardent desire to love God and my neighbor; and this holy and divine truth He sealed by the sacrifice of His soul for those that He loved - for all sinners. And yet what a stranger I still am to his love! Often, only too often, I have no desire, for the sake of one of my friends, to rise early or go to bed late, or in bad weather to go and errand. My pride and my blind self-will often will not allow such sweet sensations to rise within me. I am convinced that the pure, unblemished prayers of our wise and sympathizing forefathers, and of our highly esteemed superiors are efficacious to us, and that they direct the grace and blessing of the Almighty down upon our native country... As regards the unfolding of love in my heart, and the uprooting of all that is uncouth in it, and as regards the meeting of everyone half way in a friendly manner, I avow openly and sincerely that to this end I use all the strength that becomes mine through the mercy of our Redeemer; nevertheless, I feel that even now I often make mistakes in my judgment of rudeness and friendliness; but thanks to my merciful Redeemer, I also at once feel those mistakes, am sorry for them, suffer in my heart on account of them, and beg and implore His Grace that it may confirm me in my sincere and true desire to be friendly towards every one and to fall out with no one, and in my endeavors to let everyone to depart from me contented.735

With his fall, man had also dragged down Nature. Together with man, Nature fell and became a wild material chaos, a dark labyrinth of dead objects. Just as man’s fall led to the “damage” of Nature on the cosmic scale, his revival was supposed to restore the “normal” God-given form to Nature. World and man’s destinies were tied together, and they had the same path. Only the human being could regain the lost paradise of a spiritual self in a matterless world. It is not coincidental that Freemasons in Russia placed special emphasis on reading, translating, and publishing John Milton’s Paradise Lost (in an early Russian translation from French the work bore a characteristic name of The Ruined Paradise). It is in remembrance of the unavoidable retribution for “ruining” paradise that Freemasons M. M. Scherbatov and A. M. Kutuzov translated Edward

735 Translated by In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 269. In War and Peace, in an attempt to turn Pierre to self-inspection, his benefactor “advised for myself personally above all to keep a watch over myself, and to that end he gave me a notebook…” (Tolstoy, War and Peace, 480)
Young's poem on the last day (characteristically translated as "The Judgment Day").

Leading Russian Freemasons A. P. Sumarokov, V. I. Maikov, and M. M. Kheraskov wrote their "philosophical odes" about the Judgment Day as a penitence for man's fall and the inescapable end of the "imperfect" times.

The lost paradise was associated for Russian Freemasons with the Golden Age of Astrea, the "renewed Eden," or "the kingdom of the endless peace and harmony." They considered reaching Astrea to be the highest award of the Grand Architect of the Universe to a Mason: "The desired Golden Age of equality, freedom, and peace" was waiting for those who reached the ultimate knowledge of self and Nature.

The Golden Age was not only a place, it was also a time. The Golden Age could be found in the past and in the future, in the kingdom of endless light:

When in the Golden Age

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736 Aleksandr Petrovich Sumarokov (1718-1777), writer, playwright, founder and director of the Russian (Rossiiskogo) theatre in 1756-1761, publisher of the magazine Trudolubivaia pchela (Industrious Bee) since 1759. Sumarokov was a member of the lodge working in 1756-1759 and known by the so-called Olsuf'ev report (on the Olsuf'ev's report, see Chapter 1, pp. 59-60).

737 Vasilii Ivanovich Maikov (1728(30?)-1778) was a poet, translator, and playwright. He started in a military, and got close to the Elagin's circle in the 1750s. When Maikov moved to Moscow, he became involved with M. Kheraskov and the magazine Utreennii svet (Morning Light). Maikov also was a founding member of the Vol'noe Economicheskoe Obschestvo (Free Economic Society). In 1772-1773, he was a secretary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Russia (Elagin's "English" lodge) in St. Petersburg. During his Masonic career, he was an orator in the lodge Oziris (Osiris) working the Reichel and the Swedish system in St. Petersburg. In 1774, he visited the St. Petersburg lodge of Urania, known as the lodge of Lukin under number 304 in the list of the lodges of the Grand Lodge of England.

738 On Kheraskov, see Chapter 2, footnote 388 on page 135.

739 The notion of "Golden Age" was central to many Rosicrucian manifests. The Golden Age is "The Age when people possessed the same knowledge that Adam had in paradise." Yates, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment, 79.


741 GIM, fond 450, folder 558/b, 1rev: "Zhelannyi vami vek zlatoi, ravenstvo, vol'nost' i pokoi."
Love was shining in all its glory,
and all people belonged to brotherhood,
then everyone was a Freemason.742

History in the mythology of Freemasonry is thus presented as a transition from
one period of light (in the past) to another (in the future) through the period of darkness
and chaos.743 According to the Masonic rhetoric, world history existed only because
time, as a category, emerged with the fall of man and would disappear after man leaves
the world. Time was relative. It was also finite, closed in itself, actually existing only in
“Euclidian” human consciousness: “… What has passed is dark for us; the future is
unknown. We do not know where we are from, what we are, and where we are going.
[We] know only the present.”744 But for Freemasons, once man started his search for the
Golden Age of Astrea, he would be immortal until he found it: “From the moment he
started his experiments even until his discoveries he is not aging at all.”745 History can
be considered a symbolic representation of the destiny of man. Man could return to the
blessed state of light and harmony only if he improved, perfected himself.

In this sense, the whole history of mankind was a history of man, his way to
himself, a continuous Bildung, and the stages of history were only stairs of tests and
growth leading to enlightenment and salvation. The main character of the Masonic
ethos, in general, is a man who is trying to understand, better, and educate himself, find

742 Russkii arkhiv 4 (1916), 444:
Kogda lubov’ v zlatye veki
Blistala vsem v svoei kruse
I v bratstve zhili cheloveki,
Togda masonry byli vse.

743 See Baehr, The Paradise Myth, especially Chapter V.
744 N. P. Barsov, “Iz masonskogo rituala nachala nastolasczego stoletiia,” Istoriiceskaia biblioteka 11
(1878), 13.
745 N. F. Dubrovin, Pis’ma glavneishikh deiatelei v tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra I (St. Petersburg,
1883), 310.
in himself a higher, nobler, internal power and feelings. He is a traveler going though the trials and the acquisition of knowledge to the high truth. Man travels by many different roads, but in the end they all lead to the meeting with the Creator, Russian Freemasons repeatedly insisted. Freemasonry provided a chart of the traveler’s course, a way that, if closely followed, led to the Golden Age.

As this reference to the Golden Age indicates, Russian Freemasons integrated into their thought the elements of medieval mysticism, Rosicrucianism, and kabbalism. This can be explained since on the one hand, in their work of restoring moral values in individuals and society, Freemasons were searching for proper intellectual foundations that could fit specific Russian concerns. Russia did not have a Renaissance, and the Renaissance ideas found their way to Russia almost simultaneously with the Enlightenment theories. In the course of the eighteenth century Russian intellectuals opened for themselves and made their own traditions that were in the process of development in Europe three hundred years before that. That is why the leader of the Moscow circle Schwarz, for instance, used a wide range of sources. “[N]ot satisfied with his own propagation,” he “solicited the aid of great persons holding the same views, like J. Boehme and Lavater, whom he placed very highly and whom he persistently recommended to his listeners” and simultaneously recommended

746 Aptekman, “The Language and The Light. The Kabbalistic Allegory in Russian Literature.”
748 V. V. Sipovskii, N. M. Karamzin, avtor “Pisem russkogo putevstvennika” (St. Petersburg, 1899), 46-51.
Malebranche,\textsuperscript{749} referenced Newton and Leibniz\textsuperscript{750} and extensively criticized Voltaire\textsuperscript{751} and Helvetius.\textsuperscript{752}

In creating their own theories of man and the possibility of his perfection, Russian Freemasons leaned on a rich European tradition. As Nikolai Karamzin put it,

The path to education and enlightenment is the same for all nations; all of them advance on it one after another. Foreigners knew more than Russians, and thus we had to borrow from them, to learn from them, to make use of their experiences. Is it sensible to seek for that which has already been found? Would it have been better if the Russians had built no ships, trained no soldiers? Established no academies, constructed no factories, because none of this was originated by Russians? Which people has not borrowed from another. And must we not equal before we can surpass?\textsuperscript{753}

Russian Freemasons rely heavily on the Western philosophical literature of the time considering the principle of harmony between body and soul, i.e. harmony between man’s physical and spiritual aspects, ideas about interdependence of mind and matter, and attempts to prove the immortality of the soul.\textsuperscript{754}

The spiritual and morality-inducing aims of the Freemasons in Russia may be derived from the extensive interest in foreign authors whose works were translated into Russian and published. Among the modern eighteenth-century authors were F.G. Gellert, A. Haller, E. Young, F.G. Klopstock, Fr. K. Möser, Ch. Fr. Germershausen, and J. Bunyan. At the same time, systematic translations of the European sentimental works

\textsuperscript{749} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 13.
\textsuperscript{750} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 21rev.
\textsuperscript{751} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 5rev.
\textsuperscript{752} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 27rev.
\textsuperscript{753} Karamzin, \textit{Letters of a Russian Traveler}, 219.
of writers like Gellert, Gessner, Rousseau, S. Richardson, and Goethe, paved the way for new ideas and new tastes. However, if we look through the catalogue of the eighteenth-century Masonic libraries in Russia, we also find a translation from Chinese (Kniga o vernosti; Book on Loyalty) or from Hindi (Indiiskii filosof, ili nayka zhit' schastlivoe v obschesvte; Indian Philosopher, or the Science of Happy Living), or an alchemical manuscript (Gebera, tsaria Araviiskogo, ostroumnogo filosofa i istinnogo adepta, lubopitnoe i polnoe khimicheskoe opisanie; Interesting and Complete Description of Geber, King of Arabia, Witty Philosopher and True Adept). Masonic manuscripts in Russian libraries are peppered with citations from and references to Hermes Trismegistus, Pythagoras, Marsilio Ficino, Paracelsus, Fludd, Roger Bacon, von Helmont, Madame Guyon, and the whole pantheon of mystical literature.


These Masonic efforts culminated in creation of a new sensibility epitomized in the writings of Radischev and especially Karamzin. Russian Masons were instrumental in introducing Sentimentalism into Russia and no less in shaping the literary taste and cult of feeling of Karamzin, the chief exponent of the new Russian movement of sensibility.

756 These three books are in OPI GIM.

757 In a characteristic manner, Tolstoy shows that on the recommendation of his spiritual “benefactor,” Pierre Bezukhov devoted some time to solitude and self-examination and reads a devotional work by Thomas à Kempis, in all likelihood the Imitation of Christ, popular in Russian Masonic circles. But among two most popular Masonic readings were Saint-Martin’s Des erreurs et de la vérité (in both the original French version and in the Russian translation) and the Russian translation of Ioann Arendt’s Ob istinnom khristianstve (On True Christianity). The mystical writings of Saint-Martin appealed to Russian Freemasons by their opposition to crude materialism: “... I ask materialists how they could be so blinded that man seems to them to be only a machine? This machine is working, and contains its own beginning in itself.” [...Ja sproshu materialistov, kak mogli oni oslepit' sia do togo, chto im kazhetsia chelovek tokmo mashinou? Sia mashina es'mi deistvuuschaia i soderzhit' v sebe nachalo svoego deistviaa.] Saint-Martin, O zabludheniakh i istine (Moscow: Lopukhin Printing House, 1785), 47-48.

But Freemasons were not uniform in their attitude to Saint-Martin’s ideas. According to Elagin, the book’s appearance in 1777 had quite an effect on the Russian reading public: some considered it madcap, others saw in it concealed Jesuit contrivance, and still more deemed it “fiend of Illuminism.” Elagin himself saw “ignorance” in the evaluation of Des erreurs et de la vérité as a work of the Illuminati and searched for “the most important wisdom in it.” (Elagin, “Zapiska,” 94) Lopukhin named this book “among the first books that inspired me to moral reading” (Lopukhin, “Zapiska,” 20).
A Science of Man as Developed by J. G. Schwarz

By the 1780s the Masonic science of Man that was taught in the Moscow Masonic circle was almost entirely a creation of the German professor Schwarz. The ideological spokesman of Moscow Freemasons, Schwarz actively used his position at Moscow University to spread Masonic ideology through lecture series.

The first of the three series of lectures that Schwarz delivered after his return from Germany in 1782 was on aesthetic criticism, a survey running through ancient, medieval, and eighteenth-century philosophy. The overview included Aristotle, Boileau, Baumgarten, and contemporary foreign and Russian thinkers. The second series, which began in August of 1782, was a private course on the philosophy of history given for the benefit of the students of the Friendly Learned Society at the Masonic house in Moscow. Schwarz's lectures were targeted primarily at the students of the Friendly Learned Society, but were open to many outside listeners. The series lasted until

Schwarz reiterated some of Saint Martin's ideas in his lectures (Tukalevskii, "Novikov i Schwarz"; *Izskaniia russkich masonov* (St. Petersburg, 1911). The Russian translation was published in Lopukhin's printing house. On 27 March 1786 the translation of *Des erreurs et de la vérité* was among six books of the Printing Company that were banned from being published and sold. During Novikov's interrogation, the question number 27 was devoted to the book, and Novikov needed to justify his printing the book by saying that when he published the book, "it was respected by anyone."

758 On the Friendly Learned Society and its Masonic connections, see Chapter 5, especially pages 23-26.

759 The impression produced by Schwarz's lectures was tremendous. According to A. Labzin, who became one of the most noted mystics in the beginning of the nineteenth century,

At the very time when the modish philosophers were being eagerly devoured by the untutored minds, Schwarz took upon himself the noble task of dissipating this ascending darkness, and without any other necessity except his noble motive, opened in his private home lectures of a new kind for all who wanted. With these, he refuted Helvetius, Rousseau, Spinoza, La Mettrie, and others, compared them with other philosophers opposing them, and, by demonstrating to us the difference between them, taught us also to discover the merit of each one. To the listeners, it was as though a new light began to shine! ... The most important, and for that time a dumbfounding phenomenon was the force with which his simple word took away from the hands of many the seductive and godless books in which, it appeared at the time, the entire intellect was contained, and replaced them with the Holy Bible.

(*Biograficheskii slovar*, II, 592)

In the words of another student, by his lectures Schwarz
April of the following year. The third, a widely popular Sunday lecture series entitled
"On Three Types of Knowledge," was also given at the Masonic house in Moscow.760
Schwarz's lectures of all three series have been preserved in the form of notes taken by
his students.761 On a popular level, the questions that Schwarz raised in his lectures
were discussed, almost verbatim, in many Russian Masonry-related magazines.762

In every lecture, Schwarz postulated that Man and his existence in the world
constituted the main mystery, the center of the universe, and "measure of all things." In
the same vein, translated Masonic rituals reminded brothers to "always remember that
man is the most perfect creation."763 Man was a "great miracle," "the most noble and
perfect creation of God,"764 and the idea that man was nothing more than a reasoning

... ennobled out feelings, and made us understand the delicacy and delights of arts and literature,
orderliness of geometry and astronomy, miracles and legitimacy of physiognomy, chiromancy, magic,
and cabala, and supernatural transformations of chemistry; he showed harmony of all sciences among
themselves in studying the secrets of nature, and whether under hieroglyphs or open conclusions
proved the connection between matter and spirit, limits placed to man and nature, and the
indestructibility of the connection between God and man. (Biograficheskii slovar', II, 594)
A more critically minded student disputed Novikov's opinion concerning Schwarz's fine command of the
Russian language:
Like Kant, he sometimes could not find words to express his ideas; in Kant, it was the consequence of
the imperfection of the language, but in [Schwarz] it was due to ignorance of the language.
However, he goes on to say,
No matter how poorly Schwarz knew the Russian language in which he lectured us, the truths spoken
by him were so curious that the older and more obscure the sources from which he abstracted them, the
newer they appeared to us. (Russkii arkhiv (1874), I, 1035)
760 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 190.
761 The lecture notes (or, rather later copies of the lecture notes) can be found in NIOR RGB, fond 14,
folder 680; fond 14, folder 690; fond 147 folder 141; fond 147, folder 141; fond 147, folder 142; fond 178,
folder 9179. Some of Schwarz's ideas can also be found in the hand-written collections of prayers,
quotations, and thoughts in NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 618; fond 14, folder 684; fond 14, folder 689;
possibly fond 14, folder 692-696; the lectures were printed in excerpts in the Biograficheskii slovar',
moskovskikh professorev (Moscow: Universitetskaiia Tipografia, 1855), and in the periodicals published by
Schwarz's students in the nineteenth century, Sionskii vestnik and Drug unoshestva; I. G. Schwarz, "Iz
lektssii (1782-1783)," Filosofskie nauki 1 (1992), 80-81.
762 See, for instance, in the "Discussion on the Immortality of the Soul" the debate about a relationship
between the soul and body; "philosophical discussion on the Trinity within Men. i.e., soul, body and the
third substance," Vecherniaia zaria I (1782), 1-26, 169-84, 265-309.
763 Barsov, "Iz masonskogo rituala," 26: "Vspominai neustanno, chto chelovek est' soversheneiishe
tvorenei."n
764 A. Frankenberg, Gemma magica, ili Magicheski dragotsenii kamen' (Moscow, 1784), 28, 29, 184.
machine that could be continuously perfected by the means of natural sciences seemed blasphemous to Russian Masonic ideologues.

Addressing Voltaire, Schwarz’s student, eighteenth-century Russian Freemason V. A. Levshin\(^{765}\) declared, “Man is a union and the middle point of all Nature…

Everyone sees that man possesses everything that the Earth has internally and externally.”\(^{766}\) Man was an “extraction of all things,” repeatedly stated Russian brothers following Schwarz. With his physical nature, man is connected to the rest of the world, and this connectedness does not allow him to become the perfect man (“true man,” or “new Adam,” as Russian Freemasons often referred to). At the same time, man is God’s creature that has divine elements in his essence. Schwarz lectured that the Creator sent down and implanted a new soul into the material body of each infant born; that this soul was incarnated for the purpose of trial and retribution, and was to be rewarded after death by dwelling in a Heaven of bliss, or to be punished in a hell of torment. Accordingly, the human condition, like the history of the universe, needed to progress through the stages:

1) before conversion, 2) during the conversion, 3) after the conversion.\(^{767}\)

During the conversion (i.e. his life on Earth), man was only a traveler on the way towards his eternal life. Man’s lot was to suffer, recalling his past sins. Through suffering his conscience was awakened, and this was the knowledge of self which gave

\(^{765}\) Vasiliy Alekseevich Levshin (1746-1826), author of more than 50 works; translator of more than 80 books mainly on political economy, agriculture, and home economics; a member of the Theoretical grade and inner Rosicrucian circle and Novikov’s aid in the journals’ publishing during the 1780s. After 1819, he was a member of the lodge that revived the “Theoretical Grade” in Moscow. Author of the early sentimental novel Utrenniki vlublennogo (1779); the series of Russian tales and fables Russkie skazki in ten parts (1780-83); and a utopia, which is often coined as the first Russian science fiction, on the space travel and life on the Moon, Noveisheee puteshestvie, sochinennoe v gorode Beleve,” Sobesednik lubitelei rossiiskogo slova 13-16 (1784).

\(^{766}\) V. A. Levshin, Pis’mo, soderzhaschee nekotorye rassuchdenia o poeme g. Voltera na razrushenie Lissabona (Moscow, 1788), 14-15.

\(^{767}\) Drug unoshestva, 88.
birth to the longing to be reunited with the source of all things, God. The ultimate goal of human life was, according to Schwarz, a union with God. This ideal state in which man was fully united with God and was in possession of a pure spirit could be achieved in three successive stages: through intensive knowledge of oneself, knowledge of Nature, and knowledge of God. Schwarz emphasized the power of feeling and spiritual regeneration, as well as individual illumination to perceive the Grand Architect’s design.

The idea of Man developed by Schwarz has little to do with mechanistic ideas of many enlighteners who saw man as a thinking machine conditioned by external environment. In materialistic philosophy man was regarded as a body of such excellent workmanship in which functions of the brain, spinal cord, nerves, and other organs sufficed to fulfill all his actions of man and to furnish his consciousness, will, emotions, and mental faculties. Freemasons did not deny the mechanical composition of the body. But they insisted that this view excluded altogether the need for, or the very existence of human soul or spirit. In his lectures, Schwarz emphasized that the “Reason, being refined by useless sciences and reinforced by self-love or belief in own abilities makes our imagination bigger, which conveniently brings a person either to the perfect good or the perfect evil.”

Touching upon the ideas of the philosophes who affirmed that man was a perfect machine of the finest structure, manifesting mind, will and action; those who granted man a Soul and Body; and those who conceived of man as spirit, soul, and body, forming a human triad, Schwarz insisted that man was a complex composition of four components: spirit, human soul, animal soul (including intuition and passions), and

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material body. Schwarz taught that human being is made up of a spirit (dugh), a soul (dusha), and a body (telo). He defined spirit as the highest soul (vyshaia dusha), i.e., the spark of original Adam’s soul in man. On the other hand, the soul, anima sensitive was to him an animal soul in Man (dusha zhivotnaia), ruled by human passions and desires, which may lead a person away from a spiritual goal. Finally, the body was anima vegetative, which reflected physical feelings.769

Schwarz elevated heart, soul, feelings, faith, poetic inspiration, and imagination to the level of reason. He insisted that human beings were capable of “understanding” not only with their reason, but also with their heart. Moreover, reason could claim its knowing power only if aided by feeling, intuition, inspiration, and revelation. Going in the same direction, Tolstoy’s character Mason Bazdeev in the War and Peace castigates those who strive to understand God and his Creation as “more foolish and unreasonable than a little child, who playing with the parts of a skillfully made watch dares to say that, as he does not understand its use, he does not believe in the master who made it.” For ages, as Bazdeev explains to Pierre, Freemasons labored “to attain that knowledge [of God and Universe] and are still infinitely far from our aim; but in our lack of understanding we only see our weakness and His greatness…” But to come to “know Him [God] is hard.”770 In his utopia Noveishe puteshestvie, through the character living in a “perfect” society in the Moon, the author Freemason V. Levshin insisted that “It is enough that we acknowledge our omnipotent Maker who created all these wonderful

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769 “Raznye zamechaniai pokoinogo Schwartza,” in OR RNB, QIII-112, 13. As Marina Aptekman points out, in the copy of Schwarz’s lectures in RGB, the terms for three forces are written in both Russian and Hebrew, and states on the basis of her analysis that his teaching about the three forces derives from kabbalah. Aptekman, “The Language and the Light,” 91.
770 Tolstoy, War and Peace, 382.
things... and [we] do not doubt that the cause of their existence is in the omnipotent God’s will.” In the society that Narsim, a man who travels on the Moon, finds there

[a] thorough exploration of the unknown, and to say even more, aspiring to know the unknown is considered ... as utter foolishness. With his limited reason, man cannot and is not supposed to understand or penetrate the unyielding shield of the wise intentions of the Creator.\textsuperscript{771}

Although the ultimate “knowledge” is hardly attainable, an internal sensibility is inherent in every human being, and can and should be developed by a proper education.\textsuperscript{772} To understand things outside of them, stated Schwarz, people had nerves and feelings that were intractably connected into one “Sensus Comunis: the main sense, i.e. the feeling of the soul with which [we] feel beauty of a thing without further investigation, without any syllogisms.\textsuperscript{773} When looking at a beautiful thing, our “reason dissolves in sweet sensations.” When looking and feeling “a sublime thing, all our

\textsuperscript{771} Levshin, “Noveishee puteshestvie”: Dovol’no, chto my priznaim vsemogushego tvorsta, sozdavshego vse sii chudesnye predmety, ezheminutno vstrechaushiesia glazam nashiim, i onud’ ne somnevaemisia, chob prichina im byla, krome vseis’ noi voli boga. Issledovat’ podrobnno neizvestnoe, a naibolee postigat’ nevozmozhnoe, postavliaetsia u nas krai ne glupost’u... takaia melkaia tvar’, kakov chelovek i s takim oranicchennym smyslom, nikogda ne mozhet postignut’ ili proniknut’ tverdeishu zavesu premudrykh namerennii tvorstva.

\textit{Noveishee puteshestvie} Levshina is often labeled the first work of fiction in Russia. In this utopia, the character Narsim, who belongs to the “society that labors to comprehend the exact essence of the worlds” [iz chisla obschestva, trudiaschegosia nad poznaniem tochnogo suschestva mirov], travels to the Moon and finds there an ideal society in which “the Golden Age” reigns. There are no clergy, soldiers, or monarchs (page 151), and everyone lives according to her own conscience. In his turn, the Moon-dweller Kvalboko travels to Earth and finds there an utter hell: wars, hatred, and “false enlightenment.” The only haven on Earth that Kvalboko is able to find is in Russia, the country that is governed by the wise monarch Catherine II.

\textsuperscript{772} This is an idea that Schwarz reiterated in many of his lectures. See, for instance, NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 13rev: “Sila vnutrenniiia chuvstvitel’nost’ ili vospitaniem ili temperamentom poluchaet razlichnye sposobnosti, razlichnuiu uprugost’, i poeliku ona prosveschena, toliko udobrena i volia.”

\textsuperscript{773} NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 23rev: “Sensus Komunis: t.e. chuvstvo dushi, po koemu bez dal’nego razyskania, bez silogizmov, chuvstvuem krasotu veschi.”
spiritual forces mobilize and take a step back.” Complicated by these “human” components, reason itself acquired more dimensions and departed from the mechanistic (“Euclidian”) reasoning of the *philosophes*. It was this complex mixture of human emotions, feelings, and reasoning that made people akin to the Creator. Man was a world himself, and just “like God’s imagination is able to create, so is human imagination.” Masons postulated that humanity’s very existence, with its rational and irrational side, constituted a perfectly harmonious system. On the physical level, a human was deemed a resemblance and copy of the greater world. Repeating the Rosicrucian postulate, leading Russian Masonic theorists insisted that man was a microcosm, and the world (or, Nature) was a macrocosm. Man was not alone in the world; he was “an extraction from nature, in which the wise creator breathed a breath of life.” All the elements of Nature, spirit, and matter come together and clash in a man, and this is his strength and his weakness. “Man is … the creature that connects moral with material; he is the last among the spirits and the first among the material creatures” – so Schwarz defined man’s place in the hierarchy. Nature in Masonic philosophy represented not only the macrocosm but also macroanthropos, something dependent and defined by the end directions and goals of man’s development.

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774 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 21: “Pri krasote, nash razum rasplyvaetsia v priiatnikh voobrazheniakh, t.e. chuvstvuet sladosti. Pri chuvstvakh ogromnogo, vse nashi dukhovnie sily nazad shagat....”

775 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 19rev: “Chelovek sam est’ mir; i kak Bozheskoe voobrazhenie tvorit, tak i chelovecheskoe voobrazhenie tvorit.”

776 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 564, 40rev: “Chelovek est’ izvlechenie iz vsei naturi, v kotoroe premydryi tvorets vdkohnul dykhanie zhizni.”

The organic unity of the world was one of the foundational ideas of Russian Freemasons. This union was not a simple sum of the elements, but the building blocks connected into one organism by the ties of universal sympathy. The whole living totality of the world was created in a specific harmonious order out of love and benevolence. The idea of the organic body appealed to those Freemasons who had to withstand the authority of the State and established Church hierarchies and correlated with their need to legitimize the inspirational freedom of the spirit. In his lectures, Schwarz pursued the relationship between the heterogeneous elements opposing each other to form a harmonious union, and the universe seemed to him a dynamic, living whole that affirmed the organic unity of nature and humanity.

Like man, Nature was “the unity of forces of movement and resistance, even the forces of opposition that are constantly trying to destroy each other.” The constant beneficial rotation of elements that the “infinite Wisdom” guided and coordinated the forces of Nature, explained V. A. Levshin in his discussion of Voltaire’s *Destruction of Lisbon*. Mutual attraction, “magnetism,” the notion often used by the Freemasons by the end of the century, strengthened the ties of mutual love and affection.

According to Professor Schwarz, in the grand scheme of things, individual’s perfection and high purpose were not, however, in his likeness to the world of Nature, but in building the “Temple of the Living God.” God was in man and man in God, and

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salvation was to rise through love to the life of the “spirit,” to union with God. However, at this time, as Schwarz asserted, man was not able to reach the desired union with God. Man was perfect in the past but had fallen from grace. After the fall (Adam’s fall from grace) man lost his purity, and with it all his knowledge about God and Nature that were given to him by God himself. The fall was reflected not in man’s perpetual life in sin and pain, but the loss of the knowledge he once had. A fallen man lost his harmony and his moral essence and donned on a decaying body.

Created from the “dark soil,” man, at the same time, in potential was “the most perfect of all the creatures” because he belonged “to heavens with his reasoning soul,” and had, in his essence, an ability to comprehend the world. But without the realization of his potential, this vulnerable, sinful, imperfect, fragile, fallen, mortal man “cannot rise to the skies. They are unreachable to him.” The goal of the “regal science” of Freemasonry was pronounced by Schwarz as a “secretive moral revival” of fallen Nature and this “dark and decaying temple of the fallen essence” through the enlightenment of Man.

780 Even the fragile body was “noble and elegant, [even] with its numerous imperfections and defects,” OPI GIM, fond 281, opis’ 1, folder 180, 6.
781 According to the medieval mystical elements borrowed by the Russian Freemasons, bodies were not made of earth only, but the Matter in its various forms. Medieval philosophy also added heat, then considered as an element, but now described as a mode of motion.
782 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 88 (108)-88rev (108rev): “Iz vsekh tvarei sovershenneishaia est’ chelovek. Razumnaiia dusha po nature svoei nebesna, i v osnovanii imeet sposobnost’ pocherpat’ v samoi sebe poznanie veschei i ponimat’ vse chto velikiie mery i vse tvari v sebe zakluchaut.”
784 ORKR NBMU, fond V. V. Velichko, inv. number 3975-6-60, 4rev. (“Instruktsia masteru lozhi”): “tsarstvennaia nauka – eto tainsvvennoe dukhovnoe vozrozhdenie padshei natury, etoi temnoi i tlennoi khraminy padshego estestva.”
Through the idea of "enlightenment" the Russian Masonic ideologues attempted to find a possibility of moral renaissance for Man and Nature. Man, alienated as he was from the source of light through his fall, was, nevertheless, a microcosm of the macrocosm, the universe, and the three components of man -- the body, soul, and spirit -- corresponded to the hierarchical gradations in the great Chain of Being, from the lowest matter to the highest spiritual being.\footnote{Biograficheskii slovar', II, 594.} Russian Masonic ideologues claimed that they could raise a new moral man and restore the broken Chain of Being. To help man make the ascent from body through soul to the life of "spirit" and union with God, they proposed joining together for the common good and making "chain by uniting ... hands."

For the path to enlightenment, the Bible, the book of inspiration, was the only legitimate authority. The Bible contained a plan for the restoration and working of the rough stone that could be read as a coded message sent by the Great Architect of the Universe to those who could understand it.\footnote{According to Schwarz's scheme, Freemasons were heirs of the Jewish sects (he especially pointed out the Essenes and the Theraputes). Essenes left their knowledge of the mysteries to the medieval Rosicrucians, and the Rosicrucians transferred the knowledge to the Masons (Lektsia o trekh poznaniiakh, 8).} The book of Genesis written by Moses also retained remnants of the "spark of the light," and that is why Freemasons in Russia analyzed the book thoroughly along with the Bible. "God's word did not disappear from earth, because what is said by God once cannot be lost or destroyed." insisted Schwarz in his lectures on the types of knowledge.\footnote{Lektsia o trekh poznaniiakh, 8: "Slovo Bozhiie ne ischezlo na zemli; ibo chto edinozhdo skazano Bogom, to propast' ili istrebit'sia nikogda ne mozhet."} Schwarz encouraged his students to look for hidden messages in the Bible by saying that the first three books of Genesis were written
in "kabalistic manner" (kabbalisticheskim obrazom) and that "for their [books'] understanding it is necessary to work and try to interpret them with God's help."  

Professor Schwarz taught that instead of opposing faith, science should unite with faith to prove the omnipotence of the Creator. 

Moskovskoe ezhevesiachnoe izdanie (The Moscow Monthly Edition) expressed the same hope of creating a positive system of moral values based on the reconciliation of faith and reason:

Reason demonstrates the existence of God, that is, the subject of our faith. Reason recognizes order in the world, our inner consciousness of good and evil, life of Christ, and the victory of his teaching. Faith in its turn does not oppose itself to reason, it does not make us its own enemies, or take away the satisfactions of life; it only demands the curbing of excesses.

The Freemason was to learn not only about himself, but also about the world around him through learning the main Masonic "sciences." To the question, "What sciences should be known to a Freemason?" a Russian version of the catechism offers poetry, music, painting, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and architecture. Arts and sciences were not classified by the Russian ideologues as "worldly futility," but often contemporary methods of sciences were looked upon with suspicion because they aimed

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788 Lektsia o trekh pozniyiakh, 10: "dlia ponimaniiia ikh nužno neusypno trudit'sia i starat'sia davat' im tolkovaniiia pri pomochi Boga." Among such attempts to interpret the Bible and the Book of Genesis, see, for instance, Pasterjskoe poslanie k istinnym i spravedlivim cv. k...m drevniaia sistemi, translated from German around 1785-86 (OPI GIM, fond 398, opis' 1, folder 23).

789 It is characteristic that a subtitle of the Masonic magazine Vecherniia zaria (The Evening Glow) printed by Novikov was "containing the best pieces from of the Ancient and the most Contemporary Writers that open to man a way to knowledge of God, himself, and his duties that are presented both in sermons and examples..." [... zakluchauschaia v sebe luchshie mesta drevnikh i noveishikh pisatelei, otkryvauchie cheloveku put' k poznaniiu Boga, samogo sebia i svoikh dolzhnostei, kotorye predstavlenny kak v nравochnyiakh, tak i v primerakh onykh.] The Evening Glow began to appear in March 1782, after Schwarz's return to Moscow from his trip abroad, and was devoted to the exposition of the same themes which Schwarz considered in his lectures. The format of the magazine was changed so that a theoretical treatise, probably written by Schwarz himself, expounding the main tenets of his system follows the discussion of each issue. For example, "Philosophical discussion on the trinity of man, or Essay to prove, drawing from reason and inspiration, that man is composed of 1) body, 2) soul, 3) spirit," "Discussion on knowledge of self," or "Discussion on the harmony of inspiration with the wisdom of God" (Vecherniia zaria 1, ix).

790 "Vstupenie," Moskovskoe ezhevesiachnoe izdanie 1, xxi.
either at showing that God did not exist or showing that God and the Universe were ultimately knowable.

Types of Knowledge

Schwarz’s main focus was in the consideration of the relationship between morality and knowledge. He divided all knowledge into three distinct categories. The first was called *lubopytnoe* (curious) and it “nourished our reason but is not essential to eternal good, to life in the future or restfulness of the spirit.” The second category of knowledge was *priiamoe* (pleasant) and, according to Schwarz, was comprised of music, painting, dancing, and the like. The pleasant knowledge “satisfies our senses and nourishes reason by cultivating imagination,” which was “the mouth of our soul through which we taste the knowledge of the spiritual and moral.” In the Pietist tradition, Schwarz insisted that spiritual growth was inexorably linked to imagination and emotion. Both curious and pleasant knowledge were useful and should be cultivated as gifts of God to man, but they were nevertheless double-edged weapons which could bring harmful consequences unless checked by the third, *poleznoe* (profitable), knowledge. This one came from initiation and inspiration that taught people “the meaning of true love, prayer, and aspiration of the spirit towards higher knowledge.”

These three types of knowledge can, in fact, be identified as rational knowledge, feeling, and mystical revelation. As Schwarz pointed out, although they could be considered equally important ways to knowledge, in the eighteenth century feeling and

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792 *Drug unoshestva I* (1813), 93.
793 *Biograficheskii slovar*, vol. II, 595.
mystical revelation were dangerously neglected in favor of reason. Disillusioned with rationalism as the sole vehicle for comprehending higher truth, Schwarz insisted that knowledge should be a live process, a continuous development rather than compilation of stern historical, philosophical, or mathematical doctrines. Like many Freemasons by the end of the century, he believed that practical reason was incapable of settling the ultimate questions of life that involved God and morality. In his lectures he demonstrated that all philosophical systems that “pretended to tackle philosophical questions by sheer force of reason” ended in antinomies and contradicted each other.\textsuperscript{794} He attacked French philosophes, especially Helvetius, who recognized only the first type of knowledge and placed exclusive emphasis on the need to improve man’s material conditions.

Schwarz advocated overcoming the boundaries between subject and object and insisted that subjectivity was not only inevitable but necessary dimension of human ontological processes. But by stressing the purity of the instinctive, natural person over the rational, deductive one, Schwarz created (if unintentionally) the elevation of the individual over the group and imagination over the reason. He proposed to accept the role of the thinking self in perception and to reflect its powers back upon the self in striving for a higher kind of objectivity. Thus, in confronting the phenomena selflessly, man could come to know himself. But to know himself is to change himself. Self-knowledge is already the beginning of self-transformation. Freemasonry, according to Schwarz, was not only a science of man; it was a living and constantly changing science of man. In identifying knowledge as a multifaceted process, he appealed to the

\textsuperscript{794} Biograficheskii slovar', vol. II, 592.
sensibility of the younger Masons and at the same time provided them with a philosophical foundation for Sentimentalism.

Schwarz also insisted on using analogy as a method of reasoning. Analogy used a geometrical proof, in which each step was self-evident because it was created anew each time upon the stage of the mind: “In meditation upon the Works of nature I have been induced to think that an analogical Method of reasoning is of admirable use in the invention of Philosophical Truth.” If everything in the Universe was in a harmonious union, and “the great mechanist [the Grand Architect of the Universe] created a stupendous rotation and conformity one among another,” then analogy could be taken as the best way to learn about the world and the nature without losing sight of the Creator of everything. Schwarz insisted that since “He [the Grand Architect of the Universe] loves to vary the same mode of operation a thousand ways,” this “curious diversity” points to the fact that “all his works seem … [to] equally proclaim him their common founder and contributor.”795 In using analogy, the investigator intended the relationship and participated fully in the process.

The intimate intertwining of the human being into nature forced the ideologues of Russian Freemasonry to overcome the experience of alienation common to “objective” Enlightenment science. They propagated a scientific investigation that was individualized and reflected in a process profoundly dependent on the person and his capacities to see pattern, form, and the archetype within the multiplicity of nature. Through the idea that science is open, Masonic theorists postulated that the rich content of Nature is penetrated and illuminated by human activities which were shaped by the

795 NIOR RGB, fond 147, edinitsa khraneniia 142, “Lektsii Schwarza” (1782), 22rev-23.
hand of Nature and God. Freemasons invited those philosophers to spend time observing “the great universe as it is available to our eyes and look into what and how everything happens there” as opposed to “thinking how everything could be happening there, as it often happens to our philosophers: they are not patient enough to continue their observations and rush to their study desk to plaintively deliver that little that they managed to consider.”

By the end of the century the seeds of the “proper scientific method” were firmly entrenched in Russian thought. As Pypin explains, Russian Freemasons refuted *Voltaireanism* because it “did not have any roots in their own, logically thought-through ideas.” Thus, for instance, the “awe-inspiring” Newton was revered by the Freemasons in Russia as the “only philosopher” who “could perceive that two opposite central forces were the beginning of the circle of life that emanates all things.” Schwarz and his student Davydovskii insistently propagated the idea that rational thinking should be a necessary instrument on the way to moral enlightenment. They even justified Voltaire, whose works were not dangerous by themselves, but only when wrongly understood by ill-intentioned people. The esoteric and mystical ideas could not

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796 Karamzin, *Pis’ma russkogo putshestvennika*, 476: Ia veru, chto mudrost’ gospodnia prevoskhodit mudrost’ vsekh nashikh filosofov i, sledovatel’no, mozhel naiti druzhe, bolee udobnye sposoby k soznaniu i sokhraneniu svoikh tvorenii, chem te, kotorye pripisyvatsia nashimi Leibnitsami i Bonnetami i dumau, chto luchshe bylo by nabrudat’ velikoe mirozdanie, kak ono est’, i naskol’ko eto dostupno nashemu glazu, vsmatrivat’ sia, kak vse tam proiskhodit, nezheli zadumyvat’ sia o tom, kak vse moglo by tam proiskhodit’, a eto chasto sluchaetsia s nashimi filosofami: oni ne dovol’no terpilivy, chtoby prodolzhit’ svoi nabudenii, a speshat k svoemu pis’mennomu stolu, chtoby zhalobno izlozhit’ pod tiazhest’u svoikh dogadok to nemnogoe, chto oni uspeli razgliadet’.

797 Pypin, “Russkoe masonstvo,” 7: “Oni otkazyvalis’ ot vol’nodumstva ochen’ legko, potomu chto i vol’nodumstvo ne imelo nikakikh kornei v sobstvennoi, logicheski produmannoi misli.”

satisfy Russian intellectuals if they did not contain any rational grain. Davydovskii, for instance, customarily concluded his lectures with the words: “Under the shining star of Reason, let’s place the Divine Tables of God’s precepts in the middle of our hearts, so that the true light can enlighten them.”

Implications of the Science of Man

-- Literature and Art

According to Schwarz, for reaching perfection, the cultivation of man’s moral qualities was infinitely more important than the cultivation of reason:

It is necessary to know that, excluding pride, self-assertion (samstvennost’) and physical love, all other fundamental motivations [of man] can serve the true well being of mankind. But we do not take advantage of them, and muffle them up within us, worrying in our education more about bringing the organization unto perfection than about perfecting our external and internal inclinations and feelings: will, reason, and taste. We leave them without notice whereas we should cultivate them above everything else as the cause of our happiness or misfortune.

In literature, music, architecture, and painting are united by the same sentiment there was a common element: “soul.” It is only by employing “soul” that man could creatively learn about nature, society, and himself. Occupation with literature could divert man from the sources of sins, including physical desire, love of gold, and pride:

The source of our imperfection is the imperfection of thoughts; and since thoughts are the source of all our perfections and imperfections, then in order to

799 Lavrentii Iakovlevich Davydovskii (Davidovskii), in 1781 was a student of Moscow University, supported by the Druzheskoe uchenoe obschestvo. In 1780, he wrote articles for Novikov’s magazine Utrennii svet and in 1782 – in Schwarz’s magazine Vecherniia zarya. Davydovskii was a member of the Obschestvo universitetskikh pitomchev and of a high-ranking Mason in the lodge Osirisa (Oziris) in Moscow.


801 Drug unoshestva, 95.
bring them into order or harmony with the help of imagination it seems necessary to train young people in literary sciences, music, and painting, and entertain them with the harmony of nature, which by its beauty attracts man’s feelings, makes them tenderer, more amenable to true love, and leads them into rapture. Let [the young people] notice the activities of nature; guide them to wonder about this order; bring thoughts up to the source of nature, and then, at last, a feeling of love for God will spring up in them.802

Although it is usually assumed that eighteenth-century Russian Freemasons denounced art and traditional sciences as dangerous amusements of reason and instead propagated mystical asceticism, Masonic rhetoric contradicts this opinion.803 As is explained in a hand-written collection, every child of this world had weaknesses, such as “pride and high-mindedness, futile pride and many other sins.”804 The perfectibility of man meant that man and world were not evil, and should not be hated. In translated published and hand-written Masonic literature we find many examples of the Renaissance mystics emphasizing “detachment of the heart, i.e. of our will and power of feeling, from all material things” to arrive at the feeling of peace, and “overall pleasure,” as Pordadze stated in his Bozhestvennaia metafizika (translated from German Götliche und Wahre Metaphysica (Holy and True Metaphysics).805 Ioann Arendt in chapter 14 of his Ob istinnom khristianstve, pointed out, “a true Christian should hate his life in this world and learn to loath the world as the Christ did.” In chapter 23 he tried to prove that a man who wanted to “grow and develop in Christ” should not visit the lay world often.

802 Drug unoshestva, 93-94.
803 A. I. Nezelenov, N. I. Novikov, izdatel’ zhurnalov 1769-1785 (St. Petersburg, 1875); 81:
Everything that is related to the life on this earth, not only the subjects of the material world, but what supplies the human spirit, i.e. art, science, everything was rejected by Freemasonry... it does not allow any pleasures and attachments; everything earthly should serve a man as a mere source for establishing the basis of morality and preaching.
804 Novyi katekhisis [ol’nikh] k[armenshikov], stat’ia 3: “gordost’ i vosokoumie, suetnuu chest’ i prochie mnozhaishie grekhi, nahodiashiesia v chadakh mira.”
The mystic Johannes Tauler offered the same ideas. In his *Ezhdnevnoe ispytanie sovesti* Tauler asked himself in self-confession: "do I avoid dances, and also games and musical amusements, as the pleasures and attractions to the forbidden worldly and sinful desires?"

But the theories of Russian Freemasons did not necessarily completely emulate these sentiments. Although the third point of the oath in the "theoretical grade of the Solomon [sic] sciences," the fourth degree of the Rosicrucianism so popular among Moscow Freemasons, the members were asked to "renounce [themselves] from worldly futility," the teachings of the first three degrees inspired Freemasons to use art and sciences for their own moral and intellectual betterment.

Accordingly, Schwarz understood science and art as springing from one source, as pervaded by one spirit rather than being aspects of human culture and personality that are in need of unification. In his lectures, Schwarz castigated only the art that was cold and excessively rational: "I pity a cold judge of art, who, while others are immersed in feeling, finds time to explain the rules to his neighbor."\(^{806}\) Schwarz emphasized the role of art and literature in well-balanced human development. In the fourteenth lecture on the three types of knowledge, while talking about the education of the youth, he gave the following advice to the educators "to organize and harmonize their [the young people's] thoughts, it is required, as it seems, to exercise them in *belles lettres*, music, drawing, and entertain them with the harmony of nature."\(^{807}\)

\(^{806}\) NIOR RGB, fond 14, edinita khraneniiia 689, 7: Schwarz, lectures, 14-14rev: "sozhaleu o holodnom sud’e iskusstva, kotoryi, togda kak drugie oschusshaut, nahodit esche vremia iz ‘asniat’ svoemu sosedu pravila."

\(^{807}\) NIOR RGB, fond 178, folder 9179, Schwarz's lectures, lecture 14 (February 17), 89: "Dlia privenedia ikh myslei v poriadok ili garmoniu, nuzhno, kazhetsia, molodykh ludei uprazhniat’ v slovestnykh naukakh, v muzyke, v zhivopisi i zanimat’ ikh garmoniei prirody."
Literature was among the most effective ways of influencing people's deepest emotions. As A. M. Kutuzov wrote to Karamzin from Berlin in 1791, “[Our] writings are the essence of our [inner] conditions.” It is through writing and reading that “the chain of holding hands” (tsep’ spletennykh ruk) could be transformed into a “chain of hearts” (tsep’ serdets). People’s hearts were to be captivated and then conquered. In the Instruction to the Master of the Lodge it is pointed out, “In a sensitive person there is an inner man in a deep sleep; to wake this sleeping [inner] man strong and abrupt punches into the sensitive person are required.” Poetry, especially lyrical, provided unprecedented means for influencing people’s feelings and emotions. In a Novikov-published translation from German, poetry is characterized as the “expression that aims at reaching the highest degree of an emotional perfection in every subject.” For Masons in Russia the poet was a solitary philosopher, priest and magician initiated into the highest and the deepest secrets of the universe and possessing a rare ability to use the symbolic language-code of Mother Nature. Writing poetry was among most important parts of the Masonic work in the creation of the “divine science.”

While awakening the senses was important, in educating the heart literature could do a disservice. Ideally, in educating non-Masons, the writer-Mason did not need to

808 A. M. Kutuzov in Russkii istoricheski zhurnal book 1-2 (1917), 139: “Sochinenia sut’ izobrazheniia vnutrennego nashego sostoiania.”
809 Cited in V. I. Sakharov, “Masonskaia proza: istoriya, poetika, teoriia.” in Masonskaia i russkaia literatura XVIII-XIX vv. (Moscow: Editoria URSS, 2000), 193: “V cheloveke chuvstvennom lezhit gluboko usiplennii chelovek vnutrenni; dla vozbuzychdeniia sego spiaschego potrebni sil’nie i razkie udareniiia v cheloveka chuvstvennogo.” The notion of “inner man” was borrowed from Boehme. The “indescribable difference between inner and outer man” was likened to the “difference between light and darkness that cannot embrace the light.” NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 102, 9 (“Voprosy prigotovleniia”): “Neopisuemai raznost’ mezhdu vnutrennim chelovekom i vneshnim, podobnaia razlichiu mezhdu svetom i t’mour, kotoraia sveta obnion ne mozhet.” The inner man was the remnants of the inner spark given by the Grand Architect of the Universe before man’s fall. To find an inner man in oneself meant to reach the highest level of perfection, to make oneself closer to the Creator.
amaze his readers by the role of his salon wit or position himself as a high-strung teacher of life. He was not supposed to strive for wide recognition for his literary talents, desire literary success, fame and honors (and the famed Voltaire here was the main villain). The writer-Mason was the reader’s brother, a wise friend and unostentatious advisor who enlightened and healed imperfections of human spirit, and positively affected an ailing mind and a clouded reason. He thoughtfully led his readers up the stairs of perfection of ennobled notions and secret knowledge.

Eighteenth-century Russian Masonic theorists also recognized that not only noble feelings and emotions could influence the reader, but also the story’s narrative. In this case, not the emotions, but the mind of the reader could be transformed. Schwarz compared authors, their approaches, styles, and subject matters to drinks: “some of them are like water; others are like wine; and others are like alcohol. Reading of some [authors] does nothing but relax, while reading of others strengthen.” Thus, for instance, “the French, trying to soften the teaching, weakened it; but the stoics made [the readers] think by compressing it.” Without hesitation, Schwarz advised the young generation devote time and attention to solid books and theories.  

As opposed to the novel that as a genre was brought from the West, Russian popular tales, part and parcel of native Russian tradition, reflected specifically Russian concern with feeling and heart. V. A. Levshin published his eight-volume adaptations of

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811 As I consider in the next chapter, this attitude to non-religious literature, especially novels, was often reflected in the direction that the publishing activities of Moscow Freemasons took in the 1780s.
812 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 142, Schwarz’s lectures, 2rev: “Avtoryi ves’ma khorosho sranvivaetsia s pitiiami. inye iz nikh kak voda, drugie kak vino, tret’i kak spirt, odnih ochtenie nichego bole ne prinosit kak razslablenie, drugie ukrepliat. My vidim, chto frantsyzy, staraias razzhidit’ uchenie, ego rasslabili; no stoiki szhimaia sebia zastavili razmyshliat’. Sovetuetsia molodezhi zanimat’ sia tverdymi a ne zhidkimi pisaniami.”
the Russian tales in the Novikov printing house in 1780-1783. In the introduction to the collection Levshin pointed out that

Stories and tales have existed in all the nations in all times; they left us the true indications of the instructional inscriptions of the ancient [people] of each country and [their] traditions. Russia has hers [her popular tales], but these are kept only in memory.\textsuperscript{813}

Many Russian Freemasons were involved in the discovery of those “Russian” ("russkie," as defined by Levshin), “slavonic” ("slavenskie," M. D. Chulkov\textsuperscript{814}) tales and “ancient wonders” ("starinnye dikovinki," M. I. Popov\textsuperscript{815}). Combining the genre of tale with the influence that poetry was thought to have on emotions, by the end of the eighteenth century many Russian intellectuals turned to a Russian bylina, a poetic heroic narrative carrying a moralizing grain.

At the same time, in concord with developing ideas, a new concept of man emerged and, as a consequence, a more individualized hero replaced the classical,

\textsuperscript{813} "Romany i skazki byli vo vse vremena u vsekh narodov; oni ostavili nam verneishie nachertaniia drevnikh kazhdoi strany narodov i obyknovenii. Rossiiia immeet takie svoi, no onye khrianiatsia tol’ko v pamiati," in Levshin, \textit{Russkie skazki}.

\textsuperscript{814} Vasilii Vasil’evich Chulkov (1743(?)-1792) was educated in Moscow University. In 1781, was an army colonel. Chulkov was a founding member of the Druzheskoe Uchenoe Obchestvo and, according to Novikov’s testimony in 1792, was among 14 founders of the Printing Company with his own 5000 rubles. In 1787, he was among five Freemasons who bought a house in Moscow to make it a Masonic center. In November 1791, the “brigadier Chulkov” signed the termination act of the Printing Company. Chulkov was very active in the Moscow Masonic circle, and throughout his life a member of at least seven lodges, including Moscow Directory of the Eighth Province under the guidance of Theden; Moscow lodge of Sphinx; Rosicrucian inner lodge of Theoretical degree; St. Petersburg lodge of Astrea; St. Petersburg-Moscow lodge (Kapitul) Latona; and St. Petersburg lodge of Urania. Together with Popov he was involved in the attempts at creating a “slavic mythology” on the example of the Greek and Roman mythology which resulted in the creation of the series of tales \textit{Slavenskie drevnosti, ili Priklucheniiia slavenskih kniazei} in 1770-1771.

\textsuperscript{815} Mikhail Ivanovich Popov (1742-1790(?)) made his name as an actor in 1757, later a student at the Shliakhetskii Cadet Corps in St. Petersburg, but had to move to Moscow. In 1765-67 he was a student at Moscow University. After 1767, he worked as a “writer” for the government and cooperated in Novikov’s magazines \textit{Truten’} (\textit{The Drone}) and \textit{Zhivopisets} (\textit{The Painter}). Since 1772, he was an active member of the Sobranie Universitetskikh Pitomtsev involved in the translation and publishing of foreign literature. In 1773-75 he frequently visited the St. Petersburg lodge of Urania that was considered an “English” lodge and was number 304 in the list of the Grand Lodge of England. After 1776, the lodge worked in seven degrees, and Popov was named a candidate for the initiation into the seventh degree of the Scotch Knight by Elagin.
conventional one by the end of the century. The elevation of feeling and sentiment to a level equal to reason in the creative process resulted in a more individualized, intense introspective work, bearing the stamp of its creator. The new hero was an individual with a unique personality. He was emotionally intense, sensitive and idealistic. Alienated from life, he clashed with the reality and defeated, fled from it. Such is the nature of the heroes in Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and Rousseau’s *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), which in turn provided the models for the heroes and heroines of the Russian sentimental tales and novels: Fedor Emin’s *Letters of Ernst and Dorara* (1766), Nikolai Emin’s *Roza, A Partially True and Original Tale*, P. L’voy’s *A Russian Pamela, or the History of Maria, a Virtuous Peasant Girl* (1789), and Karamzin’s *Poor Liza* (1792). If we define Russian Sentimentalism (or pre-Romanticism) as in essence the “transference of allegiance from reason to the heart but with a strong retention of classical restraint,” a meeting point between Classicism and Romanticism, then a correspondence of its ideas and the ideas propagated by Freemasons in Russia after the 1770s becomes apparent.

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818 In his lectures on aesthetics, Schwarz emphasized a transitional shift from the rational aesthetics of Boileau to the aesthetics of sensibility advocated by Ch. Bateaux in his *Les Beaux Arts réduits à une meme principie* (1747). Schwarz was the first professor who lectured on Bateaux in Russia. His students followed the lead. For instance, for Karamzin’s indebtedness to Bateaux, see Nebel, *N. M. Karamzin, a Russian Sentimentalist*, 88-90. Compare also H. Rother, *N. M. Karamzins Europäische Reise: Der Beginn des russischen Romans* (Bad Hamburg, Berlin, Zürich: Gehlen, 1968), 59-62, A. Mashkin, “Esteticheskai teoriia Bateaux i lirika Derzhavina,” *Vestnik obrazovania i vospitania* (Kazan’, 1916); *Istoriia estetiki*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1964), 376-89; Peter Brang, “A. M. Kutuzov als Vermittler des europäischen Sentimentalismus in Russland,” *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 30 (1962): 44-57.
-- Alchemy, Chemistry, and Physiognomy

Freemasons believed in direct correspondence and communion between human psychic inner world and external nature, and no subject within the intersecting realms of man's imagination and physical world, including alchemy, physiognomy, or chiromancy, could be excluded from the legitimate sphere of interest. In addition, as I mentioned earlier, Russia did not undergo the Western European Renaissance; therefore, the classical revival, and with it the trends of physiognomy, astrology, and alchemy entered Russia rather late. While in the West, the pursuit of these "sciences" was at its peak several centuries earlier, Russia remained relatively isolated from most Western developments until the large-scale Westernization. Freemasons thought of esoteric sciences as useful for the betterment of man and enthusiastically promoted them. A significant part of Freemasons in Russia was toying with the ideas of Rosicrucianism, fascinated by a theory of nature and the principles of alchemy and astrology on which it rested. They treasured the secret knowledge of the hidden cosmic forces and of the ultimate harmony of the world of which Man was a vital extract of all essences.

Criticism of the *philosophes*, stress on religiosity and moral temperance and recognition of the irrational undercurrents of the human mind could develop into extreme mysticism, obscurantist asceticism, rejection of learning as such, or excessive interest in occult. In his famous lectures Schwarz employed Boehme's cosmological ideas to describe the genesis of the world, from the gigantic outflow of the elements of divine nature forming the ideal universe to the stark tragedy of its temporary detachment from the divine matrix. Magic, for instance, was considered to be "that Godly science, with
the help of which the Magi find the natural light and natural spirit. The Magus is the
searcher of truth with whom nature speaks in all its created form through its spirit and
explains its signature."819 In the study of the “practical” sciences, Russian Freemasons
placed special emphasis on alchemy (and chemistry), astronomy, and physiognomy. As
Elagin indicated, Freemasons were looking for a “larger philosophy that could include
not only an infinite amount of pompous words but would be based on the geometric
proofs and chemical tests.”820 On a similar note, Schwarz customarily opened his
lectures with the statement: “Hermetic Philosophy is a mother: it is founded on the
knowledge of Nature, it possesses the knowledge of the Elements, Matter, perfection of
metals, and many other things, so that she [Hermetic Philosophy] is a Natural Teaching,
i.e. Physics and Alchemy.”821

According to the Freemasons immersed in the study of alchemy, any body was
composed of three essences: salt, sulphur, and mercury. Every metal had in itself other
metals “hidden” within. Gold was the most perfect metal because it contained equal
proportions of all the three essences. Metals lived their life in aspiration of becoming
gold. Since the difference between any metal and gold was deemed only in proportion, it
was considered possible to find “semen of metals” (semia metalov) that, in its turn,
formed a basis of the “philosophers’ stone.” It was believed that if the philosophers’
stone was mixed with metals in a special proportion, it was possible to turn that metal

819 Drug unoshhestv I (1813), 101.
820 NIOR RGB, fond 147, edinitsa khranenia 142, 25: “bol’shu filosofiu, kotoraiia sostojala ne v
mnogochislennom kolichestve pyshnikh slov, no byla osnovana prosto na odnikh geometricheskikh
dokazatel’stvakh i khimicheskikh opytakh...”
821 NIOR RGB, fond 147, edinitsa khranenia 142, 14 [7rev]: “Germeticheskaia Filosofii – mat’: ona
osnovyvajetsia na znani Prirody... ona obладает знанием Stikhi, Pervomaterii, sovershenstvovaniia
metallov, i mnozhestva drugikh veschei; takim obrazom, ona sama v sebe iavljaetsia Prirodnym Ucheniem
– Fizikoi i Alkhimiei.”
into gold. The philosophers’ stone was also deemed to cure all maladies and that is why it was often called a “universal panacea” or “general and universal medicine.”

Concerning alchemy, the Freemasons who believed in the postulates of alchemy, can be divided into two categories: those who passionately pursued it and those who considered alchemy, with its search for gold, an occupation contrary to Masonic belief in the futility of worldly possessions.822 For instance, Lopukhin, whose printing house was responsible for almost all the books on alchemy printed in Russia in the 1780s, labeled all alchemists the servants in the “anti-Christ’s church.” According to him, people who were “attached to gold-making and to searching the means of prolonging [their] sinful life, to exercising in the letters of theosophy, kabala, secret medicine and in this magnetism” could easily become “the best means for dissemination of and preparation for the actions of the dark forces.”823 Besides theoretical confrontation, the problem with learning the tenets of alchemy was, as Schröder explained to the leader of German Rosicrucians, that Russians were simply not interested in alchemical work because they were not skilled in the practical aspect of it.824 This opinion can be indirectly supported by the fact that compared to the amount of publications concerning moral perfection and spirituality, books on alchemy are relatively rare.825 When answering questions of

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822 Semeka, “Russkie rozenkreitsery i sochinenia imperatritsy Ekateriny II.” 367.
823 Lopukhin, Nekotorye cherty o vnutrenney tserkvi, chapter 4, 2: prikreplennye k zlatodelaniu i k iskaniu sredstv prodlit’ grekhovnuu zhizn’. k upravleniyam v bukvakh teosofi, kabbaly, alkhimii, tainoi meditissy i v magnetisme onom, kotoryi mozhut uchinit’ sia nailuchim razsadnikom i priugotovleniem dla deistvii temnykh sil.
825 Theoretically, the lack of printed works explicitly related to alchemy could be compensated by the abundance of hand-written literature and translations. However, in NIOR RGB that contains extensive list of hand-written Masonry-related works, there are only several volumes concerning alchemy: Slovar’ alkhimicheskikh terminov (16 pages); Teoreticheskii prakticheskii ruchtaia kniga vysshekh khimii
potential candidates into Freemasonry, a member of the Moscow circle pointed out that “only those who are chemists in their rankings deal with simple chemistry.” 826 Novikov lamented the fact that Russian Freemasons did not devote any serious attention to magic and kabbalah because they were in lower grades, and he knew nothing of these sciences except for the names. Chemistry, on the other hand, should have been on the radar, but Freemasons in Russia “reluctantly did not start because there was no one to show them the basic principles.” 827

Physiognomy was one of the tools for the study of mankind and the means of putting the mysterious and organic unity of man and the constant interaction of the inner and the outer self into a practical science built on observation and categorization. The concept of man as harmony of body, reason, soul, and will forms the basis of Lavater’s physiognomic studies. If Wolff described man as either “free” when in use of his reason, or a “slave” when subject to his passions, following the Pietist tradition Freemasons in Russia propagated medical theory giving substantial support to the idea that emotion and mind were to be seen holistically. Although they recognized that the correlation between psychological and physical reflected in physiognomy had not necessarily reached absolute accuracy and distinguished between theory and practice, they, nevertheless, were generally persuaded of the validity of physiognomy as a science. 828 In these comparisons, references to medical science were a part of the demand to denounce the

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(translation from German 1788, 84 pages); Traktat po khimii (11 pages); Zapisi po magi i kabbalistike (1779, 93 pages).
826 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 79-84 (Otvety, prislannye na voprosy ot br[ata] A. A. N. i otvety na nikh, 1789).
827 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 0112.
828 Edmund Heier, Studies on Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801) in Russia (Bern: Peter Lang, 1991), 65: “Surgery is positive, yet there cannot be a doubt that physicians have erred in the practice of their profession.”
traditional reliance of medical practitioners on “hypothetical explanations” and “imaginary systems” in favor of scientific experiments and clinical observations. The attitude towards physiognomy among the Moscow Masons seems to be of a dual nature, just as there was a dichotomy among them in their attitudes to alchemy or, in general, to rational and irrational. In a Russian-language Masonry-related magazine, for instance, we can also find an anonymous article clearly opposing physiognomy in 1785.

However, the most influential figure among Moscow Freemasons, Professor Schwarz, was most definitely a defender of physiognomy, as he lectured on the “justification of physiognomy” in his course on aesthetics. He insisted that the basis of physiognomy was observation and experiment and not sheer imagination and speculation. Masonic adepts of physiognomy departed from a pseudo-classical ideal of l’honnête homme and attempted to capture individuality and complexity of a human being as a mixture of features that reflected the inner self onto the outer self. Rather than simply providing a portrait or a visual image of man’s perfect physical features, physiognomy offered the Freemasons an opportunity to glorify people’s virtuous behavior. In recognizing the fluidity of man’s character, Freemasons postulated that a real human being was not an unchangeable “icon.” This theory opposed the idea that all men were born with the same natural abilities and characteristics, and that environment and educational opportunities alone shaped man’s character as well as his particular mind and talents. Providing the depiction of moral and the beginning of psychological analysis and evaluation was stimulated by the study of man on the anthropological level and by

830 In Pkoiaschiia trudolubets I (1785): 37-60, mentioned in N. S. Tikhonrov, Sochineniiia, vol 3 (Moscow, 1898), 77; Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, xviii, Rother, N. M. Karamzins Europäische Reise, 33.
the rational, scientific approaches of anatomy and physiology. Given the commitment to
the study of man which characterized the epoch, it was only natural that the increasing
preoccupation with man’s existence and with explaining the “vital phenomena” of life
should lead to the study of the “whole man.” With this development, the concrete
external began to assume an ever-increasing significance in the total structure of man; it
provided a new means of understanding man and in turn a new means of character
presentation.831

-- Healing Souls, Healing Bodies: Medical Endeavors

Activities related to medicine played an important role in Masonic undertakings
in Russia, although they are often overlooked. On a theoretical level, benevolence, a
pertinent tenet of the Craft, figured in the work of many physicians of the time. But the
practical implication of Masonic theories for the development of medicine went even
further. The need to consider Nature and Man in their harmonious interrelationship is
reflected in a common Masonic parallel between the doctor and theologian. Both
medicine and theology are theoretical and practical; the theologian’s theory is the
revealed world and that of the physician is the laws of nature.832 A tale found in the
papers of the eighteenth-century Russian Freemasons demonstrates their ideas about
interconnectedness of body and soul: A man came to a hospital and asked the physician

(1966): 208-218. Edmund Heier, Studies on Johann Caspar Lavater, points out that since it was related to
medicine, physiognomy was believed to supply a cornerstone and support for the philosophy of man in
which improved public health would be indivisible from enlightened morality.
832 Roger French, “Sickness and the Soul: Stahl, Hoffmann and Savages on Pathology,” in The Medical
Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century, 88-110.
if there was a medicine to cure his sins. Without hesitating, the physician gave the man a detailed recipe: take

obedience, prayers, and patience, the flowers of purity, fruits of good deeds, and grind them in the pot of silence; and filter them through the sieve of reasoning; then pour into the pot of humility; add water from the prayerful tears; light the fire of godly love; cover with charity, and when the light intensifies, cool down; add salt of brotherly love; and consume with the spoon of repentance; and you will be absolutely healthy.833

Instead of separating mind and body, as Descartes had done, the Masonic objective was to incorporate the spiritual into the material. Freemasons tried to establish a correlation between cognitive, emotional, and physiological changes in human development. The intention of Masonic medical theory was to prove that subconscious perceptions affect the mind and the body as a unity. If so, then the cure of the body and the cure of the soul were the same kind of activity, related to the phenomena of emotion, reason, and imagination that were coordinated in the individual organism. Schwarz told his students that Freemasonry could be considered as a general healing because it cured the diseases stemming from vice; and vice is from sin; and the sin is in the soul.834 As Karamzin put it in his Letters of a Russian Traveler,

Why the moralists are not doing enough to make people better? That is because they [moralists] consider them healthy, and talk to them as to healthy people when they are sick, so then instead of wordy persuasions they [people] should have been given several rounds of a purgative. Disorder of soul is always a result of the disorder of the body. When in our machine everything is in a perfect balance, then all the vessels are in order and dutifully exude different fluids; in a word, when every part executes a function that was vested in it by Nature, then

833 "[T]svetochi chistoty, plod dobyrykh del ... i sotri v kotle bezmolvi, i prosei v reshete razsuzhdeniia, vspyv v gorschok smirenii, prelei vody iz slez molitvenykh; prigneti ogon' bozhestvennoi lubvi, pokroi milostineu, i kogda ogon' vozgoritsia, prostudi, posoli bratolubiem, i vkushai lozhkou pokajania, i tak sovershennogo budes' zdorov." In "Pis'mo odnogo brata," NIOR, fond 237, carton 33, folder 9, 22-26.
834 NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 618, 8 (Sbornik molitv, izrechenii, vypisok iz besed I. A. Pozdeeva i I. E. Schwarza (1806-09).
soul is healthy; then a man thinks and acts well; then he is wise and virtuous, elated and happy.\textsuperscript{835}

Freemasons viewed man as a composition of four worlds (or, four principles): divine, moral, intellectual, and emotional. Body and spirit were considered connected, balancing one another, allowing Man’s spiritual and material nature to achieve equilibrium, counterbalancing each other, creating the “universal harmony.” The assumption that there was a strong relation between ethical values, morals, and soul contrasted sharply with mechanist and dualist assumptions. In his post-Cartesian enlightenment philosophy, for example, Christian Wolff divided imagination into components that were either subservient to reason (the ability to envision abstract concepts) or subservient to the passions (images that stir up feelings).\textsuperscript{836} In contrast, for Freemasons, emotion was connected to reason as well as to the imagination; they were coordinated in the individual organism. At the same time, it was a common understanding among eighteenth-century Freemasons that the mechanistic concepts that were embodied in the first three degrees of speculative Freemasonry were also applicable to the study of medicine.\textsuperscript{837}

Since body and soul were a unity, health was regarded highly. In this life body was an instrument of soul, an essential vessel for thought and feeling, and it was necessary to educate people on how to make it work properly. Health had often been held as a supreme virtue, showing a living in accordance with nature. In contrast,

\textsuperscript{835} This part is not included in the English-language edition Karamzin, \textit{Letters of a Russian Traveller}. For the quote in Russian, see Karamzin, \textit{Pis’ma russkogo putehestvennika}, 84.

\textsuperscript{836} Christian Wolff, \textit{Vernünftigen Gedanken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, auch aller Dinge überhaupt}, revised and augmented 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (Halle, 1725; 1720), 467ff.

\textsuperscript{837} FHL, R. William Weisberger, \textit{John Theopilus Desaguliers: Promoter of the Enlightenment and of Speculative Freemasonry} (typescript, n. d.), 8. For instance, the idea that just like Sun was deemed the center of the solar system, the heart likewise operated as the nucleus of the human body.
sickness was a manifestation of God’s wrath: “no illness might happen unless if sent to man from God as punishment, from which God did not create a special medicine or antidote… God also created a universal remedy from any illness.”

Disease was deemed a result of the imbalance between material and spiritual, going too far in either direction of the body and spirit. As Schwarz pointed out, “[a]ncient philosophers defined that a human being consists of body, soul, and spirit, distinguishing illnesses into external and internal maladies.” So when body was exhausted, then its spirit was affected too. Equally, when soul was not well, then mind could function normally.

Accordingly, there had to be special techniques and medicine to cure the illnesses of soul that modern doctors could not even cure.

Considering the interrelations between mind and body, Masonic doctors started interpreting, intellectualizing disease as an indication and result of disharmony. If illness was disharmony, to prevent it, Masonic tracts advised maintaining a balanced life: “Every malady can be prevented by modest and moderate way of living, especially in food, sleep, and daily exercise.”

“Organic” or “harmonious” to Freemasons meant a coordinated and integrated whole, the organism adjusting to its environment both on a conscious and unconscious level (sensually, emotionally and mentally) with immediate psychological results. As Schwarz taught his students, the network of nerves connected organism to external reality. If disturbed by the outside irritants, nerves transmitted

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839 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 102, 91 (111) (Schwarz’s lectures).
840 In Barskov, Perepiska masonov, 14-15, 19 (letter from Novikov on 14 May 1816), Copies in NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 79; fond 14, folder 594.
841 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 102 (O chelovecheskikh bolezniakh). The had-written copy of the document was created on 8 October 1781. Judging by the number of German words in the text, it was translated from German.
signals to internal functions. According to him, it was because of nerves that people perceived subjects: every part of human body had nerves to transmit information to the center in the brain. In the brain human beings had “a governor of the body, or mind,” that created “images of the outside world” on the basis of this information.\textsuperscript{842}

This medical theory about the interconnectedness of material and spiritual and the organic nature of human organism was a substantial part of the Masonic thought. Medical contributions to social progress were to be found in health care issues, such as, for example, the founding and reform of institutions (such as hospitals), or in the introduction of new standards of professionalisation. This was a medical theory that drew on and influenced the structure of ideological processes, and did not depend on state decisions. Just as Novikov-published fictional work, \textit{Chrysomander, eine allegorische und satyrische Geschichte} (1783), depicts a magus-king named Hyperion, who used alchemy to relieve the hardship of his subjects, Freemasons in Russia wanted to be involved in pharmacology and medicine to relieve the hardships of people and, ultimately, with continuous experiments, to find a better cure for the illnesses of mind and body.\textsuperscript{843}

It is as a part of the goal of inspiring a “Christian spirit” and curing bodies that Freemasons opened a pharmacy in Moscow.\textsuperscript{844} As Lopukhin pointed out, many people assumed that it was an “embarrassment” for the nobles to be involved in the book trade and the pharmacy. He, however, strongly disagreed: “There is nothing nobler than book

\textsuperscript{842} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 378, 14-17; fond 147, folder 102, 91 (111).
\textsuperscript{844} During the reign of Catherine the number of private pharmacies rose. In the last quarter of the century, St. Petersburg had at least three main and four collateral state-managed pharmacies and ten private.
trade and pharmacy because these bring people only good.”
Masons must help the humanity as much as possible, insisted Lopukhin, because it was “suffering from maladies, even through the loss of our property, trying to prepare the best medicine [that would] be different from the one prepared in other places driven by profit.” To accomplish this task, “the best foreign apothecary, Weinheim was invited.” Anyone could use a Masonic pharmacy. Those who had money paid the regular price, while many poor received their medicine for free. Weinheim’s reputation became so well-established that even after Novikov’s arrest and the dissolution of Masonic lodges in Russia his Moscow pharmacy was still considered the best.

Another influential Masonic apothecary was doctor Frenkel’, who received the permission of the government to open his Moscow pharmacy in 1785.
Frenkel’s pharmacy seemed to face a promising future as a channel through which the idea of universal therapy could be made available to a larger public and supply Masonic circles with an attractive profit. It was Frenkel’ who was the first in Russia to import and prepare the so-called “Hoffman” drops, one of the most popular remedies in Russia. Frenkel’ claimed to have received a recipe for making gold. The recipe that he sent to Wöllner turned out to be copies of the information contained in the book Annulus Platonis, a recommended reading for all Rosicrucians. But Frenkel’s reputation did not suffer: he remained the authority on special prescriptions well into the nineteenth century.

845 “Nekotorye govorili: kak ne stydno torgovat’ dvorianam knigami i aptekou ... ia dumau, netu torgovli, kotoraia by v strozhaiem smysle byla chestnee knizhnoi i aptchnoi, ibo oni tol’ko odnu pol’zu ludiam prinosiat,” NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 499, 23 (letter from N. Trubetskoj to Kutuzov in Berlin on 7 November, the year is unknown).
846 OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 24, 13 (Poslanie ubeditel’noe M. I. Nevzorova k O. A. Pozdeevu o moskovskoi lozhe, s uproverzheniem knigi Plumenskovo).
847 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 41 (letter from Trubetskoj to Rzhevskii, 30 July 1783).
848 Barskov, Perepiska, 25.
century. His assistants, Bindgeim, Kube, Linrodt, Bert, and Einbrot, opened their own successful pharmacies after the dissolution of the Novikov-Schwarz circle, and greatly contributed to the foundation of the pharmaceutical science in Russia.

Schwarz stated that medicine was an experimental science based on the tests of those who practiced the craft. Medical knowledge was a posteriori knowledge. It is not coincidental that the majority of the students who were sent abroad by Russian Freemasons studied medicine. According to the story that Lopukhin told the authorities in 1792, the main goal in sending young Freemasons abroad was to prepare experienced teachers and translators. However, the majority of the students were sent to acquire knowledge either in medicine (like Mikhail Bagrianskii, V. Ia. Kolokol’nikov, and M. I. Nevzorov) or chemistry (like A. M. Kutuzov). In 1792, Turgenev testified to the fact that sending students abroad on Masonic money had public benefit in view. The students’ benefactors urged them to study chemistry, medicine, and natural history so that they could become “more easily apprenticed in the method and system of that order and become our laboratory assistants.” Upon returning, these students were to become the assistants who would provide their knowledge and guidance “to other members of [Rosicrucian] circles,” the majority of whom did not “practice chemistry and

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849 In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 279.
850 Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 214.
851 “Vrachestvo iako nauka osnovana na opytakh drugikh, kotorye prezhde v nei uprazhnialis’, est’ poznanie aposteriori. Nekotorye utverzhdaet, chto sei poleznoi nauke Angely uchili predkov nashikh, i chto ot nich ono pereshlo k nam,” NIOR RGB, fond 178, folder 9179, 100 (Schwarz’s lectures, lecture no. 17).
852 It is notable that in Berlin the meeting place of the Masons related to Russia was the house of the Russian envoy and Freemason M. Allopecus. Baron Schröder met there with Kutuzov and Bagrianskii on several occasions.
alchemy." Their mission was the one of the enlightenment. Lopukhin thought that by sponsoring students to study medicine and chemistry he was "performing an obligation of virtue in helping the poor and in assigning them to such profitable profession as medicine." 

But sending students to study medicine and chemistry was not a simple-minded philanthropic enterprise. According to Rosicrucian instructions, knowledge of chemistry was the preparatory step toward admission to their "holy science," alchemy. In an article in the Morning Light we find reference to alchemy as a science that, unlike modern medicine, provides a cure for "internal diseases affecting breathing, heart, blood, and stomach." The article also claims that "There are on this earth certain alchemistic adepts chosen by God who can cure the internal diseases and vices by the means of universal or general medication. But out misfortune is that such righteous men are extremely rare." Sent to Berlin, A. Kutuzov was supposed to carry out practical work in chemistry and alchemy under the guidance of a bankrupt merchant from Dresden, Du Bosque. Among the Rosicrucians, Du Bosque enjoyed special fame by his earlier association with Schröpfer, who, in the 1770s, had claimed to produce thunder and lightning and conjure dead spirits. Kutuzov obtained from his teacher various

853 Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 128.
854 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 0145. As William Tooke reports, the yearly salaries at the private pharmacies amounted to 6750 rubles a year, which could have been attractive for any foreign apothecary to take on a journey to Russia. However, the difficulty of introducing the new medical constitution and obtaining a sufficient number of expert physicians and surgeons remained until the full-scale commission by Zimmermann. The state-employed medical stuff received 800 rubles a year. Tooke, vol. 2, 177-179.
855 Vecherniia zaria I (1782), ix.
856 Karamzin, Letters of a Russian Traveller, 84-86, offers several anecdotes to demonstrate that "all his [Schröpfer's] secret wisdom was only charlatanism" and makes parallels between Schröpfer and Cagliostro. Despite the dates 1789-1790 indicated in the book's title, as A. G. Cross establishes, the letters were written.
alchemic recipes by paying him huge fees and relayed them to Trubetskoi. For example, in a letter dated 13 February 1790, Trubetskoi asked Kutuzov to seek the advice of his teacher whether a combination called $\emptyset N$ could be applied to his niece and Novikov’s wife who was dying from tuberculosis. Kutuzov answered that $\emptyset N$ and another prescription he obtained from Du Bosque, $hM$, were both “applicable to all diseases.”

At the end, Tolstoy’s Pierre turns away from Freemasonry, because “seeking and vacillating, he had not yet found in Freemasonry a straight and comprehensible path.” But for many people in Russia, like Prince Golitsyn, a Freemason and member of a famous pre-Decembrist Souza ruskikh rytsarei (Alliance of the Russian knights), “the ancient science of Freemasonry led … to the truth that arranged … the attitudes of man to God, to man, and to nature.” Although Catherine regarded Freemasonry as politically subversive from at least the mid-eighties, the majority of Masons in Russia proclaimed themselves to be above politics. They chose to concentrate on reforming the passions and morals of Masonic members, and rejected Voltairianism and extreme

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857 In the spirit of Renaissance, alchemy occupied a medial position between the arts and the sciences, a position also occupied by medicine. Thomas Aquinas, to cite one example, variously calls alchemy an “operative science,” a “mechanical art,” and an “operative art.” He ranks “medicine, alchemy, and moral [philosophy]” together, since they have practical use and pertain more to specific subjects than do such fields as metaphysics, physics, and mathematics. But he also groups alchemy with agriculture and medicine as technological pursuits subordinate to physics.
858 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 086.
859 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 086-087. Also mentioned in Barskov, PerepisKA, 180-182.
materialism in favor of achieving the ideal of the virtuous, enlightened man.\textsuperscript{861} It was
the path of inner, moral regeneration, and not of political action. But by doing so they
offered a way out of the impasse of superficiality and autocratic rule by urging re-
education of the individual as a preliminary to the restructuring of society. In this
manner the Russian educated elite involved moral concern into their critical thinking and
analytical ideas.

The accusation most frequently leveled by historians against Russian
Freemasonry in the eighteenth century is that dangers of intellectual obscurantism and
reactionary social and political philosophy were inherent in the theosophical view of man
and the universe which it introduced. But as we established, the intellectual position
taken by the Freemasons in public, their emphasis on moral regeneration and self-
betterment, was the ideology of the Enlightenment in search of richer experience in the
wider and deeper realms of Man’s inner world and the ultimate mystery of Nature.
Examination of Masonic theories reveals the paradox of the immediate and total
acceptance of romantic idealistic philosophies (and literature) while retaining a
rationalistic and Enlightenment form of thought. In awakening and cultivating moral and
religious sensitivity, Freemasonry on this level converged with Sentimentalism which
was beginning to replace classic formalism. What appealed to the generation of young
Russians in this reworked and adapted body of ideas was not the radical novelty or the
originality of the thoughts and sentiments expressed in Freemasonry’s philosophy, but
rather its familiarity. The Masonic attitude expressed through the medium of printed,

\textsuperscript{861} The concern about the more extreme forms of Westernization of their country was not limited to
Freemasons. Russian literature of the eighteenth-century presents endless examples of satires against
Francomania and the petits-maîtres from Kantemir to Fonvizin.
spoken, and written word and the idealistic credo reiterated the values and “feelings” that were already circulating in the educated society.

Freemasons’ influence on Russian society was both ideological and practical. They worked in an intellectual environment shaped by the forces of the Enlightenment. Freemasons’ Enlightenment in Russia was not a formed system of great scientific originality but rather one of elaboration, popularization, and the dissemination of a worldview felt to embody the best and the most useful ideas. Just as in the West, Russian sentimentalism was built on Enlightenment philosophy in exploring the relationship between the self, a political and social order, and nature. Just as in the West, it examined the legitimacy of the subject, as a source of aesthetic and moral judgments. Just as in the West, it displayed an interest in biography, history, and folk tradition as much to trace how a particular state of affairs came about, as to seek answers in the past to the questions of the present.862

By the end of the century, Russians had already been prepared emotionally and intellectually for the theories of sentimentalism. The Freemasons’ search for divine and moral perfection in the individual and emphasis on religion and imagination was reflected in the idea that true philosophical knowledge should be based on the profound unity of all things in nature, and the insistence that the creativity of the spirit is a vital element of the humanity in a human being. These ideas appealed to the Russians because they fitted in so well with what they needed and seemed to give a complete synthesis of the emotional, sentimental, and strictly philosophical issues. Many young Russian intellectuals believed that in Freemasonry they had found what they wanted: a

philosophy that would provide them with a metaphysical basis for their own ideas on
Russian nationality, and for a new cultural and intellectual synthesis that was both
peculiarly Russian and universal. Eventually, from religious mysticism and the rhetoric
of self-improvement Freemasons in Russia turned to a patriotic assertiveness:

Sincere love for the fatherland prompted in us the eagerness to try to become its
worthy sons; and with this intention, we ventured to undertake the sharpening of
our reason together with purification of our morals. The place in which we find
ourselves in no small way helps us to carry out this double task, but [our] free
will is the main motive for it and the most reliable support.863

The subject of their concern was no longer the private world of feelings and
sentiment alone, but also a larger entity called the fatherland and the civic society of
which they regarded themselves as citizens. Expanding on the idea that there was so
much variety in human and historical phenomena that it was utterly impossible to
comprehend them in abstract and general terms alone, Freemasons in Russia viewed the
process of betterment of the human beings in an organic manner. Applied to nationality,
this meant that each human being, as well as “nations” had a soul and a body, and an
individuality, which was expressed in its history, literature, religion, art, customs, and
especially, in the language.

863 Pokoiaschiisia trudolubets I (1784), x.
Chapter 5. Freemasonry, Society, and State

On Monday morning of 16 November 1789, the streets of Edinburgh were lined with people. Hundreds watched and participated in the procession devoted to the foundation of a new building of the University of Edinburgh. Fully clad in Masonic regalia, members of the lodges of Free and Accepted Masons proudly marched the streets, along with the university provost, magistrates, university professors, students, bands of singers and musicians. The procession culminated in the ceremony during which the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland placed the foundation stone at the site of the new building. In his speech, the Grand Master asked the Grand Architect of the Universe grant the university a blessing “to finish this and every other work which may be undertaken for the embellishment and advantage of this city!” On this the brethren gave three huzzas.864

The ceremony of laying down the foundation stones of public buildings vividly encapsulates the ideological and philosophical character of eighteenth-century European Freemasonry. It reflects the idea that “enlightenment” was considered not only as an ultimate goal and continuous process, but also as constructive practical work. On a different level, public ceremonies in which Freemasons participated not as individuals, but the part of the organization, like the one that took place in Edinburgh in 1789, had the underlying assumption that the members of the brotherhood served a patriotic function of bringing light and learning to the city and the country. This bond between the university

864 Freemasons' Magazine 4 (1795), 162ff.
professors, city magistrate, and Freemasons in creating a foundation of the civil society was an essential sign of times.\textsuperscript{865}

While the members of Masonic societies in Britain were very busy publicly laying the foundations of socially significant work during the second part of the century, Russian Freemasons were equally, although not so openly, preoccupied by their own constructive efforts. Given the role the Freemasons in Russia played in the establishment of new forms of education, free institutions, access to the secrets of Nature, and the ministry to the sick and injured, their participation in public celebrations could have been fitting.\textsuperscript{866} As elsewhere, the flourishing of Masonic lodges in Russia was part and parcel of the development of sociability, civil institutions, and public life. But in contrast with many of their European brothers, Freemasons in Russia gave their triumphant “three huzzas” only in the secrecy of the lodges.

By the end of the 1780s, the social and educational work of Freemasons in Russia coincided with the efforts of the state. In a personal manner, the society of Freemasons pursued the objectives that Catherine the Great had set herself to attain: fostering of the arts and sciences and the education of the people — this was essentially both Catherine’s program and the goal of the Freemasons. However, in dealing with Freemasonry, the


\textsuperscript{866} On practical activities of Freemasons in Russia, see further.
first public organization in Russia that was not sponsored by state, Catherine had her own considerations.

Despite the fact that Masonic rhetoric vehemently emphasized sincere and most faithful recognition of the supremacy of the state and reverence towards the Russian, the conflict between Freemasons and the state reached its culminating point in the so-called “Novikov affair” of 1792 and the ultimate dissolution of the lodges. The dialectic development of Catherine’s attitude to Freemasonry through the last thirty years of the eighteenth century illuminates a general European tendency. In the 1770s, Catherine’s Legislative Commission of which Novikov was a member and which started his public career, was the most enlightened project. But then Catherine and Novikov chose different paths: Novikov chose Freemasonry, and Catherine chose to ban it. As Alexander Pushkin pointed out, “Catherine … admired the Enlightenment, and Novikov who dispersed its first rays went … to the prison cell where he resided until her death.”

In the nineteenth century, Russian historian A. Pypin put forward a compelling thesis about Novikov’s arrest being the climax in the first struggle between the authoritarian state anxious to maintain its critical function and an increasingly self-conscious public. While this version of the events still presents a persuasive

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867 For the European context of “exits from the Enlightenment” during the period 1780-1820, see Margaret Jacob, “Exits from the Enlightenment: Masonic Routs,” Eighteenth-Century Studies 33.2 (2000) 251-254.
869 For bibliography on Novikov and Catherine’s relations, see Madariaga, Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great, 522-31; Jones, Nikolay Novikov; Gilbert McArthur, “Catherine II and the Masonic Circle of N. I. Novikov,” Canadian Slavonic Studies IV.3 (Fall, 1970): 529-546; Berkov, ed. Satiricheskie zhurnaly N. I. Novikova; Garrard, ed. The Eighteenth Century in Russia; Semennikov, Knigoisdatel’skaia deiatel’nost’ Novikova; Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty; Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo.
argument, it plays down important particulars such as the accusations of sectarianism and charlatanism, the political ambiguity of getting in touch with the successor to the Russian throne, dependence on the guidance of German princes and their ministers, and the state of European politics at the time.

The official version of the dissatisfaction with Freemasonry was expressed in several articles of the verdict that the state carried out to Novikov. According to the decree, the Moscow Masonic circle was dangerous because of its

1) Relations with the Duke of Brunswick;
2) Clandestine correspondence with Prince Hessel-Kassel and a Prussian minister;
3) Attempts to lure “a known person” into a Masonic “sect”;
4) Secret religious-type assemblies with the use of religious symbols;
5) Printing books of inadequate moral content in a secret publishing house.\(^{870}\)

As these accusations testify, for the state there were several facets of the problem of Freemasonry: the political component comprising of the possible foreign influences and secretive involvements with anti-Catherine faction; and the ideological component that included a potential damage to the society’s morals and opinions. In this chapter I consider the tumultuous development of the interactions between the state and the society of Freemasons in the period 1770-1792.\(^{871}\)

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\(^{870}\) OPI GIM, fond 17, opis’ 2, folder 343, 164rev. (August 1, 1792); Novikov, Izbrannye socheniia, 606-62, 671-72. For an extensive analysis of the Novikov’s affair, see Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 173-74; Jones, Nikolay Novikov, 206-15.

\(^{871}\) In this chapter, I concentrate mainly on the activities of Moscow Masonic circle for several reasons. First, they are better documented. Secondly, because of the association with Moscow University, coherent ideological and organizational structure, undertakings of the Moscow Masons are more easily
The Political Aspect: the Problem of Grand Duke Paul

Although, as I considered in the previous chapters, the suspicions of Freemasonry’s dubious nature and goals grew increasingly since the Empress Elizabeth’s reign and the 1740s, they reached unprecedented height in the case of the Swedish-system lodges in the 1770s when the members of the Swedish-system lodges were suspected of trading the highest degrees for political support.

According to Sokolovskaia, the real purpose of the Swedish system in Russia was to “assist the union of the nobility of the two northern states by bringing together the most prominent families – both Russian and Swedish – on the basis on Freemasonry and by subordinating them to the will of the Order.”\textsuperscript{872} The situation worsened when, in an unexpected move, Duke Karl of Sudermania\textsuperscript{873} declared Sweden the ninth province of the Strict Observance and made himself Master of Sweden, Finland, and Russia, as well as a separate province in north Germany, from Elbe to Oder.\textsuperscript{874} Karl’s decision, in the eyes of the Russian authorities, was a direct indication that Sweden, through the Duke of Sudermania, attempted to exert influence on Russian Freemasonry. As the Russian Freemasons explained in the letter to Duke of Brunswick,

...many of our brothers entered with obligations and made a union with Swedish brothers, the union that led to the saddest consequences when the creation of the nine provinces was published carelessly in the gazette... Catherine considered

\textsuperscript{872} Sokolovskaia, Kapitul Feniksa, 5.
\textsuperscript{873} On Karl, King Gustav III’s brother, and his relationship to the lodges in Russia, see Chapter 2.
\textsuperscript{874} But this drew so much protest from the Danish and some German brothers that Karl abdicated his position in April 1781.
this close union of Her subjects with the Swedish Duke of the Royal Family indecent. We should admit her concerns were very justified.875

It is impossible to sustain this claim with direct evidence. But judging by the lack of direction from Sweden and confusion in Stockholm and St. Petersburg, there was a great deal of conscious manipulation on all sides. In planning to keep the province under their own control and preparing the union with Swedish Freemasonry, the Brunswick leaders of the Strict Observance appeared to be using the Swedes to draw in the Russian lodges. The Swedes seemed to hold out the possible incorporation of Russia as an enticement in bargaining for Duke Karl’s pretensions for European leadership in high-degree Freemasonry.

Finally, although this is less certain, Freemasons in Russia may have been looking forward to the time when they could propose the much more impressive candidacy of Grand Duke Paul, Catherine’s son and first heir to the throne, for the leadership of northern Masonic Province.

Certainly, the idea of making Paul the leader of Freemasonry in Russia was an important project for several branches of the Craft in Russia. Shumigorskii reports that Paul was introduced into Masonry as early as 1772.876 The late 1770s was a time of great political tension between the supporters of Catherine and the friends of Paul. In the summer of 1777, during the visit of the Swedish king, a rumor of impending revolt in favor of Paul was circulating in diplomatic circles.877 In this situation, the stories about the Russian heir’s involvement with the Swedish Freemasonry were so widespread that a

875 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 5, 35rev.-36. Published in Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 169.
876 E. S. Shumigorskii, Imperator Pavel I, zhizn’ i tsarstvovanie (St. Petersburg, 1907) and “Puteshestvie Pavla Petrovicha i Marii Fedorovny za granitsu 1781-1782,” Russkii arkhiv, no. 2 (1890): 17-78.
German Mason in St. Petersburg casually wrote a friend in the letter dated 2 January 1778 that “the king of Sweden during his presence in St. Petersburg performed the initiation of the Grand Duke.” Catherine received numerous reports regarding Paul’s possible Masonic affiliations and the strengthening of the ties between his court and the Swedes. She, for instance, obtained evidence of the financial transactions and some 5,000 rubles to be used for the establishment of the Swedish system in Russia.

As a result, the chief of Petersburg police was ordered to visit the Swedish-system lodges twice to check whether Freemasons had any correspondence with the Swedish Duke. Catherine also disciplined the people at the very core of the society. In 1781 Gagarin received an appointment to Moscow which for him meant the exile from St. Petersburg. Kurakin managed to stay close to Paul and his wife in their trip to Europe in 1781. When he returned at the end of 1783, however, he was exiled to his estate in the Saratov province. Prince Repnin had to go first to the provincial Smolensk in 1777 as governor-general and in 1781 to Pskov. Freemasons realized how suspicious their subordination to the Swedish system might have looked to the authorities and closed the majority of the Sweden-related lodges in St. Petersburg.

However, the association of Paul’s name with Freemasonry did not stop with the dissolution of the Sweden-related lodges. In the 1780s, the Novikov-Schwarz circle with

879 See later in this chapter on how this episode was reflected in one of Catherine’s anti-Masonic satires. 880 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 110; Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 227. Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 221, emphasizes that Catherine “was especially distrustful of Swedish Freemasonry and its alliance with Russia’s lodges” which led to closing of the Sweden-related lodges. As N. S. Ivanin, “K istorii masonstva v Rossii,” Russkaia starina 35 (September 1882): 542-43, points out, some of the Swedish-rite lodges were revived several years later. It is known that the St. Petersburg lodge of Aleksandr continued to work under the Swedish rite, as well as the lodge Dubovoi doliny (Zum Eichental) and Apollo did in the 1780s. The downfall of the Swedish-system lodges contributed to the shift of Masonic affairs from St. Petersburg to Moscow.
the ties to the Strict Observance and Berlin Rosicrucians claimed Paul as a member.

Moreover, it is often assumed that one of the main goals of the Rosicrucians was to make Grand Duke Paul the Master of the Order in Russia.

Paul was connected to the Berlin court through his wife, Maria Fedorovna, who was niece to the Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick. Her two brothers, Frederick and Ludwig, had the associations to the Berlin Rosicrucians led by J. C. Wöllner, later a Minister of State under Frederick William II, through their tutor. During a sojourn in Russia by Maria Fedorovna’s brothers in 1779-80 there was talk of initiating Paul directly into the Berlin chapter, though it is not clear whether this happened.

According to another version expressed in Novikov’s letter on 14 February 1783 to St. Petersburg Mason Andrei Vrevskii, the place of the Provincial Grand Master of the Russian province was still vacant in 1783 and to be filled by the heir of the Russian throne. Architect Vasilii Bazhenov, Paul’s personal friend and an ardent Freemason, was supposedly responsible for bringing this idea to the Grand Duke’s attention. Novikov first attempted to attract Paul’s favor towards the Moscow Rosicrucians by sending him, through Bazhenov, two books printed in Lopukhin’s press.

Schröder wrote in his diary:


882 These books were Arndt’s True Christianity and the Selected Library that contained Thomas à Kempis “Imitation of Christ,” Angelus Silezius’s “Flowers of Paradise,” and “Short Excerpts from Christian Teaching from the Epistles of Apostle Paul to the Colossians.” This information is not included in Longinov’s version, but printed later in Sbornik, 117-123, 118. During his interrogation, Novikov did not deny the fact of sending the books to Paul (whom he does not name, but refers to as “this person” (siia osobu)) via Bazhenov (Novikov, Izbrannye sochineniia, 640). He points out, however, that Masonic circle did not initiate the link to Paul, but the Grand Duke himself asked for the Novikov-printed books.
I gave W[öllner] today’s letter from Repnin. He said: according to what Holland [the tutor of Prince Friedrich of Württemberg, Paul’s brother-in-law] said about the Grand Duke, we can receive him [into the Order] without fear for the future... W[öllner] said: the Gr[and] D[uke] is in good hands, indeed very good! W[öllner] said: the Order receives no benefit from grand sires, and the Fathers [unknown superiors?] never like [to deal with them]. But when these grand sires are uncorrupt (which is very rare), one must, in this time of black magicians, shelter them so that their souls and the souls of their subjects can be saved.

After having relayed to Wöllner at least four of Repnin’s letters, Schröder recorded in his diary:

Wöllner has made an entire report on R[epnin] alone and says it is magnificent 1) that everything depends on me, 2) that the R[ussians] are over-excited, and indeed were so even before Gorgonus [Schwarz], 3) that he asks for help, 4) that the harvest in R[ussia] is great, but laborers are few, 5) Repnin, his thoughts, 6) that wonderful things happened every day in the realm of the spirits in Russia, about which Schröder has transmitted a multitude of stories, 7) that R[epnin] has put the G[rand] D[uke] into the right disposition.

To make the matters worse, the Russian-language Freemasons’ magazine openly wrote in 1784:

...if there is an opportunity invite into the inner workings of the Order the monarchs, who now look at it [Order] as if it were dangerous and offer them, in all the great clarity all benevolent, generous, noble and people-friendly plans and projects aimed at the good of the humankind, then, undoubtedly, they would become zealous advocates of those [plans and projects] equally as many great and enlightened monarchs, who being acquainted with the inner workings of the Order become our leaders, and with the most effective means assist all the projects that useful to the humanity.

Whether Paul was in fact involved with any of the Masonic branches is not as important as the fundamental dichotomy between Freemasonry and autocracy that the

883 Prince N. V. Repnin (1734 - 1801) was a Russian Marshall, who participated in Russo-Turkish Wars of 1768-74 and 1787-91. A nephew of Panin, Repnin was very close with the Grand Duke Paul. He was also Paul’s military advisor and the author of “Zapiska kniazia N. V. Repnina dla Pavla Petrovicha ob inostrannykh voiskakh v Rossi,” Russkii archiv 1:1 (1882), 391-93.
884 Barskov, Perepiska, 228.
885 Barskov, Perepiska, 231.
886 Magazin Svobodo-Kamen’scicheski vol. 1, part 1 (Moscow: Lopukhlin Press, with the permission of the authorities, 1784), 26.
very possibility of such involvement created. While Russian official rhetoric emphasized that the state and its rulers spread “the light,” Freemasonry claimed its own role in bringing the light to the country and its people.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the image of the tsar as “the light of all Russia” had become fairly common in Russian literature. Through at least the early nineteenth century, the tsar was described as a secular version of the transfigured Christ, with the references to his “bright face,” his “shining,” and the “light” and “rays” that he emitted. Russian rulers were often called a “luminary” (svetilo) and described or addressed with the epithet svetleishii (“the very bright,” an equivalent of “His Highness”); and his Russia was sometimes called a “radiant place” (svetloe mesto) where people “rejoice radiantly.” The Russian word svetlyi (bright) was etymologically linked with the word sviatoi (holy).

While in the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century the notion of “Svetleischii” (luminous, illustrious) referred only to the highest civil and religious authority -- the Russian Emperor or Empress, -- Masonic letters and papers are peppered with the claims of Freemasons being the enlighteners, the ones who bring “light” to the Russian people. When Russian Freemasons used the words “lichten” to address foreign Masonic authorities, they were contesting the whole idea of the Tsar as the sole enlightener, turning the task of enlightening Russia from the ruler to the public domain and transferring the idea of service to the state and the Tsar to the idea of service to the

887 A. N. Robinson, Bor'ba idei v russkoi literature XVII veka (Moscow: Nauka, 1974), 75.
889 This was the conventional form of address in the letters from the Moscow circle to the German Masonic officials.
society. It is not coincidental, for instance, that the title of one of the instruments of the propaganda of Moscow Freemasons bore the title of *Morning Light (Utrennii svet)*.

However, by emphasizing moral and religious qualities associated with light, Russian Freemasons interchangeably used the terms *procheschenyi* and *prosvetlenyi*, which could both be translated into English as “enlightened.” They probably followed a German-language nuance between *aufgeklärt* and *erleuchtet* as between “enlightened” and “illuminated,”890 reflecting the level of person’s knowledge, his moral regeneration and clarity that were previously available in Russia only to the highest moral, religious, and secular authority, the country’s rightful ruler. Moreover, in the eighteenth-century Russian language the word “light” (*svet*) acquired a connotation of world, universe, and the whole society (a lay world), so that when Russian Freemasons pledged allegiance to other bearers of light, either foreign or in hopes of luring Paul into the society, Catherine could not let these Masonic involvements in foreign and internal politics go unnoticed.

If we take into consideration these facts, constant Masonic dedications to the Grand Duke Paul as their “future father,” and the continuous and strong ties of these Russia-based brothers with various Masonic authorities in Sweden, German countries, Britain and France, Catherine’s apprehensions about Freemasons trying to interest the Grand Duke in leading the society in Russia could have been justified.891

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Catherine the Great as a Rationalist Critic of Freemasonry

890 This distinction from the Illuminati is significant for the history of Freemasonry.
891 *Magazin Svobodno-Kamen’stchestvii* vol. 1, part, 132. As In-Ho Ryu points out (283), Berlin Rosicrucians were in constant communication with Potsdam, and in their conversations, topics of international politics occupied an important place. They knew, for instance, that in 1784, the Grand Duke Paul sent a secret instruction to Count Rumiantsev, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, to act in favor of Prussia against Catherine’s international course, promising Rumiantsev compensation after Paul’s accession to the throne (also mentioned in Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo*, 231).
On the intellectual level, the rationalistically-minded monarch who prided herself in carrying out the personal correspondence with the leading figures of European Enlightenment considered Masonic rituals and ceremonies as absurd and contrary to reason. Catherine was one of the first writers to expose all versions of Freemasonry and secret societies as a disguised social climbing, aristocratic-corporatist politics, foolish Hermeticism, and pseudo-religious ritualism that had lost touch with reality. Most likely, it was Cagliostro’s visit that opened the Empress’ campaign against the “mystical and fantastic teaching of Cagliostro, Schrepfer, pater Gassner, Lavater, Swedenborg, and Saint-Martin who were beginning to cloud the thinking of people…”892 These were the very men who shaped the thoughts of the Russian Masons.

At first, Catherine’s objections to “all the Masonic stupidities and absurdities” were a “matter of personal distaste,” as In-Ho Ryu puts it.893 While she did not identify Cagliostro and his claims for possessing high Masonic knowledge with Freemasonry as a whole, she took the reception he got from the most educated people in Russia as an indicative and worrisome sign of times.894 As Catherine noted in the letter to her German correspondent Friedrich Grimm in 1781, “Cagliostro arrived at the time most favorable for him … when several Masonic lodges nourished by Swedenborg’s teachings, wanted to see ghosts at any price. So they rushed to Cagliostro.”895 Much later, in May 1788, she assured another German correspondent, J. G. Zimmermann, that she considered the followers of Cagliostro to be “as harmful as those of Mahomet,

892 Pypin, Russkoe masonstvo, 283.
893 Catherine the Great, letter to Grimm on 11 January 1780 in Catherine II. Pis’ma Imperatritsy Ekateriny II k Grimmu (St. Petersburg, 1878), 168. In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 299.
894 On the success of Catherine’s plays in Russia, see Smith, Working, 149-50.
895 Quoted in Bogolubov, Novikov i ego vremia, 355.
because they are a sect of weak-minded people and fanatics.” She saw Masonic meetings as the occasions for the Russian indolent nobility to engage in

... idle talk and children’s games which are as boring as they are loathsome; masquerades and ridiculous adornments of all sorts, all sorts of absurdity with questions and answers that are just as absurd.

In the beginning of the 1780s, Catherine composed her first play against Freemasonry, Société Antiabsurde, followed by a trilogy of comedies mocking Masonic ritual and exposing the order as an international conspiracy: Obmanschik (The Deceiver, 1785); Obol'shchennyi (The Deceived, 1785) and Shaman sibirskii (The Siberian Shaman, 1786).

Catherine’s Deceiver revolves around the figure of a mysterious foreigner Kalifalkherston. An alchemist, necromancer, and healer with supernatural powers, he enters the Samblins family in order to trick them out of money and valuable possessions. As the author herself explained in the letter to Zimmerman, “[t]he first of these comedies [The Deceiver] represents Caglistro as he really is, and the second [The Deceived]

896 Zimmermann’s Verhaelttnisse, 365-66.
897 Sochineniia Ekateriny II, vol. V, 346-47: “boltanie i detskie igrushki skol’ skuchnye, stol’ otrvatitel’ nye; maskarady i smeshnye ukrasheniia vskakogo roda, vsiakie neleposti, s voprosami i otvetami im podobnymy.”

Compare this Catherine’s characterization to Elagin’s or Novikov’s laments about the futility of early Freemasonry in Russia, Chapter 4, section Paths to Freemasonry.
898 Taina protivo-nelepogo obschestva, otkrytaia ne prichastnym onomu (St. Petersburgh: Tipografiia Veibrekhta i Shnora], 1759 [1780]). The date of the Russian-language publication is misleading for tactical purposes.
899 Anthony Cross, Catherine the Great and the British, 47-48, points out that although these plays were almost immediately translated into German and published in a number of editions by the German publisher C. F. Nicolai, “they, together with Catherine’s other comedies, passed untranslated and unnoticed in England, except for a short review of the German translations in 1800. Nicolai is deemed “justly entitled to the thanks of all those who take a sincere interest in the progress of sound reason and mental illumination” and Catherine is praised for the plays’ “highly useful tendency” and “her skill in the great art of making deep impressions on the human mind. Drey Lustspiele wider Schwärmeren und Abergläuben (Berlin-Stettin, 1788); German Museum, or Monthly Repository of the Literature of Germany, the North and the Continent in General I (1800), 570-71; Semeka, “Russkie rozenkreitsery i sochinenia imperatritsy Ekateriny II,” 343-400.
depicts those deceived by him.”

Despite the common theme, these two pieces are somewhat different in tone and the emphasis. While the first one simply exposes Kalifalkzherston as a dishonest person, the second play focuses on the harm the people like him cause to naïve people. In the Deceiver the charlatan’s machinations seem bizarre; in the Deceived, they are not only misleading, but also potentially dangerous. As Douglas Smith points out, in general, the Deceived marks an important shift in the image of Freemasonry in Russia: the leaders of secret “sects” are not simply odd people. They are greedy and smart charlatans.

In all of her anti-Masonic plays, despite a lot of talk about establishing schools, hospitals, and other beneficial public work, the deceivers are especially anxious about involving wealthy people in their cause. As I mentioned earlier, Catherine was aware of the financial funds sent by the Swedes to Russia for the propagation of the Swedish Masonic system. She also did not have any illusions about Cagliostro’s special interest in wealthy and influential Russians. Already in the Société Antiabsurde, the director of the anti-absurd society explains to the novice: “Our society does not send its own money to foreigners; we dine together in a friendly and gay atmosphere; now it depends on you to increase our number; you will pay your ruble the next time…”

After Novikov was interrogated, Catherine learned that money were transferred not only to Russia, but also from Russia. Supporting Catherine’s suspicions, Novikov testified that during Schwarz’s administration, the Moscow circle sent at least the equivalent of 300 rubles to Berlin. 200 of this amount went to Wöllner, and 100 rubles for the causes

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900 Verhaelnisse, 324-5 (letter on 10 January 1786).
901 Pekarskii, Dopolnenia, 127.
that were unknown to Novikov. During the leadership of baron Schröder, another 300 rubles were sent to Berlin.903

In the Deceived, Protolk, a swindler of Cagliostro’s rank, enters the wealthy Radotovs family.904 This time the deceiver is not a foreigner. The members of the family desperately strive for a higher enlightenment and the ability to communicate with spirits that Protolk promises to them. On his part, Propolk is tempted by the dowry offered with Radotov’s daughter and schemes to obtain the promise of her hand in marriage. The charlatan organizes the meetings of a mysterious band of brothers to perform various ceremonies. Radotov is drawn to Protolk by his own curiosity. The desire to be a part of the selected group of “enlightened” people comes later, and by portraying this Russian aristocrat’s desperation to follow the trend, the Catherine lashes out against the need to set themselves apart from their surroundings. As Radotov explains,

At first, I was driven by curiosity; I was convinced by the aspirations of two-three acquaintances of mine; then my pride found satisfaction in distinguishing myself and being able to think differently from my family and friends. I was also taken in by a naïve hope that perhaps I would be able to see and hear what is deemed impossible.905

The head of the family is not the only victim of the deceivers. Although she is not formally initiated into this society, Radotov’s daughter is also under the spell of

903 Novikov, Izbrannye sochinenia, 636.
904 Catherine II, “Obol’schennyi, komedia v piati deistviakh.”

Compare this description of the interest in Freemasonry with I. P. Elagin, “Povest’ o samom sebe,” Russkii arkhiv (1864), no. 1-12, 99.
Protolk’s ideas and her imagination is captivated by virtually incomprehensible mystical books:

She has completely given herself over to the reading of those books which many people buy only to follow fashion, and for which, frankly, I cannot find precise meaning or sound reasoning. She interprets them in such a way that it is hard to believe. 906

Led by the false enlightenment, Radotov’s daughter hears the voices that inhibit the matter and believes in seeing human souls in butterflies. And this influence on the young minds seemed to Catherine more dangerous than greediness of the common thieves.

At the end, these “melancholic-looking monkeys” who “throw dust into people’s eyes” are publicly exposed and the falseness of their claims of spiritual enlightenment is illuminated. 907 Justice is obtained; the money and jewelry are returned to the lawful owners after Protolk is arrested.

Over and over again Catherine posed the seminal question in her plays: why did Freemasons prefer to carry out their activity in secret if their intentions were truly honorable? Through her level-headed character, she asked,

Do you mean to say that there are virtues higher and greater in number than those which are already demanded of us by our laws established since time immemorial? Isn’t there some kind of depraved meaning hidden behind the “other, better virtues?” 908

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906 Catherine II. “Obol’schennyi.” 315: “Vdalas’ ona nyne v chtenie tekh knig, koi pokupaut mnogie po otdni mode, v koikh poistine ia ne nakhozhu ni smysla tochnogo, ni rassudka zdravogo; ona zhe ikh tolkuet tak. chto udivitel’ no!”


By implying that there were “better virtues” available only to a limited circle of the initiated, Freemasons, according to Catherine, deceived themselves. But even more importantly, they became dangerous to the state by trying to exercise a harmful influence on the society.

The *Siberian Shaman* continues the same theme. The members of the Bobins family are fooled by an oracle Amban-Lai, a native of Siberia and a self-proclaimed Master of the 140th degree. He is a charlatan of the same caliber as Kalifalkzherston and Protolk. As the previous two plays, the *Siberian Shaman* ends with the state police capturing the deceiver. However, this time the deceiver is accused not only of playing tricks and being a charlatan, but first and foremost of starting a school to propagate his ideas.

On 21 April 1787, Catherine explained to Zimmerman that at the least her last play was written as an explicit warning to both the deceivers and the deceived:

I am very glad you spoke well of *The Siberian Shaman*, but I am afraid the comedy will not correct anybody. Absurdities are catching, and these particular absurdities have become fashionable... I remember that in 1740 the least philosophical people pretended to be philosophers, and by this means at least reason and commonsense were not lost. But these new erroneous ideas have made fooled of many who were not fools before.

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909 According to the transcripts of Lopukhin’s interrogation, he was amused by the question of why Freemasons were hiding from the police. And although he pointed out that times and places of Masonic meetings not only were well known to the police, special enforcements were sent to regulate traffic during special Masonic celebrations, it was a tongue-in-cheek answer. Eshevskii, “Neskol’ko dopolnitel’nykh zamechanii k stat’i “Novikov i Schwarz,” *Russkii vestnik* 19 (1864), 175.

For the leaders, the reasons commonly justified the need for secrecy by moral considerations emphasizing that charitable actions were morally valuable only when performed without expecting anything in return. In NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 1 (1-2), 2rev. (Ustav ili pravilo svobodnykh kamen’chikov, 181, 1783. Often, Russian Freemasons described Freemasonry not as a secret society, but as a “meek” one, meaning that true Freemasons did not boast their knowledge and good deeds. See, for instance, NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 54, 150-152rev. In this sense, in Margaret Jacob’s words, Masonic secrecy can be considered as “an extreme form of privacy” (Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World: The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 101). However, no matter how much Lopukhin tried to present Freemasonry as a publicly accepted institution in Russia, it still remained more secretive than many of its European counterparts.

910 *Verhaelnisse*, 352.
On 1 July 1787, writing to Zimmerman about his article in the *Hamburg Gazette*, in which he had denounced the Strasbourg magnetists and compared them to the shaman in Catherine’s play, she added, jokingly:

I do hope these magnetists will be asked to come from there to those countries where similar charlatans are so decidedly liked. I can give an assurance beforehand that they will be taken less seriously and will cost less than Cagliostro and his comrades.911

The reaction that Catherine received from Zimmermann after he read her plays, “The South no longer enlightens the North, but the North enlightens the South; now enlightenment comes to us from the banks of the Neva,”912 might explain why the discussion of Cagliostro and his pseudo-magical talents opened up six years after his visit to Russia.913 It is possible that by opening up this public debate in Russia, Catherine wanted to be among the first to participate in the European preoccupation with the Diamond Necklace Affair in Paris.914 Despite Catherine’s intentions, the points that she made in her plays about Freemasonry became pretty commonplace in Europe by that time.915 None of Catherine’s plays specifically targeted Moscow Freemasons, and she restrained the mockery to the objections well known both in Europe and in Russia at this

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911 Verhaeltnisse, 355.
913 Douglas Smith, *Working the Rough Stone*, 153, points out this delay in Catherine’s reaction.
914 After the plays were performed in 1786, the supporters of Cagliostro tried to defend him by the publication of two separate translations of *A Treatise on Behalf of Count Cagliostro Memorial grafa Kalliostro protiv gospodina general prokuraora obviniauschego ego, pisannoii im samim* (Moscow, 1786) and *Opravdanie grafa de Kalliostro po delu kardinala Rogana o pokupke slavnago sklavacha vo Frantsii* (St. Petersburg, 1786) that was written immediately after the affair of the Diamond Necklace. The Diamond Necklace affair was a scandal that cast another shadow on the queen of France Marie-Antoinette in relation to the disappearance of an expensive necklace in 1785. Cagliostro was arrested, but it was established that he did not take part in the plot.
time.\textsuperscript{916} Chastising the Russian public for following the fashion of Freemasonry, by saying “He who does not always follow prejudice in the latest fashion is the one who possesses reason,” Catherine herself readily followed an anti-Masonic trend.\textsuperscript{917}

The debates on the nature of true and false enlightenments, the distinctions between \textit{Aufklärung} and \textit{Schwärmerei}, and the nature of the societies of Illuminati, Martinists, and Freemasons, were at the time on the agenda of the intellectuals all over Europe. In 1784, the Bavarian government banned Illuminati and Masonic lodges, starting discussions about possible political goals of various secret societies, and the events of the French Revolution complicated the matters even more. While Russian educated society felt “only the aftershocks”\textsuperscript{918} of European events, Catherine made the agenda close to her heart.\textsuperscript{919} In 1787, for instance, she commissioned the translation and

\begin{itemize}
\item By 1784, two popular anti-Masonic pamphlets were published in Russia: Abott Larudan’s \textit{Mops without a Collar and Chain, or the Free Revelation of the Mystery of the Society of the Mopses (Mops bez osheinika i bez tsepi, ili svobodnoe otkrytie tainstv obschestva, imenueschegosia mopsami} (St. Petersburg, the Genning Press, 1984)); and \textit{The Freemason Unmasked, or the Authentic Masonic Mysteries Published Precisely and Impartially and in Great Detail (Mason bez maski, ili podlinnye tainstva masonskii, izdannye s mnogimi podrobnostiiami tochno i bespristrasno} (St. Petersburg: the Genning Press, 1784)), both translated from French.
\item Catherine the Great, “The Deceiver,” in \textit{Sochinenia Ekateriny II}, 299: “Razumen to iz nas, kto ne vseda po mode sleduet predubezhdenu.”
\item Faggionato, \textit{A Rosicrucian Utopia}, 190.
\item This time period is characterized by the general confusion between many secret societies. Most likely, Catherine, like many European intellectuals, lumped together the clandestine goals of Freemasons, Illuminati, and even Jesuits. On the Illuminati in Russian context, see footnote 604 on p. 205.
\item N. Berdiaev put forward a thesis on which Catherine confused the terms on purpose (N. Berdiaev, “Russkaia ideia,” in \textit{O Rossi i russkoi filosofskoi kul’ture} (Moscow: Nauka, 1990), 58). At least by the end of the 1780s the terms “Freemason” and “martinist” were often used interchangeably in Russia.
\item Le Mercier de la Rivière popularized the name “Martinists” in the \textit{Tableau de Paris} by describing under it the followers of the mystical doctrines of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. Many people in Russia, however, understood by this name the disciples of the occult teachings of Saint-Martin’s early mentor, Martines de Pasqually, who in the later eighteenth century were led by Jean-Baptist Willermoz (Vuillermoz). Saint-Martin had brought his doctrine close to Catholicism by rejecting the elements of occultism and magic, but Willermoz was the direct heir of Pasqually’s occultist rituals. \textit{L’Ordre martiniste des Elus-Cohen de l’Univers} founded by Don Martinez de Pasqually in 1768 was merged with Freemasonry by his successor Jean-Batiste Willermoz. (C. Lenning, \textit{Encyclopaedie der Freimaurer}, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1882-1828), 398ff; Schneider, \textit{Quest for Mysteries}, 54). Russian eighteenth-century Martinists should be distinguished from the members of \textit{L’Ordre Martiniste} that Papus (Dr. Gérard Encausse) created in 1888.
\end{itemize}
publication of the texts against Cagliostro, one of which was also published by
Nikolai. Moreover, the Russian version of von der Recke’s book had the introduction
in which Nikolai supported the idea of Cagliostro being a Jesuit. Both works
presented Cagliostro as a charlatan, the idea that continued in the publication of
Cagliostro Discovered in Warsaw, or An Authentic Description of His Chemical and
Magical Operations Conducted in this Capital City in 1780 in 1788.

The campaign against the Jesuit conspiracy was carried out on the pages of
Berlinische Monatsschrift (edited by Nikolai) and Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek (edited
by F. Gedicke and J. Biester) throughout 1788 and 1789. And Catherine used both
magazines to promote her belonging to European intellectual elite. In March of 1788,
Berlinische Monatsschrift pointed out the effectiveness of the Empress’ struggle against
ignorance. To support the impression, Catherine wrote a personal letter supporting von
der Recke which was enthusiastically published in the August issue of Berlinische
Monatsschrift. At the same time, later that year Nikolai published another anti-Jesuit
book of Catherine’s protégé von der Recke, this time directed at another well-known
Freemason with connections to Russia, J. A. Starck. Finally, it is likely that it was the
Empress who in 1789 commissioned the translation and publication of the book in

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920 A Reply on Behalf of Countess de Valios La Motte to the Treatise of Count Cagliostro (1786)
([Doillot], Vozrachenie so storony grafiny de Valua-la Mott, na opravdanie grafa de Kalliostro (St.
Petersburg, 1786) and News of Cagliostro’s Infamous Stay in Mitau in the Year 1779 and his Magical
Experiments by Charlotte von der Recke (1787) (Opisanie prebyvanitsa v Mitave izvestnago Kaliostra na
1779 god. i proizvedemykh im tamo magicheshchikh deistvii (St. Petersburg, 1787).

921 On the eighteenth-century conspiracy theories and their interconnections, see Steven Luckert, Jesuits,
Freemasons, Illuminati, and Jacobins: Conspiracy theories, secret societies, and politics in late

922 The original was A. F. Moszynski, Kalliostro poznannyi v Varshave, ili Dostovernoe opisanie
khimicheskih i magicheshchikh ego deistvii, proizvodimykh v sem stolichnom gorode v 1780. Moscow, 1788.

923 Etwas über des Herrn Oberhofpredigers J.A. Starck Vertheidigungsschrift, nebst einigen andern
nöthigen Erläuterungen von Charlotte von der Recke (Berlin, 1788).
French under the title *Lettre de Mr. Starkowsky, à son ami et parent, M. Starck à Darmstadt, à Moscou*. The French version, however, was appropriately purged of the references to the Jesuit conspiracy. Finally, Catherine’s European public relations campaign ended with the German-language publication of her three plays under Nicolai’s editorship and with the foreword extolling the virtues of the enlightened Empress. It is also precisely around this time that the Moscow governor-general Bruce [Brius] called Catherine’s attention to the activities of the Moscow Masonic circle. By the 1786, the letters sent by regular mail both within the Empire and abroad were intercepted and studied. When Catherine was already suspicious of the content of Freemasons’ teachings and their connections to foreign lodges and societies, Novikov’s Masonic associates, notably Schröder, began accusing Russian Freemasons of financial dishonesty in the letters that were read by the police.

What happened between the publication of Catherine’s plays in 1786 and Novikov’s imprisonment in 1792 has been the subject of many speculations.924 It is clear, however, that Catherine’s suspicions towards the political inclinations of Freemasons only strengthened. Many Russian Freemasons themselves admitted the influence of the French Revolution. Lopukhin, one of Novikov’s most important Masonic friends, pointed out in his memoirs:

> Perfidy, slander, malice, and the public’s chattering nourished and fortified the court’s suspicion of our society. Some saw us as purely sanctimonious men, while others assured that our system was aimed at the institution of freedom; and this was happening around the time of the French Revolution. Others assured that we were drawing in the people and with this aim were generously giving out

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924 In the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian historians tended to emphasize the political aspect of the Moscow Masonic circle, including their involvement with foreign lodges and the Grand Duke Paul (for instance, the interpretations by Barskov, Pypin, and Vernadskii). The Soviet-era historians preferred to interpret the events as Catherine’s personal attack on Novikov-the-Enlightener in the view of the revolutionary events (Makogonenko, *Novikov i russkoe prosveschenie*).
alms. Yet others told about how we spoke with spirits but without believing
themselves in the existence of spirits, and various absurdities were divulged...
All of this was intensified by the beginning of the Revolution in Paris in 1789,
which at that time was attributed to secret societies and to the system of the
philosophes. However, the mistake in this conclusion was that those societies
and that system were not all all similar to ours.925

Rumors about Novikov’s dangerous political involvements proliferated both
before the trial and after it. Many thought, “all he is accused of is corresponding with the
Jacobins.”926 Even the analytical reports to the member of the royal family claimed that

While Prince Prozorovskii was trying to uncover the designs of the Martinists and
find certain evidence against them, a letter to Novikov from the Bavarian
Illuminati with clearly mystical leanings was intercepted... The Empress was
keeping some important documents about the Martinist affair, including a list of
names, a letter from the Munich Illuminati to Novikov, and the interrogations of
the most important members of the society.927

It is true that the tensions generated by the Revolution in France contributed to
this government action against the secret societies. Given the persistent rumors about
involvement of the Grand Duke Paul and Freemasonry, and the participation of secret
societies (without distinguishing among Freemasons, Martinists, or Illuminati) in the
French Revolution, the state’s measures against the Moscow Masons were dictated by
important political and ideological concerns. If we consider the Novikov affair in
European context, it becomes clear that his arrest and the state control over the activities
of his group were not exemplary acts of extreme autocracy. After the 1784, authorities in
many European countries exercised the similar caution towards Masonic lodges. In
1784, for instance, Masonic lodges were banned in Bavaria. In 1787, Joseph II closed

925 Lopukhin, Zapiski, 26-27. Also, quoted and translated in Faggionato, A Rosicrucian Utopia, 211.
926 N. N. Bantysh-Kamenetskii in a letter to Prince Kurakin, quoted in M.S. Balabanov, Rossia i
evropeiskie revolutsii v proshlyom (Kiev: God. Izd-vo Ukrainy, 1924), 61.
927 “Zapiska o Martinistakh, predstavlennoia v 1811 g. grafoom Rastopchiny velikoi kniashe Ekaterine
Pavlivne,” Russkii arkhiv no. 9-12 (1875), 76-77. Quoted and translated in Faggionato, A Rosicrucian
Utopia, 211.
down all but a few Masonic lodges in his territories. In Prussia, numerous controversies around secret societies complicated the work of the German Freemasons. In France after 1789, members of Masonic lodges were suspected of political plotting by all sides, and the lodges virtually extinguished by 1794. In the 1790s, lodges came under intense scrutiny in Britain.

However, repressions of the Novikov group can also be considered as a part of Catherine’s larger campaign against political opposition. Moscow Freemasons from the Novikov-Schwarz circle emphasized that their work was not political in any way. In a well-known dialogue between Novikov and Baron Reichel, in which the former, distracted by his vain search for mystical truths in the lodges he attended, asked the latter to help him distinguish the true Freemasonry from the false, Reichel pointed out to Novikov that

Every Masonic organization that has a political motive is false; if you notice even a shadow of a political aspect and connections, or if you see anyone preaching the words equality and freedom, then regard it as false. But if you see that it leads, through self knowledge, to improvement of oneself, along the path of Christian teaching, in the strict sense, if it is foreign to all political appearances and unions, drunken feasts, depravity of members’ morals, if [they] speak of freedom among members in the sense of being liberated from passions and vices and of controlling them, then such Freemasonry is already a true one or leads to the discovery of a true Masonry.

In their search for “true” Freemasonry aimed at the betterment of self, Freemasons in Russia arrived at the idea of betterment of the society and started to develop an increasingly public stance.

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928 According to the famous interpretation advanced by Pypin, and repeated by others afterwards, the arrest and subsequent incarceration of Novikov in 1792 represented a climax of the first struggle between an increasingly self-conscious public and a state which was beginning to abrogate its critical function. This position is also prominently reflected in Bogolubov, *Novikov i ego vremia*, 454, 457-59; Pypin, *Russkoe masonstvo: Makogonenko, Nikolai Novikov i russkoe prosveschenie XVIII veka.*

It has been often pointed out that the notion of “intelligentsia” as socially active educated elite was added to Russian lexicon by Schwarz’s lectures.930 Around the 1780s, the nascent intelligentsia became the expression of the thoughts and aspirations of the educated elite, and eighteenth-century Freemasonry formed the basis of the developing mythology of the intelligentsia. As custodians of great “truths,” these intellectuals considered their practical philanthropy in terms of own self-replication, trying to reform not only willing brothers but also members of the “outside” society. Since there were no “public places for the citizens to discuss our fatherland’s wellbeing” in Russia, lodges became the last “refuge, temple[s] devoted to truth and wisdom” aimed to “fire up the hearts of true Masons.”931 In its Masonic publication, the Novikov-Schwarz group, for instance, called on Freemasons in Russia not to limit their work by the boundaries of the lodge and confines of theory. Freemasons, they insisted, should propagate their ideas “not by words... but by actions, leading by example in every kind deed.”932 Every lodge had banded together in the intimate contact of lodge life, and the lodge’s members worked together inside and outside the lodge with a certain unity of purpose. While a sub-group of every lodge provided its members with opportunities to give and receive help from each other, they often were intent on working together beyond the confines of their formal association. In this sense, just joining a lodge was in great measure an expression of withdrawal from the old traditional patterns of Russian life.

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930 V. Tukalevskii, Iskaniia russkikh masonov (St. Petersburg, 1911); Raeff, Orgins of the Russian Intelligentsia.
931 Magazin Svobodno-kamenschicheskii, soderzhaschii v sebe rechi, govorennie v sobraniakh: pis’ma, razgovory i drugie raznyia kratkie pisaniia, stikhami i prozou, vol. 1, part 2, 15.
Freemasons were anxious to incorporate some of their Masonic "truths" and regulations in the framework of the community. "Your fatherland has a right to claim your life and your service," emphasized Russian Freemasons in the country where the public sphere was underdeveloped. According to Masonic commentators, just as charity and love of humanity are tied together, "charity and true Patriotism are inseparably connected." The rhetoric of Freemasons' obligation to serve the public and a country that infuses rhetoric of Freemasons in Russia corresponds with their practical idealism. Novikov's characterization of his own destiny could also be applied to many Freemasons in Russia: "I was born and reared in the womb of the fatherland. For this I am obligated to serve it by my labors and to love it." And Freemasonry was supposed to only accentuate this feeling by making its members "better people useful to themselves and to the state." Noble deeds were equated with heroic actions. Thus, in the words of Marc Raeff, "Freemasons transferred the notion of service to the State to those in society."

From the time Freemasons' "beloved fatherland opened Freemasonry and through it was made to participate in the acquiring the true light," nothing had received as much effort as "the education of the young children of the Order and making them ready to accept the secrets saved in it from the most ancient times ... till the omnipresent God will

934 Smellie. Panegyr. or. a Poem. upon the Excellent Art of Masonry. 6-8.
935 V. I. Novikov, Masonstvo i russkai kul'tura (Moscow, 1993), 7-8.
937 Magazin Svobodno-Kamen'sicheskii vol 1, part 2, 85.
938 Raeff, Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia, 163.
open these [secrets] to the whole world to the benefit of humanity." In the order against Novikov signed by Catherine and attached to the documents related to his trial, love of humanity is not regarded as a plausible explanation for the Masonic involvements with society. Instead, it is alleged that Masonry-related and sponsored hospital, pharmacy, seminars, and printing houses were a part of a scheme of deceiving people and tricking them to part with their money or aspirations of power and control. As General Prozorovskii reported to Catherine, after Freemasons secured control over the Moscow University Press, they tried to make themselves a society that would have special privileges. It is with this goal that they established the Friendly Learned Society and, under the pretense of a science-oriented association, started printing books that did not go through the censoring system. They "deceived stupid people," and opened "grand buildings with hospital, pharmacy, printing house, and to admit students from seminars to teach them for free...."

Structures for Influencing the Society

-- Charity Institutions

939 Magazin vol'nikamenschicheski, vol. 1, part 1, 1: "S togo vremen, kak vozvlbennoe otechestvo nashe otkrylo istinnyi istochnik svobodnogo Kamen' schichestva i chrez to doelos' uchastvuuschin v stiazhani svet, ni o chem tolko ne bylo prilgaemo starani, kak o vospitaniu unykh chad Ordena i sodelania ikh sposobnymi k priniatui tainstv, sokhraniamykh v nem s samykh drevneishikh vremen i ... dokole vsemugushii Bog blagovolit otkryt' onyia vsemu miru ko blagy chelovechestva...."

As I establish in this chapter, Freemasons' public activities were a natural extension of their philosophy onto the reform of man and society. All areas of practical applications, including pedagogy, philanthropy, commitment to publishing, and medical and pharmacological advances, were based on Masonic theories about man, his moral, spiritual, and physical composition. Just as medieval Church ideologues were convinced that "true" self-love and the love of God would coincide, so in the spirit of the eighteenth century, Freemasons believed that true self-love would coincide with "true" benevolence. From the "science of man" came the main influential idea -- the possibility of reforming human nature -- that informed Masonic activities by the end of the eighteenth century.

940 OPI GIM, fond 17, opis' 2, folder 343, 161-162 (letter on 1 May 1792, signed by Catherine).
941 Pekarskii, Dopoleniia, 128-29; Longino, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 272; Elagin, "Zapiska," 90; N. M. Karamzin, Neizdannye socheniia i perepiska (St. Petersburg, 1862), 223, 224.
Though Masons may have looked after their own first, however, they and their lodges were both well qualified, willing, and well situated to support the general infrastructure of the new “outpatient” philanthropy and to direct its other forms of voluntary activity. By the end of the eighteenth century, Russia afforded many striking proofs of the liberality and compassion of Freemasonry by establishing charitable institutions.

Generally, charity was directed at Freemasons’ immediate dependents. The Grand Lodges, like the Grand Lodge of England, invested a lot of time and effort into the foundation of two major formal foundations during the eighteenth century in Britain, the Royal Cumberland School for Girls (1788) and the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys (1789), but they probably had little or no impact on the children of the non-Masonic poor. Charity was understood in broad terms and was not “confined to almsgiving.” It was supposed to be an “uniform, uninterrupted, universal benevolence, which presides over our thoughts, words and actions.”

Since a good Mason was a citizen of the world, “his charity should move along with him, like the sensible horizon, wherever he goes, and, like that too, embrace every object, as far as vision extends.” Equally, the progress of benevolence was not

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942 Among prominent examples of the initiatives in the same vein, there is Freemasons’ School on Saint George’s Fields that was instituted on the 25th of March, 1788, for “Maintaining, Clothing, and Educating the Female Children and Orphans of Indigent Brethren belonging to the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons” (British Library, Add. 29970 Proceedings of the Royal Lodge of Freemasons, at the Thatcher House Tavern, St. James’ Street, London, 1777-1817).

943 A Sermon preached before a Provincial Grand Lodge of Free masons at Faversham, Kent on the Festival of St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1774 (Canterbury, printed by Simmons and Kirkby, Masonic Pamphlets, vol. 44 (Sermons, Addresses, etc., 1757-1798), 16.

944 Thomas Pollen, “Universal Love. A Sermon Preached in Trinity Church, at Newport in Rhode Island, Before the Right Worshipful Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, on the 24th Day of June, 1757,” in FHL, Masonic Pamphlets: Sermons, Addresses, etc. 1757-1798, vol. 44 [B.10.MAS], 16.

945 Hutchinson, The Spirit of Masonry, 216.
confined to the narrow circle of family and lodge brothers. Freemasons insisted that as an image of God, every man was worthy of help.\textsuperscript{946} If “A Mason’s Lodge is now a school of Virtue, into which men do not enter as idle spectators: but take frequent lessons, and depart every time more and more perfect,”\textsuperscript{947} they were eager to use the lessons taught in the lodges in the society. Tested in the laboratories of the lodges, charitable actions extended to the city, the country, and, ultimately, the whole of mankind. As people, “in whatever situation they are placed,” are still the same, they are “liable to similar dangers and misfortunes,” and consequently, the whole “Human Species are proper objects for the exercise of charitable dispositions.”\textsuperscript{948} Attesting to the fact that people “partake of one common nature,” Masonic commentators celebrated the idea of a perfectionizing benevolence that could “aid” a faulty nature. Freemasons often assumed an advisory or pedagogical role.

The perfectionizing model implies a hierarchy in which friends perform the roles of tutor and student, parent and child. Moreover, the ability to sympathize, to feel the urge and have the habit to be charitable was often equated with being polished and culturally advanced. Freemasons pointed out that “a people or nation end-d [endowed] with a quick sensibility, are always benevolent in their dispositions.”\textsuperscript{949} Although sensibility was regarded as implanted in the heart of every man to some degree, yet, like all other feelings, it could be greatly strengthened and improved by “proper culture.” In the true spirit of the eighteenth century, learning and a taste for the elegant arts of life were the best means of promoting this sensibility. Thus, the division between those who

\textsuperscript{946} NIOR RGB, fond 14, folder 1 (1-2), 10rev.
\textsuperscript{947} Pollen, “Universal Love,” 18.
\textsuperscript{948} Smellie, \textit{Panegyr}, 6-8.
\textsuperscript{949} Smellie, \textit{Panegyr}, 6-8.
required assistance and Freemasons was considered not only along lines of wealth, but also learning, taste, and “sensibility of spirit.” By attributing charity and benevolence to the sphere of taste and feelings Freemasonry only emphasized the selective nature of their society. “The poor, oppress’d with Woe and Grief,” those who “Gain from … bounteous Hands Relief,” are opposed to those who can allow themselves to be benevolent. The feelings of the hand of charity required Freemasons to be divested of every idea of superiority, and to consider themselves as being of the same rank and race of man, but the rhetoric of charity as the common denominator for equality was often misleading.

The most obvious practical activity of Russian Freemasons was collecting money for the poor. For instance, with the destruction of the bread harvest by the harsh frosts in the winter 1786-87, severe famine happened all over Russia. In 1787, driven by the precept of love and help one’s fellow human beings, Freemasons provided voluntary famine relief for the Russian poor by buying bread and distributing it on the streets.

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950 The exclusiveness and selectiveness of Freemasonry was especially emphasized by the charity directed specifically at Freemasons. By the end of the century, Masonic organizations were forced to enforce rules and procedures against “impostors” who might have abused their confidence or intercepted “the fruits of their benevolence” (FHL, The Freemasons’ Magazine, Part I, vol. 2, 1794).

951 RGADA, fond 8, opis’ 1, folder 254 (1), 352, 260rev. (Elagin’s personal papers, Constitutions, 1767).

952 Despite the fact that according to Smith, Working the Rough Stone, 24, even former serfs were allowed to join lodges in Russia, rhetoric of equality is especially ambiguous in Russia, where the majority of the population was in serfdom. Glossing over the situation, Freemasons in Russia insist that ultimately masters and serfs are the same: when they die, they are buried in the same soil: “…respect your superiors in age and in rank. Superior is put above us to make us follow the law… Servants are born to serve you… but equal with any peasant. You will be buried in the same soil as your peasant,” in NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 91, 2-4 (Lodge Speeches by Gamaléia, 23 October 1783).

953 As In-Ho Ryu establishes, in the lodge of Urаниия annual collections averaged only 110 rubles while the lodge spent 1,000 rubles on celebrations of the St. John’s Day in 1772, and 75 rubles 55 kopeks on the funeral of a brother. In-Ho Ryu, “Russian Freemasonry in the Age of Catherine,” 150.

954 A wealthy Siberian manufacturer, Grigorii Pokhodiashin, was said to have gone bankrupt and required to sell his paper factory in order to sponsor Novikov and his various public enterprises. Pokhodiashin spent at least 50,000 rubles to help the Moscow Masonic circle organize the famine relief in 1787. M. M.
Ironically, Freemasons in Russia collected money not only for the Russian poor. In Russian lodges, just like the lodges over the globe, charities were collected and sent to the respective Grand Lodges to which they pledged allegiance. As I considered in the second chapter, the Provincial Grand Master for Russia Elagin was responsible for contributing money collected by the Russian brethren to the charity fund of the Grand Lodge of England.

-- Educational System

Rather than simply donating money, Freemasons in Russia directed their activity to practical endeavors related to education. Since the work of Freemasonry was often referred to as reforming, educating, or polishing its members and, by extension, members of the society, lodges themselves provided outstanding examples of the influence of pedagogy. As Professor Schwarz summarized, foreign and Russian Freemasons associated with Moscow Masonic circle made an effort to “educate” Russian people by

1) Spreading “correct” principles of education;

2) Supplying Novikov’s press with translated and useful materials to be printed;

3) Attracting “capable foreigners into the field of Russian education to replace the many ignorant and bad ones engaged in teaching, and further to train native Russians in teaching.”

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955 See, for instance, Chapter 1 on the details of Elagin’s payments to the Grand Lodge of England. According to Novikov’s estimations, Schwarz sent over 300 rubles to Berlin.

956 Longinov’s account of Schwaz’s activities is based on the Biograficheskii slovar' professorov i prepodavatelei, which in turn bases its entry on Schwarz almost entirely on the professor’s own account of his activities written in the memorandum of 1782 in order to present his grievances against curator.
Although due to the relatively limited involvement of only educated levels of society in Freemasonry in Russia, a Masonic ethos could not be considered as a definitive force in the empire, there is considerable evidence of the influence of Masonic learning societies, the society for translation, the seminary, and Freemasonry-oriented lectures at the university level.

As we established in previous chapters, the Westernizing country was considered by many foreign and Russian Freemasons as *tabula rasa* akin to a child’s mind in need of being shaped meticulously from youth. In Russia’s Westernizing “youth,” Peter the Great reorganized the system of education using many ideas developed in Prussia under the Pietist conception of the state as an institution responsible for its subjects’ welfare. The useful, the rational, and the practical were the catchwords of education as it was espoused at Halle, Leipzig, and Marburg. With the institution of the Table of Ranks in 1722, civil, military, and other positions were classified into fourteen ranks that were open to everyone, including foreigners. Peter established the idea that, for the advancement in state service, ability was more important than the advantages of birth. Although the merit principle was often ignored, from the beginning of the eighteenth century, education became increasingly important. Through the compulsion of the Petrine service system,

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Melissino, Schwarz’s memorandum is published in “Zapiska Schwarz na otnošeniakh k nemu I. I. Melissino,” *Letopis russkoi literatury i drevnosti* 4 (1862): 96-110.


958 Among the foreigners who advised Peter on the issues of education, Leibniz and his protégé Wolff were the leading figures. On Leibniz’s role in Russian educational system, see V. I. Chuchmarev, “G. V. Leibnits i russkaia kul’tura nachala XVIII stoletii,” *Vestnik istorii mirsovoi kul’tury*, no. 4 (1957): 120-32; V. I. Guerrier, *Sbornik pisem i memorialov Leibnitsa otnosiaschikhsia k Rossii i Petru Velikomu* (St. Petersburg, 1873).
... education did take hold in Russia, particularly among the nobility... No more than a generation after Peter's death education was accepted as a matter of course by the majority of nobles and in many instances even eagerly sought after.959

Peter's associate in education reform, Feofan Prokopovich, in his the Spiritual Regulations (1721), implied that pedagogy was a means for generating a new type of Russian citizens. While Peter aimed at creating a secular system of education in Russia, training the technically-proficient servants of the state needed to be complemented with training the loyal citizens to the state. It was Peter who ordered the translation of parts of Pufendorf's De Officio hominis et civis Juxta legem naturalem libri duo (1673) that appeared as abridged O dolzhnosti cheloveka i grazhdanina in 1726. During Catherine's rule, the Enlightenment ideal of education as something distinctive from instruction and training for service emerged. In 1783 a version of the book became a compulsory reading in Catherinian schools. The primacy of moral lessons and service to the state remained intractably linked. In the words of a contemporary,

Of what value is it to the citizenry when a man has an intellect strengthened by science and talent but, wasted from his youth by many harmful examples to his heart, is made into a pernicious official or [unworthy] citizen of his fatherland?960

Virtuous thinking, the inclination towards learning and the general well being of all Russians were supposed to be sponsored and controlled by the state. Moral education, along with the necessity for the state to control it, constituted the dominant theme in Russian education.

It is not coincidental, however, that moral education was the sphere in which the Freemasons tried to break the state control over the education. In 1783, Novikov

959 Raeff, Origins, 133.
960 Materialy dlja istorii uchebnikh reform v Rossii v XVIII-XIX vv., ed. S. V. Rozhdestvenskii (St. Petersburg, 1910), quoted in Black, Citizens for the Fatherland, 91.
published a treatise “On the Education of Children for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and General Welfare” (*O vospitanii i nastavlenii detei dlia rasprostraneniiia obscheopoleznikh znaniii i vseobscheego blagopoluchiiia*) that is often coined “the best educational work in Russian of the end of the eighteenth century."\(^{961}\) By the time the essay was published, Novikov was already a leading Freemason and influential publisher whose words were esteemed among educated Russians. In broad strokes, this large educational treatise sums up the views on education of the Moscow Masonic circle. Here Novikov repeated Locke and Rousseau (with the overtones of Rollin, Fénelon, and Basedow) in stressing the training of “the heart” above intellectual instruction. He emphasized that moral development was far more important to man and his society than purely technical training and extensively urged teachers to concentrate on knowledge applicable to reality.

Speaking out against rigid structures in learning, Novikov, however, did not discard the need to develop person’s reasoning: the more the reasoning powers were developed, the more successful the education of the heart would become. Moral education of the character demanded rational control. Even religious training has to be guided by reason, not dictated by teachers: “Children themselves should investigate religion and Christianity and confirm their faith by rational proofs when their reason is sufficiently developed.”\(^{962}\) Novikov’s ideas on education as moral exercise were important for Russia, but not as original as some Soviet historians claimed them to be.\(^{963}\)

The belief in the importance of moral training among Russian educators of the eighteenth

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\(^{961}\) E. N. Medynskii, *Istoriia russkoi pedagogiki* (Moscow, 1936), 95.


\(^{963}\) For instance, see M. F. Shabaeva, *Ocherki istorii shkoly i pedagogicheskoi mysli narodov SSSR: XVIII v.-pervaia polovina XIX v.* (Moscow, 1973), 165-76.
century was in tune with Western pedagogues who emphasized both practical training and character building in education. Educators in Russia had stressed long before Freemasonry's involvement in education that

Learning is like a weapon in that it can be used for both good and evil. One must control it. One must direct the heart through knowledge and keep it virtuous. Knowledge must open the door to virtue. A pure heart is preferred over great minds. But one must be careful here too, for the laws and piousness of Christianity rises above even human virtues. Without devoutness, no learning is truly useful and no virtue is complete...

These words echo the statements of Melissino, who, as early as 1757, had said that "fear of God, and knowledge of the laws of Christianity are the pre-requisites for Russians who wish to call themselves educated."

While fusing Western rationalism with traditional religiosity was a response to a specifically Russian need to find new bases for morality, the correlation between educating not merely admirable people, but loyal and useful citizens was a leitmotif of educational endeavors. Novikov’s introduction to the first Russian-language magazine aimed specifically at children, *Detskoie chtenie dla serdca i razuma* (1785-1789, *Children's Learning for the Heart and Mind*), goes further in connecting the need for moral education with service to the state. Novikov wrote, “there [in the magazine] will be moralizing pieces, that is, those in which you can learn your duty to God... and to the Ruler.” The magazine articles were supposed to help children become “good citizens for their Fatherland.” Physics, natural history, and geography were to be included, and

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965 Speech delivered by Barsov, one of the leading Russian educators of the time, 1760. Cited in Black, *Citizens*, 55.

historical tales were to be the carriers of much useful information. As the editor pointed out, “Love of order, moderation, and true love of their country” were among the most important traits that, if developed, could bring Russia’s youth an

... inclination to virtue, a habit of order... a patriotic feeling, a noble national pride, ... contempt for weakness and ... ostentation,... men and women must be educated according to their sex, and each particular class of society must be taught to fulfill its proper function.

According to an opening article in the Russian-language Freemasons’ magazine,

Since the time our beloved fatherland opened for itself a true source of Freemasonry and through it became involved in acquiring the true light, nothing received more effort than education of the youth able to receive the mysteries that are kept in it [Freemasonry] from the ancient times and opened to a small number of people, until the almighty God decides to open those [mysteries] to the whole world for the benefit of the whole mankind... Moscow University, the first Russian university, the main stronghold of the state education of its citizens, was one of the few islands of relative equality in Russia. The doors of the university were open to all who could pass the entrance examination, gentry and commoners alike (but excluding serfs). The university provided the nearest thing that existed in Russia to that career open to talent, and children of the nobles studied on an equal footing with children of village priests and merchants. By the mere fact of its existence, the university was corrosive of the values of the surrounding environment. Despite the progressive agenda, by the end of the century the training was still conducted by the means of harsh learning methods and rigid curricula. By the 1780s, Moscow University became known for its Masonic affiliations. Mikhail Kheraskov was the university curator, who rented the University Press to Novikov and company and actively

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967 Detsko ehtenie dla serdsa i razuma, pt. 1, second edition (1819), 2-3, 4-8.
969 Magazine Svobodno-Kamen’ schicheskii, vol. 1, part 1, 1.
promoted education-related Masonic enterprises. The most well-known Freemason at the university at the time was Professor Schwarz. Hired in September of 1779 as an extraordinary professor of the German language in the two gymnasia attached to the university, six months later he was already inspector of the new Pedagogical Seminary, established on his design, and promoted to the rank of ordinary professor of philosophy. Schwarz was now in the position to start his lectures on philosophy of history and theory of knowledge.

If we closely compare Schwarz’s university lectures with Masonic publications in the Russian language, an obvious connection between the two is a testament that the university lectures were one of the main channels for disseminating Masonic messages. As I consider further, Schwarz’s activities in organizing various pedagogical activities outside the classroom indicate that he might have planned an ambitious program of bringing about a moral transformation of the educated public at large.970 It is known that he obtained the permission of the University Conference to draw up a comprehensive program of reform in the spring of 1780. The project was ready a year later, and had the approval of the University Conference. The unexpected return of Kheraskov’s senior, the first curator I. I. Melissino from his leave of absence obstructed its implementation. I. I. Melissino, a one-time Procurator of the Holy Synod, and the older brother of P. I. Melissino who invented his own Masonic system, led the anti-Masonic fraction of the university and initiated an attack on Schwarz. As a report from Melissino to General Prozorovskii testifies, the authorities feared that the university

970 In the light of Schwarz’ activities, it is not surprising that V. V. Sipovskii advanced the thesis about Schwarz being a secret agent of the Bavarian Illuminati. “Novikov, Schwarz, i moskovskoe masonstvo,” in appendix to N. M. Karamzin, avtor “Pisem russkago puteshestvennika.”
... served only as a pretext to the Friendly Society\textsuperscript{971} and that the students of the seminaries, after being fed the mystic, theosophical alchemic, and cabbalistic systems of Swedenborg and other liars like him, would spread [the received knowledge] in the provinces and thus would contaminate the insides of the state.

Professor Schwarz was singled out as the main reason that the university was becoming a hotbed of Masonic activity. The authorities were concerned with the fact that the students considered Schwarz, a non-Orthodox foreigner, their "shepherd."\textsuperscript{972} By the end of 1782, the pressure from the anti-Masonic party became so great that Schwarz was forced to resign.\textsuperscript{973}

Besides Schwarz, among influential professors who were Freemasons we find M. G. Gavrilov (1759-1828), professor of the Old Russian literature and languages, theory of architecture and fine arts, who was a member of the lodge Oziris (1780), Sphinx (1786), and Alexander (?); Johann Christian Geim (1758-1821), German-born and Göttingen-educated professor of history, statistics, and geography, rector of Moscow University in 1818, the author of the popular Russian-German-French dictionary and a member of several lodges; or Christian Friedrich Mattei (1744-1811), Leipzig-educated professor of Greek and Roman literatures, who resided in Russia since 1772 and was a Meister von Stuhl in the lodges of Druzby (Friendship) (1777) and den drei Fahnen (of Three Banners). Jacob Sneider (1747-1848), originally from Colmar, became professor of civil and Roman law, member of the den drei Fahnen lodge, the Friendly Learned Society, and Master of the Moscow lodge of Tserera (Ceres) in 1784. P. I. Strakhov

\textsuperscript{971} On the Friendly Learned Society, see next section.
\textsuperscript{972} RGADA, fond 146 opis' 1, folder 23, "Donosenie Kuratora Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Universiteta ... I. I. Melissino glavnokommanduuschemy Moskvi Kniazu A. A. Prozorovskomy," 13 June 1790 (although brother Sch... is mentioned by Novikov, it is doubtful that he refers to Schwarz, who died in 1784. Most probably, the brother Sch... mentioned is baron Schröder), 24-24rev.
\textsuperscript{973} Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 189: Biograficheskii slovar' professorov, II, 590. Schwarz's complaint is published as "Zapiska Schwarz," 96-110.
(1757-1813), professor of physics, was very active in the Friendly Learned Society, was sent abroad to study at the expense of the Freemasons, and prepared many translations of the books for Masonic presses. One of the best university lecturers, he saw half of Moscow at his lectures on physics, and was the university rector in 1805-07. He was also the Master of the *Germes* (Hermes) lodge in 1780. Kh. A. Tchebotarev (1746-1815), professor of history and rhetoric, librarian, publisher of the *Moskovskie vedomosti* (*Moscow Register*) and, in 1803, the first selected rector of Moscow University, was a prominent figure in Moscow public life, member of the Friendly Learned Society, and the president of the Society of Russian history and antiquities. Tchebotarev was initiated in Freemasonry on 25 July 1775 in the lodge *Ravenstva* (Of Equality). Later he became the second and the first warden in the *den drei Fahnen* and *Meister von Stuhl* of the Moscow lodge of Sphinx in 1782. According to the memoirs of his student, Tchebotarev used to teach at home the students that were entrusted to him by the Masonic circle.\(^974\)

One of the students at a Masonic Seminary, A. A. Prokopovich-Antonskii (1762-1848), became professor of natural history, agriculture, and mineralogy, serving as the university vice-rector in 1807-17 and rector in 1818-21. During 1783-85, Prokopovich-Antonskii was a member of the Hermes lodge.

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**Seminaries and Educational Societies**

When Moscow University was opened in 1755, two classical gymnasia were established as a preparatory step to the university. They were old-fashioned grammar schools based mainly on the study of Latin and Greek. Since the proposals to reorganize

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\(^974\) Magnitskii’s memoirs, as mentioned in A. Semeka, “Russkie rozenkreisery i sochineniiia imperatritsy Ekateriny,” 358.
the gymnasium remained unsuccessful until 1791, Moscow Freemasons directed their
effort in organizing the first Pedagogical Seminary at Moscow University with the goal
of training future teachers in secondary schools. The idea belonged to the leader of
Moscow Freemasons Professor Schwarz, who became the curator (inspector) of the
seminary after he managed to secure private funds for it. A newcomer to Moscow, he
was able to obtain 20,000 rubles for the seminary from a well-known philanthropist, N.
A. Demidov. Additional help came from Masonic friends Kheraskov and Trubetskoi.
Schwarz himself donated 5,000 rubles and a collection of books.

The Pedagogical Seminary opened in November of 1779. Starting with six
students, chosen from among the candidates drawn from various ecclesiastical
seminaries, in 1782 the number of the students of the Pedagogical Seminary grew to
thirty, all of whom were supported with 100 rubles a year by the Masonic circle.\footnote{For a comparison, during the reign of Catherine II the state spent approximately 19 rubles to house,
feed, and clothe a soldier for a year. In 1783, the median market price for a cow was 12 rubles.}
After 1785, the Friendly Learned Society established thirty-five scholarships for the
training of teachers and study abroad. The students of the seminary lived in a house
bought by the circle which also accommodated Novikov’s publishing house of twenty
printing machines, pharmacy, and private apartment of Schwarz and his family. The
seminary had strong ties with the ecclesiastical authorities, and among the students were
two future metropolitans of the Russian Orthodox Church: Matvei Desnitskii
(metropolitan Mikhail) and Stepan Glagolevskii (metropolitan Serafim).

Three of the scholars selected to study at the Pedagogical Seminary, P. A.
Sokhatskii,\footnote{Pavel Afanas’evich Sokhatskii (1766-1809) was a professor of philology, author of the work of
education “Slovo o glavnoi tseli vospitania” (A Word on the Main Purpose of Education).} V. G. Ruban,\footnote{V. G. Ruban was a
prominent Russian mathematician and physician.} and A. A. Prokopovich-Antonskii,\footnote{A. A. Prokopovich-Antonskii was
a Russian mathematician and astronomer.} later became
outstanding educators themselves, and all three joined Novikov's Masonic circle. It was Prokopovich-Antonskii who, as director, was able to make a newly opened Blagorodnyi pension (Noble Boarding School) for the gentry, where new subjects could be taught along with Latin and Greek, to counterbalance the shortcomings of the university gymnasia. He single-handedly modernized the curriculum and the whole institution. Latin and Greek were eliminated, and emphasis was laid on natural history, physics, mathematics, Russian, and modern languages and literature. In 1798, Prokopovich-Antonskii delivered an address on "O vospitanii" ("On Education") at the university and, in a characteristic preoccupation, stressed the importance of moral training of character in distinction to the formal intellectual instruction of the old classical school.

Another Masonic enterprise that involved Moscow University was announced in June of 1782, when the Moscow Register announced that an unknown benefactor contributed funds for the establishment of the Perevodcheskaia seminaria (Translating Seminary) "for the translation of the best authors and morally-conducive works into Russian language, and [that this benefactor] will support six students to study at the ... and the students of the seminary who are already at the university." The same article mentioned that the friends of the unknown sponsor of the seminary, following his example, decided to fund ten more students.\textsuperscript{979} The university disclosed the name of the

\textsuperscript{977} Vasili Grigor'evich Ruban (1742-95) was a writer, poet, and translator, who became the inspector of the seminaries on the south of Russis (Novorosskiisk).
\textsuperscript{978} Anton Antonovich Prokopovich-Antonskii (1762-1848) was the first professor of natural history of Moscow University and professor of medicine and horticulture.
\textsuperscript{979} Moskovskie vedomosti 48 (1782), 383.
benefactor by publicly thanking Petr Tatischev, a Freemason and a patron, in the *Moscow Register* for his decision to sponsor the seminary and its students. Freemasons actively employed the students of the seminary (especially A. A. Petrov, A. M. Kutuzov, and N. M. Karamzin) for various translations appropriate for moral advancement of the reading public. Building on and simultaneously heating extensive interest in foreign authors, Masonry-related circles were immersed in translating and publishing activities. By providing young Russian men with means of supporting themselves through translation, the Moscow circle combined philanthropic activity with the need to supply its printers with material suitable for publication.

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980 Petr Tatischev (1730-1810) was son of a wealthy and prominent Police Master General Alexei Tatischev. On the younger Tatischev’s involvement with Freemasonry, see In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 185ff.

981 Moskovskie vedomosti 52 (1782), 415.

982 Among them were F. G. Gellert, A. Haller, E. Young, F. G. Klopstock, Fr. K. Moser, Ch. Fr. Germershhausen, J. Bunyan, and J. Milton. Some of the most popular works translated into Russian were: F. G. Gellert, *Geistliche Oden und Lieder* (1787), various excerpts from his *Moralische Vorlesungen* under the title: Nastavenie otsa synu, kotorogo on otravliaet v Akademiu (1781), O priatnosti grusiti (1781), O narvstvennom vospitanii detei (1787), and Rassuzhdenie F. Gellerta o tom, dlia kogo vredno znat’ o budushchei svoei sud’bne (1787). Edward Young, *The Complaint or Night Thoughts* (1787), *The Frightful Judgment* (1787), *The Triumph of Fate over Love* (1780); E. G. Klopstock, *Messias* (1785-1787); Fr. K. Moser, *Daniel in der Lowen-Grube* (1781); and anonymous works from the German: *Chrysomander* (1783); *Ueber alte Mystiker oder Geheimnisse* (1785). Ch. Fr. Germershauers’s works were translated in a ten-volume edition under the title *Khoziain i khoziatka ili dolzhnosti gospodina i gospozi* (1780-89). John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1786-1877); Ch. Ch. Sturm, *Gespräche mit Gott oder gedanken in der Morgenstunden auf jeden Tag des Jahres* (1787-1789); and Betrachtungen über die Werke Gottes im reiche der nature und der Vorsehung auf allen Tage des Jahres (1787-1789); J. G. Zimmermann, *Vom Nationalstolz* (1788); J. Mason, *On Self-Knowledge* (1781); Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1780); Haller, *Vom Ursprung des Uebels* (1786); Gessner, *Das hölzerne Bein* (1783), *Daphnis* (1788), *Abels Tod* (1780); J. Arndt, *Ueber das wahre Christentum*, 5 vols. (1784); G. J. Zollikerer excerpts from his *Einige Betrachtungen über das Uebel in der Welt* (1781). For information on various Masonic translations from European languages into Russian, see Rothe, *Deutsche in Russland* (Köln: Bohlau, 1996), 26-52; Vernadskii, 91-97, 111-136; *Svodnyi katalog russkoi knigi XVIII veka*: 1725-1800 (Moscow, 1963-67), 5 vols.). Also, as I consider further, Freemasons were engaged in printing magazines, and the translated articles and pieces represent their main content. Apart from regular translations of entire books, the Masonic journals, such as Moskovskoe ezhemesiachnoe izdanie (1781), *Utretnii sver* (1777-79), *Vecherniaia zaria* (1782), *Pokoiashchishia trudolubets* (1784-85), Moskovskie vedomosti (1783-84), and *Detskoe chtenie dlia serdtsa i razuma* (1785-89) (compare *Svodnyi katalog russkoi knigi*, IV, and N. I. Novikov i ego sovremenniki (Moscow, 1961), 15-336), published excerpts from Western writers without indication of sources.
Longinov reports that Novikov paid substantial amounts of money for the translations.\footnote{983} It is said that as a publisher, Novikov sometimes bought two or three translated versions of the same book just to encourage the translators. The best translations were published, the rest was destroyed.

In 1783, the Pedagogical seminary and Translating seminary were absorbed into a larger establishment, called the Philological seminary, with the number of students reaching fifty.

As a result of these activities, Freemasons accumulated a sizeable following among the students at Moscow University. On 13 March 1781, a group of disciples was brought together under the aegis of the Sobranie universitetskikh pitomtev (Association of University Students), with the aim of

[the cultivation of the minds and tastes of the members, meeting together for reading and discussion of their literary essays; their moral improvement for the sale of which each meeting is opened by one of the members reading a speech of moralistic content; finally – training in humanitarian activities, for the sake of which publication of periodicals consisting of the works of the members is proposed.\footnote{984}

The magazine Vecherniaia zaria (the Evening Twilight) was a result and reflection of their activities. Many of the members of the society were the scholarship students supported by Freemasons and living in the same house under the personal supervision of Schwarz.\footnote{985} In 1784, several former Moscow Masonic students branched out to found in St. Petersburg Obschestvo druzei slovestnykh nauk (Society of the Friends

\footnote{983} Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 220-221.  
\footnote{984} Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 136-137.  
\footnote{985} The funds were mainly raised through the members of the secret inner lodge of Garmonia (Harmony), Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 099.
of Literary Sciences). Members of this society, which called itself an “inseparable part
of the Association of University Students in Moscow,” were

[t]o try, according to their best ability, to be frank, one-minded, to love their
fatherland more than themselves, to be sympathetic to the unfortunate fate of his
fellow man, and to apply the greatest possible care for cultivation of his reason by
sciences profitable to mankind, and likewise work toward making his heart
righteous and incorruptible.986

The Association of University Students and various groups of Moscow
intellectuals with the ties to the university became the foundation for the new society,
_Druzheskoe Uchenoe Oboesctvo_ (Friendly Learned Society).987 Although functioning
well before that, the Friendly Learned Society was officially founded on 6 November
1782. Among other things, a pompous opening ceremony featured a special address to
the Governor General Chernyshev to recommend the new learning-philanthropic society
to Catherine’s protection.988 Printing and widely disseminating its invitation and the
short introduction to the Friendly Learned Society allowed Moscow Freemasonry to
openly appear on the public arena and pronounce its most universally recognized ideals
of “philanthropy, mutual help among brothers, and education of able men for the
state.”989 The introduction described the character and role of the new society as:

… composed of various men and youth noted for their nobility, and others
experienced in sciences, in zeal towards the propagation of enlightenment, and in
their distinguished gifts. These people, different from one another in age, style,
manner of living, profession, and gifts of fortune, are brought together by worthy
employment of leisurely hours for profit, lobe of learning, and public and private
well-being. Their mutual alliance, mutual inclination, and mutual good qualities

986 Cited in In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 213.
Jahrhunderts: ‘Druzheskoe uchenoe obschestvo,’” in _Beförderer der Auflärung in Mittel- und Osteuropa_,
257-70.
988 Longinov, 09. Although an old Freemason himself, Count Chernyshev was probably not aware of the
connections between Freemasonry and the Friendly Learned Society (Longinov, 095) when he reported to
Catherine about the new society and obtained her approval for it (Pekarskii, 128).
989 Eschevskii, 211.
are channeled by them into mutual profit, mutual services, and mutual perfection... finally, everyone becomes most useful and active.990

The stated goals of the Friendly Learned Society were to invite foreign scholars, enter into correspondence with the leading European intellectuals, and publish books, especially textbooks, at the expense of the society, and then distribute them in schools. The invitation to attend the inaugural meeting of the society on 6 November 1782 specified that the main preoccupations of the society included printing the textbooks books to distribute for free among the seminaries and other schools for 3000 rubles in total; concern for the distribution of the branches of knowledge that had been relatively neglected in Russia, including Latin and Greek languages, study of antiquity, chemistry, and characteristics of the things in nature; taking care of the Translators’ seminary at the university that at the time was comprised of twenty-five students (twenty-one of whom had already been under the patronage of the Society).991

The financial support for the society came from Petr Tatischev. In 1785 in Dessau, a book under the title Freimaurer Bibliothek, was dedicated to “Dem Hochwohlgeborenen Herr Peter Alexewitsch von Tatisvhschew [sic], Obermeister der Loge zu den drey Fahnen in Moskau.”992 It is important for us to point out this dedication of a German Masonic book to Tatischev and the enthusiasm of an unknown editor related to the establishment of the Friendly Learned Society in Moscow. Written in Berlin on 1 December 1784, these words testify to the international importance of practical undertakings of Moscow Freemasons:

990 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinstv, 060-061.
991 The text of the announcement in Russian is in Longinov, “Prilozhenie.” “Priglashenie Druzheskogo Obschestva,” in Novikov i moskovskie martinstv, 05-09; also in Russkii arkhiv (1863), 610, and Istoria Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 222.
992 Freimaurer Bibliothek: drittes Stück, Auf Kosten der Verlagskasse für Gelehrte und Künstler, und zu finden in der Buchhandlung der Gelehrten (Dessau, 1785), 61-64.
Most honorable brother in the Order! With such a remarkable zeal they furthered the foundation of the society of the learned friends that had as its high goal the ennoblement of the dispositions and the spread of knowledge in Moscow in November of 1782. I have learned about this [event] from their invitational program that was written for the occasion and which was also transferred to me. If (as the program indicates) the goal of the society is to find pleasant and instructive activities for leisurely hours according to an example shown by Scipio Africanus\textsuperscript{993}; bring together into one union people who are usually divided by their age, way of living, different occupations, and the means of earning living; do not let natural talents die away, but encourage them to act; to foster the spread of the knowledge of Latin language, and also acquaintance with antiquities, [acquaintance with] nature, which in its entrails saves so many treasures for every evenhanded researcher approaching it with the purity of thought; to create philological seminaries for homeless young people in which they could, in addition to education, receive [material] support, and aim to make them the future educators of the people, direct their minds to the generally useful activity in advance, and cultivate love to God and their neighbor in their hearts; and finally promote, by the means of a choosing good books for reading, enlightenment of the people’s spirit in their fatherland: who in this case would deny the superiority and general usefulness of such an establishment! Let the blessing of heavens to come down three times to these benefactors of the humankind, and let them serve as an example to many German states that are to meet with fewer obstacles in their path to the same goal, as they dispose of incomparably larger amount of preparatory means for achieving it.

Such societies, in which their young members from whom only voluntary sincere desire to participate in them [societies] is required, ... stock the rules for the whole life, using only the lessons and the experience of the elders, and where not only the learned [person] but also every well-disposed man has a right to raise his voice. These societies, I am telling you, can educate their active fellow members as friends of the humankind and for the Order itself. With the time, these disciples of wisdom will also stand in its ranks under the banner of the Order’s law and with weapons in hands will go fight the unbelief\textsuperscript{994}

\textsuperscript{993} Scipio Africanus (Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Numantinus (Africanus the Younger), 185-129 BC) a Roman general, who through the support of such leading intellectual figures as the poet Terence, the satirist Lucilius, and the Stoic philosopher Panaitius, exerted influence on the development of Latin literature and also upon the blending of Greek and Roman thought, not least in the adapting of Stoic ideas to Roman needs. To many later Romans, especially to Cicero, so much esteemed by the Freemasons in Russia, Scipio Africanus was an ideal statesman, personifying in his personal virtue, cultural patronage, and aristocratic moderation the golden days of the republic.

\textsuperscript{994} Foreword to Freimaurer Bibliothek. Published in German with Russian translation in Russkii vestnik 21 (1857), 184:

Sie, hochgeschätzter Ordensbruder, haben mit ausgezeichneten Beeherungen im November 1782 die Stiftung einer Gesellschaft gelehrte Freunde in Moskau befördert, deren edle Absicht auf Verfeinerung der Sitten und Ausbreitung der Wissenschaften gerichtet ist. Dies versündiget das mir mitgeteilte damalige Einladung – Programm, Müße und Freunde, verschieden an Alter, an Lebensart, an Geschäften und Glückgütern, gemeinschaftlich zum allgemeinen Wohl zu verbinden; unentwickelte
This information about the goals and the means of the society was evidently received from the announcement that Russian Freemasons sent out to foreign lodges with which they were in contact.

-- Publishing Activities and the Creation of a Reading Public

In addition to the reform of the system of education, printing was another practical preoccupation of Freemasons in Russia. For the most of the eighteenth century, printing was a state monopoly that was used by the rulers to convey their vision of the direction the society should take. However, between 1776 and 1783, private individuals owned or rented the presses that printed over a quarter of all Russian-language books in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1783, the industry received a boost when Catherine issued an edict that granted private individuals the right to own and operate printing presses, the so-called vol'nye tipographii, without having to receive a special privilege from the government. Almost immediately, in 1783, in addition to the Moscow University Press rented by Novikov, Freemasons opened two presses aimed at

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Naturtalente anzufeuern; Kenntnisse in der GelehrtenSprache, in den Altertümern, in der Natur, die den klagen nicht selbststückigen Forschern so viele verbogene Schätze aufschliesst, zu erweitern; in besonderen philologischen Pflanzschulen für den Unterhalt und Unterricht hilfslosen Jünglinge zu sorgen; daraus künftige Nationallehrer zu ziehen; und zu solchem Zweck sie zur wirksamen Tugend und ihre Gemüther zur Gottesfurcht und Nächstenliebe zeitig zu bilden, überhaupt aber den Geist des Vaterlandes nach und nach durch wohlgefeidt und Gemeinnützlichkeit solchen Instituts verkennen! Der fruchtbare Segen müsse dreifach auf diese Wohltäter der Menschen ruhen, und Macher deutscher Staat, der weit mindere Hindernisse zu überwinden, und weit mehrere Vorbereitungsmittel in Händen hat, möge daran ein Beyspiel zur Nachahmung nehmen.

Aus Gesellschaften dieser Art. wören mit aufrichtiger unverlierter Theilnehmung die jüngeren Mitglieder aus den Lehren und Erfahrungen der älteren ihren Lebenswandel formen können, und wo nicht bloß der Gelehrte, sondern auch der rechtschaffene Weltbürger spricht; aus solchen, saglich können auch für den Orden tätige Menschenfreunde hervorkommen. Diese Zöglinge der Weisheit schwören einst zu seiner Gesetzesfahne, und Waffen sich wider die Anfälle des Unglaubens. The text of the invitation in Russian is in Russkii arkhiv 2 (1863), 222, and "Priglashenie Druzheskogo Obschestva," in Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinisty, 05-09.

995 400 let russkogo knigopechataniiia, 1564-1964, vol. I (Moscow, 1964), 137.
printing Masonry-related publications and one secret printing house that was supposed to publish books for the internal consumption of the members of the lodges.996

When two Masonic publishing houses, the Novikov-led University Press and the Lopukhin-led private Publishing House made up the syndicate, their output during the period 1779-84 (i.e. before the Typographical Society was founded) was enormous, constituting 893 titles, which comprised about 30 percent of all books printed in Russia between 1779 and 1792.997

With three presses, the Moscow circle was successful in bringing a sharp commercial instinct into the service of their moral concerns. But the management aspect was not completely in the hands of Russian Freemasons. A substantial portion of Novikov’s letters to his unnamed superiors in Berlin is devoted to the discussion of the printing business, indicating that the actual control over his publishing activities was in the hands of foreigners.998 In the letters that Novikov, under his Masonic name Kolovion, sent around 1782-1784, he presented detailed reports about the state of the printing houses, including their profit and available funds in the terms that indicate his complete submission to his superiors.999 His reports (or, dispatches, as he called them) are direct and clear consequences of his superiors’ commands. Letters are peppered with

996 It is important to point out that besides the printed literature, a whole corpus of hand-copied literature existed in eighteenth-century Russia. Freemasons actively used the medium of hand-copied literature because it allowed them to impose restrictions on the use of some works and maintain relative secrecy.
997 The two Masonry-directed publishing enterprises displayed different tendencies in the titles they printed. While Lopukhin preferred mystical and quietist writings, Novikov’s house favored those dealing with alchemy and hermeticism.
998 Most probably, it was the Rosicrucian circle of Wöllner, connections with which were established during Schwarz’s visit to Berlin. See Chapter 2.
999 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6 and fond 147, folder 77 (Pis’ma Koloviona k nachal’niku). For an analysis of the dates of the letters, see In-Ho L. Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 405-408.
elaborate expressions of respect and submission to the wise direction of foreign Freemasons and assurances of loyalty to his “highly worthy superiors,”

... the true priests of the only true and invisible church of our Savior Christ, to whom He promised by his mercy to stay with them to the end of the world, to whom He gave the keys both to lock and unlock” and dutiful execution of their orders from the leading Russian publisher and journalist.1000

By submitting the publishing business of Moscow Freemasons to the control of his superiors in Berlin, Novikov was convinced that he was bringing light and greater good to his beloved fatherland. He acknowledged his plight in dealing with Masonry-related printing activities according to the strict commands of his superiors, but at the same time assured his foreign correspondents that he would follow their instructions “with sincere obedience throughout [his] life.”1001 As he wrote to his superior:

Be glorified our merciful Savior for the great mercy He showed toward our fatherland, though our merciful fathers are highly glorious superiors, by the permission to print mystical books...1002

As it appears from Novikov’s letters, the printing enterprises of Moscow Freemasons were to be reorganized according to the orders of the superiors. All the reins were supposed to go to Schröder, who received control over the bookstore and all financial flows, and Novikov pointed out that

... this burden [printing business] weighs on me; I impatiently wait for the day when I could be merely your agent and execute your orders which can be fulfilled after the actual establishment of the company.1003

However, Novikov was hesitant about entrusting Schröder with the Printing House because, as he explained, 1) Schröder was already overburdened with other

1000 Barskov, Perepiska, 240-41.
1001 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 5.
1002 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 084.
1003 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martenisty, 084.
responsibilities; 2) had weak health. Admitting that the difficulties with managing the press arose from Novikov's own lack of experience and expertise in the beginning stages of the organization, Novikov emphasized that the sheer scale of the venture did not allow one person to be in full control. Pointing out that the decisions on these matters are needed as quickly as possible, Novikov lamented the slow speed of correspondence and inquires. He wondered whether there was a way to receive some vital decisions from Berlin by some "verbal means." As a part of the reorganization process, Novikov and Schröder promised a detailed registry of the Printing House in the second letter, attaching it in Russian and German to the third letter. But even without the registry, the Berlin superiors were well informed about activities in Moscow. In the second letter, for instance, Novikov mentioned that the work of the secret printing house for "mystical" books had already started, and two books, Prostoserdechnoe o molitve nastavlenie (A Simple-Hearted Instruction on Prayer) and Hutchinson's Dukh masonstva (Spirit of Freemasonry), had already appeared. Or, on a completely different note, referring to the fact that the majority of the workers at the printing house were "spoiled drunkards" who required constant supervision, Novikov hinted that his superiors were already aware of that problem. He also extensively consulted with Berlin about the prices of the "mystical" books and the location for a "special printing house."

1004 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 5, 5rev.
1005 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 4rev.
1006 A chance to send business accounts (kal’kulatsionnye tablisy), a list of books Novikov had for printing, Masonic acts in Novikov's possession, with an indication of resources and translators, together with a list of all the books which had been printed or were in the process of publishing presented itself with Schröder's trip. On his way from Moscow, Schröder made stops in St. Petersburg, Dorpat, Riga, and Courland, arriving in Berlin on 7 November 1784. Vernadskii, Russkoe masonstvo, 72; Barskov, Perepiska, 260.
1007 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 68.
1008 NIOR RGB, fond 147, folder 6, 6.
The “special” press for the production of “mystical” works was Moskovskoe tipograficheskoe obschestvo (Moscow Typographical Society or Company) that was sponsored by the money of the Masonic circle. The Typographical Society was opened in fall of 1784.\textsuperscript{1009} Novkov’s later testimony to the officials during the trial shows that he did not keep the accounts of the University Press and the private Typographical Society separate.\textsuperscript{1010} Thus, in an indirect manner, he was placing not only the Typographic Society, but also the University Press, at the disposal of his Berlin superiors.

Despite Novkov’s influence on the printing market in Russia, he was not the only Freemasonry-related publisher and book trader. By far, the largest group of publishers and Freemasons in Russia at the end of the eighteenth century were Germans who either were born abroad or were born and raised in the German neighborhoods of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Karl-William Miller,\textsuperscript{1011} the son of a bookbinder, who moved to St. Petersburg to take a job at the Academy Press, was born in Lübeck. Following in his father’s footsteps, Miller became an influential St. Petersburg bookseller. Member of the lodge \textit{Ravenstva} (Of Equality), he offered his connections in St. Petersburg to establish

\textsuperscript{1009} The major shareholders, brothers Trubeskies and Lopukhin invested 15,000 and 20,000 rubles respectively; Kutuzov, Schröder, Chulkov, Turgenev, and Ladyzhenskii put in 27,000 rubles, which brought the cash capital of the company to the unheard 65,000 rubles. Eshevskii, “Moskovskie masony,” 207.

\textsuperscript{1010} Longinov, \textit{Novikov i moskovskie martinisty}, 884.

\textsuperscript{1011} Gary Marker, \textit{Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 93-9598, 100, 175, mentions Karl Müller, a Freemason, Novikov’s fellow bookseller, and a founder of the \textit{Obschestvo starauschesshia o napechatanii knig} (the Society for Publishing Books). Apparently, Karl Müller and Karl Miller are the same person. The difference in the spelling in Latin letters can be attributed to the inverted translation from German into Russian and then from Russian into German. In Serkov, \textit{Entsiklopedii}, 546, as well as in other Russian-language sources, \textit{Pis’ma N. I. Novikova}, ed. M. V. Rezin (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo imeni N.I. Novikova, 1994); Martynov, \textit{Knigoizdatel’ Nikolai Novikov; Nemtsy v Rossii: Ludi i sud’by} (Moscow, 1998), the last name’s spelling is closer to Miller.
the distribution of the Masonic publications printed in Moscow. Miller was
Novikov’s close associate in organizing the so-called Obschestvo starauscheesshiia o
napechatanii knig (the Society for Publishing Books). Widely advertised in the St.
Petersburg News, the books published by the society were the first productions of a
group that exercised a degree of autonomy and control over publishing.

Another foreign Freemason involved in Russian book trade was Johann Heinrich
Uthoff, who owned a Moscow bookstore together with Biber. Since Biber and Uthoff
were among main sources of Moscow Freemasons to receive books from abroad, after
the beginning of the Novikov’s trial, Biber managed to flee the country. A Mason of
the fourth grade, and a lodge librarian in 1779-80, Uthoff was put on trial for being a
commissioner of Novikov and distributor of the many banned publications.

Johann (Karl) Schnoor (1738-1812) arrived to St. Petersburg in 1770 and opened
the printing house, which functioned from 1772 till eventually 1821, and later became a
part of the Senate Printing House. In 1776-81, Schnoor was a co-partner of Weitbrecht,
with whom he published several Masonic books in German, becoming then a partner of
Bernhard Breitkopf in 1781-82. In 1779, Schnoor received special privileges from the
government to open a printing house in the provincial Tver.’

In general, Freemasons took a passionate interest in distribution and played a
prominent role in the development of the book trade throughout provincial Russia. At a
time when the production of most of the provincial printing presses were unable to find a
commercial outlet, censorship records show Novikov's publications were on sale in a

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1012 Letters from Novikov to Miller are attached to the correspondence between Novikov and Bulgakov in
NIOR RGB, fond 41, folder 2, 19-19rev.
1014 Martyov, Knigoizdatel’ Nikolai Novikov.
number of important provincial towns from Archangel to Tambov, Nizhnii Novgorod to Irkutsk. Isabel de Madariaga has argued that these were the provincial towns with the dynamic Masonic scheme. In the provincial towns with significant book-trade connections, many of those who supervised and supplied the bookstores were active Freemasons.\textsuperscript{1015}

In addition, foreign Masons facilitated the transmission of the books from abroad to Russia. The most significant non-Russian (if not exactly export) outlet was the Riga merchant, Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, whose firm regularly sold books from the Moscow University Press and the Typographical Company.\textsuperscript{1016} Although for Freemasons in Russia the participation in the international book trade was somewhat hindered,\textsuperscript{1017} the international aspect of the book trade that involved Russia personifies the large economic and cultural interchange between the Russian Empire and its Western neighbors along the northern Baltic.\textsuperscript{1018} Periodical contacts with the book traders united centers of culture and community from Moscow and St. Petersburg across national boundaries to Stockholm, Danzig, Copenhagen and Hamburg, Leipzig, Berlin, Amsterdam, London or Aberdeen.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1015] Madariaga, \textit{Russia in the Age of Peter the Great}, 523.
\item[1017] Robert Darnton has shown that it took eighteen months between the time an order was sent from Russia to a dealer in Switzerland and the time the books actually arrived in Moscow. Robert Darnton, \textit{The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie}, 1775-1800 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 302. The story of getting the volumes of \textit{Encyclopédie} to five Russian customers indirectly supports Novikov’s claim that printing books in Russia was to provide for Russian market much more effectively and less expensively than transporting the books published abroad. Five folio editions of \textit{Encyclopédie} were ordered by the bookseller Christian Rüdiger to be delivered in Russia in 1777. By 1781, when the order was finally completed, two of the customers had given up (Ju. D. Levin, \textit{Schöne Literature in russischer Übersetzung}, 2 vols. (Köln: Böhlau; St. Petersburg; D. Bulanin, 1995-6).
\item[1018] In another formulation, Russian careers of these German book traders and publishers personifies the vitality of the eighteenth-century “north-European communications network” (Heinz Ischrejt, “Buchhandel und Buchandler” in \textit{Buch und Buchhandel im 18. Jahrhundert} (Hamburg, 1981).
\end{footnotes}
-- Printed Production: Books and Magazines

With the ten-year rental agreement for the lease of the Moscow University Press received from a fellow Freemason Mikhail Kheraskov, who was the curator of the University at the time, and at least two Masonic printing houses (the one led by Ivan Lopukhin and another under the aegis of the Moscow Typographical Society) Moscow Freemasons obtained unprecedented resources to influence the hearts and minds of Russia’s readers. Traces of the influence of the Moscow Masonic circle can be found in the print information of hundreds of books printed by the Moscow University Press, the rented printing house (the books with the imprint “printed by N. Novikov”); the Printing House of N. Novikov, the private printing house led by I. Lopukhin); the Typographical Society (privately organized by Freemasons in 1784); and secret printing house (for publication of Rosicrucian works restricted to selected members).\textsuperscript{1019}

As a result, in total, about 8,000 titles were produced in Russia from 1783 till the end of the century, which was over three times of what had been produced before.\textsuperscript{1020}

According to the documents published by Pekarskii, during Novikov’s interrogation authorities pointed out with noticeable dissatisfaction that as a result of Masonic activities “cryptic books had spread its sting from Riga to the Don stantsias, and being scattered among the vicious brotherhood in all of Russia, had an equal level of contamination with the brothers who published them [the cryptic books].\textsuperscript{1021}

\textsuperscript{1019} P. K. Simoni, “Novkov i knigoprodavtsy Kol’chuginy” in Materialy k istorii Rossiiskoi knizhnoi torgovli XVIII-XIX stoletii 1 (St. Petersburg, 1906); V. P. Semennikov, Knigoizdatel’skaia deiatel’nost’ N. I. Novikova i Tipograficheskoi kompanii (Petersburg, 1921).
\textsuperscript{1020} Marker, Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 105.
\textsuperscript{1021} Pekarskii, Dopolneniia, 135: “sokrovennye knigi ot Rigi do donskikh stanits zhalo svoe rasprostranili i, rassypamy buduchi mezhdu buistvennym bratstvom po Rossii, imeli odinakovoe zarazhenie s bratiami, ikh
In their publication endeavors, Freemasons strove for

... promoting philosophy\textsuperscript{1022} and developing the human mind, will, and feelings, advancing them to virtue... [T]he only aim of literature is a moral one... The only noble goal that is within my power is to publish a magazine [that] ... disseminates (morally) useful works.\textsuperscript{1023}

In this vein, one of the leaders of the Masonic Printing House, Ivan Lopukhin emphasized, “the main goal of that society [Freemasonry] was to publish morally-conducive books that teach a purely evangelical ethics... and the members of which exercised in knowing themselves, Nature, and the Creator.”\textsuperscript{1024} Shaping the tastes and minds of the Russian people through disseminating of good reading was a constant concern in Masonic correspondence and publications. In his letters to Mason D. P. Runich, who managed the Moscow post service and was, in fact, responsible for the state supervision of Freemasonry-related correspondence, Lopukhin pointed out that Freemasons needed to use the fashion of the time for piety to publish as many morally beneficial books as possible. “What is published – is published,” he exclaimed and compared “useful” books to a medicine which, with its unnoticeable drops, started “reviving metamorphoses,” drawing explicit parallels between medical and moral healing.\textsuperscript{1025}

It was a regular Masonic practice to divide all the published works into two categories: for the general readership and for Masons. The books in the latter category

\textsuperscript{1022} From Novikov interrogation we learn that a letter sent from the Don region from the ataman Illovaitskii’s adjutant Popov (who himself was a university-educated Freemason) received Masonry-related books in the Don region as well as in Kazan’ (Novikov, Izbrannye sochinenniia, 631).

\textsuperscript{1023} Novikov, Masonstvo i russkaia kul’tura, 48.

\textsuperscript{1024} Lopukhin, Zapiski, 21.

\textsuperscript{1025} In Russkii arkhiv II (1870), 1219: “delaeat spasitel’nye peremeny...”
were mainly distributed among the brothers according to the level of their initiation. However, as Freemasons claimed, “all the books that are published by the true Freemasons, whether you think they are devoted to magic, kabbalah, alchemy or other symbols and figures, in fact, preach the same.”

In the 1780s, mostly because of the tireless work of Masonic translators, Moscow Typographical Society published classical hermetic texts, such as Corpus Hermeticum, Der Weg zu Christo by Jacob Boehme; Opus Magico-cabalisticum et Theologicum by Georg Welling; Aurea Catena Homeri by Anton Joseph Kirchweger; Psalterium chymicum by pseudo-Paracelsus; Novum Lumen Chymicum by Sendivogius; Utriusque cosmi maioris scilicet et minoris metaphysica by Robert Fludd; Himmlisch Manna, Azoth et Ignis by Valentin Weigel; Gemma Magica by A. V. Frankenberg; Theologia Mystica and Göttliche und wahre Metaphysica by John Pordage; Der Sechs Tage-Wercke dieser Welt Geheime Bedeutung by Georg Friderich Retzel; the infamous Des Erreurs et de la Vérité by Louis Claude Saint-Martin;1027 and explicitly Rosicrucian works like Die Pflichten der G. und R. C. alten Systems attributed to J. F. Gohring. Thus, through the work of this Rosicrucian publishing enterprise, the Russian public was introduced to a whole range of mystical and esoteric writings.1028 According to recent estimations, the Printing Company issued about 500 volumes.1029

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1026 OPI GIM, fond 398, opis’ 1, folder 24, 80 (Poslanie ubeedit’ noe M. I. Nevzorova k O. A. Pozdeevu).
1027 Russian translation was performed by P. I. Strakhov, later an influential professor of Moscow University. Strakhov was sent abroad to study at the expense of the Friendly Learned Society in 1785.
In an issue of the Zhivopisets (The Painter), Novikov wrote an article on publishing and bookselling, entitled "News from Millionaia,"\textsuperscript{1030} in which he complained about the lack of interest in literature that advanced morality:

Who in France would believe it if we were to say that Tales of Magic (Contes de fée) was more widely read than the works of Racine? But in Russia, 1001 Nights has soled much better than the works of Sumarokov. And would not a London bookseller be horrified if he heard that here sometimes 200 copies of a published book would not be sold in ten years? Oh, the times! Oh, the customs! Be brave, Russian writers! Soon your works will be sold widely.\textsuperscript{1031}

As the citation indicates, as an alternative to simple entertainment of tales and novels, Novikov recommended publishing and disseminating the works of Russian writers. It does not mean that he opposed translations of foreign authors. As a book printer, bookseller and a businessman, he was also a "cultural agent who operated at the meeting point between literary supply and demand."\textsuperscript{1032} The demand, however, was for a new fashionable type of literature, and the Russian educated public wanted to read translated novels. When asked, "What do we translate the most?" a critic replied: "We translate everything that sells the best, and right now it is the novels."\textsuperscript{1033} The translated novels occupied the main segment of the market, and even after the success of the first authentically Russian novel, Rossiiskaia Pamela P. L’vova, the Göttingen professor of philosophy Ch. Meiners pointed out, that "[t]he Germans surpass other nations in the number of novels, and the Russians in translating them."\textsuperscript{1034}

\textsuperscript{1030} Millionaia was a St. Petersburg thoroughfare occupied by the publishing houses and bookstores.

\textsuperscript{1031} Zhivopisets, part 1, no. 6 (1771), quoted in Berkov, Satiricheskie zhurnaly, 439-43.

\textsuperscript{1032} Robert Darnton, Business of Enlightenment, 270.

\textsuperscript{1033} "Chto u nas bol’ sheu chast’ perevodiat?" – kritika otvechaet, "To chto luchshe raskhoditsia, a luchshe raskhodiatsia romanii." In Severnyi vestnik, part 3 (1804), 292.

\textsuperscript{1034} "Nemtsy, mozhet byt’, prevoshkodiat drugie natsii mnoghestvom romanov, a Russkie propast’u ikh perevodov," in K. Meiners, Glavnye nachertaniia teorii i istorii izlaschnyk nauk, trans. P. Sokhatskii (Moscow, 1803), 344.
Freemasons, however, were not attracted to translating, publishing, and selling
the type of novels that could be defined as a "fantasy of amorous adventures written …
for entertainment."\textsuperscript{1035} In general, Russian Masonic publishers had a negative attitude
towards comedies, satires, or novels as instruments in their quest for a moral society,
pointing out that only clear and positive parables could allegorically instruct people on
how to lead their life. In contrast, people read novels, as wrote Russian Freemason M.
Kheraskov, "to fall in love … and often highlight the sweetest words in red ink; but
philosophy, moral rhetoric, books on sciences and arts are not novels, they are not read
for the affectionate phrases."\textsuperscript{1036}

As I mentioned earlier, however, novels did attract attention of the Freemasons as
new forms of emotional reflection. Masonic circles favored a special type of novel-like
narrative that incorporated the traits of the philosophical treatises, a social utopia and an
educating novel. This novel presented its reader with ideas, philosophical
generalizations, and moral discourses that were expressed in a personal, emotionally
colored way. The "kind novels," as G. Gue defined them, "offered moral teaching that
was more complete and perfect than all the most clever philosophers [could offer]."\textsuperscript{1037}

It was the kind of literature that could educate the reader with the proper way of thinking

\textsuperscript{1035} "… wymysły lubownikh prikluchenii, napisanye prozou s iskusstvom dlaia zabavy." In G. Gue,
Istoricheskoie rassuzhdeniie i nachale romanov, s priravleniem Bellegardova Razgovora o tom, kakuu
mozhno polucht’ pol’zu ot chteniia romanov, trans. I. Krukov (Moscow, 1783), 4.
\textsuperscript{1036} "Romany dlaia togo chitat’, chtob iskusnee lubit’ sia, i chastot otmechat’ krasnymi znakami nezhniia
samyia rechi: a filosofia, nравовечии, knigi do nauk i khudozhestv kasauschiesia i tomu podobnie, a ne
romany, i ikh chitat’ ne dloia lubovnykh izrechenii." M. Kheraskov, "O chteni knig," Poleznoe uveselenie
(January 1760), 5.
\textsuperscript{1037} "…o kotorykh mozhno skazat’ to, chto Goratsii govoril ob "Iliade" Omerovoi, t.e., chto ona
predlagat’ nравовечие gorazdo polnee i luchshe, nezheli samye iskusnie filosofy." G. Gue, Istoricheskoie
razsuzhdeniie o nachale romanov, 87.
and feeling, and such novels in which the aim of the writer was to “cultivate reason and transform morals” were attractive to the Freemasons.\textsuperscript{1038}

In Russia, as in Europe, Andrew Ramsay’s \textit{The Travels of Cyrus} and Abbe Terrason’s \textit{Sethos} became the staples of Masonic libraries and examples of novels appropriate to the educational agenda of Freemasons. Both novels are based on Fenelon’s \textit{Adventures of Telemachus}, written for the education of the French heir to the throne in 1699. Following Fenelon, Ramsay and Terrason constructed novels of travel in which the descriptions of adventures allowed exposition of the issues important for Freemasons. A benevolent Prince,\textsuperscript{1039} who is accompanied by a wise mentor, is at the center of each novel. Both authors used travels, myths, and legends as a way of understanding various problems of society and the state. The novels are full of theosophical, theurgical information, cosmogonic myths in their theosophic interpretation, discussions of the sources and nature of good and evil as a part of the secret knowledge received from the ancient civilizations.\textsuperscript{1040}

Immediately after the publication of the first part of \textit{Sethos} in the translation of Fonvizin, his university professor and a leader of Freemasonry Baron Reichel highly recommended the translation. Reichel stated that there were “no novels that could surpass \textit{Telemachus} written by Fenelon in its beauty and worth,” but at the same time

\textsuperscript{1038} “…v nauchenii uma i ispravlenii narov.” G. Gue, \textit{Istoricheskoe razsuzhdenie o nachale romanov}, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{1039} Which corresponds with the Freemasons’ desire to have a royal protection in every country and Russian Freemasons’ insistence on the benefits of the enlightened monarchy.
\textsuperscript{1040} Russian Masonic participation in interest in ancient civilizations can be illustrated in the catalogues of the translations. Novikov, for instance, printed A. A. Petrov’s translation from English of Indian \textit{Bhagavad gita} (Baguat-Geta, ili Besedy Krishny s Arzhunom, s primechaniami) (Moscow, 1788) and Shtark’s mystical \textit{O drevnikh mysteriiakh, ili tainstvakh, byvshikh u vsekh narodov} (1785), translated by Petrov and printed in Lopukhin’s printing house.
agreed that Sethos had “more dignity.”1041 The Masonic Printing Company reprinted the popular Sethos in 1788-89.

Ramsay’s influence on Freemasons in Russia was even more pronounced. Even his name was included, along with Boehme, Fenelon, and Young, into the mythology of the Moscow circle.1042 In Russia, there were two translation of Ramsay’s Cyropaedia, and both were made in Masonic milieu.1043 A. Volkov made the first translation from French, and the book under the title, Novoe Kironastavlenie ili Puteshestviia Kirovy was published in 1765 in the Moscow University Press. Novikov printed another translation twenty years later as Novaia Kiropediiia, ili Puteshestviia Kirovy with the note that the translation was made from an English-language copy in 1785. S. Bobrov, a member of the Novikov-Schwarz circle, completed this translation. In 1786, this publication was added to the list of “suspicious” books, and in 1787 Moscow authorities confiscated 177

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1041 “... net ni odnogo romana, kotoroi by prevoskhodil po krasote i pol'ze “Telemaka,” napisannogo Fenelonom...” “Sif imeet bole dostoinstva, nezheli “Telemak.” I. G. Reichel, “Izvestie i opyt o rossiiskom perevode Sifa,” Sbornie luchshikh sochinenii k rasprostraneniu znaniia i k proizvedeniu udovol'stvia, part 3, no. 6 (1762), 101, 103. Another favorable review is in Ezhevesiacchie sochineniiia (September, 1763), 281-282.


1043 Ramsay’s Travels of Cyrus was published in Europe for the first time in English in 1727 as Chevalier Ramsay, The Travaels if Cyrus... To which is annexed a Discourse 1727 upon the Theology and Mythology of the Ancients (London 1727). The book was reprinted in 1727-28, 1728, 1730, 1739, 1745, 1751, 1757, 1763, 1779, 1795 in London; in 1728, 1763 in Dublin; 1794 in Edinburgh; 1793, Burlington, US; 1795, Boston, US; 1796, Philadelphia.

Also it was published under the title Sr. A. Ramsay, A New Cyropaedia, or the Travels of Cyrus. With a Discourse on the Theology and Mythology of the Ancients, a new Edition with many Amendations and Additions (London, 1760); in Edinburgh, 17??; and in French as Les Voyages de Cyrus, avec un Discours sur la Mythologie (Paris, 1727). The second edition in French was in 1728, Amsterdam; 1728, Luxembourg; 1730, 1757, 1762 in London; 1753, Paris; 1768, la Haye; 1796, Philadelphia.

As Mr. Ramsay, Aussi avec de titre La nouvelle Cupiterie, ou les Voyages de Cyrus; avec un Discours sur la Mythologie published in Edinburgh in 1729; 1763, Paris; 1786, S. Malo. It was also published in Italian and Spanish in the end of the eighteenth century. After eighteenth century, the book was reprinted numerous times.
copies. \footnote{Longinov, \textit{Novikov i moskovskie martinisty}, 044.} Volkov, the translator, was accused of being a Rosicrucian. \footnote{RGADA, fond 18, opis’ 1, 28.} After Novikov’s arrest, in 1792 the book was banned in Russia. \footnote{N. N. Mel’nikova, \textit{Izdanija, napravlenne v tipografiu Moskovskogo universiteta XVIII veka} (Moscow: Izd-vo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1966), 57.}

A Freemason with a defined educational agenda, Novikov was interested in getting the most morally beneficial books to the greatest number of people at the lowest possible price. \footnote{Karamzin commented that Novikov “traded in books as a rich Dutch or English merchant trades in products of all countries: that is, with sense, with integrity, with foresighted imagination.” Nikolai Karamzin, “The Book Trade and the Love of Reading in Russia,” in \textit{Literature of Eighteenth-Century Russia: A History and Anthology}, 1 vol. (New York: Dutton, 1967), 449, and in \textit{Russian Intellectual History, an Anthology}, ed. Marc Raeff (New York: Humanity, 1966), 113-116.} His main concern was not the insufficient amount of books on the Russian market, but rather about the quality of the books. According to a popular anecdote, a customer at Novikov’s bookstore complained that the book assortment included only books on religion and morality and asked Novikov for a popular novel, such as abbé Prevost’s \textit{Memoires d’un Homme de qualite} \footnote{The first translation of \textit{Mémoires et aventures d’un homme de qualité qui s’est retiré du monde} (1728) written by abbé Prévost d’Exiles (1697-1763) was performed by Freemasons in six parts in 1756-64. The first part was translated by Elagin, the Provincial Grand Master, and the second - by his deputy Lukin (V. S. Sopikov, \textit{Opyt Rossiiskoi bibliografii}, vol. 4, №8981 (St. Petersburg, 1813-1821), 216).} or \textit{Cléveland}. \footnote{Le philosophe anglais, ou \textit{Histoire de M-r Cléveland, fils naturel de Cromwell} (1731) was translated into Russian in nine parts in 1760-71 (V. S. Sopikov, \textit{Opyt Rossiiskoi bibliografii}, vol. 5 (St. Petersburg, 1813-1821), 78 (№12382)).}

Novikov retorted that the selection was limited to the religious literature only because the translators themselves chose to limit themselves to those books, and he, as a publisher, was pressed to follow their lead. At the end of the conversation, Novikov, in a characteristic manner, offered to let his disgruntled customer take home for free the whole selection of moralizing books that the customer did not want to buy for himself.

Whether true or not, this story reflects Novikov’s preoccupation with “morally good”
publications, his willingness to sacrifice profit for the sake of his mission, and the
domination of the translated literature that correlated with the importance of translators in
the publishing endeavors of the Freemasons. Longinov points out that Novikov used to
buy manuscripts that he considered inappropriate and destroy them so that other
publishers would not have a chance to publish harmful books.\textsuperscript{1050}

Printing magazines offered more flexibility in following personal tastes than book
publishing did. Without the necessity to obey the publication rules and honor contractual
printing obligations, Freemasons actively used magazines as a means of disseminating
information, exchanging opinions, and spreading propaganda. Magazine articles aimed
at informing, teaching, enlightening, and morally improving the society on a large scale
and in shorter time. In 1784, Freemasons made an attempt to organize a magazine-based
library of Masonic literature. In the Lopukhin Press they published \textit{Izbrannaia biblioteka
dlia khristianskogo chtenia} (The Selected Library of Christian Reading) in three parts.
They also revised and shortened the \textit{Selected Library} and published it in two parts so that
the poor could purchase it for just one ruble. Another openly Masonic magazine, \textit{Magazin
svobodnakamenschisheskii} (Freemasons’ Magazine) was published in only 600 copies
and sold only in lodges.

With the number of periodicals being published in Russia, whether they were
catering to the developing interest in economic or cultural affairs or designed to place
informative rather than diverting literature in the hands of the educated public, it is
difficult to establish which of them had a pronounced Masonic slant.\textsuperscript{1051} The three

\textsuperscript{1050} Longinov, \textit{Novikov i moskovskie martiniy}, 220.
\textsuperscript{1051} In the foreword to the \textit{Morning light}, Novikov makes direct reference to Freemasonry, disclosing his
Masonic preoccupations: “Our society is composed of only ten people; and the number of years we have
lived, added together, does not amount to more than thirty…” As In-Ho Ryu establishes, this reference to
magazines printed by Novikov can be singled out as part of the Masonic printing enterprise are *Utrennii svet* (*Morning Light*, 1777-1780), *Vecherniia zaria* (*Evening Glow*, 1782), and *Moskovskoe ezhesmiachnoe izdanie* (*Moscow Monthly Periodical*, 1781).\(^{1052}\)

The pages of the magazine the *Morning Light* were filled with translations of moralistic literature, including Plutarch, Seneca, Pascal, Wieland, Gessner, and Young. In 1780, in one issue Novikov published an essay on moral admonition as a practical precept in which he urged writers to act as teachers and to be useful, and not only entertaining. He insisted that moral admonition, or ethics, was “the science which directs us ... [it] is the first, the greatest and for us the most useful study.”\(^{1053}\) The goal of the *Morning Light* was to present “the wisdom of the ancients” to facilitate cultivation of “knowledge of self”:

> We leave to the hairdressers, tailors, and inventors of new fashion to beautify [people’s] exterior; we leave it to the well-seasoned physicians to take care of their bodily disease; but their souls and spirit will certainly be our exclusive concern.\(^{1054}\)

Besides the cultivation of morals, another theme that characterized the journal since its inception was the insistence on the need to combine a theoretical search for true Freemasonry with philanthropy. All the proceeds of the *Morning Light* were directed to support two charity schools, St. Catherine’s (established in 1777)\(^{1055}\) and St.

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1052 The *Moscow Monthly Periodical* published in 1781 in three parts was a formal continuation of the *Morning Light*. Published by Novikov, it was edited by Schwarz.


1054 *Utrennii svet* I (1777), xi.

1055 *Utrennii svet* I (1777), 282.
Alexander's (1778).\textsuperscript{1056} Already in the first issue the subscribers and readers were informed that money spent were simply "a light, agreeable burden which can hurt no one and can do great honor to the country and to humanity."\textsuperscript{1057} The regular announcements from the \textit{Morning Light} on the state of the schools indicate that Novikov received contributions from Masons and non-Masons alike, and by 1779, there were 93 students in both schools.

The influence that these publications exercised on Russian reading public of the time was substantial. For instance, \textit{Morning Light}'s subscribers lived in 58 different towns of Russia. Already in 1802, Karamzin pointed out that "even the poorest people have subscriptions [for the newspapers and magazines] and even the most ignorant want to know what is heard from the foreign lands.\textsuperscript{1058}

\textbf{The Conflict: Course of Action}

According to Pypin's widespread interpretation, the arrest and prosecution of Novikov in 1792 represented a climax of the first struggle between the increasingly self-conscious public and the state.\textsuperscript{1059} To support this hypothesis, the consideration of the government backlash against Freemasons is usually focused on the printing activities of Novikov and considered through the lens of the analysis of acts of a high-handed autocrat cutting down the first independent civic-minded initiative.

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\textsuperscript{1057} Vestnik Evropy 9 (1802), 58-9: "Samye bednye ludi podpisyvatsia i samye bezgramotnye zhelaut znat', chto pishut iz chuzhek zhemel'."
\textsuperscript{1058} Pypin, \textit{Russkoe masonstvo}. \end{flushleft}
As I established in this chapter, it is true that Masonry-sponsored publishing enterprises bear characteristics of Masonic interests. At the same time, in contrast with government printing, they were often carried out under and reflected market conditions and popular demand.\textsuperscript{1060} As Gary Marker establishes in his work on the eighteenth-century Russian print market, the pursuit of an effective public voice by political, religious, and literary elites became synonymous with the struggle to create, to control, or to have access to the printed media.\textsuperscript{1061} There is no doubt about the connection between the quest for power and influence in Russia on the one hand and the desire to control printing on the other. In this situation, given a wider diffusion of cheaper books, the state felt a need for greater precautions of preventive censorship.

Despite Catherine’s suspicions about Freemasonry’s political nature and possible dangerous intellectual influences, the first direct clash between the state and Freemasons occurred in relation to their printing activities. At first, Novikov’s printing enterprises were scrutinized by the Commission for Popular Schools, whose books he had printed without permission in 1784. The Commission inspected Novikov’s publishing facility at Moscow University in relation to the books \textit{Shortened Catechisms}, \textit{Guide to Handwriting}, and \textit{Regulations for Students}. Later that year, a history of the Jesuit order published as a supplement to the \textit{Moskovskie novosti} (\textit{Moscow News}) was brought to Catherine’s attention. Then, in 1785, all private educational institutions were to be

\textsuperscript{1060} It is virtually impossible to establish Novikov’s beliefs and ideas judging by the books published by the University Press. He so was overburdened with the outside orders from Church, government, and independent individuals that he himself admitted that he often printed books without reading them. The problem is even more complex when we turn to the magazines, in which we find certain differences and discontinuity of the emphasis. If the most undeniably Masonic magazine, the \textit{Evening Twilight}, is often attributed to Schwarz, there is no unity in its vision with Novikov’s \textit{Moscow Monthly Edition} or the \textit{Industrious Man Resting} (1784-1785).

inspected and supervised so that “superstition, corruption, and deceit” would be stopped. And this continued with the inspection of private hospitals in January of 1786.

Since all books had to be submitted to the ecclesiastical authorities before being issued for general reading and no work could be printed anywhere without prior examination by the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities, without going through the censure Novikov’s printing activities clearly violated the law. After Catherine was informed of the large volume of religious works being printed on secular presses in defiance of the official monopoly of the Holy Synod Press, she had no choice but to order the inspection. It was found that in Moscow alone, secular presses published 313 titles of religious works (166 of these by Novikov). As a result, on 27 July 1787, Catherine prohibited printing of all prayer books, church books, or religious works except those produced by the authorized presses, and extant copies of such books were confiscated from all the bookstores.

The inspection of Novikov’s printing houses with the aim of establishing whether his books contained “arguments incompatible with the simple and clear rules of our Orthodox faith and civic duties” continued. When the Moscow Governor asked

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1062 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinstva, 016-017 (Catherine’s order on 7 October 1785).
1063 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinstva, 018 (Catherine’s order on 23 January 1786).
1064 On Catherine’s alliance with the Church against Freemasons, see Faggionato, A Rosicrucian Utopia, 192-201.
1065 Longinov, Novikov i moskovskie martinstva, 018 (Catherine’s order on 23 January 1786).

Six books were banned from publishing and distribution as a result:
- Apology, or Defense of F[ree] M[asonry], translated from German by Turgenev and printed by N. Razskazov press, 1784;
- Brotherly admonition to Certain Brothers of Freemasonry, translated from German by Obolduev, printed by the Lopukhin Press in 1784;
- Pocketbook of F. M., translated by Obolduev, second edition by the University Press, 1783;
Archbishop Platon to check the books printed by the Moscow University Press under Novikov in 1786, he divided the 461 volumes under his consideration into three groups: Masonic books with mystical content; moral-religious books; and scientific-rationalist books with French radical tendencies. According to Platon, the first group was incomprehensible; the second group was very useful and helpful for the Orthodox Church; and the third group was definitely harmful and contradicted "the teaching of the Church, though Novikov himself was a "good Christian and a faithful son of the Orthodox Church." But since Novikov printed the books of all three groups, this was considered as sufficient grounds for his persecution.

In September 1788, Catherine, having studied the reports of the ecclesiastical censors, ordered the return of 299 of the 313 titles to their printers and sellers, but banned the other 14 and decreed that future requests to publish religious works be submitted to the Synod. Of the fourteen titles banned, Novikov’s printing press had published eleven. It must be emphasized that these books were not banned on political grounds, but on legal objections. As a result of the turmoil, the authorities decided not to renew Novikov’s lease on Moscow University Press after it had expired in 1789. Finally, the

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Saint Martin’s Des Erreurs de la Vérité, translated by Strakhov, published by the Lopukhin Press, 1785;
- Paracelsus’ Chemical Psalter, or Philosophical Laws on the Stone of Wisdom, translated by Kutuzov, printed by the Lopukhin Press, 1784;
- Khrizomander, allegorical and satirical story of various most important content, translated by Petrov, published by the Lopukhin Press, 1783.
V. Sopikov, Opyt rossiiskoi bibliografii, ed. V. Rogozhin (St. Petersburg, 1904-06); Svodnyi katalog Russkoi knigi XVIII veka, 1725-1800, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1962-66).

backlash culminated in 1792 in Novikov’s arrest and the prohibition of Masonic lodges.\textsuperscript{1067}

As I mentioned earlier in relation to the emergence Catherine’s anti-Masonic plays, the timing of the Novikov campaign stands out. Until 1786, Masonic books and periodicals were openly available in the bookstores in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and provincial towns. Equally importantly, Masonry-affiliated learning and translating societies, pharmacies, and hospitals received approval of authorities (on whatever terms). This suggests that the tension between the public discourse sought by Catherine the Great and Russian officials and the secretive reforming strategies of Freemasons was not considered as a serious problem until a combination of other factors came into play.

In internal politics, in In-Ho Ryu’s expression, the 1780s was the time of “the end of the honeymoon between the state and society.”\textsuperscript{1068} Catherine’s attempts at establishing a dialogue with the society by the means of the Commission failed, and the violence of the Pugachev rebellion\textsuperscript{1069} finalized the estrangement. On the one hand, the political enthusiasm of the educated society that marked Catherine’s accession to the throne changed to bitter disillusionment. On the other hand, as Catherine’s anti-Masonic plays and Freemasons’ attacks on the French Enlightenment philosophes indicate, the

\textsuperscript{1067} Catherine’s antipathy towards Freemasons had broader ideological grounds for suspicion of dangerous foreign contacts, sectarianism, and charlatanism. But as Douglas Smith points out (Working the Rough Stone, 7), it is necessary to emphasize that formally Novikov’s arrest was not ordered directly by Catherine. It was not a simple act of a high-handed autocracy, but a series of measures initiated and carried out by the Moscow authorities, who were intent on annihilating all aspects of Masonic practical influences on Russian society.

\textsuperscript{1068} In-Ho Ryu, “ Freemasonry under Catherine the Great,” 71.

\textsuperscript{1069} Pugachev rebellion (1773-1775) was the greatest peasant rebellion in eighteenth-century Russia. The leader of the uprising, a Don Cossack Emil’ian Ivanovich Pugachev (c. 1742-1775) assembled a diverse group of Cossacks, peasants, serfs. Ural mine workers, ethnic minorities, and religious dissidents dissatisfied with heavy taxation and military recruitment, disruption of traditional foundations of society, tightening of the state regulations, and curtailing of local autonomies. The spontaneous outbreak of disaffected elements grew into a rebellion aimed at changing the social and political foundations of society.
dissention had a deeper nature. The alliance of the enlightened monarch and the older
gentry had faith in philosophical rationalism in its foundation, but the identity crisis had
shaken the stability of this cornerstone.

As the measures against Freemasons in Russia indicate, what attracted the
government’s attention was not the overbearing moral elitism growing out of belonging
to a special society or theoretical preaching of asceticism, but rather the Masons’
practical activities and the presence of a large number of foreigners in their lodges.
However, the situation had drastically changed after the French Revolution. Catherine
saw how ideas could inspire a political action. While she supported theoretical
philosophizing of the *philosophes*, practical activities of Freemasons in Russia involved
real needs and aspirations of the educated elite. With a strengthening opposition to
everything foreign that developed as a reaction to the French Revolution and Russia’s
increasing involvement in international affairs, Freemasonry, an essentially foreign
import sustained by the efforts of foreigners, was becoming more and more suspect in the
eyes of the Russian public and authorities. Although, as I demonstrated in the previous
chapter, paradoxically, while the majority of Freemasons in Russia set their lodges
against the philosophy of the French of which Catherine was a great admirer and which,
as Freemasons thought, preached godlessness and immorality, Freemasons’ practical
activities and their very existence went counter to the idea that Russia’s development
should be directed from above.

In 1782, Catherine the Great led the ceremony of dedication of the famous
equestrian statue of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg.\textsuperscript{1070} The statue’s pedestal bears the

\textsuperscript{1070} For the place of the statue in public imagination, see Chapter 1.
simple inscription, “To Peter the First, [from] Catherine the Second,” the symbol of the continuity between Peter’s and Catherine’s endeavors in bringing Russia closer to Europe. Hundreds of people watched the procession and the ceremony, but the participation was restricted to the highest state nobility and the bureaucrats.

This tension between Masonic practical activities, social and intellectual aspirations of the nascent intelligentsia, and the constraints of the state established a framework for the development of Russian intellectual life at the end of the eighteenth century. It is difficult to determine whether these activities, including education and publishing, had significant impact on public morals. But the fact that Freemasons in Russia tried to carry out these projects attests to that they saw themselves as responsible instruments of both morality and useful entertainment who required printing to establish a public voice. Freemasons considered it vital for the dissemination of their moralizing message to create a network of book dealers, attract foreign professors, establish educational institutions, learning societies, and printing houses free of control direct control of the state, thus providing an unheard degree of independence from the state for the circles of nascent intelligentsia. In the second half of the century, a self-conscious group of intellectuals worked tirelessly to make a newly acquired moral vision the guide for the development of Russia and its people.

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1071 In 1802, N. M. Karamzin, who was educated at the Masonic pension to become one of the most prominent Russian historians and writers, pointed out that “even the poorest people subscribe [for books, magazines, and newspapers] and even the most illiterate want to know the news from the distant lands,” and related this achievement to the activities of the Novikov circle. N. M. Karamzin, “Lubov’ k čteniu i k knigam,” Vestnik Evropy 9 (1802): 58-9.

1072 Poleznoe uveselenie (Useful Entertainment) was a title of a magazine that lasted for more than a year, a rarity for a private magazine in Russia.

1073 Raeff, Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia.

1074 Raeff, Origins, 158ff.
As selective elite that claimed influence over the society’s intellectual and moral dispositions, Freemasonry, with its insistence on the leadership of intellectually gifted and moral individuals, inadvertently opposed the power of the absolute monarch, Church officials, and nobility. At the same time, as I. A. Goncharov mentioned in his memoirs, his teacher Iakubov, “like almost all nobility, or, to put it better, all our nobles, belonged … to a Masonic lodge.”\textsuperscript{1075} With the associations, printing houses, societies for the translation and learning, hospitals and apothecaries, the Masonic elite used new and effective ways of influencing the society; the growing following could be directed to a moral regeneration. Their ideas, boldly formulated and adapted to practical activity, appeared at the right time and addressed specific social groups and strata that were quickly becoming too influential. Freemasons infringed upon traditional ideas about society, hierarchy, and power.\textsuperscript{1076} This could not be ignored by the authorities.


Conclusion

... [D]o you believe that Russia is still what it was fifty years ago and that one
can write about it carelessly and without knowing the facts? How would you
react if I were to subject the most prominent Swiss to negative character sketches
based on mere reports by a few of my countrymen who had spent no longer than
three months in Switzerland?

These angry words were not written by a patriotically-minded Russian. With
these words the Sturm und Drang dramatist and poet Jacob Michael Reinhold Lenz, a
Freemason devoted to the “Russian cause,” harshly reacted to the conclusions about the
character of the entire Russian nation that his friend Johann Kaspar Lavater had rashly
made. In a long letter in 1780, Lenz accused him of misrepresentation and
demanded a correction. To amend Lavater’s faulty analysis of the Russians, Lenz
provided him with a series of silhouettes and his own physiognomic sketches. Defending
the Russians, Lenz concluded his attack by rhetorically asking: “Have you studied
Russia’s history? Or do you judge only by hearsay? ... I would like to burn the whole
part [about Russia]. Not a single word in it is true.”

Born in 1751 near Riga, the part of Livonia that had been incorporated into the
Russian Empire since 1721, ethnically Lenz was not a Russian. He spent his formative
years in the German states, first studying theology under Kant in Königsberg, later
moving to Strasburg and the Weimar court after that. By 1775, Lenz was a well-known

1077 On Lenz’s connection to Russia, see M. N. Rozanov, Poet perio da “burnykh stremlenii”: Jakob Lenz, ego zhizn’ i proizvedeniia (Moscow: Universitetskia tipographia, 1901); H. Kindermann, J. M. R. Lenz
und die deutsche Romantik (Leipzig, 1935); H. M. Nebel, N. M. Karamzin: A Russian Sentimentalist (The
russischen Romans (Bad Hamburg, Berlin, Zürich: Gehlen, 1968); Edmund Heier, “Studies on Johann
Caspar Lavater (1741-1801) in Russia,” Slavica Helvetica. Band 37 (Bern, 1991); Serkov. Entisiklopedia,
474.

1918), 166.
member of the literary community in Germany. An established poet and dramatist with personal (yet tumultuous) relationships with Goethe, Wieland, Herder, and Lavater, in the winter of 1777 Lenz suffered a mental breakdown from which he never recovered. Abandoned by his family and friends, he returned to Riga in 1779. With the money and recommendations from his close friend in Riga and a fellow Freemason, the book dealer Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, Lenz made several unsuccessful attempts to earn living as a tutor in the St. Petersburg families associated with Masonry.

In 1781 Lenz met Schwarz and moved to Moscow. The last ten years of Lenz’s life, 1781-1792, were associated with the Moscow Masonic circle. There Lenz taught literature, German, and belles lettres in all of the pensions and seminaries established by Freemasons in Moscow. Together with Schwarz’s family and the students, Lenz lived in the house that belonged to the Typographical Society and housed the pharmacy, library, and the printing presses.

In 1784 Lenz developed a plan to create a literary society that would be an extension of the lodge Druzhby (Friendship) and advance morally appropriate [Masonic] messages in Russian-language literature and poetry. He also translated the works of Russian poets and historians involved in the Moscow circle and published the first German-language newspaper in Russia. Lenz was a connecting link between Moscow Freemasons and the literary circles in Germany. It is through Lenz that the Russian students learned about recent developments of Sturm und Drang. A close friend of Karamzin, Lenz was responsible for developing an itinerary for Karamzin’s trip to
Europe and provided him with letters to Kant and Lavater. Unremittingly he worked on the education of his Russian students and the extension of knowledge about Russia in the West.

"The poor Lenz" was a part of a host of scholars, tutors, merchants, and soldiers from all over Europe who swarmed into the country in hopes of making their fortune in service to the "barbarians of the North." A British visitor in 1789 wrote:

I feel myself here as in another world, the dress, the manners, and customs of the people are so different from those of other nations in Europe. Besides the variety of nations which compose the Russian Empire, in my daily walk through the city I meet with English, Danes, French, Swedes, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Venetians, Poles, Germans, Persians, and Turks... This assembly is a natural masquerade, and no city upon earth presents any amusement of this kind in such perfection as Peters burg.

This "natural masquerade" brought into Russia an amalgamation of ideas. The ideas traveled from the West and, adjusted to fit the local needs, acquired an astonishing influence in Russia. The Russian intellectuals who were members of the society of Freemasons were bred on this mixture of French skepticism, science, materialism, emergent German romanticism, historicism, and idealism. However, as Marc Raeff put it, a newcomer on the scene "needed time to become acquainted with Western offerings and to acquire the tools necessary for a meaningful assimilation of Western ideas." After the acquaintance, Russians negotiated the influences of a number of different

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1079 This is the trip described in Karamzin's *Letters of a Russian Traveler, 1789-1790: an Account of a Young Russian Gentleman's Tour through Germany, Switzerland, France, and England* that introduced Russian reading public to the Sentimentalism.
1080 Black, *Citizens for the Fatherland*, 57.
1082 Raeff, *Origins*, 149.
“civilizing processes,” some of which they adopted, while considering others dangerous to faith and morals.

In the course of the eighteenth century Russia’s involvement with all foreign innovations went through three main stages: introduction of an original innovation; its dissemination within the Russian society; and finally the society’s reaction to it. Just like an acquaintance with a book of a foreign-language author, any new trend in Russia had to undergo the process starting with the presentation of an original text, moving to its translation into Russian, finally arriving at the stage of a critical analysis, imitation, and adaptation.

Already in the first part of the century, Russians consciously emulated a European path, which is itself a sign of recognition of the West as a model. The comparison of Russia to the West at that time was appealing and not threatening. At this stage Russians defined Russia by its similarity to Europe. But once the West was recognized as a model, the degree to which national identity was gratifying depended on the outcome of the competition with the West. On the example of Freemasonry, I assume this move was reflected in the desire to the Russian brothers to form an independent Masonic province, to prove that they were capable of independent activities, intellectual and cultural, comparable to but different from the West. While in the beginning of the century, Russian Masons imitated the West, trying to become just like it, later they started to define the West as an inappropriate model for Russia. Russian Freemasons recognized that Western models of Masonic organization had their merits, but Russia was incomparable to it, unique, and went its own way unrelated to the West.
It is notable that in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* Pierre Bezukhov's personal attitude to Freemasonry also develops through several distinct stages. When he first becomes a member of the lodge, he meets Freemasons who see nothing in the Craft but the external forms and ceremonies and prize the strict performance of these forms without concerning themselves with the rituals' purpose or significance. In their endless quest for proper society connections and patronage, these men flock into the lodges shamelessly hoping for easy career advancement. At this point, for Pierre Freemasonry becomes just another burden associated with high society, a meaningless pastime. Disappointed, he leaves Russia and travels around Europe in search of the true enlightenment. Upon his return, he lives through another spiritual crisis and is initiated into higher Masonic degrees after a chance meeting with a Russian Freemason Joseph Bazdeev that completely changes Pierre’s views on the true goals of Freemasonry. However, it is not the foreigners or the mystically-inclined aristocrat Bazdeev, but the “personification of everything Russian,” an uneducated soldier Platon Karataev who finally provides Pierre with a suitable moral and spiritual foundation. Pierre’s infatuation with Freemasonry ends completely with the realization of a possible link between the society of Freemasons and secret political cabals.

It is impossible to establish whether Tolstoy deliberately divided Pierre’s involvement in Freemasonry according to the stages of the development of the Craft in the eighteenth-century Russia. But Pierre’s experiences in lodges, his disappointment, trip abroad, crisis of faith, and finally enchantment with higher Masonic degrees echo the paths of many Freemasons in Russia. The fact that Pierre’s intellectual

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1083 As I mentioned earlier, in preparation for *War and Peace* Tolstoy used eighteenth-century Masonic documents and was well acquainted with the general development of the Craft in Russia.
vacillations culminate in his [re]turn to everything Russian is also emblematic of the search of the eighteenth-century Russian Freemasons. Departing from the original cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, choosing different forms of Masonry, the Russian Masons gradually became more and more invested in the concept of Russia as an organic, separate, national entity that was radically different from that of other countries with regard to customs, outlook, laws, and way of life.

This transformation was not confined to Freemasonry. If the beginning of the eighteenth century was associated with Peter the Great, the ruthless westernizer who forcibly shaved beards, in the end of the nineteenth century Alexander III, an ardent Russian nationalist, grew a beard for everyone to see his true belonging to Russia. Peter the Great, who is reputed to have said that “we need Europe for a few decades before we turn out backside to it,”¹⁰⁸⁴ put Russia on the path of modernization through the unconditional orientation to the West. By the end of the nineteenth century this path led to the integration of a national element into an ideology of Russianness expressed in the formula “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality.”¹⁰⁸⁵ The mid-point of this transition, the eighteenth century attests that the competition with the West was itself made possible by enlightenment cosmopolitanism which, in its turn, was the driving force behind both the early achievements of Russian culture and the beginning of the formation of national consciousness. To form a cultural identity, the Russian intellectual community needed to define whether it belonged to the European civilization and find its own place between the West and the East. If in the majority of the European countries the achievements of

¹⁰⁸⁵ The slogan was created by Count Sergey Uvarov, minister of education in 1833–49 and a member of the St. Petersburg lodge Poliaroi zvezdy, in 1832. On Uvarov’s Masonic affiliation, see Serkov, Entsiklopedia, 820.
eighteenth century were based on the previous developments, in Russia, modernization was almost exclusively borrowed from the West.

It is true that for Russian and foreign Freemasons the reasons for entering Freemasonry and the involvement in the dissemination of the Craft in Russia were as diverse as the individuals that composed the lodges. As Russia’s Provincial Grand Master Elagin identified, brothers’ “motivating forces” varied, and “almost every newly admitted [brother] announces his own will depending on his character and temperament. While some asserted that they looked for “enlightenment,” and that the wisdom and sciences of the lay world were not sufficient for “reaching happiness,” others claimed that their goal was “to acquire a habit for honest and chaste behavior.” Yet others were “searching for friendship and Brotherly love, stating that these feelings are expelled from profane society and that only here, in the temple based on friendship and love” man could experience pure feeling of belonging. Elagin was also first to admit that “unfortunately” for Freemasons, there were many who were led “by vain and simple curiosity” or “base self-profit” or “simple” vanity.

But although the interests of the brothers varied as much as the composition of their lodges and covered a wide range (including publishing, philanthropy, mysticism, natural sciences, alchemy, or the issues of serfdom and education), their primary focus

1086 De Corberon, for instance, eagerly sought admission to Melissino’s seventh degree without grudging certain practical services asked in return (de Corberon, Journal, I, 108). When he finally succeeded in inducing Melissino to admit him into the secret of the seventh degree, Corberon found out that certain favors were expected in return. Melissino asked Corberon to write three letters -- to Potemkin, N. Panin, and Catherine’s then-favorite Zoritz -- recommending Melissino for the post of Russian minister at Mittau (de Corberon, Journal, II, 182).

1087 Although Elagin does not use the Russian equivalent of the word “profane” (prófan) that was already entering Russian language by the end of the eighteenth century, the meaning of the word “svetskii” that he uses is closer to a meaning of the word “profane” as not being among the initiated [into Freemasonry] or not possessing esoteric or expert knowledge than the literal translations of the word “svetskii” -- secular, temporal, worldly -- do.

1088 Elagin, Zapiska, 582-83.
invariably was in the preoccupation with morality and ethical teaching. The views of Russian Freemasons may be regarded as an attempt to overcome the deep religious and intellectual crisis suffered by Russian society in the eighteenth century. However, the spread of the skeptical “French” version of the Enlightenment associated in Russia with Voltairianism made Freemasons seek a new basis for morality that could raise the moral climate of society, while still having the foundations agreeable to reason. In this search to create a “Science of Man” that could fit Russian conditions, the fusion of different traditions -- including neo-stoicism, various trends of Christian traditions, Renaissance thought, Hermeticism, Cabalistic thought, Pythagorean and Newtonian science -- became the most original aspect of the Russian movement.

The particular moral vision that inspired Russian Freemasons was an intensely personal one: they were concerned with living the most moral life possible. And although Freemasons all over Europe were confronted with the same problem, the Russians considered it largely in a social and political void. Within the lodges “[f]reedom and equality reign among us [Freemasons],”1089 and a Masonic hymn proudly proclaimed the ultimate equality of Freemasons in a lodge, where “a Czar is equal to us, and we don’t have flattering slaves,”1090 but outside the lodges many of them were serf-owners. This insistence on the definition of man as a creature that is gifted with free will sounds paradoxical for eighteenth-century Russia where, possibly like nowhere in Europe, the majority of the population was in chains. “And as long as human being has a will that can be corrupted by a dire use of it, I will continue to deem

1089 Russkaia starina 1 (1870), 225: “Svoboda i ravenstvo tsarstvuut mezhdu nami.”
1090 OPI GIM, fond 450, folder 558b, “Masonskii rukopisnyi sbornik “Virshi i pesni,” 27: “U nas i tsar’ so vsemi raven, i net laskauschikh rabov.”
him free, even though he is almost always in chains,” Rousseau’s words were echoed by Saint-Martin in a Russian translation of his work.\footnote{A. Haller, O proiskhozhdenii zla (Moscow, 1786), 30. L. K. Sen-Martien, O zabluzhdeniiakh i istine (Moscow, 1785), 26: “I potomu dokole v cheloveke est’ volia, kotoraia khotia i mozhet razvratit’ sia khudim ee upotreblemien, ne perestanu odnako pochitat’ ego svobodnim, khotia on pochti vsegda poraboschen.” Compare to Rousseau’s “Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains.”} While the elite, the “salt of the earth” as they called themselves, labored to tread the path to perfection, what was to be done for the majority of the population in Russia?

To overcome this tension, instead of political liberty, Freemasons chose to emphasize the inner moral freedom of the politically restricted man in Russia. The central theme of their works has about it something more abstract and at the same time intimate. It was the problem of the self-fulfillment of the individual. It was only in the inner world of the spirit, in the development of a beautiful soul – die schöne Seele – that man was free and able to fully realize himself. Such a soul is produced through the cultivation of noble and moral sentiment, moving naturally in harmony with reason.

Freemasons focused their efforts on moral education in Russia and developed their systems in the spirit of broad educational reform.\footnote{Thus, the result of their practical activities, during 1750-99, there were published 31 book on moral education (as compared to 39 in 1800-50) and 62 books on moral instruction (as compared to 36 in 1800-50), and 7 on practical ethics (3 in 1800-50). Classified catalogue of the RNB, quoted in Catriona Kelly, Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin (Oxford University Press, 2001), appendix 1, 399. For a select bibliography of advice literature 1700-1800, see pages 408-412.} Many foreign Freemasons were deeply involved in the project of educating Russia under the premise of “spreading the Art and the Light of Freemasonry.” Such educational efforts of the brotherhood as the Pedagogical and Translators’ Seminaries and the Society for the Translation of Foreign Books (1779), the University Alumnus Club (1781), and the Friendly Learned Society (1782), worked to educate the “mind and taste of its members, who, by coming
together to read and discuss their own literary experiments, could develop their morality and love all mankind.\textsuperscript{1093}

These practical activities were based the idea of a humanistic education and the rhetoric of service to Russia. In the second part of the century the number of educated people engaged in intellectual activity rose dramatically.\textsuperscript{1094} Masonic lodges and societies were in major part responsible for this increase and became significant channels for directing this intellectual interest. Freemasonry was seen as a force that claimed to unite men of good will in the noble cause of education and philanthropy, filling the spiritual vacuum created by sudden and forced acquaintance with Western ideas.\textsuperscript{1095}

Although for the most part of the century, the goals of Masonic propagators and the westernizing policies of the state coincided, the rhetoric of service to the country and its people contrasted with the official language of service to the state and its ruler. Freemasons, both foreign and Russian, identified themselves with the nation as a whole and considered themselves as the conscience of the fatherland. By the end of the century, by identifying their own principles with the needs of Russia, Russian Freemasons became a part of the self-conscious European public.\textsuperscript{1096} As V. Kluchevskii suggested, it is possible to argue that Freemasons contributed to the development of “something that was yet unknown to the Russian educated society: a public opinion.”\textsuperscript{1097}

The intellectuals involved in Freemasonry represented not only a nobility whose primary function was service to state, but also the beginnings of a self-conscious,

\textsuperscript{1093} The phrase is from the Lenz’s project of a literary society. Quoted in Tukalevskii, “Novikov i Schwarz,” 278.
\textsuperscript{1094} M. M. Shkhrange, \textit{Demokratische intelligentsia XVIII veka} (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 4ff.
\textsuperscript{1095} In-Ho Ryu, “Freemasonry under Catherine the Great: A Reinterpretation,” 165.
\textsuperscript{1096} See Smith, \textit{Working the Rough Stone}, esp. chapter 2.
\textsuperscript{1097} V. O. Kluchevskii, “Vospominaniia o Novikove,” \textit{Russkaia mys’} 1 (1895), 58.
independent intelligentsia serving the people and accomplishing a significant social purpose. By concerning themselves with the state of “souls” of their members and the moral education of the Russian people, Freemasons started formulating a version of a Russian cultural identity. As was concluded by G. Florovsky, a Russian theologian,

All the historic importance of the Russian Freemasonry resided in the fact that it represented psychological ascesis and reintegration of the [Russian] soul. In Freemasonry, the Russian soul goes back to itself after a long period of dissipation... This was spiritual awakening from a dead faint.1098

Freemasonry was one among many cultural institutions that contributed to the transmission and development of Enlightenment ideas. With its global network, the organization connected people all over Europe. In the context of Masonic interactions between Russia and the West, it is possible to trace international transfers of ideas from one culture to another and to consider how the Enlightenment interacted with social factors and national traditions while transcending boundaries and cultures. On a practical level, it contributed to the development and functioning of patronage networks, to the establishment of new trends in publishing, education, medicine, and charity work and played an important role in the culture of educated people. On a personal level, it addressed emotional and intellectual needs of its members. Finally, Freemasonry helped consolidate the cosmopolitan Enlightenment identification and, in the case of nascent Russian intelligentsia, bring them closer to the West. By encouraging its members to assume the identity of brothers and friends, lodges served as a foundation for the Russian participation in the project of the eighteenth century. In promoting this sense of identification of enlightened and educated people with its organization and rhetoric, the brotherhood ensured their involvement with the ideas of the Enlightenment. In these

ways, Freemasonry was a consistent and powerful ally of the Enlightenment, Westernization, and the beginnings of Sentimentalism in Russia.
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