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Towards Russian Opera:

Growing National Consciousness in 18th - Century Operatic Repertoire

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Introduction

From Opera in Russia to Russian Opera: State of the Art Between Fractures and Continuity

Critics and historians of Russian literature have often declared to have the figure of the poet Aleksandr S. Pushkin to be what they call "nashe vsyo" (our 'all'), recognizing his role as the founder of literary genres and as the original codifier of the language. It is in reference to this 'myth' that musicologists have searched, within the same socio-cultural context, for an analogous figure in Russian music. As pointed out by Marina Frolova-Walker in her *Russian Music and Nationalism, From Glinka to Stalin*,[1] in the synthesis of the best elements of contemporary European landscape, the composer M. I. Glinka had followed in the footsteps of its counterpart. Here is how Tret'yakova summarizes this parallel:

> Мы с полным правом говорим о Пушкине как выразителе своего времени и создателе основ современного русского языка. С таким же правом мы можем говорить и о Глинке как создателе русской классической музвки. Подобно Пушкину, он вобрал в себя все лучшее, что было до него в русской музыкальной культуре. И на этой прочной основе - народной и профессиональной - создал новую музыку.[2]

> [We rightly say that Pushkin epitomised his time and created the foundations for modern Russian language. In the same way we can say that Glinka was the father of Russian classical music. Like Pushkin had done in literature, he gathered together all that was best in Russian music, be it professional or folk music, and on this solid basis, he created a new style of music.]

While emphasizing Glinka's act of foundation, the scholar recognizes the previous existence of a process of creation, which through the attempts of various authors carried out a stratification of features increasingly close to the Russian culture, features that the great composer was able to synthesize: language, subject, dramaturgical and musical forms.[3]

However, this myth was created to symbolize the birth of an authentically Russian music, which means a music that, disgarding Western influences, was a true expression of the Russian people, of the 19th-century idea of the 'Russian soul'.

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[1] M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Russian Music and Nationalism, From Glinka to Stalin*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press 2007.

[2] L. S. TRET'YAKOVA, *Russkaya muzyka XIX veka* (Russian 19th-century music), Moskva, "Prosveshchenie" 1982, p. 12.

[3] A similar process can be seen in the context itself of the reception of the operas: Russian culture was acquiring increasing autonomy from Western patterns, comparisons being made between them in a constant, open and intense debate.

Contrasted with Western individualism and pragmatism, the 'Russian soul', is embodied in music through the opera *Zhizn' za tsarya* (A life for the tsar, 1836), which compositional suggestion is the gloomy *pesnya protyazhnaya* (lyric song, literally 'drawn-out' song), quoted or simply evoked by the composer. The first of the directions undertaken by the composer to obtain a music that was to be authentically national was thus the assimilation of popular styles already bearers of national associations: popular songs in urbanized version, salon romance, and Polish dances to represent the 'Other'.

Moreover, *A Life for the Tsar* also brought news from the formal point of view: prince Vladimir Fyodorovich Odoevsky (1804-1869), man of letters and music critic, hailed it as the harbinger of a "new element in art," Glinka having "proved with his brilliant essay that Russian melody […] may be elevated to the level of tragedy."[4] *A Life for the Tsar* was the very first Russian work the musical stage to dispense with spoken dialogue, which still survived from Russian opera's *Singspiel* days.[5] Moreover, the opera consisted in "Russian melodies which however are not copies of any specific folk songs."[6] Glinka "had used this material in an unprecedented way, as the stuff of drama, the carrier and supporter of plot and characterization," while "Formerly folklike melodies had played the same kind of decorative role in the Russian musical theater as everywhere else in Europe."[7] According to the critic and composer Aleksandr Serov, formal coherence was also guaranteed by the use of *Leitmotiv*, or rather of theme-quotation, for dramatic purposes.

Starting from his second opera, *Ruslan i Lyudmila* (Ruslan and Lyudmila, 1842), music nationalism undertook a different path. Glinka had in fact tried to avoid the repetition of recognizable languages and models, such as the traditional quoting of popular tunes, or Peterburgian salon romance. For this reason the opera was received by the audience of the time as much less Russian comparing to the previous one. This resulted in a controversy that lasted until the birth of the Russian School, which nurtured its protagonists and opposers. Moreover, the opera was perceived as a failure from a dramaturgical point of view.

[4] V. F. ODOEVSKY, *Muzykal'no-literaturnoe nasledie* (Musical-literary heritage, Moscow, 1956), p. 119, quoted from R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera*, *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Nov. 1977), p. 143. Also in reference to Catterino Cavos's *Ivan Susanin*, Taruskin points out that "[…] prior to Glinka, Russian operas had never aspired to the tragic style at all. […] Previous Russian operas and quasi-operas with potentially tragic situations (e. g. *Askold's Grave*)– Taruskin continues, - had characteristically avoided tragic *dénouements* by such standard devices as the last-minute rescue or the intervention of a *deus ex machina*." *ibidem*.
[5] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 144.
[6] V. F. ODOEVSKY, *Muzykal'no-literaturnoe nasledie…*, p. 143.
[7] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 143.

Much debate surrounded the opera, which became a flashpoint of opposing ideologies, irrespective of its origins: at the end of the 1850s and in the 1860s the ground of *Ruslan* saw the opposition of critics supporting or denying Wagnerian claims, which used Glinka's work as an instrument of their struggle, with the goal of reaching real Russian opera. Richard Taruskin reconstructed this controversy in his essay *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera*.[8]

When Glinka's second opera was heard, those who expected a continuation down the path of *A Life for the Tsar* were disappointed because *Ruslan and Lyudmila* seemed to turn its back upon all that *A Life* had stood for:

> In place of the lofty theme of his first operas, Glinka now offered a musical treatment of Pushkin's mock-epic of 1820, a work decidedly out of joint with the times, which, moreover, was much despised by progressive literati, such as Vissarion Belinsky (1811-1848), according to whom Pushkin's poem was "nothing more than a fairy-tale, devoid of any sense of time and place or national character and hence of verisimilitude.[9]

In both conception and execution, *Ruslan* was an about-face from the noble and dramaturgically successful operas *seria* that had preceded it. It belonged to another tradition, that of the "magic opera," the tradition of *Die Zauberflöte* and *Oberon*. And it could hardly serve the cause of the "organic" fusion of the dramatic and the national, since its literary source was an imaginary fancy with no real ties to the Russian epic tradition, and no aim or purpose beyond entertainment.[10]

At the moment of its reception, the vices ascribed to the opera were incongruity of content and manner in the opera, inconsistent tone, paralysis of action, and an extremely eclectic musical language, its melodic material consisting of Russian, Tatar, Caucasian, Persian, Turkish, Finnish musical folklore, in a context including also the music in Italian opera-*buffa* style that characterizes Farlaf, and Chernomor's whole-tone scale. Moreover, the folkloric tunes were mostly actual quotations rather than imitations, and they were used as themes for set pieces, while dramatic scenes and situations were mostly carried by stylistically neutral music. The result was that local colour had once again been relegated to a decorative role, and had lost the organic relationship to the drama that was the hallmark of *A Life*.[11]

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[8] *ivi*, pp. 142-62.
[9] V. BELINSKY, *Sochineniya* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1857), III, p. 96, quoted from R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 144.
[10] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 144. Frolova-Walker demonstrates that there actually was a nationalistic purpose in the opera. M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Russian Music and Nationalism…*, notably pp. 117-27.
[11] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 145.

According to Odoevsky anyway, who admitted that the libretto of *Ruslan* needed re-elaboration, he who remained indifferent to an event of this kind was not only not an artist, but was not even Russian.[12] Considering, as a romantic writer, the fantastic as a metaphor for the human condition, he maintained that the differences between Glinka's handling of *Ruslan* and Pushkin's indicated that the composer attempted to impose this view upon the poet's world as well.[13] *Ruslan* had a few other defenders, including the orientalist Osip Senkovsky (1800-1858), who was attracted by the exotic material, but the general opinion declared the opera to be "une chose manquée."[14]

This opinion went unchallenged while *Ruslan* languished unperformed, and *A Life for the Tsar* became the very staple of the repertoire, until the mid-1850s, when the musical writers Aleksandr Nikolaevich Serov (1820-1871) and Vladimir Vasil'evich Stasov (1824-1906) sparked a controversy that was to result in *Ruslan* being given a new lease of life.

The controversy started when Stasov published an article attacking the self-conscious nationalism of *A Life*, declaring it naive and limiting, in *Russky Vestnik* (The Russian courier) of October-December 1857.[15] He later turned Glinka's first opera into a kind of trial balloon for the second: where Odoevsky had singled out and highly praised the interpenetration of national and dramatic elements in *A Life for the Tsar*, Stasov contended that both these factors belonged to an outmoded aesthetic; Glinka's truly new and valid contribution lie in the opera's "oratorio character," and its eschewal of traditional conflict dramaturgy – conveniently, the very "flaws for which Ruslan was denigrated."[16] On the other side, *Ruslan*'s failure reformed entirely Serov's critical outlook: in a music drama, *drama* should come first: in 1856 the composer viewed Dargomyzhsky's *Rusalka* as a continuation along the path indicated by *A Life for the Tsar*, despite its romantic and supernatural subject derived from Pushkin.

On 26 January 1859 the Circus Theatre in Saint Petersburg, the newly re-established home of the Russian Opera, burned to the ground, and *Ruslan*'s score was destroyed.[17] Stasov wrote an article titled *A Martyr of Our Time* in the form of a letter to

[12] Letter to V. V. Stasov, in V. F. ODOEVSKY, *Muzykal'no-literaturnoe nasledie…*, p. 145.
[13] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 146.
[14] The expression belongs to Rafail Zotov, who defined as such the opera on the periodical *Severnaya pchela* (The northern bee), 1842, No. 277.
[15] Reprinted separately in V. V. STASOV, *Izbrannye sochineniya* (Selected works), 3 voll., Moskva, "Iskusstvo" 1952, I, pp. 379-524.
[16] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, pp. 148-9.
[17] *ivi*, p. 154.

the editor of *The Russian Courier* (*Russky vestnik*).[18] This time Stasov attempted to demonstrate that *Ruslan*'s destiny had been ill-fated from the very beginning: the libretto, formerly judged as adequate, became its main fault: "Glinka's achievements [was] viewed as a triumph over crippling handicaps, whereas previously everything was seen as proceeding smoothly from a consistent and congenial, if hardly "organic", conception."[19] In contrast with *A Life*'s monotony of tone, due to the subject of the libretto, *Ruslan* had amongst its major assets its "richness of coloring, strength, variety, beauty, vitality."[20]

According to Taruskin, Stasov's growing hostility towards *A Life for the Tsar* was impelled by Serov's unswerving defence of the opera.[21] The composer had in fact introduced Wagnerian side-issues into the controversy (for instance in his article of 1860 *A Life for the Tsar and Ruslan and Lyudmila*), with the consequence that, in the main outburst of Pan Slavism of the 1860s, Serov's name was linked with a subversive though nebulous "German party" associated with Anton Rubinstein and the new Conservatory of Saint Petersburg. Nationalism and obscurantist Slavophilia were brought into play by opponents of the Conservatory in defence of "Pure Russian:" exploitation of Glinka's operas as a rallying point for Pan-Slavism reached its height in 1867, when both of them were produced in Prague under Mily Balakirev's direction, as part of a festival of Slavic music.[22] On that occasion, Glinka's bust was placed in the Czech Museum as part of the festival activities, a ceremony described by Stasov in a "delirium of Pan-Slavist enthusiasm."[23] Glinka, whom Stasov himself had described as "devoid of the dramatic," was now to be ranked as a dramatist besides Shakespeare, next to whose bust his bust had been placed.[24]

The controversy continued with the next generation of music writers, which saw César Antonovich Cui (1835-1918) opposing to Herman Augustovich Laroche (1845-1904).

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[18] *Muchenitsa nashego vremeni* (A martyr of our time), changed by the editor in *Mnogostradal'naya opera* (A long-suffering opera). Reprinted under its original title in V. V. STASOV, *Izbrannye stat'i o M. I. Glinke* (Selected works on M. I. Glinka), edited by T. N. Livanova, Moskva, Muzgiz 1955, pp. 50-65.
[19] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 154.
[20] V. V. STASOV, *Izbrannye stat'i o M. I. Glinke…*, p. 51, quoted from R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 155.
[21] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 155.
[22] *ivi*, p. 156.
[23] *ibidem*.
[24] *ibidem*. In 1901, in his *Art in the Nineteenth Century*, Stasov finally confessed that Glinka's talent was "completely devoid of the dramatic talent," the only thing preventing *Ruslan* from being considered the greatest opera in the world. V. V. STASOV, *Izbrannye sochineniya…*, III, p. 721, quoted from R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 155.

In 1867 Laroche defended *Ruslan* against Serov's attacks in his *Glinka and his Significance in the History of Music*, presenting in the opera the solution to the problem of music drama: the seemingly indiscriminate conglomeration of styles that had been so often noted with disapproval was for him the opera's richest virtue.[25] According to Taruskin,

> at this point it was precisely the "objectivity" of Glinka's operatic style – the root of his power of characterization and hence of his dramaturgy, deriving in large part from the composer's accurate observation and assimilation of various folk musics – that Laroche saw a way out of the post-Classical impasse of Western music, and not only for Russia.[26]

The scholar pointed out that what Laroche valued in Glinka had nothing to do with opera per se, but with questions of "pure" musical style: the tacit assumption behind Laroche's critique of Glinka was that in music drama what matters most is music.[27] No less than Stasov, Laroche was exploiting Glinka as a propagandist's dike against the "Wagnerian tide."[28] As Taruskin pointed out, the object of debate had become a hobby-horse, and the controversy had ceased to be informative about anything other than the antagonists themselves.[29] In 1872 Chaykovsky summarized this controversy, agreeing with Serov:

> Serov's judgement proceeded from that premise which was the motto of all his critical activity, namely, from the Wagnerian principle that "opera is musical drama." … [The "Ruslanists"], not relying on philosophical principles, not given to abstract aesthetic theorizing, decided that *Ruslan* was not only Glinka's best opera, but simply *the* best opera, an opera of operas, so to speak, the Tsar of operas. In *Ruslan* – so say these fiery but notably paradoxical *feuilletonists* – Glinka demonstrated greater creative strength in comparison with his first opera; he appeared fully armed with ripe mastery and went along paths entirely new to art, which he was the first to point out. In *Ruslan*, according to them, Glinka declared himself a bold innovator and shook off the shackles of routine and convention, while in *A Life for the Tsar* he still submitted to old forms. … In comparing these two sharply conflicting viewpoints, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that Serov's criticism goes deeper and is the more rational. … It is a fact that large-scale works of art are to be valued not so much for pure strength of innovation, as for perfection of form in which inventive force is to be channelled, for the balance of its parts, for the successful meshing of the idea with its external expression. *Ruslan* cannot be included among the model operas; it is simply a magical spectacle accompanied by outstandingly fine music. There can be no doubt that if our operatic repertoire were rich in remarkable works, or if Glinka had lived to write two or three more operas which came closer than *Ruslan*, to satisfying the requirements of the stage and of dramatic interest, then *Ruslan* would be given more rarely and would be relegated mainly to the concert stage.[30]

Concluding, according to Taruskin,

[25] *ivi*, pp. 156-9.
[26] *ivi*, p. 159.
[27] *ivi*, p. 160.
[28] *ibidem*.
[29] *ibidem*.
[30] P. I. CHAYKOVSKY, *Muzykal'no-kriticheskie stat'i* (Articles of music critic), Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1953, quoted from R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 161.

> The great value of the *Ruslan* controversy, […] was that it made the question of music *versus* drama an open, hotly-discussed, and almost obsessive one for practically all Russian musicians, whether or not they were parties to the original debate. There is not a Russian opera of the later nineteenth century that does not have a clearly defined "relationship" to *Ruslan*, whether pro (*Sadko*, *Prince Igor*) or con (*Boris Godunov*, *Vrazhya Sila*). […] The history of the *Ruslan* controversy shows that Russia found her own way to music drama, and that the major impetus came from Glinka. But it was not the success of the master's first opera that pointed the way, it was the failure of the second.[31]

In Soviet times this controversy was glanced over, and Mikhail I. Glinka became the founder of the two main branches through which Russian opera would produce its major successes: the historical epic of *A Life for the Tsar*, and the magical fairytale of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. This myth survives still today, in a time when, on a popular level at least, the scheme is proposed in the same terms.

Moreover, the exclusive reference to Glinka has been received by Western Europe in an often a-critical way, through a series of works such as César Cui's *La musique en Russie* (Paris, 1880),[32] Rosa Newmarch's *The Russian opera* (London 1914),[33] and Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi's *Masters of Russian Music* (with G. Abraham, London and New York, 1936) and *A Survey of Russian Music* (Harmondsworth, 1944).[34]

This vision left considerable aftermaths in the history of Russian music. On the one hand, as Frolova-Walker pointed out, the stress on the national character of music composed in Russia guaranteed the permanence of Russian music in the concert repertoires (as in the case with *Ballets russes*). On the other hand, it had the opposite effect in

[31] R. TARUSKIN, *Glinka's Ambiguous Legacy and the Birth Pangs of Russian Opera…*, p. 161.

[32] As a writer on music, César Antonovich Cui (1835-1918) contributed almost 800 articles between 1864 and 1918 to various newspapers and other publications in Russia and Europe, "retiring" from regular music criticism in 1900. His wide coverage included concerts, recitals, musical life, new publications of music, and personalities, a significant number of his articles dealing with opera. Because of rules related to his status in the Russian military, in the early years his musico-critical articles had to be published under a pseudonym, which consisted of three asterisks (***). Cui's primary goal as a critic was to promote the music of contemporary Russian composers, especially the works of his now better-known co-members of The Five, who, however, were not spared negative reactions from him. Russian composers outside of The Five, however, were often more likely to produce a negative reaction. His *La musique en Russie* was published in Paris in 1880 (ed. G. Fischbacher).

[33] Beginning in 1897, Rosa Newmarch (1857-1940) did a great deal of research on Russian music, making many visits to Russia and working at the Imperial Public Library of St. Petersburg (nowadays Russian National Library) under the supervision of Vladimir Stasov. She became one of the first English critics to champion Russian music in such works as *The Russian opera*, published by Herbert Jenkins (London, 1914).

[34] As a talented polyglot, Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi (1877 – 1944) was a multilingual music writer and critic. He began a career in 1902 as a music critic and correspondent for several English, American, German and Russian periodicals. Calvocoressi's legacy as a music critic and translator was his advocacy for Russian music. He wrote three books on Modest Musorgsky: *Mussorgsky* (Paris, 1908), *Mussorgsky* (London, 1946), a new extensive biography of Mussorgsky posthumously published. *Mussorgsky: His Life and Works* (London, 1956), and several others on European and Russian composers, such as *Glinka* (Paris, 1911), *Masters of Russian Music*, with G. Abraham (London and New York, 1936), *A Survey of Russian Music* (Harmondsworth, 1944).

Academic context, causing the exclusion of Russian composers from the 'normal' history of music. In Soviet Union the history of music was organized in two main, distinct lines: *zarubezhnaya* (foreign) and *russkaya* (Russian). As the scholar witnesses,

> Russian classical music was taught as if it had arisen and flourished quite independently of Western music. The categories under which Western music was commonly discussed, such as counterpoint or sonata form, were considered only tangentially relevant to Russian music, which was discussed in relation to folksong and *narodnost'* (nationality). Russian music was regarded as a separate tree, with its roots firmly planted in Russian soil. It had its own, internal network of references and its own value system.[35]

As for Italian secondary literature, in handbooks Russia is treated, when it is, marginally up to the advent of the so-called School of five (The Five), with the oft repeated references to Glinka and to the almost unknown Dargomyzhsky.

One of the permanent aftermaths of the recalled traditional vision is that Mikhail Glinka in particular has come to be considered a watershed dividing the history of Russian opera into two main sections, either side of the year 1836: on the one hand the true history, and on the other a sort of prehistory, a partition that is reflected in handbooks in the distinction between *do-* and *ot-* Glinkian opera, long time accepted by Western scholarship.[36]

This approach excludes much of the experience that anticipated the novelties introduced by Glinka, Dargomyzhsky and the Five, from the process that led to the creation of the 'national opera.'[37]

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[35] M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Russian Music and Nationalism*…, p. vii.

[36] A. S. RABINOVICH, *Russkaya opera do Glinki* (Russian opera before Glinka), Moskva, Muzgiz 1948; A. A. GOZENPUD, *Muzykal'ny teatr v Rossii. Ot istokov do Glinki. Ocherk* (Musical theatre in Russia. From the origins to Glinka. An essay), Leningrad, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1959. This is particularly true in respect to Italian secondary literature, as in R. TEDESCHI, *I figli di Boris, L'opera russa da Glinka a Šostakovič* (Boris's children, Russian opera from Glinka to Shostakovich), Torino, EDT 1990, in which the Russian musical life before the advent of Glinka is reduced to a very few words.

[37] Particularly harsh is the critic's judgement: "Немногие опыты и пробы дилетантов екатеринского, павловского, александровского и николаевского времени (Фомина, Николаева, Матинского, Пашкевича, Кавоса, Алябева, Верстовского и других) были совершенно ничтожны, слабы, безцветны и бездарны. Эти люди только старались подражать иностранцам и потому никогда ничего не достигали сами. Русская опера была бледна, бедна и бессильна, инструментальная же музыка и вовсе отсутствовала." (Some of the attempts and efforts made by *amateurs* in the time of Catherine, Paul, Alexander and Nicholas (for example by Fomin, Nikolayev, Matinsky, Pashkevich, Cavos, Alyabev, Verstovsky and others) were absolutely insignificant, weak, colourless and mediocre. They were trying to imitate foreigners and therefore were never able to achieve anything themselves. Russian opera was bland, poor and lifeless, while the instrumental music was totally absent.) V. V. STASOV, *Iz knigi "Iskusstvo XIX veka"* (From the book *19th-Century Art*), in *Stat'i o muzyke*, *v pyati vypuskakh* (Articles about music, in five issues), vypusk V, edited by V. V. Protopopov, Moskva, «Muzyka» 1980, p. 61. As Livanova underlines, Stasov was interested in Glinka's legacy, in order to show the continuity between his work and that of the next generations. T. N. LIVANOVA, *Stasov i russkaya klassicheskaya opera* (Stasov and Russian classical opera), Moskva, Gosudarstvennoye Muzykal'noye Izdatel'stvo 1957, p. 78.

The impression one gets nowadays is that on the one hand Russian composers wrote operas that were not Russian enough, and on the other hand foreign composers wrote Russian works that were not recognized as 'true' operas.[38] Leaving aside the inner discussion of the national school, in which the case of both Glinka's operas is symptomatic, it is clear that Russianness is associated, in a knot that still appears hard to untie, to assumptions having formal significance. Therefore the main elements concerned as distinctive criteria of the Russian opera are the introduction of folkloric material, the Russianness of the subject, its possible acknowledgement as melodrama, and the coherence of the whole, reflected, for instance, in the absence of spoken dialogues.

As a consequence, for a long time the *do*-Glinkian experiences were not acknowledged for their artistic value, and this resulted in these works being neglected, with little effort being made to identify or enhance single moments, authors, or works.

On an academic level, the Glinkian myth is nowadays subject to deconstruction, not in order to devaluate the composer's work, but to re-place his figure underlying the role of critics in the elaboration of his image, and at the same time in order to re-evaluate figures and experiences that have been overshadowed by his myth. Some revisionism could already be seen with scholars such as Gerald Abraham, who in 1939 attempted to topple *A Life for the Tsar* from its throne and show it rather as the culmination of the pre-Glinkian tradition.[39] According to Abraham,

> "A Life for the Tsar" was neither the first opera composed on a Russian subject or to a Russian text, the first opera by a Russian composer, nor (in the opinion of the present writer) the opera that really laid the foundation-stone of modern Russian music. True, it happens to be the first of the only two operas written by the first Russian composer of any importance; but, even so, it is not – historically considered – a beginning of anything. Rather it is an end, a summing-up, the best and almost the last blossom produced by a rather sickly plant.[40]

According to the scholar, "The true foundation stone of Russian opera, as the world knows it, was the work that followed "A Life for the Tsar" – "Ruslan and Lyudmila"."[41] This position was due to the observation that composers such as Fomin, Matinsky, Berezovsky, Bortnyansky, Pashkevich, and even the foreigners (Sarti, Canobbio, Martín y

[38] According to Taruskin, "Before *A life for the Tsar* there were no true Russian operas. Russians like Berezovsky and Bortnyansky had composed Italian operas in the eighteenth century, but these were composed on Italian soil and performed only in Italy. Opera performed in Russia to Russian texts (even if composed by Cavos) meant only singspiels or *comédies mêlées d'ariettes*." R TARUSKIN, *Defining Russia Musically*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press 1997, p. 227.
[39] G. ABRAHAM, *On Russian Music*, London, William Reeves Press [1939], pp. 2-19.
[40] *ivi*, pp. 1-2.
[41] *ivi*, p. 2.

Soler) appreciated the flavour of the national folk-music more than might have been expected. The position of the scholar was, though, only partially revisionist:

> But these were only oases in the desert of Italian or quasi-Italian music produced at the Imperial Court. […] Thus Russian opera for more than half-a-century was composed by through-and-through Italians, by superficially Russianised Italians, by Italians trained Russians, and by Russian amateurs who took this Italo-Russian music as their model. Of these the Italians were at least competent technicians, but the Russians – even those who had studied abroad – seem to have been as weak in technique as in inspiration. Apart from its historical interest, their collective output (as far as one can judge from the specimens obtainable) is an insipid pot-pourri of the musical platitudes of the day, faintly flavoured with native condiments.[42]

As for modern historians, revisionism was called out by Richard Taruskin in his article *Thoughts on the History of Russian Music*[43] and in the book *Defining Russia Musically*,[44] in which the scholar intended to demolish *clichés* that, having become nowadays indefensible in other, parallel scientific fields, have still not disappeared in the musicological one. As Taruskin stated in his 1984 essay, "There is no area of music historiography that is in greater need of fundamental revision than that of Russian music, and here the corrective can only come from the West."[45]

> Still, - the scholar continues, - the habit of speaking of Russian music above all in terms of its Russianness has ingrained many prejudices and lazy habits of thought. It is often taken for granted that everything that happened in Russian music has a direct relationship, positive or negative, to the national question, which question is often very reductively construed in terms of "sources in folk song and church chant," as Alfred Swan put it. This in turn can and often does become a normative criterion: an overtly quotational national character is taken as a mark of value or authenticity, and its absence, conversely, as a mark of valuelessness.[46]

The scholar explained that since it was assumed that Russian music is, or ought to be, "coloured Russian," it was further assumed that nationalism (or national character, or the striving for a native idiom), was something unique, or at least especially endemic, to Russia, or to "peripheral centers" generally, while it was one of the assumptions that kept these centres peripheral in our minds.[47] On the contrary, nationalism was universally held to be a positive value in 19th-century Europe, from where Russia had imported it:

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[42] *ivi*, p. 5.
[43] R. TARUSKIN, *Thoughts on the History of Russian Music*, *The Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Autumn, 1984), pp. 321-39.
[44] R. TARUSKIN, *Defining Russia Musically…*.
[45] R. TARUSKIN, *Thoughts on the History of Russian Music…*, p. 322. "extremely mendacious and tendentious historiography that emanates from the USSR, which many Western scholars continue to rely upon far too uncritically, […]" *ivi*, p. 323
[46] *ivi*, pp. 323-4.
[47] *ivi*, p. 329.

> And the precise way in which Glinka's use of folklore differed from that of earlier Russian composers – to wit, that it came from the mouths of main characters, not just decorative peasant choristers and choryphées, and that it provided a medium for tragic action, not just comedy - was precisely the way in which the typical Romantic opera differed from those of the eighteenth century, and reflected above all a change in viewpoint on the nature of folklore-one that emanated not from Russia but from Western Europe (i.e., from Rousseau and Herder) – that folklore represented "the nation" and not just "the peasantry". That the latter idea died hard even in Russia is reflected at the première of *A Life for the Tsar* - that it was "de la musique de cochers."[48]

According to the scholar, it was in the domain of "comparative nationalism" that Western scholars may had something unique to add to the historiography of Russian music, since in Russia the historiography of Russian music was "irrevocably insular and itself nationalistic, devoted exclusively to the writing of "national history," emphasizing only "what is nationally unique or distinctive," […] out of all proportion to reality, or, in many instances, to truth."[49] Russian music needed to be set within a world context.

On the same line we find the work of Frolova-Walker, who tries to set up a discussion about Russian music that could prescind from these extremes, re-integrating its studies inside general musicology and a wider field of culture.

Such a revisionism is though, as far as I know, more rearward in the field of pre-Glinkian music theatre, which had long time been overshadowed by the dazzling performances of the *Moguchaya Kuchka* ('Mighty Handful').

According to Marina Rytsareva (or Ritzarev) in fact, the reputation of 18th-century culture suffered on two sides. On the one hand it was overshadowed by the glorious 19th-century accomplishments and considered, as mentioned above, as only an insignificant prelude to the real triumph. On the other hand, it was also bereft of any national 'authenticity', unlike pre-Petrine culture, which was seen as having such authenticity.[50]

Contributing to this contempt was the fact that 19th-century musicians simply did not possess a sufficient knowledge of the cross-cultural influences of earlier times to be able to assess the 18th century fairly.[51] The idea of the foreign influence in fact, which developed in 19th century, allowed critics and scholars to deal with 18th-century art with this univocal approach, that of the absence of any national roots in it. Contempt for the imitational 18th-century art, for the "false classicism", was bound to the more modern, aesthetically progressive, romantic tendency, that pervaded critics such as Vissarion Belinsky, who expressed this position in his *Literaturnye mechtaniya* (Reveries of

[48] *ibidem*.
[49] *ivi*, p. 330.
[50] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, p. 1.
[51] *ivi*, p. 2.

literature). The critic later overcame his harsh judgement and reached a more balanced evaluation of these artistic phenomena, though always defining 18th-century literature as a transplanted tree in search of new ground. This vision embodied the positions of critics of the 1860s Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov who, in order to support the critical realism of their time, left in the background the aim of studying pre-Pushkinian literature. The art of Kantemir, Lomonosov, Knyazhnin was relegated to the field of "false Classicism", a perspective that prevented any possible in-depth examination.

Gradually this topic began to attract scholars as a historical phenomenon (not a an aesthetic position to which they opposed realism), although the empiric character of the first essays lingered till the first decade of the 20th century.

At the beginning of the new century also the interest towards Russian 18th-century music increased, and led to essays by scholars such as N. F. Findeyzen, S. V. Smolensky, A. V. Ossovsky, in the periodicals *Russkaya muzykal'naya gazeta* (Russian music newspaper) and *Muzykal'ny sovremennik* (Musical contemporary).[52] The most well known of them is Nikolay F. Findeyzen's two-volume *Ocherki po istorii muzyki v Rossii s drevneyshchikh vremen do kontsa XVIII veka*, the second volume being entirely devoted to the 18th century.[53]

Marxist-Leninist methodology and ideology tried to see in the art of 18th century progressive tendencies, bound to the development of analogous ideas of liberation from serfdom, notably in the production of Russian comic operas,[54] which, as we shall see, they did not always support. At the same time though, a new perspective was suggested by Boris V. Asaf'ev and by the scholars of the Russian Institute of Art History (RIII). The 'ideological' basis of this research was the idea of historical continuity in the Russian musical culture and in the gradual formation of Russian music as a living and developing organism. The scholar had already pointed out the danger of Glinka's myth making:

> Я преклоняюсь перед гением Глинки. Я считаю, что мы мало ценим его, мало знаем. <…> Но тем более я считаю несправедливым отказывать в значении творческой работы работе его предшественников. Восхищаясь Глинкой (но мало изучая его), упскают из виду один факт, для историков вполне естественный и постоянный: наличие исторического

[52] O. E. LEVASHEVA, *Vvedenie* (Foreword), in *Istoriya russkoy muzyki, XVIII vek chast' pervaya* (History of the Russian music, 18th century century, First part), edited by Yu. V. Keldysh, tom II, Moskva, «Muzyka» 1984, p. 8.
[53] The work has been recently translated in English and published as: N. F. FINDEIZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800*, edited and annotated by M. Velimirovich and C. R. Jensen, 2 volls., Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 2008. According to Ol'ga E. Levasheva, in the book the role of Italian influence is though overestimated. The exposition of facts, moreover, contains several mistakes. O. E. LEVASHEVA, *Vvedenie…*, p. 8.
[54] O. E. LEVASHEVA, *Vvedenie…*, p. 8.

процесса, закономерно протекающего. В творчестве Глинки гораздо больше элементов от прошлого и от современной ему русской культуры, чем обычно думают. […]

Создания Глинки так величавы и прекрасны, что необходимо сделать некоторое усилие, чтобы отстранить их чисто эстетическое обаяние ради непредвзятости исторической оценки и более глубокого понимания процесса.[55]

[I bow to Glinka. I think that we evaluate him without knowing him enough. […] Nevertheless, I consider it unjust not to give due credit to the creativity of his predecessors. Admiring Glinka (but not studying him) one loses sight of a fact that for historians is firm and natural: the existence of a historical process that regularly passes through. In Glinka's art there are many more elements of the past and of the contemporary Russian culture of his than it is usually thought. […]

Glinka's works are so great and wonderful that it is necessary to do an effort to put their purely aesthetical charm aside in order to avoid any bias in their historical evaluation and in the deeper understanding of the process.]

In the 1940s scholars of Asaf'ev's group (such as A. V. Druzhinin, V. A. Prokof'ev, A. N. Rimsky-Korsakov, A. V. Finagin) demonstrated the will to a more scientific (objective) approach towards pre-Glinkian experiences, embodied in the three-volume anthology *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian music in musical examples) edited by L. S. Ginzburg, professor at the Conservatory of Leningrad, which gathered and presented music sources.[56] The same generation produced A. S. Rabinovich's *Russkaya opera do Glinki* (Russian opera before Glinka) and T. I. Livanova's *Russkaya muzykal'naya kul'tura XVIII veka v ee svyazakh s literaturoy, teatrom i bytom* (Russian 18th-century music culture in its relationship with literature, theatre and everyday life, Moscow 1952), where music is treated together with literature and theatre, with in-depth examination of authors such as Trediakovsky, Lomonosov, Sumarokov, Krylov, Radishchev, Derzhavin, and the issues of *kant* and *rossiyskaya pesnya* (Russian song) that originates from Sumarokov's lyric.

In the 1950s and 1960s a whole series of musicological monographic works was issued, such as B. L. Vol'man's *Russkie pechatnye noty XVIII veka* (Russian printed scores of the 18th century, Leningrad, 1957)[57] and A. A. Gozenpud's *Russky muzykal'ny teatr do Glinki* (Musical theatre in Russia. From the origins to Glinka).[58] In 1965 Yury V. Keldysh issued his *Russkaya muzyka XVIII veka* (Russian 18th-century music), dedicated to the issues of music style, genres, artistic tendencies and creative figures, in an attempt to

[55] B. V. ASAF'EV, *Ob issledovanii russkoy muzyki XVIII veka i dvukh operakh Bortnyanskogo* (On the research of Russian 18th-century music and two operas by Bortnyansky), in *Izbrannye trudy* (Selected works), tom iv, Moskva, Izdatel'stavo Akademii nauk 1955, p. 27.

[56] *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian music in musical examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, M.-L., 1949, re-issued in the years 1968-69; the same author published also *Russky muzykal'ny teatr 1700-1835*, *Khrestomatiya* (Russian musical theatre 1700-1839, An anthology), L. – M., Iskusstvo 1941.

[57] Re-edited and expanded in B. L. VOL'MAN, *Russkie notnye izdaniya XIX – nachala XX veka* (Russian music editions of the 19th-beginning of the 20th centuries), Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo «Muzyka» 1970.

[58] A. A. GOZENPUD, *Muzykal'ny teatr v Rossii*….

integrate Russian experiences in the wider scope of European culture, a new approach compared to previous works that tended to isolate their object of study. The Swiss scholar Robert-Aloys Mooser (1876-1969), who, as Findeyzen, explored the Imperial archives, published several valuable works: *Opéras, intermezzos, ballets, cantatas oratorios joués en Russie durant le XVIIIe siècle*, *L'opéra comique français en Russie au XVIIIe. siècle*, and the three-volume *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle*, and a series of articles, mostly on foreign composers being at service at the Russian court.[59]

According to Marina Ritzarev, "Due to the events of history and their complex intertwining, it was only in the last third of the twentieth century that the artistic treasures of Russian pre-Glinkian music began to attract broad public attention even in Russia itself, while outside Russia they have remained virtually unknown".[60] Musicology of the 1980s paid much attention to the issue of progressive tendencies (not in a political sense though), reducing the role of Italian influence compared to elements of other provenance influence, in order to enhance autonomous and autochthonous features.

The issue of available sources was in fact one of the factors that prevented research on 18th-century musical life in Russia. According to Levasheva, this was due to the conditions or archives, where music sources were carelessly treated, or were incomplete. Most of the works of the Catherine-era composers had disappeared, and nothing seems to have been preserved from the first half of 18th-century. Levasheva attributes this negligence to Imperial Russia, when music was not considered a heritage to be preserved, but used rather for everyday consumption. The composers were rarely mentioned on the printed librettos, and scores were only by chance preserved in archives.[61] In Levasheva's explanation one senses the effects of Soviet bias against the Imperial era: the scholar points out the low status of music and musicians in the social hierarchy (apart for the Italian maestros, musicians were actually considered 'serfs'), the absence of educational institutions dedicated to music until the second half of the 19th century (!), and the "astonishing indifference for the destiny of the national music."[62] Actually, this is common to the European vision of art before the idea of repertoire was carried about by

[59] R. - A. MOOSER, *Operas, Intermezzos, Ballets, Cantates, Oratorios: joués en Russie durant le 18e siècle, avec l'indicatione dea oeuvres de compositeurs russes parues en Occident à la même époque. Essai d'un repertoire alphabetique et chronologique*, Genève, A. Kundig 1945; *L'opéra comique français en Russie au XVIIIe. siècle: contribution à l'histoire de la musique russe*, Genève-Monaco, Kister, 1954 (first ed. 1932); *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIIIme siècle*, voll. 1-3, Genève, Mont-Blanc 1948-51. For the articles see the general bibliography.
[60] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 1.
[61] O. E. LEVASHEVA, *Vvedenie…*, p. 9.
[62] "удивительное равнодушие к судьбам отечественной музыки," *ivi*, p. 10.

Romanticism, which together with the music instruction institutions established the organized form of conservatories only after the French revolution.

Another factor in this neglect was, according to Levasheva, the immaturity of Russian composers:[63] actually, the first Russian composers emerge in the last quarter of the century, but this, as I will try to demonstrate, was not due to chance, but due to the interest of authorities in the development of local professionals in all disciplines.

The re-discovery of the Russian 18th-century heritage in the 1970s led to the resurrection of some scores, which were also staged, such as Bortnyansky's *Le fils rival*, Fomin's *Yamshchiki na podstave* (The coachmen at the relay) and Fomin's *Orfey i Evridika* (Orpheus and Eurydice), staged in the 1740s at the M. I. Glinka Museum of Musical Culture of Moscow, or Bortnyansky's *Le foucon* and Pashkevich's *Skupoy* (The miser), staged by the Moscow Theatre of Chamber Music. In the 1970s, some of these scores were edited and published in the series *Pamyatniki russkogo muzykal'nogo iskusstva* (Monuments of Russian art music) over twelve issues.

An updating of research in this field had been called for by Gerald Abraham in his *On Russian Music* and by Gerald Seaman in the articles *Russian Folksong in the Eighteenth Century* and *Folk-song in Russian Opera in the 18th Century*, but his own works were still permeated by outworn convictions as the progressive, democratic ideology that in his opinion stood at the basis of the first attempts at Russian comic opera.[64]

Among more recent studies, apart from those which I have already referred to, I will mention the highly respectable seven-volume encyclopaedia of 18th-century musical Saint Petersburg *Muzykal'ny Peterburg: XVIII vek, Entsiklopedichesky slovar'* (Musical Petersburg, Encyclopaedia) edited by Anna Porfir'eva within the studies of the mentioned Institute of Art History.[65] Especially in the first part of my work, I made use of the volumes edited by Lyudmila M. Starikova dedicated to the Russian theatrical life during the reigns of Anna Ioannovna and Elizabeth Petrovna, which have the great merit of collecting original documents from different Russian archives and disposing them in an objective manner, so that any scholar could get from them the information they themselves

[63] *ibidem*.
[64] G. R. SEAMAN, *Russian Folksong in the Eighteenth Century*, in *Music & Letters*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (July, 1959), pp. 253-60, and *Folk-song in Russian Opera in the 18th Century*, in *Slavonic and East European Review*, 41: 96 (1962: Dec.), pp. 144-57.
[65] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg, Entsiklopedichesky slovar'* (Musical Petersburg, Encyclopaedia), 7 voll., Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "KOMPOZITOR" 2000-02.

contain.[66] The author's starting point was the observation of the lack of documentary sources concerning the reign of empress Anna.[67] She includes in secondary literature about this topic virtually the only Vsevolodsky-Gergross's essay, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche*.[68] The scholar declares that, among the causes of this neglect, the fact that the theatre itself as a branch of study had for many years been split from its Western "brother", "even when its exponents staged it directly on the Russian stage (for instance, Italian or German troupes that performed at the court of Anna Ioannovna)."[69] In fact, according to Gerngross, "information about them seemed unnecessary for the history of our national theatre.[70]

A second obstacle was constituted by the separation between the history of spoken and music theatre:

> Немногочисленные факты, добытые исследователями, дробились между этими двумя видами, на самом деле существовавшими в ту пору в неразрывной связи. Так что воссоздать сколько-нибудь цельную или хотя бы обобщенную картину театрального процесса в России того времени не представлялось возможным.[71]
>
> [Countless facts, gathered by researchers, split between these two aspects, which actually coexisted at that time, linked by unbreakable bonds. So that reconstructing any entire or at least general picture of the theatrical process in Russia of that time appeared impossible.]

This have tried to keep in mind while carrying out my research. Possibly due to my personal educational path, which began with studies on Russian literature at the faculty of Foreign Languages and Literature, I considered impossible to prescind from the general cultural context and to focus exclusively on musical events in a context as peculiar as the Russian one, in which the protagonists of literature musical and spoken theatre themselves

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[66] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny. Dokumental'naya khronika, 1730-1740* (Russian theatrical life at Anna Ioannovna's time. A documented chronicle, 1730-1740), vypusk I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Radiks 1995; *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny: dokumental'naya khronika* (Russian theatrical life at Elizabeth Petrovna's time. A documented chronicle), vypusk II, edited by L. M. Starikova, 2 voll., Moskva, Nauka 2003-2005; *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny: dokumental'naya khronika 1751-1761* (Russian theatrical life at Elizabeth Petrovna's time. A documented chronicle 1751-1761), vypusk III, ch. I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Nauka 2012.

[67] "Анненский период истории русского театра всегда манил к себе историков, занимал их воображение. Но его изучение затруднялось крайней скудностью документального арсенала, имевшегося в их распроряжении." (Anna's period in the history of Russian theater has always attracted the attention of historians, occupied their imagination. But its study was made considerably difficult by the scant documentary material at their disposal.) *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 9.

[68] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche* (The theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Anna Ioannovna and Ioann Antonovich), in *Ezhegodnik imperatorskikh teatrov* (Yearbook of the Imperial Theatres), III-IV, Sank-Peterburg, 1914.

[69] "даже тогда, когда представители его творили непосредственно на российской сцене (как, например, итальянские или немецкие труппы, игравшие при дворе Анны Иоанновны)." *ivi*, p. 9.

[70] "сведения о них казались необъязательными для истории нашего национального театра". *ibidem*, p. 9.

[71] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 9.

have long been the same. As acknowledged by scholars of the past generations, the very fact that Russia did not have schools specializing in music in this phase is testament to this absence of rigid boundaries between disciplines.

Something similar could be said with regard to the history of the country, which also affected (and it could not be otherwise) the history of its culture, and which have tried not to ignore while drawing conclusions from facts.[72] With regard to this I made use of a set of quite modern secondary literature. Among these contributions, which one can consult in the general bibliography, I will mention the works of Kamensky, Rogger, Thiesse and Wortman, being the most shrewd regarding the main subject.[73]

These are the main considerations that stood at the basis of the present research. This study contemplates focusing on the elements of *continuity* in the evolution of theatrical activity in Russia starting from the 1730s, that is when the first troupes of Italian actors-singers arrived in Moscow from Dresden. Actually, the present work is the initial part of a wider project deemed to re-construct a line of continuity in the fractured history of Russian music, by tracing experiences that led to the two Glinka operas, which I have recalled as great divide in the history of Russian music, and often considered its real beginning. The project originated with my first research about pre-Glinkian Russian music, dedicated to Catterino Cavos and his opera *Ivan Susanin*, which was recently published in Italy.[74] In this part, a temporary chronological boundary, due to the objective limits dictated by the framework of the doctoral dissertation, are conventionally fixed at the end of the reign of Paul I, which coincides with the turn of the century.

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[72] "Примерно за шесть десятилетий в стране не вышло ни одной книги по политической истории аннинского, елизаветинского, екатеринского и павловского времени и лишь в последние годы, начиная с 1986-го, такие книги стали появляться. Подобное отношение к истории послепетровской России, восходящее к схеме русской истории, созданной в 1930-е годы, отразилось в школьных и вузовских учебниках, по которым учились несколько поколений россиян, и, следовательно, получило широкое распространение в массовом сознании." (For about six decades in the country no book was published about the history of the times of Anna, Elizabeth, Catherine and Paul, and only in the last few years, starting from 1986, such books began to appear. Such an approach to the history of post-Petrine Russia, being part of the scheme of Russian history formulated in the 1930s, was reflected in handbooks for schools and universities, according to which some generations of Russians have studied, and has consequently gained much diffusion in the masses' consciousness.) A. B. KAMENSKY, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I: reformy v Rossii 18 veka: opyt tselostnogo analiza* (From Peter I to Paul I: reforms in 18th-century Russia), Moskva, RGGU 1999, pp. 15-6.

[73] A. B. KAMENSKY, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I*...; H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1960; A. M. THIESSE, *La creazione delle identità nazionali in Europa* (Original title: *La Création des identiés nationales*), Bologna, Il Mulino 2001; R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power: myth and ceremony in Russian monarchy: from Peter the Great to the abdication of Nicholas 2*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2006.

[74] A. GIUST, *"Ivan Susanin" di Catterino Cavos, Un'opera russa prima dell'Opera russa* (Catterino Cavos's *Ivan Susanin*, A Russian opera before The Russian opera), Torino, EDT 2011.

From the study of the available sources the need for clarification on documents and their interpretation emerges. This is why among the first tasks I gave myself was to reconstruct the facts. Although the present work is in great part based on secondary literature, I've tried to reorganize and verify as much as possible of the available information, referring when possible to primary sources. Retracing part of the history of opera in Russia, I often wondered about the utility of 'repeating' the information already presented, also in Western languages, by such great historians of music as Mooser and Findeyzen. However, these works belong to another time, Findeyzen having written his *Essays* in 1928-29, and Mooser having compiled his *Annales* in 1948-51. Therefore, an updating seemed necessary. On the other hand, the mentioned sources, such epoch-making works as Keldysh's *History of Russian Music* and more recent works as Rytsareva's *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, which I also exploited, are based on a different approach. One the one hand, the disposition in annals chosen by Mooser not only in his three-volume *Annales*, but also in his *Operas, Intermezzos, Ballets, Cantates, Oratorios: joués en Russie durant le 18e siècle* (maybe less in his *L'opéra comique français en Russie au XVIIIe. siècle*), although very useful for data retrieval, does not enhance which experiences were more or less important, nor put enough stress on the relationships intertwining between stagings and the wider cultural context, for instance. Keldysh's works had the purpose of giving a full picture of Russian musical activity in each single epoch, a task I did not apply to. Finally, Rytsareva's approach differs form mine in that she paid much more attention to the activity of such composers as Bortnyansky and Berezovsky, whom she had long studied, and who remain outside the scope have chosen, since I decided not to tackle the component of sacred singing in relation to the development of Russian music.

My aim was not to give a complete image of theatrical activity in Russia within the chosen chronological scope, but to enhance the experiences that I consider ascribable to growing national consciousness as it has been described by such historians as Wortman, Kamensky and Rogger, and to present them in relation to analogous experiences in the history of culture.

From the reconstruction of the activity of single troupes present in Moscow or Saint Petersburg, the emerging image is that of a musical milieu not marginal in European musical life, but sharing the main phenomena that characterized it: the use of opera *seria* as a celebrating event for the sovereign and 'mirror' of the Court; the growing taste for comic opera and its becoming progressively sentimental and serious; the use of *coleur locale* in

order to make works reflect the original traits of the country's culture through the model of opera with spoken dialogues that was widespread throughout Europe.

As evidence that Russia was not considered periphery to Europe, let's consider the interest taken in moving to Saint Petersburg by two of the undeniably main European composers. According to Rytsareva, "The stream of German and other European musicians into Russia became so notable that it was little wonder that in 1726, J. S. Bach also contemplated such a possibility."[75] In fact Georg Erdmann (1682-1736), with whom Bach studied in the years 1698-99 at the Ordruf Lyceum, after which both moved to Lüneburg, was accepted into the service of the Russian court in 1714 and worked as the Court Counsellor and resident consul of Danzig (Poland) at the Court of Catherine I (the widow of Peter I). Erdmann enjoyed the patronage of prince Anikita Ivanovich Repnin (1668-1726), general field marshal and Peter's comrade-in-arms. On 26 July 1726 Bach wrote to him asking about a possible position at the Russian court.[76] Similarly, W. A. Mozart, exhausted by the uncertainties of his freelance existence, in 1791 had authorized count Andrey Razumovsky, Russian ambassador in Vienna, to start negotiations with prince Grigory Potyomkin about his possible appointment in Russia.[77]

Among the other mentioned factors, notably close to the turn of the century, the increasing development of national consciousness emerges, and finds expression in all fields of culture, including music theatre. This phenomenon has not been stressed enough at this stage, partly because of the scant attention paid to such seemingly secondary factors as the language in which performances were staged, or the use of musical folklore.

Associated to an important debate about the codification of the literary language as an instrument of national self-identification, the practice of staging foreign operas in Russian translation appears as one of the main means of appropriation and revisiting of the European performances. With regard to this, too, an attempt to retrace the history of theatre in Russia (by the end of this work I will freely call it 'Russian theatre') also seemed justified in order to clarify (when possible) the aspect of which language was used in performances. As I will often underline in the work, confusion emerges from the use of both ancient sources and secondary literature in referring to operas quoting their titles in the language of the writer, instead of that of the author, or of the text. As we shall see,

[75] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 37.
[76] *ibidem*. Erdmann's reply is not known.
[77] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 1, R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, *L'époque glorieuse de Catherine II (1762-1796)*, Genève, Mont-Blanc 1951, p. 466.

librettos were published in several languages, and if for the activity of the first troupes of Italians it is easy to answer to the question of the language of staging, that becomes harder when it comes to the activity of theatres in Catherine's time. Mooser with regard to this does not help, with his habit of recording almost all titles in French, specifying, but not always, whether the title is a translation or not, or in which language they were originally staged, and omitting their original titles. On the other hand, Russian and Soviet sources usually give titles in Russian, also when referring to foreign works, independent of the language used in the performance. The consequent problem, which can seem trivial at first, becomes crucial in a context where translation was one of the strongest means of appropriation of foreign models. In the last quarter of the 18th century in Russia every troupe (Russian or foreign) staged works that belonged to their 'national' repertoire, but also to others, works that could be originals (foreign or Russian), translations, or remakes. The identification of some of the quoted works proved to be sometimes beyond my possibilities, and possibly lost indefinitely. It is not a lavish question when it comes to re-establishing continuity of evolution in music theatre, when the traditional handbooks' vision can be roughly summarized in 'activity of the Italians until the sudden advent of The Russian genius', with the consequent, inevitable question about how much Italian and how much Russian there was in each single work (for the solution of this issue, see the Conclusions). The identification of the 'originals' and the study of the process of appropriation through the practice of translation, which in the literature of the time had received a full theorization, was thus among the main purposes of the present research.

On the other hand, the mentioned reference to folk music, which was one of the foundations of the Russian school of the late *Ottocento*, appears to have been ample before that time. Certainly the use of the folklore was different, but the recourse to it in order to embody a National culture in opposition to the idea of importing of foreign models, demonstrates the unsuitability of the traditional historiographical model. Since my work took origin from the statement of the inefficacy of the recalled historiographical model, while putting Russian experiences in relation to those affecting the European musical milieu I have tried to keep that old model in mind, just in order to demonstrate which were the aspects of its inefficiency. That is not to be considered as just discussing, again, Russian music exclusively according to specific categories like folksong and *narodnost'* (nationality), as previously said.

Manifestations of growing national consciousness emerge in this phase in music theatre, in strict connection with the literary world and spoken theatre. Another issue is

whether these experiences were successful from an artistic point of view, a question I did not apply to.

With regard to one last possible aspect, an updated interpretation of facts also leads the possibility, more attractive for the Italian musicologists, of reconstructing the particular reception of Italian opera in Russia, an aspect that emerges as active and strongly characterized, reserving interesting perspectives of examination.

Some Notes on Methodology

This three-and a half-year research was carried out within the doctoral programme in Storia e critica dei beni artistici, musicali e dello spettacolo (History and criticism of the visual arts, music and performing arts) at the Department of Visual Arts and Music, University of Padua. Over these three and a half years, I spent two main periods in Russia, studying and collecting documents for the project. The first, three-month long, was spent at the Russian Institute of Art History of Saint Petersburg, which gave me the possibility to visit the main libraries of the city, such as the Russian National Library (RNB), the Library of the Conservatory "N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov", the library of the Russian Institute of Art History (RIII), the library of the Mariinsky theatre (former TsMB), the Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN), the library of the Institute of Russian Literature (IRLI, Pushkinsky dom), the Theatrical library (SPTB) and the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA).

My second stay was in Moscow, where I was housed at the State Institute of Russian Language "A. S. Pushkin", which allowed me to spend a longer period (from November 2010 up to June 2011) in the city, attending such institutions as the Russian State Library (RGB), the State Public Historical Library (GPIB), the library and the manuscript section of the "A. A. Bakhrushin" State Central Theatre Museum, the archive of the Ostankino Palace and Museum (OM) and the library of the M. I. Glinka Museum of Musical Culture (TsGMMK).

Not all the sources I collected were included in the present work, since some of them were intended for its previously mentioned extension. Operatic librettos, collections of folksongs, manuscript or printed music scores as well as periodicals of the time feature among the main sources used in this work, which were indicated throughout the text.

The present work is organized in three chapters, each committed to the reign of the sovereigns Anna Ioannovna, Elizabeth Petrovna and Catherine II (which also includes the

reign of Paul I) respectively. From time to time have tried to present the main troupes acting in each single period, their repertoire, and eventual observations related to the main topic. As for the information about historical facts recalled, I did not considered necessary to indicate the sources when it came to facts of general renown, relying on the general bibliography, as opposed to cases of personal interpretations of single historians.

The choice of writing the present work in English was aimed at the diffusion of its results, referring in particular to English-speaking countries, where there is more interest in the history of Russian/Soviet music nowadays than in Italy. English, being the most widely spoken language in academic circles in most countries, will render the work more accessible to anyone who might be interested in it. English not being my second language, it has taken a great effort on my part to fulfil this purpose, and I sincerely hope the reader will forgive any linguistic imperfections in the text. The same is to be considered when it comes to translations into English, which I included for tha sake of the non-Russian speaker. Where not indicated, they must be considered my translations, made with an exclusively 'utilitarian' aim, deprived of any artistic ambitions, especially in relation to translated verses.

Transliteration from Russian

As an Italian speaker writing in English about Russian topics, I found myself faced with the problem of translitering Russian words in the correct form, which is not the same for speakers of different languages, and for their relative scientific worlds.

Writing in English, I chose to follow, for homogeneity's sake, the transliteration system of this language, and in particular to follow the transliteration table presented by Terras in his *Handbook of Russian Literature*, which is usually considered an authoritative source.[78]

For the reader's convenience, please find below Terras's transliteration table added to which is the corresponding transliteration recognized by the Italian academic system, as can be found in the most recent handbooks of Russian language:[79]

[78] *Handbook of Russian Literature*, edited by V. Terras, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1985.
[79] In particular, I refer to C. CEVESE, JU. DOBROVOL'SKAJA, E. MAGNANINI, *Grammatica russa* (Russian grammar), Milano, Editore Ulrico Hoepli 1999, which is used at the Venice University Ca' Foscari, where I did my studies in Russian Language and Literature.

Cyrillic	Terras's transliteration	Italian academic system[80]
А а	A a	A a
Б б	B b	B b
В в	V v	V v
Г г	G g	G g
Д д	D d	D d
Е е	E e	E e
Ё ё	Yo yo	Ë ë
Ж ж	Zh zh	Ž ž
З з	Z z	Z z
И и	I i	I i
Й й	I i[81]	J j
К к	K k	K k
Л л	L l	L l
М м	M m	M m
Н н	N n	N n
О о	O o	O o
П п	P p	P p
Р р	R r	R r
С с	S s	S s
Т т	T t	T t
У у	U u	U u
Ф ф	F f	F f
Х х	Kh kh	Ch ch
Ц ц	Ts ts	C c (or Ts ts)
Ч ч	Ch ch	Č č
Ш ш	Sh sh	Š š
Щ щ	Shch shch	Šč šč
ъ	„[82]	„
ы	y	y
ь	’[83]	’
Э э	E e	E e
Ю ю	Yu yu	Ju ju
Я я	Ya ya	Ja ja

In some cases I decided to indicate tonic accent to facilitate the not always simple pronunciation of Russian words to this transliteration marks. Since the Russian language does not foresee tonic accents in its orthography, they are to be understood as an additional element for the reader.

Note on Dates

Dates in Russian documents are given as they appear in the originals, according to the Julian calendar practiced in Russia from 1700 to 1 February 1918. The so-called *Stary*

[80] C. CEVESE, JU. DOBROVOL'SKAJA, E. MAGNANINI, *Grammatica russa…*, p. 33.
[81] According to Terras, the adjectival endings *–yi* and *–ii* are rendered by *–y* in the English text: *maly* instead of *malyi*, *Dostoevsky* instead of *Dostoevskii*. Cfr. *Handbook of Russian Literature…*, p. xix.
[82] According to Terras, the "hard sign" is usually rendered by a y in the English text. *ibidem*.
[83] According to Terras, the "soft sign" is usually omitted in proper names in the English text. *ibidem*.

stil' ('Old style') lagged behind the Gregorian calendar ('New style') eleven days in the 18th century and twelve days in the 19th.

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In my choice to write this dissertation in English, I had to recur to linguistic experts who helped me in presenting a correct text, editing it with care, patience and generosity: among these, I would like to thank my tutor Professor Sergio Durante, Eleonora Morelli, Sara Gesuato, Paola Taffarello, Stephen Trollip.

My partner Davide has assisted me in innumerable ways; whatever I might say here cannot do full justice to the extent and the value of his contribution.

Chapter I - Russia and Opera: Making Acquaintance

This work will focus on the main positions that Russian rulers took with regard to the country identity, particularly in relation to the rest of Europe, from the rise of the issue to the end of the period we are considering. As declared in the introduction to this script, the period of time under consideration for this study starts in the early 1730s, that is, with the beginning of the reign of Empress Anna Ioannovna.

As known, the Empress succeeded Peter I, whose rule (1682-1725) had been characterized by a forced Westernization of the state structures, country landscapes and the daily life of its population (the Russian *byt*); the change can be easily identified also by comparing Peter's portrait with the portrait of his predecessor, his father Aleksey Mikhaylovich.[1]

Peter is known to have issued about 3.000 laws and decrees (*ukazy*), leading reforms in every aspect of the life of his people. Starting from the state structures, he replaced the traditional *Boyarskaya duma* (the representative assembly of the nobility) with the Senate, to which he himself invited the most valuable members; he also eliminated the *Zemsky sobor* (Russian assembly of the land), replaced such offices as *Prikazy* with *Kollegii* (Collegia), and organized all subjects without exceptions in the notorious table of ranks (*Tabel' o rangakh*).

As far as the more visible aspects of citizens' life are concerned, Peter I led the reform of the calendar and revolutionized the exterior look, forbidding, for instance, to wear the Russian national dress in cities, and forcing aristocrats to wear the European clothing, which he himself indicated.[2] In social relations he changed familiar traditions and

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[1] With regard to the pre-petrine period, the Italian slavist Antonella D'Amelia claims: "An atmosphere of monasticism suppresses the everyday existence in 17th-century Russia. Clergy and Tsars impose to the population an almost monastic life, the ban of any form of amusement. In 1648 strict edicts are sent to every Russian city to be solemny read in churches on Sunday and in markets in the fair's days: they order not to sing in squares, streets or fields, not to congregate to watch shows, not to dance, not to clap hands, not to tune choruses, that is to renounce to all those popular entertainements that Church considers as the remnants of pagan superstitions." ("Una coltre di monachesimo soffoca l'esistenza quotidiana in Russia nel XVII secolo. La Chiesa e gli zar impongono alla popolazione un regime quasi monastico di vita, il divieto di ogni forma di divertimento. Nel 1648 severi editti sono inviati in tutte le città della Russia per essere solennemente letti nelle chiese la domenica e nei mercati nei giorni di fiera: vi si ingiunge di non cantare nelle piazze, nelle vie o nei campi, di non adunarsi a guardar spettacoli, di non ballare, di non battere le mani, di non intonare cori, di rinunciare cioè a tutti quegli svaghi popolari che la Chiesa considera residui di superstizioni pagane."), A. D'AMELIA, *Un rito spettacolare: la festa da ballo in Russia tra Settecento e Ottocento* (A spectacular rite: the ball in Russia between 18th and 19th centuries), in *Europa Orientalis* 19 (2000): 2, p. 67.

[2] It is interesting to note that this rule regarded only the cities' inhabitants, ignoring on the contrary countrymen and members of the Clergy. This difference was, among others, one of the factors that caused that detachment between city and country, that was to play so important a role in the 19th century in

introduced new rules of behaviour - on this topic he even prescribed *Yunosti chestnoe zertsalo* (The true mirror of youth), the acceptable behacious of youth in public - and started from 1690 the so called *assamblei*, organized social gatherings, with music and dances.[3] Peter decided that all children of noble birth should receive some early education,[4] both religious and laic: a decree imposing compulsory education (1714), new schools (of mathematics, artillery, engineering, navy, medicine), the opening of the first public library, the first museum (*Kunstkamera*), the Academy of sciences in 1725, and the first newspaper, *Vedomosti* (Gazette) are the results of this policy.

To affirm the superiority of state authorities over the Church, he created the Saint Synod, a Minister that dealt with the Church affairs; this implied the shift from a religious to a prophane cultural frame of mind (for instance, the development of prophane art comparing to the previous exclusively sacred art).

He also initiated the tradition of inviting foreign educators for children, including music and dance teachers; he was the first to send young Russian artists to Italy, e. g. the first prophane painter of the Russian history, Ivan Nikitin. From Italy he also bought several art objects, starting to accumulate what was later to be the collection of the Hermitage. Desiring to gain to Russia an access to the sea, he led the long Northern war with Sweden (1700-1721), and in 1703 founded at the extreme northern periphery of the country the city of Saint Petersburg; the city was built according to the contemporary European style (the Russian baroque of Domenico Trezzini), as its founder wanted it to be on equal to the other European capital cities. At the end of the Northern war Peter transformed Russia into an Empire, receiving the title of Emperor in 1721, and therefore wanted it to become a country that could stay side by side with the main European powers.

A different interpretation has been given to the Westernization that characterized the rule of Peter I's successor, Anna Ioannovna. Daughter of Peter's half-brother Ioann V, Anna was put on the throne with the support of princes Dolgorùky, who did not approve the rule of Aleksandr Menshchikov, who was behind the short reign of Catherine I (1725-1727) and Peter II (1727-1730). Having spent most of her life (from 1710) in Mitau, Courland, before settling down in Russia, and speaking no fluent Russian, Anna had

particular when aristocrats re-discovered the lost Russian habits through the people that, remaining freer from European influence, had preserved the "authentic" Russian manners (*nravy*).

[3] With this regard D'Amelia recalls the instructions Peter I gave for the organization of these new forms of sociality. A. D'AMELIA, *Un rito spettacolare…*, pp. 67-102. See also M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, p. 36.

[4] With this regard he promulgated the *Ukaz o nedoroslykh* (Order about minors), a law according to which young people before getting married had to pass an exam confirming their instruction.

agreed to the conditions imposed by this much influent family of boyars, thus promising not to take decisions without a previous consultation with the Dolgorùkys themselves. After her ascension, she nevertheless breached this contract, sent the members of Dolgorùky family into exile in Siberia and started ruling the country with the support of a group of German leaders led by Ernst Johann Bühren (Birón in the Russian version). Bühren was the duke of Courland and Senigallia (1737). Although married to Benigna Gottlieb von Trotha Treyden since 1723, he became Anna's secretary and lover, and finally at Anna's elevation to the throne, he went to Moscow to become grand chamberlain and count of the Empire. Although he did not occupy any official position in the government, he is known to have been the real behind-the-scene ruler of the Empire.[5]

Bühren's behaviour soon made him unpopular with Russians of all classes. During his rule, his enemies and rivals were swept away, while poor people were ground down by taxation. He is said to have caused over 1.000 executions, while the number of persons exiled by him to Siberia is estimated between 20.000 to 40.000. As an administrator, however, he showed considerable ability, and maintained order in the Empire.

Because of Bühren mistrust in Russian courtiers, Anna appointed "his" German people to the most influent state offices, inaugurating a period of foreign rule that offended the most prominent Russian aristocrats. The reign was thus opened to any foreign cultural stimulus, as long as it had no Catholic or Roman inprint.[6] Hence, Anna's reign became famous as *Birónovshchina* (or "German yoke", with reference to the Mongolian one), the suffix *–shchina* imparting a negative connotation to the word. In fact, the choice of letting Western models shape the life of the country resulted in the opposition of the aristocracy excluded from power. In Richard Wortman's interpretation, while Peter had ensured non-Russians's subservience, Anna Ioannovna violated the patriotic feelings of the nobility.[7]

One of the most remarkable results of the period of the *Birónovshchina* was the

[5] Born as Ernst Johann Bühren (23/13 November 1690 – 29/18 December 1772) in Kalnciems (Courland), he was the grandson of a groom in the service of Jacob Kettler, duke of Courland, who bestowed upon him a small estate, which Bühren's father inherited and where Bühren himself was born. He received some education at the academy of Königsberg, from which he was expelled for riotous conduct. In 1714 he set out to seek his fortune in Russia, and unsuccessfully solicited a place at the court of the Princess Charlotte of Brunswick-Lüneburg, the consort of the Tsarevich Aleksey Petrovich. Returning to Mitau, he succeeded in gaining a footing at court there through one of his sisters, who was the fancy of the ruling minister, Pyotr Bestuzhev. Bühren's mistress was the young duchess Anna Ioannovna. During his patron's absence, Bühren, a handsome, insinuating fellow, succeeded in supplanting him in the favour of Anna, and procuring the disgrace and banishment of Bestuzhev and his family. From this time to the end of the duchess's life, Bühren's influence over her was paramount.

[6] L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'illuminismo e la steppa, Settecento russo, Seconda edizione con antologia poetica* (The Enlightenment and the steppe, Russian 18th century, Second edition with poetic anthology), Roma, Edizioni Studium 1994, p. 63.

[7] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power: myth and ceremony in Russian monarchy: from Peter the Great to the abdication of Nicholas 2*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2006, p. 42.

change in attitude towards Peter the Great. Anna continued on Peter's footsteps; however, she was seen as lacking in motivation and her choices as devoid of well-grounded reasons. As Hans Rogger outlines, Anna's time protests against foreigners and their role in Russia were no longer automatically synonymous of the critique towards Peter's modernization and reforms (Peter also did had opposers who had appealed to a nationalism *ante litteram*). On the contrary, the protests could be made in his name and in defence of his ideals. Foreigners were attacked now not as innovators but as perpetrators of backwardness and Russian dependence on the West.[8] Peter emerged as the founder of Russia's greatness and strength, threatened by people coming from abroad, who were invalidating his achievements. As will be explained later (Chap. II – Elizabeth Petrovna), this task was faced by Peter's natural heir, his daughter Elizabeth. These are amongst the reasons underlying Anna's reputation as a coarse and ignorant woman, a puppet in the hands of German politicians, someone who dealt with anything but the real Russian interests; her reign is considered as a down time in the history of Russia.

Nonetheless, at Anna's death, Russia had made its entrance in the European political scene, and was considered a European country, as it was in Peter I's ambitions. As a ruler of such an Empire, Anna decided to epmphasize Russia's political power through the splendour of her court. From this viewpoint, it is worth evaluating the first impact in Russia of the performing art that characterized European courts at that time: Italian opera.

The First Italian Troupe in Moscow

Opera made its entrance in Russian territory at the beginning of the fourth decade of the 18th century,[9] which represents the chronological starting point for this study. The

[8] See H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1960, pp. 32-3.

[9] Attempts to establish a theatrical activity in Russia had been made also before, but evidently without success. Peter I had ordered the construction of a public theatre of the Red Square, became an instrument which of political propaganda and social progress. To direct it he had invited the German Johann Kunst, who was replaced by his countryman Otto Fürst at his death in 1703. Its repertoire included contemporary French and German plays, Molière's comedies and Russian sacred 'school dramas'. They received also the task to teach to Russian actors. The theatre, however, had a short life, closing up in 1706. When the Court moved to St. Petersburg in 1720 another attempt to create a permanent theatre was made by some actors. In the same year Peter requested Yaguzhinsky to find in Prague a troupe of comediants who could speak 'Slavian', that is Czech. Between 1720 and 1730 some German troupes arrived, and in 1728-29 a French troupe made a tour, already during Peter II's rule. See M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa (1731-1738)* (Italian comedies and comic actors at the Russian court (1731-1738)), Roma, Bulzoni Editore 2000, pp. 82-7. See also M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny: prolog "Rossiya po pechali paki obradovannaya" i opera-seria "Miloserdie Tita"* (Theatrical celebrations for the coronation of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna: the prologue *Afflicted and Comforted Russia* and the opera seria *Titus's Clemency*), in *Okkazional'naya literatura v kontekste prazdnichnoy kul'tury XVIII*

actors who formed the first permanent troupes in Russia came from the court of Dresden, of the king of Poland Augustus II the Strong, Elector of Saxony as Frederick Augustus I. Although staying in Dresden where he had his main residence, from January to June Frederick Augustus used to move to Warsaw with a part of the Court. This is why the first actors arrived from Warsaw, even though belonging to the court of Dresden. There, the King had at his disposal an orchestra and a cappella of great renown, and five troupes: an Italian and a French opera troupe, a group of Italian actors and another of French, and a corps de ballet.

The Italian slavist Maria Luisa Ferrazzi has reconstructed the negotiations that led to the engagement of the first group of actors. Their arrival was realized through the mediation of Baron Le Fort, Russian ambassador to Saxony, and the general procurer of the Senate Pavel Ivanovich Yaguzhinsky, who had been ambassador to Poland in 1726, and the great chancellor, marshal Reinhold von Loewenwolde. The project was to have a permanent troupe at Court. The company arrived in Moscow on 15 February 1731, as the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskiya vedemosti* (Saint Petersburg gazette) announced.[10] It was directed by the over seventy-year-old Tommaso Ristori. The old age of the troupe director supports Mooser's idea, according to which Frederick Augustus accepted Anna's request to send to Moscow the eldest actors, who had worked at his court since 1690, in order to renew his own personnel.[11]

The company reached the Court on the last days of August 1731.[12] The correspondence of Baron Le Fort[13] gives us in detail the list of its components: six singers, nine musicians, a copyist and a poet and director. Some of them were Italian, as in the case of the castrato Giovanni Dreyer and his brother Domenico, an oboist of Florentine origin, Giuseppe Avolio (or Avorio, Avoglio), who was the husband of Cristina-Maria Croumann (Graumann) Avolio, primadonna of the troupe.[14]

Although Vsevolod Vsevolodsky-Gerngross affirms that it had been an operatic troupe,[15] it actually consisted of actors of *commedia dell'arte*, joined by some musicians.

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veka (Occasional literature in the context of festive culture of 18th century), edited by P. Bukharkin, U. Ekuch and N. Kochetkova, Sankt-Peterburg, Filologichesky fakul'tet Sankt-Peterburgskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 2010, pp. 311-24.

[10] No. 16 dating 18/29 February. M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 23.

[11] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIIIme siècle*, I, *Des origines à la mort de Pierre III (1762)*, Genève, Mont-Blanc 1948, p. 43.

[12] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 41.

[13] Letter to Lagnasco, 10 September 1731, M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 41.

[14] See M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 42 n.

[15] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche* (The theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Anna Ioannovna and Ioann Antonovich), in

Indeed, the troupe staged mostly comedies in prose in the spirit of the Italian *improvvisa*, which were often centred on the protagonist's mask (Pantalone, Arlecchino, Brighella, Scaramuccia, Rosetta), as usual in the late 17th century, with much more attention to the roles than to the plots. It was the case of pieces in which spoken dialogues were alternated with sung passages; the characters developed a simple love affair, or sometimes an everyday (*bytovoy*) anecdote. The texts included two or three scenes, usually based on the relationship between a young and beautiful woman, endowed with keenness and astuteness, and an old man, awkward and ridiculous, easy prey of the cunning coquetry of the antagonist. Compared to those of the *commedia dell'arte*, the number of characters was considerably reduced (usually no more than one *buffo* and one *buffa*), and the comic tricks seemed much less coarse.[16] The troupe staged popular subjects, and farcical re-elaborations of literary works, including some suggestions coming from Calderón and Tirso de Molina. Only the titles of the main works are preserved, nearly all in French translations.[17]

The tour lasted through the end of the year, the performances becoming progressively less frequent also because of the death of Anna's mother, Praskov'ya Fyodorovna, or possibly due to the arrival to Moscow of a group of singers and musicians engaged in Germany by the Empress's music teacher, the *Kapellmeister* Johann Hübner,[18] which gave momentum to the musical entertainment.[19]

In the same year in fact, an orchestra had been engaged, which arrived in Saint Petersburg following the duke Karl Ulrich von Holstein-Gottorp, Peter future son-in-law, who reached Russia to marry the granduchess Anna Petrovna, Peter I's daughter and the future mother of Peter III.[20] Together with the musicians in Ristori's troupe, the artists who arrived with Hübner formed an instrumental ensemble of high stature. Even if yet unable to

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Ezhegodnik imperatorskikh teatrov (Yearbook of the Imperial Theatres), III-IV, Sank-Peterburg, 1914, pp. 7-9.

[16] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 39 n.

[17] The most reliable sources on this topic are Sipovsky and Peretts, while the formers (Arapov, Morozov, Grech, Karabanov, Petrov) contain several mistakes. *ivi*, p. 20. As for the scenarios, Ferrazzi collects the following ones: *L'inganno fortunato*, *Le Cocu imaginaire* (possibly *Arlequin cocu imaginaire*, Paris, 1716), *Pantalon désabusé* (or *Pantalon interrompu dans ses amours*), *Arlequin prince feint* (possibly the comedy *Arlequin cru prince par magie*. Hôtel de Bourgogne, 1716), *Pantalon petit-maître*, *L'Amant trahi* (possibly *Lelio et Arlequin valets dans la même maison*), *Rosetta jardinière ou la Comtesse de Tortone*, *Arlequin maître d'école*, *La dame démon et la servante diable* (possibly *Arlequin persécutée par la dame invisible*, Paris, 1716), *Arlequin marchand d'esclaves ou d'Etourdy*, *Le festin de Pierre*, *Scaramouches armes et bagages*, *Pantalon apothicaire*, *Scaramouche magicien (ou sorcier) par plaisir*, *Les disgrâces d'Arlequin circoncis*, *Scaramouche jardinier* (possibly *Le Jardinier. L'Ortolande*, Paris, 1716), *L'Amant lunatique*, *Franca Trippa*, *Scaramouche musicien sophistiqué et maître à danser*, *Scènes comiques*, *Marlin dragon*, *Arlequin statue*, *Les tapisseries de France*. M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, pp. 112-24.

[18] Johann Hübner, talented violinist, was born in Warsaw in 1696. He came to Russia in 1721 following the Austrian ambassador count Kinsky.

[19] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 41.

[20] *ivi*, p. 42 n.

stage opera *seria*,[21] the troupe had the merit of staging the first Italian opera ever produced in Russia, the "commedia per musica" *Calandro*[22] on a libretto by Stefano Benedetto Pallavicino set to music by Giovanni Alberto Ristori.

Premiered in Pillnitz (near Dresden), on 2 September 1726, to celebrate the return of the Prince Elector of Saxony from Warsaw, it was restaged in Moscow on 30 November (11 Dec.) 1731, on occasion of the annual festivity of Saint Andrew's order.[23] Two letters testify this event. The first is a letter that Le Fort sent to Count Lagnasco on 10 December 1731:

> Moscoù le 10^{e} Decbr. 1731
> Mercredy passé on a celebré ici la Fete de Ste. Catherine, joùr de nom de Mad^{e} la Dùchesse de Mecklenboùrg… L'apresdiné il y eùt Galla à la Cour, Concert et Soùppé.
> Demain noùs avons la Fere de St. André, où toùs les Chevaliers de cet Ordre paroitront dans l'habit institùé, avec le Colier, l'apresdiné il y aùra la representation de la Pastorale de Calandro, de la composition dù Maitre de Chapelle de V. M. Ristori. L'on est apres à faire la derniere repetition. Le voyage de Petersboùrg reste fixé à s'y troùver le 19^{e} Janvier V.S. Les eqùipages de la Coùr commencent à defiler.[24]

The second letter, also registered by Mooser, was written by Le Fort on 17 December 1731:

> Moscoù le 17e Xbre 1731
> […] L'apresdiné l'on representa poùr la derniere piece de Theatre la Pastorale de Calandro de la composition dù Maitre de Chapelle de V. M. Ristori.
> …Dans ùne coùple de joùrs l'on reglera le depart des Mùsiciens et Comediens qù'il a plû à V. M. de

[21] *ibidem*

[22] Tommaso Ristori's son Giovanni Alberto (Bologna (?), 1692 - Dresden, 1753) had accompanied his father when he had been engaged by the elector Friedrich August I at the Saxon court in December 1715. In 1717 he was appointed composer of the Italian comic theatre managed by his father. At the same time he became director of the *cappella polacca*. In Dresden he had his first opera for the court, *Cleonice* (17 August 1718). Being responsible, together with Heinichen and Zelenka, for the curch services at the Saxon court, he composed several masses, motets, litanies and other liturgical pieces. His opera *Calandro* was followed by another Italian comedy in 1727, *Un pazzo ne fa cento, ovvero Don Chisciotte*. After his short visit in Russia, he went to Warsaw, where Augustus II was residing. With the death of the king in 1733, Giovanni Alberto was temporarily demoted to the rank of chamber organist with a reduced salary, that he later secceeded to increase. With the imposition of Hasse's opera *seria*, he continued composing liturgical works and operas such as *Le fate*, performed on 10 August 1736, and *Arianna* for the Elector's birthday on 7 October 1736. His pasticcio *Didone abbandonata* was staged at Covent Garden, London, on 13 April 1737, while his *Temistocle* and *Adriano in Siria* were given in 1738 and 1739 respectively at S. Carlo, Naples, where he must have accompanied the Saxon princess Maria Amalia for her marriage to Charles III, King of the Two Sicilies. By 1744 he had returned to Dresden, where he composed liturgical works that earned him the appointment as court *Kirchenkomponist* in 1746. In 1750 he was named vice-*Kapellmeister* under Hasse. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by S. Sadie, London, Macmillan Publishers 2001, vol. 21, pp. 443-5.

[23] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 42 n., A. LOEWENBERG, *Annals of Opera: 1597-1940, Compiled from the Original Sources by Alfred Loewenberg*, edited by E. J. Dent, Genéve, Societas Bibliographica 1955, R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 81.

[24] *Lettres et copies de relations de M^{r} Le Fort à Moscoù et à Pétersbourg à M^{r} le C^{te} de Lagnasc. 1730-1732*, N. 58 Copie, quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 378. The trascription is by R. – A. Mooser.

> se rendre à cette Coùr. Il a apparance qùe le Violon Verokay et ViolonCello Janesky, qùi ne sont pas aù gage de V. M. poùrront etre retenùs icy en Service. [25]

This comic *pastorale*, in three acts, is based on the comedy *Il Calandro* by Bernardo Dovizi, who in turn had borrowed elements of the plot from Plautus's *Menaechmi* and the character of the eponimous hero, the cynic misanthropist Calandro (bass), from Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

The action takes place in Tempe, a valley in Thessaly.[26] According to Steffen Seiferling,

> Pallavicini's intention in choosing Tempe as his backdrop and shepherds as his protagonists was twofold. Firstly, his choice serves as a reflection on the site of Schloß Pillnitz itself, just outside the gates of Dresden: the *Licenza* specifically compares the Valley of Tempe with the Valley of the Elbe. Secondly, it draws the work into the genre of *Pastorale*; indeed, the opera is named as such at the end of the score.[27]

Anyway, the reason of the choice of this play for the Russian court possibly lies in another, unusual, character: a bear, with whom Calandro associates. The prototype of most comic figure in the opera, the philosopher who falls in love and becomes ridiculous, is Aristotle, who was taken for a ride by Aspasia, becoming a highly popular topic in the Middle Ages and in Venetian opera of the 17th century.[28] Calandro left the city and tried his luck in the country together with his bear, which he wanted to educate as a man; in the city it was impossible to educate the true beast, Man, because no one wanted to follow his philosophy. Despite his initial reputation as a virtuous, he will finally be unmasked as a hypocrite and traitor to his own self-proclaimed moral code.

The comedy's text is written in verses, not always presenting rhyme and with irregular length; arias are more regular, of which only one (Licisco's "Rallegrati omai"[29]) is repeated.

A shepherd has reported to Nearco (contralto) that a bear is disturbing the peace and safety of the valley. The action begins with Nearco going out to hunt with his friend Agide (soprano), who hides under the fake name of the shepherd Licisco; this disguise is prompted by his unrequited love for the shepherdess Timea, for whose sake he had left his

[25] *ivi*, N. 59 Copie, p. 378. The trascription is by R. – A. Mooser.
[26] [B. PALLAVICINO], *Calandro*, *Commedia per musica*, MDCCXXVI. A version of the libretto is preserved at the Marciana Library, in Venice.
[27] S. SEIFERLING, *Calandro – Commedia per musica*, booklet of the CD *Batzdorfer Hofkapelle Giovanni Alberto Ristori Calandro Commedia per musica Eine Oper Für Pillnitz*, Kammerton 1997, transl. G. McDonald, p. 6.
[28] *ivi,* p. 7.
[29] [B. PALLAVICINO], *Calandro*, *Commedia per musica*…, p. 55.

betrothed Clizia (contralto) in the capital city.

Just in the moment when the shepherds are springing at the beast, whom Calandro defends, Nearco's father Alceste (tenor) stops the action having recognized the philosopher and hoping to convince him to become his son's tutor. The philosopher decides to delay his departure.

Clizia, who has gone mad over the loss of her fiancé Agide, comes to Licisco in pilgrim's clothes, but does not recognise him. The first act ends with her lament.

In the second act, Calandro complains with king Alceste about how badly he was received by the Thessalean people, blaming their fear of the bear. Aware of the hypocrisy of the philosopher, Nearco decides to flout him: when Clizia asks him for her lover, he convinces her that Calandro is her longed-for Agide. In her madness she believes that a magical rival has transformed him, and rips out his beard accusing him of disguising in vain, complaining for him being victim of a charm.

By night, Clizia comes to the same place where Agide is. When she appears by the light of her torch, insane as she is ("con chioma sciolta, e fiaccola in mano", she evokes Ecate when hearing Agide's voice), Licisco imagines that she is a ghost, and is prepared to do anything to give her a peaceful rest ("Renditi al tuo riposo"[30]). In turn, Clizia can only hear Licisco's voice, as the man is too far to be seen, and tries to conjure her lover back to his former state. The act finishes with their duet.

In the last act, Calandro has searched the entire valley in dispair for his bear (aria "Son rifinito, son trafelato"[31]). When the shepherds arrive next to a cave, Calandro, exhausted from searching, sinks into a deep sleep. Licisco would escape from the roaring beast, but Nearco explains that he has kept it in the cave. Anxious to persuade Calandro to leave Thessaly (aria "Caprio snello appena giunge"[32]), Nearco disguises the bear as a woman by putting on it Clizia's smock, and lays it down by the sleeping philosopher.

Waking up, the philosopher would rather run away from the presumed woman, marriage being contrary to his misanthropic ideals, but he is held back by a kind of 'sympathy':

> Che sì, che vuol la sorte
> La perdita dell'Orso
> Compensarmi così,
> E mi sostituì
> Più gentile animal per compagnia.

[30] *ivi*, p. 48.
[31] *ivi*, p. 50.
[32] *ivi*, p. 53.

Usa il Saggio la sorte. O simpatia![33]

Alceste, charged by Licisco to persuade Clizia to resign, arrives with the young woman. He thus understands that Calandro is all but wise, and chases away the beast. When Clizia, finally comes to her senses and can see the true Agide, he finds back his reciprocal feelings, declares himself under his true name Timea is joined with Nearco. Calandro and Alceste are pleased with this outcome: "Spettatori, / Finita è la Commedia, ed il discorso; / S'altro ballo non v'è, ballerà l'Orso."[34]

The Second Italian Troupe in Saint Petersburg

When Ristori's troupe left Russia (with the exception of the cellist Gasparo Janeschi and violinists Giovanni Verocai and Bindi), Hübner's musicians continued their activity through the whole 1732. The same year the Empress gave orders to the violinist from Hamburg, Johann Kayser (later replaced by Hübner), to engage a new company.[35] The circumstances of this engagement are not clear, but the arrival seems to have taken place at the beginning of the summer 1733.[36] This second group of musicians, seemingly larger than the former, included the violinists Luigi and Antonio Madonis, and the actors Pietro Mira, also a violinist, and Pietro Pertici, also a singer. This troupe was probably dissolved in the autumn of the following year.

Their activity is witnessed by the presence of the scenarios, whose *perechen'* (summary, or 'argomento') were translated in Russian or German, for the sake of better comprehension. According to Ferrazzi, the scenarios staged in Russia in 1733-34 preserve the two fundamental elements of the *commedia dell'arte*: on the one hand the conventional sentimentalism expressed in the lovers' long tirades, sighs, and young maidens' bows and such gestures as the rapid opening or closing of doors and windows; on the other hand, the

[33] *ivi*, p. 59.
[34] *ivi*, p. 70. The final chorus "Lentar al riso il freno" is followed by a "LICENZA", according to which is possible to collocate the production at the Court of Frederick II: "Gioa non ebbe mai luogo più giusto; / Dalle Sarmate, oimè lontane rive /Dopo lunga dimora (Vien FEDERIGO, e ci promette AUGUSTO. / Salutato da mille augei canori / Così Fosforo in Cielo il Sol previene. / Incontro Amor gli vola, e nell'aspetto, / Che sì bramò, del suo venire s'accerta; / E tal veste di Misnia i prati, e i colli / Beata primavera, /Che Tempe fora in paragon deserta. / Nostra gioia seguiamo; e faccia fede / D'un'allegrezza intera / Palma battuta a palma, / E canto, e suono, e sciolto in danze il piede. / Di zanne armate, / E voi leggiere /Fere – tremate, / Ecco ritorno / Fè il Cacciator. / Contro la prode / Illustre mano / Fia che soccorso / Vi porga in vano / Lena di corso, / Di selva orror." (Followed by the repetition of the final chorus,and a ballet). *ivi*, pp. 71-2.
[35] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 44.
[36] *ivi*, p. 18.

farce, the *bouffonnerie*.[37] In fact, considering the linguistic barrier, pantomime and *lazzi* were much used (as it had been for the Italians at the French court), and led to general, rumorous brawls that amused the Empress and her entourage.[38]

At the same time however, according to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross the theatre in Anna Ioannovna's Russia witnessed the fall of improvisation and the raise of literary text.[39] In these scenarios, the conventionality of the plots as it had already happened in Italy and France in the second half of the 17th century, and the masks represented in Russia did not correspond to fixed types only: their roles expanded and their functions became changeable, with different parts assigned to individual characters.[40] According to Ferrazzi:

> […] the logic that controlled the conception and staging of a performance that was itself shapeless and inconsequential as the original 'improvvisa' was, in the plays performed in Russia appears strongly darkened by the excessive insistence on obscenity and physical and verbal acrobatics. After all it is not surprising that in Russia, too, the *commedia dell'arte* reflected, when it did not stress, the condition of decline it had been experiencing since a long time in the West: as it had been observed in the matter of predominance of gestual over the verbal gest, the fact that they found themselves in front of an audience who not only did not understand Italian, but was almost unaware of the cultural reality in which the *improvvisa* had flourished, could only affect the scenic attitude of our [Italian] *comici*, forcing them to compensate the lack of adequate cultural equivalents with an exasperate exhaltation of the mimic element of the acting, finally deteriorating the fragile balance from which *improvvisa* had initially drawn its great appeal and its high artistic value.[41]

[37] *ivi*, p. 158.
[38] *ivi*, p. 157.
[39] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 28.
[40] Thus for instance Smeraldina, usually Harlequin's 'amorosa', is sometimes represented as Silvio's wife, or as Pantalon's of the Doctor's niece, or either sorceress or "queen of the spirits". With reference to this, Ferrazzi outlines the only episode of *sklonenie na russkie nravy* (adaptation to the Russian mores – see Chap. III –Part II - Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire) in these texts in a conversation between Smeraldina and Pantalone, in the play *Smeraldina Kikimora*: the heroine, posing as the daughter of a Muscovite Doctor in Medicine, invites Pantalone to a Russian dance. M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, pp. 151-2 n.
[41] "[…] quella logica che pure presiedeva all'ideazione e alla messa in scena di uno spettacolo di per sé informe e illogico qual era l'originaria "improvvisa", nelle *pièces* recitate in Russia sembra fortemente offuscata dall'eccessiva insistenza sulle oscenità e gli acrobatismi tanto fisici che verbali. Del resto che in Russia la commedia dell'arte riflettesse, se non addirittura accentuasse, lo stato di scadimento nel quale in Occidente versava ormai da tempo, non stupisce affatto: come si osservava nel particolare a proposito del predominio del lazzo gestuale su quello verbale, il fatto di trovarsi dinanzi ad un pubblico che non solo non capiva l'italiano, ma che era anche quasi totalmente ignaro della realtà culturale nella quale l' "improvvisa" era fiorita, non poteva non influire sul comportamento scenico dei nostri comici, forzandoli a compensare la carenza di adeguati equivalenti culturali con un'esasperata esaltazione dell'elemento mimico-gestuale del loro gioco recitativo e giungendo, infine, ad infrangere quel delicato equilibrio interno, dal quale inizialmente l' "improvvisa" stessa aveva tratto il suo grande fascino, nonché la sua alta qualità artistica." *ivi*, pp. 158-9.

The Third Italian Troupe in Saint Petersburg

In 1734 the actor and violinist Pietro Mira,[42] also known as Pedrillo, was asked to collect new musicians and singers to stage Italian operas and comedies at the Russian Court. A third Italian troupe was thus engaged, directly in Italy,[43] which the actor led in the summer of 1735, amounting approximately to fifty artists: musicians, singers, dancers, technicians (among these the scenographers Girolamo Bon and Carlo Gibelli) and actors.[44] The troupe engaged by Pietro Mira was more numerous than the previous ones, and included artists of opera, comedy, *intermezzi* and ballet. Some of them were the same who had entered Russia in 1733 and extended the contract to 1735, as the usual length of the contracts at that time was only two years.[45]

This is the main core of the 'Italian troupe' (*Ital'yanskaya kompaniya* in documents[46]) that was destined to endure till at least the 1760s: a theatrical body that was to originate in the future the more complex institution of the Imperial Theatres. This company gathered foreign troupes engaged by the Court and single artists, several of them being not Italian. Among the members, Mooser recalls the violinists Giovanni Verocai, Luigi Madonis (who had been in Russia since 1733), Giovanni Piantanida and Domenico

[42] Pietro Mira (Monte Scaglioso, Naples, after 1700 (?) – after 1782), studied violin in Vienna, and on 26 December 1725 was called to Palatine Chapel in Lucca. In 1733 he left this post to move to Russia, engaged by Johann Kayser for the court of Anna Ioannovna. Passing from Moscow to St. Petersburg Mira took part, as a singer, in the intermezzos which the Italian troupe often gave at the Winter Palace. According to Mooser, "Les contemporaines relatent, en effet, que Pietro Mira montrait, dans ces petits ouvrages si lestement tournés, une verve irrésistible qui déchaînait l'hilarité de tous les spectateurs. […] il farcissait le texte qu'il récitait de saillies indécentes, et le soulignait de jeux de physionomie et de gestes si impayables, qu'Anna Ivanovna, fort friande de cette sorte de plaisanteries, se prit pour lui d'une véritable affection et lui témoigna, tout aussitôt, une particulière bienveillance." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 277. So, succeeding in gaigning the Empress's favour as a buffoon, receiveing also commissions of particular trust for the sovereign herself, he was charged in 1735 to engage a new troupe directly in Italy, what he did founding the troupe which Araja was to direct. After Anna's death he requested the Court to be discharged, and came back to Italy, arriving to Venice in 1743. In 1747 he was in Dresden, where he sang in the theatre of the Prince Elector of Saxony. Later, he definitely settled down in Venice, where in 1775 he opened a hotel, which he possibly directed till the end of his life. The fate of Pietro Mira in Russia is reconstructed by Mooser in R. - A. MOOSER, *Violonistes-compositeurs italiens en Russie au XVIII^me^ siècle. III. Pietro Mira dit Pedrillo*, in *Rivista musicale italiana* (Italian journal of musicology), XLVI (1942), pp. 273-93.

[43] Details of the engagement and the engaged troupe are recorded in R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, pp. 119-21.

[44] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 51. V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, pp. 54-7. See also R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, where, however, the author is sometimes wrong.

[45] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny. Dokumental'naya khronika, 1730-1740* (Russian theatrical life at Anna Ioannovna's time. A documented chronicle, 1730-1740), vypusk I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Radiks 1995, p. 28. For this reason, it's not obvious to consider the two troupes that came to Russia as two diferrent: for instance, Alberto Basso considers them as a single troupe remaining in Russia up to 1735. See A. BASSO, *Storia della musica* (History of music), vol. 6, *L'età di Bach e di Haendel* (The time of Bach and Handel), Torino, EDT 1991, p. 132

[46] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 28.

Dall'Oglio; the cellists Gasparo Janeschi (arrived in 1731) and Giuseppe Dall'Oglio; the contrabbassist Eiselt (or Eyselt, from Bohemia, 1731); the hoboist Döbbert (arrived from Berlin in 1731) and Domenica Dreyer (1731); the bassoonists Friederich and Glösch (or Glöotsch), also arrived in 1731 with Hübner.[47]

At her arrival the troupe was not immediately ready to stage operas; its early stagings were plays in prose, with a more serious tone than before, including comedies and a tragedy, whose texts are unfortunately not preserved.[48] Texts were translated into Russian by the poet Vasily Trediakòvsky, while Jacob von Stählin, who had arrived in Saint Petersburg the same year (1735), was to prepare twice a week summaries in German, which were distributed to the Court's audience before the performaces (see Chap. III – Part II – Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire).

The repertoire of this troupe, compared to the formers, presents original traits of renewals on a thematic and verbal level; even though the plays of the former experiences remain, Ferrazzi observes a greater psycological elaboration, and the introduction of serious moments, which can be ascribed to Riccoboni's theatrical reform: stories that could be successful among the audience without offending morals; the desire to impose a comedy of characters, in which the plot centred around the single protagonist would become the vehicle for moral edification; the subordination of subjects, including already known ones, to new ethic and aesthetic claims. According to Ferrazzi, it is possible to compare the third Italian troupe in Saint Petersburg to the Nouvelle Comédie Italienne in Paris, in regard to the choice to stage a modern repertoire, which seems to be linked to the awareness of the renewal introduced in the most important European courts.[49] This was a lesson that was taken up by the young poet Aleksandr Sumarokov, but also by a good deal of Russian playwrights in their production of the late 18th century.[50] If this refers mostly to the spoken theatre, long before the development of a similar idea of autonomy in opera, an

[47] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, pp. 120-1.
[48] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 56.
[49] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, pp. 162-3.
[50] Maria Chiara Pesenti has studied the process thorugh which the most characteristic tecnics of *improvvisa* (with particular reference to intermezzos) had been assimilated by part of the Russian amatorial theatre. Ferrazzi analyses the influence on the first comedies of Sumarokov, belonging to the years 1750 and 1751. The scholar finds numerous affinities with the Western patterns: the number of characters, their names and peculiarities, the feeble plots, such scenic situations as the wedding contract or the dynamics master-servant. In comedies such as Sumarokov's *Tresotinius* or *Chudovishchi* (The monstrosities), Ferrazzi finds that the satire pursues a double object: personal, in the invective against Trediakovsky, and social, against the raising gallomania and the corruption of the court clerks, inaugurating a satirical line that was to be developped later by many Russian playwrights: A. G. Karin in *Rossiyane, vozvrativshiesya ot Frantsii* (Russians coming back from France), D. I. Khvostov in *Russky parizhanets* (The Russian Parisian), Ya. B. Knyazhnin in *Neschastie ot karety* (Misfortune from a coach), *Khvastun* (The boaster), *Chudaki* (The eccentrics), V. V. Kapnist in *Yabeda* (Chicanery, 1798), Fonvizin. See M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte…*, pp. 163-70.

effect on opera can also be supposed. The separation between the two disciplines remained still to come, and the protagonists were be the same for a long time on, as in the case with Sumarokov (see Chap. II – Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre").

Ferrazzi's observations reveal, at first, the development of a terminology related to the theatrical performance: in particular, finding a definition and setting the basis for a critical discourse. The Russian language is enriched with an essential glossary, for the most part translated from the German, including terms such as: *pozorishchnye igry* (theatrical shows); *tragediya* and *komediya*, but also *pechal'naya* and *uveselitel'naya igra*, for tragedy and comedy; *posredstvennye rody pozoryshchnykh igor* (mixed genres); *osoblivye deystviya* or *aktusy* (acts); *vstuplenie*, *uchrezhdenie*, *unichtozhenie*, *razreshenie* for protasis, epitasis, catastasis and catastrophe; *sostoyanie priklyucheniya* (type of plot); *soglasie* (but also *edinstvo*) *vremeni*, *mesta i proizvodeniya* (or *deystviya*) for the three unities; *govoryashchie persony*, or *persony*, as actors, and so on.[51]

This vocabulary reflects the attempt to react to a new reality, defining it in early critical essays. This very need led academic Strube de Piermont to write the essay titled *O pol'ze teatral'nykh deystv i komediy, k vozderzhaniyu strastey chelovecheskikh* (About the benefit of theatrical performances and comedies in the moderation of human passions).[52]

The poet Kantemir also introduces references to opera in his writings, defining opera as the "lively representation of a serious subject."[53] This is the only aspect that distinguishes opera from prose theatre: while in comedies actors (*izobrazhateli*) simply talk, in opera they express themselves by singing.[54] The same is for Jacob von Stählin in his *Istoricheskoe opisanie onago teatral'nago deystviya, kotoroe nazyvaetsya opera* (Historical description of the theatrical action called 'opera', 1738), where he claims:

> Что опера есть такой род театральных действии, которыя показываются от поющих лиц,

[51] See also P. N. BERKOV, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy terminologii XVII-XVIII vekov ("komediya", "intermediya", "dialog", "igrishche" i dr.)* (From the history of theatrical terminology of the 17th-18th centuries ("comedy", "intermezzo", "dialogue", "play" and others)), «TODRL», XI, M.-L., pp. 280-99; *Slovar' russkikh pisateley XVIII veka* (Dictionary of the Russian writers of the 18th century), edited by A. M. Panchenko, vyp. I, Sankt Peterburg, AN SSSR Institut russkoy literatury (Pushkinsky dom) 1988.

[52] *«Primechaniya na vedomosti» za 1739 god* (*Notes to Gazette* for the year 1739), *Chasti 85* (Parts 85-6), [STRUBE DE PIERMONT], *O pol'ze teatral'nykh deystv i komediy, k vozderzhaniyu strastey chelovecheskikh* (About the benefit of theatrical performances and comedies in the moderation of human passions), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 330, pp. 577-81.

[53] "la viva rappresentazione di una vicenda seria", A. D. KANTEMIR, *Razgorvory o mnozhestve mirov gospodina Fontenella…* (Conversations on the plurality of Fontenelle's worlds…), in *Sochineniya, pis'ma i izbrannye perevody knyazya Antiokha Dmitrievicha Kantemira* (Works, letters and chosen translations of prince Antiokh Dmitrievich Kantemir), tt. I-II, SPb 1867-1868. Quoted from M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 215.

[54] A. D. KANTEMIR, *Razgorvory o mnozhestve mirov gospodina Fontenella…*, quoted from M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 215.

> и что в ней не только слух через непрерывное соединение с поющими голосами инструментальныя музыки, но и зрение чрез остроумныя представления и машины весьма чрезвычайным образом увеселяется, о том в нынешния времена и сказывать почти уже не для чего. От других правильных театральных действий, а именно от трагедии и комедии, разнствует она как именем и намерением, которое при таких действиях бывает, так самым содержанием и представлением.[55]

[The fact that opera is that kind of theatrical action, which is performed by singing people, and that in it not only hearing, through the uninterrupted conjunction with the sung parts by the instrumental music, but also sight is extremely amused through witty stagings and machines this fact in our days does not even need to be recalled. From other correct theatrical actions, such as tragedy and comedy, it differs in name and and in the purpose this kind of stagings has, and also in the subject and expression.]

The anonymous article *O Pozorishchnykh igrakh ili komediyakh i tragediyakh* (On theatrical shows, or comedies and tragedies), published in nos. 44-6 of *Primechaniya* (Notes) to the newspaper *Gazette of Saint Petersburg* of 1733, contains more precise critical instances about opera reception: if compared to tragedy, opera is perceived to be more difficult to understand because librettos are written in verses, which are considered a limit in terms of realism:

> Самыя их речи и изображения помышлений располагаются, сколько возможно, по состоянию особ и их склонности ума, при чем и сие примечается, чтоб оныя речи всегда были остроумныя и до самого дела принадлежащия, хотя в самом приключении, без сомнения, часто такия речи и дела бывали, которыя либо не так прибраны или с началом и соединением всего приключения не согласны были. Сие кажется правде еще противнее, что часто все речи стихами предлагаются, которыя ежели они с музыкою поются, оперу сочиняют. Но как речь в приятности позорищной игры никакого помешательства не делает, так изображение и род оных речей, хотя б то учинилось стихами или простым словом, оной приятности весма не умаляет. Понеже в комедии и трагедии того токмо смотреть надлежит, чтоб различныя приключения между собою изрядно сведены были, и при том бы к некоторому общему намерению склонялися, а всегда б и везде нечто правде подобное находилося.[56]

[The speeches and representations of thoughts themselves are arranged, a much as possible, according to the situation of the characters or to their way of thinking, and one con observe that their speeches are always sharp-witted and pertaining to the situation; hoewever in the plot itself, unquestionably, speeches and situations were often not so clear or not so coherent with the whole plot itself. It appears more contrary to the truth that all speeches are proposed in verses, which are sung with music, and compose an opera. But since the beauty of a stage performance is not corroded by its speeches, this beauty is not reduced by the form and type of these spechees, be it in verses or in simple speech [prose]. Since in comedy and tragedy one has one to pay attention to how well different situations are put together and oriented towards a certain general intention, and in that always something lifelike can be found.]

This actually seems to refer to what was theorized by Riccoboni in his *Dell'arte*

[55] YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie onago teatral'nago deystviya, kotoroe nazyvaetsya opera* (Historical description of the theatrical action called 'opera'), *Prilozheniya k gazete «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1738 god (chasti 17-21, 33, 34, 39-49)* (Notes to the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1738), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny...*, Doc. 327, p. 532.

[56] *O Pozorishchnykh igrakh ili komediyakh i tragediyakh* (On theatrical shows, or comedies and tragedies), *«Primechaniya na vedomosti» za 1733 god. №№ 44-46* (*Notes to Gazette* for the year 1733, Nos. 44-6), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 305, p. 517.

rappresentativa (On performing art), where he outlines how the Italians used recitatives to recall the means of ancient tragedy, obtaining, however, a form of performance hard to be endured by the audience:

Il Naturale sogliono imitare
I Tedeschi, i Spagnuoli, gli Italiani,
E piu gli Inglesi nel rappresentare.
Par che l'Italia un poco si allontani
Dal famigliar discorso per il metro
Vediamo se dal vero son lontani.
Dicon che i primi di quel tempo addietro
In Tragedia, o Commedia d'ogni sorte
Al suon cantavan di Zufolo, o Pletro:
Credolo in onta dell'idée bistorte
Di un certo Monsieur Froso autor moderno,
Che declamavan sol grida ben forte.
Poiche se Cicerone apro, e squinterno
Col *Cantavit* si spiega ad ogni passo,
E chiaro che cantavano discerno.
Penso però che allor, che fu in conquasso
Tutto il Teatro doppo dei Latini,
Che per secoli fu veduto abbasso:
E che quei nostri primi Cittadini
Voller dar Opra al suo rinascimento
Si trovasser confusi e babuini.
Di sei parti di un tal componimento
Tanto esenziali, che il maestro addita
Puotero far di cinque esperimento.
Ma cantaro la bella Margherita
Quando si venne a ragionar del Canto.
Arte che all'ora affatto era smarrita.
Le Tibie doppie, e semplici, che tanto
Sentivan nominare, a quella gente
Eran straniere più che il Garamanto.
Rivolgendo però nella lor mente
Come compire a questa esenzial parte
Credettero trovar l'equivalente.
Il verso, disser, molto si disparte
Dal ordinaria forma dela prosa,
Se con Ritmo è costrutto, e si comparte:
Però dal comun uso in qualche cosa
Allontaniamci col tuon de la voce,
E rendiamla sonora, Armoniosa.
E per provarlo, versi ogn'un veloce-
-mente sul tuono andava scantacchiando
In senso grave, languido, o feroce.
Questa maniera ancor và conservando
L'Italia nostra in una cantilena
Che adopran le Academie recitando.
Ella ti ucide, ti sfibra, ti svena,
E di tuoni in concerto sconcertato
Senti, che ti và in fondo de la schiena;
Ne so già se si trovi un battezato,
Che una Tragedia intera sopportasse
Per penitenza di un grave peccato.[57]

[57] L. RICCOBONI, *Dell'arte rappresentativa*, (On performing art, I ed. London, 1728), Bologna, Arnaldo Forni editore 1979, pp. 40-2.

The author of the *Saint Petersburg Gazette* seems to go even further, attesting the increasing interest of the refined audience for the composition of the drama and the development of the plot rather than the verbal expression of the characters, which is pushed here to the background. An attempt to determine if (and how) this approach was to be influent on the Russian repertoire to come will be made further in this work.

Ferrazzi observes that, the lack of information concerning the dramatic actors, when compared with the available information about the music activity of the troupe, leads to assume a fall of interest toward the *commedia dell'arte*. Also Giacomo Casanova and Manstein in their memoirs confirm the preference accorded by Anna to opera.[58] As mentioned above, the permanent activity of Italian opera at the Russian court had been only anticipated by the staging of Ristori's *Calandro*. By that time it was but an isolated event,[59] at least until the arrival of the Neapolitan musical director and composer Francesco Araja, together with Pietro Mira's troupe.[60] His arrival in Russia marks the beginning of a stable activity, with *La forza dell'amore e dell'odio*, staged on 29 January 1736, for the celebration of Empress Anna Ioannovna's birthday.[61] The event is attested by

[58] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 55.

[59] Taruskin had pointed out the singularity of this event, though not considering the following stagings of Italian operas during the 1730s: "An earlier operatic performance on Russian soil - *Calandro*, a *commedia per musica* by Giovanni Alberto Ristori, […] - was an isolated event, not to be duplicated in the old capital until 1742". R. TARUSKIN, *Defining Russia Musically*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press 1997, p. x.

[60] Francesco Araja was born and studied in Naples, where made his debut with the comic opera *Lo matremmonejo pe' mennetta*, in 1730. After the debut, it was the turn of *Berenice* in Pratolino (near Florence), and *Ciro riconosciuto* and *Cleomene* in Rome (1731), where he also gave the oratorio *S. Andrea Corsini*. The same year his setting of Metastasio's *Semiramide riconosciuta* was presented in Naples. In 1733 he composed the cantata *La Cimotea* for the marriage of the duke of Avellino to the Duchess of Maddalonia. In 1734 he debutted in Milan with *La forza dell'amore e dell'odio*. Before coming to Russia he was in Venice, where he gave *Berenice* in 1734 and *Lucio Vero* in 1735 at the Sant'Angelo theatre. According to Mooser, it's likely that, founding himself in Italy, Pedrillo had heard of his recent successes, and offered him to move to Russia. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, pp. 121-31; *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 1, pp. 834-5. For the rest of his biography see Chap. II – Part II – The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*.

[61] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 55, R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 57. A. LOEWENBERG, *Annals of opera...* In his *For a History of the Theatre in Russia*, published in German in 1769, and known as the first history of theatre in Russia, Jacob Stählin recalls: "In 1737, finally, for the first time an authentic Italian opera was staged, and subsequently every year a new one appeared. The first was called *Abiazare*, and was composed in Peterburg by the Maestro di cappella of Her Majesty the Empress Mr Araja, from Naples; the second was *Semiramide, ovvero Il finto Nino*. [The librettos of] Both of them were issued and distributed at the court in Italian and German in my translation in blak verses." ("В 1737 году была, наконец, впервые представлена настоящая итальянская опера и впоследствии каждый год появилась новая. Первая называлась «Абиазар», которую сочинил в Петербурге капельмейстер Ее Величества императрицы синьор Арайя, неаполитанец; другая – «Семирамида, или Притворный Нин». Обе были напечатаны и распространены при дворе по-итальянски и по-немецки в моем переводе в свободных стихах.") Stählin presents the summary of this opera, adding that it had been represented at the Winter Palace several times and, printed in several languages (Italian and Russian, Italian and German) at the Academy of Sciences. J. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *K istorii teatra v Rossii (Iz ne opublikovannykh eshche memuarov professora Istorii izyashchnykh iskusstv v Rossii gosudarstvennogo sovetnika i sekretarya Peterburgskoy Akademii nauk gospodina Yakoba fon Shtelina* (For

an announcement on the newspaper *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* of 2 February 1736:

> № 10, в понедельник, февраля 2 дня 1736 года
>
> В Санктпетербурге 2 дня февраля. В прошлой понедельник, то есть 29 числа сего месяца, представлена от придворных Опериstов в императорском зимнем доме преизрядная Опера под титулом «Сила Любви и Ненависти» к особливому удовольствию Ея Императорского Величества и со всеобщею похвалою зрителей. Поэзию сочинил господин Кавалер Ф. П… в Риме, музыку компоновал придворный капель-мейстер господин Араи, украшении вымыслил Иероним Бон, театральной живописец при дворе, а балы издал Директор господин Антонио Риналди.[62]

[No. 10, Monday 2nd, 1736

In Saint Petersburg on 2 February. On the last Monday, that is on 29 of this month, the opeatic singers of the Court staged at the Winter Palace an excellent Opera called *La Forza dell'amore e dell'odio* with the special pleasure of Her Imperial Majesty and general praise of the audience. The poetry has been composed by Mister Gentleman F. P. … in Rome, the music composed by the Court Kapellmeister Mister Araja, the scenes projected by Geronimo [Girolamo] Bon, theatrical painter of the Court, ballets created by Director Mister Antonio Rinaldi]

The opera was repeated on 2 May 1737:

> № 35 в понедельник майя 2 дня 1737 года
>
> В Санктпетербурге майя 2 дня. В прошлой четверток, то есть 28 апреля, случившееся торжество коронации Ея Императорского Величества нашей всемилостившей государыни препровождено было в здешней резиденции через три дни с особливою магнифиценциею <…>
>
> На третий день представлена на театре в Зимнем Императорском доме преизрядная и весьма богатая опера, называемая «Сила любви и ненависти», при чем вместо интермедий между действиями были преизрядные балеты.[63]

[No 35 on Monday May, 2nd, 1737

In Saint Petersburg on Monday 2nd. On the last Thursday, that is April, 28th, the celebrations of the coronation of Her Imperial Majesty our most gracious sovereign have been accompanied in this residence for three days by a special magnificence […].

On the third day in the theatre of the Winter Imperial Palace a very rich and excellent opera *La Forza dell'Amore e dell'Odio* was staged, the intermezzos between the acts being replaced with excellent ballets.]

For his debut, Araja chose an opera he had staged in Milan, at Regio Ducale, in 1734.[64] According to the librettos printed for the staging in Milan and Saint Petersburg, the

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a History of the Theatre in Russia (From Still Unpublished Memoirs of Professor of Fine Arts in Russia, the State Counseillor and Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg Mr Jacob von Stählin), in *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*» (A chapter from the book by M. Johann Josef Heigolt *Supplements of the New Russia*), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. 334, pp. 532-76. The complete Russian translation of these memoirs is published by Starikova for the first time.

[62] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1736 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1736), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. no. 146, pp. 268-70.

[63] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1737 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1737), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. 170, p. 311.

[64] [F. PRATA], *La forza dell'amore, e dell'odio, drama* [sic] *Da rappresentarsi nel Regio Ducal Teatro di Milano Sotto il reale patrocinio della sacra reale maestà di Carlo Emanuele Rè di Sardegna, di Cipro, di Gierusalemme, e Duca &c. &c. &c. Nel Carnovale dell'anno 1734,* In Milano, MDCCXXXIV, Nella R. D. C., per Giuseppe Richino Malatesta Stampatore Regio Camerale, Con licenza de' Superiori. A exemplar of

libretto belongs to some C. F. P., identified by Mooser in some abbot F. P., also author of the 'farsetta in musica' *Il P. Tifone*, staged in Florence in 1752 (with music by Giacinto Quagliattini). Stefano Garzonio identified him in Francesco Prata.[65] For the occasion, the libretto was re-printed in Saint Petersburg, in a version that contains Italian and German text (*Die Macht der Liebe und des Hasses*).[66] According to this version, ballets by Antonio Rinaldi Fossano (also called Fusano) replaced for the occasion the usual intermezzos, and sets were painted by Girolamo Bon.[67] The poet Giuseppe Avoglio was possibly responsible for the general direction of the production.[68]

According to Stählin, on that occasion the orchestra was composed by more than forty musicians of Italian and German origin, including the violinists Pietro Mira, Giovanni Piantanida, Ludovico (Luigi) Madonis, Giovanni Verocai and Domenico Dall'Oglio, the cellists Johann Riedel, Gasparo Janeschi and Giuseppe Dall'Oglio, the bassoonist Friedrich, the contrabbassist Eiselt, the hoboist Döbbert, some musicians of the regiments of the Imperial Guard, and musicians of the chamber orchestra who regularly served the Court.[69]

According to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, the manuscript score is preserved at the Music Library of the Direction of Imperial Theatres (today the library of the Mariinsky theatre).[70] Having examined the score, Vsevolodsky-Gerngross recalls that during the

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the libretto can be found at the Library of the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, but the text is also visible in a digital version on the site http://www.urfm.braidense.it/rd/06047_3.pdf.

[65] See R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, p. 162; S. GARZONIO, *La traduzione poetica nella Russia del XVIII secolo. La poesia musicale italiana. Profilo storico* (The poetic translation in 18th-century Russia, Italian poetry for music. Historical sketch), in *La nascita del concetto moderno di traduzione: le nazioni europee fra enciclopedismo e epoca romantica* (The Birth of the modern conception of translation: European nations between Encyclopaedism and Romanticism), edited by G. Catalano e F. Scotto, Roma, Armando Editore 2001, pp. 362-73. In other sources (SBN catalogue) the libretto is ascribed to G. Bonecchi, possibly because he was to become (but only later, in 1742) the court's poet in Russia.

[66] [F. PRATA], *La Forza dell'Amore e dell'Odio drama per ordine della Sacra Imperial Maesta di Anna Giovannona Imperatrice di tutte le Russie da rappresentarsi nel nuovo Imperial teatro di St. Pietroburgo nell anno 1736*. S Pietroburgo: *Nella Stamperia dell'Academiae delle science* [*sic*, 1736]. This version of the libretto is at the Russian National Library (RNB Rossica).

[67] As to Stählin, machines and sets were of the Italian masters Geronimo (Girolamo) Bon and Giovanni Tarsia. A. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…*, pp. 571-2.

[68] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 165.

[69] In his *Notices about Music in Russia* Stählin records an orchestra of "fourty and more" musicians YA. FON SHTELIN (J. STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii* (Notices about music in Russia), in *Muzyka i balet v Rossii XVIII veka* (Music and ballet in 18th-century Russia), edited by B. I. Zagursky, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "Soyuz khudozhnikov" 2002 (I edition in *Muzykal'noe nasledstvo, Sbornik materialov po istorii muzykal'noj kul'tury v Rossii*, vypusk I, edited by B. V. Asaf'ev, Leningrad, Triton 1935), p. 116.

[70] [F. PRATA], *La Forza dell'Amore e dell'Odio… (1736)*. See. V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, pp. 57-8. According to Mooser, another exemplar is at the National library of Vienna, erroneously classified as 'serenata', and with the datation of 1739. See R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle, conservées à Léningrad*, in *Revue de musicologie*, T. 25, No. 77/78 (1946), p. 30. Actually, it is can be found in the catalogue of the music collection (Katalog der Musiksammlung) with the shelf number Mus. Hs. 19232.

performance only a part of the text was sung, while all the action was led by spoken dialogues ("на разговорном диалекте"). If true, this could be ascribed to the above mentioned factors: the need to relieve the audience's effort to endure the long Italian recitatives, to which, as Riccoboni claims, not all audiences were used, but also a simple lack of interest in the specific medium of 'simple recitative'. Only the lyric passages, usually placed at the end of the scenes, seem to have been recollocated and sung, always with repetition: these were the sung passages of the opera that recalled the chorus of the ancient Greek tragedy, for its location and contents.[71] According to Mooser's investigation of the manuscript score, the final chorus was the feeblest part of the performance, because it was sung by the soloists.[72] Stählin outlines also the fact that each act ended with a ballet replacing the usual *intermezzi*, which, in his opinion, was to play a role in the history of the Russian opera.[73]

Among the singers (probably treasuring Stählin's information), Mooser recalls Catarina Giorgi (Abiasare), her husband Filippo Giorgi (Sofite), Caterina Mazany (Nirena), Pietro Pertici (Barzante), the castrato Pietro Morigi and the Florentin Perdici (respectively prince Taxile and the king Barzante), and (more doubt) Avoglio and Rosa Rubinetti-Bon (whose names do not appear in the libretto) in the roles of Talestri and Merindo.[74] They are not the same of the Milanese staging, it can be assumed that, except for the hypothese of arias 'di baule', the choice of staging this opera was made by the composer himself, who probably wanted to make a good impression on the Court, despite his limited experience with the troupe he had to work with. And in fact he is known to have received general approval.[75] According to Mooser, Anna intended to commission for him a new libretto to Metastasio, who refused because of work overload at the Court of Vienna.[76] The information becomes more plausible when considering that the following operas staged at the Russian court were often based on librettos by Metastasio, court poet

[71] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 63.
[72] Only in 1742 for Hasse's *La clemenza di Tito* the Imperial Cappella's singers was employed on stage, to be employed in every occasion from that time on (see Chap. II – Part I – The Coming to Power of the Empress and *La Clemenza*).
[73] See A. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…*, pp. 571-2; V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 63.
[74] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 166.
[75] According to Stählin, "The Court received this opera with a storm of applause and great pleasure; the rapture for the new performance found expression in the fact that all boxes and the pit were overcrowded; they had to repeat a hundred of times, sometimes with the same success." ("Двор принял эту оперу с массой аплодисментов и с огромным удовольствием; восторг по поводу этого новаго зрелища выразился в том, что все ложи и патер были переполнены; раз сто пришлось повторить и несколько раз все с тем же успехом."). See V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 59. The judgement quoted by Vsevolodsky-Gerngross does not appear in Starikova's edition of Stählin's *Istoricheskoe opisanie*, see. A. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…*, pp. 532-76.
[76] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 167.

in Vienna since 1730. This confirms that the celebrative role of Italian opera in the 'young' Russian court imitated the European *ancient régime* status symbols.

La forza dell'amore e dell'odio was followed by other Italian operas *seria*, approximately one per year on the sovereign's birthday and the coronation anniversary, which were to become two of the favourite occasions to celebrate tsar and monarchy.[77]

In 1737 the *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* attest the staging of *Il finto Nino ovvero la Semiramide riconosciuta*:

> № 9, в понедельник, генваря 31 дня 1737 году
> В Санктпетербурге 31 генваря. В прошлую пятницу, то есть 28 числа сего месяца, препровожден при зимнем дворе 44 летней всевысочайший день рождения Ея Императорского Величества <…>
> На другой день сего торжества представлена на Императорском театре в Зимнем доме богатая Италианская Опера, называемая «Притворный Нин, или познанная Семирамида» <…>.[78]

> [No 9, on Monday, 31 January 1737
> In Saint Petersburg, January 31st. On the last Friday, that is on 28 of the current month, at the winter residence the 44th Most High birthday of Her Imperial Majesty was celebrated […]
> On the second day of this celebrations the rich Italian Opera called *Il Finto Nino, ovvero La Semiramide riconosciuta* was staged in the Imperial theatre at the Winter Palace […].]

Araja chose the libretto by Metastasio *Semiramide*, opera *seria* in three acts, staged for the first time in Rome at the Teatro delle Dame, with music by Leonardo Vinci, during the Carnival 1729.[79] The libretto was issued by the Academy of Sciences, in two simultaneous versions: in Italian and Russian and in Italian and German;[80] once more,

[77] Some details about the celebrations recalls of the coronation anniversary are given by Catherine II in her memoirs. Referring to the year 1753, she refers: "[…] avant que d'aller demeurer dans ces nouvelles possessions de Son Altesse Impériale, l'Impératrice célébra l'anniversaire de son couronnement, à Moscou. C'était le 25 avril. On nous annonça qu'elle avait ordonné que le cérémonial fût exactement suivi selon qu'il avait été suivi le propre jour du couronnement. Nous étions fort curieux de ce que ce serait. Le veille elle alla coucher au Kremlin. Nous restâmes à la Sloboda, au palais de bois, et nous reçûmes l'ordre de venir à la messe à la cathédrale. Dès les 9 hueres du matin nous partîmes du palais de bois, en équipage de parade, les domestiques marchant à pied; nous traversâmes tout Moscou pas à pas (le trajet fait sept verstes) et nous mîmes pies à terre devant l'église. Quelques moments après l'Impératrice y vint avec son cortège, la petite couronne sur la tête, et le manteau impérial, comme de coutume, porté par les chambellans. Elle alla se placer à sa place ordinaire à l'église, et à tout ceci il n'y avait rien encore d'extraordinaire qui ne se pratiquât à toutes les autres fêtes de son règne. […] Lorsque la messe et le sermon furent finis, l'Impératrice sortit de l'église; nous nous mîmes en devoir de la suivre, mais elle nous fit dire que nous pouvions revenir à la maison. Ce fut alors que nous apprîmes qu'elle allait dîner toute seule sur le trône, et qu'en cela le cérémonial serait observé comme le jour même de son couronnement, où elle avait dîné seule."CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même, et précédés d'une préface par A. Herzen*, Londres, Trübner & cie. 1859, pp. 188-9.

[78] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1738 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1738), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 163, p. 307.

[79] See P. METASTASIO, *Drammi per musica*, 3 voll., edited by A. L. Bellina, I, Venezia, Marsilio 2002.

[80] [P. METASTASIO], *Il finto Nino, ovvero la Semiramide riconosciuta, dramma per musica da rappresentarsi per ordine della Sacra Imperiale Maestà di Anna Giovannona, Imperatrice di tutte le Russie, nel nuovo*

Stählin was the author of the German translation, while the Russian one was entrusted to Pyotr Medvedev. Scenes were created by Girolamo Bon, and ballets by Rinaldi.

According to Mooser, two copies (manuscript) of the complete score are housed at the former Central Musical Library of the Academic Theatres of Saint Petersburg, and in Berlin. The opera, including a great role of vocal virtuosity, made use of a reduced orchestra, composed only of a string quartet doubled by oboes, with horns and timpani in some cases. As for the performance, Vsevolodsky-Gerngross recalls again that the parts of the text that led the action (recitatives) were not sung.[81] As in the previous occasion, choral parts were sung by the soloists.[82]

On 28 April 1738 the *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti* attest the staging of *Artaserse*:

> № 9, в понедельник, генваря 30 дня 1738 года.
>
> В Санктпетербурге 30 генваря <…> В самый высокий праздник, то есть 28 апреля по полудни, изволила Ея императорское Величество с их Высочеством цесаревной Елисавет Петровной и государыней принцессой Анной в большом зале под балдахином публично кушать. В средине сего зала за большим, наподобие зделанном столе трактовано великое множество Дам и Ковалеров, причем учинен был от Италианской капельли преизрядной концерт <…>.
>
> На другой день представлена на театре Императорскаго зимняго дому преизрядная и для сего высокаго торжества нарочно компонованная опера, называемая «Артаксеркс, или за верность сына пожалованной отец».[83]

[No 9, on Monday, January 30th 1738

In Saint Petersburg, 30 January […]. On the most high celebration, that is on 28 April at midday, Her Imperial Majesty had lunch in public with Her Highness the crown princess Elizaveta Petrovna and the princess Anna in the big hall under a canopy. At the centre of the hall at a large table with the form of a double-headed eagle a huge number of Ladies and Gentlemen received the meal, while the Italian Cappella gave an excellent concert […].

On the following day in the theatre of the Imperial Winter Palace the excellent opera called *Artaserse, ovvero Il padre premiato per la fedeltà del figlio,* which was composed expecially for this Most High celebration.]

While the music was written by Araja specifically for the Russian performance, the libretto he chose was once again by Metastasio, who had written it in 1730 for the Teatro delle Dame in Rome, where it had been staged with music by Vinci. Two editions of the

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Imperiale Teatro di S. Pietroburgo, nell'anno 1737. San Pietroburgo nella stamperia dell'Accademia Imp. Delle Scien. The libretto in the Russian version is at the National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB): [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Pritvorny Nin ili Semiramida poznanna. Dramma na muzyke deystvuyushchayasya po ukazu imperatorskago eya velichestva Anny Ioannovny samoderzhitsy vserossiyskoy v novom imperatorskom teatre*, [1737]. A microfilm copy of the score is preserved at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome; it is probably a copy of the exemplar attested by Mooser at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre of St. Petersburg. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle, conservées à Léningrad*…, p. 30.

[81] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 69.

[82] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 169.

[83] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1737 god* (From the newspaper *Gazette of Saint Petersburg* for the year 1737), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. 173, p. 314. Mooser records another staging on 29 January 1738.

libretto were issued: the Italian - German, translated by Stählin, and the Italian – Russian, translated by Medvedev.[84] Again, Bon was the author of the sets, and Rinaldi of the ballets. According to Mooser, the score is lost nowadays.[85]

The opera would be performed also on 1 May 1738, on the coronation anniversary:

> № 35, в понедельник, майя 1 дня 1738 года
>
> В Санктпетербурге 1 майя. Высокое торжество коронования Ея Императорскаго Величества нашей всемилостивейшей государыни, случившееся 28 числа минувшего месяца, и два за оным последующия дни, препровождены при зимнем дворе с обыкновенною церемониею <…>.
>
> На третей день представлена к Высочайшему Ея Императорскаго Величества удовольствию Италианская опера «Артаксеркс», при чем вместо обыкновенных интермецов преизрядныя балеты были.[86]

[No 35, on Monday, May 1st, 1738

In Saint Petersburg, on 1 May. The most high anniversay of the coronation of Her Imperial Majesty our Most Gracious sovereign, that recurred on 28 of the current month and on the two following days, was celebrated at the Winter Palace with the usual ceremony […].

On the third day with great pleasure of Her Most High Imperial Majesty the Italian opera *Artaserse*, in which the usual intermezzos were replaced by excellent ballets.]

Other Foreign Troupes

During Anna's rule, there were other foreign troupes apart from the Italian one; these came to Russia upon the Empress's invitation, or on their own, hoping for good chance, as it was custom in the rest of Northern Europe. Among private troupes that arrived in Moscow and Saint Petersburg without a special invitation by the Empress there was, for instance, the German troupe headed by Johannes Grigg (April 1734); in 1738 a German troupe headed by the director Martin Miller.[87]

According to Lydmila Starikova, documents make clear that Anna requested not only an Italian troupe, but also a German or a French one, in the case king Augustus would have had any superfluous ones.[88] In 1736 she gave orders to engage the German troupe directed by Caroline Neuber: the majority in the company reached Saint Petersburg via Riga in April 1740, and the first stagings took place on 30 April 1740.[89] The invitation

[84] [P. METASTASIO], *L'Artaserse, dramma per musica, da rappresentarsi nel Teatro del Palazzo d'inverno, per ordine della Sacra Imperial Maestà di Anna Giovannona, Imperatrice di tutte le Russie. 1738. San Pietroburgo*, at the Library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN).
[85] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 172.
[86] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1738 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1738), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. 177, pp. 322-4.
[87] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 230.
[88] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 16.
[89] *ivi*, p. 31.

responded, according to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, to the preference the Empress and Bühren accorded to the German culture.[90] Neuber and her husband proposed a more literary valuable repertoire, if compared with Italian *intermezzos* and comedies (and operas, too): rejecting comic coarsenesses of the Haupt und Staatsactionen, they had proposed in Leipzig a repertoire made up of rationalistic Classicism.[91] Unfortunately the troupe did not receive the expected success, and had to leave the country at the beginning of 1741, for reasons related to the choice of repertoire (as to Stählin and Gerngross), as well as to the year of mourning established after Anna's death.[92]

From the documents collected by Starikova it emerges that some of the actors who arrived in Russia with Neuber later joined the indipendent German troupe headed by Sigmund, which was to be engaged by Elizabeth in 1742 (see Chap. II – Elizabeth Petrovna).[93]

Referring to Anna's period, Starikova observes that "schematically one can characterize it as a period of "pre-formation", or the "eve" of the formation of the Russian national theatre (a stage that takes place in the late 1740s and 1750s)".[94] The first remarkable aspect of these early attempts was the desire to set up a *permanent* theatre. Documents reported by Starikova give the image of the following Court project: "the project envisages to select a troupe that could be permanent […]."[95] In fact, according to Starikova,

> Еще при царе Алексее Михайловиче в Москву из-за рубежа наведывались отдельные исполнители и группы актеров. Во времена Петра I приезды их участились, и в 20-е годы XVIII века Россию посещали уже целые труппы. Но особенно важное значение имела **постоянная** [bold in the original], а не эпизодическая деятельность этих артистов на русской сцене в первой половине XVIII века, начавшаяся в 1731 году с приездом первой итальянской труппы.[96]

[At the time of Aleksey Mikhaylovich yet single performers and groups of actors were called to Moscow from abroad. At Peter I time their arrivals became more frequent, and in the twenties of 18th

[90] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 86.
[91] *ivi*, pp. 86-93.
[92] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 56, but also R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 230.
[93] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 32.
[94] "Схематично его можно охарактеризовать как период «предформирования», или «кануна» завершающего этапа формирования русского национального профессионального театра (сам же этот этап приходится на 1740-1750-е годы)." *ivi*, p. 9.
[95] "Проект предусматривает подобрать труппу, которая могла бы быть постоянной <…>.", *Chernoviki doneseniy Le Forta Saksonskomu Dvoru* (Draft copies of the reports of Le Fort to the Court of Saxony), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 8, p. 140.
[96] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 15.

century entire troupes visited Russia. However particular importance should be given to the **permanent** [bold in the original], and not episodical activity of these artists in the Russian scene in the first half of the 18th century, to begin in 1731 with the arrival of the first Italian troupe.]

The remark is referred to both opera and prose theatre, the two activities being still undistinguished. Starikova observes that "the enduring existence of the "Italian troupe" played a significant role in the coming into being of the organized forms of the Russian theatrical life":[97] indeed, the experiences related to Anna Ioannovna's initiative laid the foundations for the institution of the Imperial Theaters.

Mooser remarks that the first Italian operas had only a few repeats after the *première*, in spite of the enormous costs of their production, and generally not overlapping within the year of the first staging. It was only towards the half of the century, i. e. during Elizabeth's rule, that operas had a longer run. According to the historian, the encomiastic character of this kind of stagings was to have a negative impact on the 'quantity' of productions:

> Il n'en reste pas moins qu'il faudra bien des années encore, en tout cas plus d'un quart de siècle, pour que les milieux mondains de Saint-Pétersbourg se montrent capables d'apprécier à sa valeur un spectacle présentant une réelle tenue, et soient en état d'en sentir la beauté. Ce ne sera ni le fait de l'impératrice Elisabeth Pétrovna, ni même, malgré son extraordinaire intelligence, celui de Catherine II qui demeura toujours insensible à la musique, et qui n'était pas éloignée de considérer celle-ci comme le plus ennuyeux et le plus cher de tous les bruits.
>
> Si donc l'opera seria va poursuivre sa carrière à la cour, il conservera pendant longtemps son caractère d'apparat, telle une cérémonie obligatoire qu'il est de bon ton d'entourer de tout le faste possible, mais au lendemain de laquelle on se hâte vers des plaisirs moins solennels et plus aimables, mieux accordés, en un mot, à la mentalité de ceux auxquels ils s'addressent.[98]

Thus, the success of the Winter Palace performances was not to be enduring, and opera *seria* remained an isolated event, not proliferating, nor calling forth any new event. It was, however, to prepare the ground for opera *buffa*, some twenty years later.[99]

In fact, Russia had not witnessed the birth of that entrepreneurial theatre that in Italy had flourished since the early 17th century. Mooser outlines the different, or confined, character of the Russian experience:

> On commetrait une erreur assez grave en assimilant les grands spectacles lyriques organisés en Russie, durant le règne d'Anna Ioannovna, à ceux dont le public occidentale avait pris l'habitude, dès le milieux du XVIIe siècle. En effet, loin de constituer un élément de la vie populaire et d'être ouvertes à tous les amateurs capables de payer leur place, ces représentations conservèrent, pendant près de vingt ans, un caractère solennel et tout occasionnel qui les différencie singulièrement de

[97] "В связи с этим, - the scholar concludes, - нужно подчеркнуть, что длительное существование «Итальянской компании» сыграло важную роль в становлении организационных форм русской театральной жизни." *ivi*, p. 30.
[98] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 167.
[99] *ivi*, p. 160.

> celles qui avaient cours à l'étranger, à la même époque. Elles n'étaient pas seulement réservées aux membres de la famille impériale et à ses intimes, au corps diplomatique et à un petit nombre de hauts personnages qui y étaient conviés nommément, selon les prescriptions d'un protocole rigoreux. Elles se suivaient de façon irrégulière, amis à des dates immuables, de façon à marquer certains anniversaires que l'on avait coutume de célébrer avec une pompe particulière.[100]

These remarks led to another question that should be considered: the venues and their accessibility to the theatres at this time. As for the spaces where performances were held during Anna's time,[101] Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli[102] was commissioned a opera house in Moscow for the first opera *Calandro*; unfortunately, this was completed late, and could not be used on that occasion.

After returning to the capital city, in April 1734 Empress Anna ordered Rastrelli to re-build the Winter Palace, in which the architect projected and started to build a hall for comedy and opera. The hall was designed for 1000 spectators, who entered without paying a ticket, upon the Empress's invitation. Comedies and intermezzos were given twice a week, while operas were staged during the most important celebrations.[103]

The audience of these early performances (sometimes referred to as 'people') was constituted by the court's entourage, who not only was admitted to these *soirées*, but was also forced not to ignore the sovereign's invitation. According to Karabanov, the places were distributed for free, according to the ranks and the title of the audience. Having observed that the majority of them were constituted by people next to the Court or

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[100] *ivi*, p. 160.

[101] With the arrival, in 1731, of the first Italian troupe, a *Komediantsky dom* (Comedy theatre) was built in Moscow on the Red Square, as confirmed by the *ukaz* (royal command) issued by the Empress ("Ея Императорское Величество указала: для камеди построить пристройной к тому дом на Красной площади, где прежде мего был камедиантский дом <…>"). *Delo «O stroenii komediantskogo domu i ob otpuske iz doitochnoy kantselyarii deneg 5000 rublev»* (File about "The construction of a comedy theatre and the release of 5000 roubles from the chancery"), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 295, p. 466. Unfortunately the building was never used, and was destroyed by a fire on 29 May 1737.

[102] Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli (Paris, around 1700 – St. Petersburg, 1771), was the son of the Florentin sculptor Bartolomeo Carlo (1675-1744), Peter I's favourite, who had made several bronze portraits of the Emperor (among them the one that stands in the Engeneers' square in St. Petersburg). Francesco Bartolomeo was appointed Court architect by Anna Ioannovna in 1736, but it is only during Elizabeth's rule, from 1741, that he became the protagonist of the Russian architecture, giving origin to the so-called "Russian baroque", and to a school and a group of collaborators. In St. Petersburg he had been the author of works such as Vorontsov Palace, Smol'ny Monastery, the imperial palace of Peterhoff, the palace of Tsarskoe Selo, Stroganov Palace, the Winter Palace. Outside St. Petersburg, his most important work is the church of St. Andrew in Kiev. Near Moscow Rastrelli restored the monastery of New Gerusalem, and did several renovation works at the Kremlin. Many of his plans are preserved at the Hermitage, at the State Archive of Moscow and in Warsaw Museum, where there is also his manuscript *Relazione* (Report) about the works he accomplished. See *Storia della civiltà letteraria russa*, *Dizionario*, *Cronologia* (History of the Russian litarary culture, Dictionary, Chronology), edited by M. Colucci and R. Picchio, Torino UTET 1997, pp. 256-7.

[103] M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 72 n. According to Starikova, ten years later, in 1742, he was to build a new *Operny dom* (Opera house), erected on the river Yauza specifically for the coronation of Empress Elizabeth. The same project seems to have been used for the construction of the *Operny dom* in St. Peterburg, several years later. *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 69.

foreigners, the Empress desired to render the theatre accessible for those subjects who did not know any foreign language.[104] On the other hand, the admission to the same theatre depended on the type of performance. A comparison of previous announcements of Italian opera performances with other public announcements issued on the city's newspaper *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, referring to the performances of private foreign troupes that were given in the capital city in the same years, will confirm this idea. The first is located in a "private" theatre:

> Известно чинится, что недавно прибывшие сюды Немецкие показыватели выпускных кукол смотрения достойную Комедию представлять будут: о преступлении прародителей Адама и Еввы. Где показаны будут виды неба, ада и красного рая с различными зверями и приятным пением птиц.
>
> Театр есть в Большой Морской под вывескою выпускных кукол.[105]

[Be advised, that the recently arrived German performers of puppets will stage a Comedy that deserves to be seen: about the original sin of the primigenitors Adam and Eve. Where they will show views of heaven, hell and Eden with several animals and agreeable singing of birds.
The theatre is in the Bol'shaya Morskaya street under the signboard of puppets.]

The second one takes place on the Empress's locations, which evidently could be used for performances of the artists who did not directly serve the Court. Despite the difference in location, the tone remains the same, definitely different (less official) from that of the annoucements about operas:

> № 94, в четверток, ноября 23 дня 1738 года
>
> Для известия
>
> Прибывшия сюда из Голандии комедианты, которыя, по веревкам ходя, танцуют, на воздухе прыгают, на леснице, ни за что не держась, в скрипку играют, с лесницею ходя, пляшут, безмерно высоко скачут и другия удивительныя вещи делают, получили от двора позволение в летнем Ея Императорского Величества доме на театре игру и действия свои отправлять. Где они начнут играть с 26 числа сего ноября месяца. Цена смотрельщикам положена с первых мест по 50 копеек, с других по 25, а с третьих по 10 копеек с человека, о чем чрез сие объявляется.[106]

[No. 94, On Thursday, November 24th, 1738
To be released
Dutch comediants who, having arrived here, walk on a cord, dance, make jumps, play violin staying on a ladder, without any support, and staying on it also walk, dance, make incredibly high jumps and other amazing things, received from the Court the permission to give their performances in the theatre of Her

[104] "Театры устроены были в Летнем саду и в Зимнем дворце, во флигеле; места раздавались безденежно, по чинам и по званию зрителей. Заметив, что большая часть из них были приближенные Двора или иностранцы, Императрица пожелала сделать театр доступным и для незнающих иностранные языки своих подданных". A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra kadetami pervogo kadetskogo korpusa. K stoletnemu yubileyu* (The foundation of the Russian theatre by the cadets of the first Infantry Corps of cadets. For the centenary), SPb, v Tipografii voenno-uchebnykh zavedeniy 1849, p. 5.
[105] *Afisha 1730-kh godov* (Playbill of the 1730s), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 269, p. 440.
[106] *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1738 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1738), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, Doc. 284/a, p. 454.

Imperial Majesty's Summer Palace, where they will begin to perform from 26 of the current month on. The fixed price for the spectators is 50 copecs per person for the first places, 25 for the second places, and 10 copecs for the thirds, as released by the present.]

It is clear that the audience allowed to these shows is not the same one that attended Italian opera: here the newspaper mentions the possibility to buy a ticket, while for operas the entry was not public. The theatre is considered a private enterprise, with revenues for the administration of the Court itself.

At the same time, the difference in the terminology used, compared with previous terminology referring to Italian opera, testifies the celebrative, encomiastic, official message that the latter in particular was expected to diffond, among different expressions of theatre in Anna's epoch: what Wortman called the monarch's "scenario". According to the historian,

> Symbolic display served as an essential mechanism of tsarist rule. Carefully staged ceremonies and celebrations, the coronations foremost among them, demonstrated the monarch's powers of control and direction, providing a simulacrum of a political order responding to his will.[107]

And the message did arrive: as to the English ambassador who was present at the ceremony of the coronation, "you cannot imagine how sumptuous the present court is with its new sovereign, even though there is not a shilling in the Treasury."[108]

Who was the addressee of this message, the audience to whom this "scenario" was directed? As said, the 'people' allowed to these performances was the Court's entourage, in an almost tautological situation in which the Court represents itself to its own entourage. The Court being a sort of microcosm reflecting the bigger European universe, with ministers and funcionaries representing European countries, opera was the vehicle to obtain international acknowledgement from Europe, with particular attention to German

[107] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, p. 1. "The particular realitazions of the governing myth by the successors to the throne, I call *scenarios of power.* The scenarios cast each ruler as mythic hero transforming the myth to fit his personal views and tastes, as well as the cultural and political circumstances of the time. Ceremonies figured nota s discrete and unrelated events but as episodes in the monarch's ongoing scenario". *ivi*, p. 3. With regard to this D'Amelia points out that the use of emphasizing the sovereign's political reforms traces back at least to Peter I: "All amusements of that time, as well as the masquerades and assemblies are nothing more than spectacular ceremonies, out-and-out theatrical actions organized with political aims by Peter, to mark every important event of the life of the State". ("Tutti i divertimenti di quel periodo, come le feste mascherate e le assemblee non sono altro che cerimonie spettacolari, vere e proprie azioni teatrali organizzate a fini politici da Pietro, per segnalare ogni importante avvenimento dello stato.") A. D'AMELIA, *Un rito spettacolare…*, pp. 75-6. See also N. A. OGARKOVA, *Koronatsiya imperatritsy Anny Ioannovny i "Muzykal'nye panegiriki" Trediakovskogo* (Anna Ioannovna's coronation and Trediakovsky's *Musical Panegirics*), in *Europa Orientalis* 19 (2000): 2, pp. 39-56.

[108] "Non potete immaginare quanto è sontuosa l'attuale corte con la nuova sovrana, anche se in cassa non c'è neppure uno scellino." M. O. GERSHENZON, *Griboedovskaya Moskva* (Griboedov's Moscow), 1916 (reprint The Hahe-Paris 1970), p. 10, quoted in A. D'AMELIA, *Un rito spettacolare…*, pp. 75-6.

countries, as the Italo-German translations attest. This was the reason to prefer such a cosmopolitan form of expression:

> На самом деле же приезд именно итальянской труппы отнюдь не случайность, а назревшая культурная необходимость. С одной стороны, наметившийся в Италии в начале XVIII века кризис комедии дел'арте, основанной на актерской импровизации, и начавшаяся борьба за литературный театр заставили многие труппы искать новую аудиторию, не знакомую еще с таким типом искусства.
>
> С другой стороны, итальянская комедия дел'арте оказалась именно тем типом и той формой театрального представления, которая пришлась «в пору» тогдашнему русскому зрителю (его уровню подготовки для полноценного восприятия сценического действия). В момент, который мы определили как «предформирование», русское общество уже испытывало потребность в общении с высококлассными актерами и музыкантами, артистами-мастерами, исполнителями-виртуозами (каковых своих тогда еще не имелось). Однако нужно было такое театральное искусство, восприятию которого не мешал бы существенный барьер, каким обычно становится чужой язык. Итальянская комедия дел'арте явилась идеальным «чужим» театром: его можно было освоить очень быстро, ибо преобладали в нем прежде всего актерское начало и импровизационная стихия без жесткой опоры на закрепленный литературный текст. <…> Это делало их искусство доступным и эмоционально заразительным **для аудитории любой национальности** [my bolding – A. G.].[109]

[Indeed the coming of the Italian troupe itself is not at all a sheer luck, on the contrary a matured cultural need. On the one hand, the crisis of the 'commedia dell'arte', based on the actors' improvisation, that had took shape in Italy at the beginning of the 18th century, and the struggle for a literary theatre that had begun, had forced many troupes to search for a new audience, which was still not acknowledge with that type of art.

On the other hand, the Italian 'commedia dell'arte' happened to be just the right kind and form of theatrical staging that was «opportune» for the Russian audience of that time (for its stage of preparation for a perception of the scenic action that would be full of value). At the moment, that we have defined as «pre-formation», the Russian society already needed contact with actors and musicians of a high level, skilled artists, virtuoso-performers (such as at that time there were no among their contrymen). However there was the need of such a theatrical art, the perception of which could not be disturbed by such an essential barrier as usually a foreign language happens to be. The Italian commedia dell'arte was the ideal «foreign» theatre: it could rapidly be assimilated, because it was dominated first of all by the actorial principle and by the element of improvisation without the support of any literary text. […] This made their art accessible and emotionally catching **for an audience of any nationality** [my bolding – A. G.].]

According to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, the Empress "desired more sumptuous and artistic performances, **such as there were at the Western courts** [my bolding – A. G.]."[110] Stählin too, after dealing with opera in European countries in his *Historical Description of the Theatrical Action Called 'Opera'*, needed to outline that "opera also in the court of the Russian Empire in Saint Petersburg is in the finest conditions".[111] In this sense, the activity of Italian opera troupe in Saint Petersburg is comparable to similar situations in other European courts. And this was exactly Anna's objective when

[109] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 16.

[110] "желала более пышных и более художественных зрелищ, **таких, какие бывали при западных дворах** [my bolding – A. G.]." V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, p. 2.

[111] "<…> опера и при Российском Императорском дворе в Санктпетербурге находится в наилучшем состоянии." A. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…*, p. 571.

requesting Friederich Augustus of his own troupe. Aware of opera being "today in great courts and in honorable republics […] the greatest entertainement",[112] Anna desired her own Court to be at the same level of the European Empires.

But she had also another audience. Although the notion of "people", when referring to audience in 18th century, is most often to be restricted to the court's entourage, in the same period the Russian sovereigns will have often to look at a broader conception of it in relation to the political solidity of their rule (as it will soon be the case with Elizabeth and Catherine II – see chap. II and III). The tone chosen in the analysed public messages attests the need of this official message, of this "scenario" to be transmitted to this larger addresse, with description aiming at evoking the "direct" audience's impressions. Thus, the (larger) people, who had not direct access to the Court performances, could imagine the "very rich and excellent opera" (преизрядная и весьма богатая опера), and participate in the "special pleasure of Her Imperial Majesty" (особливое удовольствие Ея императорского Величества) and in the "general praise of the audience" (всеобщая похвала зрителей). The "special magnificence" (особливая магнифиценция) of celebrations emanated the same feature to the whole Court; the message of greatness of the Crown was to be listened to, on two different levels, by a cosmopolitan - international, and a Russian – "national-*ante-litteram*" audience. It is the case, for instance, with the message transmitted by the 'scenario' prepared for the coronation anniversary on 28 April 1738: "At the centre of the hall at a large table with the form of a double-headed eagle a huge quantity of Ladies and Gentlemen received the meal, while the Italian Cappella gave an excellent concert" (В средине сего зала за большим, наподобие двоеглаваго орла зделанном столе трактовано великое множество Дам и Ковалеров, причем учинен был от Италианской капельли преизрядной концерт).

The repetition of the same attributes ("преизрядная", excellent), and the reference to habits consolidated by the time of 1738 ("с обыкновенною церемониею", with the usual ceremony, "вместо обыкновенных интермецов преизрядныя балеты были", the usual intermezzos were replaced by excellent ballets), give the impression of the pursuit the foundation of a tradition. Everybody (once again, inside and outside Russia), had to know that "Russia receives, in the authority of her great Sovereign Empress, the pleasure to assist to excellent operas at the court of Her Imperial Majesty" (Россия получает при благословенной державе своея великия Государыни Иператрицы сие удовольствие, что она при дворе Ея Императорского Величества преизрядныя оперы видеть

[112] "ныне при великих дворах и в знатных республиках […] наибольшее увеселение", *ivi*, p. 532.

может).[113]

Concluding this section, it is worth quoting more of Starikova's synthetic evaluations of Anna's reign, considering the theatrical experience she promoted:

> С именем Анны Иоанновны у нас связано ощущение чего-то мрачного, гнетущего, атмосферы душевной черствости и жестокости. Рядом с ней черной тенью встает то, что получило название «бироновщины»: засилие иностранцев и прежде всего немцев, попрание национальной гордости и т. п. И это, естественно, должно было сказаться и на культурно-эстетическом климате как во всей стране, так, уж конечно, и непосредственно вокруг императрицы. <…> Наверное, мы до сих пор недооценили значения царствования Анны Иоанновны, особенно для развития русской культуры. Именно в это десятилетие произошел на Руси органичный синтез «восточного» и «западного», совершилась подлинная ассимиляция новых веяний. <…> в анненское десятилетие такие веяния не только внедрились и задержались, но скрестились, смешались с исконно русским, образовав новые и неразрывные социокультурные соединения, принадлежащие уже одинаково и Западу, и России. При этом показателен интерес императрицы не только к тому, что пришло с Запада, что прижилось и стало симбиозом российского и европейского, но – особенно – к тому, что осталось еще в чисто национальном качестве, например, к русскому фольклору и его носителям <…>.[114]

[The name of Anna Ioannovna is to all us is bound to the feeling of something sombre, oppressive, to an atmosphere of mental induration and brutality. Next to her like a dark shade what has been called "birónovshchina" raises: the domination of foreigners, first of all Germans, the trample of the national pride etc. Obviously, this must tell also on the cultural and esthetic climate of the whole country, as it certainly directly told on directly around the Empress. […] Probably, till now we underestimated the importance of Anna Ioannovna's rule, in particular for the development of the Russian culture. Just in this decade an organic sythesis of "East" and "West" occurred in Rus', an authentic assimilation of new tendencies was accomplished. […] In Anna's decade such tendencies not only were instilled and stayed long, but also crossed, mingled with radically Russian ones, giving origin to new and indissoluble socio-cultural combinations, belonging further on both to West, and to Russia. At this regard it is indicative the Empress's interest not only in what came from West, in what got acclimatized and became a symbiosis of Russian and European element, but – especially - in what preserved its pure national qualities, for instance, in Russian folklore and its bearers […].]

Starikova refers in particular to the strong national tone of the *zabavnaya svad'ba* organized by Anna at the end of her reign, in 1740, after the victory over Turkey in autumn 1739: "The celebration became a kind of theatralized hymn of the triumphant Russian State system."[115] The great masquerade organized at the Ice Palace in 1740, according to Starikova, mirrored all the results obtained by travels and expeditions of members of the Academy of Sciences through the Russian Empire, which had been collected in descriptions or memoirs by ethnographers, geographers, historians, botanists and others.[116] If Peter had banned Russian dances, together with Russian caftans and womens' tunic dresses, from the balls he had introduced, Anna loved very much popular dances, and, as

[113] *ivi*, p. 532.
[114] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 78.
[115] "Праздник был своего рода театрализованным гимном торжествующей российской государственности", *ivi*, p. 95.
[116] *ivi*, p. 95.

D'Amelia outlines, "took care also that the Russian roots would not be forgotten and every year carnival time she invited to the court the Guard's officers with their wives who danced in the Russian way, thus raising the attention of the foreigners who attended the Court".[117] As Starikova claims,

> Анна Иоанновна, <…> всегда была неравнодушна к русскому фольклору: народным песням, пляскам, сказаниям, преданиям, суевериям, обычаям и пр., собирая вокруг себя их исполнителей и носителей <…>. Теперь же перед ней и всей столицей предстала вся многоязычная Россия в ее подлинных национальных костюмах, с подлинными музыкой, песнями, плясками, манерой поведения и т. п. И эта Российская империя оказалась так многолика и экзотична, что во всем самом подлинном, но выхваченном из привычных условий и пересаженном в столичный антураж, она выглядела маскарадно-фантастично. Это удивительное сочетание в одном и том же явлении предельной почвенной подлинности с небывалой фантастичностью (точнее сказать, когда одно и то же явление было и самым подлинным, и в то же время казалось фантастическим), так ярко выразившемся в данном маскараде, можно считать одной из отличительных особенностей анненской эпохи вообще.[118]

[Anna Ioannovna, […] was never indifferent to the Russian folklore: popular songs, dances, tales, legends, superstitions, customs etc., collecting around herself their performers and bearers […]. Now in front of her and of the whole capital city the whole multi-lingual Russia appeared in its authentic national costumes, with its authentic music, songs, dances, behaviour etc. And this Russian Empire happened to be such many-sided and hexotic, that in every authentic, but snatched away from its habitual conditions and transplanted to the entourage of the capital city, it appeared as a fancy masquerade. This astonishing combination in one unique phenomenon of the utmost grounded authenticity with an unprecedent fancy (more precisely to say, when one phenomenon and the other at the same time were authentic and seemed fantastic), such brightly expressed in that masquerade, can be considered one of the distinctive peculiarities of the entire Anna's time.]

Two different lines seem to take shape in the theatrical life of Anna's time. On the one hand we have the cosmopolitan phenomenon of the European theatre, with a relatively wide range of import products represented by *commedia dell'arte* fading definitely away, imposing Italian opera and the raising activity of several private foreign troupes (German in particular by this time). One the other hand there is the Russian folklore that had its own expression in the popular songs, tales, and customs.

Considering, in perspective, the birth of a national operatic theatre, that will include this second element in a non-native frame, it seems to me still impossible to find any strictly national trait in the stagings of this time of typical European performances. By now the two branches seem to grow separately, and the time when operators of musical theatre will consider the idea of introducing national traits in an original repertoire appears to be still to come. However there are already peculiarities in the reception, worth to be kept in mind, such as the use of replacing recitatives with spoken dialogues.

[117] "[Anna] si preoccupava anche che non si dimenticassero le radici russe ed ogni anno durante il carnevale invitava a corte gli ufficiali della guardia con le mogli che ballavano alla russa, destando così la particolare attenzione degli stranieri che frequentavano la corte." See A. D'AMELIA, *Un rito spettacolare…*, p. 82.
[118] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 101.

Moreover, Anna realized highly significant projects in the foundation of national music institutions, thus giving the country the first instruments with which a national theatre was to develop: it was in her epoch that Jean-Baptiste Landé organized, as soon as Antonio Rinaldi left Russia with the troupe, the first ballet school, which was to become the *Teatral'noe uchilishche* (today known as M. S. Shchepkin High Theatre School, or Institute); as Vsevolodsky-Gerngross defines it, it was as "almost complete French ballet [consisting] of only Russian forces."[119] In a similar way, Anna established music printing at the Academy of Sciences Printing Press, established in Saint Petersburg in 1726.[120] Her most important project was maybe the School of Court Singers, which she opened in the town of Glukhov in 1738, providing the Imperial Court with child singers and musicians, because at that time neither Saint Petersburg nor Moscow had an educational framework for professional musicians, so that the Ukraine remained the main source for training specialists in *partes*-singing and instruments.[121] According to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, Anna Ioannovna founded the first Music school, on 10 January 1740, in order to supply musicians at a time when the majority of foreigners had left Russia and their contracts had expired.[122]

The third Italian troupe was doomed to leave Russia during the year 1738.[123] On 17 October 1740, Anna Ioannovna's death marked the definitive end of the prestige enjoyed by *commedia dell'arte*.[124] This event was followed by a year of mourning for the

[119] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, pp. 72-6.
[120] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 43.
[121] *ivi*, pp. 43-4. See also Chap. II, part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre".
[122] See V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne…*, pp. 83-4.
[123] *Ukaz* dating 9 February. See M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 55. Another "Pastorale" had been staged on 10 July 1739, which title is unfortunately still unknown: "No. 55 on Tuesday 10 July 1739/ In Saint Petersburg on 10 July […] On the same day [Monday, 2 July] the Court celebrated the solemn engagement of His Serenity the Grand Duke, Prince of Braunschweig-Lüneburg, Anton Ulrich with Her Highness the princess Anna. For the accomplishment of this high marriage for next Tuesday, that is on 3rd of the current month, […] / On Friday at the Winter Palace at the residence of their Excellencies the newly married prince and princess to all the most distinguished persons of both sexes a plentiful lunch has been planned, and at midday there has been staged in the Opera house of the Winter Palace оперном Зимняго дома зале an excellent theatrical action, called with Italian name of Pastorale […]." ("№ 55 во вторник июля 10 дня 1739 года/ В Санктпетербурге 10 июля <…> В тот же день [Monday, 2 July] воспоследовало при дворе торжественное обручение Его Высококняжеской светлости Принца Брауншвейг-Люнебургского Антона Улриха с Ея Высочеством государынею Принцессою Анною. К совершению сего высокого брака назначен следующий вторник, а именно 3 число сего месяца <…> / В пятницу был в Зимнем доме у их Светлости новобрачного Принца и Принцессы всем знатнейшим обоего пола лицам пребогатой обет, а по полудни представлено в оперном Зимняго дома зале преизрядное театральное действо, называемое Италианским имянем Пасторале <…>."). *Iz gazety «Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1739 god* (From the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1739), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, Doc. 187, p. 329.
[124] During the following reign of Elizabeth Petrovna (see Chap. II), there was to be a reduced activity of staging intermezzos, in favour of other genres. Vsevolodsky-Gerngross records only five titles, that he

Empress's death, which suspended Araja's productions for some time.

On her deathbed Anna appointed Bühren regent because the baby emperor Ivan VI (Ioann Antonovich) was then only one month old. Bühren's regency lasted exactly three weeks, until 8/19 November 1740, when he was arrested by his ancient rival, field marshal Münnich. The commission appointed to try his case condemned him to death by quartering (11 April 1741), but the sentence was commuted by the clemency of the new regent, Anna Leopoldovna, the mother of Ivan VI, to banishment for life in Siberia, while all his property was confiscated. Anna Leopoldovna, the former Empress's niece, was appointed the new regent.

reported only in Russian: *Syn p'yanitsa* (The drunkard's son, 'intermezzo' staged in St. Petersburg on 9 Febrary 1746); *Pastorale* ('Italian action', staged in St. Petersburg on 8 and 11 February 1742, and on 26 April and 7 September 1748); *Chepukha smeshnaya*, or simply *Chepukha* ((Funny) nonsense, 'intermezzo' staged in St. Petersburg on 1 July and 31 August 1750, and in Moscow on 18 February 1753); *Trakolo*, or *Vor* (The thief, 'intermezzo' staged in St. Petersburg on 2 July 1750); *Igrok* (The gambler', intermezzo staged in St. Petersburg on 10 October 1757 and 27 February 1758. These performances were staged by actors such as Rosina Bon, Domenico Cricchi, Nunziata Garani and Pietro Compassi. According to an *ukaz* signed on 15 September 1745, they were staged in the evenings of Mondays, later, according to the *ukazy* of 30 October 1753 and 5 May 1755 on Wednesday. According to Gerngross, there were many more intermezzos, which titles did not get to our time. See V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne* (The Theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna), Sankt-Peterburg, «GIPERION» 2003, pp. 66-7.

Chapter II - Elizabeth Petrovna

Part I – The Coming to Power of the Empress and *La Clemenza*

The Coming to Power of the Empress

During the years 1740-41, the country was ruled by Anna Leopoldovna as regent for the young Ivan Antonovich (Ivan VI), who was only two months old, and was a puppet of the German court clique (Bühren, Ostermann, Loewenwolde, Münnich, in connivance with Ivan's father, the Duke of Braunschweig-Mecklenburg). On 25 November 1741, another *coup d'état* led by members of the Russian aristocracy, with the help of the Preobrazhensky Regiment, succeeded in putting on the throne the second-oldest surviving daughter of Peter the Great and Catherine I, Elizavéta Petròvna (henceforth Elizabeth), thus deposing Ivan VI.

The beginning of Elizabeth's reign was marked by a turn over in the Court staff, which was aimed to put an end to the German domination. As soon as she ascended the throne, Elizabeth banished from the country such figures as Münnich, Ostermann and Loewenwolde, who were sent to Siberia, and forced Anna's favourite Bühren to take up his residence in Yaroslavl'.[1] As reflected in the renewal of the staff, also the main directions in ruling the country were subjected to radical changes. Such a break from the past was to take place at every subsequent change of the ruler in Russia from then on.

At the time Elizabeth rose to power, the guardsmen claimed to be animated by patriotic hatred against the German tyranny. While Anna's departure from Peter's reforms had been perceived by her opposers as a foreign "attack" on the Russian state, Elizabeth came to the throne as a "native" (*prirodnaya*) empress.[2] The *coup d'état* was seen by her supporters as a patriotic act: according to Rogger, press, academic speeches, theatrical performances, and poetic outpourings commemorated the great day:

> The poet Lomonosov returned to the theme of liberation from the foreign yoke by Peter's daughter in one after another of his stiffly grandiloquent odes, and as late as 1762 the memory of

[1] For more than twenty years, the ex-regent disappeared from the high places of history, to re-emerge for a brief moment in 1762, when the Germanophile Peter III summoned him to his court. In 1763 Catherine re-established him in his duchy, which he bequeathed to his son. He died at Rastrelli's palace in Mitau on 29 December 1772.

[2] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power: myth and ceremony in Russian monarchy: from Peter the Great to the abdication of Nicholas 2*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2006, p. 42.

those great days could still inspire him to patriotic fervor. Elizabeth, Russia's savior, will usher in a golden age and save Russia from all fear.[3]

The empire and the nation of Russia quickly became the main topic and the true object of praise in Lomonosov's odes. As the historian Aleksandr Kamensky observes, this was the first case when national feelings of people were knowingly used by politicians for their own aims.[4] The message that the 'scenario' of Elizabeth's rule conveyed consisted of the idea that she had wrested the heritage of Peter the Great from the hands of foreigners and delivered the sons of Russia from slavery, bringing prosperity back to her father's reign. Patriotism was thus superimposed on the restoration of Peter's reforms, although the Empress's father himself had opened the road to foreigners and led to a forced Westernization of the country. This is well exemplified in the following stanza by Lomonosov:

На запад смотрит грозным оком
Сквозь дверь небесну Дух Петров,
Во гневе сильном и жестоком
Преступных он мятет врагов.
Богиня кротко с ним взирает
На Невский брег и простирает
Свой перст на Дщерь свою с высот:
«Воззри на образ твой и плод,
Что все дела твои восставит
И в свете тем себя прославит.»[5]

[The Spirit of Peter looks through the door of heaven
At the West with frightening eye,
He gazes at his criminal enemies
In a fierce and severe anger.
The goddess together with him
Gently looks at the Neva shore and extends
Her finger on her Daughter from above:
"Look at your image and fruit,
Who will raise all your deals
And through this will be glorious in the world."]

[3] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1960, p. 32. With regard to this, one can compare Lomonosov's *Oda na pribytie Eya Velichestva Velikiya Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Elisavety Petrovny iz Moskvy v Sanktpeterburg 1742 goda po Koronatsii* (Ode on the arrival of Her Majesty the Great Sovereign Empress Elizaveta Petrovna from Moscow in Saint Petersburg after her coronation), with his *Oda torzhestvennaya Eya Imperatorskomu Velichestvu Vsepresvetleyshey Derzhavneyshey Velikoy Gosudaryne Imperatritse Ekaterine Alekseevne, Samoderzhitse Vserossiyskoy na Preslavnoe Eya Vosshestvie na Vserossiysky Imperatorsky Prestol Iyunya 28 Dnya 1762 Goda* (Solemn ode to Her Imperial Majesty the Most Glorious Sovereign Great Empress Ekaterina Alekseevna, Autocrat of All Russias, on Her Most High Ascension to the All Russian Imperial Throne in the day 28 June 1762).

[4] "По существу это был первый случай, когда национальные чувства людей были умело использованы политиками в собственных целях" A. B. KAMENSKY, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I: reformy v Rossii 18 veka: opyt tselostnogo analiza* (From Peter I to Paul I: reforms in 18th-century Russia), Moskva, RGGU 1999, pp. 276-7.

[5] M.V. LOMONOSOV, *Oda na pribytie Eya Velichestva Velikiya Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Elisavety Petrovny…*, stanza 34, p. 78.

As pointed out by Rogger, patriotism and the reference to the great tsar Peter I were simply an instrument to legitimize the Empress's ascension to the throne.[6] This leads us to consider two further aspects of the patriotic 'scenario' set up by Elizabeth's rule, which coexist with the idea of returning to the well-being of Peter I's time: on the one hand what Wortman calls the 'happiness in the official rhetoric,'[7] and on the other hand the continuing (and here intentionally ignored) influence of foreign favourites in ruling the country.

According to Wortman, "The prolonged celebrations following the religious ceremonies provided strenuous, often fervish shows of acclamation by the elite for a monarch dedicated to the well-being of Russia as they understood it."[8] We shall soon see how the musical theatre was involved in such a program (see below - *La Clemenza di Tito*). Gala dinners, balls and performances by Italian troupes were organized, and during the first audience a feast was organized for 'the people' (this time the term being considered in its larger acceptation) took place in Moscow before the palace, to legitimize the new empress also in front of a wider "public." During the whole reign, the Court would try, in a 'populist' measure, to enact and represent the ideology of the Golden Age in front of the entire country.

Indeed, under the reign of Elizabeth, the Russian court was one of the most splendid in all Europe. Foreigners were amazed at the sheer luxury of the sumptuous balls and masquerades. The Empress prided herself on her skills as a dancer and wore the most exquisite dresses (she is told to have left 15000 ball gowns after her death, none of them having been worn more than once).[9] She issued decrees governing the styles of dresses and decorations worn by courtiers, while nobody was allowed to have the same hair style as the empress, which was meant to highlight the uniqueness of the person of the monarch. Her reign is associated to the name of the architect Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli, who re-built the Winter Palace, and designed the Smol'ny Institut, and the summer palaces of Peterhoff and Tsarskoe Selo.

[6] "Soldiers, bishops, and poets with one voice acclaimed the new Empress as their liberator from the foreign yoke, greeted her as Peter's daughter and in all the jubilation failed to notice that a German, a Frenchman, and a Swede had played major roles in the conspiracy which brought her to the throne." H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia* … , p. 30.
[7] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power*..., p. 43.
[8] *ivi*, p. 44.
[9] With regard to this see [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Shtelina o Petre Tret'em Imperatore Vserossiyskom* (Stählin's Notes about the All Russian Emperor Peter III), *Chteniya v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostey rossiyskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* (Lectures at the Imperial Society of History and Russian Antiquities at the Moscow University), 1866, kn. IV, pp. 67-118.

Such a show of power can easily explain why around the mid 18th century the expenses for the maintenance of the Court increased. As Kamensky points out,

> […] theoretically speaking the growth also of the national outlay in its whole, and of the expenses for the court was a natural phenomenon, conditioned by the continuing process of Westernization of the Russian life, by the administrative and economical State functions becoming all the more complex, by the active involvement of Russia in the world culture.[10]

This idea is supported by Wortman when he states that "happiness" in official rhetoric expressed the eudemonistic ethic of the Enlightenment, and that by promising her subjects happiness, Elizabeth defined herself as a European monarch.[11]

This leads us to the second aspect worth noticing. Wortman observes that, this rejoicing being for the return of Petrine Russia, "[…] Elizabeth had inherited neither her father's vision nor his destructive energy."[12] After restoring several of Peter's institutions such as the Senate, she tended to leave government in the hands of her favourites. Elizabeth evoked her father to provide a mythical charismatic basis for her own rule, which was a conservative one, whose principal goal was to maintain the existing social and political order. On the one hand, in this respect Elizabeth's aims appear to be in virtual continuity – albeit in theoretical opposition - with her predecessor's rule. On the other hand, as already hinted at, her collaborators (favourites) were also foreigners, too, and responsible for Westernizing Russian culture. The only difference from the previous reign consisted in substituting a pro-French and pro-Italian attitude to a pro-German one. Paradoxically,

> Having established her claim as a Russian of Russians, Elizabeth could surround herself with any number of foreigners and still enjoy her reputation as a patriot. If her accession seemed to her contemporaries a liberation from the foreigner, the rest of her reign illustrated the completely casual, not to say haphazard, nature of the nationalism of the period. It is true that the highest posts in Elizabeth's government were occupied by Russians and that she was responsive to the anti-German current in the opposition to her predecessors and utilized it, but she was far from being dominated by it. Although native Russians once more came into their own, the government chancelleries were nonetheless still occupied by men who bore such un-Russian names as Bevier, Brevern, Sievers, Flueck, and Luberas.[13]

Similarly, following Wortman,

[10] "[…] в принципе увеличение и государственных расходов в целом, и расходов на двор было явлением естественным, обусловленным продолжением процесса европеизации русской жизни, усложнением управленческих и хозяйственных функций государства, активным вовлечением России в мировую культуру." A. B. KAMENSKY, *Ot Petra I do Pavla I*..., p. 293.
[11] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power*..., p. 43.
[12] *ivi*, p. 51.
[13] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*..., p. 33.

> In the sphere of the enlightenment, Elizabeth's reign prepared the way for the development of thought later in the century. Elizabeth herself was poorly educated and lacked intellectual interests. But many of her favorites, among them Ivan Shuvalov, Peter Shuvalov's brother, and Nikita Panin read the works of the philosophes and conceived of a monarchy based on law, staffed by officials who gained their positions on the basis of merit. It was Ivan Shuvalov who persuaded the empress to agree to the establishment of Russia's first university, Moscow University, in 1755. With the encouragement of Nikita Panin, a group of intellectuals and writers formed at the university to pursue the ideas of enlightenment reform. […] In other areas as well, intellectual Westernization quickened during Elizabeth's reign. The first scholarly and intellectual journals began to appear, with small circulations to be sure, but harbingers of things to come.[14]

These observations appear to portray Russian as a country in which the foreign influences were strong, nationalistic slogans notwithstanding, be they encouraged by Western figures, or by Russians accustomed to Western ideas. And in fact, as Karabanov tells, "With Empress Elizaveta Petrovna's ascension to the throne, German language at Court and in high society was replaced by French […]. From this time on, the influence of French started to affect our country […]."[15] Elizabeth had learned it with the prospect of marrying King Louis XV, although the Bourbons denied their consent because of the obscure origins of her mother.[16] She had also been educated by a French governess, and was fluent in Italian and German too. According to Mooser, "Depuis l'avènement d'Elisabeth en novembre 1741, la Russie vivait à l'heure de la France grâce à la contribution active de son ambassadeur, le marquis de La Chétardie, au coup d'Etat intronisant la fille de Pierre le Grand."[17] Elizabeth was well-educated - and this has been discussed at length also in opposition to the supposed 'ignorance' of Anna Ioannovna – was supported by enlightened favourites and had a taste for European styles; also, unlike her father, was also very fond of Italian and French music, which were among her major interests.[18] In her time, opera was both a form of entertainment and an instrument of propaganda that well incarnated the recapitulated setting.

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[14] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power*..., p. 52.

[15] "По восшествии на престол Императрицы Елисаветы Петровны, Немецкий язык при Дворе и в высшем обществе заменен был Французским <…>. С этого времени начинается у нас влияние Французскаго языка, <…>." The author, expressing himself as the typical nationalist of Nicholas I's time, thus continues: "которое впоследствии сделалось вредно и тягостно для Русскаго языка и литературы." ("that thereafter turned pernicious and oppressive for both Russian language and literature.") A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra kadetami pervogo kadetskogo korpusa. K stoletnemu yubileyu* (The foundation of the Russian theatre by the cadets of the first Infantry Corps of Nobles. For the centenary), SPb, v Tipografii voenno-uchebnykh zavedeniy 1849, pp. 6-7.

[16] Empress Elizabeth was the daughter of Peter I's second wife Ekaterina Alekseevna (Catherine I), born Marta Elena Skavronska (later Marfa Samuilovna Skavronskaya), a woman of peasant origins, who had been, before the marriage to Peter I, part of the household of Prince Aleksandr Menshchikov, and his own mistress. As for Empress Elizabeth, there is reason to believe that she could have married her favourite Aleksey Razumovsky in a secret ceremony.

[17] F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*, in *Cahiers du monde russe*, No. 43/2-3 (2002), p. 323

[18] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, pp. 46-7.

La Clemenza di Tito

The coronation celebrations in Moscow were the first manifestation of the ideology lying at the foundation of Elizabeth's reign. The coronation itself took place on 22 February (6 March) 1742, but festivities lasted longer. On the occasion, the Italian troupe performed, on 9 June, Metastasio's opera *La Clemenza di Tito*, chosen to represent the ideology of the new reign.

For the occasion a new theatre was built, on the banks of the river Yauza, in front of the Empress's palace. As attested by documents collected by Starikova, the project was commissioned to Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli, with whom the theatrical painter Girolamo Bon collaborated.[19] According to Stählin, the theatre was built in wood on a stone foundation, had fours levels (*yarusy*) and could host up to 5000 spectators; it was richly decorated and illuminated, and was appropriate for the most *magnificent* stagings.[20]

The opera troupe itself, though, was quite impoverished at the beginning of Elisabeth's reign after losing several singers and musicians, who had foreseen the imminent death of their previous patron. For this reason, Loewenwolde sent Araja to Italy to recruit musicians, and invited over to Russia a French troupe resident in Germany at that

[19] "№ 24, марта 22 дня. Из Москвы от 15 марта. <…> Здесь со всяким прилежанием строят великолепный оперный дом, которой к будущему апрелю месяцу к окончанию привесть должно. В Императорском Зимнем дворце подле большой залы строят еще другую большую маскарадную залу, которую к помянутому ж времени отделать велено." (No. 24, 22 March. From Moscow in the date of 15 March. […] Here with all the industriousness a magnificent opera house is being built, that is to be completed by the next month of April. In the Imperial Winter Palace near the great hall another big hall for masquerades is being built, also planned to be finished by the mentioned time.) *Iz "Sankt-Peterburkskikh vedomostey" za 1742 god* (From the *Saint Petersburg gazette* of the year 1742), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny: dokumental'naya khronika* (Russian theatrical life at Elizabeth Petrovna's time. A documented chronicle, 1741-1750), vypusk II, ch. I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Nauka 2003, Doc. 518, p. 551. Moreover, as attested by several documents, such as the following: "<…> отправлен из Санкт Питербурха в Москву для строения ко дню коронации Ея Императорскаго Величества Оперного дому обер архитектор Растреллий и, что принадлежит на оное строение материалов, работников и протчаго, по требованию ево все давать безостановочно, дабы низачем остановки быть не могло." ([…] the chief architect Rastrelli has been transferred from Saint Petersburg to Moscow for the construction of an Opera House by the day of the coronation of Her Imperial Majesty; at his request, provide him immediately all the materials, workers and other things, so that there can be any obstacle). *Iz Dela o postriyke Opernogo doma 1742 goda* (From the file concerning the construction of the Opera house in 1742), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vyp. II, ch. I, Doc. 519, p. 552, but also in Docs. Nos. 519, 521, that testify the stages of construction too.

[20] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii* (Notices about music in Russia), in *Muzyka i balet v Rossii XVII veka* (Music and ballet in 18th-century Russia), edited by B. I. Zagursky, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "Soyuz khudozhnikov" 2002, pp. 119-21. According to Mooser a description of the theatre can also be found on the newspaper *Sankepeterburgskie vedomosti* of 31 May 1742. 5000 seems an exaggeration to many researchers, 1000 spectators being, according to Lutsker and Susidko, a big enough number for a 18th-century theatre. I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*, *Johann Adolf Hasse in seiner Zeit, Bericht über das Symposium vom 23. Bis 26. März 1999 in Hamburg herausgegeben von Reinhard Wiesend*, Stuttgard, Carus-Verlag 2006, in the Russian translation provided by the authors.

time (see Chap. II – Part II – The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*). Araja being absent, Elisabeth had to resort to a different artistic director to organize her celebrations, and found him in Jacob von Stählin.

Born in Memmingen (Germany) in 1709, Stählin had arrived in Russia in 1735 on invitation by the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg, where he remained till his death in 1785. Two years after his arrival, he was appointed adjunct to the Academy of Sciences for eloquence and poetry studies, ethics and law, and started to work as an inventor of illuminations and fireworks. He also managed the official correspondence between the Academy, the Court and the Senate, when these were in Moscow. Later on he was charged with the organization of Anna Ioannovna's funeral. In the years 1735-37, as music correspondent for the newspaper, he issued the German edition of *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (*Sankt-Petersburger Zeitung*); from 1738 to 1742 he wrote articles (as seen) for the divulgative appendix of the newspaper, entitled *Primechaniya na Sankpeterburgskie vedomosti* (Notes to the *Saint Petersburg gazette*), printed twice weekly over a four-month period. Timed to the staging of Araja's performances,[21] its aim was to enlighten of the Russian society in several realms of culture and science, and, specifically, to familiarize readers with opera. Stählin also tried his hand at poetry writing, although the artistic value of his occasional poems is now considered disputable.[22] In his time, however, he gained enormous personal success, which led him to become, starting 1 June 1742, librarian and tutor to the grand duke Pyotr Fyodorovich.[23]

By the end of the 1730s Stählin committed himself to art history, and at the end of 1747 he founded an Academy of Fine Arts as a spin-off of the Academy of Sciences. He assumed the direction of the institution, which was expected to collect the best specialists of the time, both Russian and foreign. According to Liechtenhan, "Il s'attribuait, à lui exclusivement, des ambitions didactiques: former le goût du public et contribuer à la naissance d'un art intrinsèquement russe qui ne serait pas religieux."[24] At the Academy, thirty eight students attended lessons in different fields, including the French language,

[21] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 43.
[22] According to Liechtenhan, "Poète de l'Académie, fidèle à son maître Gottsched, il fabriquait aussi des vers à la chaîne, alignait les rimes sans prêter attention à leur sens, pourvu qu'elles soient empreintes d'un esprit servile. Quand l'un de ses contemporains s'avisait de faire de même, il appelait cela «Afterdichtung» (poésie de l'anus). Ses adversaires, le camp français, avançaient qu'il reproduisait l'éloquence de la cour de Louis XIV, en la ridiculisant par son esprit ringard." F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 322.
[23] K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob Shtelin, zhizn' i deyatel'nost'* (Jacob von Stählin, his life and work), in YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Yakoba Shtelina ob izyashchnykh isskustvakh v Rossii* (Jacob von Stählin's memoirs about fine arts in Russia), tt. I-II, edited by K. V. Malinovsky, M., „Iskusstvo" 1990, t. I, p. 10. See also M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, pp. 41-2.
[24] F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 325.

"présage d'une formation supplémentaire qu'ils recevraient à Paris."[25] In March 1766, Stählin was appointed permanent Secretary to the Academy of Sciences, and thus assigned a number of different tasks: to supervise the departments, appoint new teachers, organize scientific expeditions, have the premises repaired or built, deal with the legal trials against students or apprentices, and keep correspondence and archives up to date. Thus, he became acquainted with the most prominent men of letters of the time, such as Mikhail Lomonosov and Aleksandr Sumarokov. Starting towards the end of the 1760s, Stählin progressively devoted himself to art and music history. According to Liechtenhan,

> À la fois courtisan et contestataire, homme public capable d'exploits rhétoriques couronnés de succès et mémorialiste vengeur, Stählin nous a laissé un témoignage exceptionnel de la vie d'un intellectuel occidental en Russie, contraint à la complaisance ou à l'hypocrisie face à la hiérarchie, n'hésitant devant aucune intrigue dans ses rapports avec ses semblables ou ses subalternes. Ses notices, qui constituent des sources d'une richesse exceptionnelle, mais devant être traitées avec précaution, révèlent deux aspects significatifs des années 1730-1780: le peu d'estime des scientifiques occidentaux pour les Russes et la rivalité entre Allemands et Français, ceci bien au-delà du règne d'Elisabeth. Nommé sous Anna Ioannovna, Stählin ne supporta pas le déclin du clan germanique à l'Académie, même si ses membres les plus éminents restaient d'origine suisse ou alémanique. Son problème majeur restait le fonctionnement incontrôlable et incontrôlé d'une société méritocratique qui engendrait l'esprit courtisan, les rivalités et les médisances auxquels ni lui ni l'Académie n'échappaient, lui-même, malgré ses dires, se complaisant tout particulièrement à attiser la discorde par ses provocations.[26]

In his youth (from 1732) Stählin, a flute player, had studied at the university of Leipzig, a city that by that time was an important musical centre in Germany. He had close contacts with Bach's family, in particular with his son Carl Philipp Emanuel, and played in the Collegium musicum directed by Johann Sebastian. His music activity in Moscow began in 1742, where he conducted the orchestra rehearsals of *La clemenza di Tito*, designed costumes for the singers, and played the flute in the orchestra.[27] Having effectively been the court poet since 1736, at the moment of Elizabeth's coronation he had already received the title of "maître des cérémonies" (artistic director, *rezhissyor*).[28] According to Malinovsky, before moving to Moscow for the coronation, Elisabeth ordered "professor Stählin to follow the court of Her Imperial Majesty to Moscow", on 17 February.[29] According to Liechtenhan, he took the liberty of presenting on behalf of the

[25] *ivi*, p. 326.
[26] *ivi*, p. 332.
[27] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg, Entsiklopedichesky slovar'* (Musical Petersburg, Encyclopaedia), vol. 3, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "KOMPOZITOR" 2000, p. 283.
[28] F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 323.
[29] "профессору Штелину ехать за двором своего императорского величества в Москву", P. P. PEKARSKY, *Istoriya imperatorskoy Akademii nauk v Peterburge* (History of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg), Spb. 1870, quoted in YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Yakoba Shtelina ob izyashchnykh isskustvakh v Rossii...*, I, p. 10.

Academy of Sciences, a flattering speech in dithyrambic verse, through which he attracted further patronage by the young Empress.[30] This enterprise possibly helped him to consolidate his position at the renewed Court.

As explained above, the choice of the opera for the coronation cerebrations was partly due to Araja's absence from the Court: there was no time to compose a new opera. The choice fell upon Metastasio's *Clemenza*. The subject itself had the right characteristics to please the Empress, since it was one of the most appreciated operas all over Europe. Metastasio had written the libretto for Vienna in 1734, for the name day of emperor Karl VI (father to the Austrian empress Maria Theresa), and was first set to music by Antonio Caldara. The same subject was later to be chosen by A. Hasse, L. Leo (1735), Ch. Gluck (1752), N. Jommelli (1753), B. Galuppi (1760) and many others, including the most famous by Mozart.[31] Adolf Hasse's *Tito Vespasiano* had first been staged in Pesaro on 24 September 1735, while another version of his took place in Dresden in 1738, and later on in several German theatres. A third version, performed in Naples in 1759, has no relation to the former.[32] According to Mooser, given the good relationships between the imperial family and the regent family of Saxony, the Russian court had possibly been informed of the great success of Hasse's version. The historian, supported by sources, suggests the influence of Stählin himself.[33] Beyond the prestige of the opera, Ferrazzi points out the primary role played by the subject itself in its choice for Elisabeth's coronation:

> История Тита Флавия Веспасиана, помиловавшего своего друга Сестия, который, поддавшись на уговоры своей возлюбленной, составил заговор против жизни императора, казалось, соответствует как нельзя более личной истории Елизаветы, которая после дворцового переворота, вознесшего ее на трон, помиловала Брауншвейгскую фамилию, А. И. Остермана, Б.-Х. Миниха, Лёвенвольде и других своих могущественных противников.[34]

[The history of Vespasian, who had mercy on his friend Sesto, who, persuaded by his beloved, had organized a plot against the life of the Emperor, seemed to correspond at best to the personal history of Elizabeth, who after the palace revolution that led her to the throne had had mercy of the Braunschweig

[30] "[…] ses dons à la recherche ou aux arts n'allaient-ils pas immortaliser son nom et sa personne sacrée?" F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 323.

[31] Mozart put it in music in 1791, on a libretto re-elaborated by Caterino Mazzolà, when Maria Teresa's son, the former grand duke of Tuscany Leopold II received the crown of Hungary and Bohemia.

[32] P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii* (*The Clemency of Titus* in Russia), in *Starinnaya muzyka* (Ancient music), 1999, No. 3, p. 11 n.

[33] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIIIme siècle*, I, Genève, Mont-Blanc 1948, p. 188; P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii…*, pp. 8-9.

[34] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny: prolog "Rossiya po pechali paki obradovannaya" i opera-seria "Miloserdie Tita"* (Theatrical Celebrations for the Coronation of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna: the prologue *Afflicted and Comforted Russia* and the opera *seria The Clemency of Titus*), in *Okkazional'naya literatura v kontekste preazdnichnoy kul'tury XVIII veka* (Occasional literature in the context of festive culture of 18th century), edited by P. Bukharkin, U. Ekuch and N. Kochetkova, Sankt-Peterburg, Filologichesky fakul'tet Sankt-Peterburgskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 2010, pp. 315-6.

family, of A. I. Ostermann, B. Kh. Münnich, Loewenwolde and others among her powerful enemies.]

The relation between text and Russian reality is made explicit in a prologue in two parts, *La Russia Afflitta e Racconsolata* (Afflicted and comforted Russia, in Russian *Rossiya po pechali paki obradovannaya*), written, as Stählin recalls, directly in Italian by him.[35] It involves two main characters, Ruthenia, interpreted by Caterina Giorgi, and Astreya, played by Rosa Ruvinetti Bon. In the first scene Ruthenia, embracing her two children, weeps for her miserable destiny, evoking Peter I and his wife and successor Catherine I, to return form the Elysian fields:

> […] Mirate or come
> Deserta, inculta, disprezzata, abbietta
> Qual già fui pria di voi, vivo negletta.[36]

Ruthenia sees her own salvation in the coming of Empress Elizabeth, in virtue of the "hereditary law":

> […] Ella a me dice,
> Ch'in ELISA lor figlia, e loro imago
> Jo cangerò fortuna
> E ch'il vostro destin sara felice.[37]

The growing hope is metaphorically represented by the rising of the sun, recalled in the last recitative of the scene. The second part opens with goddess Astrea (Astraea, representing justice) appearing on the horizon accompanied by Elizabeth's personal virtues (Justice, Valour, Generosity, Magnanimity, and Clemency) symbolized by dancers. Astrea comforts Ruthenia announcing the new Empress. Further, a reference to the forthcoming

[35] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Russia Afflitta, e racconsolata* [*sic*] *Prologo nell'opera intitolata: La Clemenza di Tito* (Afflicted and Comforted Russia. Prologue of the opera titled: *The Clemency of Titus*), in [P. METASTASIO – J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Clemenza di Tito Dramma per Musica con Prologo, Da Rappresentarsi all'Occasione Della Felicissim'Incoronazione Di Sua Maestà Imperial ELISABETTA PETROWNA Imperatrice di Tutte le Russie &c. &c. &c. Nel Nuovo Imperiale Teatro di Moscau MDCCXLII.* (The Clemency of Titus. Drama for music with Prologue, To be staged on the Occasion of the Most Delightful Coronation of Her Imperial Majesty Elizabeth Petrovna Empress of All Russias etc. etc. etc. in the New Imperial Theatre of Moscow 1742) Moscau, nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imp. Delle Scienze. The attribution is based on his memoirs, in which he states: "К коронации императрицы Елизаветы в 1742 году в Москве в числе других увеселений предназначалась прелестнейшая опера «Clemenza di Tito». Мне была поручена распорядительная часть, составление для этого выдающегося события подходящего пролога («La Russia afflitta e riconsolata») и вообще заботы об опере." (For the coronation of empress Elizabeth in Moscow in 1742 among other amusements there had been intended the delightful opera *Clemenza di Tito*. I was charged of the organization, of writing a proper prologue (*La Russia afflitta e riconsolata*) for this prominent event and in general of the concern for the opera.) YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, pp. 59-61.

[36] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Russia Afflitta, e racconsolata*..., pages not numbered.

[37] *ivi*

representation of the opera is made, which directly liks the topic to the act of clemency of the sovereign:

> E grata à suoi vassalli
> Con generosa destra
> Quanto sanno bramar tutto lor dona,
> E co' sensi d'un cuor, che pochi ha pari,
> Scorda l'offese, e gl'offensor perdona.[38]

A monument is then uncovered by Ruthenia, carrying an inscription that draws a parallel between Titus and Elizabeth:

> VIVA
> ELISABETA [*sic*]
> LA PIU BRAMATA
> LA CORONATA
> IMPERATRICE
> DI TUTTE LE RUSSIE
> LA MADRE DELLA PATRIA
> LE DELICIE DEL GENERE UMANO
> IL TITO DE NOSTRI TEMPI
> MDCCXLII.[39]
>
> [Да здравствует благополучно
> ЕЛИСАВЕТА
> достойнейшая, вожделенная коронованная
> императрица всероссийская
> мать отечества
> УВЕСЕЛЕНИЕ ЧЕЛОВЕЧЕСКАГО РОДА
> ТИТ ВРЕМЕН НАШИХ
> 1742.][40]

Astrea assures Ruthenia for the return of Peter's Golden Age, leading her through her newly restored glorious land, while they are surrounded by the dancing allegories of Elizabeth's virtues, and those of her country: Hope, Love, Loyalty, Trust and Joy. People, representing peoples of the four known parts of the world - Europeans, Asian, Africans, Americans - express their rejoicing in the final chorus:

> *Mentre in Tito ammira Roma*
> *Il valore, e la clemenza*
> *E di quello all'alta chioma*
> *Grata apresta un serto d'or;*
>
> *Dal suo zelo il nostro impari*

[38] *ivi.*
[39] *Ivi.*
[40] *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda* (Programme of the performance of the opera *The Clemency of Titus*), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vyp. II, ch. I, Doc. 4, p. 54.

Celebrar la nostra Diva,
Se di quello há questa al pari
La clemenza ed il valor.[41]

[Милость с храбростью Царя Лавры соплетала,
Титова, когда рука Римский скиптр держала.
Образ когего и мы зрим на троне ныне
И того днесь похвалы соплетем богине.][42]

The prologue was later translated into French and German by the author himself.[43] A Russian 'translation' was also prepared, some extracts of which I have compared with the Italian original. It was not always faithful to the original, lacking some parts, and including some passages rendered in prose rather than in verse, and it was in fact considered a description of the event written *a posteriori* to recall it.[44] According to Ferrazzi, Lomonosov could be the author of the Russian version, which was issued anonymously in 1742.[45] Evidence in support of this includes the translations of panegyric odes that Lomonosov was commissioned to do upon his return from Germany, such as an ode composed for Elisabeth's coronation and the ode written by the academic Junker for the same occasion.[46] Actually, a correspondence can be found between Stählin's recitative lines (Ruthenia) in the first part of the prologue,

Ah! Voi del mio gran Pietro,
Della mia Caterina
Ombre, cari, e immortali, ah degl'Elisi
Deh! Lasciate il soggiorno, e i piani miei
Venite a consolar. […][47]

and the image of Peter and Catherine I looking at Elisabeth from Heaven in the quoted ode by Lomonosov. Unfortunately, a direct correspondence cannot be established, the lines by Stählin's being rendered in prose in the Russian text.[48] Anyway, a similarity can be found also in the second part. The aria by Astrea:

Fra le doti di quel core
Qual virtù sia la maggiore.
Vede il mondo, ed io lo so.

[41] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Russia Afflitta, e racconsolata…*
[42] *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda…*, p. 60.
[43] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…*, p. 316.
[44] *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda…*
[45] *ivi*, p. 316. Ferrazzi refers to *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda….*
[46] In 1742 Lomonosov had been appointed Adjunct to the Academy of Sciences, working mostly as a translator.
[47] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Russia Afflitta, e racconsolata…*
[48] See *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda….*

Del gran Padre i fatti egreggi
Della Madre augusta i preggi
Imitar ELLA imparò.[49]

is thus translated in the *Programma*:

Видит свет и я сама в Ней доброт причины:
Идет по следам Петра и Екатерины![50]

The aria also finds an 'equivalent' in Lomonosov's ode, that it is worth quoting again in a longer excerpt:

На запад смотрит грозным оком
Сквозь дверь небесну Дух Петров,
Во гневе сильном и жестоком
Преступных он мятет врагов.
Богиня кротко с ним взирает
На Невский брег и простирает
Свой перст на Дщерь свою с высот:
«Воззри на образ твой и плод,
Что все дела твои восставит
И в свете тем себя прославит».

«Исполнен я веселья ныне,
Что вновь дела мои растут, -
Вещает Петр к Екатерине, -
Твои советы все цветут.
Блаженны Дщерью мы своею;
Рука Господня буди с Нею;
Блажен тот год, тот день и час,
Когда Господь ущедрил нас,
Подав Ее нам на утеху
И всех трудов моих к успеху».[51]

[The Spirit of Peter looks through the door of heaven
At the West with frightening eye,
He gazes at his criminal enemies
In a fierce and severe anger.
The goddess together with him
Gently looks at the Neva's shore and extends
Her finger on her Daughter from above:
"Look at your image and fruit,
Who will raise all your deals
And through this will be glorious in the world".

"In this day of happiness I'm realized,
Because all my deals grow, -
Peter announces to Catherine, -
All your advices are blossoming.
We are blessed by the means of my Daughter;
With Her the hands of the Lord are awaken;

[49] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Russia afflitta, e racconsolata...*
[50] *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda…*, p. 60.
[51] M. V. LOMONOSOV, *Oda na pribytie Eya Velichestva Velikiya Gosudaryni Imperatritsy Elisavety Petrovny…*, pp. 78-9.

Blessed is that year, that day and time,
When the Lord presented us,
Leading us Her as a comfort
And all my deeds to their accomplishment."]

Confirming the attribution of the Russian version to Lomonosov is not indispensable to stress the celebrative function of Italian opera *seria*, although the confirmation of such a hypothesis would reinforce this interpretation, since Lomonosov was one of the most prominent (if not absolutely the most prominent) of the Court poets of the whole 18th-century Russia. Moreover, more precise evidence should be found with regard to this, since the reference to Elisabeth's father is, as previously pointed out, a *topos* of the panegyric poetry of her time.

Araja being absent, the music of the *Prologue*, long ascribed to him, was written, as attested by the libretto, by Domenico Dall'Oglio, musician of the Italian troupe.[52] The violinist had been in Russia since 1735;[53] he received the commission for the coronation celebrations in the spring of 1742.[54] According to Lutsker and Susidko, the music of the prologue, long considered lost, is preserved, together with the opera score, at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.[55] Not being in a position to study it myself, I gathered information about it from Stählin, according to whom the music for the *Prologue* "was so expressive and sincere, that at any performance of it, especially with the aria "Ah, miei figli" ["De' miei figli, e del mio core," Ruthenia, part I], with the sweet accompaniment of the flute and the strongly sounding lute of the Secretary Spitz, the Empress, who had a very subtle sensibility, could not refrain the tears."[56] However, we have to keep in mind that the proud memorialist would hardly have admitted the failure of an opera in whose conception he himself had directly took part. Moreover, given the circumstances in which it was staged, the opera could have no disappointing reception.

[52] "*La musica del Prologo […] è composta* dal Sig. Domenico Dall'Oglio, […]." [P. METASTASIO – J. VON STÄHLIN], *La clemenza di Tito…*

[53] He had arrived with Araja, engaged by Pietro Mira, but had remained in St. Petersburg while the composer was in Italy. His and his brother's (Giuseppe) biographies and artistic careers are reconstructed by Ferrazzi in M. L. FERRAZZI, *Musicisti padovani nella Russia del Settecento. I fratelli Dall'Oglio* (Musicians from Padua in 18th-century Russia. The Dall'Oglio brothers), in *Russica Romana*, vol. VIII, 2001, pp. 103-19.

[54] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…*, p. 322.

[55] P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii…*, p. 9.

[56] "была настолько выразительна и искренна, что всякий раз при ее исполнении, особенно в арии "Ah, miei figli" ["De' miei figli, e del mio core"], под мягкий аккомпанемент флейты и сильно звучащей лютни секретаря Шпитца, тонко чувствующая императрица никогда не могла удержаться от слез." YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 119. Erich-Felix Spitz was a German functionary at the Russian Court, and a distinguished melomaniac and amateur, too. A *Sonate* for harpsichord of his was published in Hamburgh in the eighth volume of *Oeuvres meslée*, between 1760 and 1767, by J. U. Haffner. R. - A. MOOSER, *Violonistes-compositeurs italiens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle. IV. Giuseppe Dall'Oglio*, in *Rivista musicale italiana* (Italian journal of musicology), XLVIII (1946), p. 225 n.

As for the music for the opera, while Stählin reports, maybe on a late and incorrect recollection, that the music was totally composed by Dall'Oglio, the libretto attributes it to Domenico Dall'Oglio and Luigi Madonis, who made use of Hasse's music due to the short time they had at their disposal to complete the score, which evidently had initially been planned to be composed *ex novo*: "*La musica del Prologo e la prima metà del Dramma è composta* dal Sig. Domenico Dall'Oglio, *e l'altra metà* dal Sig. Luiggi Madonis (si avvisa però che per brevità del tempo è ritenuta la musica di alcune Arie della Compositione del Sig. Hasse)."[57] For the opera, as well as for the prologue, the musicians worked in a hurry, possibly because of the circumstances of Elizabeth's ascension to the throne. As expressed in the libretto, part of the music was drawn from Hasse's score, and part of it was newly composed, thus obtaining a hybrid, though original version. The score studied by Lutsker and Susidko appears to be a re-elaboration of Hasse's Dresden version of 1738.[58] The musicologists hypothethise that Hasse's score arrived in Russia through some delegations who visited Russia some time before the staging: on 19 February, as attested by the *Saint Petersburg Gazette*, there was an audience of the Polish king and the Baron von Gersdorf, together with the ambassador, who visited the new Empress to testify the congratulations on her coronation on behalf of King Augustus III. Otherwise, the score could had been brought to the capital also by M. P. Betuzhev, secret counsellor of the Polish King, who arrived in Russia in time for the celebrations.[59]

According to the music historians, in the Russian version all recitatives (*secco* and *accompagnato*) were newly composed; of the twenty-five original arias of Hasse's Dresden score, only ten were preserved; other ten arias and two choruses were newly composed, while five *arias* present in Metastasio's libretto were eliminated. That means that Hasse's music makes less than half of the whole opera as staged in Moscow.[60]

The difference between the scores are due to differences in the texts that were used. Actually, Stählin ascribed to himself the editing of Metastasio's libretto.[61] According to

[57] [P. METASTASIO – J. VON STÄHLIN], *La Clemenza di Tito…*
[58] P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii…*, p. 9.
[59] *ivi*, p. 11 n.
[60] *ibidem*. See also the table presented in I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*…, p. 201.
[61] See [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Shtelina o Petre Tret'em Imperatore Vserossiyskom…*, and YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Donesenie Shtelina v Komissiyu* (Stählin's report to the Commission), *Chteniya v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostey rossiyskikh pri Moskovskom universitete…*, 1866, kn. IV, pp. 119-23.

Ferrazzi, the original by Metastasio had been shortened by Ivan I. Merkur'ev,[62] translator and later secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to whom the Russian edition is ascribed.[63] The Russian version, though, was not intended for the stage, but rather to be simply read out. Actually we do not know which one was the version the editors worked on, several slightly different exemplars of Metastasio's libretto having been preserved. For purposes of comparison, I have considered the version included in the Parisian collection of the poet's works published in 1780.[64]

Comparing Metastasio's libretto with the Russian edition, some differences emerge, which I am now going to schematize.

Metastasio's Parisian version[65]	Stählin's Moscow version[66]
I, 1 Vitellia reproaching Sesto for his indulgence towards Titus	I, 1 Part of Sesto's recitative is cut off: - from "Per te l'amore…" to "… qualche nuova virtù" - from "Parlagli di premiar…" to "…compatisce nell'altro…" - from "…Ei regna, è ver" to "…e tutt'il frutto è nostro"
I, 2 Annio announcing Berenice's leaving	I, 2 No changes
I, 3 Sesto's promise of the marriage between his friend and his sister Servilia and Annio's aria "Io sento che in petto";	Both eliminated

[62] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…*, pp. 311-24.
[63] "Речи переводил с италианских вершей на российския переводчик Иван Меркурьев", [I. MERKUR'EV, FROM J. VON STÄHLIN, P. METASTASIO], *Miloserdie Titovo, Opera s prologom, Predstavlennaya vo vremya vysokotorzhestvennago dnya koronotsii E. I. V. Elisavety Petrovny. V Moskve 1742 goda.*, Moskva [Peterburg], Tip. Akad. Nauk [1742], p. 12. An exemplar is preserved at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK).
[64] [P. METASTASIO], *Opere del signor abate Pietro Metastasio*, in Parigi, presso la vedova Hérissant, nella via nuova di Nostra Donna alla Croce d'oro, tomo primo-terzo, MDCCLXXX; tomo quarto-sesto, MDCCLXXX; tomo settimo, MDCCLXXX; tomo ottavo-nono, MDCCLXXXI; tomo decimo-dodicesimo, MDCCLXXXII, which can be consulted on the website www.progettometastasio.it, but also in P. METASTASIO, *Drammi per musica*, edited by A. L. Bellina, vol. II, Venezia, Marsilio 2003, pp. 373-444.
[65] P. METASTASIO, *La clemenza di Tito*, in *Drammi per musica…*, vol. II, pp. 373-444.
[66] [P. METASTASIO – J. VON STÄHLIN], *La clemenza di Tito…*

I, 4 Sesto's aria "Opprimete i contumaci"	
I, 5 The Senate offering Titus a temple; Titus choosing Servilia as his spouse	I, 3 The following words in Titus's recitative are cut off: [Romani,] unico oggetto È de' voti di Tito il vostro amore; ma il vostro amor non passi tanto i confini suoi che debbano arrossire Tito e voi.[67] Further, other lines are eliminated: [ottenerlo non curo.] I sommi dei quanto imitar mi piace abborrisco emular. Gli perde amici chi gli vanta compagni; e non si trova follia la più fatale che potersi scordar d'esser mortale.[68]
I, 6 Annio announcing to Servilia Titus's choice	I, 4 Annio's recitative is cut off from "…Se a lei che adoro…" to "Mai non parve sì bella agli occhi miei."
I, 7 Servilia sola, with the aria "Amo te solo" I, 8 Tito and Publio, the announcement of the plot being organized	Both eliminated
I, 9 Servilia revealing her love for Annio	1, 5 Servilia's recitative is reduced from "… e non amai altri finor che lui…" to "…farebbe a mio dispetto il mio pensiero…"
I, 10 Vitellia facing Servilia	I, 6 No changes
I, 11 Vitellia's expression of rage; Sesto promising immediate vengeance	I, 7 Vitellia's quite long recitative is shortened from "… Ti senti d'un illustre…" to "…forse, ad amarlo."

[67] P. METASTASIO, *La clemenza di Tito*…, in *Drammi per musica*..., vol. II, lines 202-6, p. 383.
[68] *ibidem*, lines 210-5.

I, 12 Publio announcing Vitellia Titus's decision to marry her	I, 8 No changes
I, 13 Vitellia's anxiety for Titus's safety	I, 9 No changes

II, 1 Sesto's wish to stop the plot	II, 1 No changes
II, 2 Sesto encountering Annio	II, 2 No changes
II, 3 Annio entrusting Servilia to Publio	II, 3 No changes
II, 4 Servilia and Publio recalling Titus's reaction in front of the burning	II, 4 The following verses are cut off from Publio's recitative: [Provede a tutto.] A riparare i danni, a prevenir l'insidie, a ricomporre gli ordini già sconvolti… Oh se 'l vedessi della confusa plebe gl'impeti regolar! Gli audai affrena; i timidi assicura; in cento modi sa promesse adoprar, minacce e lodi. Tutto ritrovi in lui; ci vedi insieme l'amico, il prence, il cittadino, il padre.[69]
II, 5 Servilia's anxiety for Annio's safety	The scene has been eliminated
II, 6 Sesto announcing to Vitellia Titus' death	II, 5 The scene is reduced: from Vitellia's lines "Qual anima insensata" to "innocente potrei…"
II, 7 Sesto's despair; Annio announcing him that Titus has escaped the murder and wants to see him	II, 6 Part of the dialogue between Annio and Sesto is cut off from Sesto's "Colui, qualunque sia…" to Annio's "Ogni tardanza, / Sesto, ti perde"), maybe to quicken the action, while Sesto's hesitations

[69] *ivi*, lines 643-53, p. 402.

	would be difficult to sustain.
II, 8 Servilia revealing Titus about the plot	II, 7 No changes
II, 9 Sesto presenting himself to Titus	II, 8 No changes
II, 10 Vitellia coming to Titus	II, 9 Possibly due to ideological reasons, the lines referring to the ancient concept of *res publica* are eliminated: […]. Già miei non sono che per usarne a beneficio altrui. So che tutto è di tutti, e che né pure Di nascer meritò chi d'esser nato Crede solo per sé. […][70]
II, 11 Titus accusing Annio	II, 10 No changes
II, 12 Servilia rejecting Annio	II, 11 No changes
II, 13 Annio trying to convince Sesto to tell the truth	II, 12 No changes
II, 14 Sesto facing Vitellia	II, 13 No changes
II, 15 Publio arresting Sesto	II, 14 No changes
II, 16 Vitellia in despair	II, 15 No changes

III, 1 Publio asking Titus to reveal himself to the people; Titus waiting for the Senate's sentence on Sesto	III, 1 The scene is shortened with two cuts in the dialogue between Publio and Titus: - from Publio's "È tutto colà d'intorno…" to "… non differir sì bel contento"

[70] *ivi*, lines 897-901, p. 413.

	- from his "Ah troppo chiaro" to Titus's "Io tutto voglio saper pria di partir."
III, 2 Annio imploring Titus's piety towards Sesto	III, 2 Titus's lines are shortened: - from "Io l'ho veduto…" to "…un'alma non potrebbe", - from "Tu n'hai le prove" to "o somiglianti a quelle".
III, 3 Publio carrying the news of Sesto's culpability	III, 3 No changes
III, 4 Titus ordering to present Sesto	III, 4 No changes
III, 5 Titus, impatient, ordering Publio to go himself and catch Sesto	III, 5 No changes
III, 6 Sesto facing Titus, who does not tell him about Vitellia connivance	III, 6 Only some difference in the registic indications are noticeable:[71] Metastasio's indications "Con impazienza" and "Con impeto di disperazione", present in the Parisian version,[72] have been postponed, this not having substantial dramaturgical consequences though.
III, 7 Titus, hesitating in writing his condemnation of Sesto, finally decides to save his friend	III, 7 No changes
III, 8 Publio coming and inviting Titus to the	III, 8 No changes

[71] The line "questa vita infede; lascia ch'io versi" (*ivi*, line 1232, p. 430) seems an unvolountary omission in the printing phase.
[72] *ivi*, lines 1266-7, p. 432.

arena	
III, 9 Vitellia asking Publio about Sesto's conversation with Titus	III, 9 No changes
III, 10 Annio, Servilia and Vitellia announcing Sesto's imminent execution, and Titus' wedding with Vitellia	III, 10 Vitellia's recitative is shortened from "Ah secondato avessi…" to "Questa ragione istessa fa più grave…". Servilia's aria "S'altro che lagrime" has been eliminated.
III, 11 Vitellia reflecting on her deeds	Vitellia's recitative and aria "Getta il nocchier talora" is completely eliminated
III, 12 Servilia and Annio begging Titus's mercy	III, 11 Only the chorus "Che del ciel, che degli dei" is preserved, while the following dialogue, from Titus's "Pria che principio a' lieti" to Annio's "Oh amico!", has been cut off: the Emperor's mercy, in the Muscovite version, is evidently not influenced by any others' pray, coming only from the nature of the sovereign.
III, 13 Vitellia revealing her cuplability	III, 12 Titus's recitative is shortened from "Congiuran gli astri" to "già s'impegnò la mia virtù."

The final *Licenza* was also eliminated in the Muscovite version, the reference to the dedicatee sovereign having been stated in the prologue. Anyway, Stählin reports that a ballet, with a similar function, concluded the performance: it was entitled *Zolotoe yabloko na piru y bogov i sud Parisa* (The golden apple at the banquet of the gods and the judgement of Paris)[73], and portrayed Elizabeth together with Catherine I and Anna as one

[73] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii* (Notices about music in Russia), in *Muzyka i balet v Rossii XVIII veka* (Music and ballet in 18-century Russia), edited by B. I. Zagursky, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "Soyuz khudozhnikov" 2002 (I edition in *Muzykal'noe nasledstvo, Sbornik materialov po istorii muzykal'noy kul'tury v Rossii*, vypusk I, edited by B. V. Asaf'ev, Leningrad, Triton 1935), p. 266.

of the three graces. Paris gave Elizabeth the palm of preference. Other ballets concluded each act of the opera: respectively, of "Latin peasants", of "Africans", and "of the Roman people, rejoicing at Titus's clemency."[74] Jean-Baptiste Landé appears to have been the choreographer, although it also is possible that Rinaldi took part in it.[75] No information is found about the author of the ballet music.

The cuts in the libretto shed light on the reception of Italian opera in Russia. While being considered the highest representative of a European court, it was staged in a peculiar way. We have already discussed the possibility of operas *seria* being staged as a *Singspiel* in Russia, with spoken dialogues in place of recitative: this can be ascribed to a rejection by the Russian audience of the Italian recitative, considered lengthy and difficult to stand; this was to find theoretical expression at a later time (Plavil'shchikov – see Chap. III – Part II – From Translation to 'Adaptation to Russian Customs,' and From Import to Local production).

The study of the score allowed Lutsker and Susidko to obtain more information on the production process, and also to point out the need to adapt the score to the troupe's resources, which were evidently not as strong as the German one. In fact, cuts and changes do not apply equally across the board. Titus's part, played in Moscow by the outstanding contralto Caterina Giorgi, was subject to considerable changes, due to the different *tessitura*: Hasse's music is preserved to the extent of a half.[76] Similar reasons lie at the basis of the even more strongly modified part for Annio. The original role, played in Dresden by a soprano, was given in Moscow to Catarina's husband, Filippo Giorgi, a tenor.[77] The parts of Servilia and Publio were composed *ex novo*, due to the different *tessitura* of the correspondent characters in the case of Publio (Publio's part, originally a contralto, was played by the soprano Catherina Mazany),[78] and to the weak vocal qualities of the singer who played Servilia, Geronima Madonis (Luigi Madonis's wife). Her part

[74] "Ballo di Africani" (closing act I); "Ballo di Paesani Latini" (closing act II); "Ballo del popolo romano il quale si rallegra della clemenza di Tito." (closing act III). [P. METASTASIO – J. VON STÄHLIN], *La clemenza di Tito…*, pp. 24, 51,74 respectively.
[75] Although it is often said that Rinaldi had left Russia after the end of his contract in 1738, the choreographer remained in fact in Russia at least till 1742, as the Empress's personal dance teacher. M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…*, p. 323. Generally speaking, Landé seems to have been committed mostly to serious subjects, while Rinaldi was a master of the grotesque and so was more keen on such subjects.
[76] P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii…*, p. 10.
[77] *ibidem*.
[78] *ivi*, pp. 9-10.

was reduced from five to two arias, one of which was replaced by a newly composed one, thus considerably reducing the level of virtuosity required.[79]

The best preserved parts were those of Vitellia and Sesto, respectively *prima donna* and *primo uomo*, sung in Moscow by Rosa Ruvinetti Bon and the *castrato* Pietro Morigi, who seems to have had the qualities to sustain the same *tessitura* as the originals. Vitellia's role was played in Moscow by the Girolamo Bon's wife, Rosa Ruvinetti Bon, who with *La Clemenza* made her debut in opera *seria*, having sung only in comic intermezzos before her arrival in Russia in 1735. She apparently succeeded in her role; after this opera, Araja employed her in similar roles in *Seleuco* (1744) and *Scipione* (1745). Her talent is demonstrated also by the minimal cuts to Vitellia's part, sung in Dresden by Hasse's wife, Faustina Bordoni.[80]

The vocal peculiarities of the Muscovite singers are not the only reason explaining the changes in the score: there was also the interest of the composers to show their own prowess in composition, as well as the talent of the instrumentalists. This is attested by the complex cello *obbligato* part in Vitellia's *aria* "Tremo fra i dubbi miei" (II, 16, that is II, 15 in Moscow version), composed specifically for Domenico Dall'Oglio's brother, Giuseppe,[81] and by Sesto's aria "Vo disperato a morte…" (III, 6), with *obbligato* violin.[82]

The *première* was perceived as a memorable event. To stress the importance of such a performance, in his *Historical Essay on Russian Opera, from Its Beginning to the Year 1862* Morkov published the playbill attesting the public rehearsal of the opera:

АФИША 1741 ГОДА.
1741 года июля в девятый день, на новом Феатре, на берегу реки Яузы, будет:
генеральная репетиция
ОПЕРЫ:
МИЛОСТЬ ЦАРЯ ТИТА.
Оная опера долженствует быть представлена в день возшествия на престол
Благоверныя Государыни ИМПЕРАТРИЦЫ ЕЛИСАВЕТ ПЕТРОВНЫ.

На сию пробу приглашена была знатная публика.
За смотрение денег не платили.
После пробы дан
МАСКАРАД.
В маскараде все смотрильщики в масках были.[83]

[Playbill of the year 1741

[79] *ibidem*.
[80] *ibidem*.
[81] *ivi*, pp. 10-1.
[82] I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*...
[83] V. I. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala, po 1862 god* (Historical essay on Russian opera, from its beginning to the year 1862), Sanktpeterburg, Izdanie M. Bernarda 1862, p. 145.

On 9 July 1741, at the New Theatre, on the bank of the river Yauza, there will be:
The general rehearsal
of the OPERA:
THE CLEMENCY OF TSAR TITUS.
The opera will be staged for the anniversary of the ascension to the throne of our beloved Sovereign the EMPRESS Elizaveta Petrovna.

To this rehearsal the distinguished audience has been invited.
The entrance is free.
After the rehearsal there will be
A MASQUERADE.
All visitors are begged to be dressed up for the masquerade.]

According to the *Saint Petersburg Gazette* of 7 June 1742 Elisabeth herself attended the last rehearsals on 22 May:

№ 46 в понедельник июня 7 дня 1742 года
Из Москвы от 27 майя
<…> В субботу [22 мая. – Л. С.] после полудни изволила Ея Императорское Величество более 4 часов присутствовать при одной из последних оперных проб в новопостроенном чрез два месяца, весьма изрядно учрежденном, оперном доме, и до самого окончания с особливым вниманием слушать музыки; также и зделанных для украшения театра машин смотреть с немалым удовольствием. <…>
Сего дня [т.е. 27 мая. – Л. С.] отправляться будет последняя генеральная проба оперы, называемой Снисходительство и Милость Цесаря Тита, с прологом, называемым Оскорбленная, но опять обрадованная Россия. Публичное представление оной оперы отправляться будет в будущую субботу, причем все смотрители в масках находиться, а потом чрез всю ночь маскерад при дворе иметь будут.[84]

[No 46 on Monday, 7 June 1742
From Moscow, dating 27 May
[…] On Saturday [22 may – L. S.] in the afternoon Her Imperial Majesty was kindly present for more than 4 hours at one of the last operatic rehearsals in the Opera House, newly built in two months and elegantly set up, and to listen to the music just till the end; and to look with considerable pleasure at the machines made as a decoration of the theatre. […]
Today [that is 27 May – L. S.] there will take place the last general rehearsal of the opera called The Indulgence and Grace of Caesar Tito, with the Prologue titled Afflicted and Comforted Russia. The public performance of this opera will take place on next Saturday, when all the spectators have to dress up, since afterwards a masquerade party will be held at Court all night long.]

Another document attests the large participation of 'people' to the event, this time including not only nobles or foreign ministers, but also non-noble layers of the society, such as merchants:

Май, 29 числа при дворе Ея Императорскаго Величества представлена была опера, на которую все знатныя и шахлетныя, как мужеска, так и женска полу персоны, также и купечество допущены были в маскарадном платье; а по окончании оперы при дворе, как и в прочие маскарадные дни, был бал. Оной оперы напечатано особливое описание. <…>[85]

[84] *Iz "Sankt-Peterburgskikh vedomostey" za 1742 god* (From the *Saint Petersburg gazette* of the year 1742), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vyp. II, ch. I, Doc. 1, p. 53.
[85] *Iz "Kamer-fur'erskogo zhrnala" za 1742 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* of the year 1742), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vyp. II, ch. I, Doc. 2, p. 53.

[On 29 May at the court of Her Imperial Majesty an opera was performed, in which all distinguished people and cadets, be them men or women, and the merchants too were dressed up; and at the end of the opera at court, as in other days of masquerade, there was a ball. A special description of this opera has been written. […]][86]

Support to the observation that the Court was addressing to a larger body of 'people' also seems to be found in an innovative feature of this production. To sustain such a grand performance, as Stählin recalls, the Court Cappella singers were first introduced to be employed not only as extras, but also to sing the choruses on the stage: before this occasion the Cappella had performed only for the liturgy. Stählin ascribes to himself the merit of changing the custom:

> В прежние времена хор не использовался ни для чего другого, как только для церковного пения, и лишь со времен Елизаветы он стал употребителен также в камерной и театральной музыке. Поводом к этому послужило следующее обстоятельство. К коронации императрицы Елизаветы в 1742 году в Москве в числе других увеселений предназначалась прелестнейшая опера «Clemenza di Tito». Мне была поручена распорядительная часть, составление для этого выдающегося события подходящего пролога («La Russia afflitta e riconsolata») и вообще заботы об опере. На первой репетиции я нашел очень забавным, что император Тит должен был вместе со своими приближенными и тремя остальными персонами (так как больше участвующих и других певцов не было) сам себе петь хвалебную песнь или хор. Для устранения этого затруднения императрица приказала взять певцов у придворной капеллы в оркестр и разучить все хоры. Приказание было выполнено; итальянские слова были расписаны русскими буквами между четырьмя голосами, и более пятидесяти отборных певчих после ряда оперных репетиций были обучены. Императрица соблаговолила сама присутствовать на одной такой репетиции и была свидетельницей, каких превосходных результатов добился хор. Недаром впоследствии, выступая перед иностранными посольствами, он с полным правом заслужил от них название несравнимого.
>
> После этого выступления, эти церковные певцы использовались во всех операх, а также в большие придворные праздники, и в камерной музыке.[87]

[In former times the chorus was not used except for sacred singing, and only from Elizabeth's time on did it begin to be used also for chamber and theatrical music. The cause for this was the following circumstance. For the coronation of empress Elizabeth in Moscow in 1742 among other amusements there was to be the delightful opera *La clemenza di Tito*. I had been entrusted of the organization, of writing a proper prologue (*La Russia afflitta e riconsolata*) for this prominent event and in general of the supervision of the opera. At the first rehearsals I found it very funny that Emperor Tito had to sing himself a laudatory song or a chorus together with his servants and three other characters (since there were no more singers involved). To remove this difficulty the empress ordered to take the singers from the Court Cappella into the orchestra [*sic*] and to make them learn all the choruses. The order was carried out; the Italian words were written in Russian letters between the four voices, and more than fifty selected choristers were instructed by means of a series of operatic rehearsals. The Empress was kindly present to one of such rehearsals and was a witness of the excellent results reached by the chorus. Not without reason afterwards, performing in front of the foreign embassies, it rightly deserved from them the attribute of incomparable.

After this performance, these church singers were employed in all operas, and also in the most prominent Court celebrations, as well as in chamber music.]

As for the chorus, we have at our disposal Stählin's description of it of 1768: "In the current year 1768 the Imperial Cappella consists of twelve basses, thirteen tenors,

[86] The referred to description of the opera should possibly be understood as the quoted *Programma predstavleniya opery "Miloserdie Titovo" 1742 goda....*

[87] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, pp. 59-61.

thirteen contraltos, fifteen treble voices and almost the same number of young and growing up pupils."[88] According to his memoirs, the composer Galuppi expressed high esteem and wonder towards such an ensemble, saying that he had never heard such a good one even in Italy.[89] The entry of the cappella on stage constitutes a milestone in performing practice, which affected the development of musical forms within the operatic genre. As we shall see, later on such Italian composers as Galuppi and Traetta included choruses in their operas, in order to exploit this excellent resource. In particular, Stählin ascribes to the high standard of the chorus Galuppi's choice to stage his *Ifigenia in Tauride* at the court theatre, as an opera containing ten choruses, which were excellently performed, but the same will be said about Traetta's *Antigona* and *Amore e Psiche* (see Chap. III – Part I – The Time of Great Composers).[90]

Moreover, from a different point of view, the chorus formed by the Russian singers, representing Roman people in an opera clearly referring to the Russian reality, represented the Russian *people* at the same time, for the first time entering on stage. Combined with the use of Italian composers of the most prominent musical resources of the available troupe, this choice marks an important moment in the history of opera theatre in Russia, in which the role of the 'people' was to be prominent from the very beginning.

A contemporary by the name of Markovich left his testimony as a spectator of *La clemenza di Tito*: "In the evening we have been at Palace and at the Opera House, where […] the history of the Roman Emperor Titus was staged […]. The performance was enriched with decorations representing forests, squares, clouds and similar things…",[91] which were produced by the Italians Carlo Gibelli and Girolamo Bon.[92] According to this source, the opera lasted four hours, and a wide audience attended it.[93] Stählin recalls a great success:

[88] "В минувший 1768 год императорская капелла состояла из 12 басов, 13 теноров, 13 альтов, 15 дискантов и чуть ли не из такого же числа юных воспитанников и подрастающих учеников". *ivi*, p. 57. The author quotes also some of their names.
[89] "Такого великолепного хора я никогда не слыхал в Италии" ("I have never herad such a superb choir in Italy.") *ivi*, p. 59.
[90] "Очевидно он исходил из этого своего мнения, когда в 1768 году из всех своих произведений избрал для исполнения на императорской сцене итальянскую оперу «Ифигения в Тавриде», десять хоров которой были превосходно исполнены." *ivi*, p. 59.
[91] "Ввечеру ездили во дворец и были на опере в оперном зале, где <…> репрезентовалась история о Тите, Императоре Римском <…> Сие представление украшено декорациею лесов, площадей, облаков и прочим…" *Iz "Zapisok" Ya. A. Markovicha za 1742 god* (From Ya. A. Markovich's *Memoirs* of the year 1742), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, Vyp. 2, Ch. I, Doc. 3, pp. 53-4.
[92] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…*, p. 315.
[93] *Iz "Zapisok" Ya. A. Markovich za 1742*…, p. 54.

> Стечение народа на этот первый зингшпиль в городе, насчитывающем свыше полмиллиона жителей и знатного дворянства со всего государства, было так велико, что многие зрители и зрительницы должны были потратить по шести и более часов до начала, чтобы добить себе место. Несмотря на то, что опера шла три раза и несмотря на распределение билетов по рангам (что давало возможность каждому, кто не мог достать в первый раз билета, попасть на оперу в последующие дни) приток зрителей не ослабевал. Таков был всеобщий успех этого первого зингшпиля в Москве и столь широко был развит среди московского дворянства вкус к такой совершенной и пленительной музыке.[94]

[The concourse of people to this first *Singspiel* in a city that counted more than half a million inhabitants and the distinguished nobility from the whole country was so great, that many spectators had to lose something like six and more hours before the beginning, in order to reach their place. Although the opera was staged three times, and the distribution of tickets according to ranks notwithstanding (which gave everyone, who could not find the ticket the first time, the possibility to get to the opera on the following days), the inflow of spectators did not weaken. So great was the general success of this first *Singspiel* in Moscow, and similarly the taste for such a complete and captivating music spread widely among the Muscovite nobility.]

The opera and its prologue were mentioned in the foreign press. Among other information about the coronation events,[95] *Mercure de France* reported the event in the

[94] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, pp. 121-3.

[95] "On a appris de Moscow du 18. Mai dernier, que le 8. le lendemain du jour auquel la Czarine a été couronnée, S. M. Cz. Accompagnée de toute sa Cour, se rendit de son apartement à la Sale du Trône, dans l'ordre suivant.

Un détachement des Gardes du Corps, qu'on nomme à present les Chevaliers Gardes; les Pages de la Czarine; ses Ecuyers & les Chambellans; les Premiers Gentilshommes de sa Chambre & les autres principaux Officiers de la sa Maison; ses Demoiselles d'honneur; ses Dames du palais, sa Dame d'Arours & sa première Dame d'honneur; les Conseillers des differens Conseils; les Archevêques & Evêques; les Géneraux & les Ministres d'Etat.

Le Prince de Hesse Hombourg marchoit immédiatement devant la Czarine, qui avoit à sa droite le Prince de Kourakin, son Grand Ecuyer, & à sa gauche M. de Rosomoffvsky, Grand Veneur de Russie, & qui étoit suivie des Comtes de Woronzoff & de Schuwaloff, Capitaines Lieutenans des deux Compagnies des Chevaliers Gardes. S. M. Cz. Avoit la Couronne sur la tête, & la queuë de sa robe étoit portée par la Comte de Soltikow, Grand Maître de sa Maison, & soûtenuë par six Chambellans. La marche étoit fermée par un grand nombre d'Officiers de la Maison de la Czarine, & par un détachement des Chevaliers Gardes.

La Czarine s'étant placée sur son Trône, les Ministres d'Etat, les Generaux, les Archevêques & Evêques, & les Conseillers des differens Conseils, furent admis, ainsi que les principals Dames de la Cour, à lui baiser la main; Elle dîna ensuite en public avec le Duc de Holstein Gottorp & le Prince de Hesse Hombourg, dans le Salon qui est au bout de la grande Galerie du Palais du Kremlin, & en sortant de tble elle passa sur le balcon d'une Sale voisine, d'où elle fit jetter beaucoup d'argent au people, auquel on abandonna dux boeufs rôtis & deux grandes machines charges de toutes sortes de volaille & de gibier. L'après midi, on fit couler duex fontaines de vin dans la place vis-à-vis le Palais, & le soir les principaux Edifices de la Ville furent magnifiquement illuminés.

La Czarine retourna le 9. à la Sale du Trône, avec le meme cortege que le jour precedent, & elle y donna une audience publique à l'Ambassadeur de Thamas kouli-Kan. Après cette audience, elle reçut les compliments des Députés de la Noblesse de Livonie & d'Esthonie, & elle admit à lui baiser la main, les Présidens & les Députés des Tribunaux, ses Premiers Gentilhommes de la Chambre les autres principaux Officiers de sa maison, les Capitaines-Lieutenans des Chevaliers gardes, les Colonels & les Officiers de l'Etat Major des trois Régimens des Gardes à pied[,] les Ministres d'Etat, les Géneraux & les Principales Dames de la Cour, eurent l'honneur de dîner ce jour-là avec S. M. Cz. Qui fit jetter de l'argent au people, de même que la veille.

Le 10. la Czarine fut complimentée par l'Académie des Sciences, par l'Université & par le Corps de Ville, qui lui presenta, deux grandes Coupes d'or, travaillées avec beaucoup d'art. Les Députés des Provinces & des principals Villes, eurent ensuite audience de S. M. Cz. laquelle, après que ses Demoiselles d'honneur, ses Chambellans, & les principaux Officiers de la Maison du Duc de Holstein Gottorp, lui eurent baisè la main, recut les complimens du Prince & de la Princesse de Militene, du Prince & de la Princesse de Grusin, des Kans de plusieurs Nations Tartares, des Députés des Calmouques & des Cosaques du Tanaïs, de Grebensky & de Jaïtsky. La Czarine dîna avec les Ministres Etrangers, le Prince de Grusin; elle fit jetter une

section *Spectacles*, stressing the understanding of the allegorical message by contemporary audiences:

> On mande de Moscow du onze du mois dernier, que le 9, la Czarine assista à la premiere [sic] Représentation d'un Opera Italien, intitule *la Clémence de Titus*. Le Sujet du Prologue est *la Russie affligée & consolée*. L'Auteur y rapelle plusierus de circonstances qui ont precede l'avenement de S. M. Cz. Au Trône, & de celles qui l'ont suivi; & la Clemence de la Czarine, compare à celle de Titus, fait la liaison de ce Prologue avec l'Opera.[96]

Among the foreign sources that mention the Muscovite *Clemenza*, Arteaga refers to the version staged in Russia indicating the splendid condition of art in such a harsh land as Russia.[97]

It seems that the opera was revived twice between 30 May or 5 June and 6 June in Moscow.[98] According to Stählin, at the beginning of 1743, when the court moved back to Saint Petersburg, the opera was staged twice – while the court was absent - in the newly built imperial theatre during Carnival, together with its prologue.[99] Other reprises, scarcely documented, date between 1744 and 1746, in Moscow as well as in the capital city.[100] Among the last performances is probably the one dating 21 December 1746 (2 January 1747), in Saint Petersburg, as attested again by the *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal*,[101] with sets

troisieme fois de l'argent au people; on promena dans la Ville quatre Chars de Triomphe, remplis de toutes sortes de vivres, qui furent abandonnés au pillage, & la nuit suivante il y eut des réjouissances publiques & des illumintaions dans toute la Ville." - *Nouvelles étrangères*, in *Mercure de France*, juillet 1742, pp. 1628-30.

[96] - *Spectacles*, *ivi*, p. 1626.

[97] "L'Imperatrice Elisabetta Protettrice di tutte le belle Arti, e in particolare di questa fece costruire il primo Teatro Pubblico dell'Opera a Mosca, dove assistette nella sua incoronazione alla *Clemenza di Tito* posta in musica dal celebre *Hass* [*sic*], e rappresentata con magnificenza incredibile. Il prologo intitolato *la Russia afflitta, e riconsolata* era dell'Araja. Nell'aria *ah miei figli* tutti piansero, e l'Imperatrice ancora." (Empress Elisabeth, patron of all fine arts, and of this notably, had the first Public Theatre opened in Moscow, where she watched on the occasion of her coronation the *Clemenza di Tito* set to music by the celebrated *Hass* [*sic*], and staged with incredible magnificence. The prologue titled *la Russia afflitta, e riconsolata* was by Araja. With the aria *ah miei figli* everybody wept tears, and the Empress too.) S. ARTEAGA, *Le rivoluzioni del teatro musicale italiano* (The revolutions of Italian music theatre), vol. I, Bologna, Forni Editore 1969 (I ed. 1783), p. 245.

[98] I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*... "Шестого числа тогож июня паки был при дворе маскарад и опера, а по окончании оной бал и ужин." "On 6 June again at the Court there were a masquerade and an opera, after which there were a ball and a dinner." *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal* (*Diary of the chamber harbinger*), 1746, pp. 124-5, quoted in P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii*..., p. 11.

[99] See YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, p. 125.

[100] I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*….

[101] *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal*, 1746, pp. 124-5, quoted in P. V. LUTSKER, I. P. SUSIDKO, *"Miloserdie Tita" v Rossii*..., p. 11

designed by Giuseppe Valeriani.[102] It is probably the one recorded by Loewenberg on 1 January 1747.[103]

Generally speaking, the staging of *La clemenza di Tito* marks the definition of Italian opera *seria* as the type of performance representing the Court's 'scenario', a use introduced by Anna and brought by Elizabeth to its full development (see Chapt. II - Part II - The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*). Moreover, the peculiar characteristics of this staging show a 'deviation' in the reception of opera *seria* in Russia. Lutsker and Susidko point out this production as an important stage in the adaptation of European theatrical-musical forms to the Russian country.[104] However, they refer mostly to the practice of adapting the voices to the local troupe, which remains a European practice. The elimination of the recitative to obtain a "lighter" form seems to be a more peculiar trait of the Russian reception, noticeable in the following years too.

In addition, the will to compose opera directly in Russia, exploiting local means - although not completely fulfilled - demonstrates a further development of the theatrical life in the Russian Empire, which will position Saint Petersburg as an important centre of production, and not merely import, of operatic performances, a prerogative of the most distinguished European cities. The development of an autonomous, local production was to characterize the next phase in the Russian theatrical life, made possible also by the progressive education of local professional figures in every field.

As for the influence of *La Clemenza*, notably its libretto, on close fields of the Russian culture, Lutsker and Susidko mention *Titovo miloserdie* (The clemency of Titus, 1778), commissioned by Catherine II (who could have been present to one of the last stagings in 1746) to the poet Yàkov Borìsovich Knyazhnìn, who was one of the protagonists of the young Russian theatre in the years 1770s-80s. The Empress herself referred to it in her *Tit vremen nashikh* (A Titus of our time).

In her essay Ferrazzi outlines the role of the Italians who took part in the creation of this celebration. In the use of opera as a panegyric of the sovereign, Elizabeth followed in the steps of her predecessor Anna. Moreover, this staging marks the *establishment* of Italian opera *seria* at the Russian Court as a laudatory genre until it was supplanted by

[102] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Teatral'nye torzhestva po sluchayu koronatsii imperatritsy Elizavety Petrovny…,* p. 323. Ferrazzi quotes the *Diary of the chamber harbinger*.
[103] A. LOEWENBERG, *Annals of Opera: 1597-1940, Compiled from the Original Sources by Alfred Loewenberg*, edited by E. J. Dent, Genève, Societas Bibliographica 1955.
[104] I. SUSIDKO, P. LUTSKER, *Johann Adolf Hasse in der russischen Musikkultur*…

comic opera starting in the late 1770s. The choice of an opera that had already been represented at the German court gives an idea of how the Russian court tried to be a peer with the European Imperial courts, its nationalistic (anti-German) claims notwithstanding.

At the same time, the attempt to manage the old opera with new music (if not by the *Kapellmeister* in charge, by the Court musicians Dall'Oglio and Madonis) shows the desire to go beyond the simple import of productions staged in other courts, and to produce operas *ad hoc*, clearly related to the political circumstances through the *Prologue*.

The production of *Clemenza* attests a further step in the development of the theatrical practice in Russia due in part to the introduction of a new means, notably the Court Cappella, now involved in extra-sacred functions. The audience the Court referred to in such a production was broadened, if compared to Anna's time, to non-aristocratic layers of the society. New forces were, thus, engaged in the representation of the sovereign's 'scenario'. In Elizabeth's time also the target audience of such a 'scenario' was expanded, by allowing some non-nobles to pay an entrance ticket for performances (in Anna's time, Italian operas were meant only for the court's entourage, while the lower classes were admitted exclusively to other kinds of performances). The performance thus acquired a more widely inclusive dimension, pompous, but at the same time more public.

In this sense we can understand Wortman's words, when he states that the coronation introduced a 'scenario' of "demonstrative rejoicing" that would continue through the first ten years of her reign.[105] Elizabeth elaborated the forms of Westernized presentation and celebration that Catherine II was later to use to glorify her own reign (compare Catherine II's coronation in 1762 discussed in Chapt. III – Part I – An Enlightened Sovereign)[106]. And indeed, the subsequent step in the Russian court's acquisition of an increasingly autonomous identity distinct from European models, was the creation of its own opera (even though in 18th-century forms), which 'Russianness', as we shall see, was to be conditioned by different contexts.

[105] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power*..., p. 51.
[106] *ivi*, p. 42.

Part II – The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*

The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*

During Elisabeth's rule the theatrical life was more intense than the reign of her predecessor, and saw the formation of a Court practice according to the European model. According to Starikova, "[…] theatrical stagings in Elizabeth Petrovna's time already in the 1740s occupy a highly important place in the life of the Court; theatre becomes an inalienable part of the official court ceremonial."[107] The scholar observes that

> Если в 1730-е годы успех у русской публики комедии дель'арте был связан с тем, что она являла собой тип "долитературного театра", т. е. представления ее не опирались в первую очередь на драматургию, на закрепленный текст, а использовали максимально зрелищные приемы и были доступны для восприятия любой зрительской аудиторией, (не требуя обязательно дословного понимания текста). То в 1740-е годы ситуация изменилась. Среди русской публики уже появляется достаточно образованный слой, приобретший вместе со знанием французского языка потребность и желание лицезреть на сцене высоко литературное произведение, требующее непременного понимания его текста. И усилия по приглашению французской драматической труппы в Россию начались еще до вступления на престол Елизаветы Петровны, во времена Анны Леопольдовны [see the paragraph below – The "French Theatre"].[108]

[While in the 1730s the success of the *commedia dell'arte* among the Russian audience was tied to the fact that it represented a type of 'pre-literary theatre', which means that its performance did not rely first and foremost for support on dramaturgy, on a fixed text, but, on the contrary, used maximally entertaining devices and were thus accessible to every kind of audience (with no need of a literal comprehension of the text), in the 1740s the situation changed. Among the Russian audience a sufficiently educated layer appears, having acquired, together with the knowledge of the French language, the demand and the will to watch the representation of a highly literary work on the stage, that would need the exact comprehension of its text. And the efforts to invite to Russia a French dramatic troupe began already before the ascension to the throne of Elizaveta Petrovna, during Anna Leopol'dovna's time [see the paragraph below – The "French Theatre"].]

While Italian *commedia dell'arte* gradually disappeared, performances of Italian operas and *intermezzi* became more frequent. After the premières, performances were repeated on the Empress's birthdays or name days, and were given also some years after, which appears to be a new practice, if compared to the prior one (see Mooser in Chap. I).

Empress Elizabeth, traditionally considered more inclined towards the arts than her predecessor Anna, showed a strong interest in theatrical activity: she decided when performances had to start, and whether they had to be cancelled; as documents attest, she was present to the rehearsals "till their very end", "listen[ed] to the music with particular

[107] "<…> театральные представления в эпоху Елизаветы Петровны уже в 1740-е годы занимают в жизни двора место весьма важное; театр становится неотъемлемой частью официального придворного церемониала." *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny: dokumental'naya khronika 1741-1750*..., vypusk II, ch. I, p. 16.
[108] *ivi*, p. 27. See documents 370-2 and 376.

interest", "look[ed] at the machines built for the theatre sets with great pleasure."[109] She also signed the invitation tickets for the audience, and wanted closed-door rehearsals, in order to improve the impact of the *première*:

> Ноябрь, 23-го, то есть в пятницу, при Дворе Ея Имперасторскаго Величества, во внутренних покоях, была французская комедия а присутствии Ея Императорскаго Величества и Их Императорских Высочеств, а в оперном доме играна генеральная проба будущей, для торжества возшествия Ея Имераторскаго Величества на Всероссийский престол, оперы. И во время играния во оной дом, по высочайшему Ея Императорскаго Величества повелению, не впущен был никто, кроме действуюих.[110]

[On 23 November, that is on Friday, at Her Imperial Majesty's Court, in the inner apartments, a French comedy was staged at the presence of Her Imperial Majesty and Their Imperial Highnesses, and at the Opera House there was the general rehearsal of the opera intended for the celebrations of the anniversary of Her Imperial Majesty's ascension to the All-Russian throne. During the performance, according to the orders of Her Imperial Majesty, no one was allowed to the Opera House, except for those who took part in it.]

Moreover:

> Ея Императорское Величество изволила указать имянным своего Императорского Величества указом: будущаго 1751 году апреля к 25-му числу, то есть ко дню высочайщаго торжества коронования Ея Императорского Величества приуготовить оперу, и когда оная сочинятся [*sic*] будет, тако ж и впредь ежели когда оперы будут, то во время пробы тех опер, как в Оперной дом, так и в квартиры тех действующих персон, где они чинит будут, кроме тех, находящихся в действии людей и кому неотменно при том для исправления быть надлежит, никого иного смотрителей отнюдь не допускать, и о том опери стам и протчим, чтоб та опера к назначенному времени неотменно приуготовлена была, тако ж и смотрителей на пробы ими отнюдь не пускано не было – объявить с подписками под опасением штрафа. <…>.[111]

[Her Imperial Majesty kindly ordered in the name of the Imperial Majesty herself: by 25 April of the incoming year 1751, that is by the day of the most high celebrations of the coronation anniversary of Her Imperial Majesty, an opera to be produced. When the opera is composed, as well as when operas will take place, during the rehearsals of these operas, except for those who take part in them, and for those who have to be there to help trying out, do not allow any spectator in the Opera House nor in the participants' apartments, where they will try it out, and inform by writing opera artists and the others that the opera has to be ready for the set time, and that also they must not allow absolutely any spectators to the rehearsals, a fine having been posed as a threat. […]]

The purpose of the present section is to give a description as far as possible complete and updated of the main theatrical experiences that characterized the reign of Elizabeth, in order to reconstruct the context in reference in which a Russian theatre first emerged. This inevitably leads us to deal with the work of foreign troupes that prepared the ground for setting up a Russian troupe and having it develop a repertoire of its own: among

[109] "до самого окончания", "с особливым вниманием слушает музыку", "с немалым удовольствием осматривает сделанных для украшения театра машин". *ivi*, Docs. 1, 7, 9.
[110] *Iz "Kamer-fur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1750 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* of the year 1750), *ivi*, Doc. 200, p. 171.
[111] *Iz "Imyannykh ukazov, zapisannykh v Pridvornoy kantore 1750 godu"* (From *Personal royal commands, recorderd in the Court Office in the year 1750*), *ivi*, Doc. 345, pp. 363-4.

these, the activity of the Italian Court troupe (*Ital'yanskaya kompaniya*) and of the French one, and the arrival of several foreign private companies.

Ital'yanskaya Kompaniya

The Italian opera troupe was the "protoplast" for the future Direction of Imperial Theatres. Its definition notwithstanding, it actually included artists of different nationalities and theatrical professions, engaged in court theatres and orchestras. During the 1740s its staff progressively grew wider and became all the more international.[112] In it, more and more Russian performers were also educated. Yet, under Anna's rule ten students, former singers of the Court Cappella who had lost their voice, were accepted as music students by Johann Hübner, and Jean-Baptiste Landé had founded a Ballet school to educate Russian young men. Preserving and developing the "Personnel policy" of the Court, in the 1740s many of the foreign artistic professionals who entered the Court service (except for actors) were required by contract to teach pupils of "Russian nationality" (usually two each) and transfer to them their own art "without hiding or omitting anything."[113] Among the teachers there were the musicians Vinter, Josephus Wilde, and the theatrical painter Antonio Peresinotti, who, in 1747, among other things had

> to teach openly all his art to two pupils of Russian origin and with maximum care while he will remain at service of Her Imperial Majesty, on condition that they were not too old. And if they should turn out to be deficient, in that case on his own request they would be immediately replaced with others.[114]

From the Court Cappella, which from 1742 on began taking part in opera stagings, some soloists emerged, such as Elisabeth Bielogradskaya, Charlotte Shlakovskaya, Gavril

[112] The changes occurred inside the troupe are registered by Starikova in Docs. 323, 29, 292, 222, 231/a, 232, and by Mooser in R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, pp. 199-207.

[113] "В 1740-е годы эта "кадровая политика" двора сохранилась и расширялась: многие, поступающие на придворную службу иностранные мастера творческих профессий (исключая, правда, актеров) в контрактах своих обязывались "выучить" учеников из "российской нации" (как правило 2-х человек) и передать им свое искусство "без утайки и закрытия"." *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, p. 21.

[114] "Всему тому своему художеству обучать ему, Перезиното, учеников российских двух человек нескрытно и со всякою же прилежностию пока он в службе Ея Императорского Величества будет, токмо б даны ему были не престарелые. А как скоро к тому непонятны явятца, то б по представлениям ево немедленно перемены были другими." *Iz Protokolov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy za oktyabr' 1747 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery of October 1747), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 535, p. 611. More detail on Peresinotti's agreements for teaching can also be found in *Iz Protokolov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy za dekabr' 1747 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery of October 1747), *ivi*, Doc. 540, p. 617, and in *Iz Protokoov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy fevralya 1749 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery of February 1749), *ivi*, Doc. 551, pp. 626-8.

Martsinkevich, Evstafiey G. Sietchkarev[115] and Mark F. Poltoratsky.[116] The latter's name is mentioned in documents reporting the staging of Araja's *Bellerofonte*: in an article on *The Saint Petersburg Gazette*, the author points out that "[…] Marco Polturatsky [Poltoratsky – L. S.] deserved great praise […], and among all is at the mentioned Porturatsky, born in Little Russia, who for the first time trod the boards, that everybody was amazed, and in all fairness one can say that he was not inferior to the best Italian actors."[117] The Russian corps de ballet acquired the status of a professional troupe.[118] It was the first germ of a professional and national theatre, appearing yet inside the Italian company.

Elizabeth's reign opened with the construction, as mentioned above, of the theatre for the coronation celebrations in Moscow. A new Opera House in Saint Petersburg appeared in 1743,[119] while a second "small theatre" was built at the Winter Palace in

[115] Charlotte Shlakovskaya, soprano, studied Italian and singing with Filippo Giorgi and his wife. She entered the Court service on 7 April 1756 and performed in operas and chamber music until 1777, when she retired, receiving a pension until at least 1791. Gavril Marttsinkevich, also called Gavrilushka, a tenor voice, began his career in Glukhovo in Kirill Razumovsky's private cappella. He came to Moscow in 1753, accompanying his master, and was soon admitted to the Court cappella. According to Mooser, he allegedly played the main male role in the opera *Tsefal i Prokris* in 1755, and he himself suggested to Araja the subject for his first Russian opera. As for his later whereabouts, the only information available is that he was still singing in 1764. As for Evstafey Grigorievich Sechkarev, a former cappella singer, he entered the Infantry Corps in 1752, among a group of seven pupils "spavshie s golosa" (who had lost, or changed their voice) who were ordered by the Empress to be taught "sciences". Since 1753 he took part in theatre stagings with the other members of Volkov's former troupe from Yaroslavl'. He entered the Russian troupe from its very beginning in 1756. Mooser is evidently wrong when he states that he took part in opera stagings, if referring to singing roles, but his position is borne out by Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, according to whom Sechkarev may have irritated the empress as a result of arriving late to the performance of *Tsefal i Prokris*, but was later excused by his excellent singing and acting, receiving a silver watch by the Empress herself, with the recommendation not to repeat his mistake. From 1 November 1767 to 2 March 1769, no longer belonging to the Russian troupe, he taught singing at the Academy of Fine Arts of St. Petersburg. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, 1, pp. 241-2. See also *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 95-6.

[116] Mark Fyodorovich Poltoratsky (Sosnitsa, 1729 – St. Petersburg, 1795), was the son of a poor Ukrainian churchman, and studied in the Latin school of Chernigov. He entered the Court cappella in 1745, probably through the mediation of Count Kirill G. Razumovsky. In 1752 he took part in Araja's *Bellerofonte*; later on, he sang in *Eudossa incoronata* and *La corona di Alessandro magno*. In 1753 he was appointed 'regent' of the Court Cappella, and in 1763 he became its director. In the following years, under his direction, the Cappella often took part in stagings of operas by Galuppi and Traetta, who seemingly chose the subjects in order to exploit the excellent chorus. He remained at Court service for almost half a century, enjoying the appreciation of figures such as Aleksey G. Razumovsky, Elizabeth's favourite and husband, who had possibly sung vocal music with him for the Empress. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, pp. 375-6.

[117] "Артисты Жоржи, Компасси и Марко Полтурацкий заслужили себе притом великия похвалы, и пред всеми помянутому Полтурацкому природному Малороссийцу, которой впервые вышел на театр, каждой удивлялся, и по справедливости сказать можно, что не уступит он наилучшим Италианским актерам." *Iz "Sankt-Peterburgskikh vedomostey" za 1750 god* (From *The Saint Petersburg gazette* of the year 1750), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 206, p. 175. Poltoratsky's participation in the opera is recorded also in Docs. 205/a and 207, *ivi*, pp. 174-5.

[118] *ivi*, p. 21.

[119] "<…> в Санкт Петербурге зделать оперу внутрь болшаго деревянного манежа по показанию обер архитектора Растрели к прибытию Ея Императорского Величества в Санкт Петербурх." ([…] to make a Opera House in Saint Petersburg inside the wooden arena according to the instructions of the chief

1749,[120] according to the same project as in Moscow, some corrections having been brought in during the building process. Other theatres were built in Peterhoff, in 1745,[121] in Oranienbaum[122] and in Tsarskoe Selo.[123]

Being temporarily in Italy at the moment of Anna's death and Ivan VI's deposition, Araja asked a confirmation of his mission to engage personnel for the Peterburgian troupe. According to Stählin, "in answer to his report to prince Hessen-Homburg, chief-director of the Italians, he received the confirmation for the fulfilment of the mission he had been entrusted with."[124] Araja was back in Russia in the fall of 1742, together with the newly

architector Rastrelli in time for the arrival of Her Imperial Majesty in Saint Petersburg.) *Iz dela "Doneseniya Gof intendanta Shargorodskogo po Gofintendantskoy chasti. 1742-1747"* (From the file "Dispatches of the head-quartermaster Shargorodsky for the Quarters Department. 1742-1747"), *Donoshenie* (Report), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 206, p. 175. Poltoratsky's participation in the opera is recorded also in Doc. 520, pp. 587-8. The quoted document dates 1742.

[120] The document attesting the received order of construction by Rastrelli is presented in Russian translation in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 206, p. 175. Poltoratsky's participation in the opera is recorded also in Doc. 556, which contains as an enclosure the plan of the theatre, and Doc. 557.

[121] "<…> Ея Императорское Величество высочайшим своего Императорского Величества имянным изустным указом соизволила повелеть в имеющемся в Питергофе манеже построить в немедленном времени театр для комедий." ([…] Her Imperial Majesty, by means of a most high her own Personal Imperial oral order, kindly ordered to immediately build a theatre for comedies in the arena that is in Peterhoff.), *Iz Protokolov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy za iyun' 1745 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery of June 1745), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 523, p. 602.

[122] *ivi*, Doc. 206, p. 175. Poltoratsky's participation in the opera is recorded also in Doc. 531.

[123] "№ 180. По указу Ея Императорского Величества Канцелярия от строеней, слушав оношения обер архитектора де Растрелия, поданного сего февраля 17 дня, коим представляет: сего ж де февраля 14 дня, Ея Императорское Величество всемилостивейше соизволила в селе Царском о делании комедианского оперного дом чертеж опробовать, которой имеет быть, где была бывшая гопвахта близ еловой рощи, а не на том месте, где было приказано по силе имянного ж Ея Императорского Величества указа строением производить в летнем доме в манеже." (No. 180. According to the royal command of Her Imperial Majesty's building chancery, after considering the report the chief architector De Rastrelli handed over on 17 February, that reads: today 14 February, Her Imperial Majesty kindly approved the projects for the Opera House in Tsarskoe Selo, which will be in the site where there was the former lookout post near the fir-tree grove, and not in the site, where it had been ordered personally by Her Imperial Majesty to do the construction in the Summer House in the Arena.). *Iz Protokolov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy za fevral' 1750 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery of February 1750), *ivi*, Doc. 206, p. 175. Poltoratsky's participation in the opera is recorded also in Doc. 565, p. 637. Another order was given in November 1750: "Ея императорское Величество изволила указать имянным своего Императорского Величества указом: в селе Царском во апартаментах Ея Императорского Величества зделать театр (и чего ради, для взятья меры призван был машинист Карл Жибельли), которой театр зделан был бы всеконечно к святкам." (Her Imperial Majesty kindly gave on behalf of Her Imperial Majesty the following order: to built a theatre in the apartments of Her Imperial Majesty in Tsarskoe Selo (and for this, the set builder Carlo Gibelli has been hired to take the necessary measures), a theatre that has to be completed by Christmas). *Iz "Imyannykh ukazov, zapisannykh v Pridvornoy kantore 1750 godu"* (From "Personal orders, registered in the Court Office in the year 1750"), *ivi*, Doc. 585, p. 659.

[124] "На его доклад принцу Гессен-Гомбургскому, как обердиректору итальянцев, ему было послано подтверждение на выполнение порученной ему миссии." YA. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *K istorii teatra v Rossii (Iz ne opublikovannykh eshche memuarov professora Istorii izyashchnykh iskusstv v Rossii gosudarstvennogo sovetnika i sekretarya Peterburgskoy Akademii nauk gospodina Yakoba fov Shtelina* (For a history of theatre in Russia (From the still unpublished memoirs of Professor of History of Fine Arts in Russia, the state counsellor and secretary of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg Mister Jacob von

engaged artists. Among these, were the singers Lorenzo Saletti and Antonia Costantini; among the musicians, Giuseppe Passerini, Tito Porta, and Angelo Vaccai (violinists), and the oboist Stazzi. The Court also engaged the poet Giuseppe Bonecchi[125] and the set builder Giuseppe Valeriani, while Antonio Rinaldi was once again appointed choreographer.[126]

The destiny of Italian opera in Russia being not the focus of my research, I am going to record only briefly the most important events through which the above-mentioned celebratory function was carried out. Suffice it to say that, as reported by Stählin, during the twenty-year period of Elizabeth's rule, music at court was flourishing, held in high esteem by the Empress's herself and by the sovereign's entourage.[127] Every year a new opera was composed and staged for the main State celebrations. Operas were composed and sung in Italian, while French, German and Russian translations were always supplied for the audience (see Chap. III – Part III – Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire).[128] Most part of the Italian operas were of Araja's composition, on librettos by Metastasio, or by the Court poet Giuseppe Bonecchi.

The first new production after *La clemenza di Tito* was *Seleuco*, opera *seria* in three acts, with music by Araja on a libretto by Bonecchi.[129] The opera was staged in Moscow

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Stählin)), in *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*» (A chapter from the book by Mr Johann Joseph Heigolt *Supplements to the Renewed Russia*), the complete Russian translation of this memoir is published for the first time in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny. Dokumental'naya khronika, 1730-1740* (Russian theatrical life at Anna Ioannovna's time. A documented chronicle, 1730-1740), vypusk I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Radiks 1995, Doc. 334, p. 588.

[125] Giuseppe Bonecchi (elsewhere Bonechi, Florence, 1715 – Naples, 1796) studied law at the University of Pisa, but soon abandoned his studies to devote himself entirely to literature. From Poland he moved to St. Petersburg with Araja's artists. He lived in Russia approximately ten years, composing several opera *seria* librettos. In 1752 he was dismissed, and, while leaving, commissioned to send the court two librettos per year, a condition he never fulfilled. With Metastasio's help he soon became court poet in Portugal, and from 1755 to 1764 he worked in Florence, later becoming ambassador of the duke of Tuscany in Naples. In 1776 he took part in a plot against minister Bernardo Tanucci, and spent his last years under the protection of the Neapolitan court. For the Russian court he wrote *Seleuco* (which according to Garzonio was "plagiarized" from A. Zeno), *Scipione*, *Mitridate*, *Eudossa incoronata*, and the verses of *L'union de l'amour et du mariage* (1745) and of *L'asilo della pace*; he wrote also the text for Araja's serenata *La corona d'Alessandro magno* (1750), in which Alessandro portrays Empress Elizabeth. See *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 144-6.

[126] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 203.

[127] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 128.

[128] *ivi*, p. 128.

[129] According to Mooser, "Ainsi qu'il le fit constamment pendant son séjour en Russie, le librettiste qui, du fait de sa lointaine résidence nordique, se savait à l'abri de toute réclamation de la part des auteurs qu'il pillait effrontément et qui, de surcroît, ne courait certes pas le risque de voir ses plagiats dénoncés par une presse autant dire inexistante, avait emprunté l'essentiel de son action au livret écrit en collaboration par Apostolo Zeno et Pietro Pariati, livret qui avait été mis en musique par Giovanni Zuccari et joué à Venise en 1725." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 215.

for the coronation anniversary on 26 April 1744, that being also as a celebration of the advantageous treaty of Åbo, ratified with Sweden in August 1743.[130] As usual, the libretto had a French and a Russian translation, by Adam V. Olsuf'ev, which were published in Saint Petersburg in 1744.[131] Later the opera was to be staged in Moscow and Oranienbaum.

On the occasion of the wedding of heir prince Pyotr Fyodorovich to the future Catherine II,[132] celebrated in Saint Petersburg on 21 August 1745, a new opera was commissioned to Araja, *Scipione*.[133] Premiered on 24 August at the Court theatre, it was revived on 8 September 1746 for the Empress's name day, and later on forgotten.

In 1747, for the coronation anniversary, Araja composed the new opera *Mitridate*.[134] The opera, as stated by the librettist in the preface, recalls the subject of

[130] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 128. More details about the performances of this opera can be found in R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 215 and in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 8-12, 15.

[131] The Russian version is preserved at the RNB. A manuscript copy seems to have survived, preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre, and never published. According to Mooser, it is dated Moscow 1744, attesting presumably the staging in the city. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle, conservées à Léningrad*, in *Revue de musicologie*, T. 25, No. 77/78 (1946), p. 30.

[132] Sophie Friederike Auguste von Anhalt-Zerbst-Domburg arrived secretly to Moscow on 9 February 1744. On 29 June 1744 she was engaged to Pyotr Fyodorovich, after forswearing the Luteran religion, and christened according to the Orthodox religion with the name of Ekaterina Alekseevna.

[133] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *Scipione, Dramma per musica, La poesia è del sigr. Dr. Giuseppe Bonechi, La musica è del sigr. Francesco Araya, S. Pietroburgo, Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle scienze, 1745*. It is preserved in various versions: a French-and-Russian version (National Library of Paris); an Italian-Russian one, issued by the Academy of Sciences, at the National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB), at the Library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN), and at the State Library of Moscow (RGB). This proves that Stasov and Vsevolodsky-Gerngross were wrong when they attributed the libretto to Metastasio (See V. V. STASOV, *Russkie i inostrannye opery, ispolnyavshiyasya na imperatorskikh teatrakh v Rossii v XVIII-m i XIX-m stoletiyakh* (Russian and foreign operas performed in the Imperial Theatres of Russia in 18th and 19th centuries), Sanktpeterburg, red. "Russkoy muzykal'noy gazety", 1898, and V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne* (The theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna), Sankt-Peterburg, «GIPERION» 2003). According to Mooser the score is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle…*, p. 31. A microfilm reproduction is housed at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome. More details about the performances of this opera can be found in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 31-32.

[134] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *Mitridate, Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi all'Imperial Corte di Russia il dì XXV aprile MDCCXLVII. Per festeggiare l'annua solennità dell'incoronazione di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Petrowna Imperadrice di Tutte le Russie &c. La poesia è del Signor Dottor Giuseppe Bonechi Fiorentino Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperiale &c. La musica è del Signor Francesco Araya Napolitano Maestro di Cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale &c. In St. Pietroburgo, Nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze il di 25 Aprile 1747.* It was printed in St. Petersburg (in 1747) in Italian, French and Russian (in Adam V. Olsuf'ev's translation), and is nowadays housed at the National Library (RNB) and at the Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN) of St. Petersburg. According to Mooser the manuscript score is at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle…*, p. 31. A microfilm reproduction is preserved at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome. More details about the performances of this opera can be found in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 78-9.

Racine's tragedy *Mithridate* (1673), which Bonecchi had drawn on. The dominating position of Italian opera notwithstanding, the poet refers to the need of drawing models from the French theatre, pointing out action and drama instead of a theatre focusing mainly on singing. This peculiarity seems to distinguish Russian reception:

> *Il fine principale però, che mi son proposto a sceglier questo soggetto, è stato di far conoscere quanta perfezzione abbia acquistata in quest'ultimi tempi il Teatro Drammatico Italiano, sul quale non ci si fa più vedere come altre volte un'arte storpiata in grazia d'un'altra, (*)* [here the reference is to Scipione Maffei's *Prefazione al Teatro Italiano* and to Gravina's *Libro della Tragedia*] *ma giuste e severe Tragedie, nelle quali* ***non il senso solo, lusingato dall'attrattiva del canto, ma la Ragione ancora trova intieramente di che appagarsi****. Prova indubitata di questo si è,* ***il potersi, di qualunque perfetta Tragedia Francese far con pochissimo cambiamento una perfetta Opera Italiana*** [my bolding – A. G.]. *Ques'è ciò, che ò intrapreso, e che spero d'aver sufficientemente provato nel corso di questo dramma.*[135]

He also outlines some cuts he made to the source, on account of specific indications from the Court. This would require a deeper investigation in order to figure out the reception of Italian opera in Russia:

> *Avverto però, che a motivo della brevità, che premurosamente si ricerca nella Corte per cui ho l'onore di comporre ò dovuto troncarne dei pezzi assai considerabili, delle Arie, e fino delle scene intiere, le quali bramerei, che si tornassero a porre al loro luogo, qualora dovesse intraprendersene nuova rappresentazione in Italia*.[136]

From these observations it seems that, although Italian opera was considered the best medium to represent the Court's power, it was conceived of as a type of entertainment that had to be shortened, as had been the case with *La Clemenza di Tito*. That is why, in my opinion, the reference to brevity, even though the poet refers to Arias too, should be understood in relation to recitatives above all. We shall go back to this topic later in this work.

The year 1748 saw the staging of the newly composed serenata by Bonecchi and Araja, that is *L'Asilo della Pace*,[137] staged for the coronation anniversary on 25 April, and,

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[135] G. BONECCHI, *Mitridate, Dramma per musica sa rappresentarsi all'Imperial Corte di Russia il dì XXV aprile MDCCXLVII. Per festeggiare l'annua solennità dell'incoronazione di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Petrowna Imperadrice di Tutte le Russie &c. La poesia è del Signor Dottor Giuseppe Bonechi Fiorentino Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperiale &c. La musica è del Signor Francesco Araya Napolitano Maestro di Cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale &c. In St. Pietroburgo, Nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze il di 25 Aprile 1747, Prefazione*, pages not numbered.

[136] *ibidem*.

[137] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *L'Asilo della Pace, Festa-Teatrale da rappresentarsi in musica all'Imperial Corte di Russia Il di XXV aprile MDCCXLVIII per festeggiare l'annua solennita dell'Incoronazione di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Petrowna Imperadrice [sic] di tutte le Russie etc., etc., etc. La Poesia è del Signor Dottore Giuseppe Bonechi Fiorentino Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperiale etc. La Musica è del Signor Francesco Araja Napolitano Maestro di Cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale etc. In St. Peterburgo Nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze*. It is housed at the library of the

possibly for the last time, on 7 September 1748.[138] According to Mooser, in this *serenata* the role of the chorus is more enhanced than usual, which made him relate it to the attempts of such composers as Galuppi and Traetta to exploit the Russian Court cappella, which was considered an excellent ensemble at that time. The historian gets the information from the libretto, because he considers the score to be lost.[139] Actually, a microfilm reproduction of it is preserved at the library of the Conservatory Santa Cecilia, in Rome, where a sort of Russian fund is to be found.[140] It is a manuscript copy, which carries the French title of *L'Asile de la Paix*, but with the text sung in Italian.[141] Among a total of nine music numbers, the score includes only two choruses, one at the beginning of the play and one at the end. The former ("Torna sollecita in sì bel giorno…") is an *Allegretto* for three voices (two sopranos and bass):

university of Göttingen (Niedersächsische Staats und Universitätsbibliothek). Bonecchi drew inspiration from two passages from Horatius, which he quotes at the beginning of the poem: "Non furor…aut vis eximet otium; / non ira, quae procudit enses, / et miseras inimicat Urbes". (Lib. IV, Od. 15) "Jam Fides, et Pax, et Honor, Pudorque / priscus, et neglecta redire Virtus / audet,..." (Carmen saec. Pars III.) More details about the performances of this opera can be found in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…,* vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 109-10.

[138] Documents collected by Starikova possibly refer to this staging, recalling a 'pastorale' in the same period. See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 118 a, b, v.

[139] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 223.

[140] During the 1960's the musicologist Cesare Valabrega led a project for the acquisition of scores of the Italian composers who worked in Russia in the 18th century. An Italian commision of musicologists including Guglielmo Barblan and Emilia Zanetti collected music from the Central Library Kirov (nowadays library of the Mariinsky theatre), the library of the St. Petersburg Conservatory and the Institute of music and cinema (today St. Petersburg Institute of Art History – RIII), which is now at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia", in Rome. See D. CARBONI, *Alla corte imperiale di Pietroburgo: fortuna delle opere di Baldassarre Galuppi in Russia* (At the Imperial Court of Saint Petersburg: fortune of Baldassarre Galuppi's operas in Russia), in *Galuppiana 1985, Studi e ricerche, Atti del convegno internazionale (Venezia, 28-30 ottobre 1985)* (Galuppiana 1985, Studies and researches, Proceedings of the international conference, Venice, 28-30 October 1985)), edited by M. T. Muraro and F. Rossi, Firenze, Leo S. Olschki editore, MCMLXXXVI, pp. 113-26. According to Domenico Carboni, current director of the library, the fund collects the following scores: P. Anfossi's *L'Orlando paladino* ('dramma eroicomico') and *Il Teatro in teatro* ('opera buffa'); G. B. Anselmi's *La Giuditta* ('dramma teatrale'); F. Antonolini's *Aria di Camilla* from *Les Amazones*, *La Fée Urgèle* ('opera'), *Leonora* ('opera comica') and *Il giorno ultimo* ('opera'); G. Astarita's [*sic*] *La finta foletta* ('opera'); F. Araja's *Bellerofonte*, *Céphale et Procris*, *L'asile de la paix* ('serenata'), *Eudossia incoronata*, *Mitridate*, *Scipione*, *La Semiramide*; C. Cavos's *Russalka, la ninfa dell'Est* [*sic*], and *Ivan Susanin*; D. Cimarosa's *Amor rende* sagace; B. Galuppi's *Ifigenia in Tauride*; G. Gazzaniga's *La vendemmia* ('dramma giocoso'); G. Paisiello's *La dama immaginaria*, *L'ingiusta gelosia*, *Lo sposo burlato* and the oratorio *Nella Passione di Gesù Cristo*; N. Piccinni's *Le finte gemelle* ('opera buffa'); A. Prati's *L'école de la jeunesse* ('*opéra comique*') and *Trois Sonates pour le clavicin ou l'harpe*; V. Righini's *Il convitato di pietra* ('opera'); G. Sarti's *I finti eredi* and *Il pretendente*; T. Traetta's *L'isola disabitata* and *Li virtuosi*; L. Cherubini's *La prisonnière* (*opéra comique*).

[141] As to the score, its manuscript title page reads as follows: *L'asile de la paix, Serenade pour être représentée sur le nouveau théatre de la cour, à l'occasion de la Fête du couronnement de sa majesté impériale Elisabeth Petrowna, Impératrice de toutes les Russies & & &. La musique est faite par Mon. François Araya, Maître de chapelle de sa majesté imperiale &. Le 25 d'Avril 1748.*



Example No. II, 1 - F. Araja, *L'Asile de la Paix*, chorus "Torna sollecita in sì bel giorno…", measures 9 - 12

The latter ("Sereno ogni pensier in così fausto dì…") employs four voices (two sopranos, tenor and bass), and a solo (bass) part is inserted before the recapitulation. The orchestration also is richer, horns and timpani being added to the strings:



Example No. II, 2 - F. Araja, *L'Asile de la Paix*, chorus "Sereno ogni pensier in così fausto dì…", measures 1 - 6



Example No. II, 3 - F. Araja, *L'Asile de la Paix*, chorus "Sereno ogni pensier in così fausto dì…", measures 27-33

One more peculiarity of the Russian reception seems to me more interesting in the perspective of the present research: although the main characters are Greek deities, the action takes place in the Russian countryside. This is a first, though superficial, sign of the process of 'Russification' that constitutes the main thread of the present work, and that, though not affecting music in any aspect, will be noticed also in further works.

Araja's *Bellerofonte*, again on a libretto by Bonecchi, was staged on 28 November 1750 for the coronation anniversary, and on the occasion of the opening of the new theatre next to the *Yolovaya roshcha* (fir-tree grove), built under Valeriani and Peresinotti in a hurry in order to replace the old opera house, burned down in October 1749.[142] The libretto

[142] According to Mooser, the score is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle…*, p. 30. A microfilm reproduction is at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome. More details about the performances of this opera can be found in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 204, 205/a, 206-207. As the survived copies attest, the libretto was later set to music by Giuseppe Misliwecek called Il Boemo (1767), and by Ignazio Platania (1778). As for the reconstruction of the Opera House, the following documents attest it: "Ея Императорское Величество изволила указать имянным своего Императорского Величества указом: за згорением Оперному дому для действия комедей употребить манеж, состоящей в саду близ старого летняго Ея Императорского Величества дворца, в котором зделать от Канцелярии от строеней театр; <…>. И зделание оное производить под смотрением обер архитектора Растрелия немедленно, дабы он оной комедианской дом к действию в нем комедей совсем во всякой готовности был к будущему торжественному дню коронации Ея Императорского Величества, то есть апреля к 25-му числу сего 1750 году неотменно." (Her Imperial Majesty kindly gave the following command in the name

was printed, as usual, in several languages.[143] According to Mooser, the performance of 28 November 1750 was considered worth of particular solemnity, possibly because it celebrated two important events, and was thus the first to be advertised in Russia by playbills. According to Mooser, the playbill is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre in Saint Petersburg, and attests the participation, among Italian singers, of the Russian singer Poltoratsky in the role of the general.[144] The event was reported on the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* of 11 December 1750:

> № 99 во вторник декабря 11 дня 1750 года
> В Санктпетербурге декабря 11 дня
> О торжестве, происходившем при дворе для высочайшаго Возшествия на престол Ея Императорскаго Величества осталось еще упомянуть некоторыя обстоятельства, а имянно, новую оперу, Беллерофонт называемую, сочинял придворной стихотворец господин Доктор Бонекки, и сочинитель оныя имел намерение, чтоб под образом сего Героя представить достохвальныя свойства нашей Всемилостивейшей Государыни, что и учинил он ко всеобщему удовольствию. Музыку к оной сочинял придворной капелмейстер Господин Арая, и одним словом сказать, стихотворческое сочинение, музыка, балеты, украшения, махины и платье были в своем роде превеликаго совершенства. Актрисы Жоржи, Масани и Гарани, также и Актеры Солетти, Жоржи, Компасси и Марко Портурацкий [Полторацкий. – Л. С.] заслужили себе притом великия похвалы, и пред всеми помянутому Портурацкому природному Малороссийцу, которой впервые вышел на театр, каждой удивлялся, и по справедливости сказать можно, что не уступит он наилучшим Италианским актерам. Махины и декорации Г. Валериани к великому удивлению представил зрителям. Балеты сочинял Г. Фоссани.[145]
>
> [No. 99, Tuesday 1 December 1750

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of Her Imperial Majesty: because of the burning of the Opera house, to use for the staging of comedies the arena that is in the park near the old Her Imperial Majesty's Summer Palace, in which the building chancery must have a theatre built; […] to do immediately the mentioned construction under the supervision of the chief-architect Rastrelli, in order to have the comedy hall ready for the staging of comedies in it by the day of the celebrations of next anniversary of Her Imperial Majesty's coronation, that is, unfailingly by 25 April 1750.). *Iz "Imyannykh ukazov, zapisannykh v Pridvornoy kantore 1750 godu"* (From "Personal commands, registered in the Court Office in the year 1750"), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 563, p. 635. The exact place is better determined in another document: "<…>вместо сгоревшаго опернаго дома Ея Императорского Величества всевысочайшее намерение есть каменной оперной дом же на том месте, которое между Аничковскаго дворца и саду, которой лабиринтом именуется, построить, <…>." ("[…] In order to replace the Opera House that burned down the most high intention of Her Imperial Majesty is to have a stone opera house built in the same place, that is between the Anichkov Palace and the garden called labyrinth, […].) *Iz dela "O stroenii kamennogo opernogo doma vmesto sgorevshego" 1750 goda* (From the file "About the construction of a stone opera house to replace the one that burned down), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 564, pp. 635-6.

[143] According to Mooser, copies of the Italian version are preserved at the State Library of Moscow (RGB MK) and in several Italian libraries. The French version is preserved at the library of the University of Göttingen, and the Russian one at the Russian National Library (RNB) and at the library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN) of St. Petersburg. The author of this version was Ivan Gorlitsky, official translator for the Academy of Sciences, appointed to that post by Trediakovsky, at the moment involved in the writing of a tragedy for the same occasion, commissioned by the Empress. A microfilm reproduction of the score is preserved at the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome.

[144] This is attested also by the *Programma predstavleniya opery "Bellerofont" 1750 god* (Programme of the performance of the opera *Bellerofonte* in the year 1750), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 207, pp. 175-81.

[145] *Iz "Sankt-Peterburgskikh vedomostey" za 1750 god* (From *The Saint Petersburg gazette* of the year 1750), *ivi*, Doc. 206, pp. 174-5.

In Saint Petersburg, 11 December

About the celebrations that went on at Court for the most high Ascension to the throne of Her Imperial Majesty, it remains to be mentioned some circumstances, that is that a new opera, entitled *Bellerofonte*, has been composed by the Court poet Mister Doctor Bonecchi, where its author had the intention of representing, in the image of his hero, the praise-deserving qualities of our Most Gracious Sovereign, which he did with the pleasure of all us. The music was composed by the Court composer Mister Araja, and in a word one can say that the poetic text, the music, the ballets, the furnishings, machinery and the costumes were in one's own way absolutely perfect. The artists Giorgi, Mazany and Garani, as well as the Actors Soletti, Giorgi, Compassi and Marco Polturatsky [Poltoratsky – L. S.] has deserved great praise for this, and among all is at the mentioned Porturatsky, born in Little Russia, who for the first time trod the boards, that everybody was amazed, and in all fairness one can say that he was not inferior to the best Italian actors. Machinery and sets were created by Mr Valeriani with great amazement of the spectators. The ballets were created by Mr Fossani [*sic* - Rinaldi].]

Later on the opera was performed more than once: on 21 December 1750 for the Empress's birthday, on 16 February 1751, and on 29 April 1753 in Moscow for the coronation anniversary.[146] What is worth remarking is the participation of Russian singers to Italian stagings, a fact made possible also because they received an education totally in line with the Italian style, a condition that, as Mooser states, would have important implications on the formation of a national theatre in Russia (see Chap. II, Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre").[147]

On 28 April 1751 a new opera by Araja was staged, titled *Eudossa incoronata o sia Teodosio II*.[148] In this opera, too, clemency is the main attribute ascribed to the Empress, referred to as Eudossa, as indicated in the final Licenza:

[146] For documents attesting further stagings see *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny: dokumental'naya khronika 1751-1761* (Russian theatrical life at Elizabeth Petrovna's time. A documented chronicle 1751-1761), vypusk III, kn. I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Nauka 2011, Docs. 14, 180

[147] "Sous peine de perdre de vue l'ensemble de l'effort culturel dont la capitale fut le foyer dès cet instant, et de n'en pas saisir toute l'importance, on ne saurait, en effet, dissocier les destinées de l'opéra italien de celles du théâtre national. […] elles ne tarderont pas à se rejoindre de plus en plus fréquemment et de plus en plus intimement, jusqu'au jour où, grâce à cette sorte d'interpénétration, grâce aussi à l'esprit d'initiative et au talent de certains artistes du cru, on assistera à la naissance d'un théâtre musical autochtone, dont l'apparition aura été préparée de longue date, aussi bien par les compositeurs et les chanteurs venus d'Italie, que par les dramaturges et les acteurs groupés autour de la scène du Corps des cadets". R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 250.

[148] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *Eudossa incoronata o sia Teodosio II. Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi all'Imperial Corte di Russia il Di XXV Aprile MDCCLI per festeggiare l'annua solennità dell'Incoronazione di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Prima, Imperadrice di tutte le Russie &c., &c., &c. E di nuovo replicata al V di settembre MDCCLIII nel giorno festivo del nome di Sua Maestà Imperiale. La poesia E' del Signor Dottor G. Bonechj Fiorentino, Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperial &c. La musica è del Signor Francesco Araya Napolitano, Maestro di Cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale, &c. In St. Pietroburgo, nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze, Sic 5 Settembre 1753*. Possibly issued in four languages, it is preserved only in the Italian and Russian versions. The Italian version is preserved at the Russian State Library in Moscow (RGB MK), at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB Rossica) and at the Library of the University of Göttingen. The Russian one, in the translation by Adam Olsuf'ev, is preserved at the RNB, at Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN) and at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. The score is preserved at library of the Mariinsky theatre in St. Petersburg, in a unique copy copia entitled *Eudossa incoronata Teodoro II°*. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle…*, p. 30. A microfilm reproduction is housed at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome.

Un vel di cui si cuopre il mio rispetto
E' (celar nol saprei) d'Eudossa il Nome:
Anno più degno Oggetto,
AUGUSTA, i Versi miei:
E allor, che i Pregi a celebrar m'accingo
D'una Donna Immortal, che in seno accoglie
Ogn'Eroica Virtù, che al Trono rende
Di quella, che ne ottien Luce maggiore
Dice Eudossa la lingua. ELISA il Core.[149]

The opera was repeated on 24 May 1751, 26 April and 7 September 1752 in Saint Petersburg, and on 24 October 1753 in Moscow (with newly issued libretto).[150]

In 1752 Bonecchi left Russia to return to his homeland, soon forgetting the promise he had made to the Empress to provide new librettos for the Russian Court.[151] That is why the next opera, *Alessandro nelle Indie*, commissioned by Elizabeth on 15 July 1755 and staged for the first time on 18 February 1756, was composed on an old libretto by Metastasio.[152]

Needless to say, the music was composed by Araja, and the ballets were by Rinaldi; sets were by Peresinotti on Valeriani's project. In the staging of this opera too, the students of the Infantry Corps of Nobles took part (see Chap. II - Part III – The Birth of the

[149] [G. BONECCHI], *Eudossa incoronata o sia Teodosio II. Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi all'Imperial Corte di Russia il Di XXV Aprile MDCCLI per festeggiare l'annua solennità dell'Incoronazione di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Prima, Imperadrice di tutte le Russie &c., &c., &c. E di nuovo replicata al V di settembre MDCCLIII nel giorno festivo del nome di Sua Maestà Imperiale. La poesia è del Signor Dottor G. Bonechj Fiorentino, Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperiale. La poesia E' del Signor Dottor G. Bonechj Fiorentino, Poeta di Sua Maestà Imperial &c. La musica è del Signor Francesco Araya Napolitano, Maestro di Cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale, &c. In St. Pietroburgo, nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze, Sic 5 Settembre 1753*, p. 73.
[150] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 252; *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…(1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, Docs. 27-8, 101, 122-3, 190.
[151] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 253.
[152] The most ancient version of the libretto, preserved at the Russian State Library of Moscow (RGB MK), seems to date 1756. Its title page reads as follows: *Alessandro nelle Indie. Dramma per musica da ripresentarsi all'Imperial corte di Russia, il Di XVIII Decembre MDCCLV, per festeggiare l'annua solennità della nascita di Sua Maestà Imperiale Elisabetta Petrovna, Imperatrice di tutte le Russie… In St. Pietroburgo, nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze, il di 18 dicembre 1755.* According to Mooser the score is lost. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 261. Stählin's notice, according to which the opera had been was staged in Dresden in 1731 with the title of *Cleofide, o Alessandro nelle Indie*, with music by Johann Adolf Hasse, refers to the libretto compiled by Michelangelo Boccardi after Metastasio, rather than to a version by Apostolo Zeno. YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie onago teatral'nago deystviya, kotoroe nazyvaetsya opera* (Historical description of the theatrical action called 'opera'), *Prilozheniya k gazete «Sanke-Peterburgskie vedomosti» za 1738 god (chasti 43-44)* (Notes to the newspaper *Saint Petersburg gazette* for the year 1738 (Parts 43-4)), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, vypusk I, Doc. 327, p. 562.

"Russian Theatre"). Later, the opera was repeated on 21 February, 28 April and 2 July 1756.[153]

After 1756, Araja's name stopped appearing in connection with remarkable events in Saint Petersburg, the composer having abandoned operas for minor occasional works. The explanation probably lies in the changes that occurred on the Peterburgian scene with the arrival of private troupes, offering new repertoires (see below - Private Foreign Troupes in Saint Petersburg), but also with the arrival of the composer Vincenzo Manfredini, who enjoyed the prince heir Pyotr Fyodorovich's protection in the late years of the Empress's rule (see below - Theatre Activity at the Summer Residence of Oranienbaum).[154]

These years were characterized by a turnover within the Italian troupe. Foreseeing the fall of their Maecenas, many artists preferred not to be present at the succession to the throne, an event that in Russia was often accompanied by troubles. In 1758 the Court sent Giuseppe Dall'Oglio to Italy to engage new artists, after that Saletti and Carestini had left;[155] the same year the choreographer Rinaldi left Russia and was replaced by Giovanni Antonio Sacco (who had worked in Locatelli's troupe, see below – Locatelli and the Introduction of Opera *Buffa*), and by Christof Hilverding from 1 September 1759 on.[156]

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[153] *ivi*, p. 261. V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 53; *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… 1751-1761*, vypusk III, kn. I, Docs. 396, 401-2, 419-20.

[154] According to Ritzareva, "All these events of 1757-58 [Locatelli's arrival and Raupach's opera *Al'tsesta*] drew the Court's attention away from Araja [that is, from Italian *opera seria*], leaving him inactive and lacking support. His relations with Grand Duke Peter Fyodorovich remained good, however, although the latter was not actually able to help Araja until he became Emperor, two and a half years later. Meanwhile, on 27 July 1759 Araja resigned. […] Upon ascending the throne, Peter III restored the authoritative kapellmeister [*sic*] to his former position. Araja, however, had barely arrived for his reappointment on 28 May 1762, when on 5 July his patron was assassinated and a week later the new Empress, Catherine II, appointed Vincenzo Manfredini to compose the music for her coronation ceremonies. This time Araja truly had nothing left to wait for in Russia and quit its soil forever." M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, pp. 62-3. According to Porfir'eva, Araja's date of death is usually assumed to be c. 1770. However, the mention of his name as a living maestro by Manfredini in his treatise *Regole armoniche, o sieno Precetti ragionati* (1775) demands a re-examination of this assumption. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 61.

[155] For more details see M. L. FERRAZZI, *Musicisti padovani nella Russia del Settecento…*, pp. 103-19.

[156] Franz Anton Christof Hilverding (Vienna, 1710 - 1786) was an Austrian dancer, choreographer and *impresario*. He was a member of a large theatrical dynasty active in Vienna since albeit the 1660s. His father, Johann Baptist Hilverding, had been an associate of the famous Hanswurst Josef Anton Stranitzky, and his elder brother Johann Peter Hilverding led various troupes of German actors, ending his career in Russia. His principal training was with the dancer Blondy in Paris, at the emperor's expense, during the 1730s. By 1737 he was engaged as a dancer at the Habsburg court, where he soon began composing ballets alongside Alexander and Franz Anton Phillebois. According to his pupil Gasparo Angiolini's account, the period of mourning after the death of Charles VI in 1740 allowed Hilverding time to reflect on reforms in the nature of theatrical dance, which led him to replace old *commedia dell'arte* characters with natural ones, to banish the masks, and to turn dance to more expressive purposes. Hilverding's first documented choreographies date from 1742, and were mostly performed in conjunction with Italian operas, notably Hasse's *Ipermestra* (1744) and Gluck's *Semiramide riconosciuta* (1748). Following the reorganization of Viennese theatres under court

The following year (1759) Araja too left Russia. His departure was, in Gerngross's viewpoint, a crucial moment in Russian theatrical life, because from that time on the audience's preferences lifted from opera *seria* to opera *buffa* (see below - Locatelli and the Introduction of Opera *Buffa*).[157] Anyway, the life of the Italian Court troupe was to continue: on 12 September 1759, to replace Araja, a new *Maestro di cappella* was appointed, Hermann Friedrich Raupach,[158] a German composer and harpsichord player who was at service in the Italian troupe since 1755 and, according to Stählin, had previously demonstrated to master excellently the Italian style.[159] On 15 April 1759 the court engaged in Vienna, as composer of ballet music, Joseph Starzer,[160] who was to

control in 1752, Hilverding was named choreographer for both the German Kärntnertor and French Burg theatres, with responsibility also for Italian operas; Joseph Starzer composed most of the ballet music. It was Hilverding's independent pantomime ballets that most impressed his contemporaries, such as *Ariadne et Bacchus* and *Narcisse et la Nymphe d'Echo* (both in 1754). Towards the end of 1758 he left for Russia, where Starzer soon followed. There they revived some of their Viennese works and created several new pantomime ballets and ballets for Italian operas. His two first ballets were *Novye lavry* (*Les nouveaux lauriers*) to Raupach's music (the former composed alongside Springer), and *Pribezhitse dobrodeteli* (*Le retire de la vertu*) to Starzer's. In 1760 he created *La victoire de Flore sur Borée* to Starzer's music, probably inserted in Raupach's *Siroe*. For the celebration for Catherine II's coronation he created the ballets *Amour et Psiché* to Manfredini's music and four ballets to Starzer's music for Traetta's *L'Olimpiade*. In 1763 he created *Le Retour d'Apollon au Parnasse* to Starzer's music for Manfredini's opera *Carlo Magno*. He composed also ballets on private commission, soon to Springer's music. In Vienna Hilverding was succeeded in the Burgtheater by Angiolini, who over the next several years, in collaboration with Ranieri de' Clazabigi, produced a series of major dance dramas (to music by Gluck) informed by their knowledge of ancient pantomime. Hilverding worked alongside his former pupil following his return to Vienna in 1764, but in a more pastoral, allegorical vein. After the *Hoftrauer* for Emperor Franz Stephan (died in 1765), Hilverding served briefly as the lessee of the Kärtnertortheater, but retired from active participation in the enterprise in 1767 on account of poor health. See the dictionary entry written by Bruce Alan Brown in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by S. Sadie, 29 voll., London, Macmillan Publishers 2001, and *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 247-9.

[157] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 56.

[158] For the biography of Hermann Friedrick Raupach see Chap. II - Part III, n. 112.

[159] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 139.

[160] Joseph Johann Michel Starzer (bap. Vienna, 1728. Vienna, 1787), Austrian composer and violinist, was the son of the horn player Thomas Starzer, who served in the *Kapelle* of Count Johann Julius von Hardegg, and as a watchman at court, before entering the orchestra of Vienna's German (Kärtnertor) theatre around 1752. No details of his musical training are known, but it has been surmised that he studied with the court composer Giuseppe Bonno, the teacher of his sister Catharina, a gifted contralto; another possibility is the violinist Giuseppe Trani, who like Bonno was employed in the Kapelle of field marshal Joseph Friedrich, prince of Sachsen-Hildburghausen. He probably worked as a violinist and composer in the French theatre since 1752, and as a composer in both theatres in the season 1755-56. Hilverding was called to the Russian court in late 1758, and Starzer, after collaborating with several choreographers, among whom Hilverding's successor in the French theatre, Angiolini, followed after the end of the season 1758-59. In Russia Starzer and Hilverding re-staged some of their Viennese works, and created a number of new, mainly allegorical, ballets and collaborated on ballets for Italian operas (*Le refuge de la vertu*, Spb 1759; *La victoire de Flore sur Borée*, Spb, 1760; *Siroe* Spb, 1760; *Le jugement de Pâris*, Spb, 1761; *Promethée et Pandore*, Spb, 1761; *Le pauvre Jourka*, Moscow, 1762; *Le seigneur du village moqué*, M., 1762; *La vengeance du dieu de l'amour*, M., 1762; *Le retour de la déesse du printemps*, M., 1763; *Pygmalion ou La statue animée*, M., 1763; *Apollon et Daphné ou Le retour d'Apollon au Parnasse*, M., 1763; *Acis et Galathée*, Spb, 1764). In collaboration with Raupach he created *Les nouveaux lauriers* (SPb, 1759). In a report from this period, J. A. Hiller credited Starzer with the introduction of German composers' works to Russian audiences. Starzer worked with other choreographers besides Hilverding, including his successor Pierre Granger, before coming back to Vienna in 1767. Hilverding returned to Vienna in 1765 and Starzer only in 1767, after which he created several large-scale pantomime ballet scores to choreographies by Jean-Georges Noverre, mainly on

remain in the service of the Court until 31 January 1762. For the Italian troupe, Raupach composed ballets such as *Armide et Renaud* and *Le Désespoir d'Armide*,[161] and the opera *Siroe*, on libretto by Metastasio, successfully performed for the coronation anniversary on 13 December 1760 (sets by Valeriani, Peresinotti and G. Urbani).[162] The latter had at least four more stagings: on 20 and 29 December 1760, 2 January, 28 and 29 April 1761.[163] Hilverding created ballets to Starzer's music to be inserted in the opera. Sets were decorated by the theatrical painter-perspectivist Giuseppe Valeriani and Antonio Peresinotti. This was to be the last Italian opera staged during Elizabeth's reign. The

galant and grotesque subjects, but also including heroic subjects, and by Angiolini, who followed Noverre in Vienna in 1774, and created multi-act ballets, such as *Le Cid* and *Teseo in Creta*. With the advent of Joseph II's Nationaltheater, and the dismissal of the court's ballet troupe, Starzer was called upon to compose music for German plays, the music of which does not seem to have survived. One *Singspiel*, *Die drei Pächter* (Vienna 1778, not to be confused with a work with the same title by W. G. Becker, after Monvel and Dezède, staged in 1785) seems also to date from this period. During the early 1780s, Starzer was among the musicians participating in van Swieten's Sunday afternoon musical exercises devoted largely to the music of Bach, Handel and other composers in the strict style. Here Starzer played for the baron along with the lutenist Kohaut, and (singing tenor) helped van Swieten, Mozart and others tried out various choral works. He was chosen by van Swieten to arrange works of Handel, and lead performances for the concerts of the Gesellschaft der associierten Kavaliere, these functions being taken over by Mozart following his death in 1787. Late in life he was also active in the newly founded Tonkünstler-Societät, both administratively and as a composer and director. Generally speaking, in collaboration with the choreographer Franz Hilverding, Starzer helped to lay the foundations for the Viennese reform of ballet by Gluck and Gasparo Angiolini (Hilverding's pupil), and thus to some extent also for the Gluckian opera reform. See the entry on Starzer written by Bruce Alan Brown in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians…*, and *Dizionario enciclopedico universale della musica e dei musicisti*, *Le biografie*, 8 voll., Torino, UTET 1986.

[161] After the composer's death, the Academy of Fine Arts acquired the ballets: *Andromède et Persée*; *Antigono Primo*; *Antigono Secondo*; *Infelici Fortunati*; *Enée et Lavinie* (*Héro-Pantomime*); *Sémélé et Jupiter* (*Héro-Pantomime*); *Le Jeu de l'Amour*; *La force de l'Amour* (*Héro-Pantomime*); *Le Faune enchanté*; *Les Villageoises Malicieuses*; *La Forza Humiliata*; *Le Vauluble attrapée*; *L'Infidélité decouverte*; *Armida*; *Le Désespoir de l'Armide*; *Diana non Partita*; *La Soeur en Vienise ou [sic] la fontaine*; *Lucius Verus*; *L'Enlèvement de l'Europe*; *Le Chinois Tableaux*. V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*. As we shall see (Chap. II, Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"), he was to compose music also for the Russian troupe.

[162] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 139. An extract of the opera was issued in 1760: *Ekstrakt iz opery Siroy: Predstavlennoy na pridvornom teatre v radostny den' prazdnestva vozshestviya na sverossiysky prestol eya velichestva gosudaryni imperatritsy Elisavety Petrovny noyabrya 25 dnya 1760 goda. Stikhotvorstvo g. abbata Metastasiya, slavnago stikhotvortsa, obretayushchagosya v sluzhbe eya velichestva imperatrittsy korolevy vengerskoy i bogemskoy; Muzyka g. Raupakha, eya imperatorskago velichestva vserossiyskiya kapel'-meystera. V Sanktpeterburge, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk* [1760] (Extract from the opera Siroe: performed at the Court theatre in the most merry day of the celebration of the ascension to the throne of Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna on 25 November 1760. Poetry by the Abbot Mr Metastasio, the famous poet, serving Her Imperial Majesty the Queen of Hungary and Bohemia; Music by Mr. Raupach, Kapellmaister of her Imperial All-Russian Majesty. In Saint Petersburg, Academy of Sciences [1760]). More details about the performances of this opera can be found in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… 1751-1761, vypusk III,* kn. I, Docs. 810 a, b.

[163] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 64-5. *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… 1751-1761,* vypusk III*,* kn. I, Docs. 814, 817-8, 844-5. The revival dating 22 October 1761, reported by Vsevolodsky-Gerngross is probably erraneous, a comic opera with a ballet being registered by the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* on the same date. *Ivi*, Doc. 865.

preserved score, though incomplete, has recently been published.[164] It contains no recitatives, and possibly not even all the arias that were sung.[165] It accounts for sixteen arias, among which two do not belong to Metastasio's original: Siroe's aria "Vo solcando un mar crudele", and Emira's aria "Che furia, che mostro". The former (not to be confused with Arbace's aria concluding act II of *Artaserse*, which has the same *incipit*, but different content) has probably been inserted to replace Siroe's "Fra' dubbi affetti miei", while the latter seems to be the follow-up of Emira's recitative ("Tu, barbaro, tu piangi! E chi l'uccise?..." III, 4), also recalling other passages by Metastasio in *Artaserse*, which the author (Lazzaroni?) might have used as a source. Seemingly, the libretto could have been treated as a pasticcio, as had been the case with *La Clemenza di Tito*. Although this cannot be considered certain evidence, reasons of brevity possibly explain the absence of recitatives and the reduced number of arias (twelve arias were dropped, if compared with Metastasio's libretto), which might be considered in relation to Stählin oft-quoted observations on operas staged with spoken dialogues instead of recitatives.

Theatre Activity at the Summer Residence of Oranienbaum

Besides Moscow and Saint Petersburg, the activity of the *Ital'yanskaya kompaniya* took place, in a more private form, in the other residences of the court, such as Peterhoff, Oranienbaum and Tsarskoe Selo.[166] Italian opera in particular found full expression in the theatre of the residence of Oranienbaum, where Pyotr Fyodorovich and his wife Ekaterina Alekseevna (future Peter III and Catherine II) spent their summers starting in 1743.

Pyotr Fyodorovich, Peter I's nephew (as son of Anna Petrovna and the duke of Holstein-Gottorp Karl Friederich), was born in Kiel, where he lived until his fourteenth birthday. In 1742 he was summoned to Saint Petersburg by his aunt, who wanted to educate him to the functions he was expected to fulfil.[167] According to several historians, he was to remain through his life, "un être assez borné, de moeurs grossières, et il resta fonciérement allemand, ne se genant pas pour manifester en toutes occasions, et

[164] H. F. RAUPACH, *Siroe*, Partitur, Nach dem Manuskript revidiert und herausgegeben von Denis Lomtev, Moskva, "PREST" 2000.
[165] As the editor Denis Lomtev affirms, the published 'score' was drawn from a manuscript which was itself a copy (housed at the library of the Royal Conservatory of Bruxelles), but the original is not preserved. D. LOMTEV, *Neizvestnaya opera zabytogo kompozitora* (The unknown opera by a forgotten composer), in H. F. RAUPACH, *Siroe*, Partitur…, pp. 3-4.
[166] Information about the edification of theatres in such places can be found in documents collected by Starikova in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, pp. 549-661 (Docs. 523, 525-7, 532, 543 concerning Peterhoff; 565, 585, 732 concerning Tsarskoe Selo).
[167] Stählin left some notes about Pyotr Fyodorovich, to whom he had been tutor, in [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Shtelina o Petre Tret'em…*, pp. 67-118.

ouvertement, le mépris en lequel il tenait le pays des tsars et le peuple sur lequel il devait régner."[168] But he demonstrated great passion for music, played the violin (which he had studied with Pietro Peri) in his orchestra, together with other noblemen-amateurs, or performing as a soloist. Notably, Pyotr Fyodorovich was fond of Italian opera: beyond his personal passion (which his wife did not share), it is possible to venture the hypothesis that his desire to maintain Italian opera *seria* in a moment when, as we shall see, it was going to meet a period of enforced inactivity, was due also to the desire to imitate the Prussian court of Frederick II.

Anyway, after the wedding, the young couple used to spend quite a lot of time in Oranienbaum in the estate which Elizabeth had presented the heir in 1744 and turned it into a cultural centre, taking with them the Court personnel, included musicians.

According to Ritzareva, the grand duke had a Stone Hall (*Kamenny zal*) built, also known as *Kartinny dom* or *Kartinnaya palata* (Picture Pavillon) and *Byvshy Operny Dom* (Old opera house), a structure that housed the theatre, which was called the 'opera'.[169] A document collected by Starikova attests the construction of a first theatre in 1747:

> № 72. По указу Ея Императорского Величества Канцелярии от строеней, <…>, поданного сего марта 10-го дня, которым объявляет, что по Высочайшему Его Императорского Высочества повелению велено при Ранинбоме построить к предбудущему майю месяцу сего года каменной оперной дом. <…>[170]

> [No. 72. According to Her Imperial Majesty's royal command to the building chancery, […], delivered on 10 March, through which she declares, that according to Her Imperial Highness's orders the construction of a stone Opera House near Rannibom has been commissioned by the next month of May of the current year […].]

The original small ensemble developed into a big orchestra, and in 1755 a new Opera House (a wooden two-storey structure with an attic) in the Italian style was built by Rinaldi - engaged from Rome by the grand duke himself - to replace the old theatre.[171] According to Ritzareva, "Its pit had 24 seats and the stage was fully equipped. The two levels of spectator boxes and most of the walls were covered with bleached canvas. Many of the boxes had painted ceilings, created between 1757 and 1761 by the Italian master

[168] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 331.
[169] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 65.
[170] *Iz Protokolov Kantselyarii ot stroeniy za mart 1747 goda* (From the minutes of the building chancery for the year 1747), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 531, p. 608.
[171] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, pp. 143-4.

Francesco Gradizzi." The famous painter-perspectivist Giuseppe Valeriani created sets.[172] The theatre opened in the summer of 1757 with the staging of Araja's *Bellerofonte*, the same opera that had been staged in 1750 for the opening of the new Opera House in Saint Petersburg.[173]

The Little Court (*Maly dvor*) employed the poets Antonio Denzi[174] and Lodovico Lazzaroni,[175] and such singers of the Italian troupe as Maria Camati (nicknamed 'La Farinella'), Maria Monari, Caterina Brigonzi, the two German singers Eleonore Brihan (or Brian) and Sophie Niederstedt, the violinists Caselli and Onezorg, the traverso player Koster and the cellist Überscheer. Numerous musicians serving at the Imperial Court, including *castrati*, were also sometimes called upon to perform. For instance, Denzi was employed also at the Empress's Court, and Brigonzi at Locatelli's troupe (see below – Locatelli and the Introduction of Opera *Buffa*). According to Gozenpud, in order to provide future native performers (who were paid much less than their foreign counterparts), Pyotr Fyodorovich founded a music school for the children of German soldiers serving in the Holstein Regiment at his service. In 1755 he also opened a ballet school, recruiting

[172] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 67. The building of the Opera House was moved from Oranienbaum to St. Petersburg in 1824 and was later destroyed by a fire. It has since been restored on its original site in Oranienbaum. *ibidem*.

[173] Ballets by Antonio Rinaldi and sets by Valeriani. The libretto referring to this staging, issued by the Academy of Sciences in 1757 in Italian, Russian and German, is preserved at the Library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN, Italian version) and at the Library of the Congress in Washington (German version). R. - A. MOOSER, *Un tsar mélomane: Pierre III*, in *Annales de la musique et des musiciens* ..., I, p. 345.

[174] Antonio Denzi (also called Denzio) was a singer, composer, librettist and theatre director. Born in Venice, where he worked from 1715 to 1721, he was later in Prague, becoming the intendant of Count Sporck till 1734, staging numerous operas by Albinoni, Bioni, Vivaldi and other composers. In 1733 his opera *Filindo* was staged in Ratisbona. In the years 1747-48 he was active in Munich, where he had his opera *Barsina* staged; later in Lübeck he directed a troupe that gave performances of ballets and pantomimes, but did not gain the expected success. In 1755 Denzi was engaged as court poet in St. Petersburg, succeeding to Bonecchi, and probably performing also as a singer, notably in intermezzos staged at the Oranienbaum theatre. He was the author or the cantatas *Urania vaticinante* and *Junon secourable*, both set to music by Araja in 1757, and of the libretto for the opera *buffa Il marito geloso*, with music by Zoppis or Rutini, staged by Locatelli's troupe. Around 1758 or 1759 he was replaced by Lodovico Lazzaroni, and, once quitted the Court service, reached Moscow. His further destiny remains unknown. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens*..., I, p. 237. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*..., vol. 1, p. 297.

[175] Ludovico (or Lodovico) Lazzaroni (Venice, ? - ?) was an Italian poet and librettist. He served in Stuttgart, and in 1757 he probably came to Russia together with Locatelli's troupe. In December 1758 they staged his *Il Giudizio d'Aminta*, on music by Ferdinand Zellbell. In 1760 he entered the Court service and wrote the text of *La pace degli eroi*, which was translated in Russian by Ivan Barkov as *Mir geroev*. He later wrote the libretto of the opera *Carlo Magno*, staged on 24 November 1763 with music by Manfredini, and *La virtù liberata*, set to music by Galuppi. Lazzaroni stayed in St. Petersburg until 1772, when he was replaced by Marco Coltellini. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*..., vol. 2, p. 124.

"children of the gardeners and peasants, who are aged ten to thirteen, and having a pleasant appearance […].”[176]

The repertoire included operas that had been already staged at Court, and were simply revived in the local theatre, without need of new sets or costumes. The librettos issued at the moment of the performance attest the following stagings: *Seleuco*,[177] *Bellerofonte*,[178] *L'asilo della pace*. Araja composed for this stage several occasional works, possibly in order to gain Pyotr Fyodorovich's benevolence in view of his imminent ascension to the throne.[179] Among the works especially created for this theatre there are:

1755:

L'Amor prigioniero, theatrical dialogue in one act and two parts, written in 1740 by Metastasio for the Court of Vienna, and set to music by the *Kapellmeister* Georg Reutter in 1741. For the staging of 1755 the sets were created by Giuseppe Valeriani and Antonio Peresinotti. *Amor prigioniero* was played there on 16/29 June 1755, most probably as the opening performance, and composed on the grand duke's commission.[180]

1757:

[176] A. A. GOZENPUD, *Muzykal'ny teatr v Rossii. Ot istokov do Glinki. Ocherk* (Musical theatre in Russia. From the origins to Glinka. An essay), Leningrad, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1959, p. 101.

[177] As attested by the French-Italian version of the libretto: *Seleucus: Opéra qui doit être représenté à Oranienbaum par ordre de Son Altesse Impériale monseigneur le grand duc de toutes les Russies etc. & etc. / La poésie est de Mr. le docteur Bonechi ...; La musique est de Mr. François Araya ... - À St. Péterbourg [!] [St.- Peterburg]: À l'Imprimerie du Noble Corps des cadets, 1761*. (*Il Seleuco: Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi in Oranienbaum per comando di Sua Altezza Imperiale monseigneur il gran duca di tutte le Russie etc. etc. etc. / La poesia è del Sig. dottor Giuseppe Bonechi ...; La musica è del. sig. Francesco Araya* ...).

[178] According to Mooser, a copy of the libretto issued for the staging in Oranienbaum in 1757 can be found at the Library of Congress of Washington. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens*..., I, p. 333.

[179] Catherine II herself tells in her memoirs about the plans for the succession, encouraged by the Empress's illness: "L'état valétudinaire et les fréquentes convulsions de l'Impératrice ne laissaient pas que de tourner tous les yeux sur l'avenir." CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même, et précédés d'une préface par A. Herzen*, Londres, Trübner & cie. 1859, p. 315.

[180] The libretto is preserved at the Russian State Library of Moscow (RGB MK) and at the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersbourg (BAN): [P. METASTASIO], *Amor prigioniero, Dialogo per musica da rappresentarsi nel Teatro d'Orangenbaum per comando di Sua Altezza Imperiale Il Gran Duca di tutte le Russie etc., etc., etc. La poesia è del Signore Abate Metastasio Romano Poeta Cesareo. La musica è del Signor Francesco Araja Napolitano Maestro di Capella, di Sua Maesta Imperiale di tutte le Russie. In St. Pietroburgo Nella Stamperia dell'Accademia Imperiale delle Scienze, L'anno 1755*. According to Moooser the score is lost.

- *Urania vaticinante*, a cantata drammatica with choruses staged in the garden of the Palace on 29 June 1757 for the Grand Duke's name day; libretto by Antonio Denzi, sets by the architect Antonio Rinaldi (1710-1794), ballets by the homonymous choreographer Antonio Rinaldi (ca. 1715 – ca. 1759);[181]

- According to Pekarsky, Araja received a commission for *Junon secourable*, on the occasion of the birth of the grand duke's daughter Anna Petrovna, on 9 December 1757.[182]

1759:

The Little court was also the stage where Vincenzo Manfredini, *Kapellmeister* of the prince since his arrival in 1758, made his debut.[183] It is not clear whether he actually is

[181] The libretto was issued by the Academy of Sciences in 1757, containing both the Italian and Russian versions, and is now preserved at the Library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN). The title page reads as follows: *Urania vaticinante. Cantata con cori ad introduzione di un ballo di popoli esultanti per il giorno del nome che porta Sua Altezza Imperiale Il Gran Duca di tutte le Russie, etc., etc., etc. / Festa da celebrarsi fra l'ottava di SS. Pietro e Paolo apostoli, nel giardino d'Oranienbaum, per comando di S. A. I. la Gran Duchessa consorti, nell'anno 1757*. The score seems to be lost; it is not mentioned by Araja's biographers, except for Findeyzen who, as to Mooser, records erroneously the date of performance. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 345.

[182] P. PEKARSKY, *Istoriya imperatorskoy Akademii nauk v Peterburge* (History of Saint Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences), t. II, Sanktpeterburg, Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk 1873, p. 621. The title page in French reads as follows: *Junon secourable Lucine au très dèsirè [sic] accouchement da S. A. I. madame la grande-duchesse de toutes les Russies, etc., accouchèe heureusement le soir du IX dècembre 1757 d'une princesse impèriale baptisèe sous le nom d'Anna Petrowna*. Mooser could find no trace of the score or the libretto, which was issued by the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg in Italian and French, and which Russian translation had been written by Lomonosov. The historian expresses strong doubts about its staging in Oranienbaum, the grand duchess having lied in at the Winter Palace, as recalled in her memoirs. See CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même…*. According to Mooser, Araja's score is lost, and it is not mentioned by the composer's biographers. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 345.

[183] Vincenzo Manfredini (Pistoia, 1737 – St. Petersburg, 1799), was an Italian composer, teacher and writer on music. Son of the violin player and composer Francesco Onofrio, he studied in Bologna with G. Perti and in Milan with G. A. Fioroni. He arrived to St. Petersburg in 1758 as a composer of Locatelli's private enterprise, together with his brother, the *castrato* Giuseppe Manfredini. Initially he was appointed *maestro di cappella* at prince Pyotr Fyodorovich's 'little' Court, for which he composed at least one opera *seria* (*La Semiramide riconosciuta*, 1760). After Empress Elizabeth's death in 1761, on 27 December 1762 Peter III appointed him to the city theatre, to replace Raupach. His first composition for the Court was a *Requiem* for the Empress's death (4 voices and orchestra), performed in February 1762. After that he composed, it seems, four operas *seria*, of which only two are known: *L'Olimpiade*, on a libretto by Metastasio, performed for the first time in Moscow on 24 November 1762, and *Carlo Magno*, on a libretto by Lazzaroni, which première took place in St. Petersburg on 24 November 1763, which was repeated, in a modified version, in Moscow for the coronation anniversary in 1764. He was also the author of the "heroic pastorale" *La Pace degli Eroi*, composed on the occasion of the peace treaty between Russia and Prussia, and performed in June 1762. With the arrival of such Italian composers as Galuppi and Traetta, his importance as a composer decreased. He produced other instrumental compositions (Messes, harpsichord Sonatas, Cantatas and others), but in 1769 he decided to leave Russia. In Italy he composed a new opera, *Armida*, and wrote the music treatise *Regole armoniche o sieno precetti ragionati* (Venice, 1775). From 1785 to 1789 he was also a contributor to *Giornale enciclopedico di Bologna*, a publication devoted to cultural renewal, where in April 1785 he reviewed the first volume of Arteaga's *Le rivoluzioni del teatro musicale* (Bologna, 1783). This review led to a debate with Arteaga, to whom Manfredini responded with a second treatise, *Difesa della musica moderna e de' suoi celebri esecutori* (Bologna, 1788). Having been Prince Pavel Petrovich's music teacher since 1765, at his ascension to the throne in 1796 (as Paul I) Manfredini was again invited in Russia, where he arrived in

the composer of *Alessandro nelle Indie* staged in 1759, since another opera with the same title had been performed before with music by Araja.[184] The opera having been staged for Elizabeth, it's more likely Araja's one, Vsevolodsky-Gerngross falling into mistake.[185] For the Oranienbaum staging, in which, according to Stählin, the grand duke himself took part as a violinist,[186] the Academy of Sciences issued the libretto in Italian and French.[187] Francesco Calzevaro (who was planning to leave Locatelli's opera *buffa* troupe and to pass to the *Ital'yanskaya kompaniya*) created ballets, while Valeriani and Peresinotti were responsible for the sets.

1760:

Semiramide riconosciuta, instead, is certainly by Manfredini, newly composed in 1760 on Metastasio's libretto.[188] This opera is considered the debut of the composer's activity, deemed to last until the reign of Paul I.

The experience of the Little Court ended with the grand duke's ascension to the throne on 25 December 1761 (5 January 1762). As a consequence, the company was entirely transferred to the Italian Court troupe. For it Manfredini composed, on Lazzaroni's text, the heroic pastoral *La pace degli eroi* for the celebration of the peace treaty with Prussia (3 June 1762).[189]

1798. Unfortunately, his activity in this time is not known, since he died soon after arriving. Other compositions of his are listed in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, pp. 168-72. See also *Dizionario enciclopedico universale della musica e dei musicisti*, *Le biografie…*, vol. IV; *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians…*, vol. 15.

[184] The main role was played in that occasion by the Ukrainian bass Maksim Berezovsky, who would later study in Italy and become a popular composer of operas and sacred music, continuing along the direction marked by the Italians at the Russian Court. In his regard see M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, and M. RYTSAREVA, *Kompozitor M. S. Berezovsky, zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (The composer M. S. Berezovsky, his life and works), Leningrad, "Muzyka" 1983.

[185] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 107.

[186] [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Shtelina o Petre Tret'em Imperatore Vserossiyskom…*, pp. 67-118.

[187] A copy of the French version is preserved at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB), while an exemplar of the German one is at the Library of Congress.

[188] *La Semiramide riconosciuta, Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi in Oranienbaum per comando di Sua Altezza Imperiale Monseigneur Il Gran Duca Di tutte le Russie etc., etc., etc. nel suo novissimo Teatro. La poesia è del celebre Signor Abbate Pietro Metastasio Poeta di Sua Maestà Cesaréa. La musica è del Signor Vincenzo Manfredini Maestro di Cappella di Sua Altezza Imperiale. In St. Pietroburgo, Nella Stamperia del nobil Corpo dei Cadetti. 1760*. The libretto is preserved at the National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB), while the score seems to be lost. Ballets were created by Francesco Calzevaro, sets by Gradizzi. See R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, pp. 347-8.

[189] [L. LAZZARONI], *La pace degli eroi componimento drammatico per celebrare nell'Imperial corte di St. Pietroburgo il dì di giugno 1762 La gloriosissima pace tra Le Loro Maestà Pietro III. Imperadore di tutte le Russia etc. e Federico III rè di Prussia ed elettore di Brandenburg. La poesia è composta per comando di Sua Maestà Imperiale dal d. Lodovico Lazaroni Veneziano, è la musica di Vincenzo Manfredini, maestro di*

The "French Theatre"

Elizabeth showed a strong interest in French theatre all her reign long, being, like the gran duke, personally fond of music, and considering theatre an essential instrument of the Court's expression. Although the presence of independent itinerant French companies is attested since 1729 by the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti*,[190] the *permanent* presence of a "French theatre" is established with the beginning of her rule.[191]

In 1742 a troupe of French *comédiens* reached Saint Petersburg on Loewenwolde's invitation yet during Anna Ioannovna's rule (invitation that had encountered the opposition of Bühren).[192] They were directed by Charles de Sérigny, who, after having worked in Frankfurt, had been temporarily at the service of the *Landgrave* of Hessen-Cassel.

On 1 March 1743 the troupe signed with the Court a contract foreseeing 25000 roubles per year for the staging of French comedies and tragedies, as well as Italian comedies in French translation.[193] At first they performed in the small theatre in the site of the duke of Courland's Arena (*Manezh*), near the new Winter Palace. When this venue burned down on 6 December 1749, a light theatre was built next to the Summer Palace (the wooden Arena, which stood next to the Kazan''s cathedral, was re-built in the Court theatre), for the staging of comedies, operas, and intermezzos.[194] The Court supplied theatre illumination, music and sets, while the troupe had to provide for costumes.[195]

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cappella di Sua Maestà Imperiale. Stampato à Pietroburgo Nell'Academia delle scienze [1762]. Italian-Russian and Italian-German versions at Russian National Library (RNB Rossica) of St. Petersburg.

[190] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 16 August 1729, quoted in R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra comique français en Russie au XVIIIe. Siècle: contribution à l'histoire de la musique russe*, Genève-Monaco, Kister 1954 (first ed. 1932), p. 21.

[191] Some sources attest the temporary presence of a French dramatic troupe (including singers) arrived in Russia from Hamburg in 1741, directed by some Jean Baptiste Duclos, and staging French tragedies and comedies close to the tradition of the "improvvisa", the texts of which were printed with the Russian translation of the plots. *Iz bumag "Gamburgskoy missii" za 1741 god* (From the papers of the "Mission to Hamburg" in 1741) [Contract dating 11 January 1742], in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 381. For further details see L. M. STARIKOVA, *Teatral'naya zrelishchnaya zhizn' Moskvy v seredine XVIII veka* (The theatrical life of Moscow in the mid - 18th century), in *Pamyatniki kul'tury. Novye otkrytiya. Ezhegodnik ANSSSR za 1986 god* (Monuments of the culture. New findings. Annal of the ANSSSR for the year 1982), L. 1987, pp. 133-88.

[192] R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra comique français en Russie…*, p. 21. The troupe included the actors Sérigny junior and senior, Rosimond de Chateaufort, Hébert, Mr and Ms Préfleury, Mr and Ms Duchaumont (or Duchalmont), Ms Drouin, Ms La Conte, Dyuson, Morambert, Préfleury son, Dyusholmont, de Château Neuf, and Ms Lebrun. See R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 213, and *Programma teatral'nogo predstavleniya frantsuzskoy truppy, posvyashchennogo brakosochetaniyu velikoknyazheskoy chety, 1745 goda* (Programme of the theatrical staging of the French troupe, dedicated to the wedding of the royal couple, 1745), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 33, p. 97.

[193] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 138.

[194] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…*, part VIII, p. 590.

[195] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 213.

Moreover, the Empress imposed the presence of a sire able audience, thus ensuring undoubted success.[196]

Sérigny's troupe remained in Russia for the next fifteen years, from 1742 to 1757, with the same status as the Italian one and alternating with it in the weekly schedule of performances.[197]

The actors followed the Empress in her travels, a detail witnessing the extent to which she was fond of the theatre. According to Starikova, "As depending on the Court, the French troupe, as well as the Italian one, was required to respond to every Court celebration, such as coronation anniversaries, name days, ascension anniversaries, birthdays, and the like."[198] For instance, on the occasion of the wedding of the grand duke Pyotr Fyodorovich to Ekaterina Alekseevna (1745), when Araja composed and staged (on 24 August) his *Scipione*, the "French comedy" contributed to the celebrations by staging *L'union de l'amour e du mariage*, the text of which was printed in Russian, French and German by the Academy of Sciences.[199]

In 1758, Sérigny failed in renewing his troupe, and was consequently dismissed from his post; from that time on the Court signed the contracts directly with the actors who remained in Russia and with the newly coming ones, equally providing for their stay in the city.[200]

After several replacements, the troupe virtually dissolved, possibly also because of Sérigny's death, occurring in the summer of 1761.[201] Moreover, Elizabeth's love for the French theatre was not shared by her successor. Immediately after ascending the throne, Peter III gave free course to his aversion to French culture, dismissing the troupe with an *ukaz* issued as soon as on 7 January 1762, that is only two days after his succession to the throne.[202]

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[196] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 138.

[197] For instance, the register of Court events for the year 1755 records almost every week Italian vocal music and French comedies (more rarely tragedies), opera stagings being, as seen, designed to more noticeable moments in the State's life. See *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda.* (Diary of ceremonies, banquets and visits of the year 1755), *Zhurnaly kamer-fur'erskie, 1755 goda.* (The diaries of the Chamber Harbinger of the year 1755), in http://gbooks.archeologia.ru.

[198] "Как труппа придворная, французская труппа наряду с итальянской объязана была откликаться на всевозможные придворные празднества, как, например, коронация, тезоименитство, восшествие на престол, день рождения императрицы и т. п." V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 135-6.

[199] R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra comique français en Russie…*, p. 21. See also *Programma teatral'nogo predstavleniya frantsuzskoy truppy….*

[200] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 151.

[201] R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 21.

[202] According to Gerngross, it was Elizabeth who defintely dismissed the troupe on 29 December 1761. Although it is not clear whether the historian refers to the new or ancient calendar, it is much more likely that it was her heir to bring the French experience to its end, the Empress having died on 25 December 1761 (7

Anyway, the experience of Sérigny's troupe made it possible to introduce the French Classical repertoire, which had an enormous impact in the development of the Russian theatre, providing models, rules and criteria of discussion. Despite the scanty evidence of the repertoire, Mooser records Abbot Simon-Joseph Pellegrin's *Le nouveau monde* (8 January 1747) and Philippe Néricault-Destouches's *L'irrésolu* (around 1750). The repertoire included also Voltaire's *Alzire ou Les américains* (19 January 1746), and *Mérope* (2 May 1746), Destouches's (?) *Le philosophe marié ou le mari honteux de l'être* (24 January 1749), Molière's *Tartuffe* (3 April 1749), *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (6 December 1751), *L'école des maris*, and *Le médecin malgré lui*.

On 6 September 1754 they staged, in its French translation, Sumarokov's tragedy *Sinav and Truvor* (see Chap. II - Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"). The staging of this play, whose form reflects the typical pattern of French classical tragedy, attests the contacts intercurring between the two groups. Likewise, it was Sérigny himself who possibly introduced to them such plays as *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, *Le mariage forcé* and *Amphitryon*, which were given in the Russian translation by Pyotr Svistunòv (the former on 25 January 1758, and the latter in 1761, respectively) by the newly organized Russian troupe (see Chap. II – Part III - Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire).[203]

As we shall see, the diffusion of French theatre literature produced inevitable consequences on the development of a Russian repertoire. Before passing on to it however, something more needs to be said about the theatrical life led by foreigners in Elizabeth's time, which is characterized by an enormous richness, but also by important changes in its daily practice.

Accessibility

According to Ritzareva, "Accessible only to the nobility, the court stage was the only place where *opera seria* could be watched."[204] The same could be said concerning French prose theatre. For quite many years in Russia theatres were accessible to a very

January 1762 in the so called new style). V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*..., p. 152. According to Mooser, "Pressé de réagir vigoureusement contre la francophilie qui avait été l'une des traditions du règne précédent, et qu'il supportait impatiemment, le jeune souverain voulut que l'un de ses premiers actes fût de licencier abruptement la Compagnie française qui se trouvait en Russie depuis l'année 1743, et dont tous les membres reçurent aussitôt leur congé, avec l'indemnité de voyage prévue à leur contrat". R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens*..., I, p. 349.

[203] R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie*..., p. 21.

[204] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 6.

narrow circle of the population: members of the Imperial family, foreign ministers, courtiers, functionaries of an elevated rank, superior officials who received the free access to performances.[205] This audience was exempted from paying a ticket, since they received an invitation by the Empress, which obliged them to attend the performances. We have, ideed, already pointed out the celebrating role that opera *seria* held in the life of Court and country, where every performance was a manifestation of the Empress's rule, who attended every performance, or was at least represented by a member of the royal family (i. e. the heir, alone or accompanied by his spouse).

It appears that in the first years of this practice nobles were not so keen on attending theatre, and Elizabeth had often occasion to complain for the empty places, and to call upon the ladies of the court one by one, as attested by the *Kamer fur'ersky zhurnal*.[206] Mooser explains this reticence with the incapacity of the audience to endure the performance of opera *seria*.[207]

Possibly in consequence of this resistance, Elizabeth opened the theatres to larger layers of population, until then excluded, an important change in the theatrical life, attested by the *Kamer fur'ersky zhurnal*:

> <…> Апрель, 26-го числа, пополудни, в оперном доме отправлялось, для торжества коронования Ея Императорскаго Величества, Италиянское действие, нвзываемое пастораль, титул имея: "Прибежище мира", которое отправлялось в присутствии Ея Императорскаго Величества и Его Императорскаго Высочества, а Ея Высочество государыня великая княгиния за болезнию быть не изволила.
>
> Вход имели для смотрения: первых шести классов обоего пола персоны и штаб-офицеры, гвардии обер-офицеры, лейб-компании унтер-офицеры без билетов, и помещались в партер и ложи 2 этажа по надписанию, каждый по своему рангу; а в верхния ложи и галереи розданы были от двора Ея Императорскаго Величества билеты.[208]

[[…] On 26 April, in the afternoon, for the celebrations of the anniversary of Her Imperial Majesty's Coronation, an Italian action called pastorale, titled *L'asilo della pace*, took place at the Opera House in the presence of Her Imperial Majesty and His Imperial Highness, while Her Imperial Highness the grand princess could not come because of an illness.

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[205] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 184.

[206] See, for instance, *Tseremenial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda….*

[207] "D'ailleurs, si le *dramma in musica* qui, tout d'abord, occupa presque exclusivement la scène impériale, passait en effet les facultés intellectuelles d'un public relativement peu cultivé, les intermezzi italiens dont les représentations allèrent se multipliant, mais surtout l'apparition, en 1757, de l'opera buffa joué avec un entrain endiablé par une troupe de premier ordre, eurent le don d'attirer dans les salles une assistance nombreuse autant qu'empressée et fidèle." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 185.

[208] *Iz "Kamer-fur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1748 god* (From *The diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1748), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 11, pp. 138-9. Moosers thus comments the introduction of this new practice: "Evolution décisive qui s'accomplit durant les dernières années du règne d'Elisabeth Pétrovna, et dont on devine assez les heureuses conséquences pour le développement des masses populaires, obligées auparavant da se contenter des balagany (spectacles de foire) et des lourdes facéties de grossiers amuseurs." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 185.

Among those who were allowed to assist there were: people of both sexes of the first six ranks and the staff-officers, the chief guards-officials, non-commissioned officers of the Life-Guard company without invitation tickets. They took place in the parterre and in the lodges of the first gallery, following the orders, according to the ranks. For the superior lodges and in the gallery tickets were sold by the court of Her Imperial Majesty.]

The audience admitted to the court performances grew wider during Elisabeth's reign, as attested by such notes as: " […] Her Imperial Majesty most kindly permitted the chief sentry Imperial guard officials to be present at Court during the time of the comedy."[209] Until then the officers had actually attended the comedies without permission, as appears to be the case from some documents:

> <…> Сентября в 6 день представлена была в большем оперном доме французская комедия, называемая ("le Democrite amoureux"), на которую чужестранные министры званы были от двора Ея Императорского Величества чрез лакея. А шведского посла, яко ново приезжего, обер церемонимейстер заранее ево уведомил, что для послов имеется особливая ложа (~~давка~~) по правую сторону тех двух лож, которые для министров втораго ранга назначены. Около пяти часов по полудни шведской посол приехал и сел в свою ложу; после того, спустя несколько времени, приехали дацкой и аглинской послы и все оные три посла были в своей ложе. Но в двух ложех, которые определены для министров втораго ранга, никто из оных господ в них не сели, что, по-видимому, подало причину артилерии капитану Воейкову у меня спросить: не можно ль ему в них посадить других персон? На что я ему сказал, чтоб он весьма от того остерегался, потому что в оных дву ложех только министры чужестранные одни садится могут, а ежели их не случится, то никому иному в них быть не приказано. Однако несмотрением ли помянутого капитана, или чесовых, которые под ево командою состояли, не знаю каким образом, в помянутые ложи, вошли несколько офицеров и других людей, которые во всю комедию тут пробыли.[210]

[[…] On 6 September in the big Opera House a French comedy titled *Le Democrite amoureux* was staged, to which the foreign ministers have been invited by Her Imperial Majesty's court by the means of the man-servant. But the newly arrived Swedish ambassador was informed in advance by the chief-master of ceremonies, that a special lodge (~~crowd~~) was reserved to the ambassadors on the right side of the two lodges that are designated to second rank ministers. At about five in the afternoon, the Swedish ambassador arrived and sat in his lodge; some time later the Danish and English ambassadors arrived, and the all three were in their lodge. But no one of these gentlemen sat in the two lodges, which were designed to second rank ministers, and seemingly this gave the artillery captain Voeykov the idea of asking me: is it possible to make other people sit in there? To which I told him to keep away from this, because in those two lodges only foreign ministers could take sit, and if they would not, then nobody should be there. Anyway because of the distraction of the captain or of the sentinels who were under his command, I do not know how, some officers and other people went into the mentioned lodges, and stayed there the whole comedy long.]

Sometimes cadets ("все шахлетство") were admitted to performances, sometimes even merchants, albeit only the "most honourable" ("знатное купечество"). Theatrical workers were also allowed (masters, carpenters, machine-makers, tinsmiths, painters,

[209] "<…> Ея Императорское Величество всемилостивейше соизволила дозволить во время бытии при дворе комедии ходить караульным лейб-гвардии господам обер офицерам." *Iz "Zhurnala dezhurnykh pri dvore Eya Imperatoskogo Velichestva general-ad''yutantov" za 1750 god* (From *The diary of the orderly aide-de-camp-generals at the court of Her Imperial Majesty* for the year 1750), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 197/b, p. 170.

[210] *Iz "Zhurnal'nykh zapisok 1744 godu" po Tseremonial'noy chasti* (From *Diary notes to the year 1744* about the ceremonies), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 17, pp. 78-9.

tailors, hairdressers, shoemakers and the like), seemingly with the aim of improving their skills by looking at the foreigners' achievements.

However, for a wider circle of spectators allowed to the theatre, for functionaries of different ranks (*raznochintsy*), members of the middle class (*meshchane*), simple merchants, pupils, seminarists and students from non-noble families, and for the Court personnel the doors of the theatre remained closed. This is the reason why the appearance of a And the attempt to attract audience to the Court performances was made necessary by the presence of external, totally private competitors.

Private Foreign Troupes in Saint Petersburg

According to Mooser, a first attempt to create a public theatre activity had been made in 1745, when the German comedy gave dramatic and lyric performances open to the paying public.[211] These performances, though, were addressed to the German layer of population, and did not have any noticeable consequences on the theatrical practice. The company did not receive any financial support from the Court.

During the 1740s, single independent actors kept arriving to the Russian capital: English, Dutch and German most of all, but also Italian. They existed next to the Court troupes, economically independent from the government. They mostly staged plays in the spirit of *commedia dell'arte*, with a good deal of improvisation, and sometimes associated to performances of oddities, trained animals, puppets and similar things. Such shows did not need the text to be translated, laying emphasis mostly on body-action.

The "German Comedy"

On 17 September 1742 Elizabeth accorded permission (*privilegiya*) to the actor Johann Christoph Siegmund[212] and his wife Elizabeth Hübner to build and direct a new

[211] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 230.

[212] Johann Christoph Siegmund was born in Königsberg, the son of a turner. He used to tell that when he was ten years old, some marines from Hessen had brought him to St. Petersburg by ship, on which he had sit while playing with friends. In the city, he would have found protection and recommandation to the Court, and had married Elizabeth Hübner, possibly belonging to the musician's family. In 1735 he performed in a puppet show before the Court, and it was probably on that occasion that he was included in the Court's staff. Later, he came back to Germany and joined Akkerman's troupe, starting his partnership with Hilverding. He was the author of the comedy *Der Wechsel des Glücks*, written according to Gottsched's rules, and of the translation of *Taruffe*, issued in 1741. V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 158-9. According to Starikova, he began as an actor in the troupe of I. – G. Mann,

theatre in Moscow, on Novaya Basmannaya street, (next to the Zemlyanoy val), and in Saint Petersburg, on the Admiralty island, in Bol'shaya Morskaya street. At the end of the year 1740 the company performed under the name of "Russisch-Kayserl. Majestät allergnädigst privilegierten Comödianten."[213]

The troupe included also Johann-Peter Hilverding, brother of the choreographer, then leading actor at the Königsberg theatre in the role of Pantalon, and possibly in Russia even before Siegmund's arrival in Saint Petersburg. There were also the actors Akkerman and Scolari (Arlecchino), and the singer Anna-Christine Ohl with her two daughters. In 1746, maybe due to the Empress's aversion to the German culture, the troupe went through a crisis that led many of its members, including Ohl, to leave the country.[214] After Siegmund's death (1747), on 12 October 1749 Hilverding acquired the troupe and was accorded permission by the Court to lead the "German comedy."[215]

The troupe's repertoire included comedies of the so-called 'pre-literary' theatre, related to the tradition of the "improvvisa".[216] According to Starikova,

> В отдельных спектаклях постановки Зигмунда были близки традиционным, немецким представлениям, так называемым, "Haupt und Staatsactionen" (Главные и государственные действа), в которых появлялись коронованные особы со страстями, достойными царей и богов; со злодеями, кровопролитиями, страданиями и триумфами (не натурально надуманными и надутыми, но волнующими зрителей).[217]

[In distinct stagings Siegmund's performances were close to the traditional, German performances, called "Haupt und Staatsactionen" (State and crowned people), in which crowned persons appeared with passions fitting to sovereigns and deities; [they also appeared] together with evildoers, bloodsheds, sufferings and triumphs (which were non-naturally made up and double-crossed, but excited the audience).]

The presence of the singer Ohl suggests that the troupe staged also music performances, probably with a reduced staff. Among the plays in repertoire, Gerngross records the following:

- *Der durch seiner Heldenmut unüberwindliche Alcides, das ist der bei dem Fall*

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who made a tour in Russia in the years 1723-25. His arrival in Russia is attested in March 1727; in 1742 he became director of the German comedy in Russia, sending from Berlin a request for making performances: in July 1742 he went with his wife to Russia and repeated his request (Doc. 589). Elizabeth accepted it on 17 September 1742, for comedies in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Narva and Vyborg (Doc. 593 a, b); in St. Petersburg they worked at the building of the German comedy in Morskaya street (Doc. 591), while in Moscow a theatre *ad hoc* was edificated (in 1744 it existed already). In St. Petersburg the theatre opened on 5 August 1745. *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, Doc. 600.

[213] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 210.

[214] *ivi* p. 211.

[215] See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I Docs. 622 a, b, v. See also the playbills colleted as Docs. 628-30, and the programmes in Docs. 623-4.

[216] For more details see L. M. STARIKOVA, *Teatral'naya zrelishchnaya zhizn' Moskvy v seredine XVIII veka….*

[217] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, p. 38. Programmes of two performances are collected by Starikova *ivi*, Docs. 597 and 602.

des grossen Pompeji erhöhte Julius Cäsar (Alcide, invincible thanks to his courage, or Julius Caesar led in glory at the fall of the great Pompei, 17 August 1743);

- *Der unvorsichtige Mord des in der Trem wankenden Arbaces mit der durch wahre Liebe zur einer weiblichen Gesandten verwandelten arminischen Königin Arsinoe oder das durch die väterliche Grossmut in einen Königliche Thron verwechselte Mort-Schavot* (The unforeseen assassination of Arbace, killed while he was wandering in error with the queen of Armenians Arsinoe, changed into a messenger through the true love, or The scaffold changed on on the royal throne thanks to the paternal generosity, 25 November 1743);

- *Die zwar anfänglich unterbrochene und doch zuletzt bekrönte Liebe, das ist: Aus der erzwungene Eh' entsteht Ach une Weh, oder: Der ungeachtet aller Widrigen Zufälle seiner Dianira allzeit treuliebende König Alphonsus* (Love, initially interrupted but finally crowned, that is: From an extorted wedding pains and groans pour, or: The cases with King Alphonsus, eternal lover faithful to his Dianira all the unfavourable events notwithstanding, 1 December 1743);

- *Die grossmütige Tugend der römischen Kaiserin Eudoxia oder wahre Probe der Gelassenheit in der Person des wendischen Konigs Genserici* (The magnanimous virtue of the Roman Empress Eudoxia, or The true proof of temperance in the person of Genseric, king of the Sorbs, December 1743);

- *Wahre Freundschaft erduldet Keinen zwang, oder der grossmütige und durch Tapferkeit alles obsiegende afrikanische Scipio* (The true friendship does not stand any constraint, or The magnanimous Scipio Africanus, who triumphed everywhere with his heroism, 1743);

- the comedy *Die gewünschte und beglückte Liebe oder Die verweinte Hochzeit des Cupido bei dem Durchlanchtigsten Schäferpaar mit ergötzen den Lustbarkeiten des einfältigen Schaferlebens unterthänigst dargeleget und auf der durch allerhöchste Kaiserliche Gnade privilegirten Teutschen Schaubüche vorgestellt in St. Petersburg, den 21 august im 1745 unter Direction des Auctoris Johann Christoph Siegmund* (The wished and joyful love, or The tearful wedding of Cupid in a most excellent couple of shepherds, humbly staged in order to amuse us with the fun of the simple life of shepherds and staged in Saint Petersburg under the direction of the author Johann Christoph Siegmund on the stage of the German theatre, priviledged by the grace of Her Imperial Majesty, 21 August 1745).[218]

[218] For a larger list of repertoire plays see V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 171-85.

Performances included also scenes in Russian, with Russian songs and dances. When they were particularly complex, a printed programme with translation was provided.[219]

The "German comedy"'s business went on well until the arrival of the Italian *buffi* (see below – Locatelli and the Introduction of Opera *Buffa*). During the 1750s, the interest for German performances was replaced by that for other performances, the Russian national theatre among others, which asserted himself through the staging of semi-professional performances by amateurs. In the spring of 1758 Johann Peter Hilverding, devoid of any financial assistance from the Court, decided to move his troupe to Reval (today Tallinn), where it suffered no competition. Caroline Euber's requests to return in Russia to start anew her activity, addressed to the Court by the end of the 1740s, obtained Elizabeth's rebuff, marking the definitive end to the "Birónovshchina."[220]

Anyway, the appearance in several cities of this free troupe had a very strong influence on Russian theatrical life, because these performances were open to any kind of audience, including serfs, under the only condition of paying for the ticket. And indeed during 1740s German comedy attained great popularity among the largest social layers: according to Stählin, it was attended only by the lowest social layers.[221]

According to Starikova, the free German troupe exercised undoubted influence on the formation of Russian amatorial troupes that gradually appeared in the same years, and that was to lead to the establishment of semi-professional private troupes. The "German comedy" supplied literary models and facilities, since by the end of the 1740s the troupe rented out its own theatre, probably together with sets and costumes, to Russian actors.[222]

[219] As, for instance, in the *Ob''yavlenie o "Nemetskom pozorishchnom deyanii"* (Advertisement of "German performances") pubblished as a playbill of the performance staged in occasion of the peace with Sweden. *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. 595.

[220] Caroline Neuber's letters to the Court are collected in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Docs. 598 (a, b) and others.

[221] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…* , ch. VIII, p. 594.

[222] "Немецкая комедия оказала несомненное влияние на формирование русских любительских трупп "охотников", постепенно преобразовывавшихся в эти годы в полупрофессиональные партикулярные труппы. Для них немецкий театр служил сначала неким образцом, подчас единственно свободно доступным источником "настоящих", т. е. профессиональных театральных впечатлений. К концу 1740-х годов русские "охотники" вступают с Немецкой комедией во взаимодействие и тесный профессиональный контакт, вплоть до сдачи в аренду российским актерам "немецкого комедиантского дома" со всем его гардеробом и реквизитом, и вероятно, декорациям." *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, pp. 38-9.

Locatelli and the Introduction of Opera *Buffa*

If up to this period, when talking about opera, opera *seria* was always meant, from the year 1757 opera *buffa* makes its debut on the Russian theatrical scene. It was brought to Saint Petersburg by the *impresario* Giovanni Battista Locatelli,[223] who had engaged, probably in Prague, a troupe for the staging of ballets and operas. The troupe included 32 artists, among whom at least two composers (Francesco Zoppis and Giovanni Marco Placido Rutini), the concert-master Vincenzo Manfredini, later hired by Pyotr Fyodorovich as *Kapellmeister* in Oranienbaum, and the poet Lodovico Lazzaroni.[224]

Locatelli reached the capital city in 1757, with a recommendation letter written by the Russian ambassador at the court of Vienna, count Kaiserling.[225] The troupe was officially taken into service on 13 September 1757,[226] this information being attested in a letter dating 22 May 1757, written by the diplomatic courier Ivan Shokurov to some Bekhteev, from Vienna, where the contract was probably signed.

> Вы уже чаятельно известны о нынешних поездках моих и о комиссиях. Поныне кажется они, что удачливы. Здесь заключил я контракт с Локателлием на весьма полезнейших кондициях, нежели в инструкции мне предписано. Все Итальянския певицы и танцовщицы около меня ласкаются и с моей диспозиции: приходят ко мне на поклон в урочные часы, и я не запомню, когда бы был в стол благополучном состоянии.[227]

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[223] Giovanni Battista Locatelli (Milan or Venice, 1713 - 1785) was a member of Pietro Mingotti's opera troupe and wrote the librettos for Filippo Finazzi's *intermezzo Il matrimonio sconcertato, per forza del Bacco* (Prague, Carnival 1744) and the three-act opera *Diana nelle selve* (Prague, 23 November 1745). From 1748 to 1757 he rented the city theatre in Prague. He founded his own opera troupe, for which he engaged good singers (among whom were Rosa Costa, Catarina Fumagalli, and his wife Giovanna della Stella, who had sung at the Bonn court and in Dresden from 1745 to 1749), and the *Kapellmeister* Gluck, who directed the *premières* of his own *Ezio* (1750), *Issipile* (1752), and a revival of *Ipermestra* (1750). According to Tomislav Volek, Locatelli's concern to employ excellent singers and mount impressive productions was largely responsible for the growing financial difficulties under which his company operated. He moved to Russia after the break of the Seven Years War, leaving large debts in Prague. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*…, vol. 15, p. 40; V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 112-6; R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, pp. 265-76.

[224] Stählin records the main actors in *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…*, part VIII, p. 594. Gerngross gives the complete staff in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 117-8. See also D. N. KOSTYSHIN, *Antrepriza Dzhovanni-Batista Lokatelli v Rossii i Moskovsky Rossiysky teatr* (The enterprise of Giovanni Battista Locatelli in Russia and the Moscow Russian theatre), in *Starinnye teatry Rossii, XVIII-pervaya chetvert' XIX v., Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Ancient theatres of Russia, 18th – first quarter of the 19th centuries, Collection of scientific works), edited by M. V. Shchedrovitskaya, Moskva, Gos. Tsentr. Teatr. Muzey im. Bakhrushina, 1993, pp. 78-91. As for Manfredini, see n. 77 in this chapter.

[225] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 145.

[226] D. N. KOSTYSHIN, *Antrepriza Dzhovanni-Batista Lokatelli v Rossii i Moskovsky Rossiysky teatr…*, pp. 78-91.

[227] *Pis'mo kur'era Shokurova k F. D. Bekhteevu* (Letter of the courier Shokurov to F. K. Bekhteev), in *Arkhiv Knyazya Vorontsova* (The archive of prince Vorontsov), Kn. 3, *Bumagi grafa Mikhaila Larionovicha Vorontsova* (Papers of count Mikhail Larionovich Vorontsov), Moskva, Tipografiya Gracheva i K. 1871, p. 583.

[You have already been carefully informed about my recent travels and commissions. Until now it seems that they have been successful. Here I have signed a contract with Locatelli on much more beneficial conditions than the instructions I had been enforced to. All the Italian singers and dancers caress me and are at my disposal: they come to me with requests in fixed hours, and I do not even remember, when I found myself in such favourable conditions.]

Contracts are recorded in the *Archive of the Imperial Theatres*.[228] According to them, the troupe had to give performances in the old Court theatre, in the Summer Garden (at that time used also for French comedies and Italian intermezzos), three times a week, once only for the Court, in return for a financial support amounting to 7000 roubles per year.

The first performance took place on 25 November 1757 (for the coronation anniversary) and on 3 December 1757 at the Summer Palace:[229] it was the pastorale *Il retiro degli Dei*, which creators were Locatelli himself for the text and Sacco and his wife created the ballets.[230]

The troupe staged the most recent works already staged in Italy, sometimes even before their appearance in other European cities, a thing that deserves attention as Russia was at that time a country which, according to Mooser, "[…] retardait d'un siècle sur le reste de l'Europe, et dont la majeure partie de la population était plongée encore dans un état de demi-sauvagerie."[231] The repertoire included mostly operas that had already been staged in Hamburg,[232] often accompanied by one or two ballets. According to Stählin, "impregnate of cheerful music, lively scenes, and showing excellent ballets, the performances] had a general success, and the parterre was usually full of spectators."[233]

[228] *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov* (Archives of the Imperial Theatres), Vyp. I (1746-1801), edited by A. E. Molchanov, V. P. Pogozhev, K. A. Petrov, SPb., Izd. Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov, 1892. Otdel II, pp. 59-60. Documents concerning the assignation of the theatre are preserved at RGIA F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 93, L. 118, 187. According to Ritzareva, documents concerning the hiring of Locatelli and his troupe into service in Russia can be found among documents concerning the diplomatic relations between Russia, Austria, and the German Empire in RGADA, f. 32. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 62 n.

[229] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… 1751-1761*, vypusk III, kn. I, Docs 517-8.

[230] *Il retiro degli Dei, composizione Drammatica, che introduce un Ballo di Deità maritime*. The libretto is housed at the Russian National Library (RNB). According to Stählin, the action is set on the shores of the sea that laps St. Petersburg, and opens with a ballet of the gods of the sea ("открывается балом морковских богов". YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…*, ch. VIII, p. 594.

[231] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 296.

[232] According to Mooser, Locatelli's troupe also staged ballets, whose titles have been recorded, although the name of their composer is missing: *L'enlèvement des Sabines*, *Amour et Psyché*, *Les fêtes de Clèopatre*, *Les dames du sérail*, *Didon et Enée*, *Apollon et Dauphné*, *Le retour des matelots*, *Les Pandours*, *La foire de Londres où le Wauxhall*, *Le père rival de son fils ou la tabatière ensorcelée*, *Ballet turc*, *Le déserteur heureux*, *La foire vilageoise*, *La conscription*, *Ariane abandonnée par Thésée es séduite par Bacchus*. *ivi*, p. 303.

[233] "насыщенные жизнерадостной музыкой, веселыми сценами и показавшие превосходный балет, имели всеобщий успех, и обычно партер ломился от зрителей." YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 146.

The success is confirmed by the high number of performances, among which the comic subjects were prominent. Opera *seria*, although it was included in Locatelli's repertoire, was not, in fact, his main concern, maybe due to larger financial requirements he had failed to face in Prague. Here is a list of their performances:

1758:

- *Lo speziale*, "dramma" in three acts on libretto by Carlo Goldoni, music by Vincenzo Pallavicini and Domenico Fischietti (Carnival);[234]

- *La ritornata di Londra*, "dramma giocoso per musica" in three acts by Goldoni on music by Domenico Fischietti, (14 February);[235]

- *Il marito geloso*, "intermezzo per musica" for three voices by Antonio Denzi on music by Zoppis or Rutini, (summer);[236]

- *Il negligente*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni on music by Rutini, (staged in the summer);[237]

- *Il mondo della luna*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni on music by Baldassarre Galuppi (summer);[238]

- *Il filosofo di campagna*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni and Galuppi, (5 September);[239]

- *La cascina*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni on music by Giuseppe Scolari (autumn 1758, then on 12 February 1759);[240]

- *Didone abbandonata*, "dramma per musica" in three acts by Metastasio on music by Zoppis (on 25 or 26 November, or, more precisely, on 11 December, for the coronation anniversary);[241]

[234] Sets by A. Carboni; ballets created by A. Sacco on music by C. Belluzzi: *L'enlèvement de Proserpine* after act I, *Balet à l'Angloise* after act II. Libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758.
[235] Sets by A. Carboni, machines by G. Brigonzi, Libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758 (RNB).
[236] Libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758; the music, composed specifically for the occasion, nowadays is probably lost.
[237] Sets by A. Carboni; music of the ballets by C. Belluzzi; librettos issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French and Italian and Russian in 1758. The music, composed specifically for the occasion, is probably lost nowadays.
[238] Ballets set by A. Sacco to music by C. Belluzzi; libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758.
[239] Ballets by A. Sacco; libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758.
[240] Ballets by A. Sacco; libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French, with no date.
[241] Sets by A. Carboni, ballets by A. Sacco, libretto issued in St. Petersburg in Italian and French in 1758. The music, composed specifically for the occasion, is probably lost nowadays, except for Enea's aria "Vivi, superbo, e regna" (III, 2), whose manuscript copy Mooser found at the State Library of Dresden. According to the historian, it is possible that the aria "Combattuto da più venti" by Domenico Dall'Oglio,

- *Il giudizio d'Aminta*, "festa teatrale" in two acts by Lodovico Lazzaroni on music by Ferdinand Zellbell[242] (25 April 1758 and 9 December for the Empress's birthday and coronation anniversary).[243]

1759:

Galuppi's *Il mondo alla roversa*, *La Calamita de' cuori*, *Il re pastore*, *I vaghi accidenti fra Amore [e Gelosia]*;

Il pazzo glorioso, "dramma giocoso per musica" by Antonio Villani with music by Gioacchino Cocchi;

L'Arcadia in Brenta, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni and Galuppi (29 January);

- *Li tre gobbi* (*La favola dei tre gobbi*), "intermezzo per musica" by Goldoni with music by Vincenzo Legrenzio Ciampi, (7 July);

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whose manuscript is preserved at the Library of Mecklembourg-Schwerin, was to be inserted in this opera, since is no other opera with such a title among those staged in St. Petersburg with his collaboration. The text of the aria is not included in Metastasio's libretto, but it is preceded by Enea's recitative "E soffriro, che sia si barbare mercede…" (I, 18).

[242] Ferdinand Zellbell den yngre - son was born in 1719. He received his first musical training from his father, Ferdinand Zellbell senior (1715-1751), and the Swedish Ruman, and at the age of eleven he could help his father as organist at Stockholm's Storkyrka. In 1736 he started working both as a bureaucrat as well as a Court musician. In 1738 he left Sweden for a three-year journey through Northern Germany to study music with Telemann (1741-42). In the years 1743-53 he worked as an organist at the St. Nicholaus Church in Stockholm. Only on 18 June 1750 he entered the Court service as a musician, becoming Concert-master at the Royal Orchestra, taking over the post of Peter Brant. He was however turned down in 1753. In 1758 he left the country and, with the support of the music-patron Patric Alströmer, travelled to St. Petersburg. There he had his opera *Il giudizio d'Aminta* (libretto by Lazzaroni) staged on 17 December by Locatelli's troupe. The opera was revived on the occasion of the Coronation anniversary on 25 April 1759. Besides the opera, he was the author of the cantate *Auf, Zion, auf*, performed on 8 November 1758 in a German or Swedish church. On 8 June 1759 Zellebell annouced his departure from St. Petersburg through the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie novosti*. Back to Sweden, Zellbell played an important role in Stockholm musical life, directing a concert season, taking part in the organization of the Royal Academy of Music, and directing a music school in the years 1772-74. In 1774 he had his opera on Swedish text *Sveas högtig, eller Fria konsternas vördadssoffer at Dygderna* (Swedish festival, or The acknowledgement of free arts on the virtue, seemingly lost) staged. He was also the author of six symphonies, instrumental concertos, and harpsichord sonatas. F. ZELLBELL, *Il giudizio d'Aminta, Dramma per musica Da rappresentarsi nel Teatro Imperiale del Giardino di Corte il di 22 Decembre 1758 il Gloriosissimo Giorno Natalizio Di Sua Maesta Imperiale ELISABETTA Imperatrice di tutte le Russie. La Poesia è del Dottor Lodovico Lazaroni Veneziano. La Musica è di Ferdinando Zellbell Maestro della Musica di Corte di SUA MAESTA IL RE DI SUEZIA*, URTEXT, edited by H. Schmitt-Hallenberg, Älgarås, Edition Gran Tonante 2009; *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 237.

[243] The cast includes the castrato Massi (Aminta), the soprano Buina, probably Buini (Diana), Maria Camati, "La Farinella" (Juno), the tenor Buini (Time), and the bass Ignazio Doll (Mercury). See the recently published score: F. ZELLBELL, *Il giudizio d'Aminta…*, p. x. Later, the opera was given again on 25 April 1759, on the occasion of the coronation anniversary, and later in concert form on 9 December 1759 (new style) in Stockholm. The libretto, issued in Italian in 1758, is preserved at the Royal Library of Stockholm, while an autograph manuscript of the score is housed at the Kungliga Bibliotek of Stockholm. Lazzaroni transferred the protagonist to Russia, and made him wander thorugh the forests around St. Petersburg, where he meets such deities as Juno, Diana, Mercury and the Time, thus hinting to Empress Elizabeth.

- *Il Conte Caramella*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni and Galuppi (10 September);[244]

- *La maestra*, libretto in three acts by Antonio Palomba with music by Cocchi (25 October).

1760:

- *La Galatea*, "pastorale eroica" in two parts on a libretto by Metastasio with new music by Zoppis (5 September, for Elizabeth's name day).[245]

1761:

- *Le Cinesi*, "componimento drammatico" in one act by Metastasio with music by Gluck (7 o 8 February);[246]

- *La conversazione*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni and Scolari (23 February);

- *Bertoldo alla corte*, in three acts, libretto by Goldoni and Ciampi (23 April);

- *I bagni d'Abano*, "dramma giocoso" in three acts by Goldoni with music by Galuppi and Giuseppe Bertoni (8 October).

The list of operas and ballets staged by Locatelli's troupe in Gerngross and Stählin's notes is so extended, that it is impossible to report them all here. This could be by itself the topic of further research, which uncertainties at the moment would constitute the reasons to deepen into it.

His business enjoying good health, Locatelli ventured to double the enterprise in Moscow. In the old capital he had a new theatre edified in *Krasny prud* (The pretty pond), which was inaugurated probably in January 1759. There Locatelli staged, among others, such operas *buffa* by Galuppi, as *La calamita de' cuori* (staged for the opening on 9 February 1759), *Il mondo alla roversa*, *Il conte Caramella*; more uncertain seems to be the

[244] Translated in Russian as *Nochnoy barabanchik ili graf Karamella*.
[245] Sets by A. Carboni; libretto in Italian and French issued in St. Petersburg in 1760; as for the music, it seems that only Poliremo's aria "Dalla spelonca uscite" (bass voice, from act I) is preserved.
[246] Sets by A. Carboni; libretto in Italian and French issued in St. Petersburg without date. The opera was completed by the performance of the *ballet héroique Le jugement de Paris* by F. Calzevaro, probably with music by Joseph Starzer.

staging of *Didone abbandonata*.[247] Unfortunately in Moscow his success was not so long lasting, since after an early success during the fall, in winter his business met a crisis that led him to close it down in 1761.[248] Locatelli's theatre was later to be acquired by the Direction of the Imperial theatres (see Chap. III – Part II – Russian Theatres in Moscow). Some of the musicians who had moved to Moscow, such as the *castrato* Giuseppe Manfredini, did not come back with Locatelli, and settled down in the city, where they worked as music teachers, thus spreading the taste of Italian music and their skills, and producing a background that would support the tradition of musical theatre in Moscow.[249]

Other actors of the Muscovite troupe were called to Saint Petersburg according to the Empress's *ukaz* dating 16 January 1761.[250] Here Locatelli's troupe continued to stage operas throughout Elizabeth's reign, at least until the year of mourning that followed her death in 1761. At the beginning of 1762 his contract was renewed for other five years, but the financial situation was so fragile that many of his artists started leaving the country, or searching for engagement in other troupes, since Peter III was not interested in acquiring Locatelli's troupe for the Court.

Catherine II would allow the impresario to organize some masquerades, for instance for the celebrations of her coronation on 28 June 1762. As a reward for *Il consiglio delle muse* (21 April 1763), a birthday 'serenata' staged at the conclusion of the coronations celebrations in Moscow,[251] Catherine assigned him a place of entertainment called *Krasny kabak* (The pretty tavern), in Ekaterinov, where Locatelli opened a

[247] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 305.

[248] To explain such a disaster compared to the success enjoyed in St. Petersburg, Stählin produces practical reasons: "К основным причинам такого провала надо отнести то, что обычно с начала весны многочисленное московское дворянство со своими семьями уезжало в свои поместья, где оставалось до глубокой осени, а также и то, что зимой в громадном деревянном театре было так холодно, что там никто не мог усидеть." (Such a failure has to be ascribed, among the main causes, to the fact that since the beginning of spring the numerous Muscovite nobility used to move with their families to their estates, where they used to stay till late autumn, and also the fact that in winter in such an enormous theatre it was so cold, that nobody could sit there.) YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 147. According to Mooser, the failure was due to audience's reaction, whose peculiar characteristics had evidently not be taken into account: "[…] l'insuccès de l'entreprise tenait à plusieurs causes dont l'une des moindres ne fut pas, sans doute, le fait que le public moscovite, sensiblement moins cultivé que celui da Saint-Pétersbourg, se trouvait hors d'état d'entendre la langue dans laquelle était chanté l'*opera buffa*." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 272. For sure, the Muscovite audience was less prepared to this kind of performances, which had took place regularly only in the capital.

[249] For more details on Locatelli's muscovite enterprise and its relation with the Russian theatre in Moscow see D. N. KOSTYSHIN, *Antrepriza Dzhovanni-Batista Lokatelli v Rossii i Moskovsky Rossiysky teatr…*; V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*.

[250] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 132. 1762 according to Kostyshin, who is maybe wrong, since the Empress died the year before. D. N. KOSTYSHIN, *Antrepriza Dzhovanni-Batista Lokatelli v Rossii i Moskovsky Rossiysky teatr…*, pp. 78-91.

[251] *Il consiglio delle Muse, Serenata da cantarsi all'Imperiale Corte di Mosca, il di 21 aprile dell'anno 1763, Festeggiando il glorioso giorno natalizio di Sua Maestà Imperiale Catterina II, Imperatrice di Tutte le Russie etc. etc. etc*. libretto issued in Moscow, set to music by an unknown composer (Manfredini or Zoppis being the most favourite candidates).

restaurant. In 1767 his business went definitely bankrupt: at the troupe's breaking up, many of the actors left Russia, or flew into the Court Italian troupe.

As for the impresario, he did not leave Russia even after the dissolution of his enterprise. In 1777 he was to write the libretto of *La sopresa delli dei*, a mythologic 'serenata' set to music by Paisiello on the occasion of the birth of the grand duke Aleksandr Pavlovich. In 1783 he wrote the cantata *Jahvé*, whose composer and origin still remain unknown. On 16 February 1784 he was finally appointed teacher of Italian and French at the *Teatral'noe uchilishche* (Theatre school), which was his last activity until his death occurring on 22 April 1785.

Locatelli's experience, worthy of a more in-depth investigation on its own, can be considered the most remarkable event of the last years of Elizabeth's rule: first, it marks the entrance of a new genre, the comic one, which was to be so important for the future evolution of Russian musical theatre. As evident from the list of performed pieces, at this stage this genre was intertwined with the figure of the Italian playwright Carlo Goldoni, who was also to make his entrance in Russian literary scene and to have important consequences on the development of Russian opera theatre.[252]

The success of the comic genre, at least in Saint Petersburg, was so great, that it was bad for the business of both the French and the German troupes, while the *Italianskaya kompaniya*, which was provided for by the Court financial's support, would be less and less often called upon from 1758 on. In the last years of Elizabeth's rule we assist to a shift in the interest of the Peterburgian cosmopolitan audience in favour of the comic genre.

This can be ascribed also to the changes in the audience composition, which included more people and of various demographic characteristics. Indeed, Locatelli established in Russia also a new type of theatre, entrepreneurial (or semi-entrepreneurial, to be more precise), with the introduction of the ticket entrance to performances, an aspect drastically changing the practice of theatre going. The Empress herself used to attend these

[252] To be more precise, the *intermezzo La Pelarina* had been staged by Ristori's troupe on 13 May 1731 at the Kremlin's Palace. With regard to this see R. M. GOROKHOVA, *Dramaturgiya Gol'doni v Rossii XVIII veka* (Goldoni's dramaturgy in 18th-century Russia), in *Epokha prosveshcheniya, Iz istorii mezhdunarodnykh svyazey russkoy literatury* (The Enlightenment era. From the history of the international relationships of the Russian literature), edited by M. P. Alekseev, Leningrad, Nauka 1967, p. 310. The article is centred on Goldoni's literature's role in Russia. See also S. BUSHUEVA, *Gol'doni v Rossii. Komedii Gol'doni na stsene russkikh dramaticheskikh teatrov* (Goldoni in Russia. Goldoni's comedies on the stage of the Russian prose theatres), SPb., Rossiysky institut istorii iskusstv 1993.

performances, taking with her the royal couple in the case of Court performances, and appearing in incognito to the free ones. According to Stählin,

> За вход разрешено было брать плату, а также разрешены были общегородские спектакли. За место в партере платили по одному рублю, а ложи абонировались знатными господами на год и за них платили по триста рублей. Для двора были представлены первые три ложи, за которые платили несколько тысяч рублей.[253]

[For the entry it was allowed to take tolls, and public performances were also authorized. The price for a place in the parterre was one rouble, while the nobility purchased lodges for a year, and used to pay for them three hundreds roubles. The first three lodges were designated to the Court, who used to pay for it several thousands roubles.]

Stählin records similar information elsewhere in his memoirs, when speaking about the ballets organized by Locatelli's troupe:

> Им [i. e. to Locatelli's artists] была предоставлена старая театральная сцена в саду императорского летнего дворца. Они не состояли на придворной службе и играли и для города, получая за вход как с городских жителей, так и с придворных наличными деньгами. Двор снял первые ложи, знатные господа – остальные. За каждую ложу, обыкновенно, платили 300 рублей в год. Плата за вход в партер была 1 рубль. Ставился новейший в изящном вкусе балет, иногда даже два балета в один вечер, все же остальные дни шла опера-buffa. Театр был всегда переполнен.[254]

[The old theatrical stage in the garden of the Imperial Summer Palace was deputized to them [Locatelli's artists]. They were not at service of the Court, and performed also for the city, receiving money for the entry, both from the city inhabitants, and from courtiers. The Court rented the first lodges, and Nobles took the others. For the single lodge they used to pay 300 roubles per year. The toll for the entry to the parterre was one rouble, sometimes for even two ballets in one night, while for the rest of the days they gave opera *buffa*. The theatre was always full.]

In larger respects, the complex panorama that loom during Elizabeth's reign, together with the mutation that took place in the audience and their expectations, prepared the ground for the birth of a budding national theatre, as referred to by Ferrazzi and Starikova.[255] If traditionally theatre historians seem to refer almost exclusively to prose

[253] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 146.
[254] *ivi*, pp. 270-1.
[255] "Qui basti attrarre l'attenzione sulla compresenza, nella Russia di metà Settecento, di *troupes* di diversa provenienza e formazione: un dato che ci conferma come, alla già acquisita familiarità con lo specifico della commedia dell'arte italiana, i sudditi di Elisabetta Petrovna abbiano potuto affiancare una conoscenza diretta e considerevolmente approfondita della commedia francese e di quella tedesca, proposte – entrambe – sia nelle loro espressioni genuinamente popolari, sia nelle forme più colte di ascendenza classica. E' questo l'*humus*, su cui germoglierà il futuro Teatro nazionale […]." (Here it will be enough to pay attention to the coexistence, in middle 18th-century Russia, of troupes of different origin and education: a fact that confirms that Elizabeth Petrovna's subjects, after acquiring familiarity with the peculiarities of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, could acquire deep acquaintances with French and German comedy, presented both in their genuinely popular expression, and in the more cultivated classic forms. This is the ground on which the future National Theatre would grow up […].) M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa (1731-1738)*, Roma, Bulzoni Editore 2000, pp. 56-7. "На первое десятилетие царствования Елизаветы Петровны – на 1740-е годы – падает этап активного формирования всех основных составляющих национального театра, подготовший "кульминацию", произшедшую в середине 1750-

theatre, it is, in my opinion, possible to extend the same dynamics to musical theatre, the two disciplines being at that time not separated by any critical, administrative, or professional criterion.[256]

On the one hand the permanent presence of the *Ital'yanskaya kompaniya* established the knowledge and experience of opera as a typical musical/theatrical performance in Russia, although with the limited accessibility to it I have tried to outline.

On the other hand, while the multiplication of troupes made the Russian audience accustomed to different genres, the Russian national theatre was inevitably influenced by the cosmopolitan experience of the Peterburgian theatres, which would develop its peculiar characteristics from its very beginning, as we shall see in the next part of this chapter.

x." (The first decade of Elizaveta Petrovna's rule – in the 1740s – is a stage of active formation of all the main components of the national theatre, which pave the way to the "culmination", occurred in the 1750s.) *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, p. 13.

[256] This was to happen much later, at the beginning of the 19th century, when the Court composer Catterino Cavos, as Director of the Music Section of the Imperial Theatres, proposed the Direction to separate the troupe of music theatre from that of spoken theatre, in order to get better results from the single disciplines. See my *"Ivan Susanin" di Catterino Cavos, Un'opera russa prima dell'Opera russa* (Catterino Cavos's *Ivan Susanin*, A Russian opera before The Russian Opera), Torino, EDT 2011, p. 53.

Chapter II - Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"

The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"

Among the private troupes referred to above, we cannot fail to account for the presence of several Russian troupes of amateurs, who, having familiarized with theatrical practice thanks to the experiences mentioned earlier (Chap. II – Parts I-II), got together to stage their own performances. These Russian amateurs soon reached a level of expertise comparable to that of semi-professional or professional troupes, thus making Elizabeth's reign crucial for the formation of a national theatre. In addition, music theatre developed along with spoken theatre, while at the same time the Court progressively took care of the professionalization of musicians and singers.[257]

The historian Apollon Karabanov, who is evidently one of the main sources Vsevolodsky-Gerngross referred to in his *The Theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna*,[258] reconstructed in 1849 the stages that led to the founding of a Russian troupe at the Imperial Court of Saint Petersburg.[259] According to his and others' studies, it can be said that the development of an official Russian theatre, comparable to the Italian and French court troupes in function and organization, could be traced back, on the one hand, to the theatrical experiences made at the *Kadetsky korpus* and on the other, to the theatre of Fyodor Grigor'evich Volkov.[260]

The *Kadetsky Sukhoputny Shlyakhetny Korpus* (Infantry corps of nobles), initially called *Rytsarskaya akademiya* (Academy of Chivalry), was an educational institution for noblemen, founded in 1732 by Anna Ioannovna on Münnich's initiative, following an original idea by Peter I. At that time, it was the only institution in Russia that replaced at one time university, lyceum and academies. The aim of the institution was to enable the

[257] During Anna's reign for instance, a music school had already been founded, per royal command (*ukaz*) dating 10 January 1740. The school, directed by Hübner, prepared the musicians' children and the court's serfs. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, p. 178.
[258] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*.
[259] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*.
[260] Folk theatre does not seem to be included in this evolution. Anyway, a rapid roundup of its main expressions can be read, for instance, in A. M. RIPELLINO, *Del teatro popolare russo* (On Russian folk theatre), in *Ricerche slavistiche* (Slavistic researches), vol. II (1953), pp. 60-91, M. K. PEZENTI, *Komediya del' arte i zhanr intermedii v russkom lyubitel'skom teatre 18 veka* (*Commedia dell'arte* and the *Intermezzo* genre in 18th-century Russian amatorial theatre), Sankt-Peterburg, Baltiyskie sezony 2008; M. C. PESENTI, *Arlecchino e Gaer nel teatro dilettantesco russo del Settecento: contatti e intersezioni in un repertorio teatrale* (Harlequin and Gaer in Russian 18th-century amatorial theatre: contacts and intersections in a theatrical repertoire), Milano, Guerini scientifica 1996; M. K. PEZENTI, *Komediya masok v Rossii: pervye svyazi s Italiey, zarozhdenie novogo uvlecheniya* (The comedy of masks in Russia: first contacts with Italy, conceiving of a new passion), in *Europa Orientalis*, no. 19, pp. 251-76.

growing aristocracy acquire good manners. Russian young men could receive there a broad education, which included a good deal of humanities, and such subjects as music, drawing, fencing, and dance.

Starting in the 1730s, some of the school's students appear to have been sharing an interest toward European theatre, notably the French repertoire. Around the figure of the poet Alàksandr Petròvich Sumaròkov, such students as Repnin, P. I. Panin, M. F. Kamensky, M. M. Kheraskov, N. P. Elagin, P. S. Svistunov, P. Melissino, S. A. Poroshin, and others formed the Society of lovers of the Russian literature (*Obshchestvo lyubiteley Russkoy slovesnosti*), in which they nurtured an interest in literature, and acted out their love for theatre through performances. Among the first shows staged by the cadets there are the famous *Komediya ob Iosife* (Joseph's comedy, 1734-35). Later, they enriched their repertoire plays with French classics (such as Racine, or Voltaire's *Zaïre* in 1748), performed in French, which they had probably previously seen at the French theatre (from which they also rented facilities), and other imitative plays written by themselves.

In 1749 they staged for the first time Sumarokov's tragedy *Khorev* (1747), which gained such a success, that count Alekséy Grigòr'evich Razumòvsky, for whom Sumarokov worked as an assistant for, considered it opportune to tell the Empress. This tragedy, written in alexandrine verses in a classical structure, imbued with naïve moralism, but still contaminated by the dramaturgical production of the cleric academies, is said to have marked the starting point to the Russian national theatre.[261] The Empress must have been of the same opinion, because according to her wish the performance was repeated at Court on 8 January 1750,[262] an event that marked the beginning of a Russian theatrical activity at Court. Catherine II too made reference in her *Memoires* to plays staged in the year 1750:

> Pendant le séjour de la cour en dernier lieu à Moscou, le prince Youssoupoff, sénateur et chef du corps des cadets, avait eu le commandement en chef de la ville de St. Pétersbourg, où il était resté dans l'absence de la cour. Pour son amusement et celui des principales personnes qui s'y trouvaient avec lui, il avait fait jouer par les cadets, alternativement, les meilleures tragédies, tant russes, que composait alors Soumarokoff, que françaises, de Voltaire: celles-ci étaient défigurées. A son retour de Moscou l'Impératrice ordonna que les pièces de Soumarokoff fussent jouées à la cour par cette troupe de jeunes gens. L'Impératrice prit plaisir à voir ces représentations, et bientôt on crut remarquer qu'elle les voyait jouer avec un plus grand intérêt qu'on ne s'y serait attendu. Le théâtre, qui était dressé dans une salle du palais, fut transporté dans l'intérieur de son appartement; elle prit

[261] L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'illuminismo e la steppa, Settecento russo, Seconda edizione con antologia poetica* (The Enlightenment and the steppe, Russian 18th century, Second edition with poetic anthology), Roma, Edizioni Studium 1994, p. 134.
[262] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 14. The documents attesting Elizabeth's invitation to Volkov to perform at Court are collected in RGIA, F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 87.

> plaisir à parer les acteurs; elle leur fit faire des habits superbes, et ils étaient tous couverts de pierreries de Sa Majesté Impériale.[263]

Elizabeth encouraged Sumarokov to write more plays. The same year his translation from Shakespeare *Gamlet* (Hamlet, 1748) was staged,[264] followed by *Sinav i Truvor* (Sinav and Truvor, in Peterhoff on 29 July 1750), and *Artistona* (October 1750), *Semira* (1751), and the comedies *Tresotinius* and *Chudovishchi* (The Monsters).

As was the case for the rest of Europe, their model came from French Classicism: writers as such Corneille, Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, and Boileau, and the literary genres and theories embodied in their works by the beginning of the 18th century, were universally accepted as the pinnacle of literary art, to be imitated and assimilated by any culture that aspired to style and refinement.[265] It had taken Russian playwrights some time to find their bearings in Neoclassicism, but thanks to the rapid improvements witnessed in Russian language and versification, during the decades from 1710s to 1740s, Russian drama finally caught up with the kind of plays performed in other countries, and developed the literary instruments necessary for it, such as a more up-to-date literary language and a more modern (i. e. the syllabotonic) metric system.[266] Anyway, as Karlinsky points out, by that time, the model to be imitated had undergone alterations on its home ground. For instance, the French neoclassical tragedy written by Voltaire in mid-century had acquired a preachy, moralizing tone unknown to Racine, and the comedy inherited from Molière and Marivaux was headed in the direction of sentimental drama with Nivelle de la Chaussée and Diderot. It therefore turned out that the neoclassical dramatic genres were introduced in Russia by Sumarokov after having been subject to an evolution reflecting the current changes in the West.[267]

Even though these works by Sumarokov soon became outmoded and antiquated - the 1760s would witness to the success of the new genre of sentimental drama - the

[263] CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même…*, pp. 149-50.
[264] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 16.
[265] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press 1985, p. 60.
[266] In the meantime, literary language had been and was undergoing changes. Non-sacred subjects and contemporary Western examples (rather than forms long obsolete in the West such as the Jesuit plays and chivalric tales) had been introduced by prince Antiokh Kantemir. Vasily Trediakovsky, had proclaimed in the introductory manifesto to his Russian translation of Abbé Paul Tallemant's novel *Voyage de l'isle d'amour* (1730) the intention to write in colloquial Russian. Indeed, he considered Church Slavonic not suitable for dealing with a profane subject from the perspective of a contemporary novel. In 1735 he also started the reform of Russian versification (Kantemir's syllabic system), bringing in the new syllabotonic system, which was to be completed by Lomonosov's *Ode on the Taking of Khotin*. The *Ode* was written in iambic tetrameter, accompanied by a detailed treatise outlining the possibilities of using binary and ternary meters as well as masculine and feminine rhymes in Russian verse.
[267] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, pp. 60-1.

contemporaries greeted them as a revelation, that is, as the Russian equivalent of the French classics and European neoclassical tragedies and operas. Sumarokov was immediately proclaimed the Racine of Russia, hailed as such by such authors as Gottsched in Germany and Jean François de La Harpe in France; also, Voltaire entered into correspondence with him.[268]

His activity enticed other writers to try their hand at theatre, urged to do so directly by the Empress. She issued a royal command to the other two leading Russian poets of the day, Lomonòsov and Trediakòvsky, to write a tragedy each.[269] In 1750 the cadets staged the first tragedy written by Trediakòvsky, *Deudamiya* (Deidamia), and in 1750 and 1752, respectively, they performed Lomonosov's tragedies *Tamira i Selim* (Tamira and Selim) and *Demofont* (Demophon).

Karlinsky insists on outlining the short theatrical life of such works, reminding us that none of Sumarokov's plays was published between 1787 and 1893, and that Lomonosov's tragedy, the author's creative strength notwithstanding, did not remain in the repertoire for long. Nonetheless these efforts attest the general desire to create an autonomous, more up-to-date repertoire, that is, more modern if compared to the scholastic plays, a desire welcomed by the Court itself.

This phenomenon was maybe conditioned by the progressive diffusion of theatrical activity outside the court boundaries, where a lot of little private amateurial theatrical companies were developing, hailed with growing success by ever-larger layers of the population. Among these so-called 'democratic' troupes, besides, Volkov's one there were, only in Moscow, seven amatorial troupes,[270] with the result that in the 1750s performances were staged all over the year, with the only exception of the posts. In Saint Petersburg, for instance, Count Karl von Bühren and his brother Pyotr, Anna Ioannovna's favourite's children, used to take part to amatorial performances.[271] In Elizabeth's time these troupes

[268] *ivi*, p. 70.
[269] "Сентября 29-го. Сего числа Академии наук Президент объявил имянной Ея Императорскаго Величества изоустный указ, коим ему, господину Президенту, повелено: профессорам Тредиаковскому и Ломоносову сочинить по трагедии, <…> ; и какия к тому потребны им будут книги, из библиотеки оныя выдавать с роспискою, и по окончании того, возвратить в библиотеку по прежнему.<…>" (29 September. Today the President of the Academy of sciences has transmitted a verbal personal royal command of Her Imperial Majesty, with which it has been ordered to him, Mr President: to commission a tragedy to the Professors Trediakovsky and Lomonosov respectively, […]; to lend them the books they will request from the library together with a list, and at the end to return them to the library as before. […]), *Iz "Tekushchikh del" Kantselyarii Akademii nauk za sentyabr' 1750 goda* (From the "Current acts" of the Chancery of the Academy of Sciences of September 1750), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…(1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, Doc. 713.
[270] See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, Doc. Nos. 733-737, 740, 741.
[271] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, pp. 63-5.

rented halls for their performances (such as the House on the Solyanka street, from 1749 to 1755[272]), including the German and French theatre halls. The members of such troupes were officials from various institutions, students of spiritual academies or schools, servants in houses, merchants, people from all walks of life.[273]

The activity of the Infantry Corps too had its roots in the amateurial theatre, which represented at once the audience's need for performances, and the desire to be directly engaged in productions. One of these experiences succeeded in gaining the Court's attention, and that was the provincial theatre organized by Fyòdor Grigòr'evich Vòlkov.[274] Son of a merchant native of Yaroslavl', in 1746 Volkov came to Saint Petersburg on a business trip. There, he had the possibility to attend several performances by both the foreign troupes (French and German) and the cadets-amateurs. Being always interested in theatre, Volkov became acquainted with Akkerman, Scolari and Hilverding, frequently attending their theatre.

When he returned to his hometown, Volkov organized his own troupe, which included his four brothers, the actors Popovy (two brothers), Dmitrevsky and Ikonnikova. In their repertoire there were spiritual plays by Dimitry Rostovsky, such as *Esfir* (Esther), a dramatization of a chivalric romance the *pastorale Evmond i Berfa* (Eudon and Bertha), which he himself translated from German, and later tragedies by Sumarokov and Lomonosov, as well as comic plays of their own creation. For this activity, in 1750 Volkov also had a theatre built in Yaroslavl', with the contribution of such landowners as Maykov (the writer Vasily I. Maykov's father) or the *voevoda* of Yaroslavl' Musin-Pushkin. According to Karabanov,

> Небольшой Ярославский театр, праотец колоссальных Русских театров, скоро выстроился на берегу Волги и торжественно открыт 1755 года года представлением оперы *Титово милосердие*, которую Волков перевел с Итальянскаго. Оркестр был собран из домашных помещичьних музыкантов, а хор петь архиерейскими певчими.[275]

[A small theatre in Yaroslavl', forefather of the colossal Russian theatres, was soon built on the bank of the river Volga, and solemnly opened in the year 1755 with the production of the opera *The*

[272] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Docs. Nos. 731 and 737.
[273] *ivi*, p. 46.
[274] Fyodor Grigorievich Volkov (1729-63) used the fortune inherited from his factory-owner stepfather to found a 'public' theatre in Yaroslavl' (1750), something different from the typical private province theatres of noblemen. He performed the leading roles in the tragedies by Sumarokov, who tailored his verses to suit the actor's passionate temperament and "natural" declamation. Upon Sumarokov's retirement from his post in 1761, Volkov succeeded him as director of the newly founded Russian Theatre. He also participated in the plot against Peter III, and was put in charge of organizing the celebrations for Catherine II's coronation, during which he caught cold and died. See *Handbook of Russian Literature*, edited by V. Terras, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1985.
[275] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 25.

Clemency of Titus, which Volkov translated from the Italian. An orchestra was gathered among the landowners' domestic musicians, and the chorus was performed by the singers of the higher orders of the clergy.]

The troupe grew larger when the actors Bukharin, D'yakonov, Skochkov and other dilettantes joined it.[276]

When rumours reached Elizabeth on the large and enthusiastic crowds this amateur theatrical company drew in the remote Russian province, the Empress ordered Volkov's troupe to move to Saint Petersburg, where they staged for the Court Sumarokov's *Khorev* in Tsarskoe Selo in 1752. Other performances followed: *Sinav i Truvor*, *Artistona* and *Gamlet*, and the play *O pokoyanii gremnogo cheloveka* (The sinner's repentance) on 18 March 1752 (with sets by Peresinotti).

However, while the performers' abilities and enthusiasm were admired, the general educational level of the merchant's sons and young artisans who made up Volkov's company was judged too low. Elizabeth therefore ordered the company to be disbanded, but with a greater aim - its most promising members were to be enrolled in the Infantry Corps of Nobles to have their education fulfilled "for the learning of literature, foreign languages [Italian, German and French] and gymnastics, necessary to theatrical actors."[277] Among those who remained in service, in addition to Fyodor Volkov, there were Ivàn Dmìtrevsky, Yakov Shumsky and Aleksey Popov.[278] Other young students, former singers of the Court chapel, joined the Infantry Corps:

> (Л. 83) № 128. Февраль, в 25 день
> Из Кабинета Ея Императорского Величества в Канцелярию Кадетского корпуса
> Ея Императорское Величество указала: ис придворных певчих Петра Власьева, Григорья Емельянова, Павла Иванова, Козму Лукьянова, Федора Максимова, Евстафия Григорьева, Лукьяна Иванова определить для обучения в Кадетской корпус, которым, дав места, содержать во всем против протчих кадетов и обучать их французскому и немецкому языкам, танцовать и рисовать, смотря из них, кто к которой науке охоту и понятие оказывать будет, кроме экзерцицией воинских.[279]

[(Sh. 83) No. 128. February, 25th.
From the Office of Her Imperial Majesty to the chancery of the Infantry Corps
Her Imperial Majesty has ordered: to assign the court singers Pyotr Blas'ev, Grigor'y Emel'yanov, Pavel Ivanov, Kozma Puk'yanov, Fyodor Maksimov, Evstafy Grigor'ev, Luk'yan Ivanov to the education at the Infantry Corps, and, after having found a place for them, to provide for the same conditions as for the other

[276] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*»…, p. 591.
[277] "для необходимаго театральным артистам обучения словесности, иностранным языкам и гимнастики." Quoted from A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 27.
[278] *ibidem*, p. 27.
[279] *Iz del Kabineta Ee Inperatorskogo Velichestva za 1752 god* (From the files of the cabinet of Her Imperial Majesty of the year 1752), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 1435, p. 729. See also A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 27.

cadets, and to teach them French and German, dance and painting, according to the subjects which they will show more inclination toward and capacity, except for military exercise.]

As a result of her interest in their activity, Volkov and his companions accompanied Elizabeth to Moscow from 16 October 1752 to 19 May 1754, as the Court troupes typically did. After spending almost two years in Moscow, in 1754 the troupe came back to Saint Petersburg, where the Empress attended others stagings: on the occasion of Pavel Petrovich's birth for instance, the chamber harbinger records a staging of *Khorev* (9 February 1755).[280]

When Volkov and his colleagues completed their studies in 1756, on 30 August Elizabeth marked with an *ukaz* the official foundation of the *Russky dlya predstavleniya tragediy i komediy teatr* (Russian theatre for the staging of tragedy and comedy), the first Russian troupe in Saint Petersburg for performances of secular plays (either original Russian plays or translations from French or German repertoire[281]):

> Повелели мы ныне учредить Русский для представления трагедий и комедий театр, для которого отдать Головинский каменный дом, что на Васильевском острову близ кадетского дома. А для оного повелели набрать актеров и актрис: актеров из обучающихся певчих и ярославцев в кадетском корпусе, которые к тому будут надобны, а в дополнение еще к ним актеров из других неслужащих людей, также и актрис приличное число. На содержание оного театра определить, по силе сего указа, считая от сего времени, в год денежной суммы по 5000 рублей, которую отпускать из штатс-конторы всегда в начале года по подписании Нашего указа. Для надзирания дома определяется из копиистов лейб-компании Алексей Дьяконов, которого пожаловали Мы армейским подпоручиком, с жалованием из положенной на театр суммы по 250 рублей в год. Определить в оный дом, где учрежден театр, пристойный караул. Дирекция того русского театра поручается от нас бригадиру Александру Сумарокову, которому из той же суммы определяется сверх его бригадирского оклада, рационных и деньщичьих денег в год по 1000 рублей, и заслуженное им по бригадирскому чину с пожалованья его в оный чин жалование, в дополнение к полковничью окладу додать и впред выдавать полное годовое бригадирское жалованье; а его бригадира Сумарокова из армейского списка не выключать. А какое жалованье ныне актерам и актрисам, ак и прочим при театре производить, о том ему бригадиру Сумарокову от Двора дан реестр. О чем Нашему Сенату учинить по сему Нашему указу.[282]

[We hereby permit the establishment of a Russian theater to present tragedies and comedies, for which the Golovin Stone House at Vasil'evskii Island, near the Cadet Corps, is to be given. And for the theater it is also ordered to assemble actors and actresses; actors from the current singers-in-training and those from Iaroslavl in the Cadet Corps who are suited for the purpose, and also actors from others not presently in service; and a corresponding number of actresses. For the maintenance of the theater, from now on there should be designated, according to Our Edict, an annual sum of 5,000 rubles, which is to be

[280] "*Четверг, 9-го*, при Дворе ЕЯ ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА, на малом театре, в присутствии ЕЯ ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА, представлена была Русская трагедия "Хорев"." (On Thursday 9, at the court of Her Imperial Majesty, in the small theatre, the Russian tragedy *Khorev* was staged, in the presence of Her Majesty), *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda.* (*Diary of ceremonies, banquets and visits* of the year 1755), *Zhurnaly kamer-fur'erskie, 1755 goda.* (*Diary of the chamber harbinger* of the year 1755), p. 19, in http://gbooks.archeologia.ru.

[281] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*»…, p. 591.

[282] Quoted from *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov*…. Otdel II, p. 54

appropriated at the start of each year, after the signing of Our Edict, from the Fiscal Office. For the supervision of the house, we designate Aleksei D'iakonov, of the copyists of the Leib-Company, whom we promoted to Second Lieutenant of the Army, with the salary of 250 rubles per year, to be drawn from the sum allotted to the theater. A proper guard is also to be assigned to the house where the theater is located. We appoint as director of the Russian theater Brigadier Aleksandr Sumarokov, to whom, in addition to his brigadier's salary, is to be allotted from the sum given to the theater an allowance for food and daily expenses of 1,000 rubles; as a supplement to his colonel's salary to add and henceforth issue to him the full salary of a brigadier; and do not exclude Brigadier Sumarokov from the list of army officers. As for the salaries for actors and actresses and the others attached to the theater, a special register has been given to Brigadier Sumarokov from our Court. May the Senate act according to our Edict.][283]

The troupe, as specified in the order, performed at the Golovin House, on the Vasil'evsky Island, that is in the building where the cadets had their school. Later, with an *ukaz* dating 30 April 1757, Elizabeth established that the troupe could perform also at the French Court theatre near the Summer Palace (in the days when the troupe of Sérigny did not work), because the Golovin House, being on an island still not connected to the mainland via a bridge, was not reachable after the melting of the ice.[284] For such performances the troupe was allowed to charge an entrance fee. In 1759, when the Summer Palace was completed, next to the Politseysky bridge, Russian performances were moved to the theatre built inside it, which the Empress could reach by walking along corridors directly from her apartments.[285]

Without going into much detail, it seems interesting quoting the amount of funds received by the other troupes present in town at the same time: if the newly established Russian troupe was to receive a contribution of 5.000 roubles per year, the French one received usually 20.000 r., while the Italian 30.000 r. per year, Locatelli's troupe receiving 7.000 roubles. As director of the troupe, Sumarokov often complained about the lack of means in his letters to the favourite Ivan I. Shuvalov. On 6 January 1759 the theatre passed under the direct administration of the court, which meant more funds, and free entrance for the members of the court.[286]

The major part of its repertoire, as already hinted at, could be classified as drama.

[283] English translation quoted from N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800, I ed. Ocherki po istorii muzyki v Rossii s drevneyshchikh vremen do kontsa XVIII veka*, tt. I-II, M—L., 1928-29), edited and annotated by M. Velimirovich and C. R. Jensen, vol. 2, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 2008, pp. 68-9.

[284] "<…> в оперном Ея Императорского Величества доме, когда опер, французских комедий, интермедий представлено не будет, то есть в те дни, когда театр празден будет, то в те времена представлять русския комедии под дирекцию брегадира Господина Сумарокова" ([…] at the Opera House of Her Imperial Majesty, when there are no operas, or French plays, or intermezzos, that is in the days when the theatre is closed, then Russian plays are to be staged under the supervision of the brigadier Mister Sumarokov), RGIA, F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 93, p. 29, quoted from V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*…, p. 221.

[285] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 31.

[286] RGIA F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 93, p. 156, quoted from V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*…, p. 224.

Anyway, a clear distinction between spoken and musical theatre was a long way off, and the actors who made up the first ranks of the Russian troupe had a musical preparation also, and some experience in opera staging. First, the cadets of the Infantry Corps, as referred to above, had matured some expertise by taking part, as dancers, in opera performances of the *Ital'yanskaya kompaniya*. At school they were introduced to dance by the founder of the first ballet school in Russia, Jean-Baptiste Landé. Arrived in Saint Petersburg in June 1733 from Danzig, he had been hired at the Kadetsky korpus on 1 August 1734, on a three-year contract. In March 1736 his pupils already danced in the Italian opera performances ballets of his creation. In September 1737 he proposed the foundation of the school to Anna Ioannovna. On 1 January 1738 he was appointed dance teacher at the Court. He had twelve pupils under him, including pupils from the ballet school and cadets. In 1743 his pupils were transformed into theatre dancers.[287] The cadets took part in the staging of *La Forza dell'Amore e dell'Odio*;[288] later they were to take part in several opera stagings, such as, *La Clemenza di Tito*, performed not only in the year of the coronation itself, but also for the anniversaries, as attested in this document recorded by Starikova:

> № 378. Подано апреля 13 дня 1747 года
>
> Ея Императорского Величества ис Придворной канторы в Канцелярию Шляхетного кадетского корпуса
>
> Понеже по указу Ея Императорского Величества в приходящее торжество высочайшей Ея Императорского Величества коронации имеет быть в оперном Ея Императорского Величества доме представлена опера, для которой, тако ж для пробы оной, потребны быть кадеты. Того ради означенная канцелярия благоволит оных кадетов, сколко, имеющимся при оперном доме капитаном Рамбургом требовано будет, как для оперы, так и на пробу, отпускать неудержно. (А именно то ж число, что было в опере, называемой Титус в декабре месяце прошлого 746 году, и тех же кадетов, понеже они уже обыкновенны; а явится им в оперном доме в пондельник на страстной неделе пополудни в 3-м часу).
>
> Апреля в 11 день Семен Нарышкин
> 1747 году Секретарь Федор Яковлев
> Подканцелярист Иван Афанасьев[289]

> [No. 378. Delivered on 13 April 1747
>
> Her Imperial Majesty from the Court office to the chancery of the Infantry Corps of Nobles
>
> According to the royal command of Her Imperial Majesty on the occasion of the imminent celebrations of the most high coronation anniversary of Her Imperial Majesty an opera should be staged in the opera house of Her Imperial Majesty, for which, and for which rehearsals, the cadets are requested. For the sake of this the chancery is kindly begged to release unrestrainedly the mentioned cadets in the number that captain Ramburg will request, to be at the Opera house for the opera, as well as for the rehearsals. (And just in the same date, when the opera called *Titus* [was staged] in the month of December of the past year

[287] The first generations of dancers gave produced the first generations of teachers. See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…(1741-1750)*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, pp. 21-6.
[288] *ivi*, p. 22.
[289] *Iz del Kadetskogo korpusa za aprel' 1747 goda* (From the files of the Infantry Corps of Nobles of April 1747), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Doc. No. 689, p. 785.

746, and just the same cadets, since they are already used to it; they also have to be at the Opera House on Monday of the Holy Week at two in the afternoon).

11 April 1747 — Semyon Naryshkin
The secretary Fyodor Yakovlev
The sub clerk Ivan Afanas'ev]

The same situation occurs again the following year (1748):

№ 877. Получено сентября 2 дня 1748 году пополуночи в 2 часа

Ея Императорского Величества ис Придворной канторы в Канцелярию Шляхетного кадетского корпуса

Потребно отпустить из шляхетного кадетского корпуса в оперной дом ко исправлению действия для дни высочайшаго торжества тезоименитства Ея Императорского Величества, то есть сего сентября 5-го числа, италианской оперы, называемой Титус, кадетов до толикого числа, сколко их прежде было в присылке. Того ради, оная канцелярия благоволит упоминаемых кадетов ис показанного корпуса отпустить в означенной оперной дом ныне, которым приказать явится у обретающагося при том оперном доме капитана Степана Рамбурга. А как помянутая опера действием окончается, тогда те кадеты оным капитаном имеют отпущены быть в команду по прежнему неудержно.

Дмитрей Шепелев
Секретарь Андрей Сунгуров

№ 337
Сентября 2 дня 1748 году
По сему сообщению кадетов прежнее число 60 человек камандированы.[290]

[No. 877. Received on 2 September 1748 at 2 ante meridiem

Her Imperial Majesty from the Court office to the chancery of the Infantry Corps of Nobles

It is requested to release from the Infantry Corps of Nobles to the Opera House for the improvement of the [theatrical] action for the day of most high name-day celebrations of Her Imperial Majesty, that is on 5 of this September, of the Italian opera called *Titus*, the same number of cadets that was [indicated] in the previous dispatch. For the sake of this, the chancery is kindly begged to release the mentioned cadets form the indicated corps to go to the quoted Opera House today, and to present themselves to captain Stepan Ramburg who will be at that Opera House. When the mentioned opera ends, those cadets will be immediately released by the captain himself to their prior orders.

Dmitrey Shepelev
The secretary Andrey Sungurov

No 337
2 September 1748
With this communication 60 cadets are requested on the day before.]

And in 1750, maybe for the opera *Bellerofonte*, staged, as seen, on 28 November:

1750 года, ноября 20 дня, во вторник

Присудствующия в канцелярии шляхетнаго кадетскаго корпуса:

Подполковник Яган Фрдинант Зигхейм

Маэр Илия Мазовской

ПРИКАЗАЛИ: в силе присланной сего числа ис придворной Ея Императорскаго Величества канторы промемории, требуемое число кадетов – тридцать шесть человек, которым быть для действия оперы, оного корпуса при порутчике Петре Мелисине и двух ундер афицерах сего ж числа командировать и велеть явитца им в оперном доме у маэора Рамбура. Кои и впредь для пробы и к настоящему той оперы представлению по требованию

[290] *Iz del Kadetskogo korpusa za sentyabr' 1748 goda* (From the files of the Infantry Corps of Nobles of September 1748), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Doc. No. 696, p. 791.

оного Рамбура присланы быть имеют без удержания. И о том Ея Императорскаго Величества в придворную кантору послать промеморию.

Илья Мазовской
J. Von Siegheim
Секретарь Мирон Притчин

Промемория послана ноября 20 дня.[291]

[On Tuesday, 20 November 1750
Present in the chancery of the Infantry Corps of Nobles:
Lieutenant-colonel Yahn Ferdinand Zigcheim
Major Iliya Mazovskoy
ORDERED: by virtue of the memorandum that was sent in today's date from the Court office of Her Imperial Majesty, the requested number of cadets consists of thirty six people of that corps, who have to present themselves for the opera action, to the lieutenant Pyotr Melissino; and two non-commissioned officers on today's date are requested and ordered to present themselves at the Opera House to major Ramburg. These have to be sent without any delay for the rehearsal and for the practical staging of that opera, according to the mentioned Ramburg's request. A Memorandum about this is to be sent to the Court Office of Her Imperial Majesty.

Il'ya Mazovskoy
J. Von Siegheim
The secretary Miron Pritchin

The Memorandum has been sent on 20 November.]

Moreover, pointing out the importance of the Russian amateurial theatre that was developing in Russia even before the arriving of the first Italian troupes (during Anna's rule yet), Starikova recalls the tradition of singing: "[…] around this period [the early 1730s] Russia had its own ancient and rich tradition of vocal music, which had prepared Russian performers and spectators to the reception precisely of this kind of performance, notably, the choral tradition."[292] This tradition was carried out within the institution of the Court Cappella.

The origins of the Court Cappella date back to the foundation of a singing school in the Ukrainian town of Glukhovo (Ukraine) - a city renowned for the provision of talented voices - opened by Empress Anna in 1738.[293] In this city a domestic cappella was also organized by the Hetman Kirìll Grigòr'evich Razumòvsky,[294] the brother of the Empress's favourite Aleksey, who was himself a singer and, by means of his talented voice had fascinated the Court and the Empress, who had made him a Count of the Empire and her

[291] *Iz "Zhurnala Kantselyarii Kadetskago korpusa" 1750 goda* (From the *Diary of the chancery of the Infantry Corps of Nobles* of the year 1750), in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Doc. No. 719, pp. 805-7.

[292] "<…> в России к этому времени [the early 1730s] имелась своя давняя богатейшая музыкально-певческая традиция, подготовившая русских исполнителей и зрителей к восприятию именно данной стороны спектакля, в частности, традиция хоровая." *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, vypusk I, 1995, p. 48.

[293] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 43. See also Chap. I, Russia and Opera: Making Acquaintance.

[294] "Hetman (Polish from the German *Hauptmann* – chief) was the position of Russian governor-general appointed by the Russian tsars from 1648-1764 (with intervals) in *Malorossia* (Little Russia, the Imperial denomination of the Ukraine from the mid-seventeenth century until 1917)." M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 44 n.

secret husband. During the 1750s count Razumovsky was thus one of Russia's most influential and wealthy figures, a man of European education, and president of the Academy of Sciences. He had left for Little Russia in 1751, following the edict creating the post of hetmanship, accompanied by Grigòry Teplòv, a troupe of actors, and a certain Andrey Andreevich Rachinsky (1729-*c.* 1800), a professional preceptor who served as *Kapellmeister* at Razumovsky's house starting in 1753. Stählin notes that with the assistance of Teplov, count Razumovsky had provided his palace with a first-rate private choir and some forty extremely skilled chamber musicians, mostly Russian.

The singers coming from Glukhovo filled the ranks of the Court Cappella in Saint Petersburg. Singers were divided into two groups: adult and young, the latter being children before the age of voice change. When they changed their voice they were expelled from the Choir, and were educated to other professions dealing with theatre, such as musicians, painters or dancers. During Elisabeth's reign, professional singers were sent to the Ukraine to chose the singers for the Cappella.[295] By the end of 1740s the Chapel included more than ninety singers.

Two phenomena took place inside this institution: the confusion between the traditional Russian sacred music and the 'Italian style',[296] and the emergence, by the end of the 1740s, of the first generation of Russian professional vocalists, among whom there were Dimìtry S. Bortnyànsky (1751-1825), Maksìm S. Berezòvsky (1745-1777), and the already mentioned Mark F. Poltoràtsky (1729-1795),[297] who was engaged at the court in 1744. According to Ritzareva,

> Enlarging and improving the old Imperial Choir became of special concern and pride to the eighteenth-century tsars. Throughout the middle of the eighteenth century, when the desire for contemporary European sound preceded any real possibility of achieving it, the huge reverberation provided by a large and magnificent choir not only compensated for a lack of instruments, but also lent a special grandeur and sanctity to the whole atmosphere of the Imperial court. Singers, primarily trained in the performance of Russian spiritual music, were also taught contemporary Italian music, and it was from this choir that the first Russian professional composers were to come. Court Choir singers were widely used in ensembles for everyday court entertainment and in opera productions. If choruses in Italian *opera seria* were normally performed by a modest ensemble of soloists, then the Peterburgian court custom brought the entire choir onto the stage. The expanded role of the choir,

[295] See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Docs. 449, 453, 457, 469, 472, 484, 499, 510.

[296] "В целях сохранения старейшей русской церковной музыки, она [Елизавета] не очень охотно разрешала во вновь сочиненных церковных мотетах смешения с итальянским стилем, столь любимым ею в другой музыке. Однако, впоследствии, в царствование Екатерины II, эта более совершенная музыка все больше и болше внедрялась в придворной капелле и стала настолько употребительна, что, не говоря уже об исполнении превосходнейшим хором труднейших концертов в большие праздники, но даже обычная обедня в незначительные праздники и воскресеные дни сопровождалась фигурвционным пением". YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 55.

[297] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1741-1750)*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, Docs. 205-7. Part of them was quoted in this chapter, part II.

> constituting a kind of oratorical bias within an opera spectacle, became traditional for St Petersburg grand opera and was to influence even the nineteenth-century style of classical Russian opera […].[298]

A phenomenon of osmosis can also be observed between the Court Cappella and the first Russian troupe. During Anna's reign the cantors played as actors in such plays as the *Komediya ob Iosife* (1734-35). From the 1740s they began taking part in the Italian performances: in *La Clemenza di Tito* we have already observed the presence of chorus and extras; in *Bellerofonte* that of Mark Poltoratsky as a soloist. Part of these singers were later to be included in the staff of the newly founded Russian theatre; therefore the majority of actors of the first Russian theatre were singers, and professionally, even if not perfectly, prepared.[299]

In his memoirs, Stählin ventures an interesting hypothesis about the formation of the Russian troupe, according to which the event supposedly owes something also to the 'musical component' of the Court life. In fact, performances of the Court Cappella alternated with the Italian vocalists are attested in the *Diary of the Chamber Harbinger*.[300] Stählin refers to the performances of some singer Gavrilo, who might have been a singer of the Court Cappella, able to sing Italian arias with cadenzas and bravura ornaments. According to Stählin, when the *cappella*'s soloists performed for the Court in 1753 in Moscow, before a wide audience of courtiers and notables, the Empress was so impressed by the talent of these singers, that she apparently had the idea of staging operas in Russian:[301]

> Выступления этого приятного певца и нескольких других его земляков, немногим уступавших ему в пении, подали мысль императрице поставить оперу на русском языке, который, как известно, по своей нежности, красочности и благозвучию ближе всех других европейских языков подходит к итальянскому и, следовательно, в пении имеет большие преимущества.[302]

> [The performances of that agreeable singer and of some of his fellow-countrymen, some of whom

[298] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 44.
[299] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 48.
[300] "[1 January 1755] В продолжение стола, на балконе, играла Италиянская инструментальная вокальная музыка и пел хор певчих." (All along the banquet, on the balcony Italian vocal music was played, and the Cappella sung.) *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda*, p. 4. "[10 February 1755] Как обедню отпели, то происходила пальба из пушек; а в покоях Их Высочеств играла бальная музыка, а потом пел хор певчих; а перед покоями били барабаны и играла ж полковая музыка. " (When it was called upon for the banquet, a firing from the cannons took place; in the apartments of Their Highnesses some dance music was played and then the Cappella sung; while in front of the apartments tambours and regimental music were played.), *ivi*, p. 20. "[25 November 1755] На балконе играла Италиянская инструментальная вокальная музыка и хор певчих." (On the balcony Italian vocal music was played, and the Cappella [sung].) *ivi*, p. 108.
[301] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 133.
[302] *ibidem.*

inferior to him in singing, gave the Empress the idea of staging an opera in the Russian language, which, as everybody knows, is the nearest to Italian among all other European languages for its delicacy, beauty and euphony and, consequently, having more advantages in singing.]

This episode is of interest because traditionally the origins of the Russian theatre are ascribed exclusively to the first performances of spoken theatre, and not to events related to music. Actually, the idea of a common origin had already been put forward by Mooser:

> […] le Théâtre russe créé par Elisabeth Pétrovna devait connaître bientôt de glorieuses destinées, et faciliter l'établissement définitif de l'opéra national auquel il montra la voie, le fournissant souvent d'acteurs, et l'accueillant provisoirement sur sa propre scène, jusqu'au moment où celui-ci fut en état de voler de ses propres ailes, et de s'installer à son compte, pour concurrencer l'opéra italien et l'opéra-comique français dans la faveur du public.
>
> Comme tel, le théâtre dramatique russe nous apparaît une manière d'intermédiaire entre ceux-ci et celui-là. Et c'est à ce titre que, […], nous croyons devoir ne pas séparer son évolution ultérieure de celle des autres institutions artistiques, à laquelle elle fut si intimement liée.[303]

In this sense, on the one hand it is possible to read in Razumovsky's proximity to the Empress a role that is usually politically considered marginal.[304] On the other hand, we can imagine the newly born Russian troupes wanting to try their hands also into operatic repertoire, with the staging of the first operas in the Russian language. The theatrical activity of this informal troupe was in fact not restricted to prose theatre. Such a distinction was to be officially recognized at a more developed stage of evolution of the theatrical activity in Russia. Even though these were exceptions, Vsevolodsky-Gerngross reports the staging of *Bellerofonte* in 1752 and *Alessandro nelle Indie* in the years 1755-56.[305] The desire to develop an original theatrical repertoire, and to try their hands at musical theatre also, led the cadets to the creation of the first opera written on a Russian libretto.

[303] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 263.

[304] "Razumovskij non si occupava di politica, non ne aveva né la stoffa né la volontà. Ma è certo che il suo orientamento religioso, il suo rispetto per il clero, il suo volgersi all'Ucraina e a Kiev come matrice di autentiche verità, tutto imprimeva al regno di Elisabetta un impegno che pur volendo rifarsi alle direttive di Pietro, era genericamente slavofilo o piuttosto antioccidentale, antieuropeo. Si guardava in casa propria insomma e alle proprie risorse." (Razumovsky dod not eal with politics, he had no talent nor will. But it is certain that his religious orientation, his respect for the clergy, and his orientation to the Ukraine and to Kiev as to the origins of authentical truths, all this gave Elizabeth's reign a commitment that, though inspired to Peter's ideas, was generically slavophile, or rather anti-Western, anti-European. He looked at his own homeland and to its resources.) L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'illuminismo e la steppa…*, p. 93.

[305] Gerngross reports the actors who performed it, and who thus were part of the first Russian troupe, in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, p. 199. Documents attesting these opera stagings are preseved at RGIA, F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 87, l. 135, and F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 90, l. 96.

Tsefal i Prokris

Tsefal i Prokris (Cephalus and Procris) was staged at the Court theatre on 27 February 1755, as attested by the chamber harbinger's diary.[306] For the occasion, the Academy of Sciences issued the libretto,[307] in which the actors who performed the premiere are listed: Stefan Evstafiev in the role of the goddess Aurora (Avrora), Stefan Razhevsky in that of Erechteus (Erikhtey), the king of Athens, Gavrila Martsenkevich as Cephalus (Tsefal), prince of Phocis, Nikolay Ktitarev as Minos, the king of Crete, Ivan Tatishchev as Testor, Minos's confidant and magician, and Elizaveta Belogradskaya as Procris (Prokris), Erechteus's daughter. The libretto specifies that all singers, except for Belogradskaya (the niece of the Court lutenist Timofey Belogradsky), belonged to the court *cappella*. Possibly due to their young age,[308] all soloists sang in soprano voice, whereas a range from soprano to bass voice is foreseen for the choruses (more precisely: two sopranos, a tenor, and a bass voice in all the three choruses of the opera: "Proslavlyaysya velyaglasno" (Be glorified greatly…), I, 2; "Lyubov' serdtsa spryagaya" (Love opening heart…), I, 4; "Kogda lyubov' polezna" (When love is beneficial), III, 8).[309]

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[306] "*Понедельник, 27-го*, в оперном доме, в присутствии ЕЯ ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА и Его Высочества, представлена была опера «*Цефал и Прокрис*»." (On Monday 27, in the Opera House, in the presence of Her Majesty and Her Highness, the opera *Tsefal and Prokris* was staged) *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda…*, p. 24. The performance is reported also in the *Zhurnal Tseremonial'nykh del 1755 goda* (Diary of ceremonies of the year 1755): "№ 18. От двора Ея Императорского Величества к церемониальным делам / Ея Императорское Величество изволила указать: сего февраля 27-го дня, то есть в будущей понедельник, в оперном Ея Императорского Величества доме быть новой руской опере, имянуемой Цефал и Прокрис, в которой заседание иметь будут: генералитет обоего пола персоны в партере по прежнему, а те, которыя не усядутся, то в ложе перваго яруса поместятся. А приезд иметь во обыкновенное время; причем посылается для господ чюжестранных министров книжек на французском диалекте должина. / Февраля 26 дня 1755 году." (No. 18. From the Court of Her Imperial Majesty to the ceremonial office / Her Imperial Majesty kindly ordered: on current 27th, that is on next Monday, at the Opera House of Her Imperial Majesty there be a new Russian opera, titled *Cephalus and Procris*, in which the [following] will take part: the most high ranks of the Army, whose members of both sexes will be seated in the parterre as usual, and those who unable to find a place will sit in the first gallery. They will come at the usual time; librettos in French for the foreign ministers must be sent to these lords. / 26 February 1755). *Iz "Zhurnala Tseremonial'nykh del 1755 goda"* (From the "Diary of ceremonies of the year 1755"), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… 1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 306. See also Docs. 307 a, b, v. The production is mentioned also by Jean Benjamin F. De La Borde in his *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, who, nevertheless, apparently obtained the information from Stählin. J. B. F. DE LABORDE, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, Paris, De l'Imprimerie de Ph. D. Pierres 1780, t. I, pp. 391-3.

[307] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*. Sanktpeterburg, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk, 1755, visible in digital form at the site http://digital.slub-dresden.de. A French translation was also done, by some Henninger, which maybe unique exemplar is preserved at the Göttingen University library. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 257.

[308] According to Stählin, the singers were very young, as he stances that the eldest was fourteen years old. YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 134.

[309] As far as I know, the complete score was never published entirely. Several pieces of it were included in essays on history of music: the piano score of the overture is reported by Morkov as an appendix of his *Historical essay on Russian opera*. (V. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala…*) The score carries the board number 4084, and the note "Арранжировка собственность издателя"

Choruses too were performed by the singers of the Court Cappella, probably by singers whose voice had already changed.

The opera tells the sorrowful story of the princess of Athens Procris (Prokris in the Russian version) and the prince of Phocis Cephalus (in Russian Tsefal), who, due to Aurora's jealousy, were separated by the young woman's death. The subject was chosen by Sumarokov from Ovidius's *Metamorphoses*, which had actually inspired many performances before this one, most of them probably scarcely known in Russia.[310] Despite the classical source of the work, the subject seems to be rather revisited in a magic-baroque key, probably due to the influence of the French theatre, notably the genre of *tragédie lyrique*.[311]

(Arrangement property of the publisher), which suggests that it had been published before somewhere else. It is probably not made by Araya himself. Cephalus's aria "Esli tochno ty to znaesh'" ("If you truly know it ", II, 2) has been published by Ginzburg as an annex to his *History of Russian music in musical examples* (*Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of the Russian music in musical examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I, Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968, pp. 446-51). According to Mooser, a version for string quartet of the overture was published in Saint Petersburg by Clostermann on the *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 20 August 1787, evidence of the fact that the opera had not been forgotten by that time (R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 257). The complete manuscript score, belonging to the Library of the Direction of Imperial Theatres, is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre (See M. N. SHCHERBAKOVA, *Russky XVIII vek: iz istorii arkhivov TsMB Mariinskogo Teatra* (The Russian 18th century: from the archives of the Central Music Library of the Mariinsky theatre), in *Na veka, Zhurnal dlya tekh, kto sokhranyaet na veka pamyatniki istorii i kul'tury* (Evermore, Journal for those who preserve evermore the monuments of history and culture), No. 3 (2004), pp. 9-17). A microfilm reproduction of it is preserved in Rome at the library of the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia": [F. ARAJA], *Tsefal i Prokris Opera. Muzyka G. Arayya, neapolitantsa, EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTA kapel'meystera. Stikhotvorstvo G. Sumarokova* (Cephalus and Procris Opera. Music by Mr Araya, from Naples, Kapellmeister of Her Imperial Majesty. Poetry by Mr Sumarokov). This is the score I refer to in my analysis.

[310] Among Italian librettos Sartori recorded: *Cefalo, Dramma pastorale da rappresentarsi in Brescia nel Teatro dell'illustrissima Accademia l'agosto 1715. Dedicato a sue eccellenze […] Antonio Loredan podestà, Girolamo Diego capitanio. Brescia, Gio. Maria Rizzardi*; *Cefalo e Procri, Melodramma per intramezzi. S.n.t. In Ancona, MDCLI Nella Stamparia di Ottavio Beltrano*; *Cefalo e Procri, Ballo eroico, tragico, pantomime d'invenzione e direzione del signor Onorato Viganò da rappresentarsi nel nobil Teatro di Torre Argentina il carnevale dell'anno 1786*; *Cefalo e Procri. Favola in prosa con musica per una voce sola del conte Alessandro Pepoli. Padova, Stamperia Penada, 1792* (with music by Antonio Cappuzzi); *Cefalo il fedel. Balletto da rappresentarsi nella città di Pesaro. Pesaro, Flaminio Concordia, 1636* (libretto by Camillo Giordano). C. SARTORI, *I libretti Italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800, Catalogo analitico con 16 indici* (Italian printed librettos from the origins to 19th century, Catalogue with 16 indexes), vol. II, Cuneo, Bertola & Locatelli Musica 1990, pp. 100-1.

[311] The literary models Sumarokov referred to were the most distinguished exponents of French 17th-century Classicism: Corneille, Racine, and, as for comedy, Molière, Destouches and Philippe Quinault, still very much admired in France in 18th century. According to Simon Karlinsky however, Sumarokov imitated rather the 'second generation' of classicists: Voltaire, Scipione Maffei, Metastasio, Gottsched, that is his contemporaries, in accordance with the idea of the time that classical canons were not supposed to be changed. Among the works dealing with the myth of Cephalus and Procris, there had been, for instance, a *tragédie en musique* entitled *Céphale et Procris*, by Joseph François Duché de Vancy (1668-1704), staged at the Académie Royale in 1694 with music by Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre (1665-1729), but I could find no evidence that Sumarokov had read or knew this pièce. [J. F. DUCHÉ DE VANCY], *Céphale et Procris, Représentée par l'Académie Royalle de musique, Suivante la copie imprimée à Paris, A AMSTERDAM chez ANTOINE SCHELTE, Marchant Libraire, près de la Bourse. clo loc XCV*. The score too has been recently published: E. - C. JACQUET DE LA GUERRE, *Cephale et Procris*, edited by W. R. Griffiths, Madison, A-r 1998.

The plot is organized in three acts, each taking place in a different setting, and followed by a ballet created by the choreographer Antonio Rinaldi.[312]

After the three-part overture (*Presto*, *Andante moderato*, and *Allegro assai*[313]), the first act opens on a square in front of the temple of Minerva, where the marriage of Cephalus and Procris is to be celebrated. The king of Crete, Minos, being in love with the woman, expresses his sorrow to his confidant Testor. He is advised to ask for Aurora's help, the goddess being, in turn, in love with the prince of Phocis. Minos asks the nobleman, who is also a magician, to use all his power (*nauka*, that is 'science') to help him. When the marriage procession emerges from the temple, a chorus ("Proslavlyaysya velyaglasno", Be glorified greatly…, I, 2) accompanies the two lovers, who are blessed by Procris's father Erechteus, and promise mutual love and faithfulness.

Minos is present at the scene, and expresses his sorrow in the aria "Tyazhkaya tomu pechal'" (Heavy is the sorrow for those…, I, 2). It seems that the two lovers are finally coming to their union, which gives the opportunity for Erechteus's aria "Kormshchik vesel v korable" (The helmsman is happy on the ship…, *Moderato*, I, 3), with the typical metaphor of the helmsman who feels relieved at reaching the shore, and for the second chorus "Lyubov' serdtsa spryagaya" (Love opening heart…, I, 4, accompanied by strings). Among the overall joy however, Cephalus foreshadows his tragic destiny (rec. "No sred sikh radostey, lyubezna Prokris…" But among this joy, dear Procris…, I, 4), and begs Minerva to indicate his fate to him.[314] Suddenly, the doors of the temple open, and the voice of the deity resounds, announcing the heaven's opposition to his union:

> Часы сии вам грозны:
> Уставили их так правители небес,
> И сам Зевес.
> И все мои за вас уже прошеньи позны.[315]
>
> [These hours are redoubtable for you:
> Thus it has been decided by he rulers of the heaven,
> And by Zeus himself.
> And all my entreaties for the sake of you are too late.]

Another comedy on the same subject by Florent Dancourt was published in 1711: *Cephale, et Procris, comédie, avec un prologue, & des divertissemens. Representée pour la premiere fois le 27. Octobre 1711*.

[312] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*...

[313] Not *Allegro moderato*, as indicated by Morkov in the appendix to his V. I. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala*….

[314] ("Boginya sey strany, / Otkroy Minerva nyne, / Kakoy podvlasten ya sud'bine, / I k shchastiyu li mne sii chasy dany") (Goddess of this land, / Minerva, Reveal now, / To which sort I'm destined, / And whether these hours are given favourably), [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…, p. 10.

[315] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…1755, p. 10.

Minerva's response, followed by lightning and thunder, is staged as a typical 'magic' episode: the movement indication is *Largo e staccato*, but soon changes into *Andante*, *Presto*, and *Più presto*. The recitative is accompagnato, with dotted rhythm and rapid scales of the strings (as illustrated in the examples nos.II, a and II, 5).

At these words the two protagonists are filled with consternation and dismay, which they express in long verses, which were considerably cutted off in the score, a choice that maybe meant to introduce Cephalus's aria "Vspomniv kak tebya lyubil" (Remembering how I loved you…, I, 5) at an early stage. The (composer's?) choice to reduce the text of I, 4 and I, 5 confirms the idea that Russian audience would not appreciate too long recitatives (as it was the case for Italian opera); moreover, it seems legitimized by the repetition of similar utterances in the following scene, which was considered more suitable for the music setting, since it contains a duet between Cephalus and Procris ("Prosti, ochey moikh / Edino uteshen'e", Farewell, only comfort / To my eyes…, I, 6). After the duet, another magic episode follows: Cephalus is pulled up to the sky, thus disappearing from the stage, the action being accompanied by strings, horns and timpani in the orchestra. Procris, left alone, sings the aria "Chast' plachevna sovershilas' (My sorrowful fate has been accomplished…, I, 7), which ends the first act.

In act II "The theatre represents a marvellous valley in the mountains, with groves and springs,"[316] where Aurora has taken Cephalus. The prince, all alone, recalls Procris, whom he cannot forget, and searches for comfort in the marvellous natural environment, which responds to him in a sort of reference to another classical myth, that of Echo and Narcissus:

> Как ехо между гор в долинах раздается,
> Мое печально серце рвется;
> Оно твердит мой глас,
> И имя Прокрисы в минуту много раз.[317]
>
> [When the echo resounds in the valleys between the mountains,
> My gloomy heart tears off;
> It repeats my voice,
> And the name of Procris many times in an instant.]

[316] "Театр представляет прекрасную при горах, рощах и источников долину", *ivi*, p. 16.
[317] *ibidem*.

The pastoral setting is reflected in his aria "Razny muki ya terplyu" (I suffer different pains…, 3/8, in the key of E flat), accompanied by strings (violins playing "con sordino"), horns and traverse flutes.

When Aurora comes along and declares her love to him (III, 2), she receives Cephalus's refusal (Aurora's aria "Kak prekrasna roza v lete", Marvellous as a rose in summer), and his promise to be faithful to Procris (Cephalus's "Est'li tochno ty to znaesh'", If you know that…). For this reason, the goddess decides to resort to Testor's magic (II, 3):

> Вы ветры в скорости к Афинам полетите,
> И Критскаго Царя к Авроре принесите;
> Но чтоб с ним Тестор был!
> Как ты любовнице, Монарх его, постыл,
> О том я знаю.
> Я в горести моей,
> Днесь к ревности твоей,
> И твоего раба к вольшебству прибегаю.
>
> *Слышен пресильной шум ветров.*[318]
>
> [All winds do fly rapidly to Athens,
> And do bring to Aurora the King of Crete;
> And with him Testor!
> I know how
> You, his Sovereign, are ignominious to your beloved.
> In my sorrow,
> Now I resort to your jealousy,
> And to your servant's magic.
>
> *A strong sound of wind is heard.*]

According to Minos's orders, Testor transforms the beautiful valley into a terrible desert, where Cephalus is forced to remain until he changes his feelings. As before, the magic episode is characterized by accompagnato recitative (*Andante moderato*, III, 5), and the transformation by a *Presto* movement with strings (in the key of G minor), which introduces Testor's aria "V prestrashnoy sey strane" (In this most terrible land…, *Presto*, II, 5).

As a reaction to Cephalus' indifference to her ("In this most miserable valley, / Anything is equal: darkness, or light"[319]), Aurora leads away Procris and forces her to convince her beloved to change his feeling toward her. After hearing Cephalus' umpteenth declaration of fidelity to Procris, the princess asks Aurora to allow her to share the same

[318] *ivi*, p. 20.
[319] "В такой презлополучной доле, / Мне все равно, что тьма, что свет." *ivi*, p. 23.

destiny as his and remain in that sort of Enfer. Aurora will not concede this, every place becoming acceptable where one has his treasure.[320] The act ends with a quintet in which all characters express their feeling towards the situation: Minos's despair and that of Aurora, turning into rage, Testor's fear for what is about to happen, the two lovers' begging for mercy.

The third act takes place in a grove near Athens. The characters have come back to the world of humans, but they had to leave the city under Minerva's orders, since she did not want to witness such events in her city. Posing a condition that reminds us of the one Orpheus received from Pluto in the Enfer, she ordered Cephalus not to come back, otherwise he would be divided forever from his beloved. Whereas Minos wants Testor to render Procris well-disposed toward him (aria "Na serdtse polno strasti", My heart is full of passion), the magician is ordered to instil jealousy in Procris (III, 1), and makes her become suspicious (aria "Dlya chevo tebya tak mnogo", Why do I love so much, III, 3). This weakness again reminds one of Eurydice's misunderstanding of Orpheus leading her out of the Enfer:

То видно, что в другой ты днесь любови тлеешь.
Дивлюся, что еще со мною говоришь;
Куда лишь я приду, ты прочь оттоль бежишь.
Колико без тебя рвалася я, страдала!
Тебя мне мнилось я год целый не видала.[321]

[I can see that now your love burns for another.
I marvel at you still talking to me;
Whenever I come, you just leave.
How much did I tear off, did I suffer!
It seems to me that I didn't see you an entire year!]

The condition Cephalus is forced to accept also calls to mind the same myth:

В незнаньи в ревности не так ты все примаешь,
Как не было уже во храме больше вас,
Внимай, какой еще я слышал тамо глас:
В сей день от Прокрисы как можешь удаляйся;
Когда тебе мила она:
Иль будь с ней день, и в век с ней после не видайся.[322]

[320] "Не будет вам тово! / Утехи вашей все любови невозвратны. / Те все места тому приятны, / В которых лутчее сокровище его." (You'll not have this! / All the joy of your love is irretrievable. / All places are agreeable to the one, / Whose treasure is there.), *ivi*, p. 25.
[321] *ivi*, p. 30.
[322] *ivi*, p. 31

[In your nescience and jealousy you understand all wrong.
When you all had left the temple,
I heard this voice there:
Get far from Procris this very day;
If she's dear to you:
Be with her one more day, and you'll never see her again.]

Procris has the impression that Cephalus is sincere, but being under the magic spell, she keeps being jealous, and follows him secretly. He is put to sleep by a mysterious force, accompanied by Procris's aria "O spokoyny son" (Oh peaceful sleep…, *Andante moderato*, III, 4). Woken up by a sort of premonitory dream, Cephalus hears a murmur behind some groves, and he thinks it must be a beast. He throws an arrow, but in place of a beast, he mortally wounds Procris, who groans from behind the curtain. The young woman has the time for a farewell, and tries to relieve Cephalus, telling him that she's victim of jealousy, not of him.[323] His despair is expressed in his last aria "Terzay mya rok zlodey" (Tear me to pieces, fierce fate…, III, 7). In the last scene Aurora descends from heaven (accompanied by strings and horns, *Andante*), and announces that all happened according to Zeus's will to fulfil her. Now, as she states, tears cannot bring her back to life. The opera ends with the following chorus:

Когда любовь полезна,
Пресладостна она;
Но коль любовь та слезна,
Что к горести дана!

Цефал любил сердечно,
Равно любим он был,
И разлучился вечно
Он с той, ково любил.[324]

[When love is beneficial,
It is most delightful;
But how much tearful is love,
That is designed to sorrow!

Cephalus loved with all his heart,
And was equally loved,
He parted forever from the one,
Whom he loved.]

As a result of its magic episodes, the performance had a strong fairy-like character. Nikolay Findeyzen too, though affirming that "*Tsefal i Prokris* represents the usual type of the old Italian "classical opera" which tried to revive the traditions of ancient Greek

[323] "И жизнь мою не ты, но ревность окончала" ("Not you, but jealousy finished my life", III, 6), *ivi*, p. 33.
[324] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*. Sanktpeterburg, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk, 1764, p. 42.

drama,"[325] observed that the viewers' curiosity was gratified by the various stage effects.[326] This feature was also accentuated by Rinaldi's ballets, which, as Anna Porfir'eva pointed out, were not a simple accessory to the play, but a noticeable part of the musical dramaturgy.[327] At the end of act I, the libretto includes a first ballet in which "Minerva's priestess, Jupiter's priest, men and women from Athens try to move Jupiter by presenting him with a sacrifice."[328] In the second ballet, "Nymphs and satyrs express their joy for the restoration of their homeland's prior beauty."[329] At the end of the opera, a ballet represents a bacchanal, whose antecedent and action are explained in the libretto.[330] The represented events are based on the history of Orpheus and Eurydice. Orpheus, trying to mitigate the pain caused by the loss of his beloved by singing and playing his lyre, arouses the love of the Maenads. These, embittered by his contempt towards them, attack and kill him during a bacchanal. In honour to his celebration's day and the Maenads' victory, Bacchus himself appears, bringing the celebrations to an end.[331]

This aspect of the performance is probably what Karabanov had in mind when he stated that the libretto was written "in the way of Quinault's *drames lyriques*",[332] that is, the model of *tragédie lyrique*, or *tragédie en musique*. Actually, the character of Sumarokov's Aurora can be compared to, for instance, Quinault's Armide in the homonymous *tragédie lyrique*. The character of the magician Testor, moreover, seems to belong to the French baroque culture rather than to Italian opera, at least, not to the type of opera, the opera *seria* reformed by Metastasio, to which the Russian audience was accustomed.

Moreover, stage sets, costumes and an array of mechanical effects reached an unparalleled degree of sumptuousness, stressing a taste for the spectacular and the supernatural far more prominent than in Italian opera.

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[325] N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800…*, vol. 2, p. 158.
[326] The musicologist recalls "the wedding procession; the complete scenic transformations (the so-called complete changes [*chistye peremeny*]; thunder and wind; Cephal's ascent to the heavens; and the descent of the goddess on clouds.", N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800…*, vol. 2, p. 158.
[327] A. PORFIR'EVA, *Lepet starykh libretto* (The babble of ancient librettos), in *Peterburgsky Teatral'ny Zhurnal*, No. 2 (32), 2003, http://ptj.spb.ru/archive/32/historical-novel-32/pervye-teatralnye-zdaniya-peterburga/.
[328] "Священница Минервы, Жрец Юпитеров, Афиняны и Афинянки, приношением жертвы тщатся Юпитера умягчить", [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera…*, p. 15.
[329] "Нимфы и Сатиры изъявляют свою радость, что их жилищи прежнюю красоту получили.",*ivi*, p. 26.
[330] *Tolkovanie baleta* (Explanation of the ballet), and *Raspolozhenie baleta* (Layout of the ballet), *ivi*, p. 36.
[331] *ibidem*.
[332] "в роде лирических драм Кино" A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 21.

Finally, typical of the *tragédie lyrique* was the dance, an element that constituted the Frenchman's greatest pleasure in the theatre: the *ballet de cour*. From the *ballet de cour*, the *tragédie en musique* had inherited the divertissement in music (or singing) and dancing that was an obligatory component of each act, a role played by Rinaldi's ballets in Sumarokov and Araja's opera. Italian "classical opera", as Findeyzen called it, was going to insert intermezzos between the acts.

However, the influence of Italian opera can be noticed in the choice of the three-act structure, which calls to mind Metastasian opera rather than French *tragédie lyrique*, usually consisting of five acts. The forms chosen for the music setting too are more similar to the ones of Italian opera *seria*, as could be expected from an Italian composer, often dealing with this genre. Deprived of any typically Russian element in the music, such as the introduction of popular themes or their rhythmic or melodic patterns, the opera appears to be a synthesis of French and Italian elements, which is itself the mark of a peculiar appraisal of foreign models.[333]

Although Ritzareva refers to the opera as to a 'Singspiel' (probably owing the term to Stählin),[334] the opera was written without any spoken dialogue. Instead, the dialogues are led by recitativo *semplice* (see ex. No. II, 4), which becomes *accompagnato* only on the occasion of the observed magic episodes: Minerva's voice in the temple (I, 4, see ex. No. II, 5), and the transformation of the pastoral countryside in the desert by Testor's magic (II, 5).

[333] According to Porfir'eva, "либретто первых русских опер более всего тяготеют к жанру героической пасторали или героической идиллии, который в ближайшее время станет основой «оперной реформы» Кальцабиджи — Глюка. Ее приметы: античные герои, прямое вмешательство богов в их судьбу, путешествие в Аид или в царство мрака, любование Раем природы, наконец, любовь как главный двигатель действия и безыскусная простота выражения чувств <…> — все говорит о том, что перед нами новый, в сущности классицистский жанр, не распознанный композиторами." (the librettos of the first Russian operas are mostly drawn on the heroic pastoral or heroic idyll, which in a short time was to become basilar for Calzabigi-Gluck's "opera riformata". Its subjects: ancient heroes, direct influence of deities in their destiny, passages in the Enfer or in the underworld, admiration of the Paradise of nature, and finally, love as the main engine of the action and natural simplicity in the expression of feelings […]: all this tells us that we are in front of a new, substantially classicistic genre, not recognized by the composers.) A. PORFIR'EVA, *Lepet starykh libretto*…

[334] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 53.



Example No. II, 4 - *Secco* recitative from *Tsefal i Prokris,* manuscript score, I, 1.



Example No. II, 5 – Recitative *accompagnato* from *Tsefal i Prokris,* manuscript score, I, 4.

As was typical of Italian opera as staged in Russia (see, e. g., *La clemenza di Tito*), the score reveals some cuts in the recitative text. The most visible case (I, 5) has already been pointed out, but several more cuts can be seen all over the opera.[335] These do not seem to have any noticeable function from the point of view of the plot. In my opinion, they could be accounted for, as in the case of *La clemenza*, with the need to set a performance agreeable to the Russian audience. As in the case of Hasse-Dall'Oglio-Madonis's opera, it is possible to suppose the intervention, here as well, of Jacob von Stählin. The historian, poet, and literary man had to play, as to his testimony, a fundamental role in preparing the libretto, helping the composer, who did not speak Russian, to understand the text. Stählin seems to share Sumarokov's view about the Russian language as a language worthy of use in literature since he gave his approval to an opera on a Russian libretto, while language was, in his already quoted words, "the nearest to Italian among all other European languages for its delicacy, beauty and euphony", and had "more advantages in singing."[336] Even though Araja surely did not need any suggestions on how to set the libretto to music, Stählin could at least have indicated the composer which verses could be omitted without damaging the coherence of action and lyrical expression.

As for the arias, according to Mooser, the composer had successfully matched the music to the meaning of the text.[337] Except for Minos's aria in III, 1 (in which, however, the *Da Capo* could be implied), all the thirteen arias adopt the *Da Capo* form, the orchestra simply accompanying the singer. The same could be said of the duet, the quintet, and the three choruses.[338] The virtuosity of the solo parts confirms the Italian education of the

[335] In I, 1 lines "Ostavshaya moya nadezhda tol'ko v tom / V tebe ya zryu ee, a bole ni v kom."; in I, 2 the line "A v neshchastnoy samoy dole…"; in I, 3 (from "Kto bez nadezhdy lyubovyu raspalitsya…" to " Bzaimna strast' soedinyaet…"); in I, 4 from Procris' "O vedomost' uzhasna!" to Tsefal's "Pochto ty s nasheyu sud'binoy nesoglasna!", and the lines from "Akh! Libo gnev ikh I smyagchitsya" to "Poshlite na menya edinu!"; in I, 5 from "Naiz''yasnenyya bolezni oshchushchayu" to "I chem uron moy zaplatit'!"; in II, 4 from "Kogdab Tsefal" to "I upodobit' ikh uzhasneyshey pustyne"; in III, 1 the lines "Ty zdes' na vse mesta vziraesh'; / Priyatnosti na nikh ni gde ne izbiraet"; in III, 4 the line "Kakuyu mysl' o mne drazhayshaya imeesh'!"

[336] "по своей нежности, красочности и благозвучию ближе всех других европейских языков к итальянскому." YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii* …, p. 133.

[337] "Du moins, - et ce fait mérite d'être relevé - témoignent-ils qu'en dépit d'un poème dont il se trouvait hors d'état de pénétrer entièrement le sens, ainsi que les nuances affectives, le compositeur s'efforça de serrer son texte du plus près possibile, et qu'il réussait souvent à accorder l'expression de sa musique à celle des situations imaginées par le dramaturge." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens*..., I, p. 259.

[338] Shcherbakova's observations about choruses, according to which, if I correctly understand, "The impact on the composer's operatic style of his "Russian" experience is witnessed also by the effort to stress the favourite colours of the Court's celebration in the orchestral accompaniment of the mighty choral polyphony: "trumpets and timpani"." ("О воздействии на оперный стиль композитора его "российского" творческого опыта говорит и стремление акцентировать в оркестровом сопровождении мощного хорового многоголосия излюбленные краски дворцовых торжеств – "трубы и литавры".) does not

singers for whom they were intended. Stählin reported on them in his recollections. According to him,

> Эти юные оперные артисты поразили слушателей и знатоков своей точной фразировкой, чистым исполнением трудных и длительных арий, художественной передачей каденций, своей декламацией и естественной мимикой.
>
> По окончании этого зингшпиля аплодировала императрица, весь двор и партер гремел рукоплесканиями. Через несколько дней этот всеобщий успех стал еще более ощутимый, когда императрица пожаловала всем юным артистам прекрасное сукно на костюмы, а Арайе дорогую соболью шубу и сто полуимпериалов золотом.[339]

[Those young opera artists struck listeners and connoisseurs with their accurate phrasing, with their pure performance of hard and long arias, with the skilful performance of cadenzas, with their declamation and natural gestures.

At the end of this *Singspiel* the Empress applauded, the whole court and the parterre resounded from applauses. A few days later, this general success became even more palpable when the Empress presented all the young artists with a marvellous fabric for the costumes, and Araja with a rich sable coat and 100 golden half-imperials [500 roubles].]

For having played the role of Procris, apparently much appreciated, Belogradskaya deserved the following verses by Sumarokov himself:

> Любовны Прокрисы представившая узы,
> Достойная во всем дочь музы,
> Ко удовольствию Цефалова творца
> Со страстью ты, поя, тронула все сердца
> И действом превзошла желаемые меры
> В игре подобием преславной Лекувреры.
> С начала оперы до самого конца,
> О, Белоградская! прелестно ты играла,
> И Прокрис подлинно в сей драме умирала.[340]

> [You all-worthy daughter of the muse,
> Who has staged Procris's love's bonds,
> For the pleasure or the creator of Cephalus
> You touched, singing with passion, all hearts
> Ad overcame in your play the expectations
> Being in acting worthy of the glorious Lecouvreur.
> From the beginning of the opera to its very end,
> Oh! Belogradskaya! You played so charmingly,
> That Procris in this drama really died.]

The composer, too, deserved Sumarokov's appraisal, expressed in the following oft-quoted madrigal:

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seem to find confirmation by the score, trumpets and timpani being not a peculiarity of the Russian court liturgy. See M. N. SHCHERBAKOVA, *Russky XVIII vek…*, p. 13.

[339] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, p. 134.

[340] *Muzyka v zerkale poezii* (Music through the mirror of poetry), vyp. 1, edited by B. Katsa, Leningrad, "Sovetsky Kompozitor" 1985, p. 16.

Арайя изъяснил любовны в драме страсти
И общи с Прокрисой Цефаловы напасти
Так сильно, будто бы язык он русский знал,
Иль паче, будто сам их горестью стенал.[341]

[Araja expressed in the drama the passions
And the troubles of Cephalus and Procris
In such a strong way, as if he spoke the Russian language,
Or better, as if he himself had suffered their pain.]

The opera appears in fact to have been a success. This is how the *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* – possibly with Stählin's intervention - reported on the production:

> The closer the current winter amusements at the court of Her Imperial Majesty approach the end of the season, the more they arouse general admiration with the excellence of their splendor. Under the highest patronage of our Most Clement Monarch, from the time of Her Majesty's ascendance to the throne, the arts and sciences have experienced ever greater growth, and so, too, have music and theatrical art now been brought to such a degree of perfection that yesterday at the court theater an essay was presented worthy of admiration, namely, six young persons of Russian nationality, of whom the oldest was not more than fourteen years old, and who have never been in foreign countries, in the distinguished presence of Her Imperial Majesty, his Imperial Excellence, and the entire Court, presented an opera written by Colonel Aleksandr Petrovich Sumarokov in the Russian language and set to music by the court Kapellmeister Mr. Araja, titled *Tsefal i Prokris*, done with such artistry in music and in the Italian manner, and with such pleasing actions, that **all knowledgeable people recognized this theatrical performance to be a descendant of absolutely the best models of opera in Europe** [my bolding – A. G.]. The incomparable choir, consisting of fifty of her Imperial Majesty's selected singers, the theatrical decorations, and the ballets between the acts of this opera caused no small admiration among the viewers, such that at the end of this magnificent spectacle, Her Imperial Majesty was pleased publicly to state her highest pleasure, and all the viewers, in boxes as well as in the parterre, gave their general approbation by repeated applause.[342]

If we want to believe Stählin, we have to consider the possibility that the opera was created on the Empress's initiative:

> Поэту Александру Петровичу Сумарокову было поручено подыскать текст для русской оперы и он избрал из Овидия прелестную историю Цефала и Прокрис. Арайя, которому она была переведена от слова до слова, очень удачно оттенил в музыке, несмотря на то что ни слова не понимал по-русски, чувства и трогательную выразительность этого произведения.
>
> Опера с успехом была исполнена в Петербурге в 1755 году на масленице и несколько раз повторялась, доставив большое удовольствие императрице – зачинательнице этого нового русского зингшпиля.[343]

[The poet Aleksandr Petrovich Sumarokov was charged of searching for a text for a Russian opera, and he chose Ovidius's charming history of Cephalus and Procris. Araja, for whom it was translated word by

[341] *ibidem*.
[342] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette), No. 18, 1755, quoted in the editors' English translation from N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to1800*, vol. 2, pp. 68-9.
[343] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii*…, p. 134.

word, successfully rendered in music the feelings and the touching emphasis of this work, although he did not know any Russian word.

The opera was performed with success in Petersburg in the Carnival of the year 1755, and was repeated several times, providing great pleasure to the Empress – pioneer of this new Russian *Singspiel*.]

Anyway, the production was perceived as a crucial event. Evidence of this is, for example, a tobacco box made by the Imperial porcelain factory, which reproduces music from the opera (the violin part of the second movement of the overture, which is in the original an *Andante moderato*).[344] The box is nowadays preserved at the Russian Museum of Saint Petersburg. According to the head of the department of ornamental-applied arts, Elena Aleksandrovna Ivanova, it belongs to the Collection of the Imperial Family, and was firstly recorded in the book by S. N. Troynitsky *Farfornye tabakerki Imperatorskogo Ermitazha* (Petrograd, 1915). In this issue the box is dated around 1760s, whereas the department head's personal catalogue places it in the 1750s, dating its passage to the collection of the Russian Museum in 1932. Since the box was found in the city and in this collection, in particular after Araja's leaving, it is possible that this was not one of the typical snuff-boxes presented to the Italian Maestros by Russian Sovereigns as a sign of approval: as Ivanova pointed out, these boxes were usually made of precious stones and not of porcelain, and due to their value, their recipients would hardly have left them in Russia. The box must have been a celebrative object, as was the case with celebrative medals remembering special events of the State life. *Tsefal i Prokris*, in fact, meant that opera was no longer an exclusive prerogative of the foreigners, but could be created also by natives, as the article appeared on *Sanktpeterbursgkie vedomosti* pointed out. The opera seemed to have accomplished the aim that Empress Anna had set already in the 1730s. Russia seemed to have found its own medium of expression in the field of music theatre too, to have established the new genre of Russian opera. Of course, we have to distinguish the meaning itself of 'Russian opera' from the way the term was conceited in the 19th century, when the *Moguchaya kuchka* was acknowledged for the foundation of a 'Russian school.' That later, Romantic aesthetic seems to have been so artistically successful, and so strong in its critical exposition, to prevent its own historicization up to the current time. By the time *Tsefal i Prokris* was composed, anyway, any racial, ethnic, or even folkloric issues seem to have been excluded from the criteria for determining if an opera was to be regarded as Russian. No Russian settings (one could say Rus'ian, from the very first heart of Russian culture, Rus'), or names or characters, or folkloric tales or musical themes are

[344] An image of the box made in Imperial porcelain factory Araja's *Tsefal i Prokris*, can be seen in M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 54, and in N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800*…, vol. 2, p. 155.

introduced in libretto or score. These criteria were to be formulated only later. Anyway, the opera was publicly acknowledged as 'Russian', and no issue was raised concerning the legitimacy of its 'Russianness'. The only aspect revealing the need to distinguish it from European products seems to be the choice of the language for it. This is, in my opinion, the only conscious choice made in order to give the opera a national trait. On the contrary, the re-elaboration of foreign formal models, which has been discussed above, seems to be, while no less considerable, more unconscious.[345]

After the première, the opera was repeated on 10 March,[346] 2 May,[347] and on 8 September 1755 at the Court theatre.[348] In his *Historical Essay on Russian Opera, from Its Beginning to the Year 1862*, Morkov published the playbill of its staging on 24 February 1756:

> Сего 1756 года, в десятый день марта, на Новомъ Феатре, на Царицыномъ лугу, близь летняго сада, Российскими Придворными актерами представлена будетъ:
> **ЦЕФАЛЪ И ПРОКРИСЪ,**
> Опера в 3-хъ действияхъ, съ хорами певчихъ и балетами, сочинения Александра Петровича Сумарокова, музыка придворнаго композитора Франческо Араии.
>
> Действующя лица:
>
> Аврора…….....СТЕПАН ЕВСТАФЬЕВИЧ.
> Эрихтей, Царь Афинский…….....СТЕПАН РОЖЕВСКИЙ.

[345] The strong cosmopolitan character of Russian culture of this stage is once more attested by the fact that the inscription on the box celebrating the foundation of Russian opera was not in Russian, but in Italian. The text, deprived of any political trait, reads as follows: "…mio bel nume ah! Dove sei? Ah dove sei? Infelice io ti perdei! E rimango a sospirar, infelice io ti perdei e rimango a sospirar e rimango a sospirar mio bel nume ah! Dove sei ah? Dove sei infelice io ti perdei e rimango a sospirar a sospirar infelice io ti perdei e rimango a sospirar rimango a sospirar luce oi me degli occhi miei tu restasti all'ombre eterne e per me senza i tuoi rai ombra il giorno appar il sole appar ombra il giorno il sole appar il sole appar…!" (Courtesy of Mrs Elena Alexandrovna Ivanova, head of the department of ornamental-applied arts.)

[346] According to Findeyzen, the *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) contain information about repeat performances on this date. N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800…*, vol. 2, p. 69.

[347] "Вторник, 2-го, в оперном доме представлена была на Российском диалекте опера «Цефал и Прокрис». В ту оперу ЕЯ ВЕЛИЧЕСТВО и Их Высочества присутствие иметь изволили в партере, в Своем месте; Генералитет и знатное дворянство обоих полов сидели в определенных им местах, а Турецкий Посланник с своею свитою был в ложе, что за решеткою." (On Tuesday 2nd, at the Opera House the opera *Cephalus and Procris* was staged in Russian language. Her Majesty and Their Highnesses kindly assisted to this opera, sitting on their place in the parterre; the most high ranks of the army and the distinguished courtiers of both sexes sat on their assigned places, whereas the Turkish Envoy with his suite was in a lodge behind a grid.) *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda…*., p. 59. Other documents attesting the production are collected by Starikova in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 311-2.

[348] "*8-го числа*, для Высочайшаго дня Тезоименитства ЕЯ ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА, в оперном доме, в обыкновенное время, в присутствии ЕЯ ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА и Их Императорских Высочеств, отправлялась Русская опера, именуемая «*Цефал и Прокрис*»." (*On the 8th*, for the Most High Name day of Her Imperial Majesty, at the Opera House, at the usual time, in the presence of Her Imperial Majesty, and Their Imperial Highnesses, there had been a Russian opera, titled *Cephalus and Procris*.) *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda…*, p. 92. Other documents attesting the production are collected by Starikova in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 338-9.

Прокрисъ, дочь его……ЕЛИЗАВЕТА БЕЛОГРАДСКАЯ.
Цефалъ, Царь Фокиды……..……..ГАВРИЛА СЕЧКАРЕВ.
Минос, Царь Критский……..НИКОЛАЙ КЛУТАРЕВ.
Нестор, вельможа Минисов, волшебник….ИВАНЪ ТАТИЩЕВ.

НАЧАЛО БУДЕТ В 5 ЧАСОВ.[349]

[On 10 March 1756, in the New Theatre, on the Tsaritsyn Lug, near the Summer Garden, the Russian Court actors will perform:
CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS,
Opera in 3 acts, with choruses of the Cappella and ballets, composed by Aleksandr Petrovich Sumarokov, music by the Court composer Francesco Araja.

Dramatis personae:

Aurora…….....STEPAN EVSTAF'EVICH.
Ericteus, the King of Athens…….....STEPAN ROZHEVSKY.
Procris, his daughter……ELIZAVETA BELOGRADSKAYA.
Cephalus, the King of Phocis……...GAVRILA SECHKAREV.
Minos, the King of Crete……..NIKOLAY KLUTAREV.
Testor, nobleman of Minos, magician…….IVAN TATISHCHEV.

THE BEGINNING WILL BE AT 5.00.]

The playbill itself attests that the staging was meant not only to the Court, but for a larger audience, as was for the "Russian opera" staged in 1758.[350]

Mooser supposes that there were two revivals in Moscow on 10 January and 27 April 1763,[351] and a new issue of the libretto by the Academy of sciences attests with more certainty a revival in 1764.[352] If compared to the version of 1755 the text contains the following changes:

Edition 1755	Edition 1764
III, 1	
МИНОС Мы все пренесены назад; Но должны все оставить град.	МИНОС Мы все пренесены назад; Но должны были все оставити мы град.

[349] V. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala…*, p. 157. Other documents attesting the production are collected by Starikova in *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 397, 399-400.
[350] "Май, 14-го числа, четверток <…> в вечеру на малом театре, что у Зименяго деревянного дома, в присутствии Ея Императорского Величества и Их Императорских Высочеств, представлена была вольная Русская опера." (On Thursday 14 May […] in the night, in the small theatre that is placed next to the wooden Winter Palace, in the presence of Her Imperial Majesty and Their Imperial Highnesses a private Russian opera has been staged [the adjective *volny*, free or private, staying for 'with payment by the audience']), *Iz "Kamer-fur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1758 god* (From *The diary of the chamber harbinger* of the year 1758), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 596/b.
[351] According to Mooser, the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* records an opera sung by the Court singers "en dialecte russe" (in Russian), without explicating its title. The historian supposes it was *Cephalus and Procris*. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, II, p. 25.
[352] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…(1764).

Какое таинство Минерва показала!
Она сказала:
Я зрети не хочу в стенах моих,
Престрашных таковых
Плачевных приключений.
Я ваших, о Цефал и Прокрис! Разлучений
Терпети не могу, в жестокости премен.
Цари, Царевна, Князь, из сих спешите стен:
Зевес Цефаловой - - - когда вы возвратитесь,
Вы с Прокрисой на век прежалостно проститесь.[353]

Какое таинство Минерва показала!
Она сказала:
Я зрети не хочу в стенах моих,
Престрашных таковых
Плачевных приключений.
Я ваших, о Цефал и Прокрис! разлучений
Терпети не могу, в жестокости премен.
Цари, Царевна, Князь, из сих спешите стен:
Спешите, удалитесь,
И за Афинами в пустиню преселитесь.[354]

[MINOS
We all have been brought back;
But we all must leave the town.
What ordinance did Minerva reveal!
She said:
I do not want to see inside my walls,
Such terrible
Sorrowful events.
I cannot stand, oh Cephalus and Procris!
Your separation, in the cruelty of these reversals.
Kings, Princess, Prince, go away from these walls:
Jupiter to Cephalus (?): when you will come back,
You will separate forever from Procris in sorrow.]

[MINOS
We all have been brought back;
But we all must leave[355] the town.
What ordinance did Minerva reveal!
She said:
I do not want to see inside my walls,
Such terrible
Sorrowful events.
I cannot stand, oh Cephalus and Procris!
Your separation,
Kings, Princess, Prince, go away from these walls:
Hurry up, go far from here,
And settle in the desert out of Athens.]

III, 2

ТЕСТОР
Но где он я не знаю:
А ты мила ль ему, о том не вопрошаю.
Конечно для тебя он рвет в лугах цветы.[356]

ТЕСТОР
Но где он я не знаю:
А ты мила ль ему, о том не понимаю.
Конечно для тебя он рвет в лугах цветы.[357]

[TESTOR
Where he is I don't know:
But if you are dear to him, I do not ask this.
Certainly it is for you that he picks up flowers in the meadow.]

[TESTOR
Where he is I do not know:
But if you are dear to him, I don't understand this.
Certainly it is for you that he picks up flowers in the meadow.]

III, 3

ПРОКРИС
<…>
Опять с любезным в сей я стороне;
<…>
Я вбегаю за ним по всем местам стеня;
Он удаляется повсюду от меня.
Как Прокрис без нево минуты днями числить,
И только лишь о нем едином в свете мыслит:
<…>[358]

ПРОКРИС
<…>
С возлюбленным опять я в сей стране;
<…>
Я вбегаю за ним по всем местам стеня;
Во всех местах ево не вижу близ меня.
Как Прокрис без нево минуты днями числить,
И только лишь о нем едином в свете мыслит:
<…>[359]

[PROCRIS

PROCRIS

[353] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…, p. 27.
[354] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…(1764), pp. 31-2.
[355] The change from '*ostavit*" into '*ostaviti*' for the infinitive of the verb 'to leave' adds one more syllable to the verse.
[356] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…, p. 29.
[357] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*… (1764), p. 33.
[358] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*…, p. 29.
[359] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*… (1764), p. 34.

[…]	[…]
Again I am in this land with my beloved;	Again I am in this land with my beloved;
[…]	[…]
I run after him everywhere in sorrow;	I run after him everywhere in sorrow;
He every time gets far away from me.	He every time gets far away from me.
As for Procris in his absence minutes seem hours,	As for Procris in his absence minutes seem hours,
She thinks all but him in the world:	She thinks all but him in the world:
[…]]	[…]]
III, 6	
ПРОКРИС	ПРОКРИС
<…>	<…>
Мне горько; да не страх виною, что страдаю;	Мне горько; да не страх виною, что страдаю;
Но что в сей час, Цефал, тебя я покидаю.[360]	Мне горько что в сей час Цефала покидаю.[361]
[PROCRIS	[PROCRIS
[…]	[…]
I regret; but it is not the fear that I suffer from;	I regret; but it is not the fear that I suffer from;
But that I'm leaving you, Cephalus, right now.]	I regret to leave Cephalus, right now.]

Although these changes do not imply any considerable difference from the point of view of the dramatic development, they attest to extra work done by the author, possibly in order to obtain a final version allowing for a simple reading. The fact that the changes appear only in the third act may suggest that Sumarokov had to hurry up to complete the opera in time for the first production, which may have left him not totally satisfied. This was the version that was included in the collection entitled *Russian Theatre*.[362]

Later, the opera was repeated many times until 1790. On 14 June 2001, the first contemporary performance took place at the Mariinsky theatre of Saint Petersburg, under the direction of Gianandrea Noseda.[363]

After 1756

At least until the beginning of the 19th century, when on Catterino Cavos's initiative the Russian opera troupe was separated from the drama troupe, the Russian troupe constituted an unicum that included both kinds of performances. Among the musical plays staged after *Tsefal i Prokris*, a comic opera in two acts on a text by Ivàn Dmìtrevsky and, presumably, music by Volkov, titled *Tanyusha ili schastlivaya vstrecha*

[360] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera…*, p. 33.
[361] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera…* (1764), p. 39.
[362] *Rossiysky featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh Rossiyskikh Featral'nykh Sochineniy* (Russian theatre or The full collection of all russian theatrical works), Chast' XVIII, V Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1788 goda.
[363] M. CORTI, *La musica italiana nel Settecento a San Pietroburgo*, in *Philo-Musica on-Line* No. 4, Annata 2004-05.

(Tanyusha or The lucky encounter), was premiered at the Court theatre on 27 November 1756. According to Mooser, Volkov must have adapted some notorious arias and popular songs to Dmitrevsky's text.[364] No documents are preserved about this play, except for the playbill recorded by Morkov:

> Сего 27 ноября 1756 года, на Васильевском острове, на Головинском вольном феатре, российскими придворными актерами будет представлена:
>
> ТАНЮША,
> Или
> СЧАСТЛИВАЯ ВСТРЕЧА.
>
> Комическая опера в 2/х действиях и в русских нравах, соч. Перваго придворнаго актера И. А. Дмитревскаго, музыка актера Ф. Г. Волкова.
>
> *Действующия лица:*
> *Старовеков*, помещик……Ф. Волков
> *Буркин*, унтер-офицер……С. Рожевский
> *Савелий*, староста деревни…….Н. Клутарев
> *Танюша*, дочь его……Е. Белоградская
> *Варинька*, подруга ея……..Мусина-Пушкина
> *Алексей*, жених Тани. …….Г. Марцинкевич
> *Федул*, садовник. ……Григ. Волков
> *Фока*, сын его, жених Вари . …….Я. Шумский
>
> Гости, слуги и крестьяне
> Начало будет в 5 часов.[365]

[Today 27 November 1756, on the Vasil'evsky Island, at the free theatre at the Golovin House, Russian Court actors will staged:

TANYUSHA, Or THE LUCKY ENCOUNTER.

Comic opera in 2 acts in the Russian manner, written by the First Court actor I. A. Dmitrevsky, music by the actor F. G. Volkov.

Dramatis personae:
Starovekov, landowner……..F. Volkov
Burkin, non-commissioned officer……S. Rozhevsky
Savely, head of the village……N. Klutarev
Tanyusha, his daughter……..E. Belogradskaya
Varin'ka, her friend……Musina-Pushkina
Aleksey, Tanya's fiancé……G. Martsinkevich
Fedul, gardener……...Grig. Volkov
Foka, his son, Varya's fiancé ……Ya. Shumsky

Visitors, servants and peasants
The beginning will be at 5.00.]

[364] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 262.
[365] V. I. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala…*, p. 159.

Al'tsesta

According to Ritzareva, "[…] it must have been a blow to Araja when, in 1758, the next Russian-language opera, *Altsesta* [Alcestis], also on a libretto by Sumarokov, was commissioned from Raupach, who had only recently made his debut as a composer."[366] In fact, a second attempt to set an opera to a Russian libretto (Stählin defines it "Russian opera") was made by the second composer of the Italian troupe, Hermann Friedrich Raupach, a young German harpsichordist who was appointed to the Court Orchestra in 1755.[367] After the general rehearsals at the Court theatre on 27 June,[368] the opera was

[366] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 62.

[367] Hermann Friedrich Raupach (Stral'sund, 1728 – St. Petersburg, 1778) was a German composer and harpsichord player, the son of the organist Christoff Raupach (1686-1744). On 13 February 1755 he was appointed cembalo player at the Court Orchestra, and in 1758 made his debut with the opera *Al'tsesta* (Alcestis). After Araja's dismissal on 27 July 1759 Raupach was assigned all his duties as a Court composer. Given that, at the time, the Court was more interested in opera *buffa* than *seria*, he had only a few opportunities to debut in the serious genre, and initially composed the vocal numbers of the prologue *Novye lavry* (two choruses), and the opera-ballet *Pribezhitse dobrodeteli*, whose instrumental numbers were composed by Starzer. Maybe with the music Raupach earned the court's approbation necessary to receive, on 12 September, the post of *Kapellmeister* of the *Ital'yanskaya kampaniya*, thus replacing Araja (Documents attesting his appointment are collected at RGIA, F. 466, Op. 1, Ed. khr. 93, l. 210.). In 1760 he composed his first (and probably only) opera *seria*, *Siroe*, on a libretto by Metastasio. The causes of his dismissal on 7 January 1762 are not clear, but might be ascribed to the new tsar's wish to appoint *his* composer, Vincenzo Manfredini, in the typical logic of turnover that characterized every succession to the throne. His departure was announced on the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie novosti* on 2 February 1762, while there is evidence that he was still in the city on 3 May 1762, when he requested the Ministry (by that time called *Kollegiya*) for a passport to return to his homeland. He was then in Hamburg and Paris, where he is said to have met the young W. A. Mozart, who used for his piano concerts (K. 37, 39, 41) four parts of Raupach's *Six sonates* for piano and violin issued in 1762. In 1768 Raupach went back to Russia, where he was appointed second *Kapellmeister* and composer of ballet music, as post that he conserved until January 1777. During this second stay in St. Petersburg he worked as a teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts, from 4 September 1777 to his death (10 December 1778). He was the author of numerous ballets, such as *Armide et Renaud* by Angiolini, or *L'Asile de Cupidon* (by Angiolini) for Traetta's *Antigone* (22 September 1770); in 1772 he composed the music for the fifth act of the ballet-pantomime by Pierre Granger *Andromède*; in 1773 the ballet of the same genre *Enée et Lavinia*; in 1773 he wrote the ballets for Traetta's *Lucio Vero*, the ballet in one act *Jupiter et Sémélé* (by T. S. Bublikov) and *Diana et Endemion* (2 January 1775). At the Academy of Sciences a list of his ballets is preserved, apparently compiled by a person who did not know French nor Italian, including [*sic*] *Infelice fortunati*, *Le Jeu de l'Amour*, *La Force de l'Amour*, *Le Faune enchenée*, *Les Villageoises malicieuses*, *La Forza Humiliata*, *La Vaulable attrappée*, *L'Infidelite de couverte*, *Diana non partito*, *Armida*, *Le Desespoire d'Armide*, and two ballets without a title. At the beginning of 1777 Raupach covered the post of Kapellmeister at the Academy of Fine Arts, and had among his pupils the future Russian composers P. A. Skokov and E. I. Fomin. Among his quite numerous works, only two operas seem to be preserved: *Al'tsesta* and the comic opera *Dobrye soldaty* (The good soldiers), which was staged only in 1780 after the composer's death, in St. Petersburg, by the artists of the Vol'ny Rossiysky Teatr (Independent Russian theatre), and remained in the repertoire of the city until the beginning of the 19th century. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, Vol. 3, pp. 13-4.

[368] "Июнь, 27-го, то есть в субботу, в оперном Ея Императорского Величества доме происходила русской опере "Адмет и Альцеста" генеральная проба, на которой Ея Императорское Величество присутствия иметь не соизволила, а были только несколько кавалеров." (On 27 June, that is on Saturday, in the Opera House of Her Imperial Majesty there have been the general rehearsals of the Russian opera *Admetus and Alcestis*, to which Her Imperial Majesty kindly chose not to assist, some cavaliers only being present.), *Iz "Kamerfur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1758 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1758), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 589.

premiered on 28 June 1758, as attested by the *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal*,[369] at Peterhoff's palace, with sets by Francesco Gradizzi and the court painter Firsov.[370] *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal* attests also the Empress attending the rehearsals.[371]

The libretto was issued in 1759, when the opera was staged on 18-19 February[372], and 5-6 May[373] at the Court theatre, at the Empress's presence.

A second edition of the libretto was issued in 1764 and included in the 18th part of the collection *Russian Theatre*.[374] This edition had probably been published on the occasion of the same performances to which Karabanov refers (17 e 21 February, 23 April and 2 May), in which the role of Admet (Admetus, king of Pherae) was played by the Court singer Dimìtry Bortnyànsky, who was to become the Director of the Court cappella, a famous composer of sacred music (especially choral concertos) and a teacher of singing in the Infantry Corps of Nobles.[375] The other performers listed in the libretto were:

Alcestis, [Admetus's] wife……Semen Sokolovsky
Hercules……..Ivan Sichevsky
Menisa, Alcesti's confidant…….Andrey Trubchevsky
Kedarkh, Admetus's confidant……..Vlas Troyanov

[369] "Июнь, 28-го, то есть в воскресенье, была в Петергофе ауденция турецкому Посланнику около полудень. <…> Того ж числа, в вечеру, в оперном доме играна малолетными певчими русская опера "Адмет и Альцеста", на которой присутствовать соизволили Ея Императорсое Величество и Их Императорские Высочества, також и Его Королевскиое Высочество Принц Карл, и при том было несколько знатных особ; началась оная в одиннадцатом часу, а окончалась в третьем часу пополуночи. Камор фуриер Василей Рубановской." (On 28 June, that is on Sunday, around midday there was in Peterhoff the hearing of the Turkish envoy. […] On the same day, at night, at the opera house there was staged by young singers, the Russian opera *Admetus and Alcestis*, to which Her Imperial Majesty and Their Imperial Highnesses were kindly present, as well as Her Royal Highness Prince Karl, besides some distinguished persons; it began at eleven, and ended after two at night. Chamber Harbinger Rubanovsky.), *Iz "Kamerfur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1758 god* (*Diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1758), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 590.

[370] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, p. 323. Vsevolodsky-Gerngross reports the names of the singers in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne…*, pp. 95-6.

[371] "Июнь, 25-го, то есть в четверток <…> в вечеру Ея Императорское Величество соизволила выход иметь на линеях, в оперной дом, где играна была малолетным певчими проба русской оперы." (On 25 June, that is on Thursday, […] in the night Her Imperial Majesty kindly went on her carriage to the Opera House, where the young singers played the rehearsals of a Russian opera.) *Iz "Kamerfur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1758 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1758), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Doc. 588.

[372] Although the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* simply refers to some "Russian opera". See *Iz "Kamerfur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1759 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1759), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 673-4.

[373] *Iz "Kamerfur'erskogo zhurnala" za 1759 god* (From the *Diary of the chamber harbinger* for the year 1759), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 682-3.

[374] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda* (Alcestis, opera, 1764), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788. The score seems to be lost.

[375] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, pp. 38-9.

Sinor, Hercules's confidant……Ivan Orobevsky

Pluton……..Fyodor Ladunka

Prozerpina……Danilo Nosachenko

The chorus played the Erinyes and Parcae. According to the libretto, all the actors were singers of the Court cappella.

Later on, the opera appears to have been revived on 8 December 1774 at prince Semyon Kirillovich Naryshkin's palace, and many times in Saint Petersburg at least till the end of the 18th century.[376]

The subject of the opera had a long staging history: only among Italian librettos, Sartori collected numerous versions dating before 1758 (Gluck's famous version dating 1767).[377] A close examination shows that Sumarokov's version was an original elaboration of the subject, as had been the case of his prior opera, the references to traditional versions notwithstanding. Among these, references can be found to Admetus's parents' refusal to sacrifice their life for their son (I, 3), as was in the story which had been popularised by Euripides's tragedy (*Alcestis*). Other features suggest the presence of different sources, such as the Greek hero's naming as Gerkules (Hercules), instead of Heracles (in Russian Gerakl), as is in the Greek version by Euripides.

In the Russian playwright's version the centre of the plot is Alcestis's love for Admetus, which initially led the protagonist to sacrifice her own life for the sake of her husband, and finally moved Hercules to the heroic victory on Pluto.

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[376] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 324.

[377] *L'Alceste, Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi di nuovo nel Teatro d'Hannover l'anno 1679 per ordine dell'altezza serenissima di madama Benedetta Henrichetta duchessa di Brunswich e Luneburg, nata principessa palatina del Rheno. Musica […] prima […] di Ziani […] rinnovata […] da Matthio Trento*; - *L'Alceste Drama per musica da rappresentarsi di nuova nel Theatro d'Hannover l'anno 1681. Alla maestà di Amalia regina di Danimarca e Norveggia. Hannover, Volfango Schwendiman, "[…] qualche Arietta muttata solo per sodisfare al genio de rappresentanti […] nuovo Prologo […] di Valente e […] musica di M. Pier Antonio Fiocco […]"*; *L'Alceste, Drama per musica in applauso del felicissimo natale della [arciduchessa] Maria figlia della […] maestà di Giuseppe I re de' romani e […] Amalia nata principessa d'Hannover. […]. Posto in musica dal sig.r Antonio Draghi, maestro di cap. di S.M.C. con l'arie per li Balletti del sig.r Gio. Gioseffo Hoffer, violinista di S.M.C. Vienna d'Austria, Susanna Cristina, ved. Di Matteo Cosmerovio*; *Die Alceste, Zu Befrolockung des Glorwürdigsten Geburts-Tag der Durchläuchtigsten Erz-Herzogin Maria Tochter Ihrer Römisch-Königlichen Majestäten Joseph des Ersten und Amalia gebornen Herzogin von Hannover […]. Mälsch-geseungener vorgestellt im Jahr 1700. Mit der Music zu denen Worten Herm Antoni Draghi der Röm. Kays. Majest. Cappel-Meister. Zu den Tänzen Herrn johann Joseph Hoffer der Röm. Kays. Majest. Cammer-Musik. Wien. Susann Christina Cosmerovin*; *Alceste, Festa teatrale per musica da rappresentarsi nell'imperial corte festeggiandosi il glorioso e felicissimo nome […] di Elisabetta Cristina imperadrice regnante. Per comando […] di Carlo VI imperador de' romani sempre augusto. L'Anno 1718. La poesia è del sig. Pietro Pariati […]. La musica è del sig. Giuseppe Porsile […]*; *Alceste, Melodrama per il Teatro di S.M.B. di P.M. e P.R. Londra, 1744*. C. SARTORI, *I libretti Italiani a stampa dale origini al 1800...*, vol. 1, pp. 58-61.

The action takes place in a setting similar to that of Sumarokov's first libretto: "The theatre represents the temple of Apollo and a square. Alcestis exits the temple and enters the square together with the people."[378] Alcestis's confidante Menisa comforts the queen, since Apollo had succeeded in persuading the Fates to reprieve Admetus of his fated day of death on condition that he could find someone to die in his place (as in Aeschylus's *Eumenides*):

МЕНИСА
Великий Аполлон,
То зделал через Парк, что наша грусть преходит,
Другова он приводит,
Умрети за нево […][379]

[MENISA
Great Apollo,
By means of the Parcae he made our sorrow go away,
He will take another,
To die in his place.]

Alcestis invokes the deities for her husband's sake in the aria with the chorus "Bogi shchast'e voznesite" (Gods do raise the happiness…, I, 1), which does not close the scene, but is repeated and followed by Menisa's aria "Podvlastna prezhney stav sud'bine" (Return to the dependence of the prior fate…), after which, the women are reached by Kedarkh, Admetus' confidant. He calls the queen to her husband, closing the scene with the aria "Semu grozyashchi gradu" (Terrible to this town…, I, 2). Unfortunately, Apollo's solution does not help Admetus in escaping death, since no-one is going to sacrifice themselves for him (I, 3):

АЛЬЦЕСТА
Никто тебя не избавляет,
Народ твой весь тебя умрети оставляет,
Отец твой в старости, и мать в исходе лет,
И любят хоть тебя, но больше любять свет,
Остатка дней своих тебе не посвящают,
Родительской любви в сердцах не ощущают.[380]

[ALCESTIS
No one liberates you,
All your people let you die,
Your father is old, and your mother is near the end of her days,
But although they love you, they love life more,

[378] "Театр представляет храм Аполлонов и площадь. Альцеста из храма с народом на площадь выходит." [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda…*, p. 7.
[379] *ivi*, p. 8.
[380] *ivi*, pp. 11-2.

And do not commit the rest of their days to yours,
Since they do not have parental love in their heart.]

In classical versions in fact, Admetus initially believed that his elderly parents would happily take his place. Since they were unwilling to do so, Alcestis decides to die for Admetus, as hinted at in the last verse "Mne samoy sebya ne zhal'" (I do not care about myself) of the following aria, "Plachte pomrachenny ochi" (Do weep my darkened eyes!..., I, 3), although this 'solution' is not yet presented, the act ending with Admetus's farewell aria "Nastal moey konchiny den'" (The day of my end has come, I, 4).

Act II takes place in Admetus's palace's garden.[381] After her aria "Vselyuteyshy rok!" (Most cruel fate!.., II, 1), Alcestis is reached by Menisa, who calls her to Admetus, a situation repeating the one in I, 2, with Kedarkh. This time she does not want to meet him, though, as she has decided to give her life to save him:

АЛЬЦЕСТА
Альцеста без нево себя возненавидит:
Но чаю, что в своем я слове устаю.
МЕНИСА
В каком?
АЛЬЦЕСТА
Хочу ево от смерти я избавить,
И обещаюся живот ему оставить.
[…]
Люблю ево сердечно.
И за нево умреть сыщу ково конечно.
Я больше зреть ево, Мениса, не хочу,
Доколе живота ему не возврачу.[382]

[ALCESTIS
Without him Alcestis hates herself:
But I hope I will keep my promise.
MENISA
Which promise?
ALCESTIS
I want to rescue him from death,
And I promise to relinquish my life to.
[…]
I love him with all my heart,
And finally will find someone to die at his place.
Menisa, I do not want to see him anymore,
Until I have given him back his life.]

[381] "Театр представляет Адметов сад." (The staged represents Admetus's garden.) *ivi*, p. 16.
[382] *ivi*, pp. 17-8.

Her intentions are misunderstood by the confidante, who hopes for the success of Alcestis's still mysterious plan in the aria "Sud'bina v pylan'i" (Oh fortune in the blaze…, II, 2), and announces her departure to Admetus who is asking about her (II, 3):

> Она теперь пошла отселя,
> И устремилась в своем успети деле.
> Супруга своего любя,
> Пошла ково сыскать умрети за тебя.[383]
>
> [She's just gone away,
> Trying to be in time for this.
> Since she loves her spouse,
> She is gone and looks for someone to die in your place.]

When he reaches the temple of fidelity, Admetus understands his wife's intentions and begs her in despair not to sacrifice herself. The chorus reinforces the dramatic power of the scene, which closes the second act with the couple's duet, as in the previous opera. Alcestis's words "Nu lyubezny ostavaysya, / I menya ne pozabud' " (Do leave your beloved, / And don't forget me…) is reminiscent of Euripides's tragedy, in which the king was asked not to marry again, since a step-mother would not accept their children.

Act III opens in the same garden. Admetus grieves for the lost of Alcestis (aria "Tol'ko lish' otrady", The only comfort…, III, 1), when Hercules comes to him. In contrast with Euripides's version (maybe for reasons of brievity), in which the king, famous for his hospitality and justice, initially hides his disgrace in order to better host his friend, here he immediately declares the reason for his woe (rec. "Skonchalasya moya supruga", My spouse passed away…, III, 2). Moved by the friend's despair, Hercules decides to face the Enfers and take the woman back (rec. "I ya soydu za neyu", I will go with her…, III, 3), expressing his courage in the aria "Razverzi les gortani laya" (Forest to the throat do open wide baying…, III, 3), and accompanied by his confidant (aria "Kak burya vozduvaet", As the tempest blows…, III, 4). The following scene takes place in the Enfer,[384] where Hercules tries to get Pluto to restore Alcestis in the living world thanks to her heroic proof of love. Proserpine's encouragement notwithstanding, Pluto refuses to fulfill the hero's request. Hercules makes use of his strength, expresses his rage and evokes the nature's forces at his service in the aria "Svirelstvuy serdtse grozno", Resound terrible heart…, III, 5), and finally leads Alcestis out of the underworld, while Erinyes and Parcae

[383] *ivi*, p. 19.
[384] "Театр представляет ад" (The stage represents Hades). *ivi*, p. 30.

comment on Hercules's arduous gesture in the chorus "Steni ty ad teper'" (Now you Enfer do wail…, III, 6).

A new change of setting takes the action back to Admetus's garden. Here the king keeps complaining about his destiny, when Kedarkh and Menisa come to him announcing an imminent triumph for Hercules. In the last scene, the hero leads the woman covered by a veil to his friend, proposing him to accept her as a wife. Here again the situation is reminiscent of Euripide's drama: Admetus opposes his refusal because of the promise made to Alcestis not to forgive her, and thus gives his own demonstration of fidelity to the spouse, whose identity is soon revealed. In contrast to the previous opera by Sumarokov (*Cephalus and Procris*), here the play has a happy ending, with the final chorus calling for the hero's triumph:

> Глас славы проницай вселенну,
> Греми во всех концах земли,
> Труби победу нам явленну.
>
> А ты одно сие внемли:
> Живи герой для пользы света,
> К безсмертной чести многи лета.[385]
>
> [You voice of the glory do penetrate everywhere,
> Resound in every part of the earth,
> Make the victory clearly resonate to us.
>
> And do remember only this:
> Let the heroes live for the world's beneficial,
> Long years towards an immortal glory.]

Despite the opposite kinds denouement, and even if it is hard to identify an explicit encomiastic interpretation of the plot - except for Hercules's role as a sort of *deus ex machina*, reminiscent of the figure of the sovereign - it is worth considering the common 'love theme' linking both of Sumarokov's works, in particular the choice and treatment of their subject.

The scene of Alcestis's death (II, 5), reminiscent of that of Procris (III, 7), whose lines can be compared.

Al'tsesta	*Tesfal i Prokris*
ОБА [АЛЬЦЕСТА И АДМЕТ] Исполняется беда,	ЦЕФАЛ О коль вы люты,

[385] *ivi*, p. 40.

Несказанно огорчаюсь;
Я с тобою разлучаюсь,
Разстаюся на всегда,
Не увижусь никогда.[386]

Прежалостны минуты!
Что зделал я с тобой!
О Прокрис, разлучил я сам себя с тобой!.[387]

[BOTH [ALCESTIS AND ADMETUS]
My misfortune is increasing,
I suffer in an unutterable way;
I'm parting from you,
Forever separating,
I will not see you anymore.

CEPHALUS
How cruel you are,
Most pitiful moments!
What have I done to myself!
Oh Procris, I myself parted from you forever!

In both operas, love is seen as a source of man's suffering, while death is seen as the end of the despair:

АДМЕТ (II, 5)
Коль бедства мой совсем покой уже умчали;
Не буду чувствовать я долго сей печали;
Болезнь моя живот мой скоро сократит,
И беспокойствие в спокойство превратит.[388]

ПРОКРИС (III, 7)
Умерьте грусть; уж вам грусть ваша безполезна.
В последний раз смотрю на твой я солнце свет![389]

ADMETUS
Misfortune having whirled away my peace;
I will not feel long time this pain;
My illness will soon shorten my life,
And change discomfort into peace.

PROCRIS
Do put down your sadness; sadness is no more beneficial to you.
Sun, it is the last time I am looking at your light!

Particularly similar is the male roles' reaction to suffering:

АДМЕТ (II, 5)
Что вижу я! Судьбы, о как вы столко люты!
О день нещастнейший! Ужаснейши минуты!
Альцеста! .. небеса! .. о мой смущенный дух!
Народ! .. мой друг! ..
О грозны времена! О казни нестерпимы!..
Твои ли мной красы в сем страшном месте зримы! ...[390]

ПРОКРИС (III, 7)
Терзай мя рок злодей,
Рви сердце ты в части!
Во все ты напасти,
Меня уж вовлек.

О грозное время! - -
Ах! Нет моей мочи –
Дражайшия очи,
Простите на век![391]

ADMETUS
What do I see! Fate, how cruel you are!
Oh most miserable day! Terrible moments!
Alcestis!.. Heaven!.. oh my confused soul!
People!.. my friend!..
Oh terrible times! Oh unendurable pain!..
Now I see you in this terrible place1

PROCRIS
Torture me Oh villain fate!
Tear my heart to pieces!
You already pushed me,
To every adversity!

Oh terrible time! - -
Ah! I have no more forces –
Most dear eyes,

[386] *ivi*, p. 25.
[387] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera…*, p. 34.
[388] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda…*, p. 23.
[389] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera 1755*, p. 34.
[390] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda…*, p. 23.
[391] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera…1755*, p. 35.

I will be for ever sorry!

In both Alcestis's and Procris's death a cruel fate plays a role: the lover becomes the cause of the end of their beloved. In the first opera, Procris is wounded by the arrow shot by her beloved (III, 6), and says:

Возлюбленный Цефал,
Мои ты дни скончал.[392]

[My dear Cephalus,
You finished my life]

This paradoxical fate is soon ascribed to external factors by reason - or rather, love -, love remaining superior to other passions. Indeed, Procris replies:

Не причитай ты смерть мою руке своей,
И предавай вину ты ревности моей,
Она меня в кустах скрывала,
И жизнь мою не ты, но ревность окончала.[393]

[Do not ascribe my death to your hand,
And put the guilt on my jealousy,
It made me hide in the bushes,
And jealousy, not you, finished my life.]

Similar thoughts haunt the lovers in Sumarokov's second opera: in the temple of fidelity, looking at soon-to-be-sacrificed Alcestis, Admetus exclaims (II, 5):

Меня сразила ты, не рок меня сразил!
О Боги, для чево Альцесте я так мил![394]

[You cutted me down, not the fate!
Oh Gods, why was I so dear to Alcestis!]

As before, he receives the same comfort, with the affirmation of love's superiority:

Жизнь и свет я презираю,
За тебя я умираю.
Всех страстей любовь вольняе,
И всего в сердцах сильняе.[395]

[392] *ivi,* p. 33.
[393] *ibidem*.
[394] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda…*, p. 21.
[395] *ivi*, p. 22.

[I condemn life and world,
I die with you.
Love is the freest of all passions
And the strongest in every heart.]

In turn, this poetic vision of 'love' is typical of the genre the *rossiyskaya pesnya* (Russian song), a literary song particularly loved by Sumarokov, and to which Sumarokov committed his theoretical views in the epistle *O stikhotvorstve* (On the composition of poetry, 1748).[396] Sumarokov is considered responsible for having said the final word on the codification of the genre, distinguishing it from previous attempts made in Peter I's time, and Anna Ioannovna's time by such poets as Trediakovsky, still strongly bound to the models of Baroque poetry.[397] Sumarokov is considered responsible for having introduced important innovations concerning style, poetic forms, plots in this genre, and notably for having committed himself to the representation of love and its philosophical, psychological, and social meaning. According to the Italian slavist Stefano Garzonio, love is represented as a source of suffering in man's life, a vision reflected in the two librettos. Moreover, Sumarokov is credited with having enhanced the genre with dramatic elements, which had been practiced to develop patterns and methods later used in theatre, and thus also with rendering it a variegated and articulated genre.[398] It is possible, although Garzonio refers here to tragedies only, that the same experimentation had consequences on his opera librettos too. Moreover, the amorous songs enjoyed such a success that they were often introduced into the contemporary *pesenniki* (song collections), such as those edited by Mikhail Chulkov and Grigory Teplov, which were to play an important role as a vehicle of folklore in the opera theatre (see Chap. III – Part II – The Birth of the Russian Opera).

As to the formal patterns of his operas, Sumarokov's the adoption of the three-act instead of the classical five-act form for his *Al'tsesta* as well as for *Tsefal i Procris*, together with his neglect of the three Aristotelian unities is regarded as deriving from

[396] P. N. BERKOV, *Zhiznenny i literaturny put' A.P. Sumarokova* (A. P. Sumarokov's life and literary path), in A. P. SUMAROKOV, *Izbrannye proizvedeniya* (Selected works), edited by P. N. Berkov, Leningrad, Sovetsky pisatel' 1957, p. 26.
[397] According to the Italian slavist Stefano Garzonio, "Bisogna comunque riconoscere che le canzoni di Trediakovsky, strettamente legate ai modelli, francesi (specie i poeti libertini e, in primo luogo, Chaulieu), erano state un importante punto di riferimento per la nascente nuova cultura musicale russa" (It's necessary to observe that Trediakovsky's songs, strictly bound to French models (notably the libertine poets, Chaulieu first of all), had been an important reference model for the rising new Russian musical culture. S. GARZONIO, *La poesia russa del XVIII secolo* (Russian 18th-century poetry), Pisa, Tipografia Editrice Pisana 2003, p. 48. See also T. N. LIVANOVA, *Russkaya muzykal'naya kul'tura XVIII veka* (Russian music culture of the 18th century), t. I, Moskva, 1952.
[398] S. GARZONIO, *La poesia russa del XVIII secolo…*, p. 49.

Metastasio's technique.[399] The same Italian influence is noticeable in his use of the meter of irregular iambics, which became a widely accepted meter in Russian drama, reaching perfection in Griboedov's *Gore ot uma* (Wit from woe, 1823). We can add to this the use of two-part arias, which probably required *Da Capo* music setting in the second opera too, even though the collocation of many arias not at the end, but within the scenes, contrasts with the classical Metastasian rules. Although no score of the second opera is extant, and nothing is known about the insertion of ballets in it, it is possible to consider a similar interpretation of the Italian lyrics and French theatre models, and such a peculiar choice of subjects as characteristic, possibly naturalized, traits of Russian theatre production. As we shall see, this pseudo-indigenous textual factor will soon be strictly tied to an analogous factor, also coming from the source of songs, and consisting of its musical component.

Novyya Lavry

As expressed in his epistle *O rossiyskom yazyke* (On the Russian language, 1748), Sumarokov was persuaded that Russian language could be used in any literary genre ("Prekrasny nash yazyk sposoben ko vsemu"[400]), so he tried his hands at different genres. As for music theatre, after the two operas, Sumarokov staged with his Russian troupe the prologue in verses *Novyya lavry* (New laurels), on the occasion of the victory of the Russian forces against Prussians in Frankfurt on 1 August 1759.[401] The libretto was translated in three languages and issued in 1759.[402] The music of the first two choruses, sung by the Court Cappella singers, was composed by Raupach, whereas the ballets, performed by the Italian troupe's dancers and created by Hilverding, were set to music by Starzer. The sets were projected by Valeriani and realized by Peresinotti, while the machines were built by Brigonzi.[403] The libretto also records also the names of the actors who performed the allegorical prologue:

[399] D. J. WELSH, *Metastasio's Reception in 18-th Century Poland and Russia*, in *Italica*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Mar., 1864), p. 45.
[400] In the late 1740s Sumarokov wrote two important Epistles: *O Rossiyskom yazyke* (On the Russian language) and *O stikhotvorstve* (On the composition of poetry), the latter being a re-elaboration of Boileau's *Art Poétique*.
[401] Among the documents collected by Starikova, two seem to refer to the prologue, referred to as a "Russian comedy, entitled *Prologue*", which was staged on 21 September 1759. See *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny… (1751-1761)*, vypusk III, kn. I, 2011, Docs. 703 a, b.
[402] It was later published together with the two librettos by Sumarokov in the collection *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788.
[403] A. P. SUMAROKOV, *Novyya lavry Prolog dlya predstavleniya na Imperatorskom Teatre, pri torzhestvovanii Tezoimenitstva EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA po preslavnoy pobede oderzhannoy ROSSIYSKIM VOYSKOM 1759 goda Avgusta v I den' pri Frankfurte*. (New laurels Prologue to be staged at the Imperial Theatre, in occasion of the celebrations of Her Imperial Majesty's name day for the

Agrafena Dmitrevskaya as Truth
Mar'ya Volkova as Minerva
Ivan Dmitrevsky as Apollo
Grigory Volkov as Neptune
Fyodor Volkov as Mars

Except for ballets and choruses (four in total), the text was probably performed as with spoken dialogues, the main roles played by actors who probably could not sing (in previous librettos, in fact, it was indicated when the performers belonged to the Court cappella). This way, the performance combined lyric and spoken theatres, in a synthetic production created by an international staff, in the cosmopolitan atmosphere that characterized the Russian capital of those years. In spite of this, references to the Russian world are to be found in the text: the action takes place, as had been in the case with *Il giudizio d'Aminta* and *L'asile de la paix*, in the groves surrounding Saint Petersburg, where Olympus deities celebrate the Russian state and sovereign.[404] In contrast to the main characters, which are deities or metaphoric figures, the singers on the stage represent the Russian people, an undistinguished mass, as attested by the three choruses of "Russians" ("Khor Rossiyan"). In the first, which marks the beginning of the plot, the chorus sings the following text while Truth shows the name of the Empress:

В радости своей судьбине,
Ликовствуй Россия ныне;
Щастие твое цветет!

Щедрая ЕЛИСАВЕТ!
Как тиха ТВОЯ держава,
Так громка безсмертна слава.[405]

[In joy do Russia
Look today at your fate;
Your happiness is dawning!

Charitable ELISABETH!
How much silent YOUR country is,

most glorious victory gained by the Russian troupes on I August 1759 near Frankfurt) V Sanktpeterburge pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk 1764 goda.

[404] "Театр представляет Санкпетербургския рощи, в которых низшедшия с Олимпа и объятыя облаками боги беседуют, увеселяяся Именем и благословенною Державою ЕЯ ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИЧЕСТВА" (The stage represents the forests surrounding Saint Petersburg, where gods, embraced by clouds, converse while descending from Olympus, celebrating the Name and the blessed State of Her Imperial Majesty), *ivi*, p. 3.

[405] *ivi*, pp. 3-4.

Such loud is its immortal glory.]

Truth and Minerva praise the glorious sovereign, recalling the main claims of Lomonosov's panegyrics (see chap. II - Part I), celebrating Elisabeth as Peter I's ideal successor in a universal perspective:

МИНЕРВА
[…]
Во ДЩЕРИ ПЕТР СВОЕЙ опять на трон возшел
В ЕЛИСАВЕТЕ все дела СВОИ нашел,
И с Россами он вечно предвещает:
Исполнится что ПЕТР ВЕЛИКИЙ обещает.[406]

[MINERVA
[…]
In HIS DAUGHTER PETER has ascended again the throne
In ELISABETH HE found HIS acts,
And together with Russians on predicts forever:
What PETER THE GREAT promises will be fulfilled.]

Russia is compared by Apollo to the Mount Helicon, where the Muses live, and the springs sacred to them merge to the Neva's waters, then lapping against the walls of Peter's city: anticipating the myth of the Russian capital as a third Rome, Petropolis embodies at once Athens and ancient Rome:

Я зрю в России Геликон:
Разорвалися в ней державши разум узы,
И обитают музы,
Не зря Словесному учению препон.
Потоки Ипокрены,
С твоей, Нева, мешаяся волной,
Текут Полночною страной!
И орошают днесь твои Петрополь стены!
Не тем уж местом ты Петрополь ныне зрим
Где прежде жили Фины:
На сих брегах поставлен древний Рим,
И дравния Афины.
Тут
Словесныя науки днесь цветут.
О ПЕТР! о ТЫ ЕЛИСАВЕТА![407]

[I see in Russia Mount Helicon:
In it the bonds that kept the reason are broken,
On it the muses live,
And do not find any obstacle to the Literary studies.
The fountain Hippocrene,
Sharing its waves with yours, Neva,
Flows through the northern country!

[406] *ivi*, pp. 4-5.
[407] *ivi*, p. 5.

And now irrigates your walls, Petropolis!
You Petropolis do not appear today as the same place
Where previously Finns used to live:
On these shores the ancient Rome has been placed,
And the ancient Athens also.
Here
Today the sciences of letters blossom.
OH PETER! Oh YOU ELISABETH!]

Mars's entrance is announced by the sound of trumpets and kettle drums: he tells Russia about her own soldiers' victory, and depicts this as an epic, pointing out the valour ("In the "Russian army the hearts lighted up heroically[408]), and the military superiority of the country ("Your enemy has then been caressed by victory, / And approached the same place as a whole army. / The entire Russian army sought / To strike it: […]"[409]). He also contrasts the willingness of the Russians to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their homeland with the fear experienced by the Germans. This is a trait of Russian nationalism that will later find its full expression in Glinka's *A life for the Tsar*, but is recorded at least since the 1730s:[410]

МАРС
[…]
Началники Российской силы там,
И Полководец сам,
Отважности своей ни чем не умеряли,
И войско ободряли,
Чтоб жизнь они теряли,
Не думая о ней,
И в час толь нужный сей,
Явили мужество России всей,
И САМОДЕРЖИЦЕ своей,
И показали то перед очами света,
Что робости ни что не может им нанесть,
Что только в мыслях их, ЕЛИСАВЕТА,
Отечество и честь.[411]

[MARS
[…]
Commanders of the Russian forces there,
And the General himself,
Did not at all mitigate their adventurousness,
And encouraged the troupes,
So that they lost their lives,
Without worrying about that,

[408] "В Российском воинстве зажглись сердца геройски" *ivi*, p. 6.
[409] "Твой враг тогда победою ласкался, / И к месту одному всем войском примыкался. / Российско войско все стремилося к тому, / Чтоб дать отпор ему: […]"*ivi*, pp. 7-8.
[410] In his *Viaggi di Russia*, the reports of his travel to Russia of 1739, firstly published in 1760, Francesco Algarotti hints at this aspect: "Non parlo poi della credenza, che è in loro vivissima, di andare diritto alla gloria eterna morendo per l'Imperadrice, eguale all'amor di patria ne' Romani […]". F. ALGAROTTI, *Viaggi di Russia* (Travels to Russia), edited by W. Spaggiari, Milano, Garzanti 2006, p. 76.
[411] A. P. SUMAROKOV, *Novyya lavry Prolog*…, p. 8.

And in such a crucial moment,
Showed their courage to the whole Russia,
And to its AUTOCRAT,
And showed in front of the eyes of the world,
That no shyness could knock them down,
That in their mind there are only ELISABETH,
Homeland and honour.]

On the opposite side,

Противны вои задрожали
И побежали.
Разсыпалися все на разныя пути,
И тщилися одно спасение найти.
Собрать и удержать их вождь полки старался,
Но в сей он суетно надежде простирался.
Бегут
И жизнь одну брегут,
Едва надеяся что Россов удалятся: […][412]

[The opposing soldiers trembled
And broke into a run.
All dispersed in different directions,
And tried only to have their lives saved.
Their leader tried to gather and keep the battalions together,
But in this attempt he miserably continued invain.
They run away
And protect only their lives,
Scarcely hoping for the Russians to move away: […]]

Taking place among the other deities, Mars invites all to sing praises to Russia, as the chorus does:

Ты Россия утешайся,
Видя толь достойных чад,
И победой укращайся!

Вселися ты сей град,
С полуночными странами;
Враг повержен сильно нами![413]

[You Russia be consoled,
Looking at so brave sons,
And do dress up with victory!

You city do rejoice,
With the cities of the North;
The enemy has been violently prostrated by us!]

[412] *ivi*, p. 9.
[413] *ivi*, p. 10.

An allegoric ballet follows, representing Victory crowned with laurels and Russians celebrating her. An "extraordinary music harmony" accompanies the appearance of the Russian eagle.[414] At the end of the ballet, another chorus concludes the Prologue:

> САМОДЕРЖИЦА народа!
> Для того ТЕБЕ природа
> Бытие дала,
> И на Трон судьбина возвела,
> Что бы ТЫ творила славныя дела.[415]
>
> [AUTOCRAT of the people!
> The nature gave THEE the life,
> So that
> The destiny put THEE on the throne,
> So that YOU could fulfil glorious acts.]

The Empress herself was present at the general rehearsals, but, as Stählin observes, the prologue was not staged any more,[416] probably in relation to its occasional, panegyric origin. The staging itself attests the role that Russian productions played in the life of the Court, similar to the panegyric role of *Ital'yanskaya kompaniya* and its repertoire.

In 1760, Hilverding created the first Russian ballet, ideated again by Sumarokov, *Pribezhitse dobrodeteli* (The refuge of Virtue), with music by Starzer, in five parts, staged between the acts of the opera *Siroe* by Raupach (25 November 1760).[417] Mooser defines it *opéra-ballet*, possibly because dialogue and action predominate over dance; Karabanov defines it as "something similar to a drama, in five acts."[418] Actually, the performance includes dramatic action, singing and dance, and the libretto clearly distinguishes between singers (*Pevitsy EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA kamermuzyki*, notably the singers Elizaveta Belogradskaya and Sharlotta Shlakovskaya, and *Pridvornye EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA pevchie*), actors (*Pridvornye EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA Rossiyskago Teyatra Komedianty*), and dancers (*Pridvornye EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA Tantsovshchiki I*

[414] "необыкновенное согласие музыки" *ivi*, p. 10.
[415] *ivi*, p. 11.
[416] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*»…, p. 596.
[417] The subject of the ballet is reported by Vsevolodsky-Gerngross in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*…, pp. 62-4. The text was published in the collection *Rossiysky featr*..., Chast' XVIII, 1788.
[418] "нечто похожее на драму, в пяти актах" A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra*..., p. 38.

Tantsovshchitsy).[419] Each part is committed to the lands where Virtue looks for a place to rest, in an allegorical plot far from being politically correct. The action begins with Virtue being chased away from Europe:

ДОБРОДЕТЕЛЬ
Когда прияла здесь неправда полну власть,
Пойду в иную я подсолнечныя часть.
Прости страна, где я сидела на престоле,
И где народ моей повиновался воле:
Простите области, где жертвенник наук;
Отколе проницал вселенну славы звук;
Прости позорище труда умов толиких.
Простите вы леса, вы горы и луга,
И волны моющи Европины брега.
Простите озера, источники и реки.
Не буду зреть тебя, Европа! Я во веки.[420]

[VIRTUE
Since here falsehood has taken the power,
I will go to a sunny land.
Farewell you my country, where I sat on the throne,
And where people obeyed to my will:
Farewell you regions, where the altar of the science is;
From which the sound pierced of universal glory;
Farewell you shame of so numerous minds' work.
Farewell you forests, mountains and fields,
And waves that leap the banks of Europe.
Farewell you lakes, sources and rivers.
I will not see thee, Europe, any more.]

Virtue cannot find a place to live either in Asia, where jealousy dominates over reason:

ДОБРОДЕТЕЛЬ
<…>
Скажи, какие в сих народах ныне нравы:
Хранится ль истина? не рушатся ль уставы?
ГЕНИЙ
Все уставы пали здесь,
Месть и злоба те обычны,
Кои аду лишь приличны,
И везде свирепство днесь.[421]

[VIRTUE
[…]
Tell me, what are the mores of these peoples?
Do they preserve truth? Do they respect rules?
THE GENIUS

[419] [A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Pribezhitse dobrodeteli, Ballet* (The refuge of Virtue, Ballet), in *Rossiysky featr*…, Chast' XVIII, 1788, p. 102.
[420] *ivi*, pp. 107-8.
[421] *ivi*, p. 110.

All rules have lapsed here,
Vengeance and evil are common,
As one can find only in Enfer,
And ferocity is everywhere today.]

nor in Africa, where love for money overcomes love for manhood:

АФРИКАНЕЦ
Сей жалобой своей не проницай мне слуха:
Страдай нещастная, и не тревожь мне духа.
Отдайте, кто купил, скоряй тому ее,
И принесите мне сокровище мое.
Прости, и от меня на веки удалися.[422]

[AFRICAN
Do not insinuate this lament to my ear:
Do suffer unfortunate, and don't trouble my soul.
Do give her quickly to the one who bought her,
And do bring me my treasure.
Farewell, and go far from me forever.]

Violent America either cannot suit for Virtue:

ДОБРОДЕТЕЛЬ
Из древня мира сей пришел тиран?
АМЕРИКАНЕЦ
Оттоле;
Сидит ево Монарх в Европе на престоле.
ДОБРОДЕТЕЛЬ
К тебе, о небеса! я руки возвожу:
Я правды на земли ни где не нахожу![423]

[VIRTUE
Did the oppressor come from the ancient world?
AMERICAN
From there;
Its Sovereign sits on the throne in Europe.
VIRTUE
Oh Heaven! I raise my arms to you:
I cannot find any truth on the earth!]

Virtue is so offered a shelter by Minerva herself: initially dressed as a Russian woman ("Minerva v obraze Rossiyanki",[424] Part IV), she indicates her the country "Where now ELIZABETH generously reigns: / Under HER rule amusements flourish: / You will certainly find refuge there. / I'm an inhabitant of the lands and the city of Peter."[425] Finally

[422] *ivi*, pp. 119-20.
[423] *ivi*, pp. 25-6.
[424] *ivi*, p. 128.
[425] "Где щедро царствует теперь ЕЛИСАВЕТА: / Под скипетром ЕЯ веселия цветут: / Найдешь прибежище себе конечно тут. / Я жительница стран и города Петрова." *ibidem*.

Virtue arrives in the "Northern land", where she finds a place to stay, her relief being represented by the changing of the sets:

> <…> театр переменяется, и представляет великое пространство моря. Добродетель приближается ко брегам России. Вдруг море превращается в приятное жилище. Является великолепное здание на седьми столпах, знаменуя утверждение седьми свободных наук, которыя в державе сей употребельны. Российский орел огражденный толпою Гениев в светлых облаках является, и распростертыми крылами изображает наукам в области своей покровительство. Радость и удивление владычествует сердцами обитателей, которые восхищенны ревностным усердием и благодарностию устремляются торжествовать сей благополучный день, что их есть Прибежице Добродетели.[426]

[[…] the set changes, and represents a wide expanse of sea. Virtue comes near the banks of Russia. Suddenly the sea changes into an agreeable place. A magnificent building resting upon seven columns appears, representing the seven free sciences that are developed in this country. The Russian eagle surrounded by a group of Geniuses appears among light coloured clouds, and with her open wings indicates that the sciences are under its patronage. The hearts of the inhabitants are filled with joy and wonder. They are excited, and zealously and gratefully they celebrate this happy day, in which their country became the Refuge of the Virtue.]

The play ends with the already familiar praise of Elizabeth as Peter I's successor. Under her rule, Russia becomes the country where Virtue can rest, where Justice, embodied in Minerva, wears the clothes of the people, and where happiness permeates everyday life, perfectly fitting Wortman's patriotic 'scenario' of 'happiness in the official rhetoric.'[427]

According to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross,

> Эти две оперы, балет и пролог считаются русскими, само собою, очень условно и лишь постольку, поскольку текст к ним был написан Сумароковым и исполнителями были русские актеры, но с точки зрения музыкальной это были произведения чисто итальянские. И музыка их была итальянской, и певчие, исполнявшие их, учились «манерному» пению у итальянцев и, конечно, всячески стремились в своем пении подражать своим учителям. А если принять во внимание характеристику музы Сумарокова, то русского во всем этом остается только текст и происхождение автора и исполнителей.[428]

[These two operas, the ballet and the prologue are considered Russian in a very conventional sense, only in that the text was written by Sumarokov and the performers were Russian actors; however, from the point of view of the music they were purely Italian works. Not only was their music Italian, but also the singers that performed it had studied according to the Italian 'manner' of singing, and, certainly, they tried in every way possible to imitate their teachers. If we pay attention to Sumarokov's characteristic muse, something Russian remains only in the text and in the authors' and the performers' origin.]

[426] *ivi*, p. 131.
[427] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power: myth and ceremony in Russian monarchy: from Peter the Great to the abdication of Nicholas 2*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2006, p. 43. See also the introduction to this chapter.
[428] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*…, p. 97.

The historian's stance can be easily understood as it was expressed after further experiences, imbued with a more developed and theorized nationalism. Anyway, the prologue and the ballet in particular show that nationalism, in a more explicitly political conception, was ready to develop further, even though it was deprived of any racial or ethnic component. Moreover, the two operas by Sumarokov appear to contribute to the development of Russian opera, dealing in their plots with the almost private role of love, and elaborating foreign models in an original manner. The directions that were to be taken are explored in the next chapter.

By way of conclusion, one can observe, with Mooser, the beginning of a new era in the history of Russian opera, together with the appearance of the idea that the Russian language could be set to music, just like other European languages. This ideas was possibly subtended by Sumarokov's idea that Russian, being "capable of everything" ("Sposoben ko vsemu"), could be exploited in different genres. According to the Swiss historian,

> Il ne s'agit là de rien de moins que de la naissance de l'opéra national, naissance rendue possible par la présence de jeunes chanteurs russes qui s'étaient formés au contact et avec les conseils des virtuoses italiens, et qui, en peu d'années, avaient accompli de tels progrès, qu'ils se trouvèrent en mesure de se présenter honorablement en public.[429]

According to Ritzareva, Araja's *Tsefal i Prokris* in particular paralleled other European aspirations to nationalize opera and other Italian genres, usually modelled after Italian works, and in a large part performed by the Italians themselves.[430] The possibility to put this event in relation with analogous phenomena in Western Europe suggests that Russian growing nationalism is, paradoxically, a cosmopolitan, European phenomenon, common to contemporary other countries' cultures.

As Starikova has observed while collocating the experience of the Russian troupe,

> Само появление в придворной жизни театральной "повсядневности" и свидетельствует о прочном месте театра в придворном быту. Именно такое отношение к театральному искусству, как к неотъемлемой части официальной жизни российского императорского двора, подспудно, но безотказно работало на развитие мысли о необходимости заведения "своего" театра (при "своем" дворе).[431]

[The emergence itself of a "daily occurrence" of theatre in the life of the Court attests the solid position the theatre held in the daily Court's life. The relationship itself with dramatic art, as an essential

[429] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie…*, I, p. 255.
[430] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…, p. 56.
[431] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Elizavety Petrovny…*, vypusk II, ch. I, 2003, p. 17.

component of the official life of the Russian Imperial Court, latently, but unfailingly led to the development of the idea of the need to establish a theatre of "our own" (at "our" Court).]

This began with imitation, since opera was an import product. While regarding the development of a national theatre as the most important factor contributing to the loss of importance of Italian opera *seria* in the last years of Elizabeth's rule (without considering the role of opera *buffa* in the context),[432] Vsevolodsky-Gerngross considers the official foundation of the Russian theatre as a watershed in the history of Russian theatre:

> Целиком подражательная драматургия, целиком подражательное искусство актера, казалось бы, свидетельствуют о полном отсутствии русского в собственном смысле театра. Но, с другой стороны, нельзя не иметь в виду свободной отечественной инициативы, проявленной русскими людьми, русских авторов и актеров, наконец, русский сюжет; нельзя не иметь в виду того, что вся наша культурная жизнь этой эпохи по своей сущности была иноземной и что поэтому либо следует отрицать всю современную ей культуру, либо ее нужно рассматривать как очаг будущей национальной культуры, как начало нашей русской культуры.
>
> История русского театра данной эпохи подразделается на два периода. Первый является продолжением истории предшествующего царствования – это период подготовительный. Второй начинается с учреждения правительственного русского театра и знаменует, таким образом, начало нового периода.[433]

[A totally imitative dramaturgy, a totally imitative art of the actor, it seems, attests to the complete absence of a Russian theatre in the true sense. However, one should keep in mind the patriotic initiative, displayed by Russian people, Russian authors and actors, and finally the Russian subject; one should keep in mind that all our cultural life of this time was substantially foreign, and that for this reason one should either deny all its contemporary culture, or look at it as at the heart of the future national culture, as the beginning of our Russian culture.

The history of the Russian theatre of this time is divided into two periods. One is a period of preparation, which continues the history of the previous rule. The other begins with the institution of the State Russian theatre, and marks thus the beginning of a new era.]

The historians seem on agree to the idea that the hint to create an opera in Russia was forcefully subject to the import of a foreign product. It was the settlement of Italian opera in the Court life that led men of letters and authorities to the will to have their own theatre. What is worth reminding today, in my opinion, is that denying the artistic value of these first attempts at Russian opera for their 'insufficient Russianness' was itself the product of the particular cultural context of Romanticism, with its strong nationalistic component. And this was itself a transient and relative culture. That is why, in my opinion, the traditional judgement has to be revised through less subjective (if possible), or at least

[432] "Сопоставляя историю итальянских оперы с историей русского театра, <…> мы легко сделаем заключение, что, доставшись в наследство от Анны Иоанновны, итальянская опера отошла у нас на второй план с развитием национального творчества." (Comparing the history of Italian opera to that of the Russian theatre, […] we easily come to the conclusion that Italian opera, left by Anna Ioannovna as a heritage, moved in Russia to the background with the development of a national art.) V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*…, p. 65.

[433] *ivi*, pp. 192-3.

different, more updated criteria. Having being revived in the Soviet era, the critical positions denying Russian affiliation to anything preceding Glinka seem difficult to overcome yet today.[434]

The works I have considered here reveal a need for some 'national' product, which is not a peculiarity of drama, but is in common to many cultural domains from Elizabeth's rule onwards. The discussion about the language itself had connections with the growing issue of a national identity. The need to identify a language universally recognized as Russian (and worthy of literary use) was affecting the stylistic experimentations of the most distinguished poets and writers of the time. Their efforts can be seen, for instance, in Lomonosov's *Rossiyskaya grammatika* (Russian grammar), 1755. Lomonosov also showed a philosophical concern for the future of Russia in his treatise *On the Preservation and Increase of the Russian Nation* (*O sokhranenii i razmnozhenii rossiyskogo naroda*, 1761),[435] and a nationalistic concern for its honour in his debate on history, where he opposed the "Scandinavian" hypothesis on the formation of the Russian State, maintaining instead that the Slavs themselves were its creators.[436]

In the realm of visual arts, Jacob von Stählin had first begun to deal with Russian art and artists.[437] At the end of the year 1747 he had created an Academy of Fine Arts, which he himself directed, with the aim of unifying the best specialists, Russian and foreign,[438] so as to educate a new generation of local artists,[439] thus appearing as a sort of

[434] Glinka's myth has recently been discussed in M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Russian Music and Nationalism, From Glinka to Stalin*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press 2007.
[435] *Handbook of Russian Literature…*, p. 264.
[436] Among his other writings, some put forward ideas for subjects suitable for monumental paintings depicting glorious episodes from Russian history.
[437] K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob Shtelin i ego materialy po istorii russkogo iskusstva XVIII veka, Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskanie uchyonoy stepeni kandidata iskusstvovedeniya* (Jacob von Stählin and his materials on the history of 18th-century-Russian art, Abstract of the PhD Thesis for the competition for the degree of Philosophical Doctor in Arts), Leningrad, 1980, p. 20.
[438] According to Liechtenhan, "Giuseppe Valeriani devint professeur de peinture avec pour spécialisation l'art de la perspective; Jacob Schumacher se chargea de la chaire d'architecture. Il y eut un département de sculpture sous la direction de Johann F. Duncker. Le dessin et l'art de la composition furent confiés à Elias Grimmel. À l'atelier de gravures se succédèrent Christian A. Wortmann, Petr Sokolov, Georg F. Schmidt puis Teicher. Stählin réunissait l'ensemble des étudiants deux fois par semaine pour les initier au dessin d'après nature, discipline qu'il choyait particulièrement. En début de mois, il vérifiait la production des jeunes dessinateurs, puis apposait sa signature au dos de chaque esquisse. L'élève était censé rapporter cette dernière avec ses nouveaux essais afin que le directeur puisse, le mois suivant, constater, ou non, ses progrès.". F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 325.
[439] In 1757 the chamberlain Ivan I. Shuvalov associated to the Moscow's University an Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg. Later it was transformed in the *Akademiya tryokh znatneyshikh khudozhestv*. K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob Shtelin, zhizn' i deyatel'nost'* (Jacob von Stählin, his life and work), in YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Yakoba Shtelina ob izyashchnykh isskustvakh v Rossii…*, p. 11. Shuvalov tried several times to unify the two Academies and, the opposition of the President of the other Academy (Stählin's) Kirill G. Razumovsky notwithstanding, Stählin knew that his creation had no future. K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob*

advocate of Russian nationalism *ante litteram*, his origins notwithstanding. In fact, one of the first biographers of the German literate, Konstantin V. Malinovsky, thus explains his ostensible 'nationalist' expressions:

> Штелин приехал в Петербург как любопытствующий европеец, но за два десятилетия стал истинным патриотом России, который, как и лучшие ее представители, заботился о "чести и славе" своего нового отечества. Он видел свою задачу в содействии развитию художеств и в ознакомлении Европы с достижениями России в области искусств.[440]

> [Stählin arrived in Petersburg as a curious European man, but in two decades he became a true patriot of Russia, who, as well as her best representatives, cared about the "honour and glory" of his new homeland. He found his task in the participation to the development of arts and in Europe's familiarization with the achievements of Russia in the field of arts.]

According to Malinovsky, Stählin was the first to understand the importance of writing a history of Russian art, leaving writings concerning different fields of art; his aim was to outline the development of art in the country he had adopted as a new homeland.[441] For sure, these claims have to be smoothed over, keeping in mind that a fully-developed theory of nationalism was still far off at this time. My impression is rather that Stählin's statements could be ascribed to similar arguments about Elizabeth's ascension to the throne. Stählin's personal battle for the acknowledgement of his achievements in constructing a milieu of artists, in which his role goes now unquestioned, possibly used 'nationalist' arguments to contrast an opposing party that was acquiring supremacy (that of

Shtelin, zhizn' i deyatel'nost'..., p. 13. In 1764 Stählin also requested Catherine II to take him at service at Shuvalov's academy, without receiving any answer. With Catherine II's ascension, Ivan Shuvalov had to quit Russia (from 1763), leaving his post at the Academy to Ivan Betskoy, who covered this post for more than thirty years. According to Liechtenhan, "L'impératrice investit d'importants moyens dans cette institution dont elle augmentait les collections par de généreux achats. Cela signifiait aussi la victoire définitive du goût français dans les plus hautes sphères de la société russe, une raison suffisante pour Stählin de l'exécrer." D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan…*, p. 327. As to Stählin's Academy, in October 1766, Vladimir Orlov was appointed director (he himself would be dismissed in 1774), while Razumovsky maintained his formal post of president. At the end of the 1760 Stählin renounced representing 'his' Academy at the Legislative Commission. In 1768 he retired from the *Saint Petersburg Gazette*, and the following year he abandoned the secretariat of the Academy, leaving his post to Johann Albrecht Euler. According to Liechtenhan, "Stählin ne pardonnait pas à Orlov d'accorder toute sa confiance au mathématicien Simeon Kotel'nikov, à l'astronome Stepan Rumovskij et à l'anatomiste Aleksej Protasov, à des Russes en d'autres termes. De peur de subir des mesures d'intimidation, certains savants étrangers n'osaient même plus écrire à leurs compatriotes." Moreover, "Son ire allait vers les «insinuations de quelques Français et autres antipatriotes» qui mettaient tout leur zèle à construire une nouvelle Académie sur les ruines de l'ancienne." F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 331.

[440] K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob Shtelin i ego materialy po istorii russkogo iskusstva XVIII veka…*, p. 8.

[441] *ivi*, p. 17. Further Malinovsky states: "Целью Штелина было показать Европе, какого расцвета достигли искусства в России от начала XVIII века до семидесятых годов. При этом он подчеркивает талант русских художников (Никитина, Матвеева), их достижения (Антропова, Рокотова, Левицкого), а иногда их превосходство в состязании с приезжими мастерами (скульптора Павлова над Жилле). Своими материалами Штелин утверждает, что и в области изобразительных искусств "может собственных Платонов и быстрых разумом Невтонов российская земля рождать"." *ivi*, p. 24.

Shuvalov), as was happening in all spheres of life in the country.[442] Possibly in order to survive at Court, Stählin "s'attribuait, à lui exclusivement, - according to Liechtenhan, - des ambitions didactiques: former le goût du public et contribuer à la naissance d'un art intrinsèquement russe qui ne serait pas religieux."[443] It would be premature, as far as I see, to ascribe this to Russian nationalism in terms of Slavophilism, although the choice itself of such arguments can be seen as a signal of the fact that being 'national', in art as well as in other realms, was an attribute to which growing attention was paid. What is worth noticing, in my opinion, is the interest which the Russian sovereigns, starting from Elizabeth, started to show in acquiring deeper knowledge of the country they ruled, and its potential, also by recurring to foreign experts.[444] Regarding public institutions, in the same year of the issue of Lomonosov's *Grammar*, Ivan I. Shuvalov promoted, together with the great poet, the founding of the University of Moscow.[445]

Similar to this process of 'discovering Russia' is the case of Müller, a German who, recruited in Germany in the first years of the Academy, received his education in Russian with the historian and archaeologist Bayer. During Elizabeth's years, he had the possibility to go back to Saint Petersburg from Siberia, and was asked to take with him information about the farthest peripheries of the Russian land. According to Satta Boschian,

> Müller era il capo di una missione composta anche di russi, che doveva raccogliere tutte le notizie possibili su quei paesi poco noti, spulciando gli archivi dei governatorati. Il ritorno di Müller coincideva con la grande ventata nazionalistica, con l'ambizione nelle élites di una storia esauriente, con la nomina dei due primi insigni professori russi dell'Accademia: Trediakovskij e Lomonosov.[446]

[Müller was the head of a mission comprising also Russians, which had to collect all possible information on those little known regions, thumbing through in the archives of the provinces. Müller's return coincided with the great nationalist wave, with the elites' ambition for an exhaustive History, with the appointment of the two first prominent Russian Professors at the Academy: Trediakovsky and Lomonosov.]

The desire to become acknowledged with the country is directly bound to the interpretation of history and the legitimation of the ruling dynasty. On the occasion of the

[442] Elizabeth's men had supplanted Anna's ones. Having arrived in 1735, during Anna Ioannovna's reign, Stählin had survived the characteristic changing of the guard, but was still a man of the defeated faction.
[443] F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, p. 325.
[444] Stählin also had created a department of cartography in his Academy, where views of the city of St. Petersburg and its environs were printed, together with an atlas with plans of the provinces.
[445] In the second half of the 1740s, taking into account the grave financial crisis in which the Academy of Sciences founded itself, provoking a wave of dismissals of some Western men of letters, Elizabeth decided to draw the institution up to the Court, appointing in 1746 Kirill G. Razumovsky, the brother of her favourite and husband, to the post of president of the Academy of Sciences. Liechtenhan pointed out that the closure of the Academy would have meant, to become ridiculous before Europe. Razumovsky left the virtual administration to his friend Grigory Teplov. In 1747, the Academy obtained new regulations. F. D. LIECHTENHAN, *Jacob von Stählin, académicien et courtisan*…, pp. 323-4.
[446] L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'illuminismo e la steppa*…, p. 117.

Empress's name-day, Müller gave a lecture about the origins of the Russian people and its name. The thesis was rejected by Lomonosov and by the Historical Assembly, because he maintained the Russian defeat towards the Normans. The question was to be raised more than once in the following years (Chap. III – The Reigns of Catherine II and Paul I).

After Elizabeth's death, occurred on 25 December 1761, the Peterburgian theatrical life was suspended for the usual year of mourning. A few weeks after the funeral instrumental music was performed again on semi-private occasions such as dinners or assemblies in the palace, but among the public performances we can enumerate only one event. On 3 June 1762 Peter III organized a banquet for 400 people to celebrate the peace between Russia and Prussia (24 April),[447] when the Italian troupe performed the play in one act *La pace degli eroi, dramma per musica*, on libretto by Lodovico Lazzaroni, who had recently been hired at the Court's service, and music, unfortunately lost, by Manfredini. The libretto was issued in Saint Petersburg in Italian and German, and in Russian by Ivan Barkov.[448]

The reign of Peter III was too short to give the Russian theatrical life any important evolution. On 28 June 1762 he was forced to abdicate in a *coup d'état* in favour of his wife Ekaterìna Alekséevna (further Catherine), by a group of soldiers of the Guard headed by the Orlov brothers, who were responsible (notably Aleksey Orlov) for his murder on 7 July.

Due to the difficult situation related to the changing of the guard that usually followed such events, Araja considered it safer to return to Italy at the beginning of the new rule.[449] Indeed, a turnover took place in the Italian troupe,[450] and many of the artists of

[447] In 1757, for instance, his wife noted down Peter III's involvement with the Prussian destiny. Remembering the victory of the Russian army against Prussia at the battle of Gross-Jägersdorf on 19 August, she recalled in her memoirs: "[…] la peine que ressentait le grand-duc de la guerre qui venait d'éclater entre la Russie et le roi de Prusse, pour lequel il avait dès l'enfance un singulier penchant, qui n'avait rien d'extraordinaire au commencement et qui dégénéra en frénésie dans la suite. Alors la joie publique du succès des armes de la Russie l'obligeait de dissimuler le fond de sa pensée, qui était qu'il voyait avec regret les troupes prussiennes battues, tandis qu'il les regardait comme invincibles." CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même…*, p. 281. Immediately after his ascension, Peter III suspended the hostilities, searching for a rapprochement.

[448] Exemplars are preserved at the Russian National Library (RNB) of St. Petersburg.

[449] As to other musicians, several members of the Oranienbaum orchestra joined the Italian Court troupe. Niedersted succeeded Jakob Foerster as second cembalist. The violinist Joseoh Ritt and the flutist Brabé were expelled, the latter being replaced by Coster, also coming from Oranienbaum. Pietro Peri was appointed *Konzertmeister* with Domenico Dall'Oglio, alternating with him (as it had been before for Madonis). Tito Porta and Anton Ohnsorge were hired. The violinist Angelo Vaccai, in St. Petersburg since 1742, was

the old generations were replaced by younger musicians. A new era in Russian musical life was beginning.

dismissed. Francesco Gradizzi replaced Valeriani, who had died on 6 June 1762. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, I, pp. 339-40.

[450] The singers Costantino Compassi, Pietro Gradizzi, Nunziata Garani, Maria Camati, Caterina Brigonzi, Ignazio Dol and Pietro Peri left Russia. *ivi*, pp. 307-22.

Chapter III – The Reigns of Catherine II and Paul I

An Enlightened Sovereign

Also known as Catherine the Great, Catherine II was the most renowned and the longest-ruling female leader of Russia, ruling from 28 June (9 July) 1762, until her death on 6 November (17 November) 1796. This figure doesn't need further presentations, having soon become, thanks to her strong personality, one of the most distinguished Enlightened sovereigns of her time, known inside and outside the Russian Empire.

She was in most part responsible for the diffusion of the Enlightened ideas in Russia, and, as a consequence, for the raise of a strong *intelligentsiya* which emerged as a new social class, belonging not exclusively to aristocracy. The Empress herself had strongly wanted the diffusion of culture in lower social layers, in conformity with the progressive ideas she had espoused. Nevertheless, she would soon realize that this new cultivated class was not intended to support her own contradictions, first of all the fact that she had participated to Enlightenment without considering the critics to absolutism and serfdom it brought about.

Thus, during her reign, in particular as a consequence of the French revolution, a gap developed between *intelligentsiya* and power. This phenomenon will be relevant also in relation to our consideration of emerging nationalism: on the one hand, as we shall see, Catherine rode the wave of nationalism in order to legitimate herself on the throne; on the other hand, since the Empress was a foreigner, also fond of foreign (French) culture, the opposing *intelligentsiya* in turn espoused this movement in order to bring forward an alternative to her power.

Criticism and polemics, which were welcome during the first part of her rule, had forcefully to stop after the French revolution, which appeared as a great divide in the parabola of her rule. After the execution of the French king and the following Terror, no criticism was allowed on her rule, which lost any democratic connotation.

Let's have a more in-depth look to the main stages of this trajectory. As Elizabeth had taken great care in organizing her own ascension to the throne (see Chap. II – Part I), Catherine tried to revive the already set tradition of richly celebrating the event. Former princess Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst, Catherine had also a more compelling reason to justify her ascension, having no legal claim to the throne, neither by heredity nor by designation. In order to assure her legitimation, immediately after her ascension, Catherine fixed the

date of the coronation (which would make her the head of the Orthodox Church) on 22 September 1762.

The Court moved to Moscow in September. In 1762-63 Jacob von Stählin took part in the commission that dealt with the artistic organization of the coronation celebrations in Moscow,[1] the direction of which was entrusted to the actor of the Russian troupe Fyodor Volkov.[2] The only existing theatre in Moscow being the one situated on the banks of the river Yauza (the old Golovinsky dom, built for Elizabeth's coronation celebrations and now being in very bad state), Francesco Gradizzi was charged of the renovation works, while the expert of theatre machines Friedrich Hilverding of installing a small stage in one of the Kremlin's palaces.[3] Costumes were provided, among others, by two Italian actors by the names of Santini and Belmonti, who will later become private impresarios in Moscow. Josef Starzer, initially dismissed, seems to have been re-instated on occasion of the celebrations.[4] The music for the opera *seria* in three acts on Metastasio's libretto *L'olimpiade* and the ballet-pantomime *Amore e Psiche* were commissioned to Manfredini, and performed jointly in Moscow on 20 October and 24 November during the coronation celebrations.[5]

According to Wortman, "The postcoronation celebrations were given a broader scope to show the "love" of the common people for the new empress. On the evening of the coronation, the Kremlin was illuminated and people converged from all over Moscow to witness "the spectacle of fire"."[6] To cut the people into the deal, Volkov staged a huge procession through the streets of Moscow, which lasted three days during Carnival (from 2

[1] K. V. MALINOVSKY, *Yakob Shtelin, zhizn' i deyatel'nost'* (Jacob von Stählin, his life and work), in YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Zapiski Yakoba Shtelina ob izyashchnykh isskustvakh v Rossii*, tt. I-II, edited by K. V. Malinovsky, M., „Iskusstvo" 1990, p. 15. The *Diary of the chamber harbinger* contains no information about the celebrations or their organization, but notices about it can be found in *Opisanie bol'shogo teatra* (Description of the great masquerade), in *F. G. Volkov i russky teatr ego vremeni* (F. G. Volkov and the Russian theatre of his time).

[2] Fyodor Grigor'evich Volkov (1729-1763) was an actor and creator of leading roles in Aleksandr Sumarokov's tragedies. The 19th-century literary critic called him "the father of the Russian theatre." Volkov used the fortune he inherited from his factory-owner stepfather to found a theatre in Yaroslavl', that is, not the private court theatre of an aristocrat. In 1756 the troupe was invited to St. Petersburg to perform before the Empress Elizabeth, and then given an auditorium in which to open a Russian Public Theatre with Sumarokov as director (see Chap. II – Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"). Upon Sumarokov's retirement in 1761 Volkov succeeded to him as director. He participated in the plot against Peter III. *Handbook of Russian Literature*, edited by V. Terras, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1985, p. 511.

[3] Later on he became one of Maddox's collaborators (see Chap. III – Part I – From the Teatr na Znamenke to the Petrovsky Theatre). O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve, 1776-1805* (The Maddox Theatre in Moscow, 1776-1805), Moskva, Rabotnik prosveshcheniya 1927, p. 16.

[4] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle*, II, *L'époque glorieuse de Catherine II (1762-1796)*, Genève, Mont-Blanc 1951, p. 21.

[5] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, p. 79.

[6] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power: myth and ceremony in Russian monarchy: from Peter the Great to the abdication of Nicholas 2*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2006, p. 56.

February 1763) and included nearly four thousand individuals and two hundred floats: masks, monsters, dwarves, puppets.[7] The descriptive programme, printed at the University of Moscow, was written in verses by Mikhail Kheraskov, while texts for choruses and songs to be sung on the floats were written by Sumarokov, and probably set to music by Volkov himself. The booklet describing the street masquerade was titled *Torzhestvuyushchaya Minerva* (Triumphant Minerva) *in which the vileness of the vices and the glory of the virtues are presented*.[8] The characters were given the task of representing in satirical form the most common social vices. Next to the pagan gods and allegorical figures, Harlequin and a dull "pedantic" appear, carried by four servants dressed as Scaramouche. Among the texts composed by Sumarokov, there were his satirical *Khor ko prevratnomu svetu* (Chorus to a perverse world), followed by a *Drugii khor ko prevratnomu svetu* (Second chorus to a perverse world), in which, as if taking advantage of a lawful pleasure-connected to the unusual climate, recalling the lines of a popular song, with appropriate vocabulary and metrics from the puppet theatre (*rayok*), Sumarokov makes a titmouse come from overseas tell and as overseas none of the typical troubles of Russian society can be found.

Прилетела на берег синица	A titmouse flew to the shore
Из-за полночного моря,	From the Northern see,
Из-за холодного океана.	From the cold ocean.
Спрашивали гостейку приезжу,	The arrived guest was asked,
За морем какие обряды.	About the customs of overseas.
Гостья приезжа отвечала:	The arrived guest answered:
«Всё там превратно на свете.	"Overthere all is perverse.
<…>	[…]
За морем подьячие честны,	Overseas public servants are honest,
За морем писать они умеют.	Overseas they can write.
За морем в подрядах не крадут;	Overseas they do not steal in contracts;
Откупы за морем не в моде,	Payoffs overseas are not fashionable,
Чтобы не стонало государство.	So that the State does not suffer.
«Завтрем» там истца не питают.	They do not feed the petitioner with "Tomorrow".
За морем почетные люди	Overseas honorable people
Шеи назад не загибают,	Do not turn their head backwards,
Люди от них не погибают.	People do not die perish because of them.
В земля денег за морем не прячут,	Overseas they do not hide money under earth,
Со крестьян там кожи не сдирают,	They do not tear the skin off the peasants,

[7] This colossal happening was also his last performance, since Volkov died some time after the masquerade (1762), probably due to a cold catched during the celebrations. M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo, Storia e testi della letteratura russa, Milano* (Russian 18th century, History and texts of the Russian literature), UNICOPLI 1997, p. 79.

[8] [M. M. KHERASKOV], *Torzhestvuyushchaya Minerva, Obshchenarodnoe zrelishche, predstavlennoe bol'shim maskaradom v Moskve 1763 goda, genvarya dnya* - (Triumphant Minerva, General popular performance, staged as a big masquerade in Moscow on – January 1763). [Moskva], Pech. Pri Imperatorkoy Mosk. Universitete, [1763]. Exemplars of this libretto, which exists in three different variants, are housed at the Russian National Library (RNB) and at the Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN) in St. Petersburg, at the Russian State Library (RGB), at the Library of the Lomonosov University (MGU), and at the Historical Library (GPIB) of Moscow, and in athor several institutions.

Деревень на карты там не ставят,	They do not bet villages playing cards,
За морем людьми не торгуют.	Overseas they do not deal in people.
<…>	[…]
Учатся за морем и девки;	Girls too are educated overseas;
За морем того не болтают:	Overseas they do not chatter:
Девушке-де не надо,	A girsl does not need this,
Надобно ей личико да юбка,	She needs only a beautiful face and a skirt,
Надобны румяна да белилы.	She needs some rouge and white powder.
Там язык отцовский не в презреньи;	Overthere the language of the fathers is not disdained;
Только в презреньи те невежи,	They disdain only those ignorants,
Кои свой язык уничтожают,	Who destroy their own language,
Кои, долго странствуя по свету,	Who, having long travelled the world,
Чужестранным воздухом некстати	Inappropriately stuffing their empty heads
Головы пустые набивая,	With foreign air,
Пузыри надутые вывозят.	Lead around their self-important bubbles.
<…>	[…]
Там купец – купец, а не обманщик.	Overthere a merchant is a merchant, not a cheat.
Гордости за морем не терпят,	Overseas pride is not tollerated,
Лести за морем не слышно,	Flattery is not heard,
Подлости за морем не видно.	Villany cannot be seen overseas.
Ложь там – велико беззаконье.	Lies overthere are a great illegality.
За морем нет тунеядцев.	Overseas there are no parasites.
Все люди за морем трудятся,	All people work overseas,
Все там отечеству служат;	All serve the country overseas;
Лучше работаюий там крестьянин,	The peasant is a worker better,
Нежель господин тунеядец;	Than the master-parasite;
<…>	[…]
Пьяные по улицам не ходят,	Drunkards do not walk alond the streets,
И людей на улицах не режут.[9]	And people are not teared off in the streets.

The chorus imitates the modi of the folk song, applying them to a theme, which was completely absent in the original:

За морем синичка не пышно жила	Overseas a titmouse lived not richly
Не пышно жила, пиво варивала;	It lived not richly, and brewed beer;
Солоду купила, хмелю взаймы взяла	She bought malt, and hops together with it
Черной дрозд пивоваром быль.	A vlack thrush was the brewer.
Дай же нам Боже пивото сварить,	Lord do let us brew the beer,
Пивото сварить, а вина накурить,	Brew the beer, and fill wine with smoke,
Созовем к себе гостей мелких пташечек.	And we will invite the little birds.
[…].[10]	[…]

The colourful procession, led in allegorical-neo-classical style matched to traditional features of Carnival, preceded the specifically panegyric part. Minerva naturally alluded to Catherine, patroness of arts and sciences, but also ministress of justice. As Wortman stated,

[9] A. P. SUMAROKOV, *Drugii khor ko prevratnomu svetu* (Second chorus to a perverse world), in *Izbrannye proizvedeniya* (Selected works), edited by P. N. Berkov, Leningrad, Sovetsky pisatel' 1957, pp. 279-81.
[10] M. D. CHULKOV, *Sobranie raznykh pesen* (Collection of various songs), ch. I (I ed. 1770), in *Sochineniya Mikhaila Dmitrievicha Chulkova, Izdanie Otdeleniya russkago yazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk* (Mikhail Dmitrievich Chulkov's works, Edition of the Section of Russian language and literature of the Imperial Academy of Sciences), tom I, Sanktpeterburg, Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk 1913, No. 196, p. 221.

> Catherine presented herself as "philosophe on the throne," identifying her rule not with present or historical models of Western monarchy, but with the ideal she found in Western thought. […] She early made known her persona as the ligislatrix who brought the benefits of reason to her subjects through the instrumentality of the laws. Her principal endeavour was the commission to codify the laws, which she convoked in Moscow in 1767.[11]

Allegorically assimilating Catherine to Minerva, the bringer of peace and the protectress of wisdom, the conveyed message was that the Empress was saving the people from the despotism of Peter III and transforming her people into citizens through laws and education. In this sense she personally stood as the heir of Justinian, and Russia as the heir to the Byzantine legal tradition. This image will accompany her propaganda all along the first years of her rule, in a tight connection with her programs concerning law and justice.

Medals were struck in honour of the great day, bearing the inscription "Orthodoxy and the Russian fatherland saved from the threatening evils by the heroic spirit of Her Imperial Majesty"; the Senate considered the erection of a monument; Count Alexey Bestuzhev-Ryumin suggested the designation "Mother of the Fatherland" to become part of the Empress' official title. She was also welcomed by the two foremost poets of the day: Sumarokov and Lomonosov, who evoked the spirit of Peter I to recall Russia to the glorious path on which he had set her.

According to Dashkova, "Moscou présentait le spectacle d'un gala sans interruption. La joie publique paraissait complète, et presque tout l'hiver sa passa en fêtes et réjouissances."[12] Wortman points out that Catherine elevated her rule by reference to her achievements (real or putative) for the benefit of Russia:[13]

> Catherine's scenario used the "love" of the people as a sign of the popular support that enabled her to depart from the norms of succession. Love became a leitmotif in the rhetoric of the first years of her reign. The generalized "joy" of Elizabeth's scenario turns into the generalized "love" of Catherine's.[14]

According to this scholar,

> The chorus of adulation extends beyond the elite to include the "people" as well. For the first time at a Russian coronation, there are references to shouts of "hoorah" from the crowds in the square during the procession. The proscenium as a distance-creating barrier is eliminated. No longer a stage performance with an inferred audience, the spectacle purports to be enacted in and among the people. The performance leaves the court, reaches the streets of Moscow, eventually goes to the

[11] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, pp. 58-9.
[12] E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff, Dame D'honneur De Catherine II, Impératrice De Toutes Les Russies*, vol. 1, edited by M. Wilmot, (I ed. 1859), General Books 2010, p. 69.
[13] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, pp. 52-3.
[14] *ivi*, p. 53.

> provinces. But Catherine's scenario carries no democratic implications. The "people" are themselves only actors supporting the chorus of the elite and confirming the dawn of a new era with Catherine's accession. There is no hint that rule derives from or even is beholden to popular sentiment.[15]

The reign of Catherine opened in the most optimistic atmosphere of changing in the direction of the progressive ideas of Enlightenment. The Empress clearly wanted to transmit an image of an enlightened sovereign: from 1762 to 1767 she led a correspondence with D'Alembert (the latter's refusal to become Paul I's preceptor notwithstanding), with Voltaire from 1762 to 1778. In 1773 Diderot came to visit her in Saint Petersburg. In 1765 she began the compilation of the *Nakaz* (Instruction), an edict proclaiming the Enlightenment principles of freedom and human rights in order to reform justice, which were to guide the work of the legislative commission (chaired by general Aleksandr I. Bibikov, but including also Ivan P. Elagin, prince Mikhail M. Shcherbatov, members of the Naryshkin family, and a son of Vasily N. Tatishchev).

In the realm of art and literature, she gave momentum to every genre of literary activity, from translation to journalism. She demanded the translation in Russian of foreign literary works, creating in 1768 the Society for the Translation of Foreign Works (assigning it the financial support of 5.000 rouble per year), which up to 1783 translated 110 works. She herself contributed to this activity, translating some passages from French *Encyclopédie* and Marmontel's *Bélisaire* (1767).

Her purpose was to renovate educational institutions, following French models, and she entrusted this task to Ivan I. Betsky, who will reform the Infantry Corps of Nobles and found the Smol'ny Institut, educational institution for noble maidens (see Chap. III- Part I – The Smol'ny Institute, and The Foundling Home (*Vospitatel'ny dom*)). Her personal ambition was to become, as a ruler, a cultural and spiritual guide for Russia.

On the opposite side though, her figure was characterized by a sort of double behaviour, certainly due to the unexpected reaction she found in the country she had to rule, if compared to her own expectations.

The Empress had strongly wished the development of an educated class, but the generation of writers and journalists that emerged from the educational institution she herself had created or renovated, soon raised against the limits and contradictions of her rule.

Catherine was in fact responsible for reforms that appeared in contrast with her progressive ideals: the works of the legislative commission had come to nothing concrete,

[15] *ivi*, p. 54.

having been interrupted in 1768, also due to the breaking out of the war with Turkey (1768), but mostly because they had come to a blind alley with respect to serfdom and the terrible life conditions of peasants. In 1785 she bestowed the charter to the nobility, which confirmed their right to own serfs and landed property, set the nobles free from the service and from the obligation to pay taxes that had been introduced by Peter I, and gave them the privilege to be tried, in cases involving loss of life, property, or noble status, by a court of their peers. In 1792, in the name of religious tolerance (against catholic intolerance), she occupied Poland for its partition after coming to an agreement with Frederick II for the succession of her former favourite Poniatowski, and with the praise of French *philosophes*.

These aspects of her rule were strongly criticized but essayists and journalists with the means she herself had supported.[16] Satire in particular, which she herself had supported and practiced writing on the journal *Vsyakaya Vsyachina* (Miscellany) with the pseudonym of Babushka, progressively became a weapon that was turned upon herself, to which she felt obliged to respond, initially with the same means of journalism, later with censure.[17] A new generation of writers (Novikov, Fonvizin, Kapnist, Khemnitser, Derzhavin, Kheraskov, Radishchev) escaped from her control and took an autonomous way that was often in contrast to the power.

Novikov had expressed his views on the journal *Truten'* (The drone, 1769), which will be closed down after one year by Catherine; in *Koshelyok* (The purse), notably after Pugachyov's revolt and the French revolution, he denounced the problem of gallomania in contrast to his idea of rediscovering Russian values, and Catherine' refusal to tackle the

[16] Among the journals issued in her time, one can list Kheraskov's *Vechera* (Evenings); Emin's *Adskaya pochta* (Hell's mail); Mikhail Chulkov's hebdomadaire *I to i syo* (This and that); *Smes'* (Miscellany); *Ni to ni syo* (Nor this nor that).

[17] According to Martinelli, "La satira evidentemente non può essere gestita o controllata dal potere e non può accettare i limiti entro i quali la denuncia fa il gioco del potere, e oltre i quali, invece, ne mina la stabilità. E allorché sarà varcato questo limite dagli scrittori dell'epoca di Caterina, che proprio da lei avevano ricevuto gli stimoli per un'indagine più approfondita della realtà russa e la spinta verso ideali umanitari e libertari, si creerà, complici anche le rivoluzioni oltre confine che scateneranno il terrore e la repressione di Caterina, quella spaccatura insanabile fra potere e *intelligencija*, cui s'è accennato, e di riflesso, ovviamente, entrerà in crisi il classicismo che della grandezza dello stato era portavoce e interprete." (Satire evidently cannot be managed or controlled by the power and cannot accept the limits within which the complaint is the game of power, and above which, however, it undermines stability. When this limit is crossed by the writers of the age of Catherine, who from herself had received momentum to further investigation on Russian reality and hed bee pushed towards humanitarian and libertarian ideals, the unbridgeable gap between power and *intelligentsiya* that has been mentioned will raise, with the help of abroad revolutions that unleash Catherine's terror and repression, and consequently, of course, classicism, which was the the spokesman and interpreter of the greatness of the state will be upset.) M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 83. For more details on some of her opposers, notably Novikov and Radishchev, see the entry *Russia*, by Vittorio Strada, in *L'illuminismo, Dizionario storico* (The Enlightenment, A historical dictionary), edited by V. Ferrone and D. Roche, Roma-Bari, Laterza 1997, pp. 409-17.

question of serfdom.[18] The uprising of Pugachyov in 1774, although ultimately defeated, had in fact revealed the resentment of the enserfed population toward the noblemen who composed the Westernized administration and culture of Petrine Russia.[19]

In 1782 Fonvizin's comedy *Nedorosl'* (The minor, 1782) was at the same time a mark and a cause of fracture between *intelligentsiya* and power. Later, on the journal *Sobesednik lyubiteley rossiyskogo slova* (The issue of the lovers of Russian literature, 1783-84), which had been founded by Catherine and directed by the princess Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, Fonvizin published his twenty-one challenging questions to the sovereign.[20]

It was the French revolution that made Catherine react, notably after the execution of Louis XVI on 21 January 1793. And this reaction was directed to the internal and external opponents. In 1790 the Empress ordered all Russians in France to return home; in 1791 French diplomatic representatives were no longer received at court; on 8 February 1793 the Empress signed a decree breaking off diplomatic relations with France and ordering exile of all French citizens in Russia (including the actors of the French troupe) who did not take an oath of loyalty to the French crown. Ships flying the French flag were barred from Russian ports and Russian citizens were forbidden to travel to France, to receive French newspapers, or to import French products.

As above mentioned, the 1790s in particular are characterized by a gap between *intelligentsiya* and power. This is clearly reflected in the anecdote that involved Princess Dashkova as Director of the Academy of Sciences, and her publication of Knyazhnin's tragedy *Vadim Novgorodsky* (Vadim of Novgorod) in 1793. Knyazhnin's tragedy was inspired by Catherine II's treatment of Vadim's revolt against Ryurik in her own play *From Ryurik's Life*. Disputing with her, the playwright had depicted Vadim as a champion of

[18] "È l'anno (1778) in cui Novikov inizia la sua eccezionale attività culturale e filantropica a Mosca, in cui Potemkin assume di fatto il governo del paese e Derzavin inizia la sua vera attività di poeta. Come s'è visto, la cultura vive uno dei suoi momenti più fervidi: la rivolta di Pugacev aveva scosso gli animi e risvegliato la coscienza nazionale facendo luce anche sulle drammatiche condizioni del paese; l'influenza della massoneria e delle idee rousseauiane avevano stimolato la ricerca dei valori nazionali. Intensa era l'attività degli storici e degli studiosi di folclore, alla ricerca delle radici autentiche di una società che andava rapidamente riorganizzano sé stessa." (This is the year (1778) when Novikov begins his exceptional cultural and philantropic activity in Moscow, when Potyomkin assumes the actual government of the country and Derzhavins starts his work as a poet. As we have seen, culture passes through one of its most fervent periods: Pugachyov's upraising had shaken the hearts and awakened the national consciousness also shedding light on the dramatic conditions of the country; the influence of Freemasonry and of Rousseau's ideas had given momentum to the research of national values. The work of historians and scholars of folklore was intense, looking for the authentic roots of a society that was rapidly reorganizing itself.) M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 113

[19] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, p. 62.

[20] Among these, a question was posed about the Russian national character, to which the Empress answered it consisted of "acute and rapid understanding of all, of the exemplary obedience, of the root of all virtues the creator gave to Man." M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 112.

Novgorod's ancient liberties who has to stab himself in the face of triumphant authoritarianism. Dashkova did not consider it as dangerous, since the author himself was a loyal monarchic. The play's message was that the Russian people expressed their feelings as loyal subjects to Ryurik: acknowledging Ryurik, they choose government instead of anarchy. Ryurik, in turn, offered his people the best form of government, which was that of an enlightened monarch. When the play was posthumously published in 1793, against the background of the French Revolution, the Empress ordered the public burning of all copies of Knyazhnin's play, and actually the 39th volume of the collection (the exemplar housed at the RNB of Saint Petersburg) lacks the pages where the tragedy was included.[21] *Vadim of Novgorod* was never performed and was not reprinted in Russia until 1914. According to Cinthia Whittaker, the contrast had raised because in Dashkova's time the only way to escape from tyranny was the killing of the tsar, or revolution, exactly what France had passed through. Dashkova didn't want this to happen to Russia. In contrast to the tyranny that developed in France with the revolution, the tyranny of the people, Dashkova proposed the Russian autocracy, which was to become, in her dreams rather that in her real expectations, a constitutional one, following the model of the British monarchy.[22] This is how she tried to justify her choice:

> Je lui [le grand-maître del la police] donnai l'autorisation qu'il domandait, en lui disant de ne pas s'imaginer qu'il dût trouver un seul exemplaire, mais qu'il verrait la pièces imprimée dans le dernier volume du Théâtre Russe, où l'Académie l'avait placé pour lui assurer plus de succeès; que s'il lui plaisait de lacérer ce volume, il était en droit d'opérer cette destruction, mais qu'il devrait m'excuser si je riais du prétendu danger imputé à ce malheureux ouvrage qui réellement était beaucoup moins hostile à la cause des souverains que la plupart des tragédies françaises jouées sur le théâtre de l'Ermitage.[23]

As Rogger remarks,

> The call for a return to Russian foundations and the rediscovery of the national heritage was hardly answered by these political measures. Nonetheless, the violence of the reaction to political events in France, especially when it expressed feelings of national pride and indignation which had existed before 1789 or 1793, served to reinforce a trend of opinion which asked Russians to be true to themselves and their country. But to be truly Russian once more, to return to the ancestral virtues,

[21] See *Rossiysky Featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh rossiyskikh featral'nykh sochineniy* (Russian theatre, or Full collection of all Russian theatrical works), Chast' XXXIX, v Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1793 goda.
[22] S. UITTEYKER (C. WHITTAKER), *E. R. Dashkova i eyo ideya samoderzhaviya* (E. R. Dashkova and her idea of autocracy), *Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, Issledovaniya i materialy* (Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, Researches and materials), edited by A. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, S.-PETERBURG, Rossiyskaya Akademiya Nauk, Sankt-Peterburgsky Nauchny tsentr 1996, pp. 68-9.
[23] E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff*..., p. 190.

> one had first to know what these virtues were, what elements there were in the national culture that were vital and unique.[24]

Rogger tells us how

> The events of French political history, especially after 1792, seemed to confirm many cherished prejudices about the harmful effects of a French education. Many Russians than ever before came to believe that the ease with which Frenchmen had overturned political arrangements held sacred for centuries, was only one more expression of the lightness of heart with which they approached most of life. A letter published in 1793 in a St. Petersburg review, and ascribed to the Princess Dashkova, stated that little better than the trampling underfoot of the most sacred laws of God and man could be expected from so flippant a people as the French. The lessons were obvious: Let us free ourselves from the foreign example and foreign teachers; let us return to sources of the national life. "Let Russians be Russians," the letter demanded, "not copies of a vicious original; let us always be patriots; let us preserve the character of our ancestors who were always firm in the Christian faith and in their loyalty to their ruler. Let us love Russia and the Russians more than the foreigners."[25]

This leads us to another aspect of her rule, which appears relevant in the perspective of the present work. In the search for the native Russian virtues, Catherine had led the way a good many years before the French Revolution made it necessary to protect Russians from gallomania and French Enlightenment ideas. Yet in the 1780s the Empress had lost interest in French *philosophes* and their abstract theories. As Martinelli points out, when Diderot came to visit her in Saint Petersburg (1773-74), the encounter was a little deceiving: the Frenchman found her absorbed in the concrete issues of her country life (notably Pugachyov's upraising). The Empress was progressively more and more attracted by the rediscovery of Russian national values, also in order to be not excluded from a process that was affecting the cultivated milieus of her country. The *intelligentsiya* was in fact rediscovering its original identity through researches in the realm of folklore and ancient proverbs, in order to catch the popular spirit (see Chap. III – Part II – The Birth of Russian Comic Opera). Novikov's journals *The Drone* (1769), *The Painter* (1772-73), *The Purse* (1774), and *The Tatler* (1770) were concerned with the problem of Russia's cultural independence and the discovery of native values.[26] Fonvizin was coming close to an

[24] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1960, pp. 69-70.
[25] *ivi*, p. 69.
[26] According to Rogger, "The dilemma of Russian "nationalism" in the eighteenth century is summed up in the person of Novikov. Unwilling to return completely to a past which had not yet become romantically transformed, incapable to glorifying a present which was so manifestly inglorious in many ways, he yet wished passionately to demonstrate that Russia had dignity and greatness of her own. To make that demonstration concrete was difficult, for Novikov was unwilling to become an uncritical defender of Russian reality (past or present) as he was unprepared to reject all that Europe had given her. He realized that Russian was not a world sufficient unto herself and that she could not yet live exclusively by her own cultural and intellectual heritage. This made his resistance to uncritical borrowing a call for self-awareness, a call for a more discriminating reception of the West, not its rejection." *ivi*, p. 75.

explicit answer to the problem of definition of the Russian identity, stating, possibly for the first time, what will be called the "Russian soul", that is, that Russian are more human, have more feeling, more heart, a greater capacity for love and happiness, in the lack of those pomp and show, vanity and greed of the sophisticated European society. Rogger finds in this attempt at a definition the premise for "the assumption of a certain continuity in the Russian intellectual environment and an influence which men who grew up in the early years of the nineteenth century could hardly have escaped."[27]

According to the historian, Catherine had known how to strike a national note from the moment of her elevation to the Russian throne:

> On the evening of June 28, 1762, and on the next day, the Empress showed herself to her guards and her people in a uniform of Petrine cut, with long flowing hair, and a hat decorated with a cluster of oak leaves. "These dresses," wrote the Princess Dashkova, who rode by the Empress' side during these triumphant days, "were the ancient national uniform of the Preobrazhensky guards, and such as had been worn ever since the time of Peter I, until superseded by the Prussian uniform introduced by Peter III."[28]

This possibly began even before her ascension, if we trust the Empress's memoirs, where she tells that Elizabeth appreciated her improvements with the Russian language.[29] The accession manifesto of 6 July 1762, written by Nikita Panin and Grigory Teplov, accused Peter III of hatred for the fatherland: Peter III was publicly blamed for the conduct of a foreign policy which debased Russia's hard-won glory by making peace with her most villainous enemy, Frederick the Great, and for planning costly and bloody wars which were not in Russia's interest, thus squandering state funds.[30] Also, he had scorned laws and justice, and had shown contempt for the Orthodox Church and religion, exposing the

[27] *ivi*, p. 84.
[28] *ivi*, p. 37.
[29] On one occasion, "L'Impératrice me graciosa beaucoup pendant ce dîner. Elle me dit que les lettres russes que je lui avais écrites à Chotilovo lui avaient fait grand plaisir […]; qu'elle était informée que je m'appliquais beaucoup à apprendre la langue du pays. Elle me parla en russe et voulut que je lui répondisse dans cette langue, ce que je fis, et alors elle voulut bien louer ma bonne prononciation." CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même, et précédés d'une préface par A. Herzen*, Londres, Trübner & cie. 1859, p. 31. Moreover, "[l'impératrice] me donna des femmes de chambre russes, afin, disait-elle, de me faciliter l'usage de la langue russe." *ivi*, p. 37.
[30] In her memoirs, possibly to legitimate her action towards her husband for the country's sake, Catherine often recalls the grand duke's preference for Prussian to Russian culture. For instance, according to her, "les bains et toutes les autres coutumes russes ou habitudes du pays, non seulement il les avait pris en grippe, mais même il les détestait mortellement." *ivi*, p. 129; moreover, "il me répéta, ce qu'il m'avait dit bien des fois, qu'ilsentait qu'il n'était pas né pour la Russie, que ni lui ne convenait aux Russes, ni les russes à lui, et qu'il était persuade qu'il périrait en Russie." *ivi*, p. 27. On occasion of the war between Russia and Prussia in 1757, Catherine records "[...] la peine que ressentait le grand-duc de la guerre qui venait d'éclater entre la Russie et le roi de Prusse, pour lequel il avait dès l'enfance un singulier penchant, qui n'avait rien d'extraordinaire au commencement et qui dégénéra en frénésie dans la suite. Alors la joie publique du success des armes de la Russie l'obligeait de dissimuler le fond de sa pensée, qui était qu'il voyait avec regret les troupes prussiennes battues, tandis qu'il les regardait comme invincibles." *ivi*, p. 281.

Orthodox Church to the extreme of a change in the old Russian faith and the acceptance of the foreign rite; in general, he was blamed for wanting to place the fatherland in foreign hands.

On the contrary, despite being an atheist devoid of piety and an admirer of Voltaire, Catherine first converted to Greek Orthodoxy, opened private home churches (previously closed by Peter III), and strengthened the influence of the clergy in censure.[31] She also put on demonstrative shows of her devotion to Orthodoxy and the church, staging magnificent pilgrimages that gave her religious observance all the splendour of a court spectacle.[32] She made clear that she, unlike her husband, would respect the religious traditions of Russia, a gesture necessitated also by her intention to proceed with the confiscation of monastery lands planned during her reign.[33] Aware of the bitter memories which Anna's reign had left among Russians, Catherine tried from the start to strike a truly Russian pose, indicating the degree to which national feelings had to be taken into account. Still in 1770 she had issued the *Antidote*, a nationalist essay aimed at disproving the anti-Russian arguments of Chappe d'Autroche's *Voyage en Siberie* (1768).

Her reign marked the emergence of an "official nationalism", the conscious identification of government measures and goals with what were felt to be truly national aspirations.[34] An evident manifestation of this trend was the ceremony Catherine organized in 1782 for the discovery of Falconet's monument she had erected to Peter I as the first maker of the national greatness. And the inscription she had posed on it, "Petro primo, Catharina secunda", was a symbolic gesture that emphasized the continuity of her rule with that of the great predecessor, a tradition to which most Russians could by now give their loyalty.[35] According to Rogger,

> The passage of time had removed the bitterest memories of Peter, and the more recent memories of foreign rule under Anna and Peter III had created the need for a heroic national figure to serve as rallying point and battle cry against foreign usurpation. Peter the Great, for the time being, became that figure, and Catherine, by paying demonstrative homage to his memory, tried to

[31] The demonstrative intent emerges for instance in her memoirs about the year 1759: "[…] la première semaine de carême, je jugeai à propos de faire mes dévotions, afin qu'on vît mon attachement à la foi orthodoxe grecque." *ivi*, p. 332.
[32] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, pp. 57-8. One of her first action after the coronation celebrations was her pilgrimage to Rostov (after Lent), which anyway hid the political aim to restart the secularization of church properties and to put into silence the opposition of the bishop Arseny Matseevich, whom Catherine will have tried and confined in Arkhangelsk.
[33] In spite of her love of court, Elizabeth was deeply religious. She visited convents and churches and spent long hours in church. It was according to her faith that she had wanted the Smol'ny monastery to be founded in St. Petersburg.
[34] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 34.
[35] M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 113.

> make it impossible for any opposition to claim him. By appearing his historical legatee, the executor of his aims, she wanted to bolster her slender claims to the crown.[36]

And in fact, Russia seemed willing to accept the image of Catherine as a second Elizabeth, judging by the fulsome expression of joy she received when welcomed by the Archbishop of Novgorod Sechenov as the new Empress, at the Uspensky Cathedral in Moscow, and during the post-coronation celebrations. As Rogger points out,

> Opposition to Catherine, which appeared soon after her coronation, might on occasion take on xenophobe shadings. But for the most part, the connection of national with dynastic feeling or with class resentment was broken. Manifestations of hostility against foreigners in government and support of a candidate to the throne under the aegis of a national restoration practically disappeared. […] Not even Pugachev, who proclaimed himself Russia's rightful ruler, made mention in his proclamations of the "foreign" Empress.[37]

Catherine's nationalism was the answer to the newly emerged type of Russian man. I espouse here the thesis of Satta Boschian, according to whom the real greatness and tragic destiny of Catherine's trajectory was centred in the intuition that this "new Russian man" "would always set himself in antagonism with absolute power. Therefore, and it could not have been different, the fidelity to Peter's line consisted for Catherine in choosing absolute power in spite of Enlightenment."[38] We shall soon see how music theatre will reflect the trajectory I've been trying to expose. It will include, for practical reason of the exposition, also the reign of her son, thus closing the span of 18th century considered in this work.

The Short Reign of Paul I

Catherine died on 6 November 1796. Having expired without regaining consciousness after the stroke she had suffered on the previous day, the Empress had no time to write the testament, in which she had planned to exclude her son from the succession and leave the throne to her grandson Aleksandr. This is why, despite his notorious brutality and ignorance, Paul ascended the throne. His rule went on in the spirit of the inscription he put on the monument to Peter I near the Saint Michael's Castle: "To

[36] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*…, p. 34.
[37] *ivi*, p. 42.
[38] "si sarebbe sempre posto in antagonismo con il potere assoluto. Perciò, e non poteva essere altrimenti, la fedeltà alla linea di Pietro è consistita per Caterina nell'aver optato per il potere assoluto a dispetto dei lumi." L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'Illuminismo e la steppa, Settecento russo, Seconda edizione con antlogia poetica* (The Enlightenment and the steppe, Russian 18th century, Second edition with poetic anthology), Roma, Edizioni Studium 1994, pp. 166-7.

the Great grand-father from the Great grand-son", an allusion to the Latin inscription dedicated by Catherine to Peter I, which puts Paul too on the line of the successors of the tsar, one of the strongest component of the Russian self-knowledge all long the 18th century. This idea of continuity notwithstanding, his short rule seemed to be intended to overturn all her mother's achievements. As Wortman observes, "If Elizabeth and Catherine had played the role of deliveratrix and benefactress of a rejoicing fatherland, Paul descended upon Moscow as the bearer of order and stability, the embodiment of the discipline that would eradicate the laxity of the "spirit of Potemkin"."[39]

The tsar restored compulsory service for the nobility, disregarding the terms of Catherine's Charter of the Nobility; prohibited the import of foreign books and forbade travel abroad. But, as Wortman points out, "By trying to strike his own image as the guardian of civic virtue, Paul offended the nobility's own sense of dignity, which under Catherine had become integral to their political and cultural identity.[40] Moreover, this severity did not respond to his own personal morality, and he continued to reflect the hedonistic spirit of the previous century. That's why the events concerning theatre during his short reign will be treated in this chapter as a prolongation of that of Catherine, without pointing out particular distinctions. It is with the final part of his reign that we shall reach the end of the scope of this work, which remains to be continued to the reign of Aleksandr I and Nikolay I in further research.

The reign of Paul I did not last enough to make durable changes in the life of the country: most of his reforms were to be soon cancelled by his son. A plot was organized by members of the nobility, whom he had greatly antagonized. Among them there were Count Peter von der Pahlne, Nikita Petrovich Panin, and the half-Spanish, half-Neapolitan adventurer admiral José de Ribas. During the night of 11 March (23 March) 1801, Paul was murdered in his bedroom in the newly built Saint Michaels's Castle by a band of dismissed officers headed by the German general Levin August von Bennigsen and the Georgian general Vladimir M. Yashvil. The conspirators had tried to compel him to sign his abdication, but when he offered some resistance, he was strangled and trampled to death. He was succeeded by his son, the twenty-three-year-old Aleksandr I, who was actually in the palace, probably aware of and silently condescending to the plot.

[39] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, p. 87.
[40] *ivi*, p. 92.

Chapter III - Part I – Troupes, Theatres and Staged Titles

Theatre Management

As many sources attest to, Catherine didn't share with her predecessor the interest for opera or music in general. This is witnessed by such remarks as the following: "Le grand-duc avait souvent des concerts pendant les après-diners, et lui-même y jouait du violon […] où je m'énnuyais ordinairement […]".[41] Also the adventurer and traveller Giacomo Casanova reports a witness concerning the Empress dislike for music:

> Un giorno, uscendo dall'Opera dove era stata data l'*Olimpiade* di Metastasio, la sentii dire queste precise parole: «La musica di quest'opera ha fatto a tutti un grande piacere, e di conseguenza ne sono felicissima, ma io mi sono annoiata. La musica è una bella cosa, ma non capisco come la si possa amare appassionatamente, a meno che non si abbia niente di importante da fare e da pensare. Ora faccio venire Buranello: sono curiosa di vedere se saprà farmi apparire la musica qualche cosa di interessante».[42]

[One day, coming out from the Opera House where Metastasio's *L'Olimpiade* had been given, I heard her say these exact words: "The music of this work has done everyone a great pleasure, and consequently I am very happy, but I have bored. The music is a nice thing, but I do not understand how you can love it passionately, unless you have nothing important to do and think. Now I'm going to invite Buranello: I'm curious to see whether he will be able to make music look for me interesting."]

Her indifference notwithstanding, the Empress understood that theatre, generally speaking, was a powerful instrument to express the Court's image, what we've been referring to up to now by recurring to Wortman's concept of 'scenario'. According to Mooser, "comprenant que la musique constitue l'un des éléments obligatoires de la vie de toute nation civilisée, Catherine II tint, en dépit de ses préférences propres, à lui donner la place que cet art était en droit d'occuper dans les préoccupations spirituelles de son entourage et de son peuple."[43] She considered theatre as a "school for the people", that had to be put, consequently, under her direct control, as she considered herself as "the teacher in charge of this school", responsible "to God for the nation's morals".[44]

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[41] CATHERINE II, *Mémoires écrits par elle-même…*, p. 65.
[42] G. CASANOVA, *Storia della mia vita* (History of my life), edited by P. Chiara and F. Ronconi, vol. III (1764-1774), Milano, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore 1996, p. 228.
[43] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 11.
[44] See V. BOROVSKY, *Theatre Administration at the Court of Catherine II: The Reforms of Ivan Elagin*, in *Theatre Research International* Vol. 24, No. 1, p. 45. "All the enlightened world knows how useful and at the same time amusing are theatrical works, fostering the moral education of children […] showing them in the characters on stage the gravity of wrongdoing, disobedience and many other human failings". Quoted *ibidem*.

Therefore, as Ritzarev points out, in Catherine's time music flourished freely as never before, paralleling the development of social life, broad cultural exchanges and technology. All the main forms of contemporaneous European music-making became firmly established, and the social circles of its consumers widened considerably. As we shall see, an almost instantaneous interweaving of the borrowed and the native took place, and by 1800 the ground had been laid for 19th-century Russian music to join the European community.[45]

After the coronation celebrations and a travel in the Eastern provinces of the Empire, Catherine came back to Saint Petersburg in middle June 1763. The new Empress's lack of interest in opera notwithstanding, the theatrical life of Saint Petersburg went on according to the usual rhythm.[46]

In 1764 the works at the New Winter Palace, started in 1755, came to an end. In the Palace, Rastrelli had projected two theatrical buildings: one had a more intimate character, the other was larger, and was called *Operny dom* (Opera House): it opened on 25 December 1763 with the performance of Sumarokov's tragedy *Sinav i Truvor*, and was intended to host the greatest stagings until 1783, when Catherine decided to have the Hermitage Theatre built, annexed to the Palace. According to Stählin,

> Этот новый театр, заложенный еще во времена императрицы Елизаветы оберархитектором Растрелли, хотя и был возведен в спешке, однако оказался уютным, достаточно безопасным и по-императорски великолепным. Над партером располагались в 4 яруса 60 лож с кабинетами, кроме того – три особых ложи, имевших кабинеты, обставленные с великолепием, для императрицы и великокняжеской четы. Перед всем партером и ложами, на фронтоне сцены установлены были большие часы с иллюминированным циферблатом,

[45] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, p. 79.

[46] Mooser gave an in-depth account of the repertoire of the first years of Catherine's rule, which I won't resume as an unnecessary diversion from the main purpose of this work. When Catherine ascended the throne, the Court was still mourning for Elizabeth's death, so in the first months after the succession there were only a few performances in Saint Petersburg. Among these, a new opera was premiered on 21 April 1763 for the Empress's birthday, on libretto by Locatelli set to music by an unknown composer *Il consiglio delle Muse*; on 10 October 1762, the ballet *Le pauvre Jourka*, created by some dancer Cesare, with music by Josef Starzer, inspired to the Russian peasant life; on 20 October 1762 the new ballet by Manfredini *Amour et Psiché*, created by Franz Hilverding; on 24 November 1762, for the Empress's name day, *L'Olimpiade* by Manfredini, staged with two ballets, *La vengeance du dieu de l'amour* and *Le seigneur du village moqué*, scenario by Franz Hilverding and music by Josef Starzer; on 25 January 1763 two ballets staged by noblemen-amateurs, created by Franz Hilverding: *Le combat de l'amour et de la raison*, musica by Dominik Sprinter, and *Le retour de la déesse du printemps*, possibly with music by Starzer. The last staged works by Manfredini were: *La pupilla*, on libretto possibly by Goldoni, and *La finta ammalata*, libretto by an unknoen author. On 24 November 1763 for Catherine's name day, a new opera was staged at the Winter Palace: *Carlo Magno*, by Manfredini, with ballets by Hilverding set to music by Josef Starzer. His *Olimpiade* was also staged before the Lent of 1763 in Moscow.

показывающие зрителям часы и минуты, чтобы при затянувшемся представлении им не нужно было прилагать усилия и доставать свои карманные часы.[47]

[This new theatre building, begun by architect Rastrelli yet at the time of Empress Elizabeth, although it had been built in a hurry, revealed itself comfortable, safe enough and great as required for an Empress. Over the parterre 60 boxes with cabinet were distributed in 4 galleries, and three special boxes with cabinets were furnished with pomp for the Empress and the couple of grand dukes. In front of the parterre and the boxes, over the stage a big clock was posed with an illuminated face, in order to show to the audience hours and minutes, for them not to be forced to make any effort in searching their pockets for their watches.]

As to the Hermitage theatre, at the beginning of 1783, months before the opening of the *Bol'shoy kamenny teatr* in Saint Petersburg (24 October 1783), in September 1783, Catherine ordered a private theatre to be located inside the Hermitage, and built by the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi, whom she had invited at Court some time before. The theatre was built on the left bank of the river Neva, conceived as a prolongation of the Winter Palace, which was called Hermitage in relation to the homonymous museum, where the sovereign used to receive her friends. Intended to host the Court performances, it reproduced the general setting of the Olimpico of Vicenza, by Palladio. It had a semi-circular hall (diameter 19 m) for the audience. The Empress and the members of the Imperial Family sat on the parterre. The stage was very big if compared to the hall, and it was provided with the most modern machines. Achieved in autumn 1785, it opened on 22 November with the comic opera *Mel'nik – koldun, obmanshchik i svat* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker) by M. M. Sokolovsky, which rehearsals took place on 16 November.[48] The official opening took place on 15 January 1786 with Sarti's *Armida e Rinaldo*,[49] opera *seria* on libretto by Marco Coltellini, previously set to music by Salieri in Vienna in 1771, and in Saint Petersburg in 1774.[50] The theatre was subject to several renovatios in different times. The theatre was intended for the personal use of the Empress

[47] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»»* (A chapter from the book by M. Johann Josef Heigolt *Supplements of the New Russia*), part VIII, *K istorii teatra v Rossii* (For a history of theatre in Russia), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny. Dokumental'naya khronika, 1730-1740* (Russian theatrical life at Anna Ioannovna's time. A documented chronicle, 1730-1740), vypusk I, edited by Starikova, Moskva, Radiks 1995, p. 597.

[48] G. KOMELOVA, A. PODEBINSKAYA, *Operny dom Zimnego Dvortsa (arkhitektura, ubranstvo, repertuar)* (The Opera House at the Winter Palace (Architecture, decoration, repertoire), in *Starinnye teatry Rossii, XVIII-pervaya chetvert' XIX v., Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Ancient theatres in Russia of 18th and first quarter of the 19th centuries, Collection of scientific works), edited by M. V. Shchedrovitskaya, Moskva, Gos. Tsentr. Teatr. Muzey im. Bakhrushina, 1993, pp. 45-6.

[49] According to Mooser, the libretto is housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB Rossica), whereas the score is housed at the Conservatory of Naples.

[50] The opera was repeated on 29 January at the Hermitage, and on 3 February at Tsaritsyn Lug. On 7 February Catherine had the performances given twice. According to Mooser, the autograph score dated 1785 is housed at the library of the Mariinsky Theatre, and copies are housed at the libraries of the Conservatory of Naples, Florence and Paris, at the Hofburg Library and in the collection of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of Music Friends) in Vienna. An incompleted version including only act II is hosed at the Conservatory of Bruxelles and in Mecklemburg-Schwerein.

and her narrow familiar entourage.[51] Almost a hundred spectators were regularly invited, but some times no more than twenty showed up. Performances were frequent in the 1780s. On 12 November 1797 Paul I, after the mourning period, gave start to the performances, which took place twice a week, and included an audience of around four hundred spectators. The theatre was not active during summer and autumn, when the Court settled in the out-of-town residences. The performances were staged by the Court troupes and by nobles-amateurs, members of the Court or of the Imperial Family. For the most magnificent performances, staff was reinforced by the Court *cappella* and other choirs, and by the musicians of the Guard's regiments. During Paul I's rule the Russian court troupe didn't perform in this theatre.[52]

Summarizing, Catherine had four theatres at her disposal during the first years of her rule:

- Two of them were in the Winter Palace, reserved to the Court, and provided with the necessary technicalities for the most lavish performances;
- The theatre at Tsaritsyn lug, next to the Summer Garden, which since 1757 had hosted Locatelli's performances;
- The theatre on the Vasil'evsky Island, inside the building of the Infantry Corps of Nobles, which had been the cradle of the newly founded Russian troupe.

When the empress ascended the throne, the French troupe had already been disbanded, and the Italian troupe that performed at the Little Court of Oranienbaum had merged with the Italian troupe of Saint Petersburg, its composer Vincenzo Manfredini being appointed *Kapellmeister*. On 9 October 1762 Catherine signed an *ukaz* engaging a French company to perform *opéra-comique*, replacing the one which had been disbanded by Peter III immediately after his accession to the throne. On 10 December 1762 a royal command was issued to engage further artists for the Court troupe.

Catherine gave the theatre a statute that was to be preserved by her successors. With her decree of 12 December 1765 she established a Directorate over the Russian theatre. In 1766 a reassessment of the Imperial scenes took place. Actually, according to Mooser, "si l'institution fondée par la tsarine Anna Ioannovna s'était fortifiée et améliorée sous le règne de l'impératrice Elisabeth Pétrovna; si, avec le temps, elle avait pris une

[51] With the *ukaz* of 12 July 1783 Catherine made known that the theatre was not at disposal of the Directorate of the Imperial Theatres. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg, Entsiklopedichesky slovar'* (Musical Petersburg, Encyclopaedia), vol. 3, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "KOMPOZITOR" 2000, p. 302.
[52] *ivi*, pp. 302-5.

extension considérable, elle conservait néanmoins le caractère d'improvisation qui avait marqué ses débuts, et n'obéissait encore à aucun d'ensemble."[53] The man who undertook the reconstruction of the Court theatre organization was Ivan Perfil'evich Elagin,[54] appointed by Catherine herself in 1766 'Director of Court Theatres and Music'.

According to Victor Borovsky,

> The tasks which Catherine had set before Elagin […] involved creating a fundamentally new administrative structure, capable of organizing systematically all the posts connected with the theatrical service and of producing the relevant financial accounts. […] The new structures, the Tsarina insisted, must exert decisive influence on the destiny and distinctive character of the Russian stage. As time confirmed, its unique development over an amazingly short historical period, and the deep artistic crisis at the end of the last century, both largely derived from those possibilities and limitations which Elagin's bureaucratic authority determined for the theatre.[55]

On 13 October 1766 Elagin laid on Catherine's table a document entitled *Stat vsem k teatram i k kamer i k bal'noy muzyke prinadlezhashchim lyudyam, takozh i skolko v god, i na chto imenno dlya spektakley polagayutsya summy* (Establishment Plan for all personnel belonging to theatres and the chamber and ballet orchestras, and likewise the amounts to be expended per annum and for what purpose precisely they are proposed).[56] The Court Office was instructed to proceed according to the scheme, even though it soon became clear that the proposed rationalization of the theatre service was beyond Elagin's capacity. Elagin's directorate was transformed into an independent State institution. All the Court troupes, orchestras, and also the personnel serving them came under this authority. This organization, which later received the name of 'Office of the Imperial Theatres', existed until to the revolution of 1917.

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[53] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 61.

[54] A man of considerable literary culture, Cabinet Minister of the Empress and one of the most influential members of the Chief Court Chancery, Ivan Perfil'evich Elagin (1725-1793) was educated at the Infantry Corps of Nobles at the same time as Sumarokov and Kheraskov. He formed a friendly relationship with Catherine while she was still the wife of the heir presumptive, and he served as an intermediary between her and her lover Stanisław Poniatowski, the future king of Poland. This brought him under suspicion of conspiracy, and he was banished from the capital by the Empress Elizabeth. His loyalty to Catherine was rewarded during her reign by a succession of official posts in which he could indulge his literary and cultural proclivities. In addition to her personal secretariat, Elagin in 1766 was appointed director of the Imperial Theatres.In 1748-51, An ensign in the Nevsky Regiment, Ivan Elagin was a clerk in the chancery of the Life Guards Company, where Sumarokov was effectively in charge. A man of broad education, who spoke several European languages fluently, Elagin won recognition for himself as a talented writer. The playwrights Fonvizin and Lukin, who had served under him in the Cabinet, valued his literary advice highly. His knowledge and taste were not inferior in other artistic field, such as music. Elagin showed interest in everything concerning theatre: sketches for costumes and their preparation, the standard of acting skill and their repertoire, the financial provision and strict control over expenditure. He translated into Russian *Der Freigeist* by J. W. Von Brawe, *Jean de France* by Ludvig Holberg, *Le Misanthrope*.

[55] V. BOROVSKY, *Theatre Administration at the Court of Catherine II…*, p. 43.

[56] Catherine approved the project on 13 October 1766, by means of an *ukaz* published in *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov* (Archives of the Imperial Theatres's Directorate), Vyp. I (1746-1801), edited by A. E. Molchanov, V. P. Pogozhev, K. A. Petrov, SPb., Izd. Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov, 1892, otdel. II, p. 88. See also *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 183.

With the introduction of the 'Plan', financial provision for the court theatres was set on a stable basis. The nominal occupant of the post was Lieutenant-Captain Vasily Il'ich Bibikov, who in 1765 yet had been named director of the Russian theatre to replace C. E. Sievers. Both the director and the institution responded to the *Pridvornaya Kontora* (Court Office), then administrated by Sievers.[57] With the *ukaz* dating 20 December 1766 Catherine appointed Elagin independent director of theatres and music.[58]

In 1783 the *Komitet dlya upravleniya zrelishchami i muzykoy* (Committee for the administration of performances and music), was created, headed by Adam V. Olsuf'ev.[59] Three years later (1786) the Committee was disbanded.[60] After this decision, several figures followed one another as directors of the Imperial Theatres (commonly called *Teatral'naya direktsiya*): S. F. Strekalov (1786-89); Khrapovistky and Soymonov (1789-91), N. B. Yusupov (1791-99), N. P. Sheremetev (from 14 February 1799), A. L. Naryshkin (from 28 March 1799).

With the *ukaz* dating 12 July 1783 Catherine decided also that Saint Petersburg should have two public theatres: the Bol'shoy (Kamenny), and the Maly (Derevyanny).[61] According to Ira F. Petrovskaya, the consequence was that "[…] after 1783 the personal role of the sovereigns in these questions decreased. In the question of repertoire the Directorate had to consider the taste not only of the sovereigns, but also of the permanent audience, to deal with revenues."[62] The decision, ascribed to the Empress's will to demonstrate her rule as an enlightened one, is probably bound, according to Borovsky, also to the desire to "extract the Russian theatre from the financial and artistic blind alley which it had reached in the second half of the eighteenth century."[63]

According to Borovsky, the theatre reform was not an isolated event, as far as already in 1763-64 Catherine had carried out a series of important reforms of the State

[57] *ivi*, p. 182.
[58] *ivi*, p. 183.
[59] *ibidem*. Adam Vasil'evich Olsuf'ev (1721 – 1784) was state secretary of Catherine II, member of the Senate, of the Russian Academy, and president of the Free Society of Economics. From 12 June 1783 till his death he was the head of the Committee for the administration of performances and music, and headed in particular the Russian troupe. Speaking several European languages, he translated into Russian the librettos of the Italian operas set to music by Araja: *Seleuco* (*Selevk*, 1744), *Mitridate* (*Mitridat*, 1747), *Eudossa incoronata, o sia Teodosio II* (*Evdoksiya venchannaya, ili Teodor II*, 1751). The translation of *Bellerofonte* (*Bellerofont*), though ascribed to him by some sources, was made on the contrary by I. S. Gorlitsky. Being also a good violin player, he took part to a concerts playing in the orchestra. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 278.
[60] *ivi*, p. 183.
[61] *ibidem*, p. 183.
[62] "<…> после 1783 личная роль монархов в этих делах уменьшилась. В вопросе о репертуарне Дирекция должна были руководствоваться вкусами не только государей, но и постоянной публики театров – заботиться о сборах." *ibidem*.
[63] V. BOROVSKY, *Theatre Administration at the Court of Catherine II…*, p. 46.

apparatus, which aim was, among others, to concentrate the paramount authority in the hands of a very small circle of people.[64] According to the scholar, the changes introduced by Elagin affected the process of elevation of the role of theatre in the consciousness of Russian society with striking rapidity: towards the end of the 18th century domestic *amateur* productions were becoming widespread in country estates of the nobility, and there was a marked change of attitude also towards the professional theatre:

> A striving to escape from a world of false, fashionable conventions to genuine, spontaneous feelings determined the attitude of Russians to their theatre and its actors. That attitude, reinforced by the policies of the ruling circles, and without parallel among other European nations, raised the national theatre to the level of a temple and a university.[65]

Elagin remained at his post for twelve and a half years, retiring at his own request. Without a single assistant and any financial reward for his theatrical duties, he directed four troupes (opera, ballet, Russian and French actors, and from the end of 1773 a French comic opera troupe), and opera and ballet orchestras. "Differing in the complexity of staging and machinery, and in the variety of costumes, the performances were given (and this was one of the chief requirements of the Court) in different premises and on different days, since the court troupes did not have their own separate buildings."[66] Outside workers were hired to assist the permanent staff. They were Russian, and according to Borovsky it is in this aspect that Elagin's main tactical objective lays. It was a matter of creating Russia's own national, and as far as possible hereditary, theatrical staff, a new generation of Russian actors and musicians, theatrical artists and workmen, who in Elagin's view must gradually force out the 'foreigners'.[67] Moreover, the new director paid much attention to the Russian composers who might write music for the stage; he personally decided on the repertoire, and where the Russian theatre was concerned, he also functioned as its censor.[68] Paradoxically, it was precisely this concentration of power that proved to be the beginning of the end of Elagin's theatrical career. As Borovsky points out,

> The attempts of his 'sub-lieutenants', as the Director-in-Chief called the creators of productions, to decide artistic questions for themselves, evoked from him a hostile rebuff. Elagin was especially indignant at foreigners, who enjoyed the protections of the all-powerful aristocracy

[64] *ivi*, p. 44.
[65] *ivi*, p. 45. Actually, Borovsky points out that "In contrast to the overwhelming majority of theatre administrators who succeeded him, Elagin gave scant attention to the French company and at times commented quite harshly on their productions." *ivi*, p. 46.
[66] *ivi*, p. 47.
[67] *ibidem*.
[68] *ivi*, p. 50.

> and of the Empress herself. In his reports to Catherine and his correspondence he complained frequently about 'the harmful and talentless newcomers'.[69]

Conflicts with the ballet master Angiolini and the composer Paisiello raised during his administration. The principle of unquestioning obedience, which in the early years of his management led to far-reaching changes in Russian stage art, turned soon into an obstacle to its progress.[70] Moreover, Catherine did not like the mixing of ballets, operas, and comedies on the same evening, nor the insertion of allegorical dances in the ballets themselves, nor repeat performances of those productions which had not met with her approval.[71] On 21 March 1779 by decree of Her Imperial Majesty Elagin was granted his discharge from the direction of the court theatres and music, where he was replaced by Vasily Il'ich Bibikov.[72] Nevertheless, after he had handed over the directorship, Elagin remained at Court for several years, and Catherine continued to value his advice highly, until the mid-eighties.[73]

The Time of Great Composers

According to Mooser,

> […] Catherine II, dont on sait l'importance extrême qu'elle attacca toujours aux choses de l'esprit, et singulièrement à celles du théatre en lequel elle voyait avec raison l'un des plus féconds éléments de culture de son peuple, ne recula, […], devant aucun sacrifice pour attirer, à Saint-Pétersbourg, l'élite des compositeurs, des instrumentistes et des chanteurs de son époque.[74]

The year 1765 actually saw the beginning of a great succession of internationally known composers, with whom Catherine enriched her Court, starting with the arrival of Baldassarre Galuppi, who was invited to replace Vincenzo Manfredini.[75] Already known in

[69] *ibidem*.
[70] *ibidem*.
[71] *ibidem*.
[72] *ivi*, p. 52. On 21 May 1779 according to Petrovskaya. I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 183.
[73] According to Borovsky, "In all likewood, the reason for Catherine's subsequent coldness towards him is to be found in Elagin's Freemasonry." V. BOROVSKY, *Theatre Administration at the Court of Catherine II…*, p. 51.
[74] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…,* I, p. 353.
[75] Among the last productions by Manfredini in Russia: the 'Cantata drammatica' *Le rivali*, at Tsarskoe Selo on 28 June 1765 for the coronation anniversary, libretto by Lazzaroni. According to Stählin the libretto was printed with its French translation with the title of *Minerva ed Apolline* [*sic*]. Mooser confirms that it is the same work, because the main characters are actually Minerva and Apollo. *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti*, 26 August 1765, advertise the selling of its Russian translation. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 45.

Russia thanks to the staging of his works by Locatelli's troupe, Galuppi was to be invited during Peter III's short rule. On 22 September 1765 he arrived to Saint Petersburg, where he had been called to direct performances and compose new works. The activity of the composer though, maybe due to the great reknown he wanted to exploit, was not as fertile, in number of works, as that of his predecessor, because he staged mostly works that he had already created for other theatres. The repertoire staged in Russia by the Venetian composer includes:

- *La virtù liberata*, 'cantata drammatica' for five voices on libretto by Lazzaroni, staged on occasion of the Empress's name day on 24 November 1765.[76]

- *Didone abbandonata* (at the end of February 1766), 'dramma per musica' in three acts on libretto by Metastasio, already premiered in Modena in 1741.[77] The opera was performed together with two ballets, *Les amants réchappés du naufrage*, and *Le sculpteur de Carthage*, performed with sets by Pierre Granger and Léopold Paradis, and music by Manfredini. After the première it was staged again twice during Easter celebrations, on 12 July and on 25 November.

- *La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza* (28 June 1766), 'componimento drammatico' on a libretto by Metastasio, with music, possibly lost, by Galuppi.[78]

- *Il re pastore* (26 September 1766, Court theatre), 'dramma boschereccio' on libretto by Metastasio, premiered in Milan in 1752. According to Mooser, for the Russian production the performance was reduced to two acts. The libretto was translated in Russian, German, and French, and printed in Saint Petersburg together with the original.[79]

[76] The libretto was translated in Russian and French, and published in St. Petersburg. Exemplars are housed at the British Museum (in Italian and French) and at the Book Museum of Moscow (MK RGB, in Italian and Russian). According to Mooser, a copy of thefull score was housed till the 1930s at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre, but was lost due to mistakes in its classification. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 60.

[77] The libretto was published without date with the translations in Russian, French and German (The exemplar in Italian and Russian is housed at the Russian National Library). Scores are housed at the library of the Conservatory of naples, at the Ricordi Archive in Milan, at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[78] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *La Pace fra la Virtù e la Bellezza, componimento drammatico per musica, da cantarsi nell'Imperial Corte, il di 28 June 1766, festeggiandosi il glorioso giorno del avvenimento al Trono dell'Imperial Maestà di Caterina II, Imperatrice di tutte le Russie, etc. etc. etc.*

[79] An exemplar of the Italian-Russian libretto is housed at the Library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN). The score seems to be lost, even tough according to Mooser at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre an homonimous opera is ascribed to Araja, who never composed works with this title. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 75.

It was staged with Angiolini's ballet *Le départ d'Enée, ou Didon abandonnée*, *ballet héroïque* in three acts, but had no success.[80]

- *La cameriera spiritosa*, 'opera giocosa' in three acts, premiered in Milan in 1766, staged in summer 1767 in Moscow, where Catherine had been accompanied by the court troupes. On that occasion the opera was staged with the title *La governante astuta ed il tutore sciocco e geloso*,[81] together with the ballets *Un amour d'Alexandre, ou Plaisir et Amour*, with music by Gluck (possibly the *ballet-pantomime Alessandro*, which the composer had written before 1764, on a scenario by Angiolini), and *La constance récompensée*, with music by Manfredini (his last Russian production), on a scenario by Angiolini.

- The only important opera that Galuppi is said to have composed for Russia is *Ifigenia in Tauride*, 'dramma per musica' in three acts, staged on 21 April 1768 at the Court theatre, on a libretto by Marco Coltellini.[82] It contains four ballets by Gasparo Angiolini (scenario and music): *Ballet de prêtresses*, *Ballet de furies*, *Ballet de matelots*, *Ballet des nobles Scytes*. Sets were created by Francesco Gradizzi. According to Stählin, the subject was chosen to exploit the Court *Cappella*, which, according to the literate, had been much appreciated by Galuppi: "aussi conçoit-on que, sentant l'éclat et les effets saisissants que pareil choeur était capable de prêter à ses ouvrages dramatiques, le compositeur se soit empressé d'utiliser abondamment celui-ci dans les partitions qu'il écrivit en Russie."[83] Galuppi inserted in the score at least ten vocal *ensembles*, some of them much developed, which impressed the audiences. The opera was repeated three times at Court.

[80] The libretto was published in French, German and Russian in St. Petersburg in 1766 (Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library). The score was published in Venice when the opera was staged in 1773, with the title *La partenza di Enea, ossia Didone abbandonata.* It is housed at the Biblioteca Estense of Modena, whereas a manuscript copy is housed at the library of the convent of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. According to Stählin, the opera was premiered on 15 September. YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»»*…, pp. 600-2.

[81] The libretto was published in Italian, French and Russian. Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library.

[82] The libretto was published in St. Petersburg in Italian, French and Russian; a German translation appeared in 1769. Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library, and at the Public Library of Genoa. Two manuscript copies of te score are housed respectively at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre and at the Library of Könisberg.

[83] He also composed numerous a cappella pieces for the liturgy, having been charged of the direction of the Cappella. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 71.

In September, Galuppi already left Russia, his three-year contract having expired. His post as Court composer for the Italian company was soon occupied by Tommaso Traetta. The composer remained in Russia in the years 1768-75, although a very few documents have survived concerning his stay. Among the repertoire staged during his tenure there are:

- *L'isola disabitata*,[84] comic opera in one act by Metastasio, given for the carnival 1769 in Saint Petersburg.[85] The opera was premiered in Bologna a few months before, but the libretto had been originally written for Vienna. Mooser suggests the idea that the composer tried to take advantage of the distance from Europe to make believe that the opera had been created on purpose, because Stählin considers it as a newly made. The libretto was translated in Russian and issued in both languages.[86]

- *L'Olimpiade*: premiered in 1758 for the opening of Verona's Teatro Filarmonico, it was staged on the occasion of Catherine's birthday on 21 April 1769, after a small revision, which included, according to Keldysh, the insertion of four choruses, performed on stage by the Court *Cappella*.[87] The libretto by Metastasio was translated in Russian and French, and issued in all three languages in Saint Petersburg in 1769.[88] Ballets were created by Angiolini. The opera was revived in the mid-1770s.

- *Antigono*, on libretto by Metastasio,[89] premiered in Padua in 1764, and staged in Saint Petersburg on 22 September 1770, after a revision reducing the opera to two acts, possibly in order to obtain a performance that lasted not too much, since the opera was staged together with at least one important ballet. Ballets were created by Angiolini on

[84] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 162.
[85] *ibidem*.
[86] According to Mooser, the only manuscript score of the opera is housed at the Library of the Mariisnky theatre. A microfilm copy of this exemplar is housed at the Conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome.
[87] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 162.
[88] According to Mooser, exemplars in French and Russian are housed at the Russian National Library and at the library of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg (BAN), in Italian at the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt. Four copies of the Peterburgian score exist, housed respectively at the Conservatories of Bruxelles, Dreseden and Paris, and at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. The score of the 1758 version is lost.
[89] According to Mooser, the libretto was published in St. Petersburg in Italian and French (exemplar at the Book Museum of Moscow) and in Italian and Russian (exemplars at the Russian National Library and at the French National Library of Paris). The only preserved version in two acts of the score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

music by Raupach: among these, *L'asile [o Le refuge] de Cupidon*, which music by Raupach is lost.[90] Sets and machines were created by Gradizzi and Brigonzi.

By the end of 1772 Traetta composed three new operas for the Winter Palace theatre:

- *Antigona*, in three acts, premiered on 11 November 1772[91] (Not to be confused with *Antigono*).[92] The libretto was the first that Marco Coltellini wrote for Russia, where he had assumed the vacancy after Lazzaroni's departure in 1768. The libretto opens with a celebrative poem, *Ode alla Sacra Maestà di Caterina II*, translated in Russian by I. A. Dmitrevsky, and in French by an unknown author.[93] The same subject of *Antigona* was later chosen by Dmitry Bortnyansky for his *Creonte*, staged at the Venetian San Benedetto theatre in 1776.[94]

- On the occasion of the wedding between the Grand Duke Paul and the Princess Wilhelmina of Hessen-Darmstadt (who was baptized as Nataliya Alekseevna at her conversion to the Orthodox confession), Traetta composed the 'pastorale' in three acts *Amore e Psiche*, on libretto by Marco Coltellini (previously set by Florian-Léopold Gassmann and staged in Vienna in 1767).[95] Since the ceremony took place on 29 September 1773, the performance might have been staged on the same or on the following day. According to Mooser, it is possible that Traetta added some scenes including choruses to the old libretto, in order to enhance this peculiarity of the Russian Court theatrical staff, as he had done with *Antigona*.[96]

[90] The scenario is preserved at the Russian National Library.
[91] According to Mooser the libretto is housed at the Royal Library of Stockholm.
[92] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *Antigona, tragedia per musica di Marco Coltellini [sic], poeta al servizio di S. M. I., da rapresentarsi nell'Imperial Tetro di St. Pietroburgo, anno 1772*. The score, according to Mooser, is housed at the Landesbibliothek of Darmstadt, at the Conservatory of Music in Paris, and at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre. The orchestral parts are housed at the Königliche Hausbibliotek of Berlin.
[93] According to Mooser the libretto was printed at the Academy of Sciences, and is nowadays preserved in several exemplars: Italian-Russian at the Russian National Library and at the Royal Library of Stockholm; the French version at the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt. The score is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre, in St. Petersburg.
[94] G. KOMELOVA, A. PODEBINSKAYA, *Operny dom Zimnego Dvortsa…*, pp. 35-46.
[95] According to Mooser the libretto was translated in French by P. - Ch. Lévesque and in Russian by an anonymous author, with the title *Kupidon i Psikhe*. Exemplars of the Italian-French version are housed at the Royal Library of Stockholm, at the Russian National Library, and the British Museum and at the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt. Exemplars of the Italian-Russian version are housed at the Russian National Library. The score is lost.
[96] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 111.

- *Lucio Vero*, 'dramma per musica' by Apostolo Zeno,[97] which also is said to include numerous new choruses.[98] Ballets were created by Granger to music by Raupach.

Traetta's activity at the Russian Court is very poorly documented, notably after this staging. On 30 June 1775 the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (Moscow gazette) announced his departure.[99] His place was soon occupied by Paisiello, who was to have a great fame from his activity in Russia, at Catherine's court from 1776 to 1783.[100] We can distinguish two lines in the composers' activity in Russia: he began composing *seria* for the main state celebrations, as it was customary for the role of *Kapellmeister*. Later on, and starting around 1780, Paisiello received increasing commissions of comedies, progressively leaving aside *seria* also in the main state occasions. According to Elena S. Khodorkovskaya in fact, in 1777 Catherine had ordered to enlarge the staff specialized in the comic genre.[101]

In any case, Paisiello's activity began with the 'traditional' forms related to the celebrative role of the Italian troupe.

- On 16 January 1777 at the Winter Palace theatre the dress rehearsals of his first opera composed for the Russian court took place: *Nitteti* was premiered on the following day.[102] The opera was performed by Italian and Russian singers,[103] with ballets by Gasparo

[97] The title page of the libretto reads as follows: *Lucio Vero, dramma per musica di Apostolo Zeno, da rappresentarsi nell'Imperial Teatro di St. Pietroburgo. L'anno 1774*. The libretto was printed in St. Petersburg with a French translation by Lévesque, and a Russian one by I. A. Dmitrevsky (Italian-russian exemplars are the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt; Italian-French exemplars at the British Museum, at the Russian National Library and at the Royal Library of Stockholm. The score is preserved in several copies: at the Library of the Mariinsky Theatre, at the Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt, at the Conservatory of Paris and at the Library of Congress.

[98] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 112.

[99] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 165.

[100] The composer was hired by means of a letter containing the three-year contract sent at the end of June 1776 by Ivan Porfil'evich Elagin. He arrived to St. Petersburg at the end of August 1776. Unfortunately, almost all the letters he sent to Abbot Galiani, apart those of the years 1781-83, are lost.

[101] "<…> в 80е гг. Придворный оперный театр, обеспеченный артистическим персоналом для 2 оперных жанров, переживает период своего наивысшего расцвета." *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 412.

[102] According to Mooser the libretto was published in two versions: the Italian-French version (with translation by an anonymous author) reads as follows: *Nitteti. Dramma per musica del celebre Sig. Pietro Metastasio, da rappresentarsi nell'Imperial Teatro di Pietroburgo, il Carnovale dell'anno 1777. In St. Pietroburgo, nella Stamperia dell'Accademia delle Scienze.* A Russian anonyme translation is housed at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK), made on the occasion of its revival in 1780; the Library of the Congress houses an Italian version dating 1788. According to Mooser, the autograph score is housed at the Coservatory of Naples, and contains recitatives and an aria from Act I which are not by Paisiello: *Nitteti. Opera in Musica. Originale di Giovanni Paisiello. Da rappresentarsi nel Real Teatro di S. M. L'Imperatrice di tutte le Russie. Nel 1777*. A copy of the score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[103] In 1773 the Italian Court troupe included two Russian singers: Charlotte Shlakovskaya and Agathe Yavorskaya.

Angiolini, sets by Francesco Gradizzi and machines by some Dampieri. It was fully appreciated, as attested by the several encore performances.[104]

- The next opera that Paisiello composed for the Russian court was *Lucinda e Armidoro*, 'azione teatrale' on libretto Marco Coltellini.[105] The opera might have been staged between September and December, and possibly on 24 November for the Empress's name day. The score is in two acts, responding to Catherine's usual request for performances to be short. Ballets were created by Angiolini, and sets by Gradizzi. According to Mooser, Catherine praised the opera in a letter to Grimm (22 December 1777), overcoming her prevalent indifference to music.[106]

- For the birth of Aleksandr Pavlovich, the first son of Pavel Petrovich and the Princess Sophie-Dorothée de Württemberg (future Paul I and Mariya Fyodorovna) and heir to the Russian throne, Paisiello received from Prince Potyomkin the commission for *La sorpresa delli Dei*, on libretto by Locatelli, staged on 12 December 1777 at his palace.[107]

- The Court also celebrated the event, for which Paisiello composed *Achille in Sciro*, on libretto by Metastasio formerly set to music by Antonio Caldara in Vienna in 1736. The opera was staged at the Winter Palace on 26 January 1778, with sets by Gradizzi and ballets by Angiolini. The libretto was published in three languages in 1778.[108] According to Mooser, it was reduced, possibly by Coltellini, to two acts only, probably to

[104] On 2 July 1777 and 23 September 1778 in St. Petersburg. In 1780 it was staged for the celebrations organized for the meeting of Catherine II and Joseph II: on that occasion the libretto was re-printed; there is also a further edition dating 1788, possibly made for a revival.

[105] The libretto was issued in Italian, French and Russian (translations by unknown authors), printed in St. Petersburg in 1777 (Exemplars are housed at the A. A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum and at the Russian National Library (RNB). The Russian translation was also included in the collection *Russian Theatre*: *Lutsinda i Armidor Muzykal'naya dramma, predstavlennaya na IMPERATORSKOM TEATRE 1777 goda* (Lucinda e Armidoro, Music drama staged at the IMPERIAL THEATRE in 1777), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXXII, 1790. According to Mooser, five manuscripts exemplar are preserved, housed respectively at the Conservatory of Naples (incomplete autograph), at the Conservatory of Paris and at the French National Library, at the Preussische Staatsbibliothek of Berlin, at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[106] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 209.

[107] The title page reads as follows: *La Sopresa delli dei. Serenata per Musica festeggiandosi la nascita di Sua Altezza Imperiale Alessandro Paulowitsch, Gran Duca di tutte le Russie, etc. Rappresentata in una Festa data dal Principe de Potemkin. Monseigneur Alexandre Paulowitsch, Grand Duc de toutes les Russes, etc. Représenté dans une Fête donnée par le Prince de Potemkin. L'azione si finge sul Monte Olimpo. La Poesie è di G. B. Locatelli. La Musica del Sig. Giovanni Paisiello, all'attual servizio di Sua Maestà Imperiale.* Printed in St. Petersburg in 1777, it is nowadays housed at the Russian National Library and at the library of the University of Göttingen.

[108] The Italian-French version of the libretto is housed at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK), while an exemplar of the Italian-Russian version is housed at the Russian National Library (RNB). According to Mooser, five exemplars of the score are preserved: an autograph with recitatives by an other author is housed at the Conservatory of Naples, copies of the score are housed at the Conservatory of Paris and at the French National Library, at the Preussische Staatsbibliotek of Berlin and at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

go along with Catherine's wish not to spend so a log time in theatre. Later, it was revived on 9 February, and possibly further.

Achille in Sciro was the last opera *seria* composed for the Russian court. In summer 1779 his opera *Demetrio* was performed at Tsarskoe Selo on the occasion of the birth of Pavel Petrovich's second son, Konstantin, but it had not been commissioned to Paisiello in Russia, having been created in Modena in 1765. Here it had sets created by Gradizzi and ballets by Canziani.[109] The libretto by Metastasio, published in Saint Petersburg with French and Russian translations, was reduced from three to two acts, possibly for the same reasons as before.[110]

- On 25 November 1780 Paisiello had his 'festa teatrale' *Acide al bivio* staged at the Hermitage theatre.[111] The libretto by Metastasio, written in 1760, had been set to music by Hasse at the Vienna Court theatre on the occasion of the wedding of Joseph II and Princess Isabella of Parma. It was accompanied by five ballets, the last set to music by Canobbio;[112] sets were created by Gradizzi.[113]

The composer's role changes with his second contract, which was signed in April 1781.[114] After more than forty years of supremacy, opera *seria* was being overcome by the comic genre, that, initially fostered exclusively by private troupes, was finally conquering a firm place in the official life of the Court. For instance, on the same occasion of the birth of Konstantin Pavlovich, Paisiello received by Grigory Orlov the commission for the opera *buffa La bottega del caffè* on libretto by Goldoni. Libretto (if ever published) and score are considered lost, but attest the introduction of opera *buffa* in the main occasions of the State life. This departure in the repertoire seems a consequence of the shift in the audience's

[109] According to Mooser the score dating 1779 is preserved in two exemplars: one with recitaties by an anonymous composer is housed at the Conservatory of Naples, a copy at the Libray of the Mariisky theatre.
[110] Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library (RNB) and at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK).
[111] The title page reads as follows: *Acide al bivio. Dramma per musica del celebre Sig. Pietro Metastasio, da rappresentarsi Nel Teatro di corte in occasione del felice giorno dell'Augusto Nome di Sua Maestà Imperiale Catterina II, Imperatrice di tutte le Russie. A St. Pietroburgo, 1780.* The libretto was published in St. Petersburg in 1780, in Italian, Russian and possibly in French. Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB) and at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK)
[112] In 1779 the Italian troupe acquired, as violin player, ballet composer and vice conductor in the stagings, Carlo Canobbio. For more details on Canobbio's activity in Russia see R. - A. MOOSER, *Violonistes-compositeurs italiens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle. VII. Carlo Canobbio VIII. Giovanni-Mane Giornovicchi dit Jarnowick*, in *Rivista musicale italiana* (Italian journal of musicology), LII (1950), pp. 55-70
[113] According to Mooser, Paisiello's score is preserved in four exemplars, housed respectively at the Conservatory of Naples (the autograph), at the Conservatory of Bruxelles, at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre and at the Russian National Library (RNB, Act II exclusively).
[114] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*..., vol. 2, p. 326.

preferences produced yet during Elizabeth's rule by the activity of Locatelli's troupe. During the reign of Catherine, the genre was practiced by the private troupe of Mariano Mattei and Angiola Orecia (see below – The Italian Private Troupe of Mattei - Orecia), which staged, among others, also operas by Paisiello, such as *La Frascatana* (autumn 1778). The troupe will be invited to produce itself at the theatre of Tsarskoe Selo opened in summer 1779.[115] Possibly, the shift from opera *seria* to *buffa* was led also by financial issues, which were actual during Catherine's rule. Since 1779 operas *buffa* began to come one after the other on Court's stage. The repertoire includes the following operas by Paisiello:

1779

- *I filosofi immaginari*, 'dramma giocoso' in two acts on libretto by G Bertati. It is the same as Bertati's *I visionari* (formerly set to music by Filippo Maria Gherardeschi in 1765, Pasquale Anfossi in 1771, Gennaro Astaritta in 1772), having received a new title for the staging in Russia.[116] The premiere took place on 3 February at Winter Palace; during summer 1779 Catherine wanted it to be repeated three times; later, it was staged in Mogilev on the occasion of the Empress's meeting with Joseph II, on 29 May 1780. On this occasion Joseph II requested Paisiello to send him a copy of the score; he had it translated in German by Gottlieb Stephanie and staged in Vienna at the Court theatre on 22 May (n. s.) 1781 with the tile *Die eingebildeten Philosophen*. The Mattei-Orecia troupe also included the opera in its repertoire (see below – The Italian Private Troupe of Mattei - Orecia). The opera was staged in Russian also, in an anonym translation, in Moscow eleven times in the period 1794-96, and later in Saint Petersburg, where it was advertised in 1800 with the singer Avdotiya Vorob'yova in the main female role.

- *L'idolo cinese* (Naples, 1767), staged on 19 August: at Tsarskoe Selo. The libretto by G. B. Lorenzi was published in Saint Petersburg in 1779 in Italian, Russian, and

[115] "кроме "придворных театральных обществ в продолжение нынешнего лета также немецкое и итальянское общество будут играть" (except for "the Court theatre companies, during this summer the German and Italian troupe will perform") *Sanktpeterburgsky vestnik* (St. Petersburg's herald), quoted from *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 325.

[116] The libretto was published in Italian and Russian (exemplar at the Russian National Library), and in French. According to Mooser, the amnuscript score is lost. A score issued in Paris in 1780 titled *Le philosophe imaginaire, opéra bouffon en 3 actes.* (*Paroles de Mr du Buisson, Musique del Sig. Paisiello*) is housed at the Conservatry of Naples. Manuscript copies of the score are housed at the Conservatories of Bruxelles and Florence, and in other European libraries. Two copies are housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre: one of them is titled: *Astrologi imagginarii* [*sic*].

French.[117] Canobbio composed the music for the ballets, and sets were made by some Bigari, an unknown painter who some time worked for the Infantry Corps of Nobles and for the Imperial Theatres. According to Mooser, it gained less success than in Naples, because the allusions to the clergy were not appreciated. Anyway, it was staged also on 22 June 1780 during Joseph II's stay at Tsarskoe Selo.[118]

Lo sposo burlato, 'dramma giocoso' in two acts by Giambattista Casti, re-discovered by Luigi Pistorelli at the National Library of Paris, Paisiello not having mentioned it in his autobiography. It is a little opera for five voices, which libretto had been translated in Russian. According to Mooser, who had discovered the libretto,[119] there exist no advertisement of the opera's staging, but a note on the manuscript indicates the performers.

- *Il matrimonio inaspettato*, commissioned by Pavel Petrovich for the opening of the theatre he had had built in his residence on the Kamenny Island, on 21 October.[120] For the occasion Paisiello had revised his *Il matrimonio inaspettato*, premiered in Rome in 1767. He virtually re-composed it, and according to Mooser it can be considered a totally new opera.[121] Ballets were created by Canziani. The opera was staged in the following year on the occasion of Joseph II's and Prince Henry of Prussia's stay in Saint Petersburg.

1780

- *La frascatana*, staged in Mogilev on 27 May 1780 for the meeting in Mogilev of Catherine II and Joseph II.

[117] The title page of the French version reads as follows: *L'Idole chinoise, drame burlesque en musique, en 3 actes, traduit du russe en prose par MM. Wolkow et Lechavoi, élèves du gymnase de l'Académie des Sciences, musicque de Mr. Paesiello. Représenté sur le nouveau Théâtre de Zarco-Selo [sic]. St.-Pétersbourg. Imprimerie de l'Académie impériale des Sciences. 1779.* This latter version, made from the Russian translation by Volkov and some Léchavoï (student of the Infantry Corps of Nobles), are housed at the Russian national Library.
[118] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 235.
[119] A Russian version is housed at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK).
[120] According to Mooser, the title page of the two exemplars of the score read as follows: *Il matrimonio inaspettato, opera buffa messa in Musica dal signor Giovanni Paisiello, per l'apertura del Nuovo Teatro di S. A. I. il gran duca di tutte le Russie, à Camennoi Ostrov. L'anno 1779, il di 21 8bre.* The Italian libretto, with the French translation titled *Le mariage imprévu* was published without place and year of edition, possibly in St. Petersburg at the moment of the première. The only exemplar is housed at the Library of the Congress. An autograph score is housed at the Conservatory of Naples, while a copy is housed at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre.
[121] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 237.

- *La finta amante*, commissioned to Paisiello for the same occasion, staged on 29 May 1780. The libretto was issued in Saint Petersburg without a date, but it should refer to the same occasion, because the performers are the same. Its author, not mentioned, could be Casti, particularly appreciated by Joseph II.[122] The opera was staged also on 25 August at the Court's theatre, for Henry of Prussia's visit to Saint Petersburg. On 3 January 1783 the Italian troupe gave it as a benefice for Locatelli, who was possibly in financial troubles in the last part of his life.[123] Later, the Russian Court troupe staged it (in 1785, and often in the period 1789 - 99) in the Russian translation by Golenishchev-Kutuzov, arranged for Paisiello's music setting by Zakhar Kryzhanovsky.[124] The Russian troupe of Moscow gave ten stagings between 1787 and 1799. In 1799 it was revived three times by the Italian Court troupe.

1781

- *La serva padrona*, staged at Tsarskoe Selo on 30 August 1781. For the occasion Paisiello had to recur to the libretto by Gennaro Antonio Federico, after having waited in vain for new librettos by Giovanni Battista Lorenzi. The libretto was subjected to some changes.[125] The opera was performed by Anna Davia de Beruncci (Serpina) and Baldassarre Marchetti (Uberto), and gained a resounding success, witnessed by the numerous revivals.[126]

1782

[122] The libretto was printed in italian, French and Russian: the latter version, by P. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, was made through the French one (exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library). According to Mooser, the score is preserved at the Conservatory of Naples, at the Conservatory of Bruxelles, at the Library Estense in Modena (with the title of *La finta ammalata*), at the Conservatory of paris, at the British Museum, at the Austrian State Library of Vienna and at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre.
[123] Announcement on *Saint Petersburg Gazette*, 30 December 1782.
[124] The manuscript score of the Russian version of the opera is preserved at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library (RNB OR) of St. Petersburg.
[125] The libretto was printed in St. Petersburg in Italian, French and Russian (translation by I. Dmitrevsky); exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library and at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK). Several exemplars of the score are housed in European libraries. I had access to the manuscript score housed at the M. I. Glinka Museum of Musical Culture, which was prepared to be sung in Russian (with Russian text).
[126] In 1784 and 1785, at the Smol'ny Institute on 17 January 1782, at the Petrovsky theatre on 15 January 1782. In the two latter cases the music composer is not precised, but it is possibly Paisiello (and not Pergolesi). The French troupe produced it on 27 October 1782, on 10 December 1782, and again in 1795. Il 20 July 1789 it was staged at the Russian Imperial Theatre, translated in Russian probably by Ivan Dmitrevsky. In this form, produced in the capital at least till 1802, the opera was later staged in Moscow, where it stayed in the repertoire till 1800.

- *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, staged in Saint Petersburg on 15 September at the Court Theatre.[127] After the death of Marco Coltellini in 1777, the post of Court poet remained vacant, and it is traditionally thought that the composer recurred to Giuseppe Petrosellini (1727 - 1799 ca.) for the redaction of the Italian libretto, the poet having already provided to him the *intermezzo Le due contesse* two years before. The musicologist Lorenzo Bianconi put forwards some doubts about the authorship of the libretto, due to the numerous Gallicisms of the text, which suggest that the author was not an Italian native speaker.[128] The libretto was issued the same year in Saint Petersburg with a French translation, and a Russian one by Ivan Vien.[129] In Russia the opera was repeated numbers of times in the years 1784-85, by the Russian troupe in 1790, and by the French troupe in Gatchina in 1797 (possibly in Framery's version). In Moscow it was staged at the Petrovsky theatre (see Chap. III –Part II) in the years 1797-99.[130]

1783

- The last opera Paisiello gave in Russia was *Il mondo della luna*, on libretto by Goldoni, commissioned from the Court for the opening of the Bol'shoy-Kamenny theatre on 24 September 1783. The libretto had already been set to music by Galuppi in 1750, and Paisiello too had worked on it for his *Il credulo deluso*, staged in Naples in 1774. Paisiello himself, or more possibly a librettist who remains still unknown,[131] reduced it from three to two acts, as usual for the Russian stage.

[127] As a comedy, Beaumarchais's *Le barbier the Séville* had gained much success, and also the French children's troupe of the Bois de Boulogne had performed it. Immediately after, the French Court troupe had staged it on 22 January 1782.

[128] Francesco Paolo Russo in his critical edition of the score puts forward three hypothesis about the libretto's authorship: according to the scholar, the libretto could have been written by one of the translators that served at Court at that time (such as Ivan Dmitrevsky, Mikhail Popov or Ivan Vien), or by the French musician Nicolas-Etienne Framery, or else by some Italian poet Angelo Talassi, who was in Russia till the month of May of tha same year. F. P. RUSSO, *Note sulla tradizione del libretto* (Notes on the libretto's tradition), in G. PAISIELLO, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, critical edition edited by F. P. Russo, vol. 1, Laaber, Laaber Verlag 2001, pp. 57-8.

[129] Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library and at the Library of the Congress. The score is preserved in several exemplars, due to its success. The autograph is housed at the conservatory of Naples, Paisiello having sent it to the king of Naples by means of Andrey Razumovsky, Russian ambassador to that Court. F. P. RUSSO, *Note sulla tradizione del libretto* (Notes on the libretto's tradition), in G. PAISIELLO, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, critical edition edited by F. P. Russo, vol. 1, Laaber, Laaber Verlag 2001, p. 58. The score was also published in Paris after its sataging at the Trianon theatre on 14 September 1784 in the French version by Framery.

[130] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve, 1776-1805* (The Maddox theatre in Moscow, 1776-1805), Moskva, Rabotnik prosveshcheniya 1927, *Prilozhenie* (Appendix), pages not numbered.

[131] At that time the Court had no Court poet appointed. According to Mooser, the score is housed at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre, together with the libretto. The autograph score is housed at the Conservatory of Naples, while two copies are at the Conservatory of Paris, and one at the Hofburg library in Vienna.

In the last months of 1783 a conflict raised between Paisiello and the members of the committee. The composer left Russia on 25 January 1784, planning to be back to Saint Petersburg the following year, and promising to send the Court music, but also professionals such as singers, actors, and composers, according to the needs of the Committee.[132] Actually, the composer possibly never had such intend, since by the end of December 1783 the King Ferdinand IV of Naples (Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies) signed his appointment as "Maestro di cappella, compositore della musica dei drammi, per il servizio della Corte reale".[133]

The crisis was possibly due to the situation of debt, which stroke the Imperial theatres in this moment, after years of a seemingly irresponsible financial administration. Vasily Il'ich Bibikov, director since 21 May 1779, was considered responsible for the situation, and therefore was replaced, with an *ukaz* signed at Tsarskoe Selo on 17 July 1783, not by a single figure, but by a Committee of six members, headed by the private counsellor Adam Vasil'evich Olsuf'ev. The other members of the committee were general-lieutenant Melissino, the chamberlain Divov and Prince Golitsyn, general Mayre Soymonov,and Pyotr Vasil'evich Myatlev, the latter named director of all performances.

This decision was motivated also by the more complex theatrical structures of the city life that had been developing. In 1783 the Imperial Theatres acquired the German and Russian private troupe of Karl Knipper (see Chap. III – Part I – The "German Theatre", and From Knipper's German Theatre to the Russian Independent Theatre). The following organs were now employed by the Directorate:

- the Italian troupe for concerts and operas *seria*;
- the Russian troupe;
- the Italian troupe for comic opera;
- the French troupe;
- the German troupe;
- the corps de ballet;
- two orchestras (for operas and ballets);

[132] The title page reads as follows: *Achille in Sciro*, *Alcide al bivio*, *Andromaca*, *Gli astrologi immaginari*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Dal finto il vero*, *Demetrio*, *Didone*, *Le due contesse*, *Il duello comico*, *Elfrida*, *La finta amante*, *I giuochi di Agrigento*, *L'idolo cinese*, *L'infante da Zamora*, *L'innocente fortunata*, *La locanda*, *Lucinda e Armidoro*, *Il marchese Tulipano*, *La modista raggiratrice*, *La molinara*, *Il mondo della luna*, *Nina o La pazza per amore*, *Nitteti*, *Le roi Théodore à Venise*, *Gli schiavi per amore*, *La serva padrona*, *Lo sposo burlato*, *Il tamburo notturno*, *Le vane gelosie*, *I zingari in fiera*. See R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle, conservées à Léningrad*, in *Revue de musicologie*, T. 25, No. 77/78 (1946), pp. 29-37.

[133] The King of Naples had *Il barbiere di Siviglia* staged at the Theatre of Caserta on 23 November 1783.

-the personnel.

The Committee appointed Ivan Afanas'evich Dmitrevsky as inspector of the Russian troupe, H. Floridor for the French one, K. Fiala for the German troupe, and G. Paisiello for Italian opera (*seria* and *buffa*), and for the orchestra.

Accessibility to the theatres had been enlarging, notably towards the popular masses, and the theatrical staff itself had been increasing. According to Mooser, "C'est, pourrait-on dire, à la démocratisation relative des scènes de la cour, que l'on assiste à ce moment, démocratisation bien conforme aux idées que Catherine II professait, quant à la valeur du théâtre, comme moyen d'éducation des masses populaires"[134]. From a private institution purse of the Court, the Imperial Theatres were becoming a public institution, intended to encourage the cultural development of the community.

Although it enjoyed some autonomy, it had to face up with financial questions. The Committee thus decided on a more sober economical treatment of the artists, who had to be engaged on invitation, and, when arrived to Russia autonomously, appointed only after an examination. The Committee had no monopoly (as it was in the case of Elagin) on the single troupes' performances: every theatre could be administrated autonomously, which meant that all theatres, excepted for the Bol'shoy Kamenny, which was a Court's own property, could be rented to private boards. The Court Cappella singers could be requested for operas *seria*, court concerts and comic operas. Among these, those who showed a particular talent could be engaged to perform as soloist in operas, notably Russian. Just on the purpose of pointing out single talents, notably national, the Committee could allow benefice-concerts to single artists. Actors, musicians and dancers could be sent abroad to improve their skills, for which expenses were taken upon by the Directorate.

At the beginning of the last year of the contract, every artist should express his will to sign (or not) a new contract, in order to to assure continuity in the staff. Catherine also accorded better conditions of retirement to Russian than to foreign artists: Russian could receive up to a half of their salary, whereas the foreigners up to a third.[135]

A school was created in 1783 to educate the artists to *Russian* theatre, to music, dance, and other jobs necessary to the theatre. The aim was not only to educate artists to complete the existing troupes, but also to replace, with time, foreigners with local

[134] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 334.
[135] On this purpose a portion of their revenues was annually withdrawn and deposited at the bank of the Foundling Home, in order to earn interests.

personnel.[136] The idea was not new, because Elagin yet in 1766 had projected a school of this type, but nothing had come out by that time. The school was now created in a building property of the Court, called *Teatral'ny korpus* (Theatres corps), that received a first group of pupils by the end of 1783. This fact alone disproves, in my opinion, Calvocoressi's thesis, according to which "Catherine the Great promoted only Italian music."[137] Moreover, we will have the occasion to see how the Empress pushed for a Russian theatre not only form the administrative point of view, but also from that of the repertoire, contributing herself with some works (see Chap. III – Part II – *Opera Komicheskaya* – A Repertoire Sketch).

As anticipated, on 24 September 1783 the staging of Paisiello's *Il mondo della luna*, on the occasion of the coronation anniversary, marked the opening of a second, bigger public theatre in Saint Petersburg. In fact, before this date the city had at its disposal only the wooden theatre at Tsaritsyn lug, which was no more up to the needs of the growing audiences. Catherine had thus ordered still in 1781 the construction of a new theatre, for which she designed the site "près de la Kolomna [one of the South-Eastern quartiers of the capital], entre la canal de la Moïka et celui de Catherine",[138] a site where there was a primitive theatre for popular entertainments. The surveillance of the works was entrusted by Catherine to general F. W. Bauer, an engineer, whereas the projects were provided by architect Ludwig-Philipp Tischbein[139], who in 1779 had submitted the tsarina two projects for theatres in Saint Petersburg and Moscow. The new theatre consisted of three levels of boxes, an amphitheatre and the paradis, three rows of sits for the most high ranks of the Empire, and several benches for the common people. The curtain too was designed by Tischbein. Over the main entrance a statue representing Minerva led the Latin inscription: "Vigilando quiesco". The theatre was provided also with a fire system, which though could not prevent its destruction on 1 January 1811. Some time after the opening in

[136] The document is published in *Arkhiv Imperatorskikh teatrov* (Archives of the Imperial Theatres), Vyp. I (1746-1801), edited by A. E. Molchanov, V. P. Pogozhev, K. A. Petrov, SPb., Izd. Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov, 1892. Otdel II.

[137] "La Grande Caterina (1762-1796) protesse soltanto la musica italiana." M. D. CALVOCORESSI, *Panorama della musica russa* (original title: *A Survery of Russian Music*), edited by L. Fuà, Milano, Tarantola 1947, pp. 25-6.

[138] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 342.

[139] A painter, engraver and architect, Ludwig-Philipp Tischbein (1744 – St. Petersburg 1806), had studied with his father in Cassel, where he had initially committed himself to theatre decoration. Later he was in Rome and in Paris, and came back to Cassel in 1777, where he started teaching at the Academy of Fine Arts. Catherine invited him in 1779 as scenographer. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 343 n.

1783, Catherine publicized the distribution of performances between the two public theatres throughout the week:[140]

the Kamenny theatre staged Russian comedies on Tuesdays and Italian operas *buffa* on Fridays, both accompanied with ballets;

the theatre at Tsaritsyn lug staged Russian comedies on Sundays, German comedies on Wednesdays, French comedies on Saturdays;

on Mondays the theatres gave performances in alternance, but without ballets.[141]

In 1783 the administration initiated the publication of *Feuilles imprimés des spectacles* (800 runs, distributed to the subscribers) concerning information about the stagings.[142] The issue existed till the end of the tsarist regime, counting at its end several dozens thousands subscribers.

On 1 January 1784 the Committee gave off a document of Regulations directed to all the Court Theatre personnell. On 14 February 1786 Catherine suppressed the Committee itself, and entrusted the administration of performances again to a single director, Stepan Fyodorovich Strekalov.[143] The decision was due to the permanent difficult financial situation of the theatres, also caused by the fact that all noblemen attended the performances without paying any ticket, and disdained the pay performances of the Kamenny. Moreover, the expenses for the personnel and the stagings kept on increasing.

[140] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* of 20 October 1783.

[141] From 16 May 1784 the Committe increased the weekly performances for the period up to 1 September: at Tsaritsyn Lug the Russian troupe performed on sundays; the German one on Wednesdays; the French one on Thursdays. At the Bol'shoy-Kamenny every Saturday the Russian troupe aleternated with the Italian troupe of opera *buffa*. For the Winter season the schedule was organised as follows: at the Kamenny theatre the Italian trupe worked on Tuesdays, and the Russian one on Frideays. At Tsaritsyn Lug German perfromances were given on Wednesdays, French ones on Thursdays, Russian ones on Sundays; Monday was the day reserved to private Court perfromances.

[142] *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov…*, II.

[143] Some members of the Commettee, first of all Olsuf'ev, had already left so that at the beginning of 1786 it was reduced to three members: prince N. A. Golitsyn, P. A. Somoynov and P. I. Melissino. Stepan Fyodorovich Strekalov (1732 or 1728 – 1805) was a state secretary of Catherine II, and directed her cabinet in the years 1784-92. Being a great connoisseur of theatre, on 19 December 1785 he was appointed by Catherine to direct the activity of the *Komitet dlya upravlenuya zrelishchami i muzykoy* (Committee for the administration of performances and music), which suffered from strong debts and the decadence of the national theatre. On 14 February 1786 he was appointed inspector on performances and music, while the Russian troupe was posed under the administration of V. I. Bibikov. At the same time, the Committee was disbanded. Strekalov is told to have preferred Italian opera to Russian theatre; under his administration the French troupe was considered second only to their Parisian equivalents. Anyway, the financial conditions of the Directorate was more and more bad, and on 3 March 1789 he was by Catherine replaced with P. A. Soymonov and A. V. Khrapovitsky. On 14 February 1786 Catherine entrusted the administrations of the Russian troupe to V. I. Bibikov, who had been previously the head of the Imperial theatres in 1765. See *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…,* vol. 3, p. 107.

Strekalov turned out to be the wrong person anyway, because in 1789 he was dismissed, having left an enormously increased deficit.

On 3 March 1789, Aleksàndr Vasìl'evich Khrapovìtsky [144] and Pyotr Aleksandrovich Soymonov[145] were appointed head of the Directorate of the Imperial Theatres. The financial problems led the two directors to considerably reduce the Italian and German troupes. In 1790 the financial situation was worse, and a radical solution was imposing, leading to the definite closure of the German and Italian theatres.[146]

As pointed out by Mooser, this decision had positive consequences on the life of the Russian troupe, to which a composer of international level as Martín y Soler was appointed as *Kapellmeister*, with a contract signed on 1 October 1790.[147] It was the first time that a foreign composer of such renown was appointed to that troupe. Moreover, the troupe obtained vocal forces of high level, because such singers as the Italian Guglielmo Jermolli, dismissed from his disbanded troupe, were acquired by the Russian one, where they will sing in Russian.[148]

Khrapovitsky and Soymonov were suddenly removed from their posts due the abuse of their power they recurred to towards the singer Elizaveta Sandunova (and her lover, also a singer, Sila Sandunov).[149] They will be replaced by prince Nikolay Borisovich

[144] Aleksandr Vasil'evich Khrapovitsky (1749 – 1801) was State secretary of Catherine II from 1 January 1783. On 3 March 1789 he was charged of the direction of the Imperial theatres together with P. A. Soymonov, and together with him he was dismissed from the post on 12 february 1791. During his direction, he payed much attention to the Court orchestras, and more than once proposed the development of the Italian operatic troupe. He was also a poet, and wrote the libretto of the opera *Pesnolyubie* (Melomania), in which he does the parody of the typical landowner passionate of music. The music was composed by Martin y Soler, and the opera was premiered in St. Petersburg on 5 january 1790. Krapovitsky was also co-author of some of the librettos written by Catherine II, writing couplets and choruses. See *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 229.

[145] Pyotr Aleksandrovich Soymonov (1737 – 1800), general major, member of the Russian Academy. From 12 July 1783 to 14 February 1786 he was a member of the Committee for the administration of performances and music (*Komitet dlya upravleniya zrelishchami i muzykoy*), notably charged of the direction of the Teatral'naya shkola. From 27 January 1788 for some months he replaced S. F. Strekalov as director of the Imperial Theatres. From 3 March 1789 he was appointed director of performances and music together with Aleksandr V. Khrapovitsky, but was dismissed together with him on 12 February 1791 because of the protest of the singer E. S. Sandunova. The playwright I. A. Krylov, who had offered two operatic librettos to the directorate, accused him of opposing to the development of Russian opera. See *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 103-4.

[146] This is probably the reason why Sarti, being restored in 1791, did n0t give any opera until the Empress's death in 1796. Cimarosa anyway maintained his position, while Moretti saw his contract renewed. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 307.

[147] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 546.

[148] See *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov….*

[149] In his article about the event, Andrey Zorin points out how the opera and the request of grace by the couple Sandunov were intertwine in a representation of Catherine's ideology at the time of French revolution. See A. ZORIN, *Redkaya veshch' ("sandunovsky skandal" i russky dvor vremen Frantsuzskoy revolyutsii)* (*Una cosa rara* (the "scandal of the Sandunovs" and the Russian Court in the age of the French revolution)), in *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* (New literary review), No. 80, 2006, http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2006/80/.

Yusupov,[150] who will be Director of the Imperial Theatres from 12 February 1791 up to 4 February 1799.[151] According to Arapov, "In a short time he arranged the administration of theatres and under his administration the Russian stage was completely revived."[152] He was particularly active in the administration of the Imperial theatres and the Theatre School: in 1791 he created the post of main *rezhissyor* of all Russian performances (including operatic ones), appointing to it the actor Ivan A. Dmitrevsky (27 October 1791), with educative and administrative functions. In 1794 three new teachers were assumed by the Theatre School: Lev' Ershov for string instruments, Franz Tureck for winds, Ivan Val'berg for dance, who also became inspector of the ballet troupe. In 1797 Yusupov also created the post of *repetitor* of the operatic parts in the Russian troupe, to which Evstigney I. Fomin was appointed.[153] The singer (tenor) Ivan Petrov was named inspector, whereas Antonio Amati was charged of the musical education of the Russian singers.

Immediately after Paisiello's departure the Committee started searching for a composer, able to perpetuate the tradition of Italian opera at Court. As seen, this tradition was deemed to last till 1790, to be then interrupted numbers of time, anyway changing its ways of functioning. As a consequence, the role itself of Italian composers had to adapt to new needs, as in part it was noticeable in Paisiello's career: we have already pointed out the shifting in the repertoire from the genre of opera *seria* to that of opera *buffa* (with

[150] Nikolay Borisovich Yusupov (1751 – 1831) was born in a family of the ancient aristocracy. He was the son of prince Boris Grigor'evich Yusupov (1695-1759), who had been a great lover of theatre, and the director of the Infantry Corps of Nobles, encouraging the cadets' attempts at creating the Russian troupe in the late 1740s. Having served in the army since his very youth, in 1771 Nikolay Borisovich started travelling all thorugh Europe, coming into contact with such figures as Diderot, Beaumarchais and Voltaire, whom he visited in Ferney. After ten years abroad (1772-82) he came back to St. Petersburg, where he was appointed court chamberlain. In 1783 Catherine sent him to Turin as her minister plenipotentiary and extraordinary ambassador (1783-89). In 1788, after several missions in Venice, Naples, and the Papal States, he was called back by Catherine to be a member of the Senate. Beyond occupying the post of Director of the Imperial Theatres, he became also Court Marshal, and directed the Imperial factories of glass and ceramics (from 1792), and was the president of the Ministery of manifacture (from 1796), and director of the Hermitage museum since 1797. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 307.

[151] On the contrary, some sources attest the appointment of prince Aleksandr Andreevich Bezborodko as director at their place, on 11 February 1791 was appointed. Aleksandr Andreevich Bezborodko (1747 – 1799), chancellor, prince, had studied in the *Dukhovnaya akademiya* in Kiev together with M. S. Berezovsky. He lived in St. Petersburg since 1775, and, being a state secretary for Catherine II, dealed with issues concerning theatre, translating the Empress's orders to the functionaries, and solving possible problems between the Directorate and musicians. He was also a distinguished patron of arts, and his protection to the singer E. S. Uranova (Sandunova) caused the dismissing od A. V. Khrapovitsky and P. A. Soymonov from the post of directors of the Imperial Theatres. In the 1790s he often organized concerts and masquerades, also at his palace. It was to his commission that Cimarosa composed the cantata *La sorpresa* (1790 or 1791), for five voices and choruses, with ballet. He was also fond of popular music, often performed at his house by the singer I. G. Rozhkov. See *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 117-8.

[152] "Он в короткое время привел в порядок управление театрами и при нем русская сцена пришла в совершенное оживление." P. ARAPOV, *Letopis' russkogo teatra* (Chronicle of Russian theatre), Sankt-Peterburg, v tipografii N. Tiblena i komp. 1861, p. 100.

[153] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 307.

aftermaths, though, in the former genre). The composers who followed him at the post of *Kapellmeister* were progressively involved in the activity of the Russian theatre, with growing commissions for contributions to the national repertoire (see Chap. III – Part I – The Time of Great Composers). This involvement is what most interests us in our perspective of the experiences ascribable to the formation of a Russian operatic repertoire. As a consequence, much more attention will be drawn to that part of their activity, than to the Italian opera production, which I'm going to rapidly review.

The Committee found Paisiello's successor in Giuseppe Sarti, who was then *maestro di cappella* at the Milan Cathedral. His first stay at the Russian court lasted from 1784 to 1786.[154]

The first opera was given by Sarti for the coronation anniversary (22 September) or the Empress's name day (24 November 1784): *Gli amanti consolati* opera *buffa* in two acts, libretto by an anonymous author, already produced in Turin five years before. For this staging the opera was seemingly revised, because the autograph score preserved at the Town Library of Faenza (Italy) leads the indication "composta per ordine di S. M. I. Caterina II".[155] It will be revived in Moscow in 1797 for the coronation celebrations of Paul I.

Possibly, Sarti was also the author of the music of Luisa-Rosa Todi's *Pollinia*, 'festa teatrale per musica', written in 1784 for one of the same occasions. When the singer performed her opera in Moscow on 23 April 1787, the newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti* ascribed the music to Antonio Sacchini, but Mooser is inclined towards Sarti, or at least for Todi's husband Francisco Xavier Todi. The libretto was printed in Saint Petersburg in 1784 with the French translation *Polyhymnie, Fête théâtrale mise en Musique*, and a French dedication to Catherine.[156]

For Carnival 1785 Sarti staged in Saint Petersburg *Idalide*, on libretto by Ferdinando Moretti, staged before in Milan in 1783.[157]

[154] On 12 July 1786 Sarti received the communication that his contract was not to be renewed, possibly due to his conflict with the singer Luisa Todi.
[155] P. ZAMA, *Opere musicali di Giuseppe Sarti possedute dalla Biblioteca comunale di Faenza* (Music works by Giuseppe Sarti housed at the Town Library of Faenza), Faenza, Stabilimento grafico F. Lega 1933, p. 4. Copies of the score are housed at the Conservatory of music of Florence, and at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.
[156] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 425.
[157] The libretto was printed in St. Petersburg in 1785 with its French translation. An exemplar is housed, according to Mooser, at the Royal Library of Stockholm.

On 19 October 1785 the composer gave his first benefice at the Kamenny theatre: *I finti eredi*, staged together with a small, newly composed opera: *Amor notaio*, possibly by Sarti himself.[158] For the first opera Sarti had revived a libretto by Bertati, *Il villano geloso*, already set in Prague and Copenhagen with the title *I finti eredi*, the same that he will use in Saint Petersburg. On this occasion he also reduced it from three to two acts.

In 1786 Sarti composed, for the 24th coronation anniversary, *Castore e Polluce* on libretto by Ferdinando Moretti, an adaptation of the libretto that P. J. Gentil-Bernard had prepared for Rameau in Paris in 1737. Moretti reduced the subject from five to two acts.[159] The opera, staged possibly 22 on September at the Hermitage theatre, did not gain the expected success, Catherine having commented "Castor et Pollux est un superbe spectacle; […] pour les faiseurs de comédies, un opéra est un peu dur à la digestion."[160]

There is no information concerning the engagement of Domenico Cimarosa, which possibly happened through the mediation of Duke Antonio de Serra-Capriola, Minister plenipotentiary of the King of Naples at the Russian Court. Also the conditions of the contract seem to have totally disappeared. Among the Italian composers' activity in Russia, the one of Cimarosa is the most obscure. Moreover, Cimarosa himself seems not to have left any personal memoir concerning Saint Petersburg.[161] The composer arrived to the city on 2 December 1787. During his stay, he produced far fewer works than his predecessors.

On 24 February 1788 he staged at the Hermitage the 'cantata pastorale' with ballets *La felicità inaspettata*, in two parts (14 scenes) on a libretto by Moretti. The libretto was not issued, but it was included by Moretti in the collection of his works.[162] The cantata

[158] According to Mooser, Sarti had composed a totally new music. The libretto was printed in St. Petersburg in 1785, in Italian and French (Exemplars are housed at the Russian National Library and at the Library of the Congress); the title page of the former version reads as follows: *I finti eredi. Opera comica, da rappresentarsi nel Teatro Imperiale diPietroburgo, l'anno 1785, composta nuovamente dal Sigr. Giuseppe Sarti, Maestro di Capella in attual servizio di S. M. Imperiale di tutte le Russie. In Pietroburgo, nella Stamperia di Breitkopf*. According to Mooser, the autograph score is preserved at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre, while copies are housed in several European libraries. Later the opera was staged in Vienna (1786), Dresden (1787), Milan (1792), Padua (1793), Lisbon (1894) , Venice (1799).

[159] The libretto was printed in St. Petersburg in 1786, in Italian and French. The title page of the Italian version reads as follows: *Castore e Polluce. Dramma per musica per celebrare il giorno glorioso dell'Incoronazione di S. M. Caterina II. La poesia è una tradzione libera dell'opera francese del Sig. Bernard. Da rappresentarsi nelli Teatri Imperiali di corte e della città.* An exemplar is housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg.

[160] *Recueil Sté impériale d'histoire*, T. XXIII, letter to Grimm of 24 September 1786. Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 443. According to Mooser the score is housed at the Conservatory of Paris, while the orchestral parts are housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[161] The librettos of his operas also were not printed.

[162] The autograph manuscript is housed at the Library of the Conservatory of Naples. Copies are housed at the Conservatory of Florence and at the Mecklemburg-Schwerein Library (the latter dated 1791). The title

made a bad impression on the Empress, who wrote about it and the *Missa pro defunctis*, which he had composed for the funeral of Duchess Serra-Capriola who died on 12 December: "Cimarosa a fait ici la messe des morts pour la duchesse de Serra-Capriola, et una opéra comique dont je donnerais pas dix sous; Mais cela peut être précieux pour les amateurs et connaisseurs; il y avait des chanteurs détestables; les bons sont tout partis [….]"[163]

On 29 June 1788, Saint Peter and Saint Paul's day, at the Hermitage, the 'cantata drammatica' *Atene edificata*, on libretto by Moretti which, non published, does not appear in his collection either.[164] The cantata was based on the story of the foundation of the city of Athens, but according to Takashi Yamada, the names of the main characters Aglauro and Cecrope, and the storyline itself, are clear references to Catherine the Great and her favourite Grigory Aleksandrovich Potyomkin, who had married in secret in 1774. Potyomkin was called "the Cyclops" because he had lost an eye in a fight.[165] This idea is comfirmed by the allusion to them as Minerva and Mars, the first being from the same coronation the image to which Catherine referred to as to a sovereign carrying laws and justice, the latter being a reference to the role of Potyomkin as military leader in the war against Turkey. Two of the four characters (three sopranos and one tenor) are drawn from Greek mythology, Aglauro (soprano, possibly sung by Anna Pozzi), and Cecrope (sopranista, possibly sung by Domenico Bruni), whereas Nisia, minister of the Gods (soprano) and the Oracle (tenor, possibly sung by Giambattista Ristorini) were specifically invented. In the cantata, the two mythical founders of Athens, Aglauro and Cecrope, pray to the gods for the prosperity of their people and kingdom, a request that is granted by the gods, as confirmed by the Oracle. As Yamada points out, the cantata can be read as an allegory of Russia's victory over Turkey in the war of 1787 to 1792, which led Russia to gain possession of the Southern territories towards the Black Sea.[166] In 1787 Catherine herself had celebrated Potyomkin's victories with a journey in Crimea and on the recently gained coasts of the Black Sea.

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page of the autograph score has the title in the composer's own hand: *Atene Edificata / Cantata a Quattro Voci / Per il giorno di S. Pietro / Composta / Per Ordine di S^{a} M^{a} Caterina Imperatrice di tutte / Le Russie/ Da Domenico Cimarosa, Maestro di Musica di S^{a} M^{a} sudetta / 1788* (Athen's Foundation / Cantata for Four Voices /For St. Peter's day/Composed/ By Order of Her Majesty Catherine II Empress of all /Russias /BY /Domenico Cimarosa/, Master of Music of aforesaid Her Majesty.) T. YAMADA, *Domenico Cimarosa in Russia*, booklet of the CD *Atene Edificata. Coro dei guerrieri*, Bongiovanni, Bologna 2008, p. 23.

[163] Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 552.

[164] According to Mooser the score is housed at the Conservatory of Naples.

[165] T. YAMADA, *Domenico Cimarosa in Russia…*, p. 21.

[166] *ivi*, p. 24.

In autumn 1788 (22 September or 24 November, then 26 October 1789, Kamenny theatre) he staged *La vergine del sole*, 'dramma serio' by Moretti, formerly set to music by Sarti and staged as *Idalide* in Milan in 1783 and in Saint Petersburg in 1785, but reduced as usual to satisfy Catherine's requests.[167]

On 27 September 1789 Cimarosa gave *Cleopatra* at the Hermitage theatre, again on libretto by Ferdinando Moretti.

In 1791 Cimarosa composed two more cantatas: *La sorpresa*, on commission of prince A. A. Bezborodko, and *La serenata non preveduta*, commissioned by Grigory Potyomkin, possibly for the gala he gave for Catherine on 28 April at his Tauride Palace (see below, Chap. III – part II – Other 'Operatic' Genres in Russian Production). These must be the last works Cimarosa composed for Russia, where according to Mooser "sa présence était devenue superflue, la direction des Théâtres impériaux ayant congédié, pour causes d'économie, la majeure partie de la troupe italienne, au cours de l'année précédent déjà."[168] On 3 June 1791 the announcement of his departure from Saint Petersburg appeared on the city gazette.[169]

According to Mooser, possibly Joseph II himself had had a role in Martín y Soler's moving to Saint Petersburg in 1788.[170] Even though the first preserved contract dates 1 October 1791, it is possible that he had already made an agreement with the theatre administration, because the *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli* indicates him as 'maestro di

[167] According to Mooser, the autograph score is at the Conservatory of Naples, while three copies are housed respectively at the Conservatory of Paris, at the Mecklembourg-Schwerein Library and at the library of the mariinsky theatre. The libretto issued on this occasion reads as follows: *La Vergine del Sole, Dramma per musica del sig. Moretti, da rappresentarsi ne' Teatri Imperiali di Corte e di Città, nell'autunno del 1788. In S. Pietroburgo, Nella stamperia di Breitkopf.* For more information see E. DI SALA FELICE, *La Vergine del Sole, un episodio dell'esotismo melodrammatico tra Sette e Ottocento*, in *Domenico Cimarosa: un 'napoletano' in Europa, Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, Aversa, 25-27 ottobre 2001, Tomo I, *Gli Studi*, edited by P. G. Maione, Lucca, Libreria Musicale Italiana 2004, pp. 271-91, and F. RIVA, *La 'Vergine del Sole' di Ferdinando Moretti e Domenico Cimarosa*, in *Gli affetti convenienti all'idee: studi sulla musica vocale italiana*, edited by M. Caraci Vela, R. Cafiero, A. Romagnoli, Napoli, ESI 1993, pp. 241-89.

[168] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 454.

[169] After his leaving, many of his operas *buffa* were staged in the city: *Il credulo* (1794), *Il matrimonio segreto*, *Giannina e Bernardone* (1794), *L'impresario in angustie* (1794 or 95), *L'italiana in Londra* (1795), *La ballerina amante* (1796), *I nemici generosi*, *I due supposti conti* and *Chi dell'altrui si veste* (1798). According to Mooser, the library of the Mariinsky theatre houses a considerable collecction of scores of the neapolitan composer: *L'amor costante*, *Amor rende sagace*, *L'apprensivo raggirato*, *La ballerina amante*, *Caio Mario*, *Chi dell'altrui si veste*, *Cleopatra*, *Il credulo*, *Le donne rivali*, *L'impresario in augustie*, *I due baroni di Rocca Azzurra*, *I due supposti conti*, *Giannina e Bernardone*, *L'Italiana in Londra*, *Il matrimonio segreto*, *I nemici generosi*, *Gli Orazi e i Curiazi*, *Il pittor parigino*, *Il ritorno di Don Calandrino*, *Le stravaganze d'amore*, *I tre amanti* and *La vergine del sole*. R. - A. MOOSER, *Catalogue d'œuvres italiennes du xviiie siècle, conservées à Léningrad…*

[170] In 1778 his opera *Una cosa rara* had been staged, and in 1787 Joseph II and Catherine had met in St. Petersburg at the Tauride Palace. R. - A. MOOSER, *Un musicien espagnol en Russie à la fin du 18 siècle, Contribution à la biographie de Martin y Soler et à la bibliographie de ses oeuvres*, in *Rivista musicale italiana* (Italian journal of musicology), XL (1936), pp. 432-49.

cappella' together with Cimarosa for the season 1788-89,[171] and Khrapovitsky registers in his journal an incident, because of which count Ludwig von Cobenzl had alluded to his possible retirement.[172]

A few days before the date of the contract, Soler had staged a short cantata on libretto by Moretti, *La Deità benefica*, on the occasion of the peace with Sweden. The composer wrote also some ballets for the Court:

- *Didon abandonnée*, tragic ballet in five acts (1792);

- *L'oracle*, in one act, danced at the Hermitage theatre by noblemen (beginning of 1793);

- *Amour et Psiché*, ballet pantomime in five acts, staged at the Hermitage in September 1793.

The success he gained was not sufficient to guarantee him a post as Court composer: on 29 March 1793 he was replaced by Sarti who, possibly thanks to the oratorios he had composed on Potyomkin's commission, had the possibility to sign a new contract. Soler's contract expired on 1 October 1794, but the composer had already announced his departure on the *Saint Petersburg gazette* on 22 August.[173]

As anticipated, at the end of 1790 the *Ital'yanskaya pridvornaya opernaya truppa* was disbanded.[174] Anyway, Italian opera, ballet and French theatre were true passion of the new director of Imperial Theatres Nikolay Yusupov, who always supported them.[175] With particular reference to the Italian productions, they never really stopped during almost all the 1790s, thanks to the presence of some private troupes in Saint Petersburg, which

[171] *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli di tutto l'anno dalla primavera 1788 a tutto il carnevale 1789* (Index of theatrical performances of the whole year from the spring 1788 to all Carnival 1789), Milano [1789], in *Un almanacco drammatico, L'indice de' teatrali spettacoli 1764-1823* (A dramatic almanac. Index of theatrical performances 1764-1823), edited by R. Verti, vol. I, Pesaro, Fondazione Rossini 1996, p. 761.
[172] *ibidem*.
[173] From St. Peterbsurg Martín y Soler passed to London, engaged in the Italian opera troupe at the Haymarket, where in 1795 he gave some new scores, and had them staged by the famous *impresario* Salomon. Possibly at the beginning of 1796 he came back to St. Petersburg, where the Italian opera troupe staged his *Il burbero di buon cuore*, premiered in Vienna a decade before. In the Russian capital he was restored at his prior functions, teached music at the Smol'ny Institute, and possibly composed the Italian cantata *Il tributo*, the libretto of which was published in St. Petersburg in 1796 and sung by the maidens of the Institute. On 15 January 1798 he gave *La festa del villaggio* at the Hermitage theatre. On 22 February 1798 Emperor Paul I express his favour to him. He gave also some ballets: *Tancrède*, ballet-pantomime in five acts (January or February 1799); *Le retour de Poliorcète* (December 1799 or January 1800). In 1800 he composed the *Cantata pour l'inauguration de l'église de l'Ordre de Malte* (See *Russkaya starina*, 1883, p. 465.) Then he was appointed at the Italian troupe, which was though definitely disbanded in 1804. Martín y Soler died in St. Petersburg in 1806. R. - A. MOOSER, *Un musicien espagnol en Russie…*, and *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 460.
[174] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 307. This is probably the reason why Sarti, being restored in 1791, didn't give any opera until the Empress's death in 1796.
[175] *ibidem*.

activity crossed with or paralleled that of the Court Troupe. Chronologically speaking, three different private troupes arrived to the city after the first attempt made by Locatelli. Their presence is partially bound to the opening of public theatres: they continued the tradition of opera *buffa* strongly supported in the capital by Catherine. By the end of the century (already during Paul I's rule) the activity of these troupes will be integrated in the Court administration, perpetuating the presence of Italian opera, with a new meaning and function. The activity of these troupes is indicative of the never exhausted passion that Russian audiences nurtured for Italian opera. As it had been for the Italian Court productions, I will review it, without deepening into a detailed exam, considering it worth of being taken into account in the general view of the Peterburgian theatrical activity.

The Italian Private Troupe of Mattei – Orecia

Yet in 1778 a company led by the Italian actors Mariano Mattei and Angiola Orecia announced their arrival to the city of Saint Petersburg from Copenhagen.[176] The troupe staged performances at the palace of the Infantry Corps, on Vasil'evsky Island. Performances took place initially on fixed days (on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday), and were advertised in three languages: Russian, German, and French.[177] The need itself of advertising makes clear that the theatre was public, open to those social layers who had less possibility to assist to performances. Seemingly, it obtained great success at least at the beginning of its activity, even though a letter sent by Catherine II to Grimm on 17 December 1778 referred to them as to a troupe of "bad Italian bouffons" giving performances in Saint Petersburg.[178]

The theatre opened on 24 October 1778 with Paisiello's *La Frascatana*, for which occasion the libretto was issued in Italian with Russian translation.[179] The enterprise staged comic operas by Italian composers, as attested by the following repertoire reconstructed by Khodorkovskaya.[180] Most of them were Russian *premières*:

[176] Khodorkovskaya refers to *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* of 27 March 1778, *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*, vol. 2, p. 195.
[177] *ivi*, p. 196.
[178] *Sborniki Imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*, vol. 23, quoted from *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 197.
[179] The translation was published in St. Petersburg in 1780 (An exemplar is housed at the Russian National Library). It was staged at the Infantry Corps several times until 1780. In Italian the opera was staged in Mohilev in 1780; in Russian it was staged in Moscow at the theatre of count N. P. Sheremetev in 1784.
[180] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, pp. 196-7.

1778:

- Pasquale Anfossi's *La vera costanza* (14 November), and Giuseppe Gazzaniga's *La Locanda* (26, 27 e 29 December).

1779:

- Florian-Leopold Gassmann's *La contessina*;
- Anfossi's *Il geloso in cimento* (2 April 1779);
- Anfossi's his *L'incognita perseguitata, o sia La Giannetta* (29 June);
- Niccolò Piccinni's *La buona figliola* (20 May);
- Giuseppe Sarti's *Le gelosie villane* (25 September).

1781:

- Tommaso Traetta's *Il cavaliere errante* (23 September);
- Giovanni Valentini's *Le nozze in contrasto* (8 December);
- Gennaro Astaritta's *Il marito indolente* (18 December);
- Paisiello's *La finta amante* (13 May), and *I filosofi immaginari*.

The troupe seemingly went bankrupt in September 1781, after moving from Vasil'evsky Island to the theatre of Tsaritsyn Lug, possibly trying to reinforce their success with a more central location. On 25 January 1782 the *Saint Petersburg Gazette* announced their departure from the city.[181]

Part of the troupe, including the conductor Mattia Stabinger[182] was engaged from April 1782 to spring 1783 at the Petrovsky theatre in Moscow; other singers and musicians were engaged by the Italian Court troupe.[183]

[181] *ivi*, p. 197.

[182] Mattia Stabingher (Mathias Stabinger, or also Staubingher, Florence, 1739 – Venice (?), 1815 (?)), composer and director of music, was the son of the oboist Melchior Stabinger, and presumably received his early musical instruction from his father and other members of the grand duke's ensemble of Florence. As a flautist, he possibly was a pupil of Nicholas Dôthel. In 1772 he directed the concerts of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Lyons, and is also mentioned as a composer and a solo flautist. From 1778 to 1781 he was successful as a ballet composer and *direttore d'orchestra per i balli* in Milan, Venice, Rome, and Palermo. After taking up appointments as *maestro di cembalo* in Warsaw and with the Mattei-Orecia troupe in St. Petersburg, he went to Moscow, where he directed the Italian opera company at the Petrovsky theatre. There he produced an opera and the *oratorio La Betulia liberata* (text by Metastasio, 26 March 1783). He returned to Italy in 1783 and wrote *L'astuzie di Bettina* for the Venice carnival (1784), and ballet music for Vicenza and Cremona. In 1785 he took over the musical direction of the Petrovsky theatre again, had great success in

The Troupe Engaged by Yusupov, 1793-95

Not so much time had to pass after the disbanding of the Italian Court troupe before Yusupov, being fond of Italian music, restored an Italian company in the city. On 19 September 1793 the troupe, consisting of nineteen artists, arrived to Saint Petersburg.[184] The performances started on 21 October 1793 with Paisiello's *La Modista raggiratrice, osia La Scufiara*.[185] Except for Paisiello's *La frascatana*, the troupe staged operas that were not known to the Russian audience, that is, according to Khodorkovskaya, one of the aspects that assured the success of the tournée.[186] Khodorkovskaya quotes the testimony of some I. G. Georgi, according to whom the troupe "[received] general praise: the theatre [was] always full of people, although the entry cost a half more than for comedies".[187] The repertoire included, apart from the mentioned operas, Cimarosa's *Il credulo*, *L'impresario in angustie*, *Il matrimonio segreto*, *Giannina e Bernardone*, and *L'Amore rende sagace*; Paisiello's *Nina, o sia la Pazza per amore*, *Gli zingari in fiera*, and *Il Re Teodoro in Venezia*; Sarti's *Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode*; Gazzaniga's *La Moglie capricciosa*; Marcello Bernardini's *L'Ultima che si perde, è la speranza*.[188]

producing his own operas (some on Russian librettos), and played an active but not especially successful part in the musical education of the Russian society. After relinquishing his Moscow post to Carlo Pozzi, he probably returned to Italy around the turn of the century. Dated manuscripts and dedications suggest that he was in Lucca in the service of Queen Maria Luisa of Etruria in 1805. His final phase of residence and date of death, however, remain unknown. Much of Stabingher's music is lost, but his two extant large-scale works reveal him to have been a skilful composer, experienced if not particularly subtle in handling the stylistic resources of the time. His instrumental music in particular, most of it for or including the flute, and clearly intended for an amateur public, shows a preference for simple melodies and small-scale forms. For Moscow, he was the author of the operas *Il finto pazzo per amore* (M. Maddox's theatre, 26 October/5 November 1782); *Shchastlivaya Tonya* (Lucky Tonya), comic opera on libretto by Dimitry Gorchakov, M. Petrovsky theatre, 14/25 January 1786, *Baba-Yaga*, comic opera on libretto by Dimitry Gorchakov, M. Petrovsky, 2/13 December 1786, *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi* (Pygmalion, or The Power of Love), drama with music on libretto by Vasily Maykov, after J. - J. Rousseau, M. Petrovsky, 20/31 December 1787, *Neudachnaya zhenit'ba* (The Unhappy Marriage, opera translated from Italian, M. Petrovsky, 16/27 February 1788. Other vocal works composed for Russia are the allegory *La presa d'Ismail* (M., 22 February 1792), *La réconciliation d'Europe* (M., 1801), and *Orfeo* (M., 22 February 1792). See the entry by Nikolaus Delius in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by S. Sadie, vol. 24, London, Macmillan Publishers 2001, pp. 237-8.

[183] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, pp. 196-7.

[184] *ivi*, vol. 1, p. 410.

[185] *ibidem*.

[186] *ivi*, p. 411.

[187] "имеет всеобшую похвалу: театр всегда наполнен людьми, невзирая на то, что за вход вполовину платят дороже, нежели в комедии." I. G. Georgi, *Opisanie tsarstvuyushchego grada Sankt-Peterburga* (Description of the regnant city of Saint Petersburg, Sankt Peterburg, 1794), quoted from *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 410.

[188] *ivi*, pp. 411-2.

Astaritta's Troupe, 1795-1800

In August 1795 the troupe staged its last performances,[189] replaced already in September by a new group of artists headed by the Italian composer Gennaro Astaritta.[190] In 1794 Yusupov had invited the composer and troupe director to engage a troupe for opera *buffa* in Italy, to stage operas in Saint Petersburg.[191] The troupe was engaged in 1795, with a three-year contract, which was renewed yet in 1796, but had to last from 1798 to 1800.[192] According to the contract, the Court provided the logistic needs for the troupe, and gained part of the revenues, the rest of them serving to pay the singers. These initially were engaged directly by the troupe director, because the Imperial Theatres had to face the age-old problem of financial difficulties.[193] The solution was similar to that accorded to Locatelli,[194] and was probably the same that regulated the arrival of the prior troupe, in 1793-95.[195] Anyway the enterprise was so successful that in April 1799 the troupe, which direction Astaritta had passed to Casassi, was directly acquired by the Directorate, which appointed the Venetian Catterino Cavos as its *Kapellmeister*.[196]

[189] *ivi*, p. 411.
[190] Gennaro Astaritta (1745, or 1749 – after 1801) was an Italian composer and troupe director. He possibly studied with N. Piccinni, having taken part to his opera *L'orfana insidiata* (naples, 1765), with some music numbers. He directed the Cappella in Naples, but also worked in other European cities. Possibly hoping to replace Paisiello, who had left St. Petersburg on 25 January 1784, Astaritta arrived to the Russian capital the same year, though being deceived by the fact that the post was occupied by Sarti. He was appointed *Kapellmeister* at the Petrovsky Theatre in Moscow, where on 20 January 1785 his ballet *La Vengeance de Cupidon, ou La Fête offerte par Venus à Adonis* was staged. Astaritta possibly came back to St. Petersburg at the end of 1786; anyway the library of the Mariisky theatre preserves a manuscript score of his opera *I Capricci in amore*, dating 1787, although its staging is doubt. In summer 1789 his Russian opera *Pritvornaya sumasshedshaya* on a libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin was staged at the Wooden theatre. The opera is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre under the title of *La Finta Foletta*. According to Anna Porfir'eva, the score doesn't contain any Russian theme, and is clearly written in the style of the Neapolitan school. From 1789 to 1794, Astaritta was probably not in St. Petersburg, his opera *I capricci d'amore* being staged in Venice in 1791. In 1795 he came back to St. Petersburg with the troupe, which was later engaged by Yusupov. In 1799 Astaritta abandoned the direction of his troupe, leaving it to Casassi, and organized a series of oratorio performances, which was soon acquired by the Imperial Theatres. In summer 1803 Astaritta left St Petersburg, and from this time on no notices about him are preserved. He left more than fourty works (operas, ballets, motets, cantatas and others), some of them are preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 65-7.
[191] *ivi,* vol. 3, p. 307.
[192] *ivi*, vol. 1, pp. 67-8.
[193] *ivi,* vol. 1, p. 68.
[194] According to Mooser, the troupe performed on the Court's stage at Yusupov's expenses. The Directorate of the Imperial Theatres provided them with the lodging, in the building called *Corps italien*, in Ital'yanskaya street. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 619.
[195] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*, vol. 1, p. 410.
[196] *ivi*, p. 71.

The success was due to the support of a such influent figure as that of Yusupov, and to the high quality of the staff, which included Teresa Saporiti and Giulia Gasperini, Stefano and Paolo Mandini, Santi Nencini, and others.[197]

The troupe began its performances with the opera *La villanella rapita* by Francesco Bianchi, staged on 24 September 1795 at the Bol'shoy theatre.[198] The repertoire staged by this troupe is recalled by the periodical *Giornale musicale del Teatro italiano di S. Pietroburgo*,[199] and in the playbills preserved at the A. A. Bakhrushin State Central

[197] The *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli* for the years 1796-97 records Sarti as Maestro di Cappella, Martín y Soler as 'Primo Maestro dell'Istituto Nobile', Gennaro Astaritta as 'Maestro Ispettore, e Compositore del teatro venale Italiano', Canobbio as 'Direttore dell'orchestra'. *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli di tutto l'anno dalla primavera 1796 a tutto il carnevale 1797, Parte duodecima* (Index of theatrical performances of the whole year from the spring 1796 to all Carnival 1797, Part XII), Milano [1797], in *Un almanacco drammatico…,* vol. II, p. 1239. More details on the troupe's staff are collected by E. S. Khodorkovskaya in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 69.

[198] *ivi*, vol. 1, p. 66, 71.

[199] The exemplars preserved at the fund of foreign sources of the Russian National Library (RNB Rossica) include four volumes of severals issued each, published between the years 1796 and 1798. They contain the following pieces from the operas staged by Astaritta's troupe, as explicited by the editor: Overtura dell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Bianchi *Allegro*; Duetto nella Opera: LA PASTORELLA NOBILE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantato dalla Sgra. Saporiti, e dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. Colloandro, Eurilla, *Allegro* "La mia pastorella, che il cor mi martella" (No. 1); Aria nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Bianchi, cantata dal Sgr. Steffano Mandini *Largo*, "Con umil riverenza mi inchino a sua Eccellenza"; Aria nella medesima Opera, del Sgr. Piccolini, cantata dalla Sgr. Gasparini *Andante affettuoso*, "Che chiedi amor da me? Perché mi fai penar?" (No. 2); Duettino dell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Winter, cantata dai Sgri. Gasparini, e Mandini. Pippo e Rosina, *Andantino*, "Con quell'occhietto languido, cara, non mi guardar, no!"; Aria nell'Opera: LA PASTORELLA NOBILE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti *Allegro*, "Non temer che ognor sarai" (No. 3); Quintetto nell'Opera: LA MOLINARA, del Sgr. Paisiello *Andantino*, Colloandro"Il villan che coltiva il giardino", Notaro, Rachelina, Eugenia, Rosp. (No. 4); Canzone nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini *Andante sostento*, Polidoro, "E' più d'una or che tu sei aspettata"; Duettino nell'Opera: LA MOLINARA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e Sgr. Mandini *Andantino* Rachelina, "Nel cor più non mi sento"; Overtura nell'Opera : L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa *Allegro con spirito* (No. 5); Aria nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti *Maestoso*, "Ai dolci accenti, accenti suoi"; Canzonetta nell'opera: LA MOLINARA, Del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dei Sgr. Gasparini, e Mandini *Andante*, Rachelina, Notaro "Il mio garzone il piffero suonava! [con recitativo che segue "Potessi tornar libera"] (No. 6); Duetto nell'Opera: LA MOLINARA, continuazione della Canzonetta trovandosi nel Numero precedente. *Andante*, Rachelina "Oh il mio caro pupazzetto" (No. 7); Overtura nell'Opera: LA BALLERINA AMANTE, del Sgr. Cimarosa *Allegro*; Aria nell'Opera : IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti *Andante con moto* "Già riede Primavera, con suo fiorito aspetto" (No. 8); Duetto nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgr. Saporiti, e dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Adagio*, Milord "Tu m'ami ancora, se a quello segno a compatirmi arrivi", Livia; Aria nell'Opera: IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti; *Andantino*, "Lode al ciel, ch'al fin aperse" (No. 9); Scena nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgr. Saporiti. *Tempo giusto* "Dunque per un infido la libertà perdei?" [Segue l'Aria "S'arresta il sangue nelle vene!"]; Duettino nell'Opera: BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, del Sgr. Paisiello. "Il conte Cara, sei tu il mio bene" Rosina *Larghetto* (No. 11); Terzetto di Mozart, cantato nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, dalla Sgr. Gasparini, e dai Sgri. Stefano e Paolo Mandini; *Andante* Conte "Rosina amabile!", Rosina (No. 12); Aria nell'Opera: LA BALLERINA AMANTE, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Larghetto con moto* "Tu qui resta!" (No. 10). The second volume of the edition included: Sinfonia nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti. *Allegro spiritoso assai*; Aria nell'Opera: IL BARBIERE DI SEVIGLIA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti. *Larghetto* "Giusto Ciel, che conoscete" (No. 13); Aria nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Andante*, "Questo core io ti donai"; Duetto nell'istessa Opera, cantato dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e dal Sgr. Stef. Mandini. *Andantino* Lisaura e Bernardone, "No, cara! Martello dai sola al mio core" (No. 14); Aria nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dalla

Sgra. Saporiti. *Larghetto* "La speranza al cor mi dice"; Aria nell'Opera: IL BURBERO DI BUON CUORE, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini *Allegretto* "Voi siete amabile" (No. 15); Aria nell'Opera: IL BURBERO DI BUON CUORE, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini *Allegretto* "Sento in seno la speranza"; Cavatina nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini *Larghetto*, "Vedovella sconsolata un marito aver credei" (No. 16); Duetto nell'Opera: IL BURBERO DI BUON CUORE, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e dal. Sgr. Mandini. *Andante un poco sostenuto* Ferramondo "Tu lo sai, ch'io ti vo' bene" Angelica; Aria del Sr. Cherubini, cantata nell'Opera : LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Andante* "Sempre buona, e sempre amante" (No. 17); Continuazione dell'Aria, che si trova alla fine del Numero precedente (*Allegretto* "Parmi che torbido mi guarda e tace"); Canzonetta nell'Opera: RINALDO D'ASTE, del Sgr. Astaritta, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Larghetto* "Giovani, che d'amore nel mare navigate"; Overtura dell'Opera: L'IMPRESARIO IN ANGUSTIE, del Sgr. Cimarosa *Allegro* (No. 18); Aria nell'Opera: RINALDO D'ASTE, del Sgr. Astaritta, cantata dal Sgr. Nencini. *Andante brillante* "Quegli occhietti furbettie brillanti"; Scena nell'Opera: L'IMPRESARIO IN ANGUSTIE, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti. Recitativo *Allegro* "Tu contrastarmi ardisci?" Aria *Andante* "Calmati, calmati" (No. 19); Cavatina nell'opera: I ZINGARI IN FIERA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Andantino* "Ah! Il trepiede e lo spiedo!"; Scena nell'Opera: I VISIONARI, del Sgr. Astaritta, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini (Recitativo (*Larghetto* "Misera me! Che ascolto!", Aria *Allegro* "Pien d'ira, furor, furor") (No. 20); Duetto nell'Opera: L'IMPRESARIO IN ANGUSTIE, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantato dalla Sgra. Saporiti, e dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Larghetto con moto* Fiordispina "Senti, senti l'augellino!" Perigonio (No. 21); Overtura nell'Opera. I ZINGARI IN FIERA, del Sgr. Paisiello. Allegro con brio; Aria del Sr. Cherubini, cantata nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Larghetto* "Nel lasciarti, idolo amato!" (No. 22); Cavatina del Sgr. Martin, cantata nell'Opera: LE NOZZE CAMPESTRE [*sic*], dalla Sgra. Gasparini *Andantino un poco sostenuto* "Sento in seno un non so che, ch'io non ho provato ancor"; Duetto nell'Opera: I ZINGARI IN FIERA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantato dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini Andante Lucrezia "Vedetela! Vedetela, guardando ormai vi sta", Pandolfo (No. 23); Terzetto nell'Opera: LE NOZZE CAMPESTRE [*sic*], del Sgr. Piccolini, cantato dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e dai Sgri. Stefano Mandini, ed Alippi. *Allegro* Rosina "No geloso maledetto!" Checc, Trapola (No. 24). The third volume (Nos. 25-36, 1797) included: Overtura nell'Opera: DIDONE ABBANDONATA, del Sgr. Paisiello; Duetto nella medesima Opera, cantato dalla Sgra. Manciurletti [*sic*], e dal Sgr. Testori *Andantino grazioso* Didone, Enea "Giuro ch'a da altro mai la destra io porgerò" (No. 25); Rondo nell'Opera: DIDONA ABBANDONATA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantato dalla Sgra. Manciurletti *Andante sostenuto* "Non ha ragione, ingrato!"; Aria del Sgr. Schuster, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini nell'Opera: I ZINGARI IN FIERA *Andantino* "Ha l'uomo tanti inganni" (No. 26); Aria nell'Opera: LA CLEMENZA DI TITO, del Sgr. Mozart. *Larghetto* "Deh! Se piacer mi vuoi"; Aria nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Bianchi, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Larghetto* "L'amorosa farfalletta svolazzando sempre gira" (No. 27); Aria nell'Opera: BRENNO, dal Sgr. Reichardt *Allegretto* "Sento amor, che al cor mi dice"; Duetto nell'Opera: LA MOLINARA, del Sgr Paisiello, cantatno dala Sgr. Gasparini, e dal Sgr. Stef. Mandini *Andante maestoso* Rachelina "Per marito vossignoria io pigliarmi", Notaro (No. 28); Aria nell'Opera: RINALDO D'ASTE, del Sgr, Astaritta, cantata dalla Sgra. Baglioni. *Andantino* "Dei primi affetti miei sempre ho nel cor l'oggetto"; Aria nell'Opera: LA CLEMENZA DI TITO, del Sgr. Mozart, *Andante* "Tu fosti tradito, ei degno è di morte"; Terzetto nell'Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart: Soprano I, Soprano II, Basso *Andante moderato* "Soave sia il vento, tranquilla si al'onda!" (No. 29); Duetto nell'Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart. *Andante* Fiordiligi "Ah! Guarda sorella" Dorabella; Rondo nell'Opera: BRENNO, del Sgr, Reichardt *Un poco Adagio* "Ah, lasciarti, oh Dio! Vorrei…" (No. 30); Sinfonia nell'Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart *Andante*; Aria nell'Opera: LA MOLINARA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini *Andante non tanto* "Ahi! Ahi! Chi mi sostiene?" (No. 31); Aria nell'Opera: LE NOZZE CAMPESTRE, del Sgr. Piccolini, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Maestoso* "Dove son? Dove son? Ah, che spavento!"; Duetto nell'Opera: COSI FA TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart. *Andante* Dorabella "Prenderò quel brunettino", Fiordiligi (no. 32); Aria nell'Opera: LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, del Sgr Mozart. *Allegro* "Non più andrai, farfallone amoroso"; Aria nella medesima Opera. *Andante* "Soprano "L'ho perduta, me meschina!"; Cavatina nell'Opera: BRENNO, del Sgr. Reichardt. Soprano "Son teco, ben mio!" (No. 33); Duetto nell'Opera: IL MATRIMONIO SEGRETO, del Sgr. Cimarosa. *Allegro vivace* Carolina Io ti lascio", Paolino; Aria nell'Opera: RINALDO D'ASTE, del Sgr. Astaritta, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. Largetto "Mio tesoro, amato bene" (no. 34); Scena nell'Opera: LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, del Sgr. Mozart. Recitativo "E Susanna non vien?" Aria *Andante* "Dove sono i bei momenti"; Aria nell'Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart. Allegretto Soprano "E' amore un ladroncello" (No. 35); Terzetto nell'Opera: DIDONE ABBANDONATA, del Sgr. Paisiello. *Allegro* Enea "Cari accenti del mio bene!", Iarba, Didone. (No. 36). The fourth volume (Nos. 37-48, 1797) includes: Sinfonia nell'Opera: IL BARBERE DI SEVIGLIA, del Sgr. Paisiello. *Allegro presto*; Scena nell'Opera: LA PASTORELLA NOBILE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti. Recitativo "Esulta appieno, e

godi, barbaro Ciel!"; Aria *Adagio* "Questo Sol, che sì funesto splende" (No. 37); Duetto nell'Opera: IL CREDULO, del Sgr. Cimarosa. *Larghetto* Nerina "Ah! Mie languide pupille" Catapazio; Aria nell'Opera: COSI FAN TUTTE, del Sgr. Mozart *Andante cantabile* "Un'aura amorosa del nostro tesoro" (No. 38); Aria del Sig. Sarti, cantata nell'Opera: LA BALLERINA AMANTE, dal Sgr. Alippi. *Allegro spiritoso* "Frema, avvampi, d'ira e sdegno"; Arietta nell'Opera: LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, del Sgr. Mozart *Andante* "Deh vieni, non tardar, oh gioja bella" (No. 39); Duetto nell'Opera: IL MATRIMONIO SEGRETO, del Sgr. Cimarosa: *Allegro maestoso, con brio* Paolino "Aara, cara, cara, non dubitar" Carolina (No. 40); No. 41 Aria nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti. *Larghetto moderato*. "Straniera, abbandonata"; Scena nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Bianchi, cantata dalla Sgra. Gasparini. Recitativo *Maestoso*, "Veh! Come! Dove sono?", Cavatina "Chi mai più bel visino" (no. 41); Aria nell'Opera: LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, del Sgr. Mozart. *Larghetto* "Porgi amor qualche ristoro"; Terzetto nell'Opera: LA PASTORELLA NOBILE, del Sgr. Guglielmi. Recitativo Marchese. Colloandro. Eurilla "Stelle! Non so che farmi" (No. 42); Continuazione del Terzetto trovandosi nel Numero precedente (*Allegro moderato*); Aria nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Larghetto* "Sol da quel labbro amato" (No. 43); Aria nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, del Sgr. Bianchi, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Largo* "Cara Rosina amata!"; Aria nella medesima Opera, cantata dal Sgr. Nencini *Allegro risoluto* "Tutto, mie care donne!" (No. 44); Aria nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti. *Allegro moderato* "Bello è talor l'orgoglio"; Aria del Sgr. Andreozzi, cantata dalla Sgra. Saporiti nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA. *Allegro non tanto* "No, queste anime non sanno paventar l'orror di morte" (No. 45); Polacca del Sgr. Martin, cantata nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, dalla Sgra. Macciorletti [*sic*]: *Allegretto* "La donna ha bello il core"; Cavatina nell'istessa Opera, del Sgr. Maier, cantta dalla Sgra. Macciorletti: *Andantino* "Nel mirar sì vaghi oggetti" (No. 46); Aria del Sgr. Piccolini, cantata nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, dalla Sgra. Macciorletti. *Andante con moto* "Ah! Di me chi vide mai"; Aria nell'Opera : I SCHIAVI PER AMORE, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Andante* "In cimento sta il mio core" (No. 47); Duetto nell'Opera: I SCHIAVI PER AMORE, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantato dalla Sgra. Gasparini, e dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini *Allegretto* Bastiano "Piche, cornacchi e nottole", Gelinda (No. 48). The fourth volume (Nos. 49-60) was issued in 1798. It includes: Overtura nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, del Sgr. Guglielmi. *Andante sostenuto*; Aria nell'Opera: I SCHIAVI PER AMORE, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Allegro* "I diavoli diluviano" (No. 49); Duetto nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantato dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti [*sic*], e dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Andante* Cavaliere "Coglier bramo, cara Nina" Nina; Aria nell'opera: GLI SCHIAVI PER AMORE, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Allegro* "Torna, Miss Meri amabile" (No. 50); Arietta del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata nell'Opera: GLI SCHIAVI PER AMORE, dalla Sgra. Gasparini. *Allegretto* "Chi mi mostra, chi m'addita"; Aria nell'Opera: L'ITALIANA IN LONDRA, del Sgr. Cimarosa, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Allegro maestoso* "Sire" io vengo ai vostri piedi" (No. 51); Duetto del Sgr. Antonolini, cantato nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti, e dal Sgr, Stefano Mandii. *Andantino mosso* Nane "E' forse questo il dì", Nina (No. 52); Scena nell'Opera: DIDONA ABBANDONATA, del Sgr. Paisiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti. Recitativo Didone Perché tu lo vuoi salvo", Enea, Aria *Largo*, Ah! Non lasciarmi no"; Aria nell'Opera: LO SPAZZACAMINO, del Sgr. Pasiello, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini *Andantino* "Fortunato colui che d'amore non conosce le dure catene" (No. 53); Aria nell'Opera: LO SPAZZACAMINO, del Sgr. Pasiello, cantata dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti. *Andante* Soprano "Che m'accosti?"; Cavatina nell'Opera: GLI AMANTI CONSOLATI, DEL Sgr. Sarti, cantata dei Sgri. Alippi, e Nencini *Largo* "Parto, perdon vi chiedo" [Leandro e ?] (No. 54); Aria nell'Opera: LA FESTA DEL VILLAGGIO, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dalla Sgr. Gasparini. *Andantino sostenuto* "Posso donarti il cor"; Aria nell'Opera: LA VILLANELLA RAPITA, cantata dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Allegro moderato* "Penso che per morire ci vuol tre cose almeno" (No. 55); Duetto nell'Opera: LA LANTERNA DI DIOGENE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantato dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti, e dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Andantino* Nina "Da che nacqui, a un solo affetto", Nane (No. 56); Cavatina nell'Opera: LA FESTA DEL VILLAGGIO, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Andante* "lontano dal suo bene un sol istante"; Aria nell'Opera: LA PASTORELLA NOBILE, del Sgr. Guglielmi, cantata dal Sgr. Paolo Mandini. *Andante* "Il mio bene io già perdei" (No. 57); Aria nell'Opera: LA FESTA DEL VILLAGGIO, del Sgr, Martin, cantata dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti. *Andante un poco maestoso*. Soprano "Ei lo dice, l'ascoltate"; Aria nella medesima Opera, cantata dalla Sgra. Mangautier. *Allegretto* "Il far piacere mi par dovere" (No. 58); Duetto nell'Opera: LA FESTA DEL VILLAGGIO, dal Sgr. Martin, cantato dalla Sgra. Mangiorletti. *Andante* Clara "Senti, senti, il poverello!" Giannotto (No. 59); Cavatina del Sgr. Sarti, cantata dal Sgr. Testori nel'Opera: DIDONE ABBANDONATA. *Andantino* "Altrove mi chiama la voce d'onore"; Aria nell'Opera: LA FESTA DEL VILLAGGIO, del Sgr. Martin, cantata dal Sgr. Stefano Mandini. *Allegretto* "Il maestro del villaggio, ch'ha studiato, ch'è dottore" (No. 60). *GIORNALE MUSICALE del Teatro italiano di St. Pietroburgo, o Scelta d'Arie, Duetti, Terzetti, Overture, etc. delle Opere buffe, rappresentate sul Teatro Imperiale di St.*

Theatre Museum of Moscow.[200] In the decade during which it was active in Saint Petersburg, it staged for the most part operas *buffa*:

- Paisiello's *Gli zingari in fiera*,[201] *L'amor contrastato, ossia La molinara*, *Didone abbandonata*, *Le gare generose, ossia Gli Schiavi per amore*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and *La finta amante*;

- Cimarosa's *L'impresario in angustie*, *Il matrimonio segreto*, *L'Italiana in Londra*, *La ballerina amante* and *Il credulo*, *I due supposti conti, ossia Lo Sposo senza moglie*, *Chi dell'altrui si veste, presto si spoglia*, and *I nemici generosi, o sia Il Duello per complimento*;

- Astaritta's *Rinaldo d'Aste* (30 June 1796) and *I visionari* (14 July 1796);[202]

- Guglielmi's *La pastorella nobile*, *La lanterna di Diogene*, and *Le due gemelle*;

- Anfossi's *Zenobia in Palmira* and *La forza delle donne*;

- Salieri's *Il moro*;

- Portogallo's *Lo spazzacamino principe* and *I due gobbi*;

- Sarti's *Gli amanti consolati*, *Palmira, Regina di Persia*, and *Le gelosie villane*;

- Niccolini's *Le nozze campestri* (16 September 1796);

- Martín y Soler's *La festa del villaggio* and *Il burbero di buon cuore*.

In the research I have referred to,[203] Khodorkovskaya does not mention Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, *Le nozze di Figaro* and *La clemenza di Tito*, which, possibly not figuring in the troupe's playbills, are recalled by the quoted *Giornale del teatro italiano di San Pietroburgo*, which, as expressed in the advise to the readers, collected numbers of the operas staged by the troupe.[204] This is, as far as I know, the first signal of the introduction of Mozart's operas in Russia.[205]

Pietroburgo, nell'Anno 1796, e seguenti, dati in luce ed accomodati per essere accompagnati d'un Cembalo solo da BERNARDO THEODORO BREITKOPF, Dilettante. Si trova in Pietroburgo nella Libreria di C. Lissner, e dall'Editore. Vol. I-IV, No. 1-60, [1796, 1798].

[200] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 69-71.

[201] Its Russian première took place on 2 February 1795 at the Bol'shoy theatre. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 69.

[202] The opera, priorly staged in Venice in 1772, was soon translated in Russian and staged as *Mechtateli* (The dreamers) by the Russian troupe. Accoring to Porfir'eva, it was also published in Moscow in an anthology of spiritual works. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*, vol. 1, pp. 66-7. The libretto of *Rinaldo d'Aste* by G. Carpani was not published. According to Mooser the manuscript score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[203] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 67-72.

[204] *GIORNALE MUSICALE del Teatro italiano di St. Pietroburgo, o Scelta d'Arie, Duetti, Terzetti, Overture, etc. delle Opere buffe, rappresentate sul Teatro Imperiale di St. Pietroburgo, nell'Anno 1796, e seguenti, dati in luce ed accomodati per essere accompagnati d'un Cembalo solo da BERNARDO THEODORO BREITKOPF, Dilettante*. The first issue is introduced by an announce by the publisher: "Avis / Ce Journal contiendra les Pieces favorites des Opéras bouffas, donnés tout récemmente au Théatre Italien de St. Pétersbourg, en Extrait pour le Clavecin, que j'arrangerai moi même, de sorte que le Chant occupera toujours une ligne à part, et même deux dans les Duos, comme on voit dans la piece présente. Il en sortira deux livraisons par Mois, dont chacune composera trois feuilles imprimées, et contiendra pou la plupart deux

Among the majority of comic operas, some operas *seria* were staged, especially during Paul I's rule (after 1796 – see below). According to Khodorkovskaya in fact, "Having assimilated since childhood opera *seria* as an imprescriptible element of the Court ceremonial, Paul wished to restore the positions of this genre on the Russian stage, clearly reeling in the last years of Catherine II."[206] Among the operas *seria* staged by the restored Italian Court troupe there figure:[207] Paisiello's *Andromaca*, Sarti's *Andromeda* and *Enea nel Lazio*, Guglielmi's *Tomiri*, Friedrich H. Himmel's *Alessandro*.

According to Mooser,

> Aussi bien, [Astaritta's troupe] restaurait-elle une tradition lointaine à laquelle la cour avait sacrifié fidèlement pendant plus d'un demi-siècle, et faisait-elle revivre une institution dont bien des mélomanes avaient déploré la disparition. Dès lors, on s'étonne de constater qu'aucun musicographe russe n'ait jugé à propos de signaler cette résurrection qui fut aussi brillante que sensationnelle, car elle eut des conséquences assez curieuses. En effet, elle détermina, dans la capitale, une véritable crise d'italianomanie qui sévit pendant plusieurs années au sein de la haute société, induisant parfois celle-ci à des exentricités fort divertissantes.[208]

Khodorkovskaya stances, in turn:

> И статус компании, и репертуарная афиша, и интенсивность выступлений никак не соответствуют утверждению, что для России в 1790-е гг. "блестящая пора итальянской оперы была уже позади" […]. Скорее наоборот: именно в эти годы в аристократической и интеллигентской среде возникает слой слушателей, для которых итальянское оперное искусство из знака социального престижа превращается в предмет эстетического переживания, что заставляет говорит о наступлении нового этапа в истории российской рецепции итальянской оперы в России.[209]

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pieces, c'est à dire: deux Airs, ou un Air avec une Ouverture, ou avec un Duo, car c'est à cela qu'il foudra nous restreindre, les pieces à plusierua voix étant hors de notre plan; cependant je n'en exclue pas totalement le Terzetto, s'il s'en trouve qui soit susceptible d'être reduit dans la forme proposée. On livrera donc dans le cours d'une Année 72 feuilles, et au moins 40 pieces, qui formeront deux Volumes, dont chacun sera orné d'un titre gravé, qu'on donnera toujours avec le douzième Numero, et l'on sera bien exacte à tenir les Livraisons toujours prêtes pour le 15 et le dernier de chaque Mois, où on pourra les prendre, brochées, chez Mr. Lissner, Libraire, près du pont bleu, ou chez moi, rue de la grande Meschitschanskoy, au coin de la Perspective de Vosnesenie, Np. 420. Le prix d'abonnement est 25 Rbl. Par An, payables d'avance à la fois, ou de six à six Mois, comme l'on voudra. / Ceux qui souhaitent des pieces détachées, en trouveront sur du papier ordinaire, dans la susdite Librairie, à un Rouble la Livraison. / A St. Petersbourg, / Ce 15 de Novembre 1795. / BREITKOPF." *GIORNALE MUSICALE del Teatro italiano di St. Pietroburgo […], TOMO I, contenente No. 1-12. Si trova in Pietroburgo nella Libreria di C. Lissner, e dall'Editore. No. 1*.

[205] Anyway, the composer must have been known yet before, because Potyomkin is known to have started contacts through the figure of the Russian ambassador to Austria Razumovsky, to engage him in his private 'court'. The issue of the role of Mozart's music in Russia is deepened in T. N. LIVANOVA, *Motsart i russkaya muzykal'naya kul'tura* (Mozart and the Russian musical culture), Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo 1956.

[206] "С детства усвоив представление об опере-сериа как о неотъемлемом компоненте придворного ритуала, Павел желал позиции жанра на российской сцене, явно пошатнувшиеся в последные годы Екатерины II." *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 70.

[207] *ivi*, pp. 71-2.

[208] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 619.

[209] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 71.

[Neither the troupe's status, nor the repertoire's playbills nor the intensity of the performances do not correspond to the assertion that for Russia in the 1790s "the brilliant age of Italian opera was already passed by" […]. Rather the contrary: just in these years in the aristocratic and intellectual milieu a new layer of listeners emerges, for whom the Italian operatic art from a mark of social prestige is transformed in an object of aesthetic interest, a fact that tells something about the beginning of a new era in the history of reception of Italian opera in Russia.]

Other Foreign Troupes of Catherine's Time

The theatrical life of the two main Russian cities at the end of the 1750s was characterized by the coexistence, beyond the Court Troupe, of several troupes composed not only by the mentioned Italian ones. As in prior epochs, the Peterburgian scene of Catherine's time saw the presence of German, French, and even English artists, who often shared the same locations in different days: on Sundays – main celebrations; on Mondays - French comedies; on Wednesday – Russian comedies; on Thursday '- French opera or tragedy; on Fridays – masquerades at Court.[210]

As in the case with Italian productions, I considered the need of recollecting the main productions of these troupes, in order to have a complete vision of the Russian theatrical life, and to have the possibility of comparing the foreign experiences with the Russian ones that developed at the same time. The complete recollection of foreign experiences remains marginal with respect to the subject of the present work, so, I did not deep into details, but simply gave notices of the main stagings, taking support mainly on secondary literature.

The English Troupe

After an initial attempt dating 1767 at establishing a private English troupe in Saint Petersburg, which lasted no more than several months,[211] in 1771 the *impresario* Ferdinand Fischer came to the capital with his company.[212] The troupe staged performances till the following summer (1772) at the theatre of Tsaritsyn Lug, which long time after their

[210] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…*, p. 600.
[211] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 80.
[212] Almost nothing is known about this figure. According to Porfir'eva, he was a court musician in Brunswik, where he published a great number of instrumental works. In 1800 he received a present by the Russian emperor Paul I for some "militar cantata" he had composed on occasion of his birthday. After his experience as impresario, he probably stayed some time in St. Petersburg after that his artists had left, working as an English teacher *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 193-4.

appearance was called 'English theatre'.[213] The first evidence of their activity is the advertising of a music performance for the 10 November 1771; the same newspaper published the announcement of their departure on 25 May 1775.[214] The repertoire staged by the troupe consists of a few comic operas typical of the English repertoire of that time, and some ballets, comedies and tragedies. Among the music performances, on 6 December 1771 the troupe staged the comic opera *The Padlock*, on libretto by Isaac Bickerstaff and music by Charles Dibdin, created in London three years before. On 1 January 1772 they staged the *ballad-opera Midas*, on libretto by Kane O'Hara, which score was a *pasticcio* of several popular airs, notably Italian arias.[215] The newspaper advertised also the comedy with a ballet (8 December 1771) and the opera by unknown author *The incostant, or The Cony to win*, which is defined a 'comedy' by Mooser.

The repertoire included also the comic opera *Love in a village*,[216] on libretto by Bickerstaff, set on music by Thomas Augustine Arne, who had created a pasticcio arranging several folk tunes, to which he added some numbers composed by himself. The opera, premiered in 1762 in London after the success of Galuppi (1760-61), and after that the success of Gay and Pepusch's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) had waned, had been welcomed as the first English comic opera, and had given origin to a wave of such works by Charles Dibdin (1745-1814) and Stephen Storace (1763-1796).[217] To the same genre *The Maid of the mill* belongs, on a libretto by Bickerstaff set to music by Samuel Arnold. Staged in saint Petersburg on 5 May 1772, the score was in this case also an arrangement of airs by eighteen Italian, German, French and English composers. Having staged also such comedies as *The devil is in him*, and *The Busy Body*, and the tragedy *Isabella or the Unlucky marriage*,[218] the troupe went bankrupt in 1773.[219]

The "German Theatre"

An independent German theatre existed also during Catherine's rule. Yet during her predecessor's reign, the actor Johann-Friedrich Neuhoff had entered Scolari and

[213] *ivi*, vol. 3, p. 193.
[214] Advertised on *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 8 November 1771. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 193.
[215] Not to be confounded, as Findeyzen does, with Grétry's score *Le jugement de Midas*, 1777.
[216] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 28 April 1772.
[217] G. PESTELLI, *L'età di Mozart e di Beethoven*, *Storia della musica a cura della Società Italiana di Musicologia*, vol. 7, Torino, EDT 1991 (I ed. 1979), pp. 101-2.
[218] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Inostrannye antreprizy Ekaterinskago vremeni* (Foreign Entreprises of Catherine's Time), *Russky bibliofil* (The Russian Bibliophile), 1915, VI, p.79.
[219] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 80.

Hilverding's troupe, associating with them in 1761. On 22 March 1762 he finally obtained from Peter III the privilege (*privilegiya*) to manage a private theatre, together with his wife Eleonora Elensohn, and to give public (*gorodskie*) performances in Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Riga and Revel.[220] They initially rented a theatre situated in a building on the Malaya Morskaya street, and staged plays four times a week. The scene was sometimes visited by the Empress incognito, and thanks to this appreciation, they soon were assigned the wooden theatre next to the Winter Palace.[221] Later on Catherine granted them the use of her own theatre and wardrobe. Neuhoff died at the end of 1764, closing up an experience, which will be revived some time later (at the beginning of the year 1765) by his former colleague Joseph Scolari.

During the year 1767 the activity of the private German theatre continued under the direction of Johann-Friedrich Mende (unfortunately I could find no information about the staged plays). When in 1770 the German theatre (as always financially independent from the Court) lose its director Scolari, the *privilegiya* was directly assumed by Mende. Unfortunately, in 1772 many of its members abandoned it, as far as it was passing through a crisis, and the theatre went bankrupt in the following year. It was revived only in 1775, when a company reached Saint Petersburg from Riga, headed by some O. H. von Vietinghof. After his return to Riga (after two years of activity in the Russian capital), the German enterprise of Saint Petersburg was taken over by Karl Knipper, who started giving performances at the theatre of Tsaritsyn Lug. This venue had been used before by Locatelli, and later by the English troupe. After having been known as English theatre, it was now called German theatre, a fact, which itself witnesses the great renown acquired by Knipper's troupe, especially in the years 1776 to 1779.[222]

According to Khodorkovskaya, the uniformity and stability of the repertoire staged by the troupe since 1775 on witnesses of the two troupes being the same.[223] The activity began with the staging of Guglielmi's *La sposa fedele*, given on 27 December 1775 in the German translation by J. J. Eschenburg, titled *Robert und Kalliste*.[224] During its activity,

[220] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Inostrannye antreprizy Ekaterinskago vremeni…*, pp. 69-82.
[221] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…,* p. 599.
[222] The troupe's staff is recorded in R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 199, in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Inostrannye antreprizy Ekaterinskago vremeni…*pp. 69-82, and in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 60, where Khodorkovskaya refers to the *St. Peterburgisches Journal*, issued in St. Petersburg in the years 1776-80.
[223] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, pp. 59-60.
[224] *ivi*, pp. 59-60, 62. According to Mooser, who considers the two troupe's administrations as two separated ones, the theatre opened on 26 December 1777, with the staging of the opera *buffa La notte critica* by Piccinni, sung in German translation by J. J. Eschenburg with the title of *Die nacht*. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 215.

the troupe gave four-five plays a week, alternating comic and tragic, lyric and dramatic productions, often in German translation, and matching different genres in the same evening. The activity of this troupe will allow the Peterburgian audience to be acknowledged with the most up-to-date *Singspiels* of the time. It addressed notably to the German audience of the Russian capital. They gave also Italian operas *buffa*, of such composers as Piccinni, Guglielmi and Latilla, often in German translation.

Among the repertoire there were the following titles, which Khodorkovskaya reconstructs mostly after the *St. Peterburgisches Journal*, because the enterprise did not use to publish performances' programs or librettos:

1776:

- *Die Dorfdeputierten* by E. W. Wolf (The village deputies, 3 January)
- *Das Elysium* by A. Schweizer (The Elisha, 11 January)
- *Der Bassa von Tunis* by F. A. Holly (The pasha from Tunis, 18 January)
- *Der Deserteur* by C. D. Stegmann (The diserter, 21 January)
- J. A. Hiller's *Die Jagd* (The hunt, 1 February)
- *Der Walder* by Georg Benda (The forests, 11 February)
- *Die Jubelhochzeit* by J. A. Hiller (The joyful wedding, 7 April)
- *Die Apotheke* by K. G. Neefe (The pharmacy, 9 May)
- J. A. Hiller's *Die Liebe auf dem Lande* (The love of the countryside, 16 May)
- *Der Dorfbalbier* by J. A. Hiller (The village barbier, 26 May);
- Hiller's *Lottchen am Hofe* (Lottie at the court), that is the German version of Favart-Duni's *Ninette à la cour* (30 June)
- *Das Grosse Los* by Wolf (The big lot, 18 August)
- Grétry's *Lucile* (12 September), possibly staged in German translation;
- *Das redende Gemälde* by C. D. Stegman, possibly a version of Anseaume-Grétry's *Le tableaux parlant* (29 September)
- Piccinni's *La notte critica*, translated in German by J. J. Eschenburg as *Die Nacht* (The night, 10 November)
- F. G. Fleischer's *Das Orakel*, possibly the German translation of G. F. de Saint-Fox's *L'oracle* (28 November).

1777:

- Wolf's *Das Gärtner-Madchen* (The gardener-girls, 1 January)
- Hiller's *Lisuart und Dariolette* (22 January)
- Grétry's *Die Freundschaft auf dem Probe* (9 February), the German version of *L'amitié à l'èpreuve*, possibly sung directly in German;
- *Semire und Azor*, on libretto by K. E. Schubert, on a subject already exploited by Marmontel, music by G. von Baumgarten (16 February),
- *Der Kaufmann von Smyrna* by C. D. Stegman or F. A. Holly (The merchant of Smyrna, 18 April);
- *Das Grab des Mufti, oder Die Zwey Gessigen* by J. A. Hiller (The Mufti's Grave, or The two Gessig, 28 May);[225]
- *Der Krieg* by J. A. Hiller (The war, 3 July);
- Piccinni's *La buona figliola*, sung in German translation by J. J. Eschenburg entitled *Das gute Mädchen* (24 August).

1778:

- *Das Rosenfest* by Wolf (The feast of the roses, 21 January);
- *Silvain* by Grétry, in the German translation by J. J. Eschenburg entitled *Erast und Lucinde* (18 February 1778)
- *Das verstelle Kammermaegden*, possibly a German remake of Latilla's *La finta cameriera* (13 April 1778);[226]
- Hiller's *Die Muse* (The muse, 30 July),
- *Die Dorfgala*, *Lutspiele* by the composer Anton Schweitzer (The village feast, 16 August);
- *Lindor und Ismene* by Nicolas Mühle (4 November);
- *Der Fassbinder* by J. - H. Roehm, possibly a version of Audinot-Quétant-Gossec's *Le tonnelier* (29 November).

1779:

- *Die verwandelten Weiber, oder Der Teufel ist los* by J. Standfuss and J. A. Hiller (The woman changed, or The devil is going on, 1 February);

[225] Mooser attributes it to Hiller, R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 211.
[226] The Italian original is attributed by Mooser to Galuppi. *ibidem*.

- *Das milchmädchen* by K. K. Agte (The milkmaids, 2 February);
- *Die Wilddiebe* by Nicolas Mühle (The poachers, 27 July);
- *Der Barbier von Sevilien* by L. Benda or I. Andrie, possibly a German version of the French comedy (12 September).

According to Mooser, "[…] il faut croire que l'entreprise de Karl Knipper répondait à un véritable besoin car […] ses spectacles se succédèrent pendant plus de deux ans, à un rythme rapide, attestant le succès immédiat dont ils jouirent auprès de la population."[227] A contemporary quoted by the scholar tells that the German theatre was "very good", and some actors were "excellent singers". The performances attracted always a lot of audience, and the Empress herself often attended them.[228]

Anyway, the success seems not to have lasted so long. According to Khodorkovskaya, a decisive role was played by a new project inaugurated by Knipper in December 1779, the so-called *Vol'ny Rossiysky teatr* (Independent Russian Theatre): from January 1780 Knipper began in fact alternating German performances with Russian ones (see below – From Knipper's German Theatre to the Russian Independent Theatre). Since February 1780 Knipper's theatre was already called no more German, but Russian. The German enterprise, moreover, in the period from April to October 1781 moved from Tsaritsyn Lug to the Infantry Corps of Nobles on Vasil'evsky Island, due to restoration works in old theatre in the Summer Garden. The troupe tried to revive the interest towards their performances introducing in the repertoire such serious works as Georg Benda's 'duo drama' in one act *Ariane auf Naxos* by (20 June 1779), I. Roll's oratorio *Abraham auf Moria* (29 March 1780), *Der Irrwisch* by Mühle, and Georg Benda's *Medea* (libretto by F. W. Gotter, 28 January 1781), but these efforts did not achieve the expected goal.

The doubling of Knipper's activity possibly caused an excessive effort for the troupe, which, due to financial troubles, was than supported by the Court, and put under the direction of some F. B. Bauer. The latter, given the financial state of the theatre, passed the task to his secretary, the future playwright Friedrich Ferdinand August von Kotzebue (1761-1819), who eighteen years later became director of the German Court theatre. In July 1783 the troupe was definitely acquired by the Directorate of the Imperial theatres, which administrated it until 1 May 1791.[229] Since that moment, Saint Petersburg stayed

[227] *ibidem*.
[228] Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 216.
[229] *ivi*, II, p. 216

long time without any independent German troupe,[230] until the very end of the century, when another troupe was led to the capital by Mire.

According to Khodorkovskaya,

> Деятельность немецкой антрепризы при всей своей непродолжительности имела немаловажное значение. Компания познакомила столичных слушателей с новым театрально-музыкальным жанром, способствовала воспитанию более широкой аудитории оперных ценителей, которой предстояло с 1783 наполнить залы "городских" театров. Наконец, опыты немецкой музыкальной сцены не прошли бесследно и для работавшего бок о бок с Книппера труппой основоположника русской оперы В. А. Пашкевича (в 1779 музыкального руководителя Вольного российского театра). Его "Тунисский паша" на либретто М. А. Малиновского, пародивавшего зингшпиль А. Ф. Холли на текст К. Ф. Хенниша "*Der Bassa von Tunis*", служит тому безусловным подтверждением.[231]

[The activity of the German troupe, her short duration notwithstanding, had a considerable significance. The company made the city spectators acknowledged with a new genre of music theatre, and made possible the education of a larger audience of operatic judges, which since 1783 will fill the halls of the "public" theatres. Concluding, the experiences of the German music stage didn't pass without traces neither for the founder of the Russian opera V. A. Pashkevich, who worked side by side with Knipper's troupe (in 1779 he was the music director of the Free Russian theatre). His *Tunissky Pasha* on libretto by M. A. Malinovsky, a parody of A. F. Holý's *Singspiel Der Bassa von Tunis* on text by K. F. Henisch is an indisputable confirmation.]

The French Court Troupe

The first trustworthy notices concerning performances of a French Court troupe of *opéra-comique* on the Russian Imperial stage pertain to the year 1764, when a troupe directed by some Jean-Pierre Renaud arrived to Saint Petersburg.[232] In October 1762 the Empress had ordered to "engage at the Court since next spring a troupe of respectable French actors, as there were formerly, from March 1743 to the current year 1762, with the same salary with which they were formerly financed, 15.000 roubles per year."[233] Thus, Catherine disavowed the dispositions of Peter III, who soon after his ascension to the throne had disbanded the French troupe of Sérigny, long years patronized by Elizabeth.

[230] To be more precise, Mooser records also the presence of a further private German troupe, having arrived to St. Petersburg in 1793. Independent from the Court, it was directed by the actress Caroline-Luise Tilly, Johann-Carl Tilly's wife, who was by that time director of the theatres of Schwerein and Lübeck. The only trace left by the troupe is a performance staged in Reval (today Tallinn) in 1795, after having left St. Petersburg. The repertoire included K. Von Dittersdorf's *Der Apotheker und der Doktor* and *Dar rote Käppchen*, and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte*. *ivi*, II, p. 615.

[231] E. S. KHODORKOVSKAYA, *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 2, p. 61.

[232] According to Elena S. Khodorkovskaya, there exists some evidence that the previous French Court troupe of Sérigny, active in Russia from March 1743 to January 1762, staged some music performances. *ivi*, vol. 3, p. 204.

[233] "будущей весной выписать ко двору компанию достойных француцзских комедиантов, как оные прежде, прошлого 1743 года с марта месяца по нынешний 1762 год, находились и на той же сумме, какой они прежде содержаны были, 15000 р. В год." *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov…*, Otdel II, p. 63.

According to Ritzareva, it was in order to fill the gap until Galuppi's arrival that the Empress ordered the reinstatement of the former French opera troupe.[234] The engagement of new artists was accomplished by the actor N. Clairval (or Clerval), who had served in Sérigny's troupe. Engaged for a three-year period, the troupe, which included dramatic actors and singers, arrived to Saint Petersburg around the first decade of September 1764, and staged the first performance on 26 September.[235] The direction of the performances was entrusted to the composer and Kapellmeister Renaud, possibly the author of the two *opéras comiques Le cuvier* and *Le mauvais ménage*.[236] The troupe staged performances every week, alternating with Russian and French comedies, and the level of the performance was considered "as good as in Paris".[237] The repertoire is poorly documented, due to the use of the *Kamerfur'ersky zhurnal* of ascribing any performance to "French comedy", and of not expliciting the titles.[238]

Starting from the opening of the activity on 26 September 1764, it included:

- *Le maréchal-ferrant* by A. F. Quétant and F. A. D. Philidor (26 September 1764);
- Favart's and P. Chevalier's *La fête d'amour, ou Lucas et Colinette*, set to music by an unknown composer (7 October 1764);
- *Les deux chasseurs et la laitière*, one act by L. Anseaume, music by E. R. Duni (1 November 1764);

[234] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 80.
[235] The staff of the troupe is recorded in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 204-5. Part of them were already known to the Peterburgian audience. Mooser includes the biography of these actors in R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, pp. 34-43.
[236] From 1759 to the beginning of 1764 the musician led a small troupe that periodically performed in Frankfurt, staging the most appreciated *opéras-comiques* of the time. Some time before leaving for St. Petersburg Renaud had his *La cuvier* staged, on libretto by Desaudray, *attaché* to the French embassy in Russia. He left St. Petersburg in the spring 1768.
[237] "исполнение было столь же хорошо, как в самом Париже" YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii* (Notices about music in Russia), in *Muzyka i balet v Rossii XVIII veka* (Music and ballet in 18-century Russia), edited by B. I. Zagursky, Sankt-Peterburg, Izdatel'stvo "Soyuz khudozhnikov" 2002 (I edition in *Muzykal'noe nasledstvo, Sbornik materialov po istorii muzykal'noy kul'tury v Rossii*, vypusk I, edited by B. V. Asaf'ev, Leningrad, Triton 1935), p. 220.
[238] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 205. The same I remarked concerning prior issues of the same diary. See for instance the Diary of the Chamber Harbinger of the year 1775, where the only remarked titles are those of the Italian operas, whereas French performances are indicated as 'comedies' or, more rarely, 'tragedies'. *Tseremonial'ny, banketny i pokhodny zhurnal, 1755 goda.* (Diary of ceremonies, banquets and visits of the year 1755), *Zhurnaly kamer-fur'erskie, 1755 goda.* (The diaries of the chamber harbinger of the year 1755), in http://gbooks.archeologia.ru/. The repertoire of the troupe directed by Renaud is recontructed by both Khodorkovskaya and Mooser after S. A. Poroshin's *Memoires* (*Zapiski Semena Poroshina, sluzhashchie k istorii Ego Imperatorskogo Vysochestva Gosudarya Tsesarevicha i Velikogo Knyazya Pavla Petrovicha* (Semyon Poroshin's memoirs, intended to a history of her imperial highness the sovereign grand prince and heir Paul Petrovic, 2nd ed. SPb. 1881), which I did not see. At the beginning of 1766 Poroshin retired from his post of preceptor of the imperial heir, and did not attend the Court any more.

- *On ne s'avise jamais de tout*, one act by J. M. Sedaine, music by P. A. Monsigny (28 November 1764);
- *Annette et Lubin*, one act by Mme Favart, music by A. B. Blaise (3 January 1765);
- *Soliman le second, ou Les Trois sultanes*, three acts by C. S. Favart, music by P. C. Gibert (25 November 1765);
- *Le caprice amoureux, ou Ninette à la cour*, three acts by Favart, music by E. R. Duni (15 December 1765);
- *La soirée des boulevards*, one act by Ch. S. Favart, on music by un unknown composer (2 January 1766);
- Renaud's *Le cuvier*, on a libretto by the attaché to the French embassy Desaudray.[239]

According to Khodorkovskaya, these performances gained the enthusiasm of Catherine's heir Paul Petrovich and his preceptor Poroshin. Mooser explains this success with their lightness, compared to the gravity of the Court's performances, and, taking support on Stählin, with the language, French, which was more widespread at Court, and thus more intelligible than Italian.[240]

On the contrary, they seemed to have but left the Empress completely cold and indifferent, a difference, which would have repercussions on the future of the troupe.[241] After the expiring of the three-year contract in fact, Renaud's troupe was disbanded, and obtained the permission to stage private performances in the Peterburgian public theatres. Most part of the troupe, anyway, left the city.

A second troupe was engaged in Paris some time later, when according to the plan presented to the Empress in 1766, Elagin charged the actor Ivan Dmitrevsky to engage new actors for comedies in Paris. The troupe arrived probably by the end of 1768 or in the first months of 1769, and was subsequently completed with the engagement of new actors. This troupe included only actors of spoken theatre. That's why Catherine, probably towards the end of the year 1772 decided to engage a new one.[242] A communication by Elagin dating 27 February 1773 attests the arrival of the company after Easter, engaged for a three-year

[239] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 205.
[240] "Ils obtinrent un succès d'autant plus général, que ces pièces françaises étaient composées dans le goût italien [!], plutôt que dans le goût français [!?], et que la langue française était plus répandue à la cour d'ici, que l'italienne." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 35.
[241] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 206.
[242] The staff is reconstructed by Khodorkovskaya, who had access to new sources which Mooser could not see, *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 206-7.

period, as usual, and performing regularly since 24 January 1774, as attested by the *Diary of the chamber harbinger*, possibly beginning with *Zémire et Azor* by Grétry (31 January 1774).

Some of the performances took place in Moscow, where the Court spent the most part of the year 1775 on occasion of the anniversary of the peace of Kyuchuk-Kaynardzh. Here, the French troupe staged Grétry's *Zémire et Azor* on 5 June.[243] The repertoire of this troupe included also, in 1775:

- A. N Dezède's *Julie* (21 August);
- *Annette et Lubin* by Blaise (27 August);
- *L'Isle des fous* and *Les deux chasseurs et la laitière* by Duni (2 September);
- Grétry's *Le tableaux parlant* (23 October);
- *L'erreur d'un moment, ou La suite de Julie* by Dezède;
- the revival of *Le caprice amoureux, ou Ninette à la cour* (6 December).

On 13 or 15 May 1776 the French actors produced the première of Beaumarchais's *Le barbier de Séville* at Tsarskoe Selo, where Catherine had moved to spend summer. In 1777 the troupe premiered in Russia Rousseau's *Pygmalion* (2 July) and Monsigny's *Le Maître en droit* (28 July).

Historians are used to ascribe the poorness of the French troupe's repertoire to the indifference of the Empress towards such a genre as the *opéra-comique*. Her negative approach to the genre was in fact documented by the Empress and her contemporaries. For instance, after a performance having taken place in the first half of 1774, Catherine wrote to Grimm that he was attracted by Paisiello's Italian operas *buffa*, but could not stand French *opéras-comiques*.[244] Anyway, as Khodorkovskaya points out, the negative approach of the Empress towards a genre, which was quite permanently present in the Court's life, possibly had repercussions on its fixation in sources rather than in its real activity.[245] Moreover, the *Diary if the Chamber Harbinger* fixed the performances only

[243] On that occasion the libretto by J. F. Marmontel, nowadays housed at the Landesbibliothek of Darmstadt, was put on sale, and advertised on *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), 29 May 1775.
[244] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 207.
[245] "<…> позиция императрицы в отношении француцского музыкального театра роковым образом сказалась прежде всего не столько на самой деятельности Французской привдорной оперной труппы, сколько на ее фиксации." *ivi*, p. 208.

when the Empress or members of the Imperial family attended them, but this does not necessarily mean the absence of performances on other occasions.

Anyway, in 1777 the troupe run up against a diplomatic incident, which, according to Mooser, made it fall into definitive disfavour with Catherine for long years: the troupe staged the comedy in five acts by Louis de Boissy *Le médecin par occasion*, in which an explicit reference is made to the impropriety for a sixty-year-old woman to fall in love. Having just made known her relationship with the thirty-two-year-old Simeon Gavrilovich Zorich, Catherine did not appreciate the tactless reference. She immediately deserted the French troupe's performances, and since that moment on, performances of French spoken theatre were staged only by amateurs in private theatres. The event is recalled by Corberon in a letter dated 12 October 1778.[246]

Mooser explains the lack of attention by the Empress to the French troupe also with other factors. In the late 1770s in fact, other troupes diverted the Court's attention, and notably: Knipper's German theatre, active independently from the Court from December 1777 to the beginning of 1781; the Italian opera *buffa* troupe led by Mattei-Orecia, from autumn 1778 to 1782, and a troupe of children-actors led by some Alexandre Pochet, and called *Petits comédiens du Bois de Boulogne*.[247]

Moreover, Catherine showed further repulsion for the French theatre and music in 1793, having apprised of the execution of Louis XVI, and deserted the performances of the French court troupe, causing its inactivity all the year long. The Empress also forced the

[246] "On a joué ces jours-cy chez l'Impératrice, à l'Ermitage, une ancienne pièce qui a pour titre: *Le médecin par occasion*. On y parle de femmes amoureuses; il y a un endroit où l'auteur dit: «Qu'une femme à trente ans soit amoureuses, passe, mais à soixante!... Cela n'est pas tolérable.» Au même instant, l'Impératrice s'est levée en disant: «Cette pièce est sotte, ennuyeuse.» Brochard, qui étoit l'acteur qui débita ce passage, fut très sot; la pièce fut interrmpue, et le spectacle cessa par la retraite de la souveraine. Cela peut te faire voir, mon ami, combien cette grande impératrice est subjuguée par ses goûts, car je ne puis donner le nom de passions à toutes les révolutions de sa ruelle." CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II, 1775-1780, Journal intime du chevalier de Corberon chargé d'affaires de France en Russie, Publié d'après le manuscript original, avec une introduction et des notes par L.-H. Labande*, Tome deuxième, Paris, Librairie Plon 1901, p. 191.

[247] Founded in Paris by some Bertin in 1778, the troupe derived its name from the fact that it usually performed at Bois de Boulogne, in front of the La Muette castle. It consisted of very young children, of whom only the name of Thérèse Maillard is known. It was led to Russia in summer 1780 by the former actor Alexandre Pochet, who had become *impresario*. The diary of Corberon recorded a performance of Beaumarchais's *Le barbier de Séville*, which had already been staged by the French Court troupe at Tsarskoe Selo on 13 or 15 May 1776. (CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…*, I, p. 264) In St. Petersburg the troupe performed in the old hall next to the Red Bridge, rented by Pochet. Their repertoire consisted of spoken theatre and French *opéras-comiques*, as attested by an announce published on 10 November 1780 on the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette), concerning the staging of Philidor's *Le maréchal-ferrant* on 12 November. In November 1781 Pochet was arrested for debts, and although having received financial help from Caterina Bonafini, who organised a concert as his benefice, he had to renounce to the enterprise.

troupe's members (as all the French citizens present in Russia) to chose between swearing their loyalty to the Crown, or leaving the country.

Anyway a repertoire of these years can be reconstructed. Among the *premières* it included:

- Monsigny's *Le déserteur* (7 August 1778);
- F. J. Gossec's *Le tonnelier* (20 December 1779);
- Paisiello's *La serva padrona* in French translation (*La servante maîtresse*, 27 October 1782);
- I. P. E. Martini-Schwartsendorf *Henry IV, ou La bataille d'Ivry* (28 November 1784);
- Grétry's *Les mariages samnites* (30 June 1787);
- Dalayrac's *L'élève de l'amour* (17 November 1790);
- J. Dezède's *Blaise et Babet, ou La suite de Les trois fermiers* (11 January 1792, Hermitage theatre), *comédie lyrique on* libretto by J. M. Monvel (revived in 1797 at the public theatre and in 1798 at the Hermitage and in Gatchina);
- Dalayrac's *Camille, ou Le souterrain* (20 August 1794).

In 1795 the troupe showed a particularly intense activity, staging at least six new *opéras-comiques*:

- N. Dalayrac's *Le deux petits Savoyards* (24 January, Bol'shoy theatre);
- Grétry's *La fausse magie* (7 May);
- Dalayrac's *L'amant statue* (7 June);
- Dalayrac's *Renaud d'Ast* (11 June);
- Grétry's *Richard, Coeur de Lion* (21 June);
- Dalayrac's *La dot* (27 July);
- M. F. S. Champein's *La mélomanie* (20 August);
- Grétry's *L'amant jaloux* (17 September).

In 1796 the troupe staged M. F. S. Champein's *Les amours de Bayard, ou Le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* (8 February)[248], *comédie héroïque* staged at the

[248] The comedy was staged together with *Les Noces de Mars*. (*Fête héroï-lyrique en deux actes, arnée de musique et de Ballets, précédée d'un Prologue, et composée [...] par M. De L****, possible ascribable to Nicolas de La Traverse.) *Sanktpeterburgsie vedomosti* of 15 February 1796 announced the event, recorded by

Hermitage on occasion of the wedding of the grand duke Konstantin Pavlovich (celebrated on 12 Jnuary 1796), and Monsigny's *Rosa et Colas* (26 October 1796).[249]

After Catherine's death, in 1796, a new era began for the French Court troupe, thanks to the good disposition of the new sovereign Paul I towards *opéra-comique*. Soon after his ascension to the throne (7 November 1796), on 22 December 1796 the new Emperor dismissed the troupe, consisting of too old and weak actors,[250] and on 12 August 1797 emanated an *ukaz* requesting the new director of the Imperial Theatres prince Nikolay Borisovich Yusupov to engage a new one, which he finally found in Hamburg.[251] According to Khodorkovskaya, "The strong ensemble of artists and the excellent stagings of performances made the French ones the favourite entertainment of the Peterburgian audience." [252] *Opéras-comiques* were staged in all the Court and public theatres (Hermitage, Pavlovsk, Gatchina), and no genre, excepted for the ballet, could concur to gain the same success in the city. "Thus, - the scholar points out, - against the government's preventive measures against import of French ideas and the Imperial decree banning import to Russia of French books and music, French opera celebrated in the capital its brilliant and irrefutable victory." [253] The success is also related to the participation of Madame Chevalier, arrived to Saint Petersburg in 1798, who made the Peterburgian audiences shift from Italian to French performances. The repertoire included revivals and Russian *premières*; among the latters Khodorkovskaya and Mooser report:[254]

1797:

- *Le quiproquo, ou La volage fixée* by Philidor, staged in Pavlovsk on 29 June 1797, on Paul's name day, with sets by the recently engaged Pietro Gonzaga.

1798:

Mooser in R. – A., *L'opéra-comique français en Russie au XVIIIe siècle*, Genève-Monaco, Editions René Kister et Union Européenne d'Editions 1954, p. 151.

[249] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, pp. 208-9.

[250] "по старости и неспособности большей части актеров"(for the old age and inaptitude of the most parts of the actors) *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov…*, Otdel II, p. 466.

[251] The complete staff is reconstructed in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 209.

[252] "Сильный ансамбл исполнителей и превосходное оформление спектаклей превратили французские постановки в любимое развлечение петербургской пубики." *ivi*, vol. 3, p. 210.

[253] "Так, на фоне превентивных правительственных мер против импорта француцзской идей и имперального указа о запрете ввозить в Россию французские книги и ноты, французская опера праздновала в столице свою блистательную и неопровержимую победу." *ivi*, p. 210.

[254] *ivi*, p. 211.

- *Azémia, ou Les sauvages* by Dalayrac (Gatchina, 27 January), formerly staged in Russian at the private theatre of Count Sheremetev;
- *Alexis et Justine* by N. Dezède (25 June at the Kamenny Theatre);
- *Les trois fermiers* by N. Dezède (2 September), formerly staged at the Smol'ny Institute);
- *Ariane dans l'isle de Naxos* by the Alsatian composer J. F. Edelmann (6 September);[255]
- *L'épreuve villageoise* by Grétry (Gatchina, 9 September);
- *La soirée orageuse* by Dalayrac (Gatchina, 22 September);
- *Raoul Barbe-bleue* di Grétry (Court theatre, 11 October);[256]
- Dalayrac's *Ambroise, ou Voilà ma journée* (15 October);[257]
- *Le petit matelot, ou Le mariage impromptu* by P. Gaveaux (19 November);
- possibly, Dalayrac's *Gulnare, ou L'esclave persane*.[258]

In 1799 Guillaume-Alexis Paris assumed the direction of the French performances, under the new administration of the Directorate, now led by Aleksandr L'vovich Naryshkin. The repertoire of this year included the following *premières*:

- *Oedipe à Colone*, *tragédie-opéra* by A. Sacchini (Kamenny theatre, 25 April);[259]
- J. B. Lemoyne's *Les fiancés* (18 July);[260]
- Grétry's *Le magnifique* (28 August)
- Grétry's *La rosière de Salency* (14 September):
- R. Kreutzer's *Paul et Virginie* (18 September);
- Grétry's *Silvain* (5 October);
- P. A. Della Maria's *Le prisonnier, ou La ressemblace* (18 October);
- Grétry's *Les deux avares* (27 October);
- Grétry's *Panurge dans l'isle des Lanternes* (27 October);

[255] According to Mooser the choruses were sung by the Court cappella.
[256] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 26 October 1798.
[257] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) of 10 May 1799.
[258] Vladimir Stasov records its staging in 1798. V. V. STASOV, *Russkie i inostrannye opery, ispolnyavshiyasya na imperatorskikh teatrakh v Rossii v XVIII-m i XIX-m stoletiyakh* (Russian and foreign operas performed in the Imperial Theatres of Russia in 18th and 19th centuries), Sanktpeterburg, red. Russkoy muzykal'noy gazety, 1898, p. 13.
[259] The libretto was published in St. Petersburg, and according to Mooser is nowadays housed at the library of Opéra theatre in Paris.
[260] Mooser refers probably to the same work as *Les prétendus* by J. B. Lemoyne, 18 July 1799 at the Kamenny theatre, then on 12 October in Gatchina.

- Lemoyne's *Le pommier et le moulin* (2 December);
- Sarti's *La famille indenne en Angleterre* (Hermitage theatre), on libretto by Castelnau (drawn from a comedy by A. F. F. Kotzebue).[261]

The year 1800 marked a sharp slowdown in the theatrical activity due to the exacerbation of the police state inaugurated by the tsar. Many actors left the country foreseeing the imminent changing of the guard. Among the performances, staged in public theatres and no more for the Court, and with a decreased frequency, one can list:

- *L'esclave, ou Le marin généreux*, French parody of the opera *buffa Gli stravaganti* by N. Piccinni (1 February);
- Monsigny's *La belle Arsène* (3 February);
- Grétry's *Le Comte d'Albert* (25 February);
- Dalayrac's *Philippe et Georgette* (19 April);
- *Annette et Lubin* by J. P. E. Schwatzendord called Martini, (18 June);
- Dalayrac's *Adele et Dorsan* (5 July);
- Duni's *La fée Urgèle, ou Se qui plait aux dames* (8 November);
- Méhul's *Euphrosine et Coradin* (2 December).

Kotzebue reports, though on an imprecise date, the staging of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide*.

The only opera premiered in 1801 before the tsar's assassination was Dalayrac's *Raoul, sire de Créqui*, staged on 10 January at the Kamenny Theatre.[262]

French performances were also staged in such educational institutions as the Academy of arts, the Infantry Corps of nobles and the Smol'ny Institute, where the French actors worked as teachers. They were also produced in aristocratic milieus by noble amateurs, or by Court actors who were privately engaged by Peterburgian noblemen, or else by the nobles' private troupes, which proliferated in this period as an imitation of the Imperial Court, and had at their disposal means sometime greater than the Court itself.

[261] Sarti's score (a manuscript copy) is nowadays housed at the Town Library of Faenza; its title page reads as follows: [G. SARTI], *La famille indienne en Angleterre, Opéra en trois actes, composée par M. Sarti, Conseiller de Collége et Maître de Chapelle de S. M. l'Empereur de toutes les Russies.* Among the fifteen music numbers, the score contains a Russian song, probably drawn fro music folklore, which was sung by Madame Chevalier in the rle of Gurly. P. ZAMA, *Opere musicali di Giuseppe Sarti…*, pp. 13-4.
[262] *Arkhiv Direktsii Imperatorskikh teatrov…*, Otdel III, p. 201.

Thus, yet in Catherine's time the French troupe staged performances on private commission, due to the mentioned indifference of the empress. According to Mooser for instance, performances took places at the palace of count Yaguzhinsky.[263] Yaguzhinsky in fact possessed a theatre, which was located inside his palace on the Isaakievskaya street, for which he engaged troupes to give public performances with ticket entrance. On 18 December 1791 the Palace of count I. P. Saltykov hosted the staging of Piccinni's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, sung in French.

The tradition of staging performances by noblemen amateurs was bound to their great passion for theatre, and to impossibility for aristocrats to take theatre as a profession, which would have spoiled their social position. This practice is nonetheless evidence of the deep penetration of French comic genres in the Russian theatrical and socio-cultural scene. The first registered case is that of the five-act comedy *Le philosophe marié*, by Néricault-Destouches, staged on 1 February 1765, in the palace of count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev with music numbers played by amateurs directed by prince Trubetskoy.

Blaise's *Annette et Lubin* was staged on 25 November 1768 together with Destouches's comedy *Le philosophe marié, ou le mari honteux de l'être*, by a group of young noblemen directed by prince Andrey Nikolaevich Shcherbatov, and with the orchestra directed by the counsellor and member of the Senate Grigory.[264] The same *opéra comique* was later staged in Saint Petersburg in 1776.[265] In the years 1785-86 stagings

[263] R. – A., *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 63.

[264] The event, on occasion of the celebration for Catherine II and the grand duke's recovery from the vaccine, is recorded by Stählin: "Для исполнения вышеупомянутых двух спектаклей этому составу артистов их высшего дворянства была предоставлена императорская придворная сцена. Обе вещи были исполнены 25 ноября к большому удовольствию двора и необычайно многочисленный слушателей." (For the production of the two above mentioned performances the Imperial Court stage was put at the disposal of this group of artists of the high society. Both performances were staged on 25 November with great pleasure of the court and of the extraordinary numerous audience.) Among the members of the orchestra, conducted by Teplov, Stählin records baroness Cherkasov at the harpsichord, the brothers Naryshkin, counts Stroganov, Olsuf'ev and Teplov, prince Pyotr Nikitich Trubetskoy, member of the Senate, and count Yaguzhinsky, beyond several officials of the imperial guard. "Все эти музыканты из высшего дворянства играли с такой аккуратностью, выразительностью и точным соблюдением piano и forte, что большинство слушателей полагали, будто это играет придворная камерная капелла, состоящая из итальянцев, немцев и нескольких русских, обыкновенно игравших в оркестре." (All these musicians of the high society played with such an accuracy, expressivity and exact respect of the piano and forte, that the most part of the listeners thought they were the court chamber music orchestra, made of Italian, Germans and Russians, who usually play in the orchestra.) YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, pp. 180-3.

[265] The diplomatist Corberon often recalls in his memoirs the amateur performances in which he himself took part. For instance, on 16 February 1776 he writes to his brother "Après le dîner, on a répété *Nanine*; cela ne va pas ancore, et cependant on veut jouer lundi" (CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…*, I, p. 168). On 27 February: "Le lendemain, dimanche 25, qui est pour les Russes le dernier jour de carnaval, nous avons contribué à une petite fête que le compte Ivan Czernichef a voulu donner à Leurs Altesses. On a transporté chez lui le théâtre qui étoit chez M. De Juigné ; on l'a placé dans une chambre obscure, séparée d'une belle pièce par une cloicon couverte de tableaux. A un signal convenu, cette cloison s'est ouverte et a laissé voir le théâtr illuminé. Nous avons donné *l'Esprit de contradiction*, où j'ai fait le rôle

were organised of the operas *Rose et Colas* by Monsigny, *Soliman second, ou Les trois sultanes* by P. C. Gibert. In 1795 a group of young noblemen staged *Camille, ou Le souterrain* by N. Dalayrac in Aleksandrovsk, near Saint Petersburg, in the estate of princess Dolgorùky, who was herself a singer and a passionate lover of theatre. The staging saw the participation of the Italian singer Paolo Mandini together with the princess.[266]

The Grand Duke himself often took part in performances of comedies and ballets.[267] Due to his bad relationship with Catherine, he used to spend most of his time in the summer residences of Pavlovsk or Gatchina. For this venue, in 1786 he commissioned several works belonging to the genre of *opéra-comique* to the Alsatian poet and librettist François-Hermann Lafermière, who was at his service as preceptor and librarian.[268]

These librettos had been set to music by the Russian composer Dimitry Stepanovich Bortnyansky, who had been educated in Italy under Elagin's administration of the Imperial Theatres, and was the music teacher of the tsar's wife Mariya Fyodorovna.[269]

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de Thibaudois, avec le plus grand succés contre mon attente, car tu sais, mon ami, que ce n'est guère mon ganre. Mais je me suis rappelé ton jeu et l'on a beaucoup ri. [...] Après cette pièce, nous avons joué le proverbe de *la Rose rouge* de Carmontelle, où Puységur a fort bien joué le peintre." (CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…*, i, pp. 170-2) Performances were seemingly staged also at Stählin's house, according to what Corberon records on 2 April 1776: "On a répété ce soir, chez le professeur Staehlin, le fameux *Stabat* de Pergolèse, qu'on doit exécuter demain au club de musique, pour lequiel j'aurai un billet. Cette répétition, mon ami, m'a fait le plus grand plaisir, qoiqu'elle fût médiocre ; et je crois devoir cette sensation agréable moins à la musique de ce morceau, qui est superbe, qu'au ressouvenir de mon pays, dans lequel je me suis transporté à cette époque du printemps, si agréable en France et si peu connue ici." (CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…*, I, p. 199) Other private amateur performances are recorded in the following years of his stay in St. Petersburg.

[266] More details in R. – A., *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 150.

[267] *ivi*, p. 87.

[268] Being of Swiss origin, Hermann-François Lafermière (or La Fermière) was born in Strasbourg in 1737. Around 1765 he was invited to teach French literature to the young heir to the Russina throne, and remained at his private service as a preceptor and librarian. He virtually occupied the function priorly fulfilled by Stählin. He had contacts with Bortnyansky and Paisiello, and was one of the leading figures organizing amatorial perfomances at the Little Court of Pavel Petrovich and his wife Mariya Fyodorovna. Fallen into disfavour with the heir, he was dismissed in 1793, and died in St. Petersburg three years later.

[269] Bortnyansky was a native of the Ukraine and had begun his career as a court singer. According to Rytsareva he was indeed born in Glukhovo, possibly in 1751. In 1758, he qualified the top ten vocal students at the Glukhovo school for Court Singers, and was sent to St. Petersburg Imperial court. According to Rytsareva, it is likely that he reached the capital under the supervision of Razumovsky during his 1758 trip. In 1764, at the age of thirteen, he was listed as playing the lead male soprano (King Admetus) in the renewed production of Raupach's *Al'tsesta*. In the 1760s he was sent to the Infantry Corps to learn acting with the actor I. A. Dmitrevsky. He received his initial training in composition and counterpoint from Mark Fyodorovich Poltoratsky, as well as from Raupach and Starzer. Having acquired this rich background, he became Galuppi's student and accompanied him to Italy in 1768. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, pp. 105-8. In winter 1776-77 he appeared at the Venetian Teatro di S. Benedetto with the opera *Creonte*, based on Marco Coltellini's *Antigona*, which was although simplified and reduced from three to two acts, inserting the third act into the second. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, p. 122. (This can be seen as evidence of the peculiar reception of Italian opera in Russian milieu. This use was typical of the Italian works staged in St. Petersburg, but here was applied for an opera composed for a real Italian theatre, conceived as an Italian imitation.) Its printed libretto indicates the date of the premiere as 26 November 1776. Since the opera gained no success, the

Due to his education and to the commission he had to fulfil, Bortnyansky had composed his works in a genre that remain outside the scope of the present research. Anyway, it's worth citing them as evidence of the osmosis between the foreign and the Russian artistic milieus, a phenomenon that increasingly characterized these years. As it had been with *La clemenza di Tito*, and with the Italian operas which followed, composed expressly for the Russian court, these works attest the tendency to appropriation typical of the Russian context, which, as we have seen, initially was conveyed through the production of foreign works at Court, to pass to works created with the intention of forging a Russian repertoire. Among Bortnyansky's opera one should mention:

- *Don Carlos*;[270]

- *Le faucon* (11 October 1786);[271]

- *La fête du Seigneur*;

- *Le fils rival, ou La moderne Stratonice*, libretto by Lafermière, (Pavlovsk, 11 October 1787).

Among the other mentioned cases of penetration of *opéra-comique* in the Russian scene, I consider worthy of attention two exemplar cases in particular: the theatrical activity at the Smol'ny Institute and the theatre organized by Count Sheremetev in his

composer tried to restore his reputation with two more scores: *Alcide* (Venice, 1778), on Metastasio's libretto, and *Quinto Fabio* (Modena, December 1778), on an anonymous libretto, already set to music by Ferdinando Bertoni (Milan, January 1778), and further set by Cherubini (Alexandria, 1780), Marinelli (Rome, 1790), and G. Nicolini (Vienna, 1811). At the end of 1779 he came back to Russia, where he was appointed head of the Court Cappella from 1796. From that moment on he committed himself exclusively to sacred music, becoming one of the most celebratied composers in that field. He died in St. Petersburg in 1825, leaving a big inheritance of spiritul works for the Orthodox liturgy. The personal and artistic biography of D. S. Bortnyansky had been deeply studied by Marina Rytsareva. See M. RYTSAREVA, *Kompozitor D. Bortnyansky, zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (The composer D. Bortnyansky, his life and works), Leningrad, "Muzyka" 1979. Part of the materials are published in English in M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*…. On the composer see also B. V. DOBROKHOTOV, *D. S. Bortnyansky*, Moskva-Leningrad, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1950; K. KOVALEV, *Bortnyansky*, Moskva, «Molodaya gvardiya» 1989.

[270] The libretto was published in St. Petersburg in 1786.

[271] The full score of the opera had been published in modern timed in the serie *Monuments of Russian Music*: D. I. BORTNYANSKY, *Sokol*, *Opera*, Partitura, publikatsiya, redaktsii teksta, perevod s frantsuzskogo, perelozhenie dlya fortepiano i issledovanie A. S. Rozanova (*Le faucon, Opera*. Full score, publication, text's edition, translation from French, transcription for piano and research by A. S. Rozanova), Pamyatniki russkogo muzykal'nogo iskusstva, Vypusk 5, Moskva, Izdatel'stvo «MUZYKA» 1975. The frontpage of the score, according to this edition, reads as follows: *La Faucon, opéra comique en trois actes, représentée* [sic] *pour la première fois devant leurs Altesses Impériales Monseigneur le Grand Duc et Madame la Grande Duchesse de Russie dans leurs château à Gatchina le 11 d'octobre 1786. Poésie est de Mr de la Fermière Musique de D. Bortniansky*. According to this Rozanov, the original of the score is preserved at the Russian Institute of Art History of St. Petersburg (RIII), and a manuscript score is preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. Two more scores are preserved at the Manuscript Section of the Russian State Library (RGB): F. 11 (Apraksin-Golitsyn), muz. Chast', p. 37, and F. 219 (gr. Orlov-Davydov), ch. 2, karton 126 (Prodolzhenie), NN 2, 3, 4. A version with accompaniment of string trio is preserved at the (TsGALI) F. 940, ed. kh. 1. The separate parts on the contrary are not preserved.

country estates. These experiences, for their organized and stable character that informed them, can be ascribed already to the group of Russian theatres of Catherine II's time.

The Russian Theatres of Catherine's Time

The Smol'ny Institute

The educational establishment for noble maidens at the Smol'ny convent (*Vospitatel'noe Obshchestvo blagorodnykh devits pri Smol'nom monastyre*) was a school for the daughters of those (often poorished) nobles or bourgeois families who could not engage private teachers. Catherine founded it with an *ukaz* dating 5 May 1764, which was accompanied by a charter provided by Ivan I. Betsky,[272] entitled *Ustav vospitaniya dvukhsot blagorodnykh devits* (Charter for the education of two hundred noble maidens). The establishment was located in the building of the Novodevich'y convent projected by Rastrelli, which construction, started in 1748, had been accomplished in 1769.[273]

Familiarly called Smol'ny Institute, it borrowed its name from the nearby Smol'ny Convent, which in turn derives from the location: in the early days of Saint Petersburg this was in fact the place at the edge of the city where pitch ('*smola*' in Russian) was processed for use in shipbuilding and maintenance. As a result the locale was called '*smol'ny*', that is 'the place of the pitch'.[274] The school received girls from the age of five-six years, and the program lasted twelve years. Among the subjects, great place was given to performing arts: dance, acting, vocal and instrumental music. The achievements were shown, according to the charter, "to ladies and gentlemen arrived to the city",[275] that is members of the Court, military and civilian functionaries of the first five ranks, often the Empress herself.

After some years after the opening of the institute real theatrical performances became to be staged, which revenues were devolved for the maintenance of the institute itself. The students performed French operas, ballets, but also instrumental concerts, vocal music and celebrative choruses. The first staging of an opera dates back to 1773. In 1776 a theatre was built inside the Institute, provided with parterre and boxes. Here is the description of the stage recorded by a the contemporary diplomatist Corberon:

> J'ai été au Monastère des demoiselles; o y a joué *la Colonie*, opéra-comique, pour le prince de Prusse, avec un ballet dansé par les quatre classes. Le théâtre est très joli: la salle est circulaire et

[272] Ivan Ivanovich Betsky (or Betskov, or Betskoy, 1703 – 1795) was the natural son of prince I. Yu. Trubetskoy. Having studied in the Cadets' Corps of Copenhagen, he had served next to the minister plenipotentiary in Paris, and traveled through Europe in the years 1738-39 and 1756. He was appointed by Catherine II director of the Building Chancery. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 135.
[273] The building was commissioned to Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli from empress Elizabeth, who died before the achievement of the works. It was intended to host, as amonastery, the tsarina herself.
[274] In 1808 the --- moved to another building, projected by Giacomo Quarenghi. *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 200.
[275] "для приезжающих из города дам и кавалеров", *ibidem.*

> représente une enceinte d'arcades de pierre surmonté de feuillages, et ces arcades se terminent de chaque côté au théâtre, qui fait comme le jardin d'un bâtiment. J'ai été surpris de ne pas voir le prince de Prusse accompagné d'aucun des grands de la Cour. C'est une impolitesse assez marquée, et dont on ne voit pas la raison. Le prince de Prusse a été fort honnête et fort gracieux; il a dansé avec l'actrice qui a fait le rôle de Blaise avec beaucoup d'aisance, et qui, avant le bal et à la suite d'un choeur de chant accompagné de harpes, a adressé à Son Altesse Royale un compliment court et bien tourné.[276]

Performances were prepared by the vocal teachers (Giuseppe Luini, Matteo Buini, Antonio Sapienza, Vicente Martín y Soler, Tommso Traetta and others) and by the acting teachers (among those Ivan A. Dmitrevsky). The orchestra consisted in the cadets of the Infantry Corps of Nobles, conducted by the singing teacher Giovanni Francisconi (in 1773 this function was fulfilled by Traetta).

Corberon recalls in his letters his frequent visits to the "monastery" in the period 1776 to 1780. Here is his description of the girls:

> […] j'ai été au Monastère, cet élablissement de filles à l'imitation de Saint-Cyr, excepté qu'ici à la classe des filles de condition on a joint une classe pour la bourgeoisie. La première est disinguée par quatre couleurs: le brun, le bleu, le gris et le blanc, qui est la dernière. Les jeunes personnes portent trois ans chaque couleur et restent en tout douze ans. Les jours où il y a assemblée au Monastère, on les voit danser entre elles, séparées du public par une balustrade, qui n'empêche pas qu'on puisse leur parler. C'est le seul moment au surplus où l'on soit admis à les voir, même les parens.[277]

On some occasions, the French diplomatist expressed his doubts regarding the opportunity of making so young girls to undertake theatrical activities, considered harmful for their education:

> Nous avons eu aujourd'hui, Madame, un spectacle fort agréable au Convent des jeunes demoiselles. Elles ont représenté *l'Indiscret*, de M. De Voltaire, *le Sorcier* et *le Coq du village*. Ce trois pièces, ainsi que le ballet qui a terminé le tout, ont été très bien rendues. La dernière surtout a été très piquante, par les petites filles de cinq, six ou sept ans qui en étoient acteurs et actrices. Je suis fâché seulement que l'intelligence de cette tendre jeunesse soit aussi mal employée; le goût des plaisirs et les talens qui y mènent sont plus nuisibles que propres au bonheur des jeunes personnes qui n'ont point de fortune. Mais je fus édifié et attendri de l'air de bonté de l'Impératrice et de contentement des jeunes personnes. Il me sembloit voir une famille bien unie et la mère la plus tendre caressée par ses enfans.[278]

Moreover:

> Vous croyez peut-être, quìon s'occupe en Russie qu'à faire des soldats ou des femmes propres au ménage; vous imaginez sans doute que, dans un pays neuf à bien des égards, on commence par les grands principes de l'éducation, par inoculer les grandes vertus morales aux jeunes gens des

[276] CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…,* II, letter to his brother of 21 September 1780, pp. 366-7.
[277] *ivi,* I, letter to Mlle de Bressolles of 10 March 1776, pp. 180-1.
[278] *ivi*, letter to the marquise de Bréhan of 13 January 1776, p. 141.

> deux sexes, et que le monde ensuite et les voyages leur donnent ce vernis qui fait les grâces. Je le croyais ainsi, Madame ; mais je suis détrompé. J'ai vu aujourd'hui les jeunes personnes du Monastère, qui est ici le Saint-Cyr de la France, représenter une comédie et un opéra-comique, avec toutes les grâces de nos belles dames de Paris. Bonnes musiciennes, bonnes comédiennes, danseuses agréables, de la plus jolie conversation, elles n'auront rien à acquérir dans le monde de ce qu'on y désire. Mais le temps qu'elles emploient à toutes ces jolies choses est donc bien considérable, et ces jeunes personnes sont donc, direz-vous, destinées à mener la vie la plus dissipée? J'ai fait la même question, Madame, et l'on m'a répondu qu'au contraire elles ne seront pas riches, et qu'on les en dédommage par cette éducation. Quel dédommagement, Madame, que la connoissance des plaisirs, quand on n'est pas destiné à en jouir par la fortune![279]

On 12 November 1796 Paul I emanated an *ukaz* appointing his spouse Mariya Fyodorovna director of the establishment. From this time on music, while keeping an important place in the students' education, lost the preeminent role it had under Catherine's/Betsky's rule.[280]

The initial repertoire consisted of French comedies and tragedies. Catherine also sought advice from Voltaire and Grimm about the most appropriated repertoire for such girls.[281] This comprehended Voltaire's *Zaïre*, *L'indiscret*, *Nanine*, *L'enfant prodigue* and *Mérope*; Molière's *Les femmes savantes*; Destouches's *L'ambitieux et l'indiscret*; G. F. de Saint-Fox's *L'oracle*, *La jeune Canadienne* by an unknown author, and even Sumarokov's tragedy *Semira*.[282] The repertoire included such works as Pergolesi's opera *La serva padrona* in the French translation by P. Baurans (*La servante maîtresse*, November 1773), together with Molière's *Les Femmes savantes*, According to Ira F. Petrovskaya though, the repertoire was mostly formed by French *opéras-comiques*:[283]

1775:

- Philidor's *Le sorcier*, and Monsigny's *Rose et Colas* (both staged on 5 February);
- Grétry's *La rosière de Salency* (19 July 1775);
- Philidor's *L'amant déguisé, ou Le jardinier supposé* (24 November 1775).

1776:

- Favart's *Le coq de village* (2 January 1776);

[279] *ivi*, letter to the marquise de Bréhan of 23 January 1776, p. 146.
[280] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, pp. 201-2.
[281] Mooser records Catherine's correspondence with Voltaire about the most appropriate repertoire in R. – A., *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, pp. 91-4.
[282] *ivi*, p. 95.
[283] The scholar referred to Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, N. N. Cherepnin, Mooser and the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette). *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 203.

- Duni's *Le caprice amoureux, ou Ninette à la cour* and *Les sabots* (12 January 1776).

1777:

- Gossec's *Les pêcheurs* (25 February);
- Grétry's *Zémire et Azor* (both staged on 25 February 1777).

1778:

- Sacchini's *La colonie* (14 June), a French remake by N. E. Framéry of Sacchini's *intermezzo L'isola d'amore*

1780:

- Dezède's *Les trois fermiers* (19 January 1780);
- F. A. D. Philidor's *L'amant déguisé*, on occasion of the visit of Joseph II in Saint Petersburg.[284]

1781:

- Grétry's *Silvain* (13 April), already staged in German at Knipper's theatre, with the title *Erast und Lucind*;
- Grétry's *L'amant jaloux, ou Les fausses apparences* (26 June);
- Désormery's *La fête du village* (2 December),

1782:

- Paisiello's *La Serva padrona* in French (17 January);
- Monsigny's *La belle Arsène* (4 December).

[284] According to Corberon, "Bonafons est venu à ma toilette, il m'a dit qu'il avoit fait une pièce, un opéra-comique, au Monastère des demoiselles, lorsque le comte de Falkenstein y est venu, et que cette pièce avoit pour titre: *l'Amant déguisé.*" CORBERON, *Un diplomate français à la cour de Catherine II…,* II, letter to Charlotte of 15 July 1780, p. 254. On the same occasion, on 22 June 1780 Paisiello's *L'idolo cinese* was staged in Tsarskoe Selo.

Later on, Martini-Schwartzendorf's *L'amoureux de quinze ans, ou La double fête* was staged in 1783, Blaise's *Annette et Lubin* in 1785,[285] and Grétry's *L'épreuve villageoise* in 1790.[286]

Mooser pointed out the decisive role of this experience in the diffusion of these works, which were often staged at the institute before being produced by the Court troupe. Moreover, this experience attests once more the great passion that the Peterburgian audiences accorded to this recently known genre.[287]

This experience was in line with Catherine's enlightened ideals of the first part of her rule. It is a further application of her conceit of theatre as a mean to instil education and good customs in her people, for whom she had decided to be the main teacher. To propagandize her initiative, Catherine commissioned an entire series of portraits of the young girls performing and being educated at the Smol'ny Institute to the painter Dimitry Grigor'evich Lavitsky (1735-1822). The series is called *Smolyanki*, and it is nowadays preserved at the Tret'yakov Gallery in Moscow.

Together with the director Betsky, who had familiarized with the most up-to-date education theories during his European travels, the Empress had elaborated a system of instruction, which he had explicated in the report *O vospitanii oboego pola yunoshestva* (On the education of youth of both sexes) of 12 March 1764, also known as *General'noe uchrezhdenie o vospitanii* (General introduction on education). The document was based on the ideas of the French *philosophes* of creating a new class of human and educated people, free from the faults of the contemporary society. Another aim was to create an intermediate educated layer between nobles and peasants, consisting of teachers, artists and educators. These ideas were at the basis of other similar educational experiences, among which the Muscovite Vospitatel'ny dom, at which head Betsky was long time appointed (see Chap. III - Part I – The Foundling Home (*Vospitatel'ny dom*)).

As we shall see, on the one hand these initiatives led to some results, because it was from the breeding ground of educational establishments that the main protagonists of a local production of musical theatre emerged. The combination of knowledge of the main European theatrical genres and technical education gave origin to the genre of Russian

[285] According to Mooser, this opera "vint mettre, semble-t-il, un point final aux soirées dramatiques de l'Institut des jeunes filles nobles." R. – A., *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 104.
[286] *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 1, p. 203.
[287] According to Mooser, "l'experience tentée à Smolla ne fut-elle pas étrangère à la vogue incroyable dont l'opéra-comique ne tarda pas à bénéficier, tant parmi les nobles dilettantes qui aimaient à monter sur les planches, que parmi ceux auxquels leur fortune permettait de posséder un théâtre particulier." R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 104.

comic opera (see Chap. III – Part II – The Birth of Russian Comic Opera). On the other hand, the results were in a way unexpected, because it was from this very social layer, which Catherine had favoured, that the opposition rose against the Empress, accused of betraying her 'progressive' ideals.

Before discussing the raise of the mentioned new genre of Russian comic opera, let's stop on a prior experience, that of the private theatre of Count Sheremetev, which I consider an intermediate passage, at least from a theoretical point of view, from the Western forms of comic theatre that characterized European and Peterburgian theatrical scenes, and the birth of their Russian correspondent.

The Theatre in the *Usad'ba* and the Sheremetev Theatres

The theatre of the *usad'ba* (provincial estate) is a phenomenon that begins in the early 18th century, initially affected private orchestras only.[288] A wave of theatre mania characterized Catherine's time, when virtually any member of the Russian high aristocracy, including its impoverished layers,[289] provided themselves with private theatres and troupes. These consisted of serfs, who were educated at singing, acting, and playing instruments by Court artists who were privately engaged at this purpose. On family and religious holydays these troupes staged performances, to which audiences were admitted on the patron's invitation. Consequently, these performances did not respond to the taste of the audiences, but to that of the possessor, who administrated them freely from the needs of the entrepreneurial theatre, in a system rather similar to the Court opera system of the Baroque era.

Between 1780 and 1820 in Russia there were at least 173 feudal theatres, of which 103 were active in cities, and the other 52 in provincial estates. When in 1797 Paul I

[288] In Russia historians record private stage since the age of Peter I, the most part of them being in Moscow and in the near region of Podmoskov'e. At Catherine I's time, theatres were present in the residences of the landowners S. Apraksin, A. Stolypin, A. Gagarin, P. Volkonsky, A. Naryshkin, D. Golitsyn, I. Saltykov. Permanent troupes worked in the estates of Lyublino, Yaropol'ts, Ostaf'evo, Marfino, where performances took place in a dedicated venue. L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh* (The Repertoire of the Feudal Theatre of Sheremetev Family), in *Starinnye teatry Rossii, XVIII-pervaya chetvert' XIX v., Sbornik nauchnykh trudov…*, pp. 47-58; V. K. STANYUKOVICH, *Domashny krepostnoy teatr Sheremetevykh XVIII veka* (The private feudal theatre of the Sheremetev family in the 18th century), Leningrad, Izdanie Gosudarstvennogo russkogo muzeya 1927.

[289] Witnessed, for instance, by the *Messager satirique* (Moscow, 1790, 3rd part, pp. 10-1): "[…] les petits pomiétchiki provinciaux qui, étant allé voir le théâtre du grand seigneur voisin, s'en retournaient chez eux les poches vides, mais suivis d'une bande de musiciens et d'acteurs, ainsi que de chariots remplis de décorse t d'instruments, se ruinant ainsi à singer la cour." quoted from R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 133.

ordered a census of these troupes in Moscow, fifteen private theatres were registered, with a total of 160 artists and 226 musicians and singers[290].

Theatres were active in the estate of prince V. I. Shcherbatov in Litvinovo, and in that of prince N. B. Yusupov in Arkhangel'skoe (both near Moscow). Prince Pyotr Mikhaylovich Volkonsky (1746-1796) possessed a theatre in his palace in Moscow, and one (330 sits) in his provincial estate of Samotek, where a complete troupe was at his disposal.[291] Mooser also registered information concerning the troupe of count Aleksandr Romanovich Vorontsov (1741-1805), which initially settled in Alabukh, in the governorate of Tambov. Since 1795 the troupe was in the estate of Andreevskoe, governorate of Vladimir, where the count settled down after leaving Catherine II's court. Here he created a school to educate actors, singers and instrument players. The troupe lasted fifteen years, and included not less than seventeen actresses and forty-eight actors, with an orchestra of thirty-eight musicians[292]. Active only in the spring and autumn, it staged three performances a week (92 plays, most of them comedies or French or Russian comic operas).

Another troupe belonged to Simeon Gavrilovich Zorich (1745-1799), the favourite of Catherine in the years 1777-78, who, having acquired a considerable fortune, had purchased lands and a palace in Shkloŭ near Mogilev, where he settled down after having lost the tsarina's favour. Here he had at his disposal an excellent orchestra and a troupe of spoken theatre, a chorus and an orchestra of Russian horns, and a corps de ballet, whose members were mostly acquired to the Imperial Theatres after the nobleman's death.

Aleksey Emelyanovich Stolypin (1744- 1810 ca), a landowner of the governorate of Saratov, often rented his orchestra to the Petrovsky theatre, and sold it to the Imperial Theatres in 1806, when it amounted to 74 actors, singers, and musicians.

Between these troupes a trade of artists emerged, who were bought and sold by noblemen who possessed them, those being serfs. For instance, in 1800 the Directorate purchased from Zorich's theatre in Shkloŭ fourteen dancers chosen by Val'berkh;[293] in 1804 countess Elena Vasil'evna Sheremeteva sold to the Imperial theatres, for the amount of 50.000 roubles, her orchestra of 36 musicians, which she describes in details in a letter

[290] R. – A. MOOSER, *Les scènes féodales et les artistes-serfs*, in *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, III, p. 827.
[291] The quality of this troupe is witnessed by the fact that Maddox had it performing in his theatre alternating with his own troupe. After Volkonsky's death, the troupe was acquired by the Directorate of the Imperial theatres.
[292] R. – A. MOOSER, *Les scènes féodales et les artistes-serfs…*, p. 826.
[293] A. A. GOZENPUD, *Krepostnoy teatr*, in *Muzykal'ny teatr v Rossii. Ot istokov do Glinki. Ocherk* (Musical theatre in Russia. From the origins to Glinka. An essay), Leningrad, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1959, p. 236.

to Aleksandr I. In 1806 the Directorate acquired Stolypin's troupe for the amount of 32.000 roubles.[294] The circulation functioned also in the opposite verse: theatre owners often purchased artists from the Court. Nevertheless, according to Gozenpud, in 1808 the Emperor Aleksandr emanated an *ukaz* forbidding this practice, possibly fearing to lose the most distinguished exponents of the Court's staff.[295]

Gozenpud registers also advertisement in which artists offered or were looked for as teachers;[296] amongst the artists who worked for the private theatres Gozenpud mentions Dmitrevsky, Sinyavskaya, Pomerantsev, Plavil'shchikov, Shusherin and the couple Sandunov.[297] Apart from this practice, which seems nowadays unacceptable, this phenomenon led also to the liberation of some artists who had shown particular qualities: it is the case of the famous violin player Ivan Khandoshkin, possibly having belonged to prince Grigory Potyomkin, of the composer Danil Kashin, liberated by G. I. Bibikov in 1799, and of Mikhail Matinsky, liberated by count S. P. Yaguzhinsky. A similar destiny affected Praskov'ya Kovalevskaya, who, being the foremost singer of the troupe of Sheremetev, became also his mistress and spouse.[298]

Among the most distinguished experiences of this kind, the most brilliant was probably that of the theatres belonging to the Sheremetev family, one of the most well off dynasties of the Russian 18th century, which could invest funds which were unthinkable for other troupes, destined to uncommon performances in the country.

The troupe was led to its most high achievements by the son of its founder, Nikolay Petrovich Sheremetev (1751-1809), who was a passionate lover of theatre and music. Nikolay Petrovich had studied at the University of Leiden, and in the years 1771-72 he had come into contact with the theatrical life of England, Holland, and Switzerland. In Paris he had studied cello with Hyvart, an employee of the Parisian Opéra theatre. Having come

[294] *ivi*, p. 236. Episodes of selling and buying artists-serfs are recorded also by Morkov in his V. I. MORKOV, *Istorichesky ocherk russkoy opery s samogo nachala, po 1862 god* (Historical Essay on Russian Opera, from Its Beginning to the Year 1862), Sanktpeterburg, Izdanie M. Bernarda 1862.
[295] A. A. GOZENPUD, *Krepostnoy teatr*…, p. 236.
[296] *ivi*, pp. 236-7.
[297] *ivi*, p. 237.
[298] Praskov'ya Ivanovna Kovaleva, called Zhemchugova from the Russian *zhenchug*, 'pearl' was the main actress of Sheremetev's troupe. Although the notice that she had studied with the actress and singer E. Sandunova appears to be legendary, she possibly was strongly influenced by the actress M. S. Sinjavskaja. Little is known about her youth, except for the fact that she was born in the estate of the Sheremetev family, being the daughter of serfs of his. Having noticed her talent, count Nikolay Petrovich had her educated at singing. In the troupe he developed she expressed herself at best in dramatic roles, such as Nina in the eponimous opera, Louise in *Le déserteur*, or Eliane in *Les mariages samnites*. She had a long and successful career inside the troupe, and gained a special position in the life of the count himself, to whom she gave a son. Having got ill, she performed publicly for the last time in 1797, and died in 1803 after having married the count. A. A. GOZENPUD, *Krepostnoy teatr…*, pp. 245-6.

back to Russia in the early 1780s, the young count kept alive his passion for music theatre, and assumed an increasingly active role in the administration of the troupe founded by his father, together with its *Kapellmeister* Stepàn A. Degtyàrev[299] and the librettist Vasìly G. Voroblévsky[300]. His first occupation for that of making new engagements, which made the troupe to include up to ninety-five artists.[301] Moreover, he kept in contact with his former teacher Hyvart. Their correspondence (possibly part of it), housed at the Historical Archive of Saint Petersburg (RGIA)[302], appears as a document rich in information concerning numbers of aspects of the production.[303] Hyvart (sometimes through some Godin) dispatched also librettos, published or manuscripts scores of orchestral and chamber music (even without or against the composers' will), models for costumes and sets from Paris Opéra, numbers of objects and furniture for sets, drawings, projects, and models of theatre buildings for their construction and equipping.

With his help Sheremetev supplied his troupe with a series of new theatre buildings, which were to be increasingly suitable for the staging of his favourite genre: the opera of Gluck-Calzabigi line. For this purpose, he had some theatres built along some fifteen years, trying to have his troupe provided with the right instruments for the staging of his favourite repertoire.[304]

Since the stages of his theatres in Moscow and Kuskovo were excessively reduced, in summer 1785 the count had a new project prepared, for a new theatre in Kuskovo

[299] Stepan Anikievich Degtyarev (1766 - 1813) was a serf of the Sheremetev family. In the estate he worked as music teacher and artistic director of the productions. Although many sources atest his activity as editor of the operas that were staged in the theatres of Kuskovo and Ostankino, his figure has not received the deserved attention, and yet remains poorly studied.

[300] Vasily Grigor'evich Voroblevsky (1730 – 1797) was count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev's secreatry, librarian and translator. He was a serf of the Sheremetev family, but received his education in St. Petersburg, wher his first translation was published in 1771. For the most part of his life he lived in Moscow, where he took part in the organization of theatrical productions. He was the author of translations and remakes around twenty operatic librettos from French and Italian into Russian. A. I. KUZ'MIN, *Krepostnoy literator V. G. Voroblevsky* (The literary man and serf V. G. Voroblevsky), *XVIII vek* (18th Century), Sbornik 4, M.-L., Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nayk SSSR 1959, pp. 136-56.

[301] Details about the staff of troupe, orchestra and corps de ballet, and on the artists' education are provided by Stanyukovich in V. K. STANYUKOVICH, *Domashny krepostnoy teatr Sheremetevykh*….

[302] RGIA F.1088 op. 1 d. 121 Letter from N. P. Sheremetev to Hyvart (1785-1792); RGIA F. 1088 op. 1 d. 186 Letters from Hyvart to N. P. Sheremetev (1784-1791). The correspondence has been published in Russian translation in N. A. ELIZAROVA, *Teatry Sheremetevykh* (The Sheremetev theatres), Moskva, Izdanie Ostankinskogo dvortsa-muzeya 1944, pp. 391-481.

[303] The preserved correspondence begins with the letter dated 15 August 1784 and ends in 1791. Possibly, it had begun even before.

[304] A. GIUST, *Architettura teatrale e repertorio nel teatro russo del Settecento: il caso dei teatri Šeremetev* (Theatrical architecture and repertoire in Russian 18th-century theatre: the case of the Sheremetev theatres), paper presented at the conference "Arti & Scienze. Scambi e relazioni" (Art & science. Exchanges and relationships), Scuola di dottorato in Storia e Critica dei Beni artistici, musicali e dello spettacolo, Padua, 7-8 June 2011, forthcoming publication.

provided with a wide stage and the most advanced theatrical machines.[305] The construction was achieved in spring 1787.[306]

The count began a new construction also in Ostankino, another estate of the Sheremetev, situated at the north of Moscow.[307] This theatre was planned to work mainly in summer, whereas the theatre in Moscow should be open during winter time, when Russian aristocracy used to come back to town. Started in January 1792, works ended only in 1798, but the theatre started its activity on 22 July 1795.[308]

As above mentioned, on the one hand his activity was stimulated by the desire to stage works belonging to the genre of *tragédie lyrique*, which in Saint Petersburg was less common than European comic genres, and which Nikolay Petrovich pursued all long this experience. Sheremetev was among the first in Russia to receive scores of Gluck's and his imitators' works, also thanks to his capacity of equipping the troupe with the utilities congruous to this kind of productions, which included crowd scenes and complex scenic effects that needed a wide stage and innovative theatrical machines. Among such performances, which only the foremost European theatres could afford, the Sheremetev scenes staged: Gluck's *Echo et Narcisse* and *Alceste*, Grétry's ballet *Céphale et Procris*; Cimarosa's *Cleopatra*. Liya Lepskaya collected documents attesting the staging of Gluck's

[305] During the preparation of the project Hyvart sent to Sheremetev a description of the stage mmachinery used at the Parisian Opéra. At the same time he sent models of the strictly necessary. For example, a "storm" with the possibility of changing the colour of the sky, a "Glory" for the appearance of deities, furniture and other objects and a model of theatre with flood, all things "unique", works of scenic art that "were necessary for the preparation of the most hard and expensive plays, being a stumbling block for theatre mechanics." Letter from Hyvart of 16 May 1785.

[306] Designed by architects A. F. Mironov and Dikushin, the theatre amazed for the rich endwments. In addition to the stage and the parterre covered with luxurious materials, a capacity of 150 seats, it was provided with a machinery with ten curtains that were changed in every performance, about 200 backgrounds, 500 *coulisses* painted on canvas. From the ceiling more than 200 clouds could be lowered. The stage of the new theatre had a depth of 20,7 m with a proscenium particularly deep (4,7 m), essential to the representation of 'great' works. The stage was equipped with upper and lower stage machines, and reflected the pattern of the opera house at Versaiiles not only in the gilt and pomp of the decorations, but also in terms of the stalls, which was new in the solution of the theatre interior, with files of the parterre and two tiers of balconies hanging opern. For a detailed description of the theatre, which is not preserved, see E. N. GRITSAK, *Kuskovo i Ostankino*, serie *Pamyatniki vsemirnogo naslediya* (Monumenti dell'eredità di tutto il mondo), Moskva, Veche 2004, and L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es* (The repertoire of the feudal theatre of the Sheremetev family. A catalogue of the performances), Mosvkva, Gos. Tsentr. Teatral'ny muzey im. A. A. Bakhrushina 1996.

[307] In 1790 Hyvart sent to the count technical plans and designs of the Parisian Opéra and other European theatres. See letters of 5 March and 22 July 1790, and of 15 September 1791.

[308] In the spring of 1792 Camporesi began to plan the theatre-palace, on which later several architects worked, such as Sheremetev's serf A. F. Mironov, the Peterburgian I. E. Starov and V. Brenna (in 1793). The main entry and the *foyer* were achieved only in 1811. L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es*…, p. 34. For a detailed description of the theatre, which is partially preserved, see also L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Mashineriya Ostankinskogo teatra*…, in *Teatral'noe prostranstvo: Materialy nauchnoy konferentsii* (The theatrical space: proceedings of the conference), Moskva, Gos. Muzey izobr. Isk-va im. Pushkina 1979, p. 269.

Armide and Sacchini's *Renaud* between 1787 and 1788, premiered in Russia in this very theatre.[309]

Moreover, during the construction of the new theatre in Kuskovo, Nikolay Petrovich discussed with Hyvart the staging of such operas as Gluck's *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Tauride*; Piccinni's *Didone*, *Atys*, and *Roland*; Sacchini's *Renaud* and *Dardanus*; Salieri's *Les Danaïdes*. He finally did not succeed in staging them, but prepared them, deepening into details about sets and effects, costumes, acting.[310] Nikolay Petrovich was attracted by the dramaticity of subjects and its repercussions on acting, in the change of sets, crowd scenes and other effects.[311]

The performance that represents at best Sheremetev's experience in this field is *Les mariages samnites*, *drame lyrique* in three acts: the opera, composed by Grétry under the influence of Gluck's reform, is characterized by an heroic subject and abundant crowd scenes. Its staging was discussed in the correspondence with Hyvart, from which it emerges that the count considered it like a *tragédie lyrique*. The opera was staged several times. The premiere dates back to November 1785. The opera was staged also on 30 June 1787, when Catherine II, who had moved to Moscow to celebrate the 25th coronation anniversary, visited the Sheremetev estate together with Joseph II. This staging was witnessed by Count Louis-Philippe de Ségur (1753-1830), who was admitted to the performance as French ambassador to the Russian court. As attested by the count himself who, not speaking Russian, mistook it for a Russian opera, the opera was sung in Russian:

> On joua sur un très beau théâtre un grand opéra russe; tous ceux qui comprenaient le poème le trouvaient intéressante t bien écrit. Je ne pouvais juger que la musique et les ballets; l'une m'étonna par son harmonieuse mélodie; les autres par l'élégante richesse des costumes, la grâce des danseuses et la légèreté des danseurs.[312]

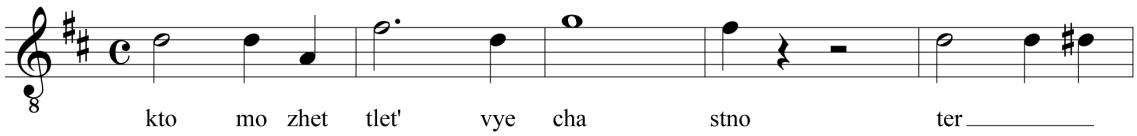
Les mariages samnites was also staged as the last performance, in Ostankino, on 30 April 1797,[313] to celebrate the new tsar Paul I, who had come to Moscow for the

[309] L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es*…, p. 12.
[310] See, for instance, Hyvart's letters of 22 May or 20 August 1786. The main obstacle was the lack in space and equipment of the stage.
[311] See, for instance, Sheremetev's letters of 22 December 1785, and of 22 December 1785.
[312] L. - PH. DE SÉGUR, *Mémoires, ou Souvenirs et anecdotes*, Paris, 1890, t. II, p. 94, quoted from R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie*..., p. 130. It had been sung in the Russian translation by Voroblevsky titled *Braki samnityan* in 1785 also.
[313] In 1799 the theatre broke off its activity beacuse of the illness of its main singer Zhemchugova, and the count disbanded the troupe: "[the count] dispersa alors sa troupe dont les hommes furent versés dans ses bureaux, cependant que les jeunes filles, convenablement dotées, furent invitées à se trouver un mari… tout en gardant leur condition de serves attachées à la maison seigneuriale." R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie*..., p. 132.

coronation (5 April).[314] The same staging was repeated on 7 May 1797 in honour of the Polish king Stanisław August Poniatowski, who had then taken refuge in Moscow, where he soon died. In his *Mémoires secrets et inédites* the decayed king recollected the opulence of costumes and jewels, the ballets and he presence of 300 extras on the scene:

> Au lever de la toile, on a vu donner, en langue russe, une représentation des Mariages samnites, musique de Grétry, mêlée seulement de quelques airs d'autres maîtres. Le tout exécuté par plus de trois cents personnes, tous sujets de Szeremetieff. Les gestes et la déclamation, copiés sur ceux des acteurs français, les costumes les mieux dessinés et enrichis de diamants de la comtesse Szeremetieff, pour plus de cent mille roubles.[315]

This was also the last public performance of Praskov'ya Zhemchugova, in the role of the protagonist Eliane that had made her so famous.[316] The archive of the Ostankino Palace-Museum preserves the parts of the performed score.[317] From a first observation I could have of these documents, which undoubtedly deserve a more in-depth examination, it is possible to point out the redaction work Stepan Degtyarev had made for the staging on Grétry's original score. The composer had tried to exploit the qualities of his troupe's singers, notably those of the main artist, by making the vocal part more virtuosic. I had not the possibility to study the whole score, which indubitably need first of all the arrangement of the music numbers in the correct order, but here is an example noticeable at a first look to it:



Exemple No. III, 1 – A. Grétry, *Les mariages samnites*, *Allegro assai*, measures 27-31

[314] According to Mooser, for the opera Sheremetev commissioned the sets to Pietro Gonzaga, engaged in 1792 by the Imperial Theatres. The historian states that models of these sets are housed at the Hermitage Museum and at the Museum of Academic theatres, possibly the St. Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music. *ivi*, p. 131.

[315] S. A. PONIATOWSKI, *Journal privé du Roi Stanislas Auguste pendant son voyage en Russie pour le couronnement de l'empereur Paul Ier*, in *Mémoires secrets et inédits de Stanislas Auguste comte Poniatowski Dernier Roi de Pologne, relatifs à ses rapports intimes avec l'Impératrice Catherine II et à son evènement au thrône, Journal privé du Roi Stanislas Auguste pendant son voyage en Russie pour le couronnement de l'empereur Paul Ier, Suivis d'une relation de ses funérailles, depuis le 12 février jusqu'au 8 mars 1798*, a cura di S. Bacciarelli, Leipzig 1862, p. 132. Poniatowski although mixes up the date of Zhemchugova's wedding with the count, celebrated in 1801.

[316] The main roles were played by Zhemchugova (Eliane), Anna Izumrudova (Céphalide) -, Andrey Novikov (Parmenon). N. A. ELIZAROVA, *Khudozhestvennye sokrovishcha dvortsov-muzeev Ostankino* (The artistic treasures of the Palace-museum of Ostankino), Moskva 1966, pp. 44-5.

[317] [A. GRÉTRY], *Samnitskie braki* (*Les mariages samnites*), Library of the Ostankino Palace and Museum of Moscow, OM 6 k. k *Iz knig grafa Nikolaya Petrovicha Sheremeteva* (From the books of N. P. Sheremetev).



Exemple No. III. 2 – A. Grétry (ed. S. A. Degtyarev), *Les mariages samnites*, *Allegro assai*, measures 28-31

The score presented Grétry's line within the staff (Figure 1), below which a further staff for the vocal part had been added (Figure 2). According to this type of changes, the Russian text had been subjected to several corrections, visible on the manuscripts in different handwritings in ink or pencil, in order to obtain the best rhythmic version while complying with both the meaning and the meter of the texts, and the vocal qualities of the performers.

On the other hand, since these stagings were extremely demanding from the point of view of staff, costumes and sets, the most part of Sheremetev's repertoire consisted of less challenging *opéras comiques*, which were the favourite genre of count Pyotr Borisovich[318], in line with the wave we've observed in Saint Petersburg. The activity of the Sheremetev theatres though has the merit, together with other institutions we shall discuss below, of taking this genre to the old capital of the country, and to stimulate the theatrical activity of its area. Among the repertoire of the Sheremetev theatres reconstructed by Lepskaya, the following *opéras comiques* figure:[319]

1779:

- *Les souliers mordorés, ou La cordonniere allemande* by A. Fridzéri on libretto by A. Ferrières (11 January);
- *Le peintre amoureux de son modèle* by Duni on libretto by L. Anseaume (7 February);
- *Les deux cousines* by Desbrosses on libretto by La Ribadière (28 June);
- *L'épreuve de l'amitié* by Grétry on libretto by Favart and (29 June)

[318] The repertorie of his time includes such works *Les souliers mordorés, ou La Cordonniere Allemande* by A. Friziéri, *Le peintre amoureux de son modèle* by E. Duni, *Les deux cousines* by P. Desbrosses, *L'amitié à l'épreuve* e *Lucile* by Grétry, *Le déserteur* by Monsigny; *La buona figliola maritata* by Piccinni; *Nina ossia La Pazza per amore* by Dalayrac. It included also such Russian operas as *Neschastie ot karety* (Misfortune from a carriage) and Catherine II's operas *Fevej* and *Novgorodsky Bogatyr' Boeslavich* (Boeslavich, the Hero of Novgorod). The full repertoire is reconstructed in L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es…*.

[319] L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es…*, pp. 129-36.

- *Les deux chasseurs et la laitière* by Duni on libretto by L. Anseaume (revived in 1784);
- *Les moissonneurs* by Duni on libretto by Favart (revived in 1780).

1780:

- *La colonie* by Sacchini on libretto by N. Framéry (5 November 1780)

1781:

- *Le déserteur* by Monsigny on libretto by Sedaine (7 February);
- *Laurette* by J. - N. Mereaux on libretto by de Malzeville.

1782:

Le devin du village by J. - J. Rousseau (1782)

1783:

Le tonnelier by F. - J. Gossec on libretto by N. M. Audinot and A. - F. Quétant (1783)

1784:

- *Blaise et Babet, ou La suite des trois fermiers* by Dezède on libretto by J.-M. Monvel (4 August);
- *L'infante de Zamore* by Paisiello on libretto by Framéry;
- *On ne s'avise jamais de tout* by Monsigny on libretto by Sedaine.

Last 1780s:

- *La belle Arsène* by Monsigny on libretto by Favart (1785)
- *Aline, reine de Golconde* by Monsigny on libretto by Sedaine (10 December 1786)

- *Lucile* by Grétry on libretto by Marmontel (1787-88);
- *Le faux lord* by Piccinni on libretto by G. Piccinni (1788);
- *Le bal masqué* by F. - J. Darcy on libretto by B. - J. Marsollier (1780s);
- *L'amoureux de quinze ans* by J. - P. Martini on libretto by P. Laujon (1780s);
- *Azémia, ou Les sauvages* by N. Dalayrac on libretto by A. Chabeaussière (1788-90).

1790s:

- *Nina, ou La folle par amour* by Dalayrac on libretto by B. Marsollier (17 September 1790);[320]
- *Rose et Colas* by Monsigny on libretto by Sedaine (1 August 1792);
- *Le tableaux parlant* by Grétry on libretto by Anseaume (1 August 1792);
- *Les deux sylphes* by M. Desaugiers on libretto by B. Ambert (1 August 1792);
- *La clochette* by Duny on libretto by Anseaume (1792 or 93);
- *Les sabots* by Duni on libretto by Sedaine (1792-93);
- *Le maréchal ferrant* by Philidor on libretto by Quétant (1795).

The repertoire included also several Italian operas *buffa*, though in a lesser percentage:[321]

- *La buona figliola maritata* by Piccinni on libretto by Goldoni (2 July 1782);
- *Il barbiere di Siviglia* by Paisiello on libretto by Lorenzi (1785-88);
- *La finta amante* by Paisiello on libretto by Casti (1780s);
- *I due baroni di rocca azzurra* by Cimarosa (1790-96);
- *Gli astrologi immaginari* by Paisiello on libretto by Bertati (1792);
- *La fiera di Venezia* by Salieri on libretto by G. Boccherini (1792);
- *Nina, o sia La pazza per amore* by Paisiello on libretto by (1793-95);
- *Lo spazzacamino principe* by Portogallo on libretto by Foppa (1795-96).

[320] The path this opera in particular covered to arrive in Russia is reconstructed in N. A. OGARKOVA, *Epizod iz muzykal'nogo byta Peterburga XVIII veka: opera N.-M. Dalejraka "Nina, ou la folle par amour"* (An episode of the musical life of 18th-century Petersburg: the opera by N.-M. Dalayrac *Nina, ou La Folle par Amour*), in *Europa Orientalis*, XVII, n. 1, 1998, pp. 43-54.
[321] L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es…*, pp. 129-36.

These performances being sometimes open to any kind of people, allowed to assist by paying a ticket, according to Mooser this phenomenon concurred to the education of the Russian audience[322]. This is particularly true for the area of Moscow, that had the possibility to develop, being long years devoid of a permanent theatrical activity. As we shall see, in these years music theatre spread over in the old capital too (see Chap. III – Part I – Russian Theatres in Moscow), with the peculiarity that performances were sung mostly directly in Russian.[323] This practice was particularly used in the Muscovite area, possibly due to a less cosmopolitan society than in city that Peter I had wanted as a 'window on Europe'. Anyway, it recalled the similar European practice of parody, which also was known in Russia, as attested by the staging of Paisiello *Il duello comico* in the French parody (*Le duel comique*) by P. Moline, and Sacchini's *La colonie*, which was itself a French remake by N. E. Framéry of Sacchini's intermezzo *L'isola d'amore*, and many others mentioned above.

As to Sheremetev's theatre, which I took as the most considerable example, operas were staged in the translation by Vasily Voroblevsky, a serf doing the function of library of Counts Pyotr Borisovich and his son Nikolay Petrovich. Prince V. I. Shcherbatov had at his service Vasily Alekseevich Levshin (1746-1826), a serf whose biography is scarcely documented, who was the author of numbers of original comedies and opera librettos, and the translation of at least seven *opéras comiques*.

The case of *Les mariages samnites*, sung in Voroblevsky's Russian translation *Braki Samnityan*, was not an exception: almost all the quoted *opéras comiques* and operas *buffa*, which formed the repertoire of Sheremetev theatres, were sung in Russian, as attested by the published librettos.[324]

As we shall see, under this aspect the Sheremetev theatres were not isolated, this practice being widespread also in other theatrical institutions, notably of Moscow. From the old capital, this use diffonded also in Saint Petersburg.

[322] R. – A. MOOSER, *Les scènes féodales et les artistes-serfs…*, p. 825.
[323] *ivi*, p. 828.
[324] L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es…*, pp. 54-87.

Russian Theatres in Moscow

The Moscow Foundling Home (*Vospitatel'ny dom*)

The Smol'ny institute was not the only educational establishment Catherine II was responsible for, in the passion for enlightened ideas that affected her at the beginning of her rule. During the celebrations for her coronation, Empress Catherine II founded in Moscow, on 1 September 1763, the Foundling Home, an educational stablishment that gathered abandoned and orphaganed children from the whole Empire, and was intended to bring them up to a high standard of culture and refinement. The institution was entrusted to the surveillance of Ivan Betsky, and was funded with the withdrawal of a quarter all public performances' revenues on the Empire's territory.

Since 1772 many professional artists teached here acting and singing, dance and playing of different intruments. The students in fact, as a part of their educational path, regularly staged performances on the institute's stage. These performances with time became a profession, and many of the students educated here passed to the Imperial theatres. Moreover, the students gave also private performances, thus influencing the city's repertoire. The programme usually included a play or a comedy, sometimes a French play given in Russian translation, a ballet and a concert. In his memoirs William Coxe collects that comic opera too had occasionally a place in the repertoire,[325] as in the case with *Derevenzky vorozheya* (The fortune teller of the village), in one act, a remake by Vasily Maykov (1728-1778) of Rousseau's *Le devin du village*, "dont les personnages, - according to Mooser - dépabtisés pour raion d'euphonie, avaient reçu des noms plus familiers au public russe."[326]

Another opera staged by the students of the Foundling home was Kheraskov's *Dobrye soldaty* (The good soldiers), with music by Raupach. The libretto was printed in the same year in Moscow.[327]

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[325] W. COXE, *Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark; illustrated with charts and engravings. By William Coxe, A. M. F. R. S. F. A. S. Rector of Bemerton*, in Five volumes. The fifth edition [I ed. 1784], London, Printed for T. Cadell, Jun. and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1802.

[326] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 206. Libretto and score seem not to have been issued, but it seems that some years after some extraits of the score were published with the title of *Ouverture avec chansons extraites de l'intermède appelé Le devin du village, pour les clavicordes ou forte-pianos, composition de J. J. Kerzelli. Prix deux roubles, Imprimé à la typographie de l'Université Impériale de Moscou, année 1778. Aux frais du libraire Ch. L. Weber.* "Il s'agit là d'un véritable incunable de l'édition musicale russe, car *Le devin du villlage* de J. Kerzelli est le premier ouvrage lyrique qui ait été publié an Russie." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 206.

[327] An exemplar can be found at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB): M. KHERASKOV, *Dobrye soldaty, opera komicheskaya. Sochinennaya na Rossiyskom yazyke. Izdanie vtoroe* (The good

Court and Private Administration of Moscow Theaters

With the *ukaz* dating 6 January 1759, Elizabeth had created the *Russkaya pridvornaya (imperatorskaya) truppa* (Russian Court (Imperial) troupe), which was the perpetuation of the *Russky dlya predstavleniya tragediy i komediy teatr* (Russian theatre for the staging of tragedy and comedy), created in 1756.[328] With the same *ukaz*, in 1759 Empress Elizabeth had established an official Russian theatre (*privilegirovanny*) also in Moscow, where a Russian theatre had grown up within the Moscow university, around the personality of I. M. Kheràskov, a friend and study companion of Sumarokov.[329] As seen,

soldiers, comic opera. Composed in Russian. Second edition), V Universitetskoy Tipografii, u N. Novikova, 1782 goda. The score might be housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[328] I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Russkaya pridvornaya (imperatorskaya) truppa* (Russian Court (Imperial) troupe), in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 57.

[329] Mikhail Matveevich Kheràskov (1733-1807) was the author of Russia's first major epic, the *Rossiada* (1778), and a prolific writer of poetry, prose, and drama. Educated at the Peterburgian Infantry Corps of Cadets, Kheraskov spent much of his professional career in various jobs at Moscow University, where he worked from its founding in 1755, ultimately became one of its four curators (rectors) in 1778, and exerted important influence on its cultural activities, especially the University Press, which he himself first directed and then invited N. I. Novikov to head in 1779. As one of the most devoted Russian Independent masons and the founder of a Masonic lodge of the Rosicrucian Order, Kheraskov produced some of the best, clearest, and most sophisticated examples of Masonic allegory in 18th-century Russia, especially his novel *Kadm i Garmoniya* (Cadmus and Harmonia, 1789) and his epic poem *Vladimir vozrozhdyonny* (Vladimir reborn, 1785). During the early 1760 Kheraskov edited two literary journals at Moscow University: *Poleznoe uveselenie* (Useful entertainement, Jan. 1760 - June 1762) and *Svobodnye chasy* (Independent time, Jan.-Dec. 1763). The former was the leading literary journal of his time, and the only journal to devote most of its space to poetry. Among the writers in this journal were several who later produced some of the best works written in the third quarter of the 18th century, including Fonvizin, Bogdanovich, Maikov, and Rzhevsky. In 1772 Kheraskov brought together many of the same writers who participated in his first two writers in his third and last journal, *Vechera* (Evenings, 1772-73), that published works read at the literary salon organized by Kheraskov and his wife, the poetess Elizaveta Kheraskova. In addition to these three literary journals, Kheraskov also edited in 1767 a three-volume translation of articles from the French Encyclopedia. During the 18th century, Kheraskov was best known for his epic poems. Between 1761 and 1805 he wrote ten long poems, ranging in subject from a defense of science in *Plody nauk* (The fruits of learning, 1761) to a defense of faith and a decrial of excessive rationality in his Masonic allegory Vladimir Reborn. For the most famous of these epics, *Rossiada*, which portrayed the 1552 capture of Kazan' by Ivan IV as the decisive event in Russia's liberation from the Tatar Yoke, Kheraskov was dubbed "the Russian Homer" and hailed as an equal of "the Northern Racine" (Sumarokov) and "the Russian Pindar" (Lomonosov). Given the fact the Russia's best poets had attempted to complete a major national epic for almost fifty years (beginning with Kantemir's abandonment of his *Petriada*, dedicated to Peter the Great in 1730, and continuing with Sumarokov's one-page beginning of an epic about Dmitry Donskoy called the *Dmitriada* and Lomonosov's two cantos of *Peter the Great*), Kheraskov's completion of the full twelve cantos was indeed considered a major accomplishment and finally fulfilled the Russian ambition for their own national epic. His three novels, *Numa, ili protsvetayushchii Rim* (Numa, or Flourishind Rome, 1768), *Cadmus and Harmonia*, and *Polidor, syn Kadma i Garmonii* (Polydorus, the son of Cadmus and Harmonia, 1794) all use classical themes (taken especially from Plutarch's *Lives* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) as an allegorical focus for discussing both Russia specifically and the human condition in general. Although written in an archaic high style with awkward syntax (including sentences of up to 200 words), Kheraskov's novels reflect a very broad knowledge of classical and European cultures and often have interesting plots. The many levels of allegory in *Cadmus and Harmonia* prove that under the influence of the Western European baroque novel, Russian prose of the late 18th century had become more sophisticated, and complex than is often realized. In addition to his epic poetry and prose, Kheraskov wrote nine tragedies, five "dramas" (following the examples of Diderot, Lesssing, and others), two comedies, a comic opera, a theatrical prologue, and many lyric poems in genres

when Locatelli had tried to expand his entreprise in the old capital city, he had a new theatre built next to Krasny prud, and merged his troupe with the one that had been created inside the University. The theatre opened on 29 January 1759, but, as we know, didn't gain the expected success and closed up.[330] The actors belonging to this troupe were, by order of Elizabeth dating 16 January 1761, tranferred to Saint Petersburg, even if some of them remained in the city.[331]

In 1763, after Catherine II's coronation celebrations, the privilege for all he entertainments passed to the Foundling Home, and only in 1765 it passed to some colonel Nikolay Sergeevich Titov who, in accord with the directorate of the Foundling Home, restarted permanent performances, making use of the old Golovinsky dom on the river Yauza,[332] and of the actors deriving from Locatelli's Moscow enterprise, at least those who had remained in the old capital.[333] The troupe included also some of the amateurs who had already performed in private stagings, together with the students of the Moscow university. Thus Moscow had finally its permanent Russian theatre, which independently from the one in Saint Petersburg.

According to Karabanov, the troupe was the breeding ground where the first Russian theatrical authors, belonging to the generation following that of Sumarokov, grew up: he refers notably to Mikhail Popov, Ivan Chulkov, Ivan Afanas'evich Dmitrevsky and Ivan Yakovlevich Sokolov.[334] These authors would draw attention to themselves just during Catherine II's rule.

In 1769 Titov stopped his activity and the privilege passed to the Italians Belmonti and Giuseppe Cinti, who since 1765 had been imposing their personalities in Moscow as music teachers. They succeeded Titov in the direction of the Moscow theatre, initially obtaining from Catherine a privilege for five years for the organization of public masquerades, and the staging of comedies, operas *seria* and *buffa*. The theatre was

ranging from panegyric, "Anacreontic", and "moral" odes to sonnets, fables, and epigrams. *Handbook of Russian Literature*....

[330] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne* (The theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna), Sankt-Peterburg, «GIPERION» 2003, pp. 232-3.

[331] Documents are preserved in RGADA F. 17, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 322, l. 49. See also O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve*..., p. 15. Stählin records the names of the actors and actresses who took part in it in YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*»…, p. 593.

[332] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve*..., p. 16.

[333] RGADA F. 17, Op. 1, Ed. Khr. 325, *O pridvornom teatre v Moskve i o peredache ego v direktsiyu polkovnika N. Titova* (The Court theatre in Moscow and its devolution to the direction of Colonel N. Titov). 1766-1769, referred to by Vsevolodsky-Gerngross in V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Elizavete Petrovne*..., p. 235.

[334] A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra kadetami pervogo kadetskogo korpusa. K stoletnemu yubileyu* (The foundation of the Russian theatre by the Infantry Corps of Nobles. For the centenary), SPb, v Tipografii voenno-uchebnykh zavedeniy 1849, pp. 34-6.

economically independent from Court.

The two impresarios initially rented a hall in the palace of Count R. L. Vorontsov, which was called *Teatr na Znamenke* (Theatre on Znamenka street), as far as it was situated in that area.[335] Since 1769 the success was great among the audience. Its repertoire included Beaumarchais's *Eugénie*, given for the first time in Russian translation by N. Pushnikov. The two impresarios requested also the permission to educate their own actors, in order to guarantee their performances the expected success. They asked for the help of Sumarokov, who was in Moscow by that time. This will be the nucleo of the first theatre school.

In December an epidemic pleague spread in Moscow, brought up by troups who had took part in the war against Turkey. This led to the interruption of public performances in 1771, that had fatal consequences on the enterprise: Belmonti himself died from the plague, while Cinti disappeared some time later without leaving any traces. After the conclusion of the plague another Italian, Melchiorre Groti, arrived to Moscow, and re-opened the Znamenka theatre at the end of 1772.[336]

The years 1773-74, witness of the war with Turkey and of the insurrection of Pugachyov, were of no need of theatre performances, which re-started the following year.[337]

When a financial crisis struck Groti's enterprise, the *impresario* associated with prince Pyotr Vasil'evich Urusov (1733-1813), passionate lover of theatre. On 17 March 1776 Urusov obtained a new *privilegiya* to direct the theatre, at the condition of building a new theatre and a hall for balls and masquerades. He offered Groti to be his companion in the enterprise. The society came soon to an end, because in the same year Groti sold his part of the society to Urusov, and disappreared, leaving the prince alone at the head of the theatre.[338] The prince soon searched for another companion to share the enterprise, having no desire nor capacity to administrate it on his own. It was in this moment that Michel Maddox (1747-1822, known in Russia as Mikhail Egorovich Maddoks), a Hebrew of English origins, found himself in Moscow, where he had possibly arrived after having spent some time in Saint Petersburg (in 1767) performing as equilibrist.[339] Together with Urusov, Maddox had a Waux-Hall built in the palace of count Stroganov, and started

[335] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 17.
[336] *ivi*, p. 18.
[337] *ibidem*.
[338] *ivi*, p. 25.
[339] This activity of his is attested by the newspaper *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg Gazette). *ivi*, p. 23.

performances on the Znamenka Theatre, with the same troupe that Titov had created in the years 1765-69.[340]

From the Teatr na Znamenke to the Petrovsky Theatre

On 1 December 1776 Urusov and Maddox chose the site where to build the new theatre on the Petrovskaya Street.[341] The site chosen by Urusov and Maddox was along the swampy bank of the river Neglinka, where Petrovka turns into Okhotny Ryad.

On 26 February 1780 a fire broke out in the theatre on Znamenka Street, during the performance of Sumarokov's *Dimitry Samozvanets* (Dimitry the Pretender): the theatre was completely destroyed, as attested by the newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti*:

> В прошлую среду, т. - е. 26 февраля 1780 г., в здешнем Знаменском оперном доме, от неосторожности нижних служителей, живших в оном, перед окончанием театрального представления сделался пожар, который скорым своим распространением на всех бивших тогда в спектакле и маскераде хотя навел было немалый страх, однакож неукоснительным прибытием самого правителя города, Его Сиятельства Князя Михаила Никитича Волконского, и благоразумным его распоряжением, так, как и расторопность, благоустройством и поспешностью полицейских команд, удержан он был и не допущен распространиться далее, так что не только близкие к театру соседние дома, но и самые флигели оного остались целы. Паче же всего то достопамятно, что при сем том опасном случае изо всей многочисленной публики, бывшей в спектакле и маскераде, ни один человек не учинился жертвою свирепствовавшего пламени, в чем справедливость отдать должно как принятым от полиции хорошим мерам, так и ревности слуг, которые в спасении жизни своих господ оказали редкие примеры достохвального своего усердия.[342]

[Last Wednesday, that is on 26 February 1780, in the locale theatre of Znalenka street, because of the imprudence the lower warden who live in it, before the end of the theatrical performance a fire broke off, which with its fast diffusion scared a lot those who were there for the spectacle and the masquerade, на всех, even though thanks to the rigorous arrival of the city governor himself, her excellence prince Mikhail Nikitich Volkonsky, and to his sensible direction, and also to the rapidity, organization and haste of the police brigades, it was suppressed and prevented to spread further, so that not only the houses near the theatre, but also its own annexes remained untouched. It is moreover worth noticing that in such a dangerous event among the numerous audience, present at performance and masquerade, not a single person was affected by any stirming flame, a fact for which one should give credit both to the good measures of the police and to attention of the servants, who in saving their masters' life gave rare examples of their praiseworthy zeal.]

The event led Urusov to retire from the enterprise, remising his shares to Maddox. Maddox had the new theatre built in five months: this theatre, situated not far from the Kremlin, received from its location the name of Petrovsky teatr (Petrovsky theatre). It was provided with a parterre with 10 rows of seats plus 5-6 rows of poltrone, and with eighty

[340] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 26.
[341] *ivi*, p. 28.
[342] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), No. 18, 29 February 1780, *ivi*, pp. 29-30.

boxes disposed on three levels, and could host up to 800 spectators. Moreover, it was provided with much advanced machines, which allowed the staging of works foreseeing notticeable scenic effets, as it was the case of the pantomime *Arlequin sorcier par sympathie* to music by Andrea Galletti, staged on 8 May 1781. The score (his only known opera) is not preserved, but according to Mooser it contained such effects, as numerous chages of costumes made directly on stage.

On 19 September 1780 the impresario gave start to the collection of subscriptions on *Moskovskie vedomosti*, announcing the opening of the new theatre on Petrovskaya Street for September:

> От Знаменского Оперного Дома объявление.
> Господин Маддокс чрез сие почтеннейшей публике объявляет, что он с 22-го числа с. М. Начнет принимать подписки на отдаваемые в год ложи в новопостроенном театре; а для того желающих иметь оные покорнейше просит, дабы благоволили присылать записки с объявлением своего желания и имени в контору, имеющуюся при оном театре на Петровкой улице, где они получить могут и письменные условия, на которых оные ложи имеют быть отдаваемы в год. Начинающиеся с 22-го сентября подписки на ложи продолжатся будут до 15-го октября, по прошествии которого сроку никакой уже подписки на ложи принято не будет: почему желающие иметь в оном театре ложи могут заблаговременно нанять и отделать, как самим угодно.[343]

[Announcement from the Opera house of Znamenka street.
Mr Maddox through this announces to the most respectable audience that from the current 22 he will begin to collect the subscriptions for boxes rented annually in the newly built theatre; for this those who are interested are kindly prayed to kindly send messages with the indication of their wish and name to the office which is situated next to the theatre on Petrovka street, where they will receive also the written conditions at which the boxes are annually rented. Starting from 22 September subscriptions for the boxes will be opern till 15 October, after which date no more subscriptions will be received: those who are interested to have a box in the theatre can thus in good time sign on and touch up, asdesired.]

In summer Maddox searched for new artists to complete his staff:

> От Оперного Дома Объявление. Желающие вступить в должность Актеров и Актрис при здешнем театре с жалованием от 200 до 600 рублей, смотря на дарованиям и способности приемлемых, могут явиться в контору оного театра, состоящую на Знаменке, где как о кондициях, так и о прочем до сего дела касающемся уведомлены они будут.[344]

[Announcement from the Opera house. Those who desire to become actors or actresses at the local theatre with a salary from 200 to 600 roubles, depending on acceptable talent and capacity, can propose themselves at the office of the theatre, which is situated in Znamenka street, where they will be informed about the conditions and other details concerning the deal.]

The theatre opened on 30 December 1780 with the performance of the Prologue *Stranniki*, written on purpose by Aleksandr O. Ablesimov with music by Evstigney I.

[343] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), 19 September 1780, *ivi*, p. 76.
[344] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), 29 July 1780, *ivi*, p. 78.

Fomin, and the ballet *L'école enchantée* on scenario by Léopold Paradis, sets by Friedrich Hilverding.[345]

On 6 March 1781 Maddox had his privilege renewed till 1796. He also named Sebastian George music director of the troupe, replacing Johann Kerzelli who had work as a conductor in Moscow for seven years, also composing for the theatre.

He engaged also a troupe, which high level was comparable with that of the Court troupe. The same actors performed in plays of spoken theatre, comedies and *opéras-comiques*. Among the artists that formed the initial groupe of the Petrovsky theatre, Chayanova records Vasily Pomerantsev and his wife Anna Afanas'evna, Yakov Emel'yanovich Shusherin, Andrey Ozhogin, Mariya Stepanovna Sinyavskaya, Nadezhda Kaligraf, Natal'ya Sokolovskaya, Elizaveta Sandunova.[346] Some of them came from the Moscow Foundling home. The high quality of troupe and corps de ballet is witnessed by the fact that on 27 October 1785 the Court troupe tried to engage them.[347]

The stability of the performances notwithstanding, the theatre several saw several alterntions in its staff. In 1782 some Italian operas *buffa* were staged under the direction of Mattia Stabinger,[348] who succeeded Sebastian George at the theatre, by former actors of the Mattei-Orecia opera troupe: they performed in Moscow till the spring 1783. Then they left Moscow with Stabinger himself, who in middle 1783 was in Venice together with some of his singers.

In 1783 Maddox, who benefited from a ten-year privilege for all entertainments, obtained three years before from the general governor of Moscow, had to face the

[345] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 81.
[346] *ivi*, pp. 79-80. At the beginning of 1800 the arrival of Sandunova made the role of opera in the repertoire increase. *ivi*, p. 134.
[347] *ivi*, p. 89.
[348] Mattia Stabingher (also known as Mathias Stabinger, or Staubingher, Florence, 1739 – Venice?, 1815?) was an Italian composer and director of music. Son of the oboist Melchior Stabinger, he presumably received his early musicale instruction from his father and other members of the grand duke's ensemble in Florence; as a flute player, he was possibly a pupil of Nicolas Dôthel. In 1772 he directed the concerts of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Lyons, and i salso mentioned as a composer and a solo flautist. From 1778 to 1781 he was successful as a ballet composer and 'direttore d'orchestra per i balli' in Milan, Venice, Rome and Palermo. After taking p appointments as 'maestro di cembalo' in Warsaw and with the Mattei-Orecia troupe in St. Petersburg, he went to Moscwo, where he directed the Italian opera troupe at the Petrovsky theatre. There he produced an opera and the oraorio *La Betulia Liberata*.He returned to Italy in 1783 and wrote *L'astuzie di Bettina* (for the Venice carnival, 1784) and ballet music for Vicenza and Cremona. In 1785 he took over the musical direction of the Petrovsky theatre again, had great success in producing his own operas (some now with Russian librettos), and played an active but not especially successful part in the musicale education of Russian society. After relinquishing his Moscow post to Carlo Pozzi (Gennaro Astaritta according to other sources), he possibly returned to Italy around the turn of the century. Dated manuscripts and dedications suggest that he was in Lucca in the service of the queen Maria Luisa of Etruria in 1805. His final phase of residence and date of death, however, remain unknown. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by S. Sadie, vol. 24, London, Macmillan Publishers 2001, pp. 237-8.

concurrence of a new *impresario*, some Baron Ernest Vaňura.[349] He had arrived to Moscow in the same year, without any occupation, and had offered his service to the director of the Foundling home Betsky. The latter was in fact looking for an occupation for the former pupils of his educational institution who, Knipper's troupe having been disbanded in 1783 (see Chap. III – Part I – From Knipper's German Theatre to the Russian Independent Theatre), had found themselves unemployed. More precisely, a small part of this group had passed to the public theatre in Saint Petersburg, three of them had passed to Maddox's theatre, whereas the others had moved back to the old capital. They were assolded by Vaňura, who submitted to the Tutelar council a project including the foundation of a popular theatre where troupes of different origins would perform, and the organization of similar initiatives in the cities of the province. Betsky and the council accepted his proposal, and made him director of the new private entrepreneurial theatre of the Foundling home.

The troupe engaged by Vaňura included unemployed actors then present in Moscow and some who had just achieved their contracts in Warsaw; in May 1784 the troupe included the Portuguese singer Luisa Todi, coming from the Peterburgian Italian Court troupe. The theatre began to work at the beginning of 1784, causing strong losses to Maddox. Since the Muscovite audience wasn't able to respond to the offer ot two different theatres, after a long trial, Maddox had to make an agreement (20 November 1784) with Vaňura, engaging the troupe and him as inspector, receiving from Betsky the promise not to open other theatre in the city.[350] The troupe was anyway disbanded the following year.[351]

[349] Arnošt Vančura, (known in Russia as Ernest Vaňura or Vanžura, Vamberg, Bohemia, 1750 ca. – St. Petersburg, 1802) was a composer of czech origin. He belonged to an aristocratic family, and led the title of baron. In Vienna he acquired a good reputation as a composer, piano and violin player. Later on he worked in Shkloŭ in the orchestra of count Semyon Gavrilovich Zorich. In 1783 he moved to St. Petersburg, where since 1786 was 'maestro di cappella' and piano player in the Court opera troupe, playing also violin in chamber music ensembles, together with such soloists as Anton August Ferdinand Tietz and Jean-Baptiste Cardon. He enjoyed the protection of Catherine II herself and N. B. Yusupov. He retired in 1797. In the years 1785 to 1797 he issued the periodical *Journal de musique pour le clavecin ou piano-forte dédié aux dames*. In 1787 he composed the music for Catherine's opera *Khrabry i smely vityaz' arkhideich* (The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich), which *première* took place on 27 September 1787 at the Bol'shoy-Kamenny theatre. He was also the author of *Trois Sinfonies nationales à grand orchestre arrangés de plusieurs chansons russes, ukrainiennes et polonaises* (St. Petersburg, 1798), part of which was traditionaly inserted as an overture for the opera *The Miller Magician, Cheat and Matchmaker* (see Chap. III – Part. II – *Opera Komicheskaya* – A Repertorie Sketch), and for this reason long time ascribed to its author E. I. Fomin. Vaňura was also the author of several works of chamber music. A. GIUST, *"Ivan Susanin" di Catterino Cavos, Un'opera russa prima dell'Opera russa* (Catterino Cavos's *Ivan Susanin*, A Russian opera before The Russian Opera), Torino, EDT 2011, p. 18 n.

[350] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 88.

[351] Vsevolodsky-Gerngross thus explains the failure of any private French troupe in the city of Saint Petersburg: "Что-же касается столичнаго населения, то несомненно немцев было в России гораздо больше чем французов и посетителями спектаклей было преимущественно русское высшее общество,

In 1784 Maddox had the summer Vauxhall restored next to his theatre, thus having at his disposal a place where to organise masquerades and open air performances, performances, gala dinners and fireworks. The Vauxhall opened with the performance of the comic opera *Arkas i Irisa* (Arcas and Iris) by Mikhail F. Kertselli, on libretto by Vasily Maykov.

In the period 1786 to 1791 the theatre went through a crisis, that let the *impresario* to remise his theatre, and himself, to the domain of the Tutelar council of the Foundling Home, preserving the role of director, rather than owner, of the theatre (1789).[352] According to Chayanova, the crisis of the theatre was bound to the appointment of the new general-en-chef of the city of Moscow, prince Aleksandr Prozorkovsky, who was fund of military discipline, but the historian points out also the change of generation in the town, where the offer of Petrovsky theatre was beginning to appear out of fashion.[353]

Anyway, the Petrovsky theatre didn't stop its activity, which went on all through Catherine's and Paul I's rules.[354] Notably in the 1790s it assisted to the flourishing of the Russian national comedy, possibly increased by the participation of such an actor as Pyotr A. Plavil'shchikov, who from 1791 began to make *tournées* in Moscow.[355] In these years also the operas by Paisiello appear, while the theatre lives on old stagings.[356]

The staged repertoire included works of several genres: tragedies, melodrama, comedies, operas, dramas and ballets. Differently from the previous times, and more in line with what happened at the Sheremetev theatres, Mooser points out that Maddox favoured *opéra-comique* in Russian translation, and the same can be said about the staged Italian

продолжавшее благоговеть перед всем французским. Но галломания была чужда народной массе. Вот почему вольный французский театр не мог существовать у нас на ряду с казенным и с вольным немецким." (If it comes to the capital's population, undoubtedly in Russia there were more Germans than French and the theatregoers were mostly the Russian high society, who went on venerating French ones. But gallomania was alien to the masses of the people. That's why in our country an independent French theatre could not exist next to the Court and independent German one.) V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *Inostrannye antreprizy Ekaterinskago vremeni…*, p. 74.

[352] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 92.

[353] "Москва из города феодальных вельмож, окруженных своими собственными придворными, становится городом служилого дворянства, с которым уже смешиваются первые представители разночинства. Маддокс со своим театром начинает быть немного старомодным, не поспевающим со своими вкусами за новым поколением – иногда милым, а иногда и докучливым." (Moscow from a town of feudal noblemen who surrounded themselves with their courtiers, is becoming a city of old aristocracy, already merging with the first exponents of the *raznochinstvo*. Maddox with his theatre begins to be a little out of fashion, not being, with his taste, in time with the new generation – sometimes pleasant, but sometimes also annoying.), *ivi*, p. 99.

[354] Anyway, when in 1796 Catherine died, the privilege estinguished, and this was the final point of the *autonomous* activity of Maddox.

[355] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 95.

[356] *ivi*, p. 197.

operas *buffa*.[357] A further step is constituted by those foreign composers' operas, which were composed directly on Russian texts. According to Chayanova, "The music of Kertselli and other Italians of the Court (Paisiello, Martini, Sarti and others), composed by them on Russian texts, was highly popular in the most differenciated layers of the Russian society and gradually penetrated also the masses and was made of "Russian popular tunes". Thus, for instance, according to Serov's analysis, the melodies "Sredu doliny rovnyya" and "Stonet sizy golubochek" entered directly our [Russian] folklore from the stage of 18th-century Italian opera."[358]

Anyway, Chayanova also points out the development of the Russian idea in music: "Anyway, the mastership of Italians notwithstanding, towards the moment of the opening of the Petrvsky theatre the development of the Russian national music already clearly appeared, and was able to make use also of the national tunes of the peasants' songs."[359]

Here is the repertoire of Maddox's theatre from the Znamenka period to the end of the century:[360]

1777 (Theatre na Znamenke):

- *Pererozhdenie* (The re-birth, 8 January), in one act by M. A. Matinsky, music by Fomin;
- *Derevensky prazdnik* (The village feast), pastoral drama with music in two acts, with music by the violin player and composer Mikhail F. Kertselli;

[357] R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 121. Vaňura's troupe, which he had acquired and disbanded, sang French *opéras-comiques* in the original language.

[358] "Музыка Керцелли и других придворных итальянцев (Паэзиелло, Мартини, Сарти и др.), писанная ими на русские тексты, была в высшей степени популярна в самых разнообразных слоях русского общества и постепенно проникла даже в народные массы и сделалась «русскими народными песнями». Так, например, по анализу Серова мелодии: «Среди долины ровныя» и «Стонет сизый голубочек» перешли в наш фолклор прямо с подмостков итальянской придворной оперы XVIII века." O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, pp. 191-2.

[359] "Однако, несмотря на главенство итальянцев, к моменту открытия Петровского театра уже явно обозначалось развитие русской национальной музыки, сумевшей использовать и национальные мотивы крестянских песен." *ivi*, p. 192.

[360] Datas are drawn from O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*; R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, and *Drammatichesky slovar' ili pokazaniya po al'favitu vsekh Rossiyskikh teatral'nykh sochineniy i perevodov, s oznacheniem imen izvestnykh sochiniteley, perevodchikov i slagateley muzyki, kotoryya kogda byli predstavleny na teatrakh, i gde i v kotoroe vremya napechatany. V pol'zu lyubyashchikh teatral'nyya predstavleniya.* (Dramatic dictionary or indication in alphabetical order of all Russian theatrical works and translations, with the report of the names of famous authors, translators and composers of the music, the time when they where staged in theatres, and the place and date of their publication. For the use of the lovers of theatrical performances.), Tochnoe vosproizvedenie izdaniya 1787 g. S.-PETERBURG izdanie knizhnago magazina "Novago vremeni" 1880.

- *Lyubovnik-koldun* (The lover-magician), libretto in one act by N. P. Nikolev (1758-1815) set to a collection of popular songs, with music by the violin player and composer Mikhail F. Kertselli.[361]

1779:

- *Schast'e po zhereb'yu* (Fortune by lot), libretto by A. O. Ablesimov, music by an unknown author;
- *Finiks* (The phoenix), libretto by N. Nikolev and music by Ivan F. Kertselli and his brother Mikhail.[362]
- *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi*, drama with with music (not preserved) by Nikolay Pomorsky, a remake from Rousseau by V. Maikov.

1780 (Theatre na Znamenke):

- *Govoryashchaya kartina* (*Le tableau parlant*, 4 June) by A. Grétry, libretto translated in Russian by K. Khilkov;
- *La crécerelle* (22 July, then 30 March 1782), unidentified, by anonymous authors;
- *Nechayannoe vozvrashchenie* (The inadvertent return, 4 October), by unknown authors, possibly a translation from French or Italian.

1780 (Vauxhall):

- *Minutnoe zabluzhdenoe* (*L'erreur d'un moment*), by N. A. Dezède, libretto by J.-M. Boutet de Monvel, translated in Russian by K. Khilkov, music as in the original;
- *Kuznets-lekar* (*Le maréchal-ferrant*) by F. – A. D. Philidor libretto translated in Russian by K. Khilkov.

1780 (Petrovsky):

[361] According to Mooser: "Ces deux fois encore probablement, […] le compositeur n'avat pas jugé utile de faire oeuvre complètement originale, et il s'était contenté d'adapter, peut-être an y ajoutant quelque chose de son cru, des airs populaires aux paroles de ses librettistes. Ce qui nous permet de constater que l'opéra-comique russe naquit dans les mêmes conditions que son devancier français." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens*…, II, p. 206.

[362] *Finiks, Dramma s golosami, v trekh deystviyakh. Sochinena v 1779 godu* (The phoenix, Drama with voices in three acts. Composed in 1779), in *Rossiysky Featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh rossiyskikh featral'nykh sochineniy* (Russian theatre, or Full collection of all Russian theatrical works), Chast' XXII, v Sanktpeterburge, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1788 goda.

- *Stranniki* (The wanderers), prologue by A. O. Ablesimov with music by Evstigney I. Fomin.

1781:

- *Arkas i Irisa* (Arcas and Iris, 20 February) libretto in one act by V. Maikov, music by Mikhail F. Kertselli, staged as a *bénéfice* for the Foundling Home.

1782:

- *Dobrye soldaty* (The good soldiers, 10 April), music by H. – Fr. Raupach on libretto by M. M. Kheraskov, staged three years before at the Foundling Home;
- *I filosofi immaginari* by G. Paisiello (14 April);
- *Novoe semeystvo* (The new family, 23 April), libretto in one act by S. Vyazmitinov, with music by some Freulich, staged an year before in the estate of Tchernuchev in Yaropolsk;
- *La finta amante* by Paisiello (3 May);
- *Pokhod s nepremennykh kvartir* (March from permanent quarters, 7 June), music by Michel Ekkel (possibly a German composer, who had moved to Moscow) on libretto in three (or two) acts by A. O. Ablesimov;[363]
- *Il cavaliere per amore* by N. Piccinni (16 September 1782), Russian *première*;
- *Tiga* (26 September) a Russian comic opera which title is the word that the geese's stockmen used to gather their animals; authors of both music and text are unknown;
- *Il finto pazzo per amore*, opera *buffa* in two acts on libretto by T. Mariani and music possibly by Mattia Stabingher (25 October 1782);[364]
- *Zemira i Azor* (*Zémire at Azor*, 2 November) with music by A. Grétry, on libretto by J. – F. Marmontel, translated from French by Mariya Vasil'evna Sushkova (1752-1803), the sister of Catherine II's secretary Aleksandr V. Khrapovitsky;
- *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker), with music by E. I. Fomin on libretto by A. O. Ablesimov ;

[363] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), June 1782.
[364] *ivi*, October 1782.

- *Dva okhotnika* (possibly *Les deux chasseurs et la Laitière*) by L. Anseaume, music by A. Bullandt;

- *Rozana i Lyubim*, 'Russian drama with songs, in four acts, libretto by N. Nikolev and music by Mikhail F. Kerzelli, staged two years later also in Saint Petersburg;

- *Neschastie ot karety* (Misfortune from a carriage), music by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin;

1783:

- *Dvoe skupykh* (*Les deux avares*) by A. Grétry, libretto by Fenouillot de Falbaire, translated from French by F. Gensh, (22 February 1783 or 1782);[365]

- *Bochar* (*Le tonnelier*, 6 August 1783, at the Vauxhall), music by E. I. Fomin on the free translation from F. J. Gossec by F. Gensh;[366]

- *Tochil'shik* (The knife-grinder), music by E. I. Fomin on libretto by N. P. Nikolev;

- *Sanktpeterburgsky gostinnoy dvor* (The Saint Petersburg bazaar), libretto and music by M. A. Matinsky;

- *Skupoy* (The miser), music by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin.

1784:

- *Les deux chasseurs et la laitière* by E. R. Duni (25 January);

- *Le déserteur* (11 February) by P. – A. Monsigny on libretto by M. – J. Sedaine;

- *Kalif na chas* (Caliph for an hour), libretto by D. P. Gorchakov (21 March), to whom historians ascribe also the music;

- *Rosa i Kolas* (*Rose et Colas,* 18 August 1784, at the Vauxhall), music as in Monsigny's original in the Russian translation by M. V. Sushkova;

- *La fée Urgèle, ou Ce qui plaît aux dames* by E. R. Duni, Russian *première* (2 November), staged by Vaňura's troupe in the original French;

- *Le tonnelier* by F. J. Gossec (14 November), staged by Vaňura's troupe in the original French;

- *Annette et Lubin* by A. Blaise (28 November), staged by Vaňura's troupe in the original French;

[365] Mooser records the performers in R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 118.
[366] *ivi*, p. 118.

- *Opekun-Uchitel' ili Lyubov' khitree elokventsii* (The teacher-guardian, or Love is more clever than eloquence, 4 December), music by E. I. Fomin on libretto in one act by N. P. Nikolev, music by an unknown author;
- *Rose et Colas* (24 December), staged by Vaňura's troupe in the original French.[367]

1785:

- *Le cadi dupé* by P. – A. Monsigny (18 January 1785), a Russian première, [368] staged by the French troupe;
- *Sancho-Pansa* (*Sancho-Pansa dans son isle*) by F. A. D. Philidor, translated from A. A. H. Poinsinet's French by V. Levshin (22 September), Russian *première*;
- *Izoblichenny koldun* (The convicted magician);
- *Kuznets* (The Hammersmith), music by A. Bullandt on the libretto by S. Vyazmitinov;
- *Tunissky Pasha* (The pasha from Tunis), music by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by M. A. Matinsky.

1786:

- *Chereviki* (The slippers, 5 June 1786), Russian comic opera by unknown authors;
- *Sadovniki* (*Les jardiniers*, 9 August 1786) *comédie mêlée d'ariettes* in two acts, libretto by B. Davesne, music by the French composer Prudent, possibly staged in a Russian translation that has not been published;
- *Henri IV, ou La bataille d'Ivry* by J. P. E. Schwartzendorf called Martini, which, staged two years before by the Peterburgain French troupe, was here given in the Russian translation by A. Malinovsky (22 November);
- *Baba-Yaga*, music by Stabinger on libretto by D. P. Gorchakov; (2 December 1786) in four acts;
- *Shchastlivaya Tonya* (Lucky Tonya), music by M. Stabinger on libretto by D. P. Gorchakov.

[367] According to Mooser, "Bien qu'ils fussent destinés à un public relativement restreint, puisqu'ils étaient donnés dans une langue que l'immense majorité de la population moscovite n'entendait pas, ces spectacles semblent avoir connu une faveur exceptionnelle auprès des mélomanes de la haute société [...]." R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 121.
[368] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), January 1785.

1787:

- *Sbiten'shchik* (The hot mead seller), music by A. Bullandt on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin;
- *Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa* (*La finta amante*), translated in Russian through French by P. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, music by G. Paisiello, revised and set to music by Z. Kryzhanovsky;
- *Les aveux indiscrets* by P. – A. D. Monsigny, translated into Russian by V. Levshin, Russian *première*;
- *L'isle des foux* by E. R. Duni, translated into Russian by V. Levshin, formerly staged in Moscow in 1775 in French.

1788:

- *Neudachnaya zhenit'ba* (The unfortunate marriage), anonymous libretto, possibly set to music by Stabinger;
- *Tsyganka* (The gypsy woman);
- *Dvoynoe prevrashchenie ili Vesely bashmashnik* (The double transformations or The cheerful cobbler);
- *Naneta i Luka* (Nanette and Luc);
- *Sluzhanka-gospozha* (*La serva padrona*), translated by some Golitsyn,[369] music by Paisiello.

1789:

- *Kupidon-pustinnik* (Cupid-hermit);
- *Rybaki*, possibly the translation of F. – J. Gossec's *Les pêcheurs*.

1790:

- *Aptekar' i Doktor*, F. Rozanov's translation from K. von Dittersdorf's *Der Apotheker und der Doktor*;
- *Aneta i Lyubim*, the translation of Blaise's *Annette et Lubin*.

[369] According to Chayanova, the libretto was written, and not translated by Golitsyn. O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, *Prilozhenie* (Appendix), pages not numbered.

1791:

- *Diyanino Derevo* (*L'arbore di Diana*), music by V. Martín y Soler, libretto translated from Italian by I. A. Dmitrevsky;
- *Osmeyannoy kupets* (The mocked merchant), music by Canziani, libretto translated from Italian;
- *Kolokol'chiki*, possibly *La clochette* by L. Anseaume, music by E. R. Duni.

1792:

- *Stolyar* (The woodworker), possibly D. Cimarosa's *Il falegname* (elsewhere dated 15 May 1793).

1793:

- *Mnimye filosofy* (The virtual philosophers), music by Canziani, libretto translated from Italian (possibly *Gli astrologi immaginari*?);
- *Koloniya ili Novoe selenie* (*La colonie*), music by A. Sacchini, libretto translated from French by V. G. Voroblévsky;
- *Dva filosofa* (The two philosophers);
- *Obmanutoy Kadi*, possibly *Le cadi dupé* by Gluck on libretto by P. – R. Lemonnier, or rather the homonymous opera by Monsigny.

1794:

- *Mnimaya sumasshedshaya* (*La finta foletta*), music by G. Astaritta on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnìn;
- *Redkaya veshch'* (*Una cosa rara*), music by Martín y Soler, libretto translated from Italian by I. A. Dmitrevsky;
- *Aleksey i Natalya* (Alexis et Nathalie);
- *Venetsianskaya yarmorka* (*La fiera in Venezia*), music by Canziani (or Salieri?), libretto translated from Italian;
- *Pigmalion*, *mélodrame*, music by F. Benda.

1795:

- *Fedul s det'mi* (Fedul and his children), libretto by Catherine II, music by Martín y Soler and V. A. Pashkevich;
- *Orfey* (Orpheus), *mélodrame* with ballets, music by E. I. Fomin on a text by Ya. B. Knyazhnin.

1796:

- *Dom sumasshedshikh*, possibly *La maison des fous* by A. Ravrio et C. Chatillon, or Duni's *L'île des fous*.

1797:

- *Sevil'sky tsiryul'nik* (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), music by G. Paisiello, libretto translated from French by M. V. Popov;[370]
- *Uchilishche revnivikh* (*La scuola de' gelosi*), music by A. Salieri;
- *Nina*, possibly *Nina o sia La pazza per amore* by G. Paisiello.

1798:

- *Krest'yanin-markiz ili Kolbasnik* (The marquis-peasant, or The cheesemonger), possibly *Il marchese Tulipano*, music by G. Paisiello, libretto translated from Italian by V. Levshin;
- *Knyaz'-Trubochist* (*Lo spazzacamino principe*), music by Portogallo, libretto translated from Italian by I. A. Dmitrevsky.

1799:

- *Dezertir ili Begly soldat* (*Le déserteur*), libretto by M. – J. Sedaine;
- *Dve nevesty* (*Le donne rivali*), music by D. Cimarosa;

[370] Chayanova seems here to mistake the original comedy by Beaumarchais with the Italian libretto. According to her, the libretto was translated from French by Popov. O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, *Prilozhenie*…

- *Reno d'Ast* (*Renaud d'Aste*), music by N. Dalayrac, translated from French;
- *Strannaya predpriimchivost' ili Pritvorny Zhokey* (The strange enterprise or The pretended jockey), music by E. I. Fomin on libretto translated by S. N. Glinka;
- *Tayna* (*Le Secret*), music by J. P. Solié, libretto translated from French by S. N. Glinka.

1800:

- *Starinnye svyatki* (The ancient Christmas season), music by F. X. Blyma;
- *Vesely bashmachnik ili Chort sam chetvert* (The Cheerful Cobbler);
- *Zhokey* (*Le jockey*), music by J. P. Solié;
- *Sonny poroshok ili pokhishchennaya krest'yanka*, possibly Francesco Bianchi *La polvere del sonno* on libretto by J. G. Ferrari, staged with music by several Italina composers.[371]

[371] The libretto was partially translated by I. A. Krylov, but, since it was not finished, was not issued at that time.

Russian Theatres in Saint Petersburg

From Knipper's German Theatre to the Russian Independent Theatre

On 28 October 1779 the German impresario Karl Knipper succeeded in signing a contract with Ivan Ivanovich Betsky to open a Russian theatre in Saint Petersburg, exploiting the singers of the Muscovite Foudling Home of Moscow. Betsky in fact was virtually active as a minister of culture, directing the establishment. According to this contract, around fifty singers and musicians moved from the school, where they had been educated to stage arts, to the capital, directed by some Aleksey Ivanovich Bobrov (vice-director). During the following three years they were supposed to be educated by the actor Ivan Dmitrevsky, the dance teacher Francesco Rosetti, and the composer and violin player Vasily Pashkevich as a music teacher and director. Music instruments and costumes were sent from Moscow together with singers, while sets and other costumes were provided by the Court theatre and several well off figures.[372] Their performances took place in the old wooden theatre of Tsaritsyn Lug, which Knipper already had at his disposal for the German troupe, and which had been recently restored by architect Quarenghi.

The performances were given four times a week, alternating with German ones, and soon supplanting them. In the period from 5 April to 10 October 1781, due to restoration works that led to the construction of a new building on the same site, the German and Russian performances of Knipper's troupes took place at the Kadetsky Korpus on Vasilevsky Island.[373] On 10 October 1781 the two troupes moved again to Tsaritsyn Lug, opening the season with a Russian tragedy.

According to Mooser, "D'emblée, l'entreprise connut un extraordinaire regain de succès qui s'explique, tout à la fois, par la naturelle curiosité du public à l'endroit d'une salle dont tout le monde disait merveille, et par le fait que, donnés dans un langue de chacun, ses spectacles intéressaient des milieux fort étendus."[374] According to a comtemporary, "The Russian theatre [was] assiduously attended and thus caused big losses

[372] I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Vol'ny Rossiysky Teatr* (The independent Russian theatre), in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, pp. 195-6.
[373] *Sanktpeterburgskie novosti* (News of St. Petersburg) of 2 April 1781. In the years 1781-82 this new building was often called *Novy* (new) or *Novopostroenny* (newly built).
[374] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 306.

to the other theatrical entreprises."[375] That's possibly the reason why the enterprise didn't last so long in the hands of its founder.

In fact, as we have seen (Chap. III – "German theatre"), Knipper had to remise to the Court the management of his German theatre, after passing through a period of crisis, possibly due to the excessive effort of supporting two companies. In the same period the *impresario* was accused of mistreatment towards the girls of the Foundling Home, who regularly performed in his troupe. On the occasion it seems that Dmitrevsky, willing to replace him, did not expose himself to defend the *impresario*, who found himself deprived, in the space of few time, of both his troupes. On the contrary the actor, who was since 15 August 1780 a teacher of acting and director of the performances,[376] formally presented himself as a candidate for the direction of the Russian troupe, a proposal, which was accepted on 29 December 1782. Thus, the former *independent* troupe passed under the imperial administration. Dmitrevsky directed it from 1 January 1783 to the beginning of August, when it cessed its activiy because the building passed under the administration of the Committee for the administration of performances and music.[377] Actors and singer (Dmitrevsky had chose for the theatre other eighteen actors and singers from the Moscow Foundling Home) were acquired by the Russian Court truoupe.[378]

Notices about the repertoire of the Independent Russian Theatre are poorly preserved: according to Petrovskaya it included comedies, sentimental dramas, ballets and Russian comic operas. Great space was dedicated to comic operas given in Russian translation, and to the new genre of national comic opera: *opera komicheskaya*.[379] Among the operas, Petrovskaya and Mooser register the following titles:

1780:

- *Derevenzky vorozheya* (The fortune teller of the village) by I. Kerzelli (3 January) on libretto by V. Maykov;

[375] "Русский театр весьма усердно посещается и тем причиняет большой ущерб другим театральным представлениям." Memoirs of the Frenchman Pickard, quoted form I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Vol'ny Rossiysky Teatr…*, p. 196.
[376] *ibidem*, p. 196.
[377] *ibidem*.
[378] *ibidem*.
[379] *ibidem*. "Karl Knipper eut le mérte d'accorder, dès le début de son entreprise, una place importante à l'opéra-comique national, suivant en cela l'exemple donné, à Moscou, par le Théâtre de la Znamenka et, comme les directeurs de celui-ci, il contribua activement au succès du genre nouveau, en créant nombre d'ouvrages dus à des auteurs du pays." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 227.

- *Izoblichenny koldun, ili Za bezdelky ssora* (The convicted magician, or A quarrel from nothing) comic opera by unknown authors, with choruses and ballets (11 October, 27 November);
- *Rozana i Lyubim* (Rozana and Lyubim) libretto by Nikolev, music by Mikhail F. Kerzelli, created in Moscow in 1778 (6 and 12 December, 3 January 1781);
- *Pustinnik* (The hermit, 8 June 1781).

1781:

- *Dobrye soldaty* (The good soldiers) by H. – Fr. Raupach on libretto by (17 and 27 February 1780, 16 December);
- *Mel'nik – koldun, obmanshchik i svat* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker) by A. O. Ablesimov and M. M. Sokolovsky (3 February, from an announce on - *Sanktpeterburgskie novosti* of 2 February);[380]
- *Neschastie ot karety* (A misfortune from a carriage, 15 December) by V. A. Pashkevich, on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnìn.

1782:

- *Nagrazhdennoe userdie zemledel'tsa* (*"Voznagrazhdenny khlebopashets"*) (The bestowed wheat grower), libretto in three acts by A. O. Ablesimov, music by an unknown composer. (13 April);
- *Tunissky pasha* (The pasha from Tunis) libretto in two acts by M. A. Matinsky, music by V. A. Pashkevich (22 June);[381]
- *Sanktpeterburgskoy gostinoy dvor* (The Saint Petersburg bazaar) libretto and music by M. A. Matisnky, later arranged by V. A. Pashkevich.

As can be noticed, most of these works were not staged here for the first time, but came from Moscow, were the the growing wave of the new Russian comic genre of *opera komicheskaya* had its origins.

[380] According to Mooser, the opera will gain success the same as in Moscow two years before.
[381] According to Mooser this opera is recorded with wrong dates by Stasov, Findeyzen and Nosov.

Russian Court theatre in Saint Petersburg

In Saint Petersburg, the troupe which had received a new organization with Elizabeth's *ukaz* of 6 January 1759,[382] was directed by Sumarokov until 1761 (that is when actors from Moscow moved to the capital city), when the playwright was made to dismiss from the direction of the Russian theatre.[383] Then the direction passed to Fyodor G. Volkov, who would keep it till his death.[384] In 1762 in fact, the troupe had moved with the Empress to Moscow for the coronation celebrations, and once a week they staged at the court theatre. In the spring of 1763 the troupe lost his founder, as Fyodor Volkov died, possibly for the exhaustion due to the celebrations' organization.

After that, Ivan Perfil'evich Elagin became the virtual director of the troupe,[385] while it was formally administrated by Lieutenant-Captain Vasily Il'ich Bibikov, who in 1765 was named director of the Russian theatre to replace C. E. Sievers.

On 12 July 1783 Catherine signed an *ukaz* "in order to educate those singers who will show particular talent, wish and assiduousness in music, so that in case of need they could be used in operas, especially when the Russian ones increase",[386] also precising that "the Russian theatre should be intended not only for comedies and tragedies, but also for operas."[387] The Committe for the administration of performaces and music discussed on 27 October 1785 the number of singers, which was later increased including singers of the Independent Russian Theatre (on its closing on 1 September 1783) and from the *Teatral'noe uchilishche*, were singers were educated just on this purpose.[388]

Among the staged repertoire, since 1779 we find included Russian and foreign comic operas, in which the most talented actors performed also as singers, because, as already said, a distinction between a lyric and a dramatic troupe was made only in the 19th

[382] I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Russkaya pridvornaya (imperatorskaya) truppa* (The Russian Court troupe), *Myzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 3, p. 57.
[383] P. N. BERKOV, *Zhiznenny i literaturny put' A.P. Sumarokova* (A. P. Sumarokov's life and literary path), in A. P. SUMAROKOV, *Izbrannye proizvedeniya* (Selected works), edited by P. N. Berkov, Leningrad, Sovetsky pisatel' 1957, p. 11
[384] As attested by *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette) nos. 59, 66, 1761.
[385] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Glava iz knigi Iozefa Khaygol'da «Prilozheniya k «Obnovlennoy Rossii»…*, p. 593. According to Karabanov, while Elagin became the director, its head was V. I. Bibikov. See A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…, p. 41.*
[386] "чтоб те их певчих, кои отменную способность, охоту и прилежание окажут в музыке, так оной обучаемы были, чтоб в случае надобности можно было их употреблять в операх, особливо же когда Российские умножатся", quoted from I. F. PETROVSKAYA, *Russkaya pridvornaya (imperatorskaya) truppa…*, pp. 57-8.
[387] "Российский театр нужно чтоб был не для одних комедий и трагедий, но и для опер." *ibidem*.
[388] Among the pedagogues Petrovskaya records Raupach, Sarti, Martín y Soler, Paisiello, Sapienza, the singer B. Marchetti, the kapellmeister of the Italian troupe G. Borghi (in 1789) and A. Amati (1791), the violin player N. G. Pomorsky (since 1789), and the composer E. I. Fomin (from 1797), while as inspector on music – O. A. Kozlovsky. *ivi*, p. 58-9.

century. Petrovskaya records the following operas, throughout the end of the century (including Paul I's reign):[389]

1779:

- *Pererozhdenie* (The re-birth) by D. Zorin;
- *Neschastie ot karety* (Misfortune from a carriage) by V. A. Pashkevich.

1781:

- *Idol kitaysky* (*L'idolo cinese*) by G. Paisiello;
- *Mel'nik – koldun, obmanshchik i svat* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker) by M. M. Sokolovsky.

1781 (?):

- *Orfey*, *mélodrame* by Ya. B. Knyazhnin with music by F. Torelli.

1782:

- *Skupoy* (The miser) by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin.

1784:

- *Dobrye soldaty* (The good soldiers) by H. – Fr. Raupach;
- *Muzh'ya – zhenikhi svoikh zhen* (Husbands – fiancés of their wives) by A. Bullandt;
- *Yarmanka* (*Der Dorfjahrmarkt*) by F. Benda;
- *Prekrasnaya Arsena* (*La belle Arsène*) by P. – A- Monsigny;
- *Sbitenshchik* (The hot mead seller) by A. Bullandt.

1783-84:

- *Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa* (*La finta amante*) by G. Paisiello.

[389] *ivi*, pp. 59-60.

1785:

- *Les deux chasseurs et la laitière* by E. R. Duni;
- *Zemire et Azor* by A. Grétry.

1786:
- *Fevey* by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by Catherine II;
- *Novgorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich* (Boeslavich the hero of Novgorod) by E. I. Fomin on libretto by Catherine II.

1786 (ca):
- *Khlor-tsarevich, ili Roza bes shipov* (Khlor-Tsarevich, or The rose without prickles), anonymous.

Before 1787:

- *Matrosskie shutki* (Seamen's tricks), music by S. Georges on an anonymous libretto.

1787:

- *Khrabroy i smeloy vityaz' Arkhideich (Ivan-tsarevich)* (The brave and fearless Knight Arkhideich (The tsarevich Ivan)) by E. Vaňura on libretto by Catherine II;
- *Sluzhanka-gospozha* (*La serva padrona*) by G. Paisiello;
- *Yamshchiki na podstave, ili Igrishche nevznachay* (Coachmen at the relay) by E. I. Fomin on libretto by N. A. L'vov.

1788:

- *Vecherinki, ili Gaday, gaday, devitsa, otgadyvay, krasnaya* (Soirées), music by E. I. Fomin.

1789:

- *Gorebogatyr' Kosometovich* (The ill-fated knight Kosometovich), music by V. Martín y Soler on libretto by Catherine II;
- *Dve nevesty* (*Le donne rivali*) by D. Cimarosa;
- *Osmeyanny kupets* (*L'avaro deluso*) by A. Sacchini (25 May);
- *Redkaya veshch'* (*Una cosa rara*) by Martín y Soler (1 June);
- *Uchilishche revnivykh* (*La scuola dei gelosi*) by A. Salieri;
- *Pritvorno sumasshedshaya* (*La finta foletta*) by G. Astaritta;
- *Dva skupyh* (*Les deux avares*) by A. Grétry;
- *Diyanino derevo* (*L'arbore di Diana*) by V. Martín y Soler;
- *Dezertir* (*Le déserteur*) by P. – A. Monsigny.

1789 (?):

- *Dva barona* (*I due baroni*) by D. Cimarosa;
- *Vladisan*, tragedy by Ya. B. Knyazhnin, with choruses.

1790:

- *Pesnolyubie* (Melomania), music by V. Martín y Soler on libretto by A. V. Khrapovitsky;
- *Lozhny lord* (*Le faux lord*) by N. Piccinni;
- *Sevil'sky tsiryul'nik, ili Bespoleznaya predostorozhnost'* (*Il barbiere di Siviglia, ovvero La precauzione inutile*) by G. Paisiello;
- *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega* (The early reign of Oleg) by C. Canobbio, V. a. Pashkevich, G. Sarti on libretto by Catherine II;
- *La colonie* by N. E. Framéry and A. Sacchini (12 November), staged a decade before in Russian at Kuskovo.

1791:

- *Fedul s det'mi* (Fedul and his children), music by V. Martín y Soler and V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by Catherine II;
- *Venetsianskaya yarmarka* (*La fiera in Venezia*) by A. Salieri;

- *Koldun, vorozheya i svakha* (Magician, fortune-teller and matchmaker), music E. I. by Fomin (?);
- *Pigmalion*, *mélodrame* by J. - J. Rousseau, music by F. Benda.

1792:

- *Sanktpeterburgskoy gostinoy dvor* (The Saint Petersburg bazaar) by V. A. Pashkevich on libretto by M. A. Matinsky.

1792 (?):

- *Orfey i Evridika* by E. I. Fomin.

1794:

- *Mnimye filosofy* (*Gli astrologi immaginari*) by G. Paisiello.

1795:

- *Derevensky markiz* (*Il marchese villano*) by some Caruso;
- *Trubochist knyaz' i knyaz'-trubochist* (*Lo spazzacamino principe*) by Portogallo.

1796:
- *Sumasbrody, ili Rybachka* (*La bella pescatrice*) by P. A. Guglielmi;
- *Blagodetel'ny grubiyan* (*Il burbero di buon cuore*) by V. Martín y Soler;
- *Nina, ili Ot lyubvi sumasshedshaya* (*Nina, ossia La pazza per amore*) by G. Paisiello.

1797:

- *Rinal'do d'Ast* (*Rinaldo d'Aste*) by G. Astaritta.

1798:

- *Oberon* (*Oberon, König der Elfen*) by P. Vranitsky;
- *Yaropolk i Oleg* (Yaropolk and Oleg) by V. A. Ozerov, with choruses by E. I. Fomin.

1800:

- *Amerikansty* (The Americans) by E. I. Fomin on libretto by I. A. Krylov;
- *Klorinda i Milon* (Klorind and Milon) by E. I. Fomin.

On the one hand, the establishment of a permanent theatrical activity in Moscow brought about the development of growing awareness in the old capital's audience. The last quarter of the 18th century saw the development of a more conscious audience, more expert and interested in theatre: spectators who had been acquainted with theatre in their travles abroad, or in the city, thanks to the enlarged possibility of attending public theatres.[390] To the activity of theatres one should add the students of the Moscow University, protagonists of the printing enterprise of Novikov (Kheraskov, Lukin, …). According to the author of the *Drammatichesky slovar'*,

> А паче в нынешнее время, вкусы еще больше исправились; дети благородных людей рассуждать умеют. Я почитаю за пристойное припомнить, что воспитание много обязано покойному господину Сумарокову. Он много успел в разных своих сочинениях в рассуждении умягчения нравов, и вкус к театру конечно от его пера исправлен.[391]

[And more in today's time the tastes have straightened: the children of noblemen can discuss. I consider worth recalling that this education owes much to Mr Sumarokov. He did a lot in his different works in discussing the softening of mores, and taste for theatre was finally straightened by his pen.]

On the other hand, the practice of staging foreign works in translation has interesting consequences on the reception of the originals, often leading to their complete unrecognizability. That's why it seems to me a considerable intermediate step between the import production of foreign works and the original, autonomous and autochthonous creation. The different phases of recreating foreign 'originals', performing them in translation, and producing new ones coexist at least in the last quarter of the 18th century, but in my opinion they have been not sufficiently pointed out by historians, often due to

[390] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 107.
[391] *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, *Predislovie* (Foreword), pages not numbered.

the simple practice of giving the titles in the scholars' language.[392] That's why I consider worth stopping on this topic before discussing the quoted theatrical experiences of Catherine's time, also considering the importance this practice had in the developing of the Russian spoken theatre.

[392] The practice of giving the titles of the staged operas in Russian characterized the Russian and soviet musicology, but also Mooser gives almost all titles in French, though signaling when it was the case with translations.

Chapter III – Part II – The Birth of Russian Opera

Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire

The perception of the history of Russian opera had been much influenced by the judgements of critics of the nineteenth Century (notably V. V. Stasov), notably those who wanted to underline the autonomy of Russian works from European models. But the creation of Russian opera passed necessarily through the transformation of a kind of production which, needless to say, had been created outside the Russian Empire, were it wasn't either known since an advanced step of its evolution.

As it has been for the formation of Russian literature, the initial appropriation of European models passed through their translation, making possible the transfer in a new cultural environment of the main models of the foreign literature, including theatre. The first generations of translations were not characterized by the fidelity to the original, as in the modern conception, but by the freedom of the author in introducing new elements or changes.

Referring in particular to opera, we can distinguish several types, in relation to their destination. In the case of translation of Italian poetry, the Italian slavist Stefano Garzonio makes a distinction between texts *literaturnye* (literary) and texts *rasschitannye na muzyku* (intended for reading), that is texts for reading and for singing.[393] This is not always possible when dealing with historical sources, also due to the tradition of indicatng the titles of spectacles always in the language of the memorialist, independently of the language in which performances were staged.

Librettos of the intermezzi and comedies represented, in Italian, by the first troupes that arrived in Russia from Dresden, were printed, for the sake of a better comprehension, in Russian, French or German translation. Intermezzos and comedies staged by the first Italian troupes (the second in particular) were translated from Italian into French, or from French into Russian. To be more precise, their *perechen'* (summary, or *argomento*) was translated, with much use of the reported speech, while only some sentences, outlined in

[393] S. GARDZONIO, *Stikh poeticheskikh perevodov ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto* (The verse in Russian poetic translations of 18th-century Italian librettos), *XVIII vek* (18th century), *Russian Verse Theory, Proceedings of the 1987 Conference at UCLA*, edited by Barry P. Scherr and Dean S. Worth, UCLA *Slavic Studies*, Volume 18, Slavica Publishers, Inc. Columbus 1989, p. 107.

capital letters, are in direct speech.[394] As it seems, the anonymity of the librettos notwithstanding, the majority of the translations of the years 1733-35 should be ascribed to Vasily K. Trediakovsky.[395] The position of the poet as translator for the Academy of Science is confirmed by the documents collected by Starikova.[396] Translations into German had been entrusted to Stählin since his arrival in Saint Petersburg in 1735. According to Pekarsky Memmingen, scholar of the Academy of Sciences, in 1735, by command of the Court, he was charged to prepare twice a week abstracts in German of Italian comedies and intermezzos, which were distributed at court before the beginning of performaces.[397] Referring to *La forza dell'amore e dell'odio* for instance, Stählin recalls that it had been printed in several languages (Italian and Russian, Italian and German) by the Academy of Sciences.[398]

A certain numbers of the summaries of the years 1733-35 are preserved; Russian spectators, evidently, read them before the play, to better follow the action, but according to Starikova, the translations were read also by people who had no possibility to assist to the court's performances: thus, translation had also the function of stimulating the interest to theatre outside the boundaries of the Court's circle.[399] Moreover, together with press articles concerning comedies and intermezzos staged by the first Italian troupes, these translations, which can be ascribed as '*literaturnye*', allowed the development of a theatrical critic: according to Starikova, "[…] they were the first attempt (still much

[394] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche* (The Theatre in Russia at the time of Empress Anna Ioannovna and Ioann Antonovich), *Ezhegodnik imperatorskikh teatrov* (Yearbook of the Imperial Theatres), III-IV, Sank-Peterburg, 1914, p. 29.
[395] These materials had been printed in V. N. Peretts, *Ital'yanskie komedii i intermedii, predstavlennye pri dvore imperatritsy Anny Ioannovny v 1733-1735 gg. Teksty* (Italian comedies and intermezzos staged at the court of empress Anna Ioannovna in the years 1733-35, The texts, Pg., 1917), quoted from *M. L. FERRAZZI, Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa (1731-1738) (*Italian comedies and comic actors at the Russian court (1731-1738*)),* Roma, Bulzoni 2000, p. 66. Vasily Kirillovich Trediakovsky (1703-1768) was one of the first theorist of literary language. In 1732 he became official translator of the court and vice-secretary of the Academy of sciences, in 1732 court poet. In 1735 he founded the Russian academy in order to gather scholars to codify the Russian literary language, and wrote the *Novy i kratky sposob k slozheniyu rossiyskikh stikhov* (New and short method for versification in Russian), in which he suggested to replace tonic verse with the syllabic one, taking support on popular poetry and on the canons of latin metrics, ideas he embodied in the translation on Fénelon's *Les aventures de Télemaque* (*Telemakhida*, 1766). V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche…*, p. 56.
[396] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny. Dokumental'naya khronika, 1730-1740*, vypusk I, edited by L. M. Starikova, Moskva, Radiks 1995, p. 46.
[397] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa…*, p. 70.
[398] J. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *K istorii teatra v Rossii (Iz ne opublikovannykh eshche memuarov professora Istorii izyashchnykh iskusstv v Rossii gosudarstvennogo sovetnika i sekretarya Peterburgskoy Akademii nauk gospodina Yakoba fon Shtelina* (For a History of the Theatre in Russia (From Still Unpublished Memoirs of Professor of Fine Arts in Russia, the State Counseillor and Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg Mr Jacob von Stählin), in *Glava iz knigi M. Ioganna Iozefa Khaygol'da* «*Prilozheniya k Obnovlennoy Rossii*» (A chapter from the book by M. Johann Josef Heigolt *Supplements of the New Russia*), *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…,* Doc. 334*,* pp. 532-76.
[399] *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny…*, p. 30.

ingenuous) at an intellective apprisal of the art of theatre (and dramaturgy as a part of it) after its initial, emotional reception."[400]

Later on, Russian translations of the works represented by Araja's troupe can be ascribed to Pyotr Medvedev, the official interpreter of the troupe recruited by Pietro Mira.[401] It is the case with *Il finto Nino ovvero la Semiramide riconosciuta* (1737), which became *Pritvorny Nin, ili Semiramida poznanna*, and *Artaserse* (*Artasers*, 1738), both on librettos by Metastasio, represented for Anna Ioannovna's birthdays in 1737 and 1738. As to *Pritvorny Nin*, Vsevolodsky-Gerngross observes that "Comparing the translations by Medvedev and Trediakovsky, we see that Medvedev is cosiderably more clear, that his style is lighter; his verses, moreover, are rhymed."[402]

According to Stählin, during the twenty-year period of Elizabeth's rule, operas were composed, and sung, on Italian text, while for the audience a French, German and Russian traslations were always supplied.[403] Karabanov's reference to *La Clemenza di Tito* translated into Russian must possibly be understood not for singing, but for reading, preparing the spectator to follow the action in a language he hardly knew.[404]

In 1768 Catherine, who herself contributed to the translation of foreign works (translated Marmontel's *Bélisaire* in 1767), established the Society for the Translation of foreign works assigning it 5000 roubles per year: till 1783 it will responsible for 110 translations.[405] The practice of translating the libretto of staged performances a posteriori, also as a further memoir of the event, lasted till 19th century at least: librettos were often issued in four languages (Russian, Italian, German and French), and their selling was advertised on the Playbills of the Imperial Theatres, not always in conjunction with the

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[400] "<…> они явились первой попыткой (достаточно еще наивной) умственного освоения театрального искусства (и драматургии как части его) вслед за первым эмоциональным восприятием его". *Teatral'naya zhizn' Rossii v epokhe Anny Ioannovny*…, p. 31. In the collection several documents of this type are reported (Docs. Nos. 303, 305, 327, 330, 331).

[401] M. L. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa…*, p. 66.

[402] "Сравнивая переводы Медведева и Тредиаковскаго, мы видим, что Медведев значительно понятнее, что слог у него значительно легче; стихи его, кроме того, срифмованы." V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS *Teatr v Rossii pri imperatritse Anne Ioannovne i imperatore Ioanne Antonoviche…*, p. 71.

[403] YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 128.

[404] "Небольшой Ярославский театр, праотец колоссальных Русских театров, скоро выстроился на берегу Волги и торжественно открыт 1755 года года представлением оперы *Титово милосердие*, которую Волков перевел с Итальянскаго. Оркестр был собран из домашных помещичьних музыкантов, а хор петь архиерейскими певчими." (The small theatre of Yaroslavl', forefather of the colossal Russian theatres, soon was built on the bank of the river Volga and triomphally opened in 1755 with the performance of the opera *La Clemenza di Tito*, which Volkov tranlsated from Italian. The orchestra was created with local landlords' musicians, and the chorus was sung by the chantors of the church.) A. KARABANOV, *Osnovanie russkogo teatra…*, p. 25.

[405] M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo, Storia e testi della letteratura russa* (Russian 18th century, History and texts of the Russian literature), Milano, UNICOPLI 1997, pp. 84-6.

staging of the same operas.[406] Garzonio has effectuated a sketch of translations of Italian works housed in Russian libraries,[407] to which works translated from other Western languages sould be added.

These types of translations were often originated through other translations: according to Garzonio, if the first translation of Italian literary verses is, for example, a fragment from *Gerusalemme liberata* (*Osvobozhdenny Ierusalim*) from the Polish translation by P. Kokhanovsky, we have to wait till 1773 to find the first translation from an Italian original, that is *Stikhi, podrazhanie ital'yanskim* (Verses, imitating Italians) by Bogdanovich from Metastasio.[408] Moreover, early translation of laudatory odes of the Court Italian poets were made in prose.[409] According to the Italian slavist, "These few facts witness that Italian poetry existed in foreign translations, that in 18th century in Russia it was translated mostly through an intermediate language (be it Polish, French, or German)."[410]

According to Peretts for instance, at the end of the intermezzo *Starik skupoy* (The old miser) the libretto reads as follows:

> By the means of this the curious reader is informed that arias and the two-voice passages which here can be found in Italian have been translated from French, from which the translator has done the translations. For this reason it is thought that the Russian translation of these arias is more akin to French than to Italian style. They have been included here in Italianfor the will of the person who has translated them from Italian into French; a fact that he had wanted also for the following reason. Because in the next intermezzos the reader will be informed about this by the following short words: arias are translated from French.[411]

[406] See *Afishi Imperatorskikh teatrov*, housed at the periodical section of the Russian National library (RNB OG).
[407] S. GARZONIO, *La poesia italiana in Russia* (Italian poetry in Russia), Firenze, Centro 2P 1984.
[408] S. GARDZONIO, *Stikh poeticheskikh perevodov ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto…*, p. 107.
[409] *ivi*, p. 107.
[410] "Даже эти немногочисленные факты показывают, что итальянская литературная поэзия бытовала в иноязычных переводах, что в XVIII столетии в России ее переводили, главным образом, через язык-посредник (то польский, то французский, то немецкий)." *ivi*, p. 107.
[411] "Con questo si dichiara al curioso lettore che le Arie e i passaggi a due voci che si trovano qui in lingua italiana, sono stati tradotti dal Francese, da cui il traduttore ha tradotto. Per questo si pensa che la traduzione russa di queste Arie si accordi più allo stile Francese che a quello Italiano. In Italiano esse sono qui accluse per desiderio di colui che le ha tradotte in Francese dall'Italiano; cosa che egli esige anche per quanto segue. Perciò anche nei prossimi intermezzi, alla fine dell'Intermezzo il lettore sarà informato di questo fatto dalle seguenti brevi parole: LE ARIE SONO TRADOTTE DAL FRANCESE." V. N. Peretts*, Italianskiya komedii i intermedii…*, p. 147, quoted from M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani alla corte russa…*, pp. 68-9.

According to the libretto of *La forza dell'amore e dell'odio*, Trediakovsky had translated it from a French prose version, and had composed verses without respecting the meter of the original arias.[412]

As a later example, we can lead the later case of *La finta amante* by Paisiello (1780, libretto by G. B. Casti): the text of this *opera buffa* had been translated by Pavel Golenishchev-Kutuzov from French, and his version is exclusively in prose.[413] The Italian-French edition itself had the verse recitatives translated in prose.[414] Evidently, this text was not intended for singing, rather as a support for an Italian staging. This version can be considered as rather neutral, in the sense that there is no trace of Russification, which appears in other cases: names and place of the action are respected. Evidently, the translator's aim was to familiarize the reader with the play.

It is in the last quarter of the century that we find cases with stage works translated for the staging. According to Kryukov the first opera to sung in Russian translation was Salieri's *Armida*, staged in 1774, in the translation by Ivan A. Dmitrevsky.[415] Russian libraries and archives house in fact 'original' scores by foreign composers, composed initially on a libretto in a foreign language, to which translated texts had been added in a second moment.[416] Also the translated librettos were published, this time in each language separately.[417]

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[412] Stählin was asked to tranlsate i tinto German. 50 copies were printed in Russian, and as much in German, exemplars of which can be found at the Russian National Library (RNB) and at the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, as well as at the library of the State central theatrical museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" in Moscow. YA. SH. [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…,* p. 571.

[413] P. GOLENISHCHEV-KUTUZOV, *Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa, komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, predstavlennaya v prisutstvii EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA* (*La finte Amante*, Comic opera in two acts, staged in the presence of Her Imperial Majesty), V SANKTPETERBURGE Pechatano v Tipografii morskago shlyakhetnago kadetskago korpusa, s. a., in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh featral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom yazyke imeyushchikhsya* (Full collection of all theatrical works in Russian language), Chast' 69, V Sanktpeterburge 1801 god, E. D.

[414] [G. B. CASTI], *La finta amante, Opera comica in due atti per musica Da rappresentarsi nel teatro della Corte di SUA MAESTA IMPERIALE CATERINA II, Imperatrice di Tutte le Russie, La fausse amante, Opéra-comique en deux actes, réprésenté sur le Théâtre de la Cour de SA MAJESTE IMPERIALE CATHERINE II Impératrice de toutes les Russies*, Italian-French version.

[415] A. N. KRYUKOV, *Perevody i perevodchiki* (Translations and translators), *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…,* Kn. 2, 2000, pp. 349-51.

[416] Among these, I had the opportunity to study the following scores in reference to 18th century: V. MARTÍN Y SOLER, *Redkaya veshch' komicheskaya opera v 2-kh aktakh, Partitura b. d. Rukopis' na russkom yazyke* (*Una cosa rara*, comic opera in two acts, Full score without date, Manuscript [copy] in Russian), housed at the library of the M. I. Glinka Central Museum of Musical Culture (Moscow, GTsMMK), F. 187 (M. S. Vorontsov), ed. khr. 9; G. PAISIELLO, *"Sluzhanka-gospozha" komicheskaya opera v 2-kh aktakh, Partitura, Postavlena v Peterburge v 1781 g.* (*La serva padrona*), manuscript copy, housed at the library of the M. I. Glinka Central Museum of Musical Culture (Moscow, GTsMMK), F. 187 (M. S. Vorontsov), e. khr. 14, Tekst na rus. Yaz. Rukopis'; G. PAISIELLO, *Opera ruskaya Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa*, v dvukh deiystvakh, Muzyka sochinena Gym Paiselolom [*sic*] Slova polozheny na muzyku c italiyanskago na ruskoy Gym. Kryzhanovskim [1780 g.] (Russian opera *La finta amante*, in two acts, Music by Mr Paisiello, Words set to

As to *La finta amante*, at the manuscript section of the Russian National Library of Saint-Petersburg (RNB OR) another version is preserved, titled *Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa*, in the complete score with Russian text.[418] For the occasion the Russian libretto had been edited by Zakhar Kryzhanovsky, who possibly worked on Golenishchev-Kutuzov's translation, adapting it to the meter necessary for singing. Here are the three versions of the first number (I, 1):

Camilletta	Camille	Priyata
A qual trifla condizione *Devo stare io poveretta;* *Qui seder sola soletta* *Tutto il giorno a lavorar.* *E pensando al mio Gelino* *Fra le pene mi consolo:* *Sol che venga a me vicino* *Il mio cor fa giubilar.*[419]	*Malheureuse! À auelle triste condition je suis reduite! Toûours seule, toûjours occupêe à travailler toute la journée! Mais en pansant à mon cher Gelino, je me console de mes peines. Dès qu'il s'approche de moi, mon Coeur est dans la joie.*[420]	Как Семила нет со мною, Словно нет души во мне Безпрестанно рвусь тоскою Скуки чувствую о дне Но! То что ево не вижу Иль не верен мне Семил? Ах я жизнь возненавижу И умру коль изменил.[421]

the music from Italian into Russian by Mr Kryzhanovsky), manuscript copy of the full score, housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB OR), F. 550 OSRK II 279 F. XII. 63; V. MARTÍN Y SOLER, *Redkaya veshch'* (*Una cosa rara*), Corrado's role, fragment, manuscript copy, housed at the manuscript section of the A. I Bakhrushin State Centr. Theatrical Museum (Moscow); G. PAISIELLO, *Neizvestnaya opera 18go veka, partiya dlya golosa* (Unknown opera of the 18th century, Voice part), housed at the manuscript section of the State Centr. Theatrical Museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" (Moscow), F. 577, op. 38. The latter can be easily recognized as *Sluzhanka-gospozha* (*La serva padrona*), Uberto's role, manuscript copy.

[417] As for Dmitrevsky's translations, I could study the following editions: [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Redkaya veshch', opera komicheskaya v dvukh deystviyakh, perelozhena c Ital'ianskago na Rossiysky yazyk pod muzyku G. Martini, Predstavlena v Sanktpeterburge Rossiyskimi pridvornymi akterami* (*Una cosa rara*, comic opera in two acts, set from Italian into Russian to the music of Mr Martini [Martín y Soler], Staged in Saint Petersburg by Russian court actors), V Sanktpeterburge, 1792 g. v Tipografii G. Krylova s tovaryshchi; [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Sluzhanka gospozha, intermediya v dvukh deustviyakh, predstavlennaya na Pridvornom Teatre. Muzyka sochinena slavnym G. Paisiellom, 1781 goda.* (*La serva padrona*, intermezzo in two acts, staged at the Court theatre. Music composed by the reknown Mr Paisiello, 1781), V Sanktpeterburge; [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Dobraya devka, komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh, Muzyka G. Pichini. Sochinena podrazhaya Italianskoy. Pervoy raz predstavlena na Kuskovskom teatre sobstvennymi Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa éetra Borisovicha Sheremeteva pevitsami i pevchimi Iyulya 2 dnya, 1782 goda* (*La Buona Figliola*, Comic opera in three acts, Music by Mr Piccinni. Composed imitating the Italian. Premiered at Kuskovo theatre by Singers of Her Excellence count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev, on 2 July 1782), Pechatana v Moskve 1782 goda; [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Trubochist knyaz' i knyaz' trubochist, komicheskaya opera v odnom deystvii. S Italiyanskago vol'no perevedennaya i prinarovlennaya pod Muzyku G-na portogalli* (*Lo spazzacamino principe*, comic opera in one act. Translated form Italian and set to the music of Mr Portogallo), V Sanktpeterburge, s dozvoleniya Upravy Blagochiniya, 1795 goda.

[418] G. PAISIELLO, *Opera ruskaya Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa....*

[419] [G. B. CASTI], *La finta amante…*, p. 4

[420] *ivi*, p. 5.

[421] G. PAISIELLO, *Opera ruskaya Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa…*, Folios 17 v – 20 v.



Example No. III, 3 – *La finta amante* – Largo, measures 9-41



Example No. III, 4 – *Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa* – Largo, measures 9-41

The same accents correspond, while some slight differences can be noticed at measures 13, 26, 32 and 35 due to the different length of the correspondent words, which although do not affect the metrics.

For the staging, the names were changed into Russian ones: Camilletta became Priyata, a *nom parlant* (from the Russian '*priyatny*', pleasant) that will often occur in following Russian operas, Gelino and Don Girone became respectively Semil and Prostyakov (the 'simpleton'). As to the place of the action, from the score it is impossible to understand whether it was transposed or not, but it is likely that it was accorded with the characters' provenance.

Though showing the cosmopolitanism of the cultural milieus of Saint Petersburg (as it was for other European capital cities), in contrast with the first kind of translations (*literaturnye*), translations *raschitannye na muzyku* show a greater degree of appropriation by the context of reception. The case of *La finta amante*, carrying the subtitle of "Opera ruskaya" (Russian opera), seems to me emblematic of the desire of getting possession of it as a part of a Russian repertoire.

Pritvornaya lyubovnitsa is in fact not an isolated case, as among the documented cases there are also the *intermezzo* by Paisiello-Federico *La serva padrona* (*Sluzhanka gospozha*, 1781), the operas by Martín y Soler-Da Ponte *Una cosa rara* (*Redkaya veshch'*, 1792) and *L'arbore di Diana* (*Diyanino drevo*, 1792)[422]. These translations are the work of the actor Ivan A. Dmitrevsky,[423] who was the author of many others of the same kind.[424]

As seen, the practice was adopted not only in Saint Petersburg, but also in Moscow: among the operas that formed the repertoire of the Sheremetev theatre, which included Piccinni's *La buona figliola* in the Russian version entitled *Dobraya devka*, also by Dmitrevsky (1782)[425], the most significant case is that of *Les mariages samnites* by Grétry,

[422] [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Diyanino drevo ili torzhestvuyushchaya lyubov', komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, peredelannaya s Italianskogo na Rossiysky yazyk i pod muzyku G. Martini podvedennaya. Predstavlennaya v Sanktpeterburge Rossiyskimi pridvornymi akterami mnogokratno.* (*L'arbore di Diana ovvero Il trionfo dell'amore*, comic opera in two acts, remade from Italian in Russian and set to the music of Mr Martini. Staged in Saint Petersburg many times by the actors of the Court.), *V Sanktpeterburge, 1792 goda. Pechatano v tipografii I. Krylova i tovarishchi*, in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh featral'nykh sochineniy…*, Chast' 69, V Sanktpeterburge 1801 god, E.D.

[423] V. N. VSEVOLODSKY-GERNGROSS, *I. A. Dmitrevskoy Ocherk iz istorii russkogo teatra* (I. A. Dmitrevsky, An essay from the history of Russian theatre), Berlin, Petropolis, 1923

[424] Among the translations by Ivan A. Dmitrevsky one can list: M. Coltellini's *Antigona*; G. A. Federico *La serva padrona* (*Sluzhanka gospozha*, 1781); L. Da Ponte's *Una cosa rara* (*Redkaya veshch'*, 1792); G. M. Foppa's *Lo spazzacamino principe* (*Trubochist knyaz' i knyaz' trubochist*, 1795); Goldoni's *La buona figliola* (*Dobraya devka*, 1782); Da Ponte's *L'arbore di Diana* (*Diyanino drevo ili torzhestvuyushchaya lyubov'*, 1792); S. Zini's *La bella pescatrice* (*Rybachka*). Vsevolodsky-Gerngross attributes to him the translation of Mazzolà's *La scuola de' gelosi* (*Uchilishche revnivykh*, 1786). See S. GARDZONIO, *I. A. Dmitrevsky - perevodchik ital'yanskikh p'es*, in *Osnovanie natsional'nogo teatra i sud'by russkoy dramaturgii (K 250-letiyu sozdaniya teatra v Rossii)*, Sanktpeterburg, Ros. Ak. N., S.-P. nauchny tsentr IRLI (P. d.) Ross. Obshchestvo po izucheniyu XVIII veka 2006, pp. 84-90. Other translations remained in manuscript form.

[425] [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Dobraya devka, Komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh, Muzyka g. Pichini. Sochinena podrazhaya Italianskoy. Pervoy raz predstavlena na Kuskovskom teatre sobstvennym Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva pevitsami i pevchimi. Iyulya 2 dnya, 1782 goda.* (*La Buona Figliola*, Comic opera in three acts, Music by Mr Piccinni. Composed imitating the Italian. Premiered

which was performed in Kuskovo and Ostankino in the Russian translation titled *Samnitskie braki* made up by Voroblevsky. The final destination of the staging is confirmed by the presence of the music score, and in come cases of the vocal parts.

According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "[…] in many (theatres) noblemen try their hand at the general utility of writing and translating dramatic works."[426] According to Chayanova, who points out the great number of translated plays present in the repertoire of Petrovsky's theatre,

> Таким образом антреприза Маддокса получила от предыдуших эпох истории русского театра большое количество переводного материала, по преимуществу из французских и гамбургских источников, и первые попытки их переложения и самостоятельного творчества, проводимого, если не в порядке того же переложения, то по строгим канонам европейской драматургии. И только в некотором небольшом количестве вещей, отчасти двух-трех сумароковских трагедиях и, главным образом, в комедиях, мы встречаем первые признаки самостоятельного национального творчества.[427]

[Thus Maddox's enterprise received from the previous epochs of the history of Russian theatre a big deal of translated material, mostly from French of Hamburgian sources, and the first attempts at their transposition and at an autonomos creation, realized, if not according to the same transposition, to the strict canons of European dramaturgy. And only in a few quantity of things, two or three tragedies by Sumarokov, and, first of all, in his comedies, we find the first marks of an autonomous national art.]

Among the translators of this epoch we can recall Vasily K. Trediakovsky, Pyotr Medvedev, Jacob von Stählin, Nikolay Outnikov, Mikhail V. Popov, Aleksandr V. Khrapovitsky, Ivan P. Elagin, Ivan A. Dmitrevsky, Vasily A. Levshin, Aleksandr P. Sumarokov, Nartov, Aleksandr Labzin, A. I. Klushin, A. F. Malinovksy, Mikhail Tolstoy, Aleksey Ivanovich Golitsyn, some I. Z. and N. C., Mikhail Makarov, Polevoy, Pyotr S. Svistunov, Murav'ev-Apostol, Aleksey P. Vzyamin, Pyotr Zubkov, some R. G., Pavel I. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, baron Pavel F. Mal'tits, Ivan S. Barkov, Il'in, N. N. Sandunov, Mariya V. Syshkova, Khilkov, the student F. Gensh, Vasily G. Voroblevsky, Yankovich, D. Koshelev, prince N. G. Krasnopol'sky, V. Pomerantsev,[428] A. V. Olsuf'ev , Ivan Vien, Zakhar A. Kryzhanovsky.[429] Often the translators were not indicated in the printed libretto, and some of them remain nowadays unidentified.

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at Kuskovo theatre by singers of Her Excellency count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev, on 2 July 1782) Pechatana v Moskve 1782 goda.

[426] "<…> во многих (театрах) благородные люди стараются к заботе своей и общей пользе писать и переводить драматические сочинения." Quoted from O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 142.

[427] *ibidem*.

[428] *ivi*, pp. 158-9.

[429] Zakhar Antonovich Kryzhanovsky (? - ?), was born in the family of a theatre employee. In 1776 he was hired as a translator in St. Petersburg. He translated into Russian the text of *The temple of the general jubilation* (*Khram obshchiya radosti* – see below – Other 'Operatic' Genres in Russian Production). He was

As I've pointed out above, both direct sources and secondary literature are not always clear in distinguishing the language in which operas were actually performed; possibly the original language and the translations, with original or new music, coexisted all along the last quarter of the century, and this did not depend on the origins of the singers: if it's possible to suggest that private Italian troupes sang their repertoire in Italian (Mattei-Orecia), Russian and Italian court troupes included singers of both nationalities each, and cases are documented of singers performing not in their mothertongue. A sketch of the works performed in translation can be traced, even if it had to be considered subject to further updating:

1779:

- Paisiello's *I filosofi immaginari*, staged in Dmitrevsky's translation (*Mnimye filosofy*) by the Russian Court troupe (8 September);[430]
- *Les deux soeurs, ou La jolie amie*, staged in Kuskovo in the translation (*Dve sestry ili Khoroshaya priyatel'nitsa*) by V. Voroblevsky (June);[431]
- Grétry's *L'amitié à l'érpeuve*, staged in Kuskovo as *Opyt druzhby* (June);[432]

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also the author of the translations *Dva okhotnika* (*Les deux chasseurs et la laitière*), Dva skupykh (*Les deux avares*), *Kuznets* (*Le maréchal ferrant*), and of the opera *Lyubovnik koldun* (The lover magician) and *Pererozhdenie* (The re-birth). See the entry by A. N. Kryukov in *Muzykal'ny peterburg*…, vol. 2, pp. 113-4.

[430] According to Garzonio, the manuscript of the translation is housed at the Russian State Library (RGB, F. 11 (Apraksin), muz., p. 5a, with the title *Filosofy*. S. GARDZONIO, *Zametki po istorii russkoy muzykal'noy poezii* (Notes of history of the Russian music poetry), *XVIII vek* (18th century), Sbornik 20, Rossiyskaya Akademiya nauk, Institut russkoy literatury (Pushkinsky dom), Sankt-Peterburg, Nauka 1996, p. 225. Another version is housed at the Library of the M. I. Museum of Musical culture of Moscow (TsGMMK, F. 187, ed. chr. 12, *Mnimye filosofy*, *Gli astrologi immaginari*, opera Akt II Partitura). Mooser also refers to an edition housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB), to which he had no access. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 229.

[431] *Dve sestry ili Khoroshaya priyatel'nitsa. Komediya v odnom deystvii; napolnena pesnyami, sochineniya g. de Kabardiera; muzyka g. Desborka. S Frantsuzskago po-ruski perelozhil Vasiley Voroblevsky. Nadpisana Eya Siyatel'stvu Grafine Varvare Petrovne Razumovskoy. Predstavlena v pervoy raz na teatre v Kuskovo Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva sobstvennymy pevtsami i pevitsami Iyunya 28 dnya 1778 goda*. (The two sisters or The good friend, Comedy in one act, interspersed with songs, and composed by Mr Cabardière; music by Mr Desborque. Translated from French into Russian by Vasily Voroblevsky. Dedicated to Her Excellency the countess Varvara Petrovna Razumovskaya. Premièred at the theatre of Kuskovo of Her Excellency the count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev by his singers on 28 June 1778) Napechatana v Moskve v Universitetskoy tipografii. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 42.

[432] *Opyt druzhby. Komediya s ariyami v dvukh deystviyakh. Materiya vzyata iz nravouchitel'nykh skazok g. Marmontelya, rechi pisannyya g. Favarom, muzyka g. Gretriya izvestnago znamenitago muzykanta proslavivshagosya vo mnogikh Frantsuzskikh komicheskikh operakh, perevedena s Frantsuzskago na Rossiyskoy yazyk Vasil'em Voroblevskim; nadpisana Ego Siyatel'stvu Deystvitel'nomu Kamergeru, Moskovskago dvoryanskago Banka Glavnomu Direktoru, Grafu Nikolayu Petrovichu Sheremetevu, predstavlena v pervoy raz v sele Kuskovo na domovom teatre Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva sobstvennymi Ego pevtsami Iyunya 29 dnya 1779 goda* (*L'épreuve de l'amitié*, comedy with airs in two acts. The subject is dran from Marmontel's moral tales, the dialogues are by Mr Favart, music by Mr Grétry, famous and celebrated musicians who had gained celebruty in many French *opéras-comiques*, translated from French into Russian by Vasily Voroblevsky; dedicated to Her Excellency the effective

- *Les souliers mordorés*, staged in Russian translation by V. Voroblevsky as *Bashmaki mordore*;[433]
- *Le peintre amoureux de son modèle*, translated as *Zhivopisets vlyublennoy v svoyu model'*.[434]

1780:

- Grétry's *Le tableau parlant*, staged at the Znamenka theatre in the translation by K. Khilkov (*Govoryashchaya kartina*);[435]
- Dezède's *L'erreur d'un moment*, staged at Maddox's Vauxhall in the translation by K. Khilkov (*Minutnoe zabluzhdenie*);[436]
- Philidor's *Le maréchal-ferrant*, aged at Maddox's Vauzhall in the translation by K. Khilkov (*Kuznets-lekar*).

1781:

chamber hambirger the director of the Main Bank of the Moscow aristocracy, count Nikolay Petrovich Sheremetev, premièred at the village of Kuskovo in the private theatre of Her Excellency count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev by his own singers on 29 June 1779); pechatana v tipografii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Universiteta. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, pp. 101-2.

[433] *Bashmaki mordore ili Nemetskaya Bashmashnitsa. Liricheskaya komediya v dvukh deystviyakh, perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka Vasil'em Voroblevskim 1778 goda v Moskve. V pervoy raz predstavlena na domovom teatre Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva sobstvennymi Ego pevtsami i pevitsami Genvarya 11 dnya 1779 goda; napechatana v Universitetskoy tipografii* (*Les souliers mordorés* or The German shoemaker. Comédie lyrique in two acts, translated from French by Savily Voroblevsky in 1778 in Moscow. Premiered at the private theatre of Her Excellency count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev by his singers on 11 January 1779; printed at the University typography). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, pp. 23-4.

[434] *Zhipovisets vlyublennoy v svoyu model'. Komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, sochineniya g. Ansima, muzyka g. Dyuni; perevel s Frantsuzskago Vasily Voroblevskoy. Nadpisana Grafu Alekseyu Kirillovichu Razumovskomu. V pervoy raz predstavlena na domovom teatre ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva sobstvennymi ego pevtsami Fevralya 7 dnya 1779 goda* (*Le peintre amoureux de son modèle*. Comic opera in two acts, composed by Anseaume, music by Mr Duni; translated from the French by Vasily Voroblevsky. Dedicated to count Aleksey Kirillovich Razumovsky. Premiered at the private theatre of Her Excellency count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev by is singers on 7 February 1779). Napechatana pri Moskovskom Universiteta. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 56.

[435] *Govoryashchaya kartina. Opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii, perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka g. Khilkovym, dovol'no nravshchaya Publike. Blistayushchy razum avtora iz'yasnil v stol malen'koy piese polnuyu intrigu, prinosyashchuyu dlya zriteley zabavu i smekh; dovol'no chasto predstavlyaema v Moskve, i nadezhno, chto vpred nevydet izo vkusa Publiki* (*Le tableau parlant*, Comic opera in one act, translated from the French by Mr Khilkov, [it has been] quite a pleasure for the audience. The brilliant mind of the author has expressed in such a little pièce a full plot, which had brought to the spectators laugh and fun; quite often staged in Moscow, it is hoped that it will not bore the audience.). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 37.

[436] *Minutnoe zabluzhdenie. Opera v odnom deystvii perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka. K. Khilkovym; muzyka tazhe, kotoraya i v podlinnike. Predstavlena v pervoy raz na Moskovskom teatre, i nyne mnogo raz povtoryaetsya k udovol'stviyu Publiki* (*L'erreur d'un moment*. Opera in one act translated from the French by K. Khilkov; music the same as in the original. Premiered at the Moscow theatre, and today revived many times for the audiences' pleasure). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 80.

- P. A. Monsigny's *Le déserteur* in the Russian translation by Voroblevsky (7 February); staged by the Peterburgian Court troupe in 1788;
- J. N. Méreaux's *Laurette*, staged in Kuskovo as *Loreta*; in Moscow it was staged at prince Volkonsky's theatre *Laurette* in the translation by V. A. Levshin (1746-1826);[437]
- P. A. Monsigny's *Aline, reine de Golconde*, translated by V. Voroblevsky (10 December);[438]
- Piccinni's *La buona figliuola*, translated by Dmitrievsky as *Dobraya devka* (Kuskovo, 2 June). The opera had been formerly staged in German in Saint Petersburg in 1778 and in italian in 1779.[439]

1782:

- Grétry's *Zémire et Azor*,[440] staged at the Petrovsky theatre as *Zemira i Azor* in the translation by M. V. Sushkova (2 November).

1783:

- Grétry's *Les deux avares*, translated as *Dvoe skupykh* by F. gensh (22 February 1782 or 1783); staged by the Peterburgian Court troupe in 1788;[441]

[437] *Loretta. Liricheskaya komediya v odnom deystvii, vybrannaya iz skaski g. Marmontelya togozh nazvaniya. Muzyka sochinena g. Mero. Perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka V. A. Levshinym. Stikhi i prelozhenie muzyki egozh. Siya piesa svoim perevodom mozhet ne tokmo sravnena byt' s originalom, no v nekotorykh pasazhakh eshche udachnee. V pervoy raz predstavlena na domovom teatre K. P. M. V. sobstvennymi ego pevchimi i pevitsami koi priobreli sebe ot zriteley dovol'nuyu pokhvalu* (*Laurette*. Comédie lyrique in one act, drawn from Marmontel's tale of the same title. Music composed by Mr Méreaux. Translated from the French by V. A. Levshin. Verse and setting to the music by himself. This translation not only can be compared to its original, but in some passages is even better. Premiered at the private theatre of K. P. M. by his singers, who deserved much praise by the listeners). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 73.

[438] Published in Moscow in 1786.

[439] [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Dobraya devka…*. In the translation the name of Cecchina is replaced by Rosetta.

[440] *Zemira i Azor. Opera v chetyrekh deystviyakh. Sochinena nashego vremeni pisatelem g. Marmontelem. Muzyka izvestnago iz chisla slavnykh opernykh muzykantov g. Gretri. Perevedena na Rossiyskoy yazyke nekotoroyu blagorodnoyu gospozheyu. V pervoy raz predstavlena na Moskovskom teatre, i pri penii arii gorlitsy Moskovskago teatra aktrisa gzh. Sokolovskaya byla applodirovana metaniem koshel'kov. Opera i muzyka stol'ko interesny, chto nikodga izo vkusu vytti ne mogut* (*Zémire et Azor*. Opera in four acts. Composed in our time by Mr Marmontel. The music is by the famous among the celebrated opera composers Mr Grétry. Translated in the Russian language by a certain noblewoman. Premiered at the Moscow theatre and received with launch of purses when the aria of the ground drove was sung by the actress of the Moscow theatre Mrs Sokolovskaya. The opera and the music are so interesting, that they never wont go out of fashion). Napechatana v Universitetskoy tipografii y g. Novikova 1783 goda. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 61.

- Gossec's *Le tonnelier*, translated as *Bochar* by V. Voroblevsky (6 August);[442]
- Paisiello's *La finta amante*, staged in 1783 or 1784 by the Peterburgian Court troupe as *Pritvornaya Lyubovnitsa*, translation by P. Golenishchev-Kutusov edited for the music by Z. Kryzhanovsky; later staged at the Petrovsky theatre in 1787.

1784:

- G. Benda's *Der Dorfjahrmarkt*, staged by the Peterburgian Court troupe in an anonymous translation (7 November 1784);[443]
- Monsigny's *Rose et Colas*, staged as *Rosa i Kolas* (18 August 1784, at Moscow Vauxhall), music as in the original in the Russian translation by M. V. Sushkova.[444]

1785:

- Philidor's *Sancho Pança dans son isle*, in translation by V. A. Levshin titled *Sancho Pansa, gubernatorom v ostrove Baratarii* (Petrovsky theatre, 22 September);[445]

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[441] *Dvoe skupykh. Opera komicheskaya v dvukh deystviakh. Perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka iz sochineniy g. Fal'bera Moskovskago Universiteta Studentom Fedorom Genshem. Muzyka tazh, kotoraya v originale, sochineniya g. Gretri. Predstavlena v pervoy raz na Moskovskom teatre v 1783 godu Fevralya 22 dnya* (*Les deux avares*. Comic opera in two acts. Translated from the French from the work of Mr Falbert by the student of the Moscow University Fyodor Gensh. The music is the same as in the original composed by Grétry. Premiered at the Moscow theatre on 22 February 1783). *Napechatana togdazh v Universitetskoy tipografii u g. Novikova*. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 41-2; R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 118.

[442] *Bochar. Opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii, perevedena vol'no s Frantsuzskago Studentom Fedorom Genshem. Muzyka tazh samaya, kotoraya v original'noy; predstavlena v pervoy raz v vaksale v 1783 godu Avgusta 6 dnya.* (*Le tonnelier*. Comic opera in one act, freely translated from the French by the student Fyodor Gensh. The music is the same as in the original; premiered in the Vauxhall on 6 August 1783) Napechatana v Moskve v Universitetskoy tipografii u g. Novikova v 1784 godu. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 27. The libretto was published in Moscow in 1780.

[443] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette), 1 November 1784.

[444] *Roza i Kolas. Opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii, perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka; muzyka tazhe, kotoraya i vo Frantsuzskom originale, est' iz nailuchshikh sochineniy, predstavlyaema byla v Moskve v publichnom Voksale* (*Rose et Colas*. Comic opera in one act, translated from the French; the music is the same as in the original; it is one of the best works, staged in Moscow at the public vauxhall). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 118.

[445] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), September 1785. Recorded also in the *Dramatic dictionary* as *Sancho Pansa, Gubernatorom v ostrove Baratarii. Opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii, sochineniya g. Puansini, polozhennaya na muzyka g. Filidorom, perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka g. Levshinym. Predstavlena byla na Moskovskom Rossiyskom teatre. Soderzhanie sey opery iz Don Kishota Gishpanskago Romana* (Sancho Pança, governor of the isle of Barataria. Comic opera in one act, composed by Mr Poinsigny, set to music by Mr Philidor, translated from the French by Mr Levshin. Staged at the Moscow Russian theatre. The subject of this opera is drawn from the Spanish novel *Don Quixote*), *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 121.

- *Soliman II, ou Les trois sultanes*, staged at the same time in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg in the Russian version by Bakhturin;[446] staged in 1787 in Orel by a group of noblemen-amateurs on occasion of Catherine II's visit in the city (17 June 1787);[447]
- Monsigny's *La belle Arsène*, staged by the Peterburgian Court troupe as *Prekasnaya Arsena*.

1786:

- Philidor's *Tom Jones* staged at prince Volkonsky's theatre in Moscow. The libretto by A. H. Poinsinet was translated by princess E. P. Volkonskaya, while verses and *podtestovka* were realized by V. A. Levshin;[448]
- Schwartzendorf (Martini)'s *Henri IV, ou La bataille d'Ivry*, staged in the Russian translation by A. Malinovsky (22 November).

1787:

[446] *Soliman vtoroy ili Tri sultanshi. Komediya v trekh deystviyakh g. Favarta, perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka. Siya piesa chasto igrana na Sanktpeterburskom i Moskovskom teatrakh, i zavsegda blagosklonno byla Publikoyu prinimana. Rol' Roksolany napolnena otmennymi vydumkami i igroyu, dayushchaya sposob pokazyvat' sebya aktrise igrayushcheyu onuyu. Deliyazh drugaya iz Sultansh imeet arii v svoey role napolnennyya priyatnostiyu. Siya piesa nikogda ne naskuchit dlya veselago raspolozheniya materi i teatra* (Soliman the second or The three sultanas. Comedy in three acts by Mr Favart, translated from the French. This play was often performed in the theatres of St. Petersburg and Moscow, and was always positively received by the audience. The role of Roksolana was full with particular jokes and a way of playing, which gave the actress who was playing it the possibility of showing herself. Deliazh, another of the sultanas, has arias in her part, full of beauty. This play will never bore for the good construction of plot and scene.). Pechatana v Moskve v teatral'noy tipografii u Khristifora Klaudiya v 1785 godu. Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 132.

[447] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette), 29 June 1787, quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 143.

[448] *Tomas Zhon ili Naydenysh. Liricheskaya komediya v trekh deystviyakh, vybrannaya iz Romana g. Fil'finga i prelozhena stikhami gospodinom Puansenetom pod tem zhe nazvaniem. Muzyka sochineniya znamenitago muzykanta g. Filidora; perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka Knyazhnoyu E. P. V., a stikhi i prelozhenie muzyki v perevedennoy Vas. Alek. Levshina. V pervoy raz predstavlena na domovom teatre Ego Siyatel'stva Knyaz' Petra Mikhaylova Volkonskago, sobstvennymi ego pevtsami i pevitsami. Onaya piesa napolnena dovol'no khoroshimi myslyami, ogromnymi khorami, i priyatnymi ariyami; bolee pridaet velikolepiya v sey piese rogovaya muzyka. Rol' g. Vestera dovol'no priobrela u zriteley sebe pokhvalu* (Tom Jones or The foundling. Comédie lyrique in three acts, rawn from the novel by Mr fielding and set to verse by Mister Poinsigny with the same title. The musica is composed by the famous musician Mr Philidor; translated from the French by the princess E. P. V., while the verse and the setting to the music were by Vas. Alek. Levshin. Premiered at the private theatre of Her Excellecy prince Pyotr Mikhaylovich Volkonsky by his singers. This play is full of very good ideas, huge choruses, and beautiful arias; moreover, more splendour is given to this play by the orhcestra of horns. The part of Mr Western was quite praised by the spectators.) Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 140.

- Philidor's *Le bûcheron, ou Les trois souhaits*, in an anonymous translation, unpublished. (Maddox's vauxhall, July 1787);
- Monsigny's *Les aveux indiscrets*, staged as *Bezrazsudnaya iskrennost'*;[449] the libretto translated by Levshin was published in Moscow in 1787;[450]
- Duni's *L'île des fous*, staged at the Petrovsky theatre in Levshin's translation (possibly *Ostrov durakov*), later published in Moscow.[451]

1788:

- D'Herbain's *Nanette et Lucas, ou La paysanne curieuse* (11 June, Moscow vauxhall and Petrovsky theatre, later numbers of times till 1800);
- Grétry's *Silvain*;
- Piccinni's *Le faux lord*, possibly in a translation by Voroblevsky;
- Paisiello's *La serva padrona*, translated by some Golitsyn as *Sluzhanka-gospozha*.[452]

1789:

- *Una cosa rara* at the Hermitage theatre (October 1789, then at least 20 times in Saint Petersburg in Russian or Italian);
- Sacchini's *L'avaro deluso* in Dmitrevsky's translation titled *Obmanuty kupets*, staged by the Peterburgian Court troupe (25 May 1789);[453] later staged at the Petrovsky theatre (8 November 1792);

[449] *Bezrazsudnaya iskrennost', opera sochineniya Gospodina De La Ribardier, na Rossiyskom jazyke perelozhennaya* (Les aveux indiscrets, opera composed by Mr De La Ribadière, translated in Russian), Moskva, v Universitetskoy Tipografii u N. Novikova, 1787, in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy…*, Chast' 55, 1801.
[450] *Sanktpeterburgkie vedomosti* (The St. Petersburg gazette), 30 November 1787. Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 143.
[451] *Ostrov durakov. Komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, paradirovana iz Goldonieva teatra; muzyka izvestnago luchshago muzykanta g. Duni. Perevedena s Frantsuzskago yazyka Vasil'em Levshinym 1787 goda* (*L'île des fous*. Opéra comique in two acts, a parody from Goldoni's theatre; music by the famous best composer Mr Duni. Translated from the French by Vasily Levshin in 1787). Recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 103.
[452] According to Chayanova, the libretto was written, and not translated by Golitsyn. O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, *Prilozhenie* (Appendix), pages not numbered.
[453] Manuscript copies of the translations are housed at the manuscript section of the Russian State Library (RGB, F. 11 (Apraksin), muz., p. 19, N. 1-2, score, 1787); according to Garzonio at the library of the Mariinsky theatre a copy of the score is housed, which does not include recitatives (I C 153/ П. О. С.). A manuscript version of the libretto is housed at the State Centr. Theatrical Museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" (Manuscript section). According to Garzonio, this too is an example of *sklonenie na russkie nravy*, starting from the change in the characters' name. Moreover, the translator recurs to phrases typical of the Russian

- Martín y Soler's *Una cosa rara*, staged (1 June 1789) by the Peterburgian Court troupe in Dmitrevsky's translation, published in Saint Petersburg in 1790; later staged at the Petrovsky theatre (19 April 1795);
- Salieri's *La scuola de' gelosi*, in anonymous translation, possibly published (15 June);
- Paisiello's *La serva padrona*, staged as *Sluzhanka gospozha* in Saint Petersburg in Dmitrevsky's translation (20 July); in Moscow it was given in the same year, and remained in repertoire until 1802;
- Martín y Soler's *L'arbore di Diana*, in Dmitrevsky's translation (*Diyanino drevo*), published in 1790. After the première (4 September) it had nine more stagings in the same year, and remained in repertoire more than twenty years, being staged also in Moscow since 1791;[454]
- Monsigny's *Le déserteur*, staged by the Russian Court troupe in Levshin's translation (*Dezertir ili Begly soldat*) published in Kaluga in 1793 (9 October); it had already been staged in Kuskovo in 1781, in Voroblevsky's version; later it was staged at the Petrovsky theatre in 1799;
- K. von Dittersdorf's *Der Apotheker und der Doktor*, translated from German by F. Rozanov;
- Cimarosa's *Le donne rivali*, staged as *Dve nevesty* (anonymous) at the Peterburgian Court theatre (18 April);[455]
- Cimarosa's *I due baroni di Rocca Azzurra*, possibly staged at the Peterburgian Court theatre in the Russian translation by some V. M. Tchernikov;
- Piccinni's *Le faux lord*, staged at the Peterburgian Court theatre, possibly in Voroblesvky's version (17 July);
- Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, staged at the Peterburgain Court theatre in I. Vien's translation (*Sevil'sky tsiryul'nik*), published in Kaluga in 1793, possibly also before (16 August);
- Gossec's *Les pêcheurs* at Petrovsky theatre, in an anonymous translation.

1790:

comic opera and to the simple peasant speech following the model of Russian librettos by such authors as A. O. Ablesimov, M. A. Matinsky and Ya. B. Knyazhnin. S. GARDZONIO, *Zametki po istorii russkoy muzykal'noy poezii…*, pp. 223-4.

[454] [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Diyanino drevo ili torzhestvuyushchaya lyubov'…*

[455] According to Mooser, an exemplar of the score with the Russian text is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

- Dalayrac's *Nina, ou La folle par amour* (Kuskovo, 17 September), possibly in Voroblevsky's translation published in Moscow in 1790;
- Blaise's *Annette et Lubin* at Petrvosky theatre, staged (as *Aneta i Lyubim*) many times till 1800.

1791:

- Salieri's *La fiera di Venezia*, in L. Vien's translation (*Venetsianskaya yarmorka*, 14 April); staged in 1795 at the Petrovsky theatre; staged in 1791 also by the Peterburgian Court troupe;
- Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, (7 December), in V. Maykov's version (*Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi*), either with Coignet's music, or with music composed by Stabinger in 1787.

1792:

- Duni's *La clochette*, staged in Kuskovo (8 September 1792) and at the Petrovsky theatre in the translation by V. Voroblevsky (possibly *Kolokol'chiki*);
- Grétry's *La rosière de Salency*, staged in Moscow between 1792 and 1793 at the Petrovsky theatre, in the translation by Mikhail Bakarevich published in Moscow in 1783.

1793:

- Piccinni's oratorio *La morte di Abele* at the Petrovsky theatre, possibly directed by Stabinger (March 1793);
- Cimarosa's *Il falegname*, staged at the Petrovsky theatre in an anonymous translation (15 May);
- Gluck's *L'arbre enchanté* staged at the Petrovsky theatre in an anonymous translation (19 June);
- Sacchini's *La colonie*, itself a French parody of *L'isola d'amore*, translated by Voroblevsky as *Koloniya ili Novoe selenie*, later translated two more times;[456]

[456] Exemplars of the libretto, printed in Moscow in 1780, are housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB) and at the State Central Theatrical museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" of Moscow.

- Gluck's *L'arbre enchanté* staged at Maddox's Vauxhall with anonymous translation and libretto.[457]

1794:

- G. Benda's *Pygmalion*, staged in Moscow in Russian anonymous translation drawn from F. W. Gotter's German adaptation (13 February);
- Monsigny's *Le cadì dupé*, staged at Maddox's Vauxhall in an anonymous translation (14 May 1794);
- Dalayrac's *Azémia, ou Les sauvages*, staged in Kuskovo in Levshin's translation published in Moscow in 1796.

1795:

- L. Caruso's *Il marchese villano*, staged by the Russian Court troupe in Saint Petersburg in Levshin's translation (15 April 1795);[458]
- Dalayrac's *Le deux petits savoyards*, staged by prince V. I. Shcherbatov's private troupe in Litvinovo (8 April 1795), in the translation by Levshin published in Moscow in 1795;
- M. Portogallo's *Lo spazzacamino principe*, staged by the Russian Court troupe in Dmitrevsky's translation (*Knyaz' trubochist*) published in the same year (4 July 1795).

1796:

- *La bella pescatrice* by P. Guglielmi at the Russian Court theatre, staged in an anonymous, unpublished translation (15 May 1796);
- Paisiello's *Nina, o sia La pazza per amore*, staged by the Russian Court troupe in Russian translation by an anonymous author, published in Saint Petersburg in the same year (18 August).

[457] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (The Moscow gazette), June 1793. Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 148.
[458] Garzonio puts forward doubts about the attribution to Levshin. GARDZONIO, *Russkie stikhotvornye perevody i peredelki ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto (kon. XVIII v.)* (Russian verse translations and remakes of Italian operatic librettos (late 18th c.)), in *Europa Orientalis*, No. 7, 1988, p. 316.

1797:

- ? Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*Sevil'sky tsiryul'nik*), libretto translated from French by M. V. Popov.[459]

1798:

- Paisiello's *Il marchese Tulipano*, staged at the Petrovsky theatre as *Krest'yanin-markiz ili Kolbasnik*, translated from Italian by V. Levshin.

1799 (Petrovsky theatre):

- J. F. Edelmann's *Ariane dans l'isle de Naxos*;
- G. De Propiac's *Les trois déesses rivales* (21 June);
- Dalayrac's *Renaud d'Ast* (*Reno d'Ast*, 15 December);
- J. P. Solié's *Le jockey* (*Zhokey*);
- C. A. Chrétien's *Les précautions inutiles* (10 December);
- J. P. Solié's *Le secret*, translated from French by S. N. Glinka as *Tayna*.

In an indefinite date there was also the staging of Framéry's *L'infante de Zamora*, itself a parody of Paisiello's *La Frascatana*, staged in the Russian version (*Infanta Zamory*) by I. Krylov, and published in Moscow in 1784. Salieri's *Les Danaïdes*, and Piccinni's *Didon* were at least prepared for the staging in Russian translation by Voroblevsky at Kuskovo.

If the case with *La finta amante* can be extended to all the mentioned operas, the presented survey demonstrate, in my opinion, that in this phase of reception of the foreign opera by the Russian operators of musical theatre, the fundamental factor of appropriation is still the language. In the Italian opera, language and the characters' names are the main changed element, and this appears sufficient to title the opera as Russian. There is still no

[459] Chayanova seems here to mistake the original comedy by Beaumarchais with the Italian libretto. O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…, Prilozhenie…*

need of Russian music, as it will be later for critics, independently of what the concept meant.[460]

According to Garzonio,

> Il processo di russificazione dei testi teatrali, ivi compresi quelli di drammaturgia musicale, si realizza pienamente nella nuova pratica di esecuzione nella traduzione russa dei melodrammi italiani. Se prima le traduzioni, anche se dovute a poeti di prima grandezza, quali Tredjakovskij, traduttore del libretto de *La forza dell'amore e dell'odio*, Sumarokov, traduttore dei libretti di Giuseppe Bonechi [*sic*], Barkov, traduttore del Lazzaroni, erano destinate a facilitare la comprensione dell'azione scenica da parte delle sovrane e della corte, adesso le nuove traduzioni acquistavano lo *status* di testi destinati all'esecuzione con tutti i problemi di resa ritmica e di coerenza poetico-compositiva che ciò comportava.[461]

[The process of Russification of plays, including those of musical drama, is fulfilled in the new practice of staging Italian operas in Russian translation. If the first trnalsations, although due to distinguished poets, such as Trediakovsky, transaltor of the libretto La forza dell'amore e dell'odio, Sumarokov, translator of Giuseppe Bonicchi's librettos, Barkov, translator of Lazzaroni, were to facilitate understanding of the stage by sovereign and Court, now translations acquired the status of texts intended for the performance, with all issues of metrical rendering and poetic composition that that meant.]

Translation and Metrics

The practice of singing in Russian verse led the matter of finding a Russian equivalent of the translated lines.[462] The metrics had to correspond to that of the music, as the text were to be submitted to already composed music, in a practice called *podtestovka*. The perfect correspondence was, obviously, very hard to obtain. In same cases this led to the modification of the music, in particular of recitatives, as is the case of *Les mariages samnites*. For the few time I had at my disposal the vocal parts preserved at the archive of Ostankino, it is clear that the different length of words and verses led to modification in the note values, and so in metrics, with notes gradually moved and so going out of phase comparing to the French original.[463] In other scores with Russian *podtestovka*, as in

[460] On the contrary, the case with Kolychev's opera *Vain Jealousy* (see below) will attest to the attachment of authors to foreign music, intended not only as style, but also as themes.
[461] S. GARZONIO, *Poesia e musica in Russia al tempo di Paisiello* (Poetry and music in Russia at Paisiello's time), *Giovanni Paisiello e la cultura europea del suo tempo, Convegno internazionale di studi, Taranto, 20-23 giugno 2002* (Giovanni Paisiello and the European culture of his time, Proceedings of the International Conference, Taranto, 20-23 June 2002), edited by F. P. Russo, Lucca, Libreria musicale italiana 2007, p. 24.
[462] The matter of the metrics in translation from Italian poetry for music to the Russian in particular has been deeply talked out by Stefano Garzonio in S. GARDZONIO, *Stikh poeticheskikh perevodov ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto…*, pp. 107-32 and other essays.
[463] [A. GRÉTRY], *Samnitskie braki* (*Les mariages samnites*), Library of the Ostankino Palace and Museum of Moscow, OM 6 k. k *Iz knig grafa Nikolaya Petrovicha Sheremeteva* (From the books of N. P. Sheremetev).

Redkaya veshch' or *Sluzhanka gospozha*, recitatives are not present, and it's possible to suppose that they were staged in form of *opéra-comique*.

In general, authors felt freer in relation to the recitatives than to closed forms, even if in this case too a variability of cases is present. The Russian score of *Redkaya veshch'* (*Una cosa rara*), which contains only closed forms, shows some differences in the translation, if compared to the printed libretto. In these cases the metrics of single lines is sometimes affected. Here is the case of the first trio (I, 3) of *Redkaya veshch'* (*Una cosa rara*), in the version of the printed libretto and in that of the score:

Una cosa rara[464]	*Redkaya veshch'* – printed libretto[465]	*Redkaya veshch'* - score[466]
PRINCIPE	INFANT	INFANT
Perché mai nel sen, perché,	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'
Cara madre ognor per te	Mat' lyubezna! Na vsyaky chas	Milaya mat'! Na vsyaky chas
Palpitarmi il cor dovrà!	Trepetat' zastavlyaesh' nas?	Trepetat' my dolzhny dlya vas?
REGINA	KOROLEVA	KOROLEVA
Perché mai nel sen, perché,	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'
Caro figlio, ognor per me	Syn lyubezny! Na vsyaky chas	Syn lyubezny! Na vsyaky chas
Palpitarti il cor dovrà?	Trepetat' zastavlyaesh' nas?	Trepetat' zastavlyaesh' nas?
CORRADO	KORRADO	KORRADO
Perché mai nel sen, perché,	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'	Akh pochto v opasnom stremyas'
Gran Regina, ognor per te	Koroleva! Na vsyaky chas	Koroleva! Na vsyaky chas
Palpitarci il cor dovrà?	Trepetat' zastavlyaesh' nas?	Trepetat' zastavlyaesh' nas?
REGINA, PRINCIPE, CORRADO	INFANT	INFANT
Deh, conserva a chi t'adora	Beregi svoy vek dragotsenny	Beregi ty zhizn' nam zhelannu
Una vita al ciel sì cara.	K shchast'yu smertnym opredelennym	K shchast'yu smertnym bogami dannu
REGINA	KORRADO	KORRADO
Meco godi, amato figlio,	Syn tebya tvoy obozhaet,	Syn tebya tvoy obozhaet,
E discaccia il tuo timor.	Ty emu i zhizn' i svet.	Dlya tebya lish' on zhivet.
PRINCIPE, CORRADO	KOROLEVA	KOROLEVA
In te vive il figlio ancora,	Kol' menya syn okhranyaesh'	Est' li syn so mnoy byvaet
In te vive il genitor.	Strakha i bedy mne net!	Dlya menya neschastiy net!

The operators of translations were aware of the issue: in the case of the Sheremetev theatres, it was raised by the main translator of that 'court', Grigory Voroblevsky, who felt inable to fulfil the given task. Referring to the opera *Les souliers mordorés* by A. Fridzeri on libretto by A. De Fer'er, the translator wrote to Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev:

> Прошлого году рассудилось Вашему сиятельству приказать мне перевести сию лирическую комедию с французского языка на русский для представления на домовом Вашего сиятельства театре, что я старался повеленное мне исполнить, сколько сил моих

[464] L. DA PONTE, *Una cosa rara (Bellezza ed onestà)*, libretto drawn form the website http://www.librettidopera.it/cosarara/cosarara.html.

[465] [I. A. DMITREVSKY], *Redkaya veshch', opera komicheskaya v dvukh deystviyakh, perelozhena c Ital'ianskago na Rossiysky yazyk pod muzyku G. Martini, Predstavlena v Sanktpeterburge Rossiyskimi pridvornymi akterami* (*Una cosa rara*, comic opera in two acts, set from Italian into Russian to the music of Mr Martini [Martín y Soler], Staged in Saint Petersburg by Russian court actors), V Sanktpeterburge, 1792 g. v Tipografii G. Krylova s tovaryshchi, pp. 5-6.

[466] V. MARTÍN Y SOLER, *Redkaya veshch' komicheskaya opera….*

было; ибо в стихотворении лет уже за тридцать я не упражнялся, а под музыку (не зная ее) и никогда не только арий, но и песен не переводил.[467]

[Last year Your Excellency ordered to me to translate this *comédie lyrique* from Franch into Russian for its staging in the theater of Your Excellency, what I've tried to fulfil with all my energy; I've not been exercising in poetry for thirty years, so (not knowing music) I did not translate and set not only the arias, but also the songs to the music.]

This kind of troubles led him to get farer from the literary translation of the text. In 1781 for instance, while translating Sedaine's *drame lyrique Le déserteur* (*Begly soldat*), according to Kuz'min

<…> Вороблевский несколко отошел от своей манеры буквального следования тексту оригинала. Он стремился сделать пьесу более понятой для русского зрителя и приблизился здесь к той группе современных ему переводчиков, которые, <…>, переводимые ими пьесы «склоняли на наши нравы». Так, например, Вороблевский находит нужным заменить русскими некоторые иностранные имена действующих лиц: Jeannette - Анюта, Montauciel - Судьбинин. В разговоре он вводит русские обороты: «oh, ça, écoutez» - «ин слушайте ж» (стр. 11). Анюта говорит солдату: «Monsieur, monsieur, allez au Château», в переводе: «Господин служивой, пойдем в замок» (стр. 28); «voilà un petit écu» - «вот тебе полтина» (стр. 66) и т. п..[468]

[Voroblevsky moved away from his manner of literary translation of the text. He tried to make the play more comprehensible for the Russian spectator and thus approached the group of contemporary translators who […] 'adapted' the playe thay translated 'to our [Russian] customs'. So, for instance, Voroblevsky found necessary to replace some foreign names of the characters' with Russian ones: Jeannette – Anyuta, Montauciel – Sud'binin. In the dialogue he introduces Russian phrases: "oh, ça, écoutez" – "in slushayte zh" (p. 11). Anyuta tells the soldier: "Monsieur, monsieur, allez au Château", in translation: "Gospodin sluzhivoy, poydem v zamok" (p. 28); "voilà un petit écu" – "vot tebe poltina" (p. 66) etc."]

The same problem was encountered by Kolychev while writing the text for his own *Tshchetnaya revnost'* (Vain Jealousy), composed for Kuskovo: even though the playwright wrote the text *ex novo*, he had to recur to *podtestovka* in order to use music drawn, as he himself declared in the libretto, "from several French *opéras-comiques*, which have been much appreciated":[469]

Читатель встретит волность принятную, при составе стихов всем сочинении, и почувствует в некоторых местах недостаток совершенства стихотворению; чего ради надлежим открыть причину, понудившую к первой, и препятствующую достигать другаго колико возможно. Намерение, с которым сочинялася Пастушья опера, под названием Тщетная ревность, или Перевозчик Кусковской, было то, дабы составить стихи по голосам из разных французских Комических Опер, нравящихся многим, и особливо той особе, которой я

[467] Quoted from A. I. KUZ'MIN, *Krepostnoy literator V. G. Voroblevsky…*, pp. 150-1.
[468] *ivi*, p. 152.
[469] V. KOLYCHEV, *K chitatelyu* (To the reader), in *Tshchetnaya revnost', ili Perevozchik Kuskovsky, Pastush'ya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, Muzyka sobrana iz raznykh frantsuzskikh komicheskikh oper. Predstavlena na bol'shom kuskovskom teatre zdelannom iz zeleni, sostavlyayushchem chast' sada, sobstvennymi Ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva pevitsami i pevchimi* (Vain jealousy, or The Ferryman from Kuskovo, Pastoral opera in acts, Music assembled from several French *opéras comiques*. Staged at the Big Theatre of Kuskovo made of greens, part of the garden, by the singers of Her Excellency the count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev), Pechatana v Moskve, 1781 goda.

желал оказать сим сочинением мою преданность. Читатель узнав сие, без сумнения согласится, что трудно тогда иметь успехи желаемые, когда долженствуешь соглашать вещи противящияся друг другу.[470]

[The reader will notice a pleasant freedom in the composition of lines of the whole work, and in some places he will feel an insufficient perfection of the verse composition; one should explain the cause of this, which made the former necessary, and caused the latter, and which prevented the attainment of the other in the bet way. The intention with wich the pastoral opera titled Vain Jealousy, or The Ferryman from Kuskovo is composed was to compose verses according to tunes belonging to several French comic operas, which were liked by many, and especially by the person to whom I wanted to show my devotion. Knowing this, the reader will undoubtedly agree on that it is hard to be successful as one wishes when one has to put in accord things that are contrary one to each other.]

On the one hand Garzonio pointed out that the practice of following Italian metrics (but this can possibly be extended to French) in Russian verse led to interesting news in Russian poetry, which were later applied to Russian poetry non intended for music. Dmitrevsky in particular, having translated many Italian librettos, in his attempt at respecting the music meter, had much experimented with foreign metrics, thus introducing new forms in Russian poetry. According to the scholar,[471] the influence of Italian librettos is visible in his attempts at maintaining the (*ekvimetrichnost'*), without abandoning the traditional meters, but deepening into more complex translations. The tendency to sophistication in the structure of arias and duets is put in relation with the first experiences of Russian comic opera staged at Court (see below), while Comic opera in popular spirit, such as those by Ablesimov or Matinsky tend to the forms of popular poetry, with free rhyme and assonance. Texts by Knyazhnin and Nikolev on the contrary are structured with much more order and make use of very complex forms.

Dmitrevsky's translations from Da Ponte (*Diyanino drevo*, *L'arbore di Diana*, and *Redkaya veshch'*, *Una cosa rara*) represent a new stage in the appropriation of Italian poetry for music.[472] In some cases they restore recitatives (sometimes called '*rechitativ s muzykoyu*'), preservng also spoken dialogues. This compromise comes as a result of trying to bring comic opera nearer to opera *seria*. Recitative can be observed also in the theatre of Knyazhnin, who tended to respect as much as possible the original source.[473]

[470] V. KOLYCHEV, *K chitatelyu….*
[471] S. GARDZONIO, *Russkie stikhotvornye perevody i peredelki ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto…, Europa Orientalis*, p. 312.
[472] According to Garzonio, both the translations were printed in Krylov's typography, which testifies thei importance in the poetic scene of the time, and their aesthetical trend. They appeared in the period that followed the establishment of poets such as Derzhavin and L'vov, who enlarged the spectrum of genres of poetry for music, introducing in it the most recent elements of the poetry of the turn of the century. *ivi*, pp. 313-4.
[473] The same tendency can be observed in Krylov in the opera *Il'ya-Bogatyr'*, staged with music by Catterino Cavos in 1807.

According to Gozenpud, the success of *Redkaya veshch'* can be explained with the fact that Dmitrevsky enriched the image of the characters with manners traits. Garzonio considers it as a remake in the spirit of the best models of Russian comic opera. The same could be said about *Trubochist knyaz'* (*Lo spazzacamino principe*, 1795), in which the satirical aspect is reinforced, and about Krylov's unfinished *Sonny poroshok ili pokhishchennaya krest'yanka* (F. Bainchi's *La polvere del sonno o La villanella rapita* on libretto by J. G. Ferrari), a free elaboration very close to Russian comic opera. In the libretto there's no tendency to new forms, and the simple and popular character of the metric forms, the colloquial expressions and vocabulary witness the tendency to the adaptation to Russian mores. These latter experiences are indicative of the new wave that affected theatrical translations.[474]

From Translation to 'Adaptation to Russian Customs'

On the other hand in fact, possibly due to the troubles caused in rendering the poetry by the distance between Western languages and Russian, the translation of foreign verse with Russian equivalent was often abandoned in favour of simpler spoken dialogues. As seen, this practice, notably used in relation to recitatives, was itself bound to the peculiar Russian reception of opera, the Russian audience being unwilling to stand long and not-lifelike Italian recitatives set to music. At the same time, it was already spread in such European genres as *opéra comique*, opera *buffa*, and *Singspiel*. As we shall see, the discussed diffusion of such genres also in Russian repertoires, combined with adaptations to Russian costumes naturally led to the overcoming of the problem toward the creation of a local correspondent, *opera komicheskaya*, which included spoken dialogues interspersed with small music numbers in plays with local subjects.

In the field of translation, this practice concedeed much more freedom in rendering foreign works, which soon gave space to the diffusion of increasingly less faithful versions. In Russia this phenomenon, called *sklonenie na russkie nravy* (adaptatios to Russian customes), spread by the second half of the 18th century and till the half of the next one, and was characterized by changes in names and identity of the characters, places, subjects, *realia* and references to their social environment, towards the Russification of

[474] S. GARDZONIO, *Russkie stikhotvornye perevody i peredelki ital'yanskikh opernykh libretto…*, in *Europa Orientalis*, p. 315.

foreign subjects. This peculiar kind of free translation was widespread mainly in the genre of comedy.[475]

Karlinsky gives credit to Ivan Elagin for setting the first example for this procedure by producing in 1764 a russified adaptation of *Jean de France*, a topical satire on fashionable Gallomania by the Danish playwright Ludvig Holberg."[476] According to the scholar,

> Elagin was especially concerned with the problem of repertoire for the expanding Russian theater of the 1760s. […] To facilitate the advent of an authentic and contemporary Russian drama, Elagin and the young writers of his circle [which included Fonvizin, Lukin, and Elchaninov] conceived the idea of selecting suitable foreign comedies and the transposing their action to Russia, substituting Russian names, customs, and situations for those depicted in the foreign original, but keeping the plot and the action intact.[477]

Other examples of remakes with adaptatios to Russian customs are Fonvizin's *Korion*, a russification of *Sidnei* by J. B. L. de Gresset, Bogdan Elchaninov's adaptation of Voltaire's *L'écossaise* (itself an adaptation of Goldoni's ?), Vladimir Lukin's *The Wastrel Reformed by Love*, Catherine II's *Timon of Athens*. According to Deryugin, elements of *sklonenie* can be identified yet in Antiokh Kantemir's translations from Anacreon, where the poet had replaced ancient *realia* with Russian ones.[478]

This theory of drama received its theoretical development by the author and translator Vladimir I. Lukin (1737-1794),[479] who first of all made a clear distinction between exact translation (*tochny perevod*), which appears to be "necessary for reading

[475] According to Deryugin, evidence of *sklonenie* can be found in Kantemir's texts. In his translations from Anacreonte he replaced ancient realia with Russian ones. A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»* (Substance of the method of translation "Adaptations to our (Russian) customs"), in *Izvestiya Akademii nauk, Seriya literatury i yazyka* (News of the Academy of Sciences, Series language and literature), tom 54, No. 5, sentyabr'-oktyabr' 1995, p. 61.
[476] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press 1985, p. 93.
[477] *ivi*, pp. 92-3.
[478] A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 61.
[479] Vladimir Ignatevich Lukin (1737 – 1794), of obscure though respectable origins, Lukin became a clerk in the Senate in 1752, then secretary to I. P. Elagin, Cabinet Minister in the Imperial court and censor of plays for the Empress Catherine later. He translated and freely adapted French plays to Russian manners and customs, and published several, with prefaces expounding his theories of translation, as *Works and Translations* (*Sochineniya i perevody*, 1765). His "original" (i.e. not translated) five-act comedy *The Spendthrift Corrected by Love* (*Mot, lyuvobiyu ispravlenny*, 1765) was an early example in the Russian theatre of the fashionable *comédie larmoyante*, and was produced successfully at Court in 1765. It is "filled with pathetic and noble thoughts," depicts "Russian reality" by the introduction of merchants, usurers, and card-players, thus reflecting the passion for gambling in fashionable society (a passion to which Lukinn was himself addicted). After the production of Fonvizin's *The Brigadier* (1769) Lukin's work for the stage became outdated. He was attacked in the satirical journals (1769-70) for deriding "famous Russian authors" (Sumarokov in particular), and withdrew from the literary scene. His work was forgotten until 1868, when Pypin published a monograph which revived interest in his work and influence in the 18th-century theatre. *Handbook of Russian Literature…*, p. 267.

and showing the author in his real aspect",[480] and the adaptation (or remake) or *peredelka* (from the verb *peredelat'*, to re-make) with *sklonenie*, which was preferable "for the staging on theatre."[481]

This conception was directed towards a more profound comprehension and fruition of the work by the audience, translators being persuaded of the educative role of theatre, according to enlightened ideas, but also aware of the different cultural ground in which their texts were supposed to be received.

Lukin's translations raised different reactions, from satisfaction of the audience to critics for not being original creations,[482] or for a lack of coherence, originated by the coexistence of Russian and foreign conceptions.[483] Anyway, as Deryugin points out, the success of this kind of adaptations increased the writing of original Russian comedies.[484]

The aim of this practice was to make a foreign play more natural to the language of translation (Russian), in contrast with the impression of alienation that raised towards a translations which tried to respect the original, also at the cost of the alteration of the language through contaminations.[485] According to Gina Maiellaro, translators and authors of remakes considered themselves as 'authors' of the artistic creation, often supplanting the original creators. This made things more complicated with regards to the circulation of works, which identity could not be easily distinguished: translations, imitations, remakes or newly composed plays.[486] Most part of the literature was in fact published in Russia without any reference to the original source, thus persuading the readers that it was always an original work.

The system of *peredelka* consisted first of all in changing the names of the characters into Russian ones, and in taking the place of action in Russia. For instance, the

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[480] "надобен для чтения и для показания автора в истинном его виде" V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody* (Works and tranlsations), Spb, 1868, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 61.

[481] "для представления на театре", insofar as "тут надлежит не столько красоту и силу чужестранного писателя показывать, сколько исправлять пороки.", V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody* (Works and tranlsations), Spb, 1868, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 61. According to Maiellaro, "[…] nelle prefazioni alle sue commedie Lukin codifica i principi dello *sklonenie*, divenendo in un certo senso il teorico dell'adattamento nel circolo di traduttori/rifacitori che facevano capo al ministro Elagin." ([…] in the prefaces to his comedies Lukin codifies the principles of the *sklonenie*, becoming the theoric of the adaptation in the circle of translators/remakers who referred to Elagin.) G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin* (The *Sklonenie na russkie nravy* in V. Lukin's comedies), in *Europa Orientalis*, XV, No. 2, 1996, p. 27

[482] V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody* (Works and tranlsations), Spb, 1868, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 61.

[483] *ivi*, p. 62.

[484] A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 61.

[485] G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, p. 25.

[486] *ivi*, p. 29.

Russian translation of Diderot's *Le fils naturel* (*Pobochny syn*), the author declares this choice in a foreword: "I have changed the names of Rosalie's servant and Dorval's servant; the latter was called Charles, the former Justine: name which are much unpleasant in our country."[487] Moreover, this i show Lukin explains his choice in reference to his remake of *Constancy rewarded* (*Nagrazhdennoe postoyanstvo*):

> […] склонил оное сочинение на свои нравы и переменил имена французския, которыя на нашем языке в переведенных комедиях, когда представляемы бывают, странно отзываются, а иногда слушателей и от внимания удаляют. […] Мне всегда несвойственно казалось слышать сужестранныя речения в таких сочинениях, которыя долженствуют изображением наших нравов исправлять не столько общие всего света, но более участные нашего народа пороши; и неоднократно слушал я от некоторых зрителей, что не только их рассудку, но и слушу противно бывает, ежели лиц, хотя по нескольку на наши нравы походящия, называются в представлении *Клитандром*, *Дорантом*, *Цитилидою* и *Бладиною*, и говорят речи, не наши поведении знаменующия.[488]

[[I] adapted this work to my customs and changed French names, which in our language in translated comedies are strangely pronounced at their performance, and sometimes distract the listener form attention. […] It has always seemed strange to me to hear alien lines in those works that through the representation of our customs must correct not only the vices of the whole world, but also the most frequent in our people; and more than once I've heard from some listeners that not only their reasoning, but also their sound is disagreeable if the characters, though near to our customs, are called Klitandr, Dorant, Tsitilida and Bladina, and speak words that do not reflect our attitudes.]

Other changes were realized in the number of characters and, as a consequence, in the organization of the scenes. The latter were often provided with moral comments that should make the comprehension easier. But, as Gina Maiellaro points out, "to transpose doesn't mean only changing names, modifying scenes and adding some characters who must give a touch of local colour: what is really important is to adapt the action to the Russian mores."[489] In this sense one should understand the linguistic experimentalism, with particular reference to dialects or local meanings, and the references to contemporary *realia*, such as the figure of *shchegol'* ('dandy'), or, moreover, references to such contemporary writers as Rzhevsky or Sumarokov. According to the playwright,

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[487] "Я переменил имена Розалииной служанки и служителя Дорвалева; последней назывался Карлом, а та Юстиною: названия весьма не приятие в выгороде нашем." - *Izvestie ot Perevodchika* (Note from the translator), in - *Pobochny syn ili Iskushenii dobrodeteli, Komediya v pyati deystviyakh i prostoyu rech'yu pisannaya*, *Sochinenie G. Diderota* (*Le fils naturel ou Les épreuves de la vertu*, Comedy in five acts written in prose, Work by Mr Diderot), in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom yazyke imeyushchikhsya…*, Chast' 60, 1801.

[488] V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody V. I. Lukina i B. E. El'chaninova* (Works and translations by V. I. Lukin and B. E. El'chaninov), edited by A. N. Pypin, Sanktpeterburg, 1868, pp. 111-2, quoted from G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, p. 29.

[489] "trasporre non significa solo cambiare i nomi, modificare le scene e aggiungere qualche personaggio che conferisca un tocco di colore locale: ciò che davvero conta è adattare ai costumi russi l'azione scenica." G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, p. 38.

> Подражать и переделывать – великая разница. Подражать значит брать или характер, или некоторую часть содержания, или нечто весьма малое о отделенное и так несколько заимствовать; переделывать значит что включить или исключить а прочее, то есть главное, оставить и склонять на свои нравы.[490]

[Between imitating and remaking there is a big difference. Imitating means to take a character of a part of the plot, or something very little and determined and thus get possession of something; remaking means including or excluding, and leaving the rest in, that is the main part, and adapting it to one's customs.]

The characters and their lines should be coherent with their geographic and social origin, and adapted to national specifics, as in the case with the French servant, who must be replaced by the Russian serf (*krepostnoy*).[491] Lukin was also attentive to the originality of jokes (in particular French in his case), which wouldn't be so effective in a literal translation, and needed a specific background to work. For instance, the playwright discussed the translation of the French word '*pedant*', easily recognized by any French spectators, but not by the Russian audience. For this reason it could not be rendered with the loan translation '*pedant*', because in Russian it lose all the ironic connotation: while in France "almost all citizens know pedants,"[492] in Russia many "do not know the very meaning of the word 'pedant',"[493] and so "they do not understand what in it is worth laughing."[494]

Lukin discussed also such aspects as the difference between far cultures, which were put into contact through translations; the lacking correspondence between the cultural background of two different contexts; the different stylistic norms that ruled the two languages involved in the process of translation.[495]

In the large number of translations the devices of *sklonenie* remained almost unalterated all throughout 18th century. A new contribution to this theory was apported by the translator and scholar Aleksandr F. Labzin (1766-1825), who expounded his view in the preface to the translation of Mercier's drama *Le déserteur* (1769), *Beglets* (1788), in which he admitted to having deviated from the original in order to make his text more

[490] V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody V. I. Lukina i B. E. El'chaninova…*, quoted from G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, p. 30.
[491] "Старик французский не будет хорош в русском переводе... ежели переводчик слово в слово переводить станет».o ancora: «тамошние слуги и служанки будут часто нашими петиметрами и кокетками, а иногда те и другие наиученейшими из господ и госпож наших"; "Они нередко в французских комедиях философствуют, к чему наши неудобны». V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody*, Spb, 1868, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 62.
[492] "знают почти все граждане о педантах" V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody*, Spb, 1868, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 62.
[493] "не знают истиному слову „педант" понятия" *ibidem*.
[494] "и не ведают, что в нем смеху достойно" *ibidem*.
[495] *ivi*, p. 62.

Russian-like.[496] Labzin also discussed the need to Russify the names and the social status of the characters of the play. For instance, he translated the French word 'laboureur' not with the Russian *krest'yanin* or *zemledelets* (peasant), but rather with *odnodvorets* (contadino proprietario). The lexical choice in fact conveyed a particular conceit: an *odnodvorets* could argue with a landowner, while a simple *krest'yanin*, being a serf, could not discuss with his own master due to its subjected status. For similar reasons Labzinym raised the issue of translating etiquette's polite phrases, but first of all he insisted on the replacement of natural French discourse ("*estestvennaya frantsuzskaya rech"*) with an as much natural Russian discourse, thus often modifying words' in order to go along with each language's specific features.

If the theory of *sklonenie* leads to interesting consequences mainly in regard to the development of a modern theory of translation, and thus seems to be outside of the context of study of the present work, the issues on which it puts emphasis are common to the field of opera. The *peredelka* appears to be a mean of appropriation of foreign repertoire, and its transformation in a national one. The method seems to be the same, with the particularity that when dealing with the issue of the changes occurring transposing a libretto from a cultural context to an other we have to keep in mind the particular 'openness' of the operatic genre compared to other types of literature.[497]

I did not find any theoretical work that proposed to use of the theory of *sklonenie* in the specific field of opera. Neverthless, a similar process of adaptation was studied in the translation of Italian operas into other Western languages, witnessing once more the participation of Russian theatrical scene to the main phenomena of European theatrical life. For instance, according to Sergio Durante, in Germany Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*

[496] L. SICHKAREV, *Predislovie*, *Mers'e*, *Sud'ya*. *Drama* (Foreword, Mercier, The judge), M. 1788, quoted from A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 63.

[497] As Cortès points out in his essay about the adaptation of Italian librettos for operas composed by Spanish composers in the Iberian peninsula in the first half of the 19th century, "nella realtà delle pratiche musicali fra Sette e Ottocento i tagli, gli adattamenti o le numerose riscritture di cui era oggetto una stessa opera - e uno stesso libretto - avrebbero potuto essere il frutto di questioni contingenti: l'adeguarsi a una compagnia che rappresentava l'opera, o le diverse capacità delle orchestre e dei teatri, o semplicemente la volontà del compositore di realizzare un'opera diversa dal modello primigenio. Erano all'ordine del giorno le modifiche al libretto: l'opera era un genere dinamico, con grande capacità di metamorfosi e accomodamento all'ambiente sociale." (in music practices of 18th and 19th centuries cuts, adaptations and numerous re-writings of the same opera – and the same libretto – coul be the product of contingent problems: the adaptation to the troupe that would stage the opera, the different skills of orchestras of theatres, or simply the composer's will to realize an opera different from the original model. Changes to the libretto were a daily practice: opera was a dynamic genre, with great capacity to metamorphose and to adapt to the social context.). F. CORTÈS, *L'adattamento dei libretti italiani alle opere spagnole della prima metà dell'Ottocento: due drammaturgie sopra un solo argomento* (The adaptation of Italian librettos of the first half of the 19th century: two dramaturgies on a single subject), in *Rivista italiana di musicologia* (Italian journal of musicology), vol. XVIII/XLV - 2008/2010, p. 286.

circulated in versions that according to the prevailing practice at the time, were not and did not intend to be accurate translation of the original, but actual re-elaborations. Notably, the opera circulated in the German version by Friedrich Rochlitz, premiered in Dresden in 1796 by Joseph Seconda (Sekonda)'s troupe as *Titus*. This translation was a remake, which included spoken dialogues to replace recitatives, according to the tradition of such troupes, which had at their disposal not *virtuosi*, but actors-singers, and were active in contexts different from those of Italian opera. According to Durante, Rochlitz's version deviated from Metastasio's text in some passages involving the plot, and therefore required some modifications to texts of set pieces comparing to the original score. In this case, Rochlitz's changes were in line with the unprecedent awakening of national feeling, including patriotism, loyalty to local institutions and sense of belonging to a broader Germanic Nation. The differences concern, for instance, the introduction of a sort of "State liturgy" (I, 4), with the repetition of the people's cries together with trumpeets. In this scene such words as *Nation*, *Volk*, *Vater des Volks* (absent or different in Metastasio) are extensively used, in a generic context that allowed to apply it to any sovereign.[498] According to Valentina Confuorto, a similar process affects Rochlitz's freee translation of Mozart's *Don Juan*.[499] As to the Spanish case, the difference between the scores of opera and zarzuela of the same period reveals that alterations in the number of scenes and other changes corresponded to a different way of understanding the precepts by Spanish composers and audience, as in the case with Pau Esteve's *La buena muchacha* (1765, from Piccinni). According to Cortès, the Spanish case appears to be simiar to the French one, as in the case with the translations of Goldoni's *Bonne fille* (1771) by Domenico Baccelli.[500]

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[498] See S. DURANTE, *Aspetti della fortuna del Tito mozartiano in Germania* (Aspects of Mozart's *Tito*'s Fortune in Germany), in *Studies on Mozart and the 18th Century*, Lucca 2007, pp. 69-87; S. DURANTE, *Quando Tito divenne Titus, Le prime traduzioni tedesche della Clemenza mozartiana ed il ruolo di Friedrich Rochlitz* (When Tito became Titus, First German translations of Mozart's *Clemenza* and the role of Friedrich Rochlitz), in *Max Lütolf zum 60. Geburstag, Festschrift*, edited by B. HANGARTNER e U. FISCHER, Basel 1994, pp. 247-58; S. DURANTE, *La «Clemenza» di Jahn, ovvero Le nozze perturbate di Musica e Filologia* (Jahn's *Clemenza*, or The disturbed wedding between music and philology), *L'edizione critica tra testo musicale e testo letterario, Atti del convegno internazionale* (The critical edition between music and literary text, Proceedings of the international conference) (Cremona, 4-7 ottobre 1992), edited by R. Borghi and P. Zappalà, Lucca, Libreria Musicale Italiana 1995, pp. 341-9; S. DURANTE, *"La clemenza di Tito" and Other Two-Act Reductions of the Late 18th Century*, in *Mozart-Jahrbuch 1991, Bericht Über den Internationalen Mozart-Kongress 1991*, pp. 733-41 and others.

[499] V. CONFUORTO, *Il Don Juan di Friedrich Rochlitz (Lipsia 1801) e la germanizzazione dell'opera di Da Ponte-Mozart* (Friedrich Rochlitz's *Don Juan* (Leipzig 1801) and the Germanization of Da Ponte-Mozart's opera), Tesi di Laurea Specialistica in Filologia musicale, Corso di Laurea specialistica in Musicologia e beni musicali, Università degli Studi di Padova, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Anno Accademico 2007-08.

[500] F. CORTÈS, *L'adattamento dei libretti italiani alle opere spagnole della prima metà dell'Ottocento…*. See also F. CORTÈS, *Le versione variate dei libretti operistici: 'La buona figliola' e 'Gli uccellatori'* (Altered versions of operatic librettos: *La buona figliola* and *Gli uccellatori*), in *Problemi di critica goldoniana* (Issues of Goldonian critics), edited by M. Pastore and G. Pizzamiglio, XIV, tomo primo, Ravenna, Longo Editore 2009, pp. 135-54. The case with Italian librettos adapted to French parodies is studied by Andrea

From Import to Local Production

The practice of staging foreign works in translation possibly supported the idea of a local production of Russian works (as seen in the repertoire of the Russian theatres of Moscow and Saint Petersburg), the possibility of singing in Russian having been successfully tested.[501] Translations and adaptations in fact soon led to the need of creating a National original repertoire, including the production of numbers of works in the genre of comic opera.

At the same time, in the 1790s judgements about literary translations had begun to appear regularly on periodical press. Growing favour can be observed towards the more faithful translations, while adaptations were subjected to increasing critics.[502] Lukin was accused of plagiarizing foreign works, defending his work as follows:

> Прочия в комедии моей старался я всевозможно сделать русскими, в чем, как меня приятели мои уверяют, несколько мне и удалося. Кажется, что не подражал *де-Туши*, и не можно меня почесть вором, обкравшим красоту его. Сходны у нас с ним последния явления, (где… разговаривают); но и тут знающий театр найдет у меня противоположение.[503]

[In my comedy I've tried to make the rest as much Russian as possible, something in which, as my friends assure, I've at least partially succeeded. It seems that I've not imitated Des Touches, and it is not

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Fabiano in A. FABIANO, *I 'buffoni' alla conquista di Parigi, Storia dell'opera italiana in Francia tra "Ancien Régime" e Restaurazione (1752-1815)* (The '*bouffons*' conquering Paris, History of Italian opera in France between 'Ancien Régime' and Restauration (1752-1815)), Torino, De Sono-Paravia 1998.

[501] According to Karlinsky, "Because of the continuing orientation toward Parisian tastes and the widespread practice of "adaptation to our customs", it was inevitable that Russian comic opera would materialize". S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 119. In the other way round, a similar process of 'osmosis' interested Russian composers who set to music librettos by foreign authors, as in the case of Dmitry Bortnyansky, who composed the music for several French *opéras-comiques*. On 11 October 1786 in Gatchina there was the première of *Le faucon*, French *opéra-comique* in three acts by the Russian composer Bortnyansky (1751-1825) on libretto by François-Hermann Lafermière, produced at Gatchina in 1786. The score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre, whereas a copy is housed at the British Museum: *Le faucon. Opéra Comique en trois actes, représentée [sic] pour la première fois devant Leurs Altesses Impériales, Monseigneur le Grand Duke et Madame la Grande Duchesse de Russie, dans leur château de Gatchina, le 11 d'octobre 1786. Poésie de Mr. de la Fermière. Musique de D. Bortniansky*. In 1786 Bortnyansky gave also his *Don Carlos*, which libretto by Lafermière was issued in Saint Petersburg in 1787. The opera was staged by noblemen-amateurs in Paul I's palace in Saint Petersburg. *La fête du seigneur*, little *comédie lyrique* staged at Paul I' castle of Pavlovsk. On a libretto possibly written by Lafermière, which score (a copy) is housed at the Library of the St. Petersburg Philarmonia. 11 October 1787 a Pavlovsk the French *opéra-comique* in three acts *Les fils rival, ou La moderne Stratonice*, libretto by F. H. Lafermière, music by Bortnyansky, The score is housed in two exemplars, ona at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre, whereas a copy is housed at the British Museum. It was sung by noblemen-amateurs. According to Findeyzen, "Both operas [*Le Faucon* and *Le fils rival*] attracted very little attentions, and remained unnoticed elsewhere. They were never performed in public nor in a Russian translation. The scores are preserved in the Public Library at Leningrad." N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas*, Eng. Transl. By M. D. Calvocoressi, in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Jul. 1933), p. 340. In the same way, the former singer and composer Maksim Berezovsky produced *Demofoonte* (Livorno, 1773); Bortnyansky: *Alcide* (Venice, 1778), *Quinto Fabio* (Modena, 1773); Skokov, *Il Rinaldo* (Naples, 1788). *ivi*, p. 334.

[502] A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 64.

[503] V. I. LUKIN, *Sochineniya i perevody V. I. Lukina i B. E. El'chaninova…*, quoted from G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, p. 30

possible to call me a thief, having stealed his beauty. Our last scenes (where … talk) are similar; but there too, a theatre connoisseur will find in my work teh contrary.]

According to Maiellaro,

> Probabilmente Lukin paga lo scotto della debolezza di una letteratura russa ancora agli albori. Goldoni o Voltaire vedevano nell'adattamento uno specifico artifizio teatrale, non certo una tappa necessaria all'arricchimento della letteratura francese o italiana. Lukin invece teorizza il rifacimento teatrale all'interno di una teoria della traduzione e di un rapporto tra le letterature più complesso e subalterno. Il suo considerare il rifacimento quale essenziale contributo alla nascita di un teatro originale russo, la franchezza con cui riconosce la totale dipendenza di questo dalla drammaturgia europea, gli hanno valso l'immeritata, ma tenace nomea di "servile imitatore", quando non "furbo ladrone", di testi altrui, facendo passare in secondo piano la diffusione europea dell'adattamento quale "artifizio teatrale".[504]

[Lukin possibly pays the price of the weakness of Russian literature in its infancy. Goldoni or Voltaire saw in adaptation a specific theatrical artifice, certainly not a necessaru step in the enrichmente of French or Italian literature. Lykin instead theorizes theatrical remake within a theory of translation and a more complex and subordinate relationship between literatures. His conceit of adaptation as an essential contribution to the birth of a Russian original theatre, the frankness with which he recognizes the total dependence of the latter from European dramaturgy, won him the undeserved reputation as a tough but "slavish imitator," when not "smart thief," of others' texts, by overshadowing the European dissemination of adaptations as a "theatrical artifice."]

The writer Nikolay Karamzin raised against the russification of names in translated plays:

> Драма должна быть верным представлением общежития; надобно, чтобы в ней люди не только поступали, но и назывались так же, как они в общежитии называются: но называются ли у нас мужчины Зланетами, Буремыслами, Милоумами, а женщины Изведами, Премилами и проч.? Одно такое имя напомнит зрителю, что он в театре и все видимое им есть небылица, а надобно, чтобы он забывался.[505]

[Drama should be a faithful representation of the social living; it is necessary that the people in it not only acted but also were called as they are in the social living: but to the men have such names as Zlanet, Buremysl, Miloum, and do women have such names as Izveda, Premila etc.? The name itself reminds the spectator that he is in theatre and that all he's watching is fiction, while it is necessary that he forgot himself.]

The practice of translations with *sklonenie* continued to exist, as witnessed by the first successes of Catterino Cavos, both remakes, *Lesta, dneprovskaya Rusalka* (Lesta, the nimphe of the Dnepr, 1803), remake of Ferdinand Kauer's *Das Donauweibchen*, and *Knyaz'-nevidimka* (The invisible prince, 1805), remake of the French *Le prince invisible* by Foignet, both containg substitution of foreign realia with Russian ones.[506] During the

[504] G. MAIELLARO, *Lo* sklonenie na russkie nravy *nelle commedie di V. Lukin…*, pp. 30-1.
[505] N. I. KARAMZIN, *Moskovsky zhurnal* (The Moscow journal), 1791, ch. I, pp. 234-5, quoted from I. A. KRYAZHIMSKAYA, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy kritiki kontsa XVIII-nachala XIX veka* (From the history of Russian theatrical critics of the late 18th-early 19th century), in *XVIII vek* (18th century), Sbornik IV, M. - L., Izdatel'tsvo Akademii Nauk SSSR 1959, p. 214.
[506] See my *Il principe invisibile di Hapdé-Lifanov: la traduzione come appropriazione* (Hapdé-Lifanov's *The invisible prince*: translation as appropriation), *Proceedings of the conference* "Arte tra vero e falso", Dipartimento di Storia, Padova, 7-8 giugno 2010, forthcoming.

century though it progressively faded out, due to the growing success of the national Russian theatre.[507] Comedies by such authors as Fonvizin and Kapnist gave also momentum to a production in the direction of a national literature, which was supposed to be original (and not to take origin from foreign sources), and reflect the everyday life of the Russian people pointing out its vices through mockery and satire.[508] As Ferrazzi points out in fact, "Russian comedy was since its very beginning the critical representation of widely spread familiar relationships and social attitudes. Once it got in possession of many of the technics of the imported comic theatre, it forgot its playful and liberating character to transform them into a mean of provocation and denounce."[509] This was actually the aspect that was outlined the most by Soviet scholarship on comic opera, which, as Karlinsky points out, saddled the form with anachronistic ideological content (the struggle against serfdom) and ignored its Western sources and parallels, producing as much obfuscation as understanding.[510]

In the 19th century the vogue of translation was progressively replaced by the increasingly requested stream of works originated by the local autonomous creation. By

[507] A. A. DERYUGIN, *Soderzhanie perevodcheskogo priema «Sklonenie na nashi (russkie) nravy»…*, p. 64. By the end of the century the judgement on Russian adaptations had definitely acquired a negative connotations: according to Belaev, "[…] the *opéra-comique* acquired the character of an imperfect forgery when it wanted to mould round our taste and to the needs of our theatrical ethics. Rough translations or absurd adaptations adulterated the original's meaning and beauty to such a point that this became almost unrecognizable, when transported in our language. All the substance of the often untranslatable gallicisms and the double sense jokes - that gave the French *opéra-comique*'s play on words a spicy shade, - all this came to the ears of our ancestors in the form of a bad arrangement, which often perverted the nature of the libretto. One should admit that, for their nature itself, the plot of *opéra-comique* as well as the original nature of its ambiguity were unperceptable to the Russian 18th-century spectators." YU. BELAEV, *Theatre and art* (Spb 1898, p. 361), quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 114.

[508] According to Martinelli, "La commedia, soprattutto satirica, ha un ruolo molto importante nello sviluppo del teatro russo non solo per i contenuti sociali e ideali che uscivano dall'astrazione del classicismo per riferirsi alla realtà russa, ma anche per l'uso della lingua parlata che restituiva connotati reali ai personaggi, i quali, a poco a poco, perdevano la fissità della maschera per acquistare volti umani." (Comedy - especially the satyric comedy – has a very important role in the development of the Russian theatre, not only for the social and ideal contents that abandoned the Classicistic abstraction in order to refer to the Russian reality, but also for the use of the spoken language, which gave realistic features to the characters: these progressively lost the fixity typical of the mask and acquired a human aspect.) M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 69.

[509] "[…] la commedia russa si fece, fin dal suo inizio, rappresentazione critica dei rapporti familiari e comportamenti sociali ampiamente diffusi. Fatte proprie molte delle tecniche propagate dal teatro comico d'importazione, tese a dimenticarne l'originario carattere giocoso e liberatorio per farne soprattutto un mezzo di provocazione e di denuncia." M. FERRAZZI, *Commedie e comici dell'arte italiani…*, p. 191. For integration about the folkloric Russian theatre see A. M. RIPELLINO, *Del teatro popolare russo* (On Russian folk theatre), in *Ricerche slavistiche* (Slavistic researches), II, 1953.

[510] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 131. According to the scholar, modern understanding of the historical importance of this genre began with Nikolai Findeizen's pioneering study published in 1928: N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800, I ed. Ocherki po istorii muzyki v Rossii s drevneyshchikh vremen do kontsa XVIII veka*, tt. I-II, M—L., 1928-29), edited and annotated by M. Velimirovich and C. R. Jensen, 2 volls., Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 2008.

now the two practice still coexist, as seen in the repertoire of the main Russian theatres. The Russian idea was particularly strong among the playwrights of the Karamzinian school: Il'in, Fedorov, Nikolev. The patriotic and aesthetic requirements, which writers for the stage had to meet, were stated by the actor and playwright Pyotr Alekseevich Plavil'shchikov[511]. Being owner of the theatrical publishing house of Saint Petersburg together with his brother Vasily, Pyotr Alekseevich started his activity as a critic in 1782 with the journal *Utra* (Mornings), where, as the official announce published on *Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti* claimed, "works of any genre and some translations [were] published."[512] The issue started in may 1782 and lasted till September of the same year, on a weekly basis.[513] The works were published anonymously, but some of the authors have been recognized, such as A. P. Sumarokov (published posthumously), V. I. Maykov, I. I. Dmitriev, Ya. B. Knyazhnin.

From his journal, Plavil'shchikov on the one hand acknowledged the need of translation as a medium for audiences to familiarize with foreign literature. In the article

[511] Son of a merchant family, Pyotr Alekseevich Plavil'shchikov was born in Moscow on 24 March 1760. He studied philosophy at the Moscow University, but soon it was clear that his real interest was devoted to theatre and literature. He became famous as an actor, devoting his activity also to journalism and literature. His theatrical activity began under the direction of M. M. Kheraskov, who was the soul of the students' performances at the Moscow University. In 1779 he left Moscow for St. Petersburg, where it is thought he was invited by Dmitrevsky himself to the Russian troupe after his debut as Khorev in the eponymous tragedy by Sumarokov, and as Sekst in Knyazhnin's *The Clemency of Titus*. His real debut, anyway, is the main role he played in Fonvizin *The Minor* at Knipper's Free Theatre on 24 September 1782. In 1783 he began also his activity as a playwright, issuing the tragedy *Druzhestvo* (The friendship), followed after two years by the tragedy *Takhmas Kulikhan* and the comedy *Ispravlenie, ili Dobrye rodstvenniki* (The meding, ot The good relatives). In 1782 he also started the issuing of the journal *Utra* (The mornings), which lasted a few years, and was later followed by the collaboration with Krylov, Klushin, and Dmitrevsky, on the journal *Zritel'* (The Spectator), since 1791. After the closing of the journal, the actor dismissed from the troupe (28 June 1793) and soon moved back to Moscow. The actor became sick after the taking of Moscow in 1812, and died on 18 October of the same year, during the escape from the city. Among his works figure a lot of plays of different genres figure, such as the comedies *Pariki* (1784), *Mel'nik i sbitenshchik soperniki* (1789), *Sgovor Kuteynika* (1789), *Bobyl* (1790), *Brat'ya Svoeladovy, ili Naudacha luchshe udachi* (1803), and *Sidelets* (1803). Among tragedies, *Vseslav*; the drama *Graf Val'tron, ili Voinskaya podchinennost'* (1796), and *Ermak, pokoritel' Sibiri* (1803, staged in 1804). Plavil'shchikov was active also as a teacher, of literature at the Gorny Institute and at the Infantry Corps. In Moscow, he directed the class of acting at the Foundling Home. He also is told to have led sorts of theatre laboratories in many provate theatres, such as that of count N. P. Sheremetev. A. F. NEKRYLOVA, *Pishushchy akter, ili Igrayushchy dramaturg?* (An actor who writes, or a playwright who plays?), in *Petr Alekseevich Plavil'sichikov, Sobranie dramaticheskikh sochineniy* (Pyotr Alekseevich Plavil'shchikov, Collection of dramatic works), edited by A. F. Nekrylova, Sankt-Peterburg, «GIPERION» 2002, pp. III-XXXIII.

[512] "<…> печатаются всякого рода сочинения и некоторые переводы." *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*, 3 May 1782, quoted from A. F. NEKRYLOVA, *Pishushchy akter, ili Igrayushchy dramaturg?...*, p. VI.

[513] *Utra, ezenedel'noe izdanie, ili Sobranoe raznogo roda noveyshikh socineniy i nekotorykh peredovov v stikhakh i proze s priobshcheniem izvestiya o vsekh vykhodyashchikh vnov' v Sankt-Peterburge Rossiyskikh knigakh*. (Mornings, Hebdomadal issue, or Collection of various genre of the most recent works and some translations in verse and prose with the insertion of news about all the Russian books recently issued in Saint Petersburg) [Sankt-Peterburg], Pechatano v Tipografii Morskago Shlyakhetnago Kadetskago Korpusa, 1782 goda [No 3-5, May, I-4 June, I, 3-4, July, I-5 August, I-3 September].

Nechto o perevodakh (Something about translations),[514] he pointed out the need of knowing works by such authors as Homer, Tasso, Milton, Sophocles, Euripides, Lésage, Prévost, Fielding, Descartes, Locke, Pascal.

On the other hand, the actor defended the development of an original, National culture, asking for a not excessive admiration for foreign works. This second point was defended by the actor in his second journalistic adventure, which he shared with he writers Klushin and Dmitrevsky on Krylov's journal *Zritel'* (The spectator). Notably on this journal, the actor expressed his aesthetic requirements in such articles as *Nechto o vrozhdennykh svoystvakh dush rossiyskikh* (Something about the intrinsic properties of the Russian souls), *Teatr* (Theatre), and *Komediya* (Comedy), appeared in the years 1791-92. In these articles, patriotism seemed to him the primary object of dramatic literature. In his programmatic article *Teatr* (Theatre) Plavil'shchikov took sides against the use of foreign plays as sources, arguing that copies are always inferior to originals, and that translations do not lead to the formation of a perfect theatre.[515] The reference is mainly to the practice of translation with *sklonenie*:

> Если же должно непременно, чтобы в России на театре были подражания, то в таком случае, я бы думал, удобнее всего подражать расположению и красотам изобретения, нежели при буквальном переводе весьма некстати приклонять свойства чужие к нашим нравам и не успевать ни в том, ни в другом.[516]

[If, however, there necessarily must be imitations, in that case I would think it's best to imitate the disposition and beauty of invention, rather than inappropriately incline alien mores to ours in a literal translation, thus failing in all.]

Plavil'shchikov considered that the development of taste and arts would only be delayed by a continuous reliance on foreign models. He did not deny that French dramatic

[514] [P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV], *Nechto o perevodakh* (Something about translations), in *Utra*..., List 4, July 1782, pp. 57-60.
[515] "<…> всякое подражание далеко отстоит от своего подлинника." ([…] any imitation is inferior to its original) A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Teatr* (Theatre), in *Petr Alekseevich Plavil'sichikov, Sobranie dramaticheskikh sochineniy*..., p. 543. The actor confirmed his position later on: "Подражание всегда бывает слабее своего подлинника: где нет творческого духа, там нет и произведения, но мы видим во всем тому противное." (Imitation is always feebler than its original: where there is no creative inspiration, there is nor the work, but we see in that the contrary.) *Zritel'* (The spectator), ch. I, February, p. 10, quoted from I. A. KRYAZHIMSKAYA, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy kritiki kontsa XVIII-nachala XIX veka*..., p. 214.
[516] A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Zritel'* (The spectator), ch. III, October, p. 125, quoted from I. A. KRYAZHIMSKAYA, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy kritiki kontsa XVIII-nachala XIX veka*..., p. 215. From this point of view he differs from the position of such critics as Klushin and Krylov, who, even belonging to his group in relation to a more general critics of theatre, were more respectful to the classics of the European dramaturgy, and worried more about the single *genre* of the pièces that should be chosen for this kind of adaptations. I. A. KRYAZHIMSKAYA, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy kritiki kontsa XVIII-nachala XIX veka*..., p. 215.

literature was exemplary, but there was much in it that was incomparably remote from Russian life.[517] According to the playwright, the subject of the play must correspond to the interests and experiences of Russians. He suggested specific events from Russian history, such as the gestures of Minin and Pozharsky:

> Отечественность в театральном сочинении, кажется, должна быть первым предметом: что нужды Россиянину, что какой-нибудь Чингис-хан татарский был завоевателем Китая и он там много наделал добрых дел? Гораздо чувствительнее детям видеть, что их отец велик, нежели другой кто; добрые дела везде любезны и привлекательны; но посторонные добрые дела постороннее имеют и действие над сердцами, а при том не все то добро в России, что добром почитается в других землях. Какая нам нужда видеть какую-то Дидону, таящую в любви к Энею, и беснующегося Ярба от ревности? Что нам нужды до непримиримой вражды, какова изображена в Веронских гробницах? Надобно наперед узнать, что происходило в нашем отечестве. Кузьма Минин купец есть лицо достойнейшее прославления на театре: его твердость, его любовь к отечеству, для коего пожертвовал он всем, что имел, непреодолимое мужество князя Пожарвского и благородый его поступок при возведении на царство законного наследника извлекли бы у всех зрителей слезы, наполнили бы их души и сердца восхищением: и все сие послужило бы совершенным училищем, как должно любить отечество.[518]

[Nationality in a theatrical work, seemingly, must be the first issue: is it necessary to the Russian man that Gengiz Khan was the conqueror of China and that he did a good deal of positive things there? It is much more touchy for children to see that their father is great, than the one of who knows who; the good deeds are everywhere pleasant and attractive; but good deeds of extraneous ones have an alien influence on the hearts, and what is good in Russia is not always considered good in other countries. Do we need to see some Didon melting in her love for Aeneas, and Iarba enraged y jealousy? Do we need the irreconcilable enmity depicted in the tombs of Verona? We should first of all know what has happened in our country. The merchant Kuz'ma Minin is a figure worthy of praise on stage: his firmness, his love for the homeland, for which he sacrificed all that he had, the insuperable courage of prince Pozharsky and his noble act at the moment of the ascension to the throne of the legitimate heir would provoke tears in all spectators, would fill their souls and hearts of enthusiasm: and all this would serve as a perfect school about how the homeland should be.]

The issue will be debated with more intensity in the first decade of the 19h century, especially by authors moving around the *Vol'noe obshchestvo lyubiteley slovesnosti, nauk i khudozhestv* (Free society of lovers of literature, science and arts),[519] on such periodicals as *Severny vestnik* (The Northern messenger, 1804-05), *Litsey* (Liceum, 1806), *Tsvetnik* (Flower garden, 1809-11) e *S.-Peterburgsky vestnik* (Saint Petersburg messenger, 1812).

[517] For this reason, the actor perceived singing in opera as a diversion: "Многократно я также обманывался и в комедиях; а в операх никогда." (I have been often misled also in comedies; never in operas.) *Prodolzhenie o zrelishchakh* (More on performances), in *Utra…*, August, List 1, p. 69. "мусика всегда отвлекает зрителя от привязанности к завяске зрелиша" (music always distracts the spectator from his involvement in the performance's plot) *ivi…*, p. 70. "Any Aria or singing reminds me that I'm looking at a theatrical performance, so that the involvement in the action is completely lost in my heart. As it seems to me, one can listen to music between the acts, and to singing in concerts." *ibidem*.

[518] A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Teatr* (Theatre), in *Petr Alekseevich Plavil'sichikov, Sobranie dramaticheskikh sochineniy…*, p. 535.

[519] I. A. KRYAZHIMSKAYA, *Iz istorii russkoy teatral'noy kritiki kontsa XVIII-nachala XIX veka…*, p. 217.

During the rule of Aleksandr I, this discussion increasingly raised, the city of Moscow housing three different theatres: Russian, French and German.[520]

Beyond the need of Russianness, these critics put forward needs of purely theatrical nature: verisimilitude (*estestvennost'*) and convenience (*priyatnost'*), also if this meant the overcoming of the rules of classical theatre. The way to perfection demanded the abandonment of classical constraint as far as the matter and the manner of the drama were concerned, because the strictest observance of the rules could not guarantee the quality of a play. According to Rogger,

> The popularity of comic opera contributed materially to the acceptance of the trends which were destined to drive classical poetry from the scene. It brought native materials and native characters before the public in great profusion; it entered not only the milieu of the gentry, but also that of the merchant class, of workmen, sailors, and peasants. Even when its pictures of the life of the people were prettified and its folk-songs imitations, it developed among its listeners a sympathetic attitude for the people and for its artistic inheritance. Unlike the classical stage, which, with few exceptions, portrayed the lower orders of society only as comic and secondary figures, the comic opera drew them with understanding and sympathy, though not always without condescension.[521]

Referring in particular to Plavil'shchikov's production, much influenced by the growing taste for the *comédie larmoyante*, the historian states that

> The product of Plavilshchikov's union of tears and laughter, the tragicomedy, which he called *dramma*, was a hybrid to horrify every purist, but it met a need which more orthodox playwrights did not fill. Plavilshchikov observed with some satisfaction that Molière's *Misanthrope* constantly played to half-filled houses, while Ablesimov's comic opera "The Miller" [see below – A. G.] for all its weakness, for all its neglect of the Aristotelian rules, played for more than 200 performances to capacity audiences. The reason was clear: "It is because the miller is one of ours; the misanthrope is a foreigner."[522]

In his *Razsuzhdenie o zrelishchakh* (Discourse about performances), Plavil'shchikov goes beyond the classical rules of the three unities, defending only the unity of the place of the action, for the sake of verisimilitude.[523] He also wanted the action to be performed on the stage, and not to be told by a character as in the classic theatre, an issue that had been raised yet in 1774 by the actor A. Volkov:[524] "Everyone will agree with me on that our feelings are more struck if the event happens before our eyes, than when it

[520] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 126.
[521] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, pp. 150-1.
[522] *ivi*, p. 150.
[523] A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Razsuzhdenie o zrelishchakh* (Discourse about performances), in *Utra…*, August, list 1, pp. 61-3, 62-72.
[524] Eventualmente O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 121.

is told by someone."[525] Performances had to be "the mirror of human life",[526] had to completely involve audience in the action, making him forgetting about the fact that he founds himself in theatre. In the article *Prodolzhenie o zrelishchakh* (More on performances), Plavil'shchikov points out the inappropriateness of 'magic events' and too frequent changes of place within the plot,[527] and, on the other hand, the need for characters to express themselves in the language that is natural for them, their everyday speech.[528] Moreover, he affirmed the need to make characters express themselves in prose rather that in verse, again for the sake of verisimilitude: "Everybody knows that writing can be twofold: either in verse, or in prose. Nobody never talks in verse, and this itself made theatre go far from verisimilitude."[529] This notably can be understood also in reference to recitatives, which all along the permanence of Italian opera on Russian stages were always perceived as alien. In the article *Discourse about performances*, it is in reference to the Russian comic opera *The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker* that the actor expressed himself about the presence of music: "[…] music always diverts the spectator from his attachment to the performance's plot […]."[530] According to the actor,

> <…> в мусику, как бы она близко ни подходила к смыслу речей, всегда более видно искусство сочинителя и игрока, нежели естественное выражение какого нибудь чувствования; при том же всякая *Ария* или пение тотчас напоминает мне, что я смотрю на театральное представление, от чего привязанность к действию совсем теряется в моем сердце. Мне кажется, что мусику приятнее слушать можно между действиями; а пение в консертах.[531]

[[…] in music, as far as if can match with the meaning of words, the art of the composer and the performer is always visible, more than the natural expression of the feeling; every aria or singing immediately reminds me that I'm looking to a theatrical performance, so that the attachment to the action is completely lost in my heart. It seems to me that it is more pleasant to listen to music between the acts, and to singing in concerts.]

Seemingly, music was seen by the actor as a superfluous element in the drama:

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[525] "Всяк со мною будет в том согласен, что чувства наши более поражаются, имея перед глазами какое-нибудь приключение, нежели когда о нем рассказывают." A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Razsuzhdenie o zrelishchakh…*, p. 68.
[526] "зеркало человеческия жизни". A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Prodolzhenie o zrelishchakh…*, p. 67.
[527] "<…> я понять не могу, как можно меня и со всем партером и с ложами поминутно таскать из комнаты на улицу, с улицы в сад, из саду в тюрьму, из тюрьмы в деревню, из деревни в лес, а из лесу в царские чертоги: <…> И так перемена театра в комедии или трагедии нейдет." *ivi*, p. 75; "Все воьшебныя приключении на театре не годятся." *ibidem*.
[528] "Слог в комедии должен быть самый простый употребительный в общежитии, и чтоб всякое ействующее лицщ тем наречием говорило <…>." *ivi*, p. 76.
[529] "Известно всем, что письмо двояко: или в стихах, или в прозе. Никто и никогда не разговаривает в стихах, и сим самым, кажется, театр удалился от правдоподобия." A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Teatr…*, p. 542.
[530] "<…> мусика всегда отвлекает зрителя от привязанностьи к завяске зрелища <…>." A. P. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Razsuzhdenie o zrelishchakh…*, p. 70.
[531] *ibidem*.

> Многие страстные любители мусики – the actor continues, - видя сию слабость в Операх выдумали другое зрелище, где изречение Актер выговаривает; а по том Оркестр как будто ответствует наподобие Эха подходящими к выражению тех слов тонами. Сие зрелище названо *дуодрамою*; Но тут ни речи ни мусика не могут никогда того производить, что производят в сердце зрителя Комедия и Трагедия; по колику одно другому мешает: притом же: естьли зрелище сочинено хорошо и естественно; то оно неимеет нужды занимать большаго еще изъяснения и привлекательности от мусики, а ежели оно само по себе слабо, то мусика его неукрасит.[532]

[Many passioned lovers of music, havig noticed this weakness in operas, invented a new performance, where the actor tells his lines; then the orchestra in a way responds as an echo with tones pertinent to the expression of those words. This performance is called *duodrama*, but in it neither words nor music can ever prodce what comedy and tragedy produce in the heart of the spectator, because one disturbs the other: in fact, if a performance is written in a good and natural manner, it has no need to be made more clear and attractive through music; if it is itself weak, music will not embellish it.]

And in fact - the actor continue, - hardly a Russian librettist gained as much success as the playwright Lomonosov:

> Но естьли хотя один Сочинитель, который увенчал себя славою творением Опер? Признаться надобно, что нет; хотя и нельзя опровергнуть того, что Италиянский Метастазий Операми своими превзойдя всех в своем отечестве сравнялся с наилучшими трагиками; но и он сам по всеобщему вкусу в отечестве принужденным себя находил писать Оперы, где всегда старался держаться правил Трагедии. Чтож касается до смешных Опер; то Италиянские Стихотворцы в них мусике жертвуют всем, даже и здравым разсудком.[533]

[And is there a writer who was crowned with glory by composing operas? One should admit, that no; even if it is impossible to deny that the Italian Metastasio, overcaming all in his homeland, with his operas was a peer with the best tragidians; but he himself, according to the general taste of the country was forced to write operas where he always tried to follow the rules of Tragedy. As to comic operas, Italian poets in them sacrifice all to music, up to common sense.]

Russian reception of this time, at least as far as Plavil'shchikov can be considered its exponent and spokesperson, considers opera according to the same criteria used for spoken theatre. And this can be easily understood in a context in which, as mentioned, the

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[532] *ibidem*.

[533] *ivi*, pp. 71-2. The superiority of spoken theatre to opera is bound to the vision of Italy as a barbaric country due to the use of *castrati*. "Да и в сей части зрелища множество существовало и существует великих людей: из певцов и из певиц никто не смеет подумать сравнятся с сими знаменитыми в сем искусстве людьми, кроме тех, которых произвела Италия; но в Италии всеобщий вкус к мусике, там живут мусикою, мусикою питаются и для мусики, чтоб дать мущине пленяющий женский голос, лишают его в целую жизнь здоровья и крепости, удовольствия жизненнаго; и чтоб получить одного такого, мертвят для того многие сотни людей. И так по моему мнению можно заключить основательно, что комедии и трагедии суть зрелища превосходные всех прочих, хотя и опера хорошо сделанная имеет свою цену." (In this type of performance also there were and there are numbers of great men: among singers no one is able to concur with these celebrated people in this art [acting], except for those who come from Italy; but in Italy the general taste for music – there they live for music, feed themselves with music, and for music, in order to provide men with captivating feminine voice, they deprive man of his health and strength, life's pleasure, all life long; and only in order to obtain this, they sacrifice many hundreds of people. So that in my opinion one can thoroughly infer that comedies and tragedies are performances superior to all others, even though opera though, when well written, has its value.) *ivi*, August, list 2, p. 73.

protagonists were not differentiated. Here is, in my opinion, one of the reasons why Russian opera, an attempt of which had been made by Sumarokov recurring to the forms of French *tragédie lyrique*, seemed to abandon that way in favour to the genre of comedy. French repertoire offered in fact a type of performance, the *comédie mêlée d'ariettes*, which functioned according to the rules of spoken theatre, while including music numbers. Moreover, the comic genres were more receptive to reality than the tragic and epic forms: as a consequence, as we shall see, proverbs, folk-sayings, popular humour, naturalistic renditions of the speech of the country gentlemen and peasants permeated the new genre of Russian comic opera. This contrasts with one of the differences between comedy and opera which, pointed out by Stählin in 1738, was overcome by Plavil'shchikov's time:

> От обоих сих театральных действии [tragedy and comedy] опера весьма разнствует. Она кроме богов и храбрых героев никому на театре быть не позволяет. Все в ней есть знатно, великолепно и удивительно. В ея содержании ничто находиться не может, как токмо высокия и несравненныя действия, божественныя в человеке свойства, благополучное состояние мира и златые веки собственно в ней показываются.[534]

[From both these genres [tragedy and comedy] opera differs. Except for deities and valiant heroes opera does not allow anyone on the stage. In it all is noble, magnificent and marvellous. In it the plot can only be an elevated and peerless action, and godlike qualities in man, a successful condition of the world, and golden ages are shown.]

In order to better define the Russianness of the place where the action takes place, "decorations do no more conventionally denotate the place of the action, but include already concrete *realia*, light effects, which had a definite emotional impact on the spectators."[535] In this sense, a first step in the direction of a more faithful picture of the true Russian life is the collocation of the action in Russian country or town, a process that had begun with the shifting of the action to undefined Russian spaces in operas with clearly Italian features, in such operas as Araja'a *L'asilo della pace*, Locatelli's *Il retiro degli dei*, and Zellbell's *Il giudizio d'Aminta* (see Chap. II, Part II – The Golden Age of Italian Opera *Seria*). Also in *I puntigliosi domestici* (1752), issued in Russian translation in 1773, the anonymous translator had transferred the action from Naples to Moscow.[536]

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[534] A. SH. [YA. VON STÄHLIN], *Istoricheskoe opisanie…*, p. 533.

[535] "<…> декорации перестают быть условным обозначением места действа, а включают уже конкретные реалии, световые эффекты, которые оказывали определенное эмоциональное воздействие на зрителей." G. KOMELOVA, A. PODEBINSKAYA, *Operny dom Zimnego Dvortsa…*, pp. 44-5.

[536] R. M. GOROKHOVA, *Dramaturgiya Gol'doni v Rossii XVIII veka* (Goldoni's dramaturgy in 18th-century Russia), in *Epokha prosveshcheniya, Iz istorii mezdunarodnych svyazey russkoy literatury* (The Enlightenment era. From the history of the international relationships of the Russian literature), edited by M. P. Alekseev, Leningrad, Nauka 1967, p. 325.

The Language Issue

Together with subjects and themes, the Russian literary world was in search of the optimal medium through which expresss them. As well as in other European countries, these years witness an increasing research in the field of language, which led to important consequences and innovations.

Researches were led not only by opposing *intelligentsiya*, but also by the State institutions. Already in 1768, Catherine, aware of the linguistic and literary debates led by such authors as Lomonosov and Trediakovsky, had organized a commission of permanent translators inside the Academy. In 1771 the Free Russian Assembly was created within the University of Moscow. The main establishments where the discussion on laguage was led were anyway the Academy of Sciences and the Russian Academy, both directed by Princess Ekaterina Romanovna Vorontsova-Dashkova.[537] Immediately after Dashkova's

[537] Ekaterina Romanovna Vorontsova (1744-1810) was the daughter of count Vorontsov, and the god daughter of Empress Elizabeth and the prince heir Pyotr Fyodorovich. Having lost her mother in 1745, she was educated in the house of her uncle, the Chancellor M. I. Vorontsov, where she had the opportunity to study several European languages, and read the works of such thinkers as Montesquieu, Bayle, Voltaire, Boileau, Helvétius. Since their acquaintance in winter 1758-59, she was a close friend of Ekaterina Alekseevna, which would become empress some years later with the name of Catherine II. In May 1759 she married Prince Mikhail Ivanovich Dashkov, and until 1761 lived in Moscow in her husband's estates, where she had to learn Russian to communicate with her mother-in-law, who didn't know any foreign languages, which, on the contrary, had been given the priority in her education. In June 1761 she came back to Saint Petersburg with her husband, and began to attend the Court, whereas her sister Elizaveta Romanovna Vorontsova was the hereditary prince's favourite. In this period Dashkova began her literary activity, her first issues being the translation of Voltaire's *Essai sur la poésie épique* (published as *Opyt ob epicheskom poezii* on the journal *Nevinnoe uprazhnenie* (Innocent exercises), 1763), and some verses on the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Alekseevna. She has told to have had a crucial role in the coup d'état Ekaterina had made, pushing her to its realization, being the heart of the plot's organization, although this is often considered an exaggeration. Anyway, after Catherine II'e ascension, the Empress received the Saint Catherine's order and a financial reward, and Dashkova was allowed to accompany her in her hike to Oranienbaum. Good relationships with the new empress went soon wrong, probably due to the princess's desire to have a too strong influence on the sovereign. Since 1768 Dashkova spent long time in Moscow and Kiev, until 1769, when she came back to Saint Petersburg and received the permission to go abroad, travelling incognito, behind the identity of some princess Mikhailova. Through Riga, Königsberg and Danzig she arrived to Berlin; then Spa, where she made the acquaintance of Lord and Lady Sussex and Mrs Hamilton, with whom she will have friendly relationships all her life long. Then she travelled to England, being in London, Bristol and Oxford. In November 1770 she arrived in Paris, visiting Diderot, then Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, Geneva, Karlsruhe, Dresden, and through Berlin she came back to Russia in 1772. Here the princess revived her literary contacts and acquaintances. She also entered the Free Russian assembly (*Vol'noe Rossiyskoe sobranie*) at the Moscow University, founded in 1771. In the autumn 1774 she moved to Saint Petersburg, but after a further misunderstanding with the Empress she requested again the permission to travel abroad: after some stops in Europe she settled down in Edinburgh, where her son attended the university. She stayed there from 1776 to 1779. From 1779 to 1780 she was in Dublin, then Cork and other Irish cities, London, Holland, and Paris. In March 1780 she went to Italy, coming back to Russia in 1782, where she renewed the relationship with the Empress. On 24 January 1783 she was appointed president of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences. In the autumn of 1783 she founded the *Rossiyskaya Akademiya* (Russian Academy). Again, soon after the opening of the Academy, the relationships between the princess and the empress went wrong, also due to the publication, in the 39th part of *Russian Theatre* (1793), of the tragedy by Knyazhnin *Vadim Novgorodsky* (Vadim from Novgorod), in, encountered the firm opposition of Catherine II who, influenced by the recent events of the French revolution, virtually led the princess to leave the academy for

return from her travels in Europe in 1782, Catherine had appointed her Director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences (known now as the Russian Academy of Sciences).[538] Within this establishment the Princess organised courses of several subjects in Russian language. In the first year of her presidence, she founded the journal *Sobesednik lyubitely rossiyskogo slova* (The issue of the lovers of Russlian literature), in which the most distinguished figures of the Russian literature of that time took part, such as Kheraskov, Knyazhnin, Kapnist and the like, and which attracted lot of attention among the Russian audience. Catherine II too wrote on the journal, in the section entitled *Byli i nebylitsy* (True stories and fairy tales), and issuing her *Zapiski kasatel'no russkoy istorii* (Notes on the Russian History). The activity of the journal lasted from May 1783 to September 1784. It was replaced by *Novyya ezhemesyachnyya sochinenya* (New monthly works), issued by the Academy of Sciences, and edited by Romovsky, Ozertskovsky and Protasov.

In coordination with Catherine, Dashkova organized scientific expeditions and archival researches in order to devise a history of Russia and its folklore, and philological researches to codify the language, according to the enlightened ideas of her time.[539]

According to Rogger,

> In Russia, as elsewhere, the evolution of a national literary language was a phenomenon of growing national consciousness, as well as being a response to practical and cultural needs. […] The declarations of linguistic independence, like those made by other countries beginning to free themselves from French tutelage, were among the first signs of resistance to the unbounded sway which French civilization and literature held.[540]

The main concern with language was about creating a common literary standard for Russian, that could serve as evidence of an autonomous national culture and a medium for its further development. In fact, in the absence of a generally accepted literary language,

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two years from 1794. After having taken part in a last session of the Russian Academy in 1796, she retired from the public life, and never met the Empress again. After having been sent into exile by Catherine's son Paul I, a decision retired thanks to the good relationships existing between the new emperor and Dashkova's son, her disgrace definitely ended with the ascension of Paul I's son Alexander. But Dashkova was then no more keen on taking part to the life of the capital: she issued ancora some publications, and committed to writing her own memoirs, which she dictated to her friend Mrs Hamilton. She died in the solitude of her Muscovite estate of Troitskoe on 4 January 1810. See N. CHECHULIN, *Dashkova, knyaginya Ekaterina Romanovna*, voce in *Russky biografichesky slovar'* (Russian biographical dictionary), vol. 6, S. - Peterburg, Tipografiya I. N. Skorokhodova 1905, pp. 119-30, and others sources indicated in bibliography.

[538] Theoretically the head of the Academy was its President; however, count Kirill Razumovsky, who had been appointed President in 1746 by Empress Elizabeth, played only a nominal role in the Academy, and the actual leadership belonged to successive Directors.

[539] J. G. Herder's remarks on language in the *Materials for the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784-91) exemplify the importance which 18th-century men attached to language; in his opinion it was only with language that the heart of the people was created, and in the language resides its whole-domain, its tradition, history, religion, and basis of life.

[540] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, pp. 85-6.

the flood of foreign words and phrases were creating a lot of confusion. The issue of language was not a novelty of Catherine's reign, it had rather quite a long heritage, due on the one hand to the long period of diglossia that had characterized the Russian reality since the Christening or ancient Rus' in 988, and, on the other hand, to the phases of bilingualism that characterized the 18th century alternating German and French to Russian.[541]

In the first quarter of the century, Russian was a language devoid of a proper orthography, having only the most arbitrary grammar, and a vocabulary composed of the most diverse elements.

Vasily K. Trediakovsky (1703-1769), translator and poet, later secretary and Professor of Rhetoric at the Academy of Sciences, had tried to bring the literary language closer to the simple Russian word, preferring simple speech to Slavonic dialect, as he had stated in the preface to his translation of Paul Tallement's *Voyage à l'île de l'amour*. The goal was not only the translation of a single work, but the creation of a secular literary language on the basis of the native tongue. Even if philologists place little credence in Trediakovsky's method or his conclusions, his rather naïve etymologies or his defective logic, Rogger outlines the importance of his work as an indication of the growing national consciousness.[542]

The problem of the relationship between Church-Slavonic and colloquial speech preoccupied also Mikhail Lomonosov, who envisioned the retention only for those living Church-Slavonic elements which were commonly understood and known. The proportion in which these were to appear as against contemporary speech was to be governed by the literary medium in which they were employed - high, intermediate, and low style. Aleksandr P. Sumarokov had declared for a literary language based on general usage (rather than Church-Slavonic), demanding naturalness of poetic diction as well as of everyday language, and preserving uniquely Russian features without turning back to antiquity. He was afraid of the fact that literary Russian might be buried under a flood of vulgarisms and foreign intrusions. At his time, the French posed the main threat and it was the barbaric French-Russian jargon of the *petimetry* (*petits maîtres*) that Sumarokov attacked most sharply. The enemy in matters of language as well as in other spheres of life was Gallomania, undiscriminating preference for the French word or phrase where a perfectly adequate Russian one would do as well.

[541] See B. USPENSKY, *Storia della lingua letteraria russa. Dall'antica Rus' a Puškin* (History of the Russian literary language. From ancient Rus' to Pushkin), Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993.
[542] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 99.

After the middle part of the century, the aristocracy's increasing consciousness of its social position and its official recognition also led it to develop a literary culture that was to give full expression to its separate identity. Westernization was reflected above all in vocabulary, but also in syntax, style and grammar. New concepts and terms came into being, created anew or borrowed from Western languages. German furnished the new administrative terminology, Holland and England supplied naval terminology; the French influence was initially restricted to a fairly small number of diplomatic and military terms.

The new high in the Westernization of the upper layers of Russian society that characterized the reigns of Elizabeth and Catherine brought about a wider use of French, as well as the neglect and, at times, total ignorance of Russian. The Princess Dashkova herself, who later became one of the most vocal advocates of Russian culture, related in her memoirs what must have been a fairly frequent experience among the upper-class youth of her time:

> Mon oncle n'épargna rien pour nous donner, à sa fille et à moi, les meilleurs maîtres; et, selon le gout de l'époque, nous reçûmes la meilleure education. On nous enseignait quatre langues differentes, et nous parlions couramment le français; un conseiller d'Etat nous appri l'Italien, e M. Bechtieff nous donnait des leçons de Russe quand nous daignions les prendre.[543]

The result was that she "spoke Russian very imperfectly", and only after diligent application the Princess finally mastered her native tongue.[544] As late as in 1790 Karamzin, travelling in Europe, was deeply impressed by the fact that educated Englishmen, though all knew French, preferred their own language, quite unlike his countrymen.

At Catherine's time, the question was still an actual item of discussion. Her reign brought new energy to the task of codifying the language, spurred in part by the interest of the Empress herself, by the importance attached to language as an index of culture, and the growing self-consciousness of the aristocracy as a class (which also had received momentum by priviledges restored by the sovereign). As Rogger outlines, "If Russian was to be brought to perfection, if its use was to be sanctioned by polite society, it had to be

[543] E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff, Dame D'honneur De Catherine II, Impératrice De Toutes Les Russies*, voll. 1-2, edited by M. Wilmot, (I ed. 1859), General Books 2010, p. 3.
[544] "Ici [in Moscow] un monde nouveau s'ouvrait devant moi: nouvelles relations, nouvelle existence. Je parlay très imparfaitement le russe; et pour comble d'embarras, ma bell-mère ne parlait point d'autre langue. […] En consequence, je résolus de ne pas perdre de temps pour m'appliquer à l'étude de ma langue natale, et j'eus la satisfaction d'y faire assez de progress pour obtenir les éloges et l'approbation de ces respectables parents auxquels je continuai de témoigner une tendresse respectueuse […]". *ivi*, p. 7.

shown that it could be as responsive and elegant a means of communication for all purposes as the other European languages were."[545]

While the poet M. M. Kheraskov was rector of Moscow University in 1767, Russian was made the language of instruction in all subjects,[546] and organized approaches to the study and normalization of literary Russian were resumed. Previous attempts had been the *Rossiyskoe sobranie* (Russian assembly), which had existed from 1735 through 1743, and its successor *Vol'noe Rossiyske sobranie* (Free Russian assembly), another institution concerned with linguistic tasks, established in 1771 at Moscow University. On 30 September 1783 Catherine and Dashkova founded the *Akademiya Rossiyskaya*. As Satta Boschian pointed out,

> […] la nuova accademia completava la mobilitazione generale sul fronte dell'intelligencija, portando il rovello dell'identità nazionale anche sui fatti di lingua. […] Riprendeva e rivendicava un'attività e una preoccupazione che aveva impegnato i primi e più consapevoli rappresentanti della intelligencija russa e, se non si appagava di quanto essi avevano raggiunto, non rinnegava il loro contributo, ma lo ampliava con maggior esperienza culturale. Preparava anche il terreno alle dispute feconde e ormai non lontane di Karamzin e Šiškov.[547]

Dashkova herself had sketched the plan for the Academy in accord with the Empress, and was named president of this institution. Thus is how the Princess tells the raise of the project in her memoirs:

> Un jour, comme je causais avec l'Impératrice dans les jardins de Czarskosélo, la conversation tomba sur la beauté et la richesse de la langue russe; ce qui m'amena à exprimer une sorte de surprise de ce que Sa Majesté qui pouvait bien apprécier la valeur de cette langue et était d'ailleurs elle-même écrivain, n'avait jamais songé à établir une Académie russe.
>
> Je lui fis observer qu'il ne manquait rien que des règles et un bon dictionnaire pour affranchir complètement notre language de ces termes étrangers et de ces phrases, si inférieurs aux nôtres comme expression et comme énergie, qu'on avait eu l'absurdité d'y introduire.
>
> Je ne sai vraiment pas, répondit Sa Majesté, comment il se fait que cette idée n'ait pas été mise déja en exécution. L'utilité d'un établissement consacré aux progress de notre language a souvent occupé mes pensées, et j'ai meme donné des orders à ce sujet."
>
> "C'est très surprenante, Madame, dis-je à mon tour; car assurément rien se serait plus facile que l'exécution d'un semblable projet. On peut trouver une grande variété de modèles, et vous n'avez qu'à choisir parmi les meilleures."
>
> "Voudriez-vous, Princesse, me dit Sa Majesté, m'en donner une esquisse?"
>
> "Il vaut mieux, Madame, répliquai-je, que vous ordonniez à un de vos secretaries de vous presenter un plan de l'Académie française, de l'Acadmémie de Berlin et de quelques autres, avec de remarques sur les traits particuliers qui pourraient s'adapter au genie et aux habitudes de votre people."
>
> "Permettez-moi de le repeater, dit l'Impératrice, je vous prie de vouloir bien prendre cette peine; car alors je pourrai avec toute confiance prévoir, grâce à votre zèle et à votre activité, l'accomplissement d'un projet qui, j'hai honte de l'avouer, n'a subi que trop de retards."

[545] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 108.
[546] Dashkova in her memoirs refers to free cours of different subjects, told in Russian by Russian teachers. E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff…*, p. 163.
[547] L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'Illuminismo e la steppa…*, p. 330.

> "La peine, répondis-je, Madame, ne sera que très peu de chose, et je vous obéirai aussi promptement que possible. Mais je n'ai pas sous la main les lires que je devrai consulter, et je demanderai à Votre Majesté la liberté de lui assurer de nouveau que le premier venu de ses Secrétaires s'acquitterait mieux que moi de cette commission."
>
> Cependant, comme Sa Majesté persistait à soutenir une opinion diffPrente, je jugeai inutile de lui oppose d'autres objections.
>
> Le soir, quand je revins chez moi, je me mis à examiner de quelle manière je pourrais le mieux executer les orders de l'Impératrice; avant de me mettre au lit j'avais dressé une espèce de plan qui me sembla de nature à pouvoir fournir quelques idées pour la formation de l'établissement don't il s'agissait, et je l'envoyait à Sa Majesté, plus pour satisfaire son désir qu'avec l'idée sérieuse de lui fournir une esquisse digne d'être choisie et adoptee par elle. On concevra donc aisément ma surprise quand Sa majesté me renvoya elle-même cet informe croquis d'un plan conçu à la hate et dressé sans etude préalable, et qu'elle me le renvoya en lui assignat toute l'importance d'un document official, c'est-à-dire revêtu de sa signature imperial et accompagné d'un oukase qui me conférait la présidence de l'Académie encore à l'état d'embryon. J'appris en meme temps qu'un double de cet oukase avait été envoyé au Sénat.[548]

The first assembly took place on 21 October 1783, and opened with a speech by Dashkova, expressing her love for the homeland, her knowledge of the Russian language, and the will for it to be studied and to flourish. Among the members, almost all elected on her initiative, the academy counted such writers as Derzhavin, Fonvizin, Kheraskov, Bogdanovich, Knyazhnin, Khemnitser, and administrators as Elagin, Shuvalov, Olsuf'ev, Bezborodko, Potyomkin, and Melissino. The activity of the Academy was centred about the publication of a grammar and a dictionary, rules for the inflection of words, as well as a definition and limitation of their meaning, in order to make the Russian language pure and rich.

Dashkova herself launched the project for the creation of the six-volume *Dictionary of the Russian Language*, arranged its plan, and executed a part of the work herself.[549] Compiled by a commission made of Derzhavin, Boltin, Fonvizin, Knyazhnin and other 42 members had worked, it was given to the print in 1789 (the first tome), the last was ready in 1794.[550]

The *Grammar* did not appear until 1802, but before its issue other similar works saw their publication, such as Nikolay Kurganov's *Universal Russian Grammar* (I edition 1769), to which he added collections of proverbs, riddles, songs and poems. In 1771 A. A. Barsov compiled *The Short Rules of Russian Grammar*, while his *Extensive Russian Grammar* remained unpublished. The School Commission published A *Short Russian*

[548] E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff...*, pp. 167-8. The anecdote seems to be reported in a way to demonstrate that the initial idea of Academy and *Dictionary* belonged to the Princess, who in many occasions pointed out her interest towards Russian, in contrast to the French education she had received.

[549] *Slovar' rossiyskoy Akademii, raspolozhennzhenny po slovoproizvodnomu poryadku* (Dictionary of the Russian language, Disposed according to the formation of words)

[550] Among the more important sources of the *Dictionary* there was the publication of Petr Alekseev's *Tserkovny slovar'* (Ecclesiastical dictionary), realized in 1773 by the Free Russian assembly.

Grammar in 1787, followed by a number of works of general use, such as Pyotr Sokolov's *Basic Principles of Russian Grammar* (1788) and Vasily Svetov's *Brief Rules for the Study of Russian* (1790).

This activity responded to Catherine's ambition to led Russian language to replace French as dominant.[551] According to the Empress, language was in fact a human artefact, and its development had to be stimulated and guided by conscious intervention of the ruler. As a consequence, it is possible to suggest that her ambition to codify the language was due to the wish to have a control on it, as an important vehicule of ideas which, with time passing by, were more and more kept under her direct censure. In this view, also the quoted anecdote concerning Knyazhnin's tragedy *Vadim Novogorodsky* can be explained with a different effect perceived by the Empress between a work staged in French, referred to a rather speculative and abstract world of ideas, and a performance in Russian, which references could be understood as directly applicable on Russian reality, and therefore considered frightful.[552]

[551] "Selon elle [the Empress], notre langue russe qui unit la force, la richesse et l'énergie de l'allemand à la douceur de l'italien, devait devenir un jour la langue dominante dans le monde entier." E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff*..., p. 196.

[552] In her report about Vadim in her memoirs, Dashkova points out just the fact that other French plays, more revolutionary, had not been considered an attack to autocracy, as Knyazhnin's tragedy had been. See Chap. III – Part I – An Enlightened Sovereign.

The Birth of Russian Comic Opera

The reign of Catherine II in particular assisted to the raise of a vast production of Russian plays including music, the majority of them belonging to the new genre of Russian comic opera. The mentioned Russian theatres, together with some private theatres-*usad'by*, were the producers of these operas: according to Mooser, Maddox staged forty-five of these operas in a quarter of century, in his theatres of Znamenka Street, Petrovsky and the Vauxhall.[553] Knipper's independent Russian theatre staged five of these operas in the three years of its existence, before being acquired by the Imperial Theatres. According to Mooser,

> De fait, imitant l'exemple donné, à Moscou, par les directeurs du Théâtre de la Znamenka, Karl Knipper, qui aurait pu se contenter de faire jouer, par ses pensionnaires, des opéras italiens et français traduits en russe, se posa, dès l'abord, en champion de l'art national, ce qui, de la part de ce simple industriel allemand, témoignait d'une manifeste clairvoyance et justifiait la bonne opinion que ses capacités avaient inspirée à I. I. Betsky.
>
> Ainsi - c'est là un fait remarquable qui, en dépit de son importance, n'a jamais été relevé par les historiens russes - ce sont essentiellement deux étrangers, le Juif anglais Michel Maddox à Moscou et l'Allemand Karl Knipper à Saint-Pétersbourg, auxquels revient l'honneur d'avoir favorisé l'épanouissement et le progrès de l'opéra-comique national que tous deux cultivèrent, sur leurs scènes, avec une persévérance qui aida ce genre nouveau à sortir rapidement de ses langes, et è conquérir une place de plus en plus considérable dans les préférences du public russe.[554]

According to Mooser, the Russian Court troupe had only nineteen Russian operas performed on their stage. The historian explains this few number with the lack of interest toward the new genre, the Court being traditionally renown for its fondness of foreign culture.[555] On the contrary, I suggest that the very fact that the Directorate considered to acquire Knipper's theatre can be understood as the attempt at obtaining the monopoly in the capital on such a genre, which seemed to gain growing success (although, as seen, it met the concurrence of Italian comic opera). Actually, further the historian acknowledges Catherine II's interest in this growing genre:

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[553] R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 171. According to Chayanova, "[…] Maddox's theatrical activity […] in its three-decade existence was the very core from which the national Russian theatrical art raised." "<…> театральное дело Маддокса, <…> за три десятилетия своего существования воистину явилось тем горнилом, из которого родилось национальное русское театральное искусство." O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 14. Moreover, "[…] for the Moscow theatre just the period of the Znamenka street in Maddox's activity put the beginning of Russian national opera, and only this itself puts it in a considerable light in the history of Russian theatre." ("<…> для московского театра именно знаменский период Маддоксовой деятельности положил начало русской национальной опере, и уже одно это выдвигает его на весьма значительное место в истории русского театра.") O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve*…, pp. 27-8.

[554] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 240.

[555] " […] les auteurs qui s'évertuèrent ainsi à doter les scènes de leur pays d'un répertoire lyrique original, ne trouvèrent, pendant longtamps, qu'un appui extrêmement parcimonieux aupres des Théâtres impériaux [...]." R. – A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 171.

> Certes, longtemps, l'impératrice parut tenir pour négligeable cette manifestation nouvelle du génie russe et, comblée par sa magnifique troupe dramatique russe, par ses brillantes compagnies étrangères et par son incomparabile ensemble coréographique, elle dédaigna de lui accorder sa protection. Aussi bien, les compositeurs autochtones qui, les premiers, s'avisèrent d'écrire des opéras russes, firent-ils oeuvre assez imparfaite dont la médiocrité pouvait justifier l'indifférence que la souveraine témoigna tout d'abord à leurs informes essais. […] Mais vint - vers 1780 - un temps où des musiciens riches d'un talent plus décidé et d'un métier plus solide, commencèrent à attirer l'attention du public et à faire accourir celui-ci aux spectacles spécifiquement russes, grâce à des partitions aimables qui faisaient une large place à la chanson populaire.
>
> Pareille réussite ne pouvait manquer de frapper l'esprit de la perspicace souveraine qui, devinant l'enrichissement que cette sorte d'ouvrage était capable de valoir à l'art national, ne lui marchandait son appui. Bien mieux, non contente d'encourager auteurs et interprètes, en assistant à leurs représentations et en y entraînant son entourage, elle estima ne pas déroger en mettant personellement la main à la pâte. C'est ainsi que, de 1786 à 1791, elle se plut à [18] fournir à des musiciens du cru ou établis en Russie, cinq livrets d'opéras-comiques russes: exemple qui fut déterminant pour l'avenir du genre car, venant de si haut, il na valut pas seulement à celui-ci une faveur accrue dans les milieux de la cour, il suscita aussi, et bien naturellement, l'éclosion d'une quantité d'oeuvres analogues.
>
> De fait, c'est à plus de soixante-dix, que l'élève le nombre des ouvrages de cet ordre, qui virent le jour à Saint-Pétersbourg et à Moscou, pendant la seconde moitié du règne de Catherine II: chiffre considérable, puisqu'il concerne une quinzaine d'années tout au plus, et qui fait bien paraître la soudaine floraison que l'opéra-comique national dut à la perspicacité de cette femme si richement et si diversement douée.[556]

Most of the musicians who tried their hands in original works are still unknown, while many of them were foreign composers who had moved to Russia: members of the Czech family Kertselli (in Moscow since the 1760s), the Czech bassoonist Anton Bullandt (in Saint Petersburg since 1780), Mattia Stabingher, Ernest Vaňura, Franz-Xaver Blyma, and other German composers: Hermann-Friedrich Raupach, Otto Tewes, some Freulich, Johann Koessler, Sebastian Gorge, Michail Ekkel, Gennaro Astaritta, and François-Joseph Darcis.

According to Karlinsky, "Russian comic opera of the age of Catherine was essentially a literary rather than a musical-dramatic genre."[557] It was a brief (one- or two-act) play that included songs, vocal ensembles, and occasionally choruses. The music for these productions was at times composed was often not an original musical score, the performers being instructed to sing their vocal numbers to a tune of this or that popular air of the day. This practice entailed a rare concordance between the poetic text and the character of the music, but this seemed not to constitute an obstacle for the Russian audience. The genre, as Karlinsky points out, was born as the exact equivalent of French *comédie mêlée d'ariettes*, with which Russians had become acquainted since the

[556] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, pp. 17-8.
[557] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great*, in *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 7, No. 3, *Essays for Joseph Kerman* (Apr. 3, 1984), p. 318.

appearance of the French company in Saint Petersburg in the 1760s (see Chap. III – Part I – The French Court Troupe). According to Mooser,

> Il suffit en effet de feuilleter le *Dictionnaire dramatique*, pour se rendre compte que, presque toujours, les pièces les plus applaudies et les plus fréquemment jouées sont empruntées au répertoire importé, dès 1764, par les comédiens français. Il est d'entre elles qui tinrent l'affiche des années durant, soit qu'elles fussent représentées dans leur teneur originale, soit que des translateurs spécialisés ou des littérateurs d'occasion s'en fussent emparés, pour les mettre à la portée du spectateur moyen qui, dans son immense majorité, ignorait le français.
>
> De fait, le théâtre russe ne tarda pas à annexer la plupart des petits ouvrages que les auteurs parisiens produisaient à l'envi, et qui étaient reçus, à Saint-Pétersbourg, à Moscou et sur les théâtres féodaux de province, avec autant d'intérêt que dans leur lointaine patrie.[558]

The typical plot included two lovers overcoming obstacles to their union, be they matters of parental opposition or of interference by a villainous bailiff. In his article *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great*,[559] the scholar points out three models from which Russian comic opera derived: such works by Favart as *Le Caprice amoureux, ou Ninette à la cour* (1755), *Annette et Lubin* (1762), and *Les Moissonneurs* (The Reapers); Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Le Devin du village*; Sedaine's libretti set to music by such composers as Philidor, Monsigny, Duni, and Grétry.

Ninette à la cour was exported to several European countries and adapted to local conditions: it reappeared in Germany as *Lottchen am Hofe*, in England as *Phoebe at Court*, in Italy as *La Contadina in corte*, in Sweden as *Lantflickan på hovet*. In 1783 it was incarnated as *La Villanella rapita*, a comic opera on libretto by Bertati with music by Francesco Bianchi, with two additional arias by Mozart (K. 479 and 480) for the 1785-production in Vienna.[560] According to Karlinsky, similar transformations occurred with other successes by Favart, leading to a great vogue for rural settings and for triangles between peasant boys and girls and noblemen or bailiffs in comedy and comic opera throughout the Western world.

Another work whose international success helped enhance the fashion for *paysannerie* in musical comedies was, according to Karlinsky, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Le Devin du village*, premiered in Paris in 1752.[561] Considered the first genuine French comic opera, because unlike the earlier *comédies d'ariettes* it was provided with a musical score of its own (by Rousseau himself), the work consolidated the custom of letting the musical theatre voice a preference for the wholesome rustic life over the supposedly corrupt life of

[558] R. - A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 113.
[559] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, pp. 318-25.
[560] For more details on the diffusion of this subject in Europe see Alfred Iacuzzi, *The European Vogue of Favart* (New York, 1932).
[561] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, p. 319.

the cities. Among its imitations the most popular is Favart's parody *Les amours de Bastien at Bastienne* (1753), also widely copied and imitated (think to Mozart *Bastien und Bastienne*, 1768).

Carrying out in the libretti of his earlier period Diderot's behest that the theatre deal with all occupations and social classes, Michel-Jean Sedaine (1719-1797) greatly expanded in his libretti the social purview of comic opera, making the poorer and humbler classes the expected and accepted protagonists in theatrical plays: "Servants, peasants, artisans, or gardeners who could appear in subsidiary or episodic roles in neoclassical comedy and sentimental drama were now shown to have love lives of their own and interesting, even paradoxical emotions."[562] This was the case with his *Blaise le savatier* (1759, music by Philidor), were the protagonists are a poor cobbler and his wife, or in *Le jardinier et son seigneur* (1761, music by Philidor), or in *Le roi et le fermier* (1762, music by Monsigny), where King Henri IV of France finds refuge in a hut of a peasant whose *fiancée* had been abducted by neighbouring nobles; his most popular *opera-comique Le Déserteur* (1769, music by Monsigny) dealt with the adventures of a simple army private who got in trouble over a practical joke played on him by his future father-in-law. In Russia this idea was emblematically represented by Nikolay Karamzin's short novel *Bednaya Liza* (*Poor Liza*, 1792), in which the author claimed that "even peasant women known how to love!"[563]

Grown up in the period of Catherine's liberalism, the generation who read Diderot as well as Voltaire, showed "a willingness to evaluate man in human and moral terms, not alone for his service to society. Virtue, delicacy of feeling, uprightness, honesty in dealing with one's fellow-men now became as important as the civic virtues-duty, honor, service."[564]

So, the French models did not only carry forms useful to Russian production. They made possible the penetration of Rousseau's philosophy, which, through the rediscovery of the value of sentiment and instinct and of the natural man, turned out to be adapt to the spirit of peasant Russia, and to the needs of that part of *intelligentsiya* that was already moving in search of its identity.[565] This phenomenon, though oriented in the direction of the codification of the identity of a single country, shared similar movements in the whole Europe, being at the same time an aspect of Westernization.

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[562] *ivi*, p. 320.
[563] "и крестьянки любить умеют!" N. M. KARAMZIN, *Bednaya Liza* (Poor Liza), in *Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika, Povesti* (Letters of a Russian traveller, Short novels), Moskva, ESKMO 2007, p. 59, English translation quoted from *From Karamzin to Bunin: An Anthology of Russian Short Stories*, edited by C. R. Proffer, Bloomington, Indiana University Press 1969, p. 55.
[564] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 178.
[565] M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 88.

This was not a simple reaction to the last thirty years of imitation in literature: a new value system was replacing the previous. Among others, Anne-Marie Thiesse has studied the phenomenon in her *La Création des identitées nationales*.[566] The historian focuses immediately on its *international* character. The basis of this European movement was the discovery that the people, always considered in his primitiveness and therefore excluded by the higher classes from the cultural context, began to be considered as a living witness of the antiquity of a country, and taken into account as a value to be rediscovered. The conventional starting point of this vogue was the publication, in 1760, of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland and translated from the gaelic or erse language by James Macpherson*. In 1761 they were followed by *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem, in 6 books, together with several other Poems, composed by Ossian, the son of Fingal; translated from the gaelic language by James Macpherson*. According to Thiesse, Ossian's epic demonstrated, against the sclerotic culture of Classicism that saw in Greek and Roman antiquity the only source of contemporary culture, that other traditions existed, and that it was possible to rediscovery their masterpieces. Macpherson had thus succeeded in legitimating the most modern aesthetical tendencies (the tormented and dark nature of Fingal's songs responding to the aesthetical requirings of the contemporary generation of writers), gathering and attributing them to an ancient source, which was a peer as the classic ones. In German countries, similar positions were kept y Johann Gottfried Herder, who opposed to the imitation of French models, finding in originality and authenticity the real value of a literary work. He wanted culture to be deep-rooted in the national genius, and there fore paid much attention to the problems of the language, in which the souls of a nation resided and that therefore was to be rediscovered by the German high layers of population, and in the folkloric expression of people. In his encounter with Goethe in Strasbourg, he exhorted the poet to gather popular songs and to feed with them their poetic inspiration; in 1778-79 he also published the collection *Volkslieder* (Popular songs), in which he included texts of the most varied nations. In Italy similar positions were attested by the publication of Alberto Fortis's *Viaggio in Dalmazia* (Travels into Dalmatia, 1770), in which Morlachia bards and their accompanying instrument, the *guzla*, were pictured. In Russia, the rediscovery of peasantry as leader of authentic values was expressed by Matthew Guthrie, author of an essay on various aspects of Russian folklore:[567]

[566] A. M. THIESSE, *La creazione delle identità nazionali in Europa* (Original title: *La Création des identiés nationales*), Bologna, Il Mulino 2001.
[567] M. GUTHRIE, *Dissertations sur les antiquités de Russie; contenant l'Ancienne Mythologie, les Rites païens, 3es Fêtes sacrées, les Jeux ou Ludi, les Oracles, l'ancienne Musique, les Instruments de musique villageoise, les Costumes, les Cérémonies, l'Habillement, les Divertissemens [sic] de village, les Mariages,*

> C'est parmi les paysans, surtout lorsquìils ont été long-temps dans l'état de vasselage, & par conséquent attachés au même sol pendant plusieurs siècles, que l'antiquaire doit étudier les moeurs & les usages d'une nation, & non parmi les gens du beau monde, ou même parmi les habitants des grandes villes, dans lesquelles les moeurs & les usages changent plus ou moins, selon que la communicatione aves [sic] les nations [5] étragéres est plus ou moins grande. Cette observation est surtout vraie par rapport aux Russes, depuis que *Pierre le Grand* a cherché à unir son empire avec le reste de l'Europe, par le double lien de la politique & du commerce.[568]

According to Rogger,

> Russia did not escape the infection of Ossianism which was sweeping Europe and the efforts which it inspired to discover a remote and romantically obscure antiquity, national ballads, bards, and folk-heroes. The dryness, the order, the all-too great familiarity of classic poetry readily gave way in Russia, as elsewhere, to nostalgic visions of a romantic past. And just as the vogue of Ossianism and Celtic balladry in the West called forth a host of "discoveries" and imitations of ancient lays, Russia too had her foreigners and impostors.[569]

During the 1760s the first Russian romances appear, rich in elements of the popular tradition, proverbs, situations typical of the peasant everyday life (*byt*), where the only defence people had against the abuses of aristocrats was their popular wit.[570] Among these, Milli Martinelli refers to Mikhail Chulkov's *Prigozhaya povarikha, ili pokhozhdenie razvratnoy zhenshchiny* (The comely cook, or the adventures of a depraved woman, 1770)"[571], or his *Nepostayannaya fortuna, ili Pokhozhdeniya Miramonda* (The changeable fortune, or Miramond's adventures, 1763). He also issued a weekly, *I to i syo* (This and that), where he gathered tales from the oral tradition, folksongs, proverbs and essays on superstition, and a *Short Mythological Lexicon* (1767).

To this, one can add V. A. Levshin's *Russkie skazki* (Russian tales, 1780-83), which include original tales but also tales taken from the Russian folkloric or epic tradition, together with short stories drawn from *One Thousand and one Nights*, and Popov's *Slavic Antiquities* (1770-71). A structure similar to that of *One Thousand and one Nights* characterized also by Chulkov's *Peremeshnik, ili Slavenskie skazki* (The mocker, or Slavic tales, 1766-89), a five-volume collection of short stories drawn once more from the popular tradition, alternating picaresque adventures, fairy and love tales. The first volume in particular had gained so much success that it was issued three more times after the first.

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les Funerailles, l'Hospitalité nationale, les Repas, &c. &c des Russes; comparés avec les mêmes objets chez les Anciens, & particulièrement chez les Grecs, A SAINT-PETERSBOURG, De l'Imprimerie du Corps Impériale des Cadets Nobles, 1795.

[568] *ivi*, p. 4.

[569] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 154.

[570] "ricchi di elementi della tradizione popolare, di proverbi, di situazioni del *byt* contadino, dove l'arguzia del popolo è spesso l'unica difesa ai soprusi dei nobili." M. MARTINELLI, *Il Settecento russo…*, p. 87.

[571] *ivi*, pp. 85-6.

Against gallomania of the elitist Court culture, Novikov attempted at the rediscovery of Russian values issuing his *Opyt istoricheskogo slovarya rossiyskikh pisatelyakh* (Attempt at a historical dictionary of the Russian writers, 1772), a history journal, *Drevnyaya rossiyskaya vivliofika* (Ancient Russian Library, 1773-75), issued in ten volumes, collecting mostly documents of history, and *Drevnyaya Rossiyskaya Idrografiya* (Ancient Russian hydrography, 1773) committed to Russian geography. Westernization introduced by Peter I and the recent passion of Russians for modern science and technics is condemned in Levshin's *Noveyshee puteshestvie* (The Last Journey, 1784), and Chulkov's *Son Kidalov* (Kidalov's dream, 1789). Both taking place on the moon, the novels describe a society of aliens, which represents an idealized Russia living according to the rules of the ancient rural an patriarchal system, in complete symbiosis with nature, in opposition to a world where nature and man have been corrupted by science and education. In a similar way, Pavel L'vov's *Rossiyskaya Pamela, ili istoriya Marii dobrodetel'noy poselyanki* (A Russian Pamela, or The story of the virtuous peasant girl Mariya, 1789) suggests the return to the values of pre-Petrine time, to a patriarchal society and a rural economy. An analogous idea stands behind *Puteshestvie v zemlyu Ofirskuyu* (Journey in the land of Ofir, 1783-84), in Kheraskov's novels *Kadm i Garmoniya* (Cadmus and Harmonia, 1786) and *Polidor, syn Kadma i Garmonii* (Polydorus, the Son of Cadmus and Harmonia, 1794).[572] An attempt at the rediscovery of Russian epos was made also by the most Westernized of Russian writers of this generation, Nikolay Karamzin, in his early *Ilya Muromets* (1795), an epic poem in which he adopted new meters, in irregular non rhymed verse.

In the 1790s such authors as M. N. Murav'ev, I. I. Dmitriev and N. A. L'vov were caught up in the wave and paid their tribute to the period when presumably Russian knighthood was in flower: Murav'ev in his unfinished *Oskold*; L'vov also began (but did not finish) an epic poem (*bogatyrskaya poema*) about the knight *Dobrynya Nikitich*; Dmitriev composed a poetic treatment of the exploits of Ermak in Siberia. In 1795 count Aleksey I. Music-Pushkin declared his discovery in Yaroslavl of an epic about the struggle Russians led against the nomadic Cuman people (in Russian *polovtsy*) in the 12th century. A transcription titled *Slovo o polku Igor'eve* (The tale of Igor's campaign) was given to Catherine II and published in 1800. Although doubts had been raised about the authenticity

[572] *ivi*, p. 105.

of the document, which was destroyed in the Moscow's burning of 1812, the epic entered the Russian national heritage as a monument of culture, later exploited by one of the exponents of the national school, Aleksandr Borodin, in the opera *Knyaz' Igor'* (Prince Igor, 1890). Virtually every nation rediscovered its bards during the second half of the 18th century, and faced the problem of codifying the language in order to reach a standard that was accessible to every layer of population, according to a new growing self-consciousness.[573] As Taruskin pointed out in his *N. A. Lvov and the folk*,

> At a time when the inhabitants of the Russian countryside thought of themselves simply as "Christian folk" (*krest'yanye*) or "the Orthodox" (*pravoslavnïe*) and would never have dreamed of claiming their *barin* (the owner of the land to which they were confined by law) as their countryman, the most enlightened (that is, Enlightened) and Westernized barins were already thinking of their "souls," together with themselves, as constituting the *narod*, the Russian "people." In the words of Prince Antioch Dmitriyevich Kantemir (1709-44), Russia's first belletrist in the modern Western sense and author of an influential "Letter on Nature and Humanity," noble and serf were united by "the same blood, the same bones, the same flesh."
>
> This expanded, as it were "verticalized" sense of blood kinship was a revolutionary notion in an age that had traditionally formed political solidarities entirely along class-based "horizontal" lines – lines that we would call international – of family, clienthood, and personal fealty. Nord id vertical political relations necessarily imply nationhood.[574]

It is important to point out, as Taruskin does, that the author of this words was a diplomat by profession, and was aware that "there can hardly be any sense of the self without a sense of the other, there could be no Russian nationalism until there was Russian cosmopolitism."[575] The acquiring of self-consciousness was thus a phenomenon that every European country carried out responding to the need of facing each other among peers.[576]

This phenomenon had aftermaths also in the field of music theatre, as we shall soon see, where the discovery of folklore affected not only subjects and texts, but also music materials. In the last quarter of the 18th century several collection of Russian songs were published, for private use of the musicians amateurs, and as a form of study of the original characteristics of Russian indigenous forms of music.

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[573] A. M. THIESSE, *La creazione delle identità nazionali in Europa…*, notably pp. 19-51, *passim*.
[574] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the folk*, in *Defining Russia Musically*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press 1997, p. 3.
[575] *ivi*, p. 4.
[576] With the turn of the century, especially after Napoleon's campaign in Europe, the idea of notion was strictly bound to that of homeland, as exemplified by Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808) in the case with Germany, but also in Russia, which had gone through the Napoleonic occupation of Moscow, by F. Glinka or V. Zhukovsky, or the early Russian operas by Catterino Cavos on text by Aleksandr Shakhovskoy, which I have studied in my *"Ivan Susanin" di Catterino Cavos, Un'opera russa prima dell'Opera russa* (Catterino Cavos's *Ivan Susanin*, A Russian opera before The Russian opera), Torino, EDT 2011.

A certain wave of mode *à la russe* can be traced in the 1730s-40s. Reinhardt Keiser composed Russian *Songs with variations* for two violins and bass. Later, Domenico Dall'Oglio wrote a *Sinfonia alla Russa*, while Luigi Madonis is told to have composed two sonatas based on Ukrainian melodies.[577]

The ballet master Rinaldi is also said to have created on Russian melodies some contradances for the court balls, and to have created a Russian-Italian ballet that was to be performed in an opera.[578] The first Russian themes with variations also began to spread, with the publication of Ivan Khandoshkin's *Chansons russes avec variations* for violin and bass, published in 1781.

Collections of songs circulated in Russia in manuscript form, as in the case with the *Pesennik* (Song book) recently published by E. E. Vasil'evna, in the series *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*, which contains three-voice songs,[579] or with the more famous *Sbornik Kirshi Danilova* (Kirsha Danilov's anthology), compiled in Western Siberia in the middle 18th century and published in 1804, followed by a second edition in 1818, and several times during the 19th century.[580] In the late 18th century collections were progressively printed, beginning with Grigòry Nikolàevich Teplòv's collection, published in 1759. Teplov was, beyond being a state functionary, a highly trained singer (in the Italian manner), a clavecinist, a conductor and a fine violinist.[581] He is said by Stählin to have composed music in the Italian style,[582] and played in the orchestra of grand duke Pyotr Fyodorovich,

[577] YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 130. Mooser has strong doubts, that cannot be dissipated, the scores having been lost. R. - A. MOOSER, *Violonistes-compositeurs italiens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle II. Luigi Madonnis*, in *Rivista musicale italiana* (Italian journal of musicology), XLV (1941), pp. 273-4.

[578] YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, pp. 130-1. According to Ritzareva, none of these pieces are known today and it is impossible at present to determine their exact dates. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 52.

[579] *Rukopisny pesennik XVIII veka* (Manuscript songbook of the 18th century), edited by E. E. Vasil'evna, in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg…*, vol. 5, 2002.

[580] See, for instance, *Sbornik Kirshi Danilova, Izdanie Imperatorskoy Publichnoy Biblioteki po rukopisi, poshertvovannoy v biblioteku knyazem M. P. Dolgorukovym* (Anthology of Kirsha Danilov, Edition of the Imperial Public Library following the manuscript donated to the library by prince M. P. Dolgoruky), edited by P. N. Sheffer, Sanktpeterburg, Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk 1901; for a modern edition see *Sbornik Kirshi Danilova, opyt restavratsii pesen* (Kirsha Danilov's anthology, Attempt at a restoration of the songs), editedby V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Vsesoyuznoe Izdatel'stvo "Sovetsky kompozitor" 1969

[581] Grigory Nikolaevich Teplov (1725-1779) a high official and senator, the illegitimate son of Feofan Prokopovich (1681-1736), the remarkable cultural figure of Petrine times, also author of several 'sacred dramas'. Teplov had received a refined education abroad in the mid-1730s, and was recognized as a scholar, writer and musician, who much contributed to Russian culture in the Elizabethan and Catherinian periods. He was also tutor to Count Kirill Grigor'evich Razumovsky, who was the brother of Aleksey Grigor'evich (Elizabeth's favourite and secret husband), and the father of Andrey Kirillovich Razumovsky, Russian ambassador in Vienna and mecenate of Beethoven (to whom the composer dedicated the well-known 'Russian quartets' nn. Numeri d'opera completi, in which Beethoven quoted Russian popular songs from an other, later, collection, Sobranie L'vova-Pracha. Scrivere per lungo). M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 48. R. –A. MOOSER, *L'opéra-comique français en Russie…*, p. 88.

[582] YA. SHTELIN [J. VON STÄHLIN], *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, pp. 131-2.

together with other courtiers, officers and amateurs of various ranks, including Lev' Aleksandrovich Naryshkin, Adam Vasil'evich Olsuf'ev and Jacob von Stählin. He was the author (anonymous in the edition, but well known in the Peterburgian context) of the collection entitled *Mezhdu delm bezdel'e ili Sobranie raznykh pesen* (Idleness Midst Labour or Collection of Various Songs),[583] a compilation of sixteen one- or two-voice songs with accompaniment, which established the new style of the sentimental gallant *lied*/romance.[584] The edition contained no Russian popular songs, but songs in the tradition of contemporary French, German and English collections, among which Levasheva pointed as possible models the *Recueil d'airs serieux et à boire* published by J. B. C. Baillard in the first half of the 18th century, *Singende Muse an der Pleisse* by Sperontes, *Augsburger Tafelconfect* (1733-37), *Berlinische Ode und Lieder* (1756-63), *Musicalische Zeitvertrieb* (1743-51), and others. The tunes are typically European arias in dance rhythms of the *tambourin*, *siciliana*, *minuet*, *branle*, *rigaudon*, *courante*, *sarabande* and *rondeaux*.[585] According to Ritzareva though, the terms indicating fashionable genres could have actually been meant to serve as an additional element to attract them to the public. In fact, according to the scholar in the context of the wave of mode *à la russe*, Teplov's songbook might be seen as '*Russian lyrics* with European-like tunes' rather than as 'Russian lyrics with *European-like* tunes', with a stress on the nationalistic aspect.[586] Actually the collection is described by Stählin in connection with the compositions on Russian/Ukrainian themes, and with the description of the private cappella of count Kirill Razumovsky, which had been created with Teplov's participation, and was among the factors that eventually led to the first Russian operas by Araja-Sumarokov (see Chap. II – Part III – The Birth of the "Russian Theatre"). Anyway, the volume, consisting exclusively of love songs, a theme though rarely treated by folk music, reflects the presence of a circle of customers, to which further collections, increasingly based on Russian tunes, will be addressed.

Of particular importance for the development of Russian literature is considered the issue of Chulkov's four-volume *Sobranie raznykh pesen* (Collection of various songs), which contains more than 800 songs, and was published in several parts in the period 1770

[583] [G. N. TEPLOV], *Mezhdu delm bezdel'e ili Sobranie raznykh pesen* (Idleness midst labour or Collection of various songs), in modern edition printed in T. LIVANOVA, *Russkaya muzykal'naya kul'tura XVIII veka* (Russian 18th-century music culture), T. 1, Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1952, pp. 189-245.
[584] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 47.
[585] It had a precedent in Bühren's *Aria et Minuet* (1734), published, with text in German and Russian, as a gift from his four-year-old son Carl Ernst to Empress Elizabeth on the anniversary of her coronation. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 46.
[586] *ivi*, p. 52.

to 1774, and then re-issued and expanded by Novikov as *Novoe i polnoe sobranie rossiyskikh pesen* (New and full collection of Russian songs (1780-81 and 1783-87).[587] The texts of the favourite Russian songs-romances (*rossiyskiya pesni*) occupied around a half of the collection, including lyrics composed by Sumarokov and Popov (because Chulkov considered them to have been written in the lyric style of the oral tradition); more than 400 songs belong to the popular genres: *liricheskie-protyazhnye* (lyric, drawn-out songs), *svadebnye* (wedding songs), *khorovodnye* (round dance songs) and *plyasovye* (dance songs).

Chulkov's initiative was later picked up by the *gusli* player V. F. Trutovsky,[588] who in 1776 issued his own *Sobranie russkikh prostykh pesen s notami* (Collection of Russian simple songs with their music). It is the first printed collection of songs to include also the music. Trutovsky's collection attracted the attention of operatic composers, and composers of a great number of variations on Russian popular themes, such as V. A. Pashkevich, E. I. Fomin, M. M. Sokolovsky and the violin player I. E. Khandoshkin, who are said to have borrowed tunes for their art works. These publications in fact provided the public and professional musicians with a repertory of tunes in a popular style, suitable for adoption in art music. And indeed, some of these tunes appeared in operas, and even in chamber music.

The collection was seemingly received with appreciation, since a second and a third parts followed, respectively in 1778 and 1779, each of them containing twenty songs. In 1782 the first part was re-issued, and a fourth part followed in 1795, a further re-print of the first part following in 1796. A difference can be noticed between the musical treatment of the tunes between the first three parts, and the last. While in the former the songs are arranged in two voices, with a leading voice accompanied by a second one in the bass, the two latter editions (part IV and part I re-edited) show an enriched accompaniment to the melodies, with the introduction of further voices (between soprano and bass), noted with

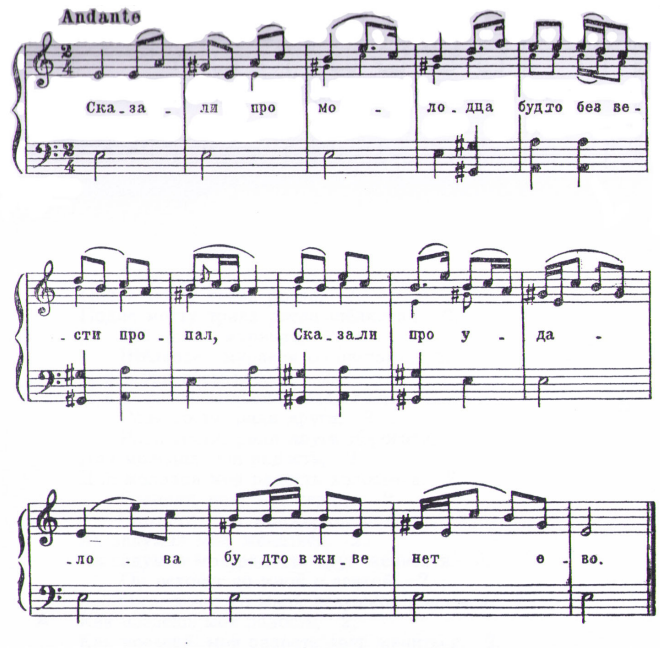
[587] M. D. CHULKOV, *Sobranie raznykh pesen* (Collection of various songs), ch. I-III s Pribavleniem 1770-1773 gg. Sanktpeterburg, Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk 1913

[588] The 'last Kammerguslist at the Russian court', as Ritzareva calls him in her *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Vasily Fyodorovich Trutovsky was appointed in 1761, the year of Empress Elizabeth's death. He then went on to serve Catherine II, as *gusli* continued to be widely used in the 1760s, especially in *plein air* entertainements. M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music…*, p. 56. Only a few biographical information is preserved on his figure. He possibly lived between 1740 and 1810. Of Ukrainian origin, it is not known where he was educated, nor how he found himself in St. Petersburg. On 10 january 1761 he was appointed *pridvorny lakey* and *kamer-guslist*; from 31 October 1762 he took part in the staging of the coronation celebrations. He possibly left service before 1792, and died in St. Petersburg in a non precised date. V. M. BELYAEV, *V. F. Trutovsky i ego «Sobranie russkikh prostykh pesen s notami»* (V. F. Trutovsky and his *Collection of of Russian simple songs with their music*), in [V. F. TRUTOVSKY], *Sobranie russkikh prostykh pesen s notami* (Collection of Russian simple songs with their music), edited by V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1953, pp. 3-34.

smaller marks. The different approach, explained by Trutovsky in a new preface, can be seen in the following examples drawn from the first and the last part respectively:



Example No. III, 5 . ***Y dorodnova dobrova molodtsa*** **(The burly good young man), Trutovsky's collection, Part I, No. 1**



Example No. III, 6 – ***Skazali promolodtsa budto bez vesti propal*** **(They said my dear disappeared without leaving trace), Trutovsky's collection, Part IV, No. 3**

It is possible to suggest that the change was due to the issue of another collection, which was deemed to gain much success in the first part of the 19th century. I refer to the first part of the famous *Sobranie narodnykh russkich pesen s ikh golosami* (Collection of Russian popular songs with their music), printed in 1790. The selection and study of the songs were the work of Nikolay A. L'vov, architect, writer, playwright and expert of

Russian folklore,[589] whereas the music arrangement was realized by the piano teacher Johann Gottfried Pratsch (elsewhere Jan Bogumir Práč).[590] The anthology was inspired by Herder's *Volkslieder* (1778-79), from the title of which L'vov adopted the term *narodnaya pesnya* (folksong), from *Volk*, in Russian *narod*, preferring it to the used *prostaya pesnya* (simple song, as in Chulkov) or *sel'skaya pesnya* (rustic song).

As anticipated, the edition had gained international success,[591] and was followed by further parts, published respectively in 1806 (2nd part, in two volumes), and in 1815 (3rd part).

On the one side the songs were given by Pratsch in a more modern treatment, with more elaborated pianistic writing; on the other hand, as L'vov expressed in his preface, the aim was that of a more faithful respect of the authenticity of the music, which sometimes entailed that 'strange' passages were not rectified or corrected. This leads us to an issue that was amply discussed by musicians of the following generations up to the Russian school, that is the authenticity of the gathered popular tunes. In the introduction to the first edition L'vov called attention to its unprecedented fidelity to the peculiarities of the original:

> Сколь трудно было собрать голоса народных неписанных на нескольких тысячах верстах разсыпанных песен и положить оные на ноту часто с фальшивого пения неискусных

[589] Nikolay Aleksandrovich L'vov (1751-1803) was a man of vast interests, music lover and encyclopedist, poet, architect, archaelogist and geologist, a botanist and imperial advisor on coal resources, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and of the Academy of Fine arts. He led a literary salon attended by such writers as Derzhavin, Khemnitser, Kapnist, the painters Dmitry Lavitsky and Vladimir Borovikovsky, and musicians, among whom Giuseppe Sarti. He was among the first literary men to tackle the issue of *narodnost'* in literature. According to Viktor Terras, although he apparently took his poetic talent lightly, much of his verse revealing an ironic attitude toward both self and subject, he rendered several important services to Russian poetry at a time when the question of its direction and cultural function was of particular issue. Other members of St. Petersburg's literary society, most notably Derzhavin and Khemnitser, regularly sought his judgements of their work. Both by example and by his work as a translator and editor, L'vov heightened his contemporaries' awareness of the indigenous folk contribution to the whole Russian culture. Apart from the collection of songs, in a 1793 translation of an Old Norse saga sought to demonstrate the appropriateness of Russian popular verse forms capturing the spirit of the original. Indeed, it was his insistence upon accentual verse as being more expressive of the national character than the syllabotonic forms established by mid-18th century practice that distinguished L'vov's original verse. The surviving fragment of an epic poem Dobrynya (1796), which he had planned as a proof of his contention, consists of unrhymed lines with varying length and beat. See *Handbook of Russian Literature*, edited by V. Terras, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1985, p. 268.

[590] Composer and music teacher, of Czech origin, he moved to St. Petersburg at the end of the 1770s, and teached music since the 1780s, at the *Teatral'noe uchilishche* since 1 January 1784 and at the Smol'ny Institute in the years 1791-95. Among his works there are the arrangements for fortepiano of the operas *Gore-bogatyr' Kosometovich* by Martín y Soler and *Fevey* by Pashkevich, both on libretto by Catherine; *Allemande* for piano (1794); *Fandango* for piano (1795); Two Russian songs for harpsichord (1796); Variations on the Russian theme *Akh ty, Van'ka, ty Van'ka goryun* (1831); a *Grande sonata* for cello and piano op. 6; 12 variations for piano (1802); Pechal'ny marsh for the funeral of M. I. Kutuzov (1813); Eight variation on the Russian theme *Ty podi, moya korovushka, domoy* (1815); the didactic work *Polnaya shkola dlya fortepiano* (Complete school for piano, 1816). He died after 1816.

[591] The collection was the source for Beethoven's three "Razumovsky" Quartets Op. 59, nos. 1-3.

> пеыцов, всякий легко представить может; но трудность еще не меньшая предстояла в том, что бы не повредя народной Мелодии сопроводить оную правильным басом, который бы и сам был в характере народном. Сие однако с возможным рачением исполнено, и бас положен почти везде так; а инде весьма близко, как при исправном хоре, в народных песнях поют оный. Сохранив таким образом все свойство народного Российского пения, собрание сие имеет и все достоинство подлинника: простота и целость оного ни украшением музыкальным, ни поправками иногда странной Мелодии нигде не нарушены.[592]

[Anyone can easily see how hard it was to collect the tunes of these unwritten folk songs, dispersed over thousands of versts, and to notate the mas often as not from the faulty singing of untrained singers. But no less difficult was the task of – without spoiling the folk melody – accompanying it with a correct bass, itself in the folk character. These tasks, however, have been accomplished with all possible diligence, and the bass has been set almost everywhere just so; and even very close to what an impeccable chorus might sing when performing these songs. Having thus preserved all the peculiarities of Russian folk singing, this collection possesses as well all the virtues of the original: its simplicity and integrity are uncompromised, whether by correcting the sometimes strange melodies or by embellishing them.][593]

L'vov's observations try to justify Pratsch's work, which, as anticipated, will be harshly judged by posterior musicians and scholars, such as Balakirev and Serov in the 1860s, up to Lyadov in the 1890s. According to Taruskin,

> Pratsch's arrangements, moreover, naive as they may seem with their right-hand doubling of the voice and their "Alberti's" and "murky's" in the left, are much more than mere "basses". They are convincingly artistic in a way that previous arrangements (i.e., those in Trutovsky's collection […], which did assume the form of a simple melody-plus-bass on two staves) were not.
>
> In effect Pratsch transformed each *narodnaya pesnya* entrusted to him into a diminutive art song with a well-wrought if conventional keyboard accompaniment prefiguring the idiom of the so-called domestic romance (*bïtovoy romans*) of the next generation, thus actively collaborating with the "folk", in the spirit of the Enlightenment, to produce a new genre that purposely mediated or transcended the borders between genres (read: social classes).[594]

Anyway, as Taruskin points out, the treatment is justified by the standard of the time. L'vov tries to find a relation between the issue of harmonization and the traditions of the choral polyphony, which much anticipated future main issues. The 'salon' character itself of Pratsch's harmonization, rather than being a mark of infidelity to the folk original, make the collection one of the most integral documents of the uses of the times when it was created. As Belyaev outlined, the approach was not so scientific as it would be in modern times. The collection was realized with the means, artistic and technical-musical, available at the time.[595]

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[592] [N. A. L'VOV], *O russkom narodnom penii* (On Russian popular singing), in *Sobranie narodnykh pesen s ikh golosami, na muzyku polozhil Ivan Prach* (Collection of Russian popular songs with their music, set to music by Johann Pratsch), edited by V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1955, pp. 42-3.

[593] Eng. Transl. by R. Taruskin in R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the Folk…*, pp. 16-7.

[594] *ivi*, p. 17.

[595] V. M. BELYAEV, *«Sobranie narodnykh pesen s ikh golosami» L'vova-Pracha* (The *Collection of Russian popular songs with their music* by L'vov-Pratsch), in *Sobranie narodnykh pesen s ikh golosami, na muzyku polozhil Ivan Prach* (Collection of Russian popular songs with their music, set to music by Johann Pratsch), edited by V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1955, pp. 3-43.

First of all, the collection was realized not with a previous research on the field, but in Saint Petersburg. In his essay Taruskin wonders about who were the real informers of L'vov, and his research leads to the suggestion that one of them could be a Peterburgian connoisseur of folklore, some Mitrofanov, who was not at a peasant (that is the supposed typical performer of such music in the far province), but possibly belonged to a midgrade civil rank, not so inferior to that of L'vov himself. The stylistic features of Pratsch's arrangements, possibly the same of this kind of informers, reflect not a documentary aim, but the artistic tastes of the addressee, that could be music students such those of Pratsch, or the members of the literary circle to which L'vov belonged. What it was sought for was not something exotic, as it was for following generations, since the *pochvenniki* of the 1750s. On the contrary, L'vov and Pratsch were faithful to the folksong as it was performed at their time in Saint Petersburg, and did not adulterate it, but possibly registered it just in the adulterated way in which it came to town.

For instance, there are, according to Taruskin, reasons to suggest that the use of the leading tone, long time considered evidence of the forced Westernization of Russian folksong by Western of Westernized arrangers (by Balakirev among others), was actually endemic in the melodies of the time. Informers were in fact not influenced by later conceptions of pureness typical of the romantic period.

Although L'vov in the preface to his work points out that the gathered material could be a "rich source" "for opera composers," that could made of it a "glorious use" starting from the very 'strangeness' (*strannost'*) of such songs as the *protyazhnye*,[596] the collector gathered material from any kind of source: mostly in Saint Petersburg by local informers, but also from earlier manuscript collections, or even from operas in which they had been already inserted, as in the case of the song *Vysoko sokol letaet* (The hawk soars aloft), included in L'vov's opera *Yamshchiki na podstave* (The coachmen at the relay, for the discussion about the song see below – *Opera Komicheskaya* – A Repertoire Sketch).[597] A circulation in both senses can be thus detected between folksong collections and the works on Russian subjects (and not only) produced at the same time: almost forty of the of the included songs are thus included in operas of the last quarter of the 18th century (such as *Coachmen at the relay*, *The miller magician*, *The Saint Petersburg bazaar*, *The early reign of Oleg*, *Fedul and his children*, including also Cimarosa's *Le astuzie femminili*).

Thus, the collection appears to be a faithful document to the real Peterburgian uses of time, representing what Margarita Mazo had defined "the complex symbiotic

[596] *Sobranie narodnykh pesen s ikh golosami, na muzyku polozhil Ivan Prach…*, p. 42.
[597] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the Folk…*, p. 20.

relationship that existed in the late-eighteenth-century urban tradition in Russia,"[598] which evidently affected not only texts, as seen in the practice of translation, but also music materials, in a sense that distinguishes Russian comic operas from similar European experiences of the same time.

As seen with regards to translations and the need to 'Russify' theatre works, also the use of Russian popular songs was theorized in theatre, again by the quoted Plavil'shchikov. In his article *Nechto o vrozhdennom svoystve dushi Rossiyskikh* (Something about the intrinsic property of the Russian soul),[599] the actor outlined:

> Коренная Российская музыка имеет нечто в себе весьма достойное примечания: песни свадебныя, хоральныя, полевыя и бурлацкия в напевах своих так отличны, что без слов можно узнать их свойство… Нежныя же и компатныя не уступают в приятности своей никаким на свете… но музыка во всех равно отличием своим от музык Европейских Азиятских доказывает, что Россияне имеют нечто свое собственное. Пляски наши также по обстоятельствам различны, и ни один на свете народ не имеет столь много изъясняющей и почти говорящей пляски, как Россияне.[600]

[Folkloric Russian music had in itself something very worth of notice: the wedding songs, choral, rustic and *burlatskie* songs are so outstanding in their tunes, that it is possible to recognize their origin without words… The sweet and little ones are inferior to nothing in the world… but the music in all them is so distinguished from the music of Europe and Asia that demonstrates that Russians have something of their own. Our dances are so different according to the contexts, and no people in the world has so many elegant and almost talking dances, as Russian people.]

The need to defend Russian original music was necessarily bound to the influence of Italian music, which was generally considered more artistically valid. The idea is expressed in the article *Vozrazheniya neizvestnogo na pred''idushchuyu stat'yu o teatre* (Anonymous objections to the previous article on theatre):[601]

> Италиянцы говорят, что в Руской музыке нет ничего привлекательного. Вот это уже непростительно! – Какое жесткое ухо! – слыша каждый день по улицам песни наших извозщиков не могут приучить себя к согласию здешняго напева; - иному бы это всю душу разщекотало. Но в извинение свое говорят Италианцы, что не слышат никакой приятности в песнях для того, что оглохли от грошу певчих; так то их музыка наша уголонила.[602]

[Italians say that in Russian music there is nothing attractive. This is unforgivable! – What a harsh ear! – hearing every day in the streets the songs of our coachmen they cannot get used to the harmony of the music of ours; - to another this would tickle the entire soul. But as their excuse Italians say that hey do not

[598] *A Collection of Russian Folk Songs by Nikolai Lvov and Ivan Prach*, edited by M. H. Brown, with an introduction and appendixes by M. Mazo, Ann Arbor / London, UMI Reseach Press 1987, p. 49.
[599] P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Nechto o vrozhdennom svoystve dushi Rossiyskikh* (Something about the intrinsic property of the Russian soul), in *Sochineniya Petra Plavil'shchikova* (Works by Pyotr Plavil'shchikov), Ch. IV, Sanktpeterburg, tip. V. P. Plavil'shchikova 1816, pp. 1-24.
[600] *ivi*, pp. 22-3.
[601] P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Vozrazheniya neizvestnogo na pred''idushchuyu stat'yu o teatre* (Anonymous objections to the previous article on theatre), in *Sochineniya Petra Plavil'shchikova…*, pp. 86-99.
[602] *ivi*, p. 93.

perceive any pleasure in songs because they went deaf because of the singers; so that our music appeased them.]

To the anonymous author, Plavil'shchikov answered in *Otvet sochinitelya na vozrozhdenie neizvestnago* (The author's answer to the anonymous objections).[603] The first argument is the polyhedric nature of Russian talents, compared with the Italian unique musical skills (!):

> Сколь бы бледна была Италия, когда бы она кроме музыки не имела других способов к своему пропитанию, - и значит ли это перебить хлебу Италии, когда я воображаю, что естьли обработать коренные Руские напевы, то выйдет приятная и усладительная музыка? Значит ли это, чтоб вся Россия записалась в музыканты, и руки собирающия лавры украсились балалайкою, когда несколько Россиян будут помыслять привести в совершенство свою музыку? … Российский народ, благодаря Всевышнему! Во основании души своей имеет ко всему непостижимую способность: он может греметь и Марсовою трубою, и Апполоновою лирою и собирать во всех частей наук и художеств славныя подати […].[604]

[How poor would be Italy, if except for music it did not have any other means for its own subsistence, - and does that mean to take away bread if I imagine, that if we could arrange Russian folk tunes, we would obtain a pleasant and delicious music? Does this mean that entire Russian population would became musicians, and the hands that gather laurel would adorn themselves with a balalaika, if some Russians think to take their own music to perfection?... The Russian people, thank God-almighty! In the deep of his soul has impenetrable means: they can thunder both with Mars's trumpets of and with Apollo's lyre and obtain results in all kind of science and arts […].]

The second argument is the beauty and richness of the Russian popular repertoire, witnessed just by the skilled Italian composers who were the main argument of his opposer:

> Вы устами италианцев насмехаетесь над Рускими напевами, как будто бы других песен у нас и не было, кроме извощичьих… Я вас осмелюсь уверить, что Пэизелло и Галуппи, необинуяся, везде говорили, что они много нашли приятнаго в Руских напевах… Сарти, Чимарозо, Траетте и многие другие многократно слушали Руские напевы, и благодаря Бога к удовольствию Петербургских жителей никто не оглох.
>
> Как искусно поместили вы волынку, по которой пляшут Медведы в Париже и Ирокойца, под которым видно вы хотели разуметь меня, который кричит, что волынки лучше нет музыки на свете; и в тоже время в унылой нашей музыке находите приятную *мелодию*… Чему же должно верить? Но позвольте вам сказать, видно вы нашу музыку знаете по тому только, как вам налгали об ней оглохлые Италианцы… Наша музыка имеет свою унылость и свою веселость… Извольте купить собрание Руских песен, и попросите кого нибудь, что вы вам спели, и вы уверитесь несомненно, что наша музыка по различию обстоятельств имеет различную и верную свойственность…[605]

[Through the mouth of Italians you laugh at Russian tunes, as if we would not have other songs beyond those of the coachmen… I dare to inform you that Paisiello and Galuppi unhesitatingly told everywhere that they found a good deal of beauty in Russian tunes… Sarti, Cimarosa, Traetta and many others often listened to Russian tunes, and thank God for the pleasure of the Peterburgian inhabitants no one went deaf.

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[603] P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Otvet sochinitelya na vozrozhdenie neizvestnago* (The author's answer to the anonymous objections), in *Sochineniya Petra Plavil'shchikova…*, pp. 100-13.
[604] *ivi*, p. 107.
[605] *ivi*, pp. 107-8.

How skilfully you did refer to the bagpipe, at which sound bears dance in Paris and the Indian, through which you evidently intended me, crying in music there is nothing better than the bagpipe; and at the same time in our gloomy music you find a pleasant *melody*… What to we have to trust? Let me say that you evidently of our music know only what the deaf Italian have told you, which is false… Our music can be gloomy and lively… Please do buy a collection of Russian songs, and ask someone to sing the,, and you will be undoubtedly convinced that our music for a series of reasons has its own varied and real properties…]

Here a direct reference to the L'vov-Pratsch collection is suggested by the advice the author gives to buy an anthology, but also by the quotation of Paisiello's judgement, which was recorded by L'vov he anonymously premised to the music:

> Где охотник нечто доброе примечает, там знаток часто оное находит, и малозначущие вещи становятся внимания достойными: искусный нашего века мызукальный сочинитель [Paisiello is indicated in a footnote] нашёл в наших протяжных песнях столько доброго и образ пения оных столь приавильно хором исполняем, что не хотел верить, чтобы были они случайное творение простых людей, но полагал оные произведением искусных мухыкальных сочинителей. Голос срастей служил не учёным певцам нашим вместо науки <…>.[606]

[Where an amateur notices something good, often there a connoisseur fids it, and insignificant things become worthy of attention: a skilled music composer of our time [Paisiello is indicated in the footnote] found our lyric songs so good and the way they are sung by the chorus so correct that he could not believe that these were the accidental creation of simple people, thinking they were the work of skilled music composer. The voice of passions served instead of science to our untrained singers […].]

Possibly Plavil'shchikov had in mind also Galuppi's judgement on the Court cappella registered by Stählin ("I've never heard such an excellent chorus in Italy"),[607] and the fact that both he and Galuppi exploited the chorus in their operas (see Chap. III – Part I--), although this chorus generally performed art music. Also in the invention of horn orchestras pointed out by Stählin the actor finds a Russian peculiarity:

> Естьли же позволено выводить следствия из несомненных начал, то я осмеливаюсь угадывать, что из припасов Руской музыки искусный сочинитель, хотя бы он и у Италиянцов научился правилам согласия, без всякого чуда может создать язык сердца.
>
> Напрасно вы утверждаете, что в России одни только гудки да балалайки; я осмелюсь вам указать такую музыку, которой нигде нет, и которой весь свет музыкальный удивляется; но которая изобретена в России… Сходите на Егерский двор или в Семеновский полк, вы услышите роговую музыку, которая вам право понравится.[608]

[If one can infer consequences from undoubted beginnings, I dare guess that from the stock of Russian music a skilled composer, also one who has studied the rules of harmony with the Italians, could reach the language of the heart without any miracle.

You vainly affirm that in Russian there are only gudok and balalaikas; I dare show you such a music, that has no equal anywhere, and to which the entire musical world will be astonished; but that has

[606] [N. A. L'VOV], *O russkom narodnom penii* (About Russian popular singing), preface to the first edition of 1790, in *Sobranie narodnykh pesen s ikh golosami, na muzyku polozhil Ivan Prach* (Collection of Russian popular songs with their music, set to music by Johann Pratsch), edited by V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo 1955, p. 39.

[607] "Такого великолепного хора я никогда не слыхал в Италии." YA. SHTELIN (J. VON STÄHLIN), *Izvestiya o muzyke v Rossii…*, p. 59.

[608] P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV, *Otvet sochinitelya na vozrozhdenie neizvestnago…*, pp. 108-9.

been created in Russia… Go to the Egersky Court or to the Semyonovsky Regiment, and you'll listen to the music of horn orchestras, which you will certainly like.]

The 1790s and the beginning of the next century saw the publication of numbers of collections of the same type, which are characterized by a similar osmosis of themes with operas: I. K. Shnora's *New Russian Songbook* (1791), Popov's *Russian Erato*, Dmitriev's *Pocket Songbook* (1796). Among the most renown collections up to the 20th century there figure:

- 1831, Ivan A. Rupin (or Rupini), collection *Narodnye russkie pesni, aranzhirovannye dlya golosa s akkompanementom fortepiano i khora* (Popular Russian songs arranged for voice with the accompaniment of piano and chorus), reissued by several publishers, witnessing its success;[609]

- 1833-34, Danil Kashin's two-volume *Russkie narodnye pesni, sobrannye i izdannye dlya peniya i fortepiano* (Russian popular songs, collected and published for voice and piano), re-issued in 1889;[610]

- in the 1830s, P. V. Kireevsky collected popular songs (only texts), which were published only in the 1860s-70s;[611]

- 1860 a composer of foreign origin, Konstantin P. Vil'boa (possibly Villebois) published numerous editions of Russian songs in various arrangements, starting from *Russkie narodnye pesni. Zapisannye pod penie i arranzhirovannye dlya odnogo golosa, s akkompanimentom forte-piano* (Russian popular songs, Transcribed from singing and arranged for one voice with accompaniment of piano);[612]

- 1860, *Sbornik russkikh narodnykh pesen* (Collection of Russian popular songs) edited by M. Balakirev, in which the composer published a series of forty songs in his arrangement for voice and piano, trying to avoid as much as possible the use of the leading

[609] A modern edition of the collection has been published as I. RUPIN, *Narodnye russkie pesni, aranzhirovannye dlya golosa s akkompanementom fortepyano i khora* (Popular Russian songs arranged for voice with the accompaniment of piano and chorus), Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1955. For epoch edition see general biblioghraphy.

[610] *Russkiya narodnyya pesni dlya peniya (s khorom) D. Kashina* (Russian popular songs for singing (with chorus) by D. Kashin), S.-Peterburg, u I. Yurgensona, Varshava, u Bende, Kiev, u L. Idzikovskago [1889]. In modern edition the collection has been published as [D. N. KASHIN], *Russkie narodnye pesni, Sobrannye i izdannye dlya peniya i fortepiano Danilom Kashinym* (Russian popular songs, Collected and published for voice and piano by Danil Kashin), edited by V. M. Belyaev, Moskva, Gos. Mus. Izdatel'stvo 1959. For other epoch editions see the general bibliography.

[611] *Pesni, sobrannye P. V. Kireevskym* (Songs collected by P. V: Kireevsky), in ten issues (Moscow 1860-74); see *Sobranie narodnykh pesen P. V. Kireevskogo* (The collection of popular songs of P. V. Kireevsky), edited by A. D. Somoynov, Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo "Nauka" 1977.

[612] *Russkie narodnye pesni. Zapisannye pod penie i arranzhirovannye dlya odnogo golosa, s akkompanimentom forte-piano* (Russian popular songs, Transcribed from singing and arranged for one voice with accompaniment of piano), Sanktpeterburg, F. Stellovsky [1860].

tone in favour to the natural minor, considered more ancient and authentic.[613] He was one of the most distinguished opponents to the use of the leading tone made by Pratsch in his anthology;

- among the exponents of the Mighty Handful, Rimsky-Korsakov also compiled two volumes of Russian national themes: *A Hundred Russian popular tunes* Op. 24 (1875-76) and Forty popular songs (1875-82);[614]

- 1877, *Russkiya narodnyya pesni* (Russian popular songs,), collected by P. V. Shteyn, which contains only texts;[615]

-1889, Lopatin-Prokunin's two-part *Sbornik russkikh narodnykh liricheskikh pesen* (Anthology of Russian popular lyric songs);[616]

- in 1904-09, Linyova published her two-volume anthology of songs transcribed from the phonographic recording.[617]

The list could be much longer if adding the collections of such authors as Gerstemberg and Dittmar, Stakhovich, Vestfal', Kastal'sky, and many others, whom is no worth quoting one by one, but who contributed to a tradition of performance and research of popular music that lasts still nowadays.

Later critics notwithstanding, such arrangements as that of the opening choruses in *Yamshchiki na podstave*, which L'vov included in his collection directly from Fomin's version in the opera, remained for a century the single attempt in Russian art music to reflect in their fullness the traditions of Russian folk choral singing, and L'vov's description of the custom of Russian heterophony (*podgoloski*) in the preface to his collection remained an isolated one until the publication of polyphonic field transcriptions of *podgoloski* by Yuly Mel'gunov, a Moscow pianist who in the late 1870s 'discovered' the heterophonic practices, which L'vov had described some decades before.[618] Seemingly, by this time L'vov's work had been forgotten if Mel'gunov's transcriptions, which began

[613] M. BALAKIREV, *Sbornik russkikh narodnykh pesen sostavlennym M. Balakirevym* (Collection of Russian popular songs edited by M. Balakirev), Sankt-Peterburg, Iogansen without date.
[614] A modern edition is included in his *opera omnia*: N. A. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, *Sborniki russkikh narodnykh pesen* (Collections of Russian popular songs), in *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy* (Collection of full works), tom 47, edited by N. V. Shelkov, Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1952
[615] [P. V. SHTEYN], *Russkiya narodnyya pesni, sobrannyya P. V. Shteynom* (Russian popular songs, collected by P. V. Shteyn), Moskva, universitetskaya tipografiya 1877.
[616] In a mdern edition the anthology has been published as N. M. LOPATIN, V. P. PROKUNIN, *Russkie narodnye liricheskie pesni* (Russian popular lyric songs), edited by V. M. Belyaev, 1889, Moskva, Muzgiz 1956.
[617] E. E. LINYOVA, *Velikorusskie pesni v narodnoy garmonizatsii* (Great-Russian songs in the popular harmonization), 2 voll., Sankt-Peterburg, Akademiya nauk 1904-09.
[618] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the Folk…*, p. 13.

appearing in 1879, were rejected as 'barbarous' by a supporter of Russian folk music as Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov.[619]

As Taruskin points out,

> it was not until the days of institutional field collecting within an explicitly "scientific" (that is, academic and anthropological) purview – the expeditions sponsored by Tsar Alexander III's own Imperial geographical Society in St. Petersburg (beginning in 1893), and those of the Musical Ethnographic Commission at Moscow University (around the turn of the century) – that Pratsch's presentational format, and the aesthetic it implied, would be effectively challenged.[620]

Opera komicheskaya – A Repertoire Sketch

In this section I will try to enlist the most known Russian comic operas, some of them having been already mentioned in the repertoire of the main Russian theatres of Catherine's time, and to add some more information about those about which it was possible to find it. Most of them were already recorded by Mooser, though in his own translation, without the original title, a fact that often hampers a clear distinction between original works, remakes and translations. Obviously, this cannot be considered a full repertoire, but I've tried to consider a large repertoire of sources, in order to gather and update the available information, many years after Mooser's and Findeyzen's studies.

The most reliable source seems to be the *Drammatichesky slovar'* (Dramatic dictionary), compiled in 1787 by an unknown author, and presenting a good number of Russian original operas and operas given in Russian translation.[621]

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[619] N. A. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, *Chronicle of My Musical Life* (eng. Transl. by J. A. Joffe as *My Musical Life*), London, Eulenburg Books, 1974, p. 257.

[620] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the Folk…*, p. 18. "The MEC publications were "phonographic," representing the last word in hardware. They specialized in descriptive scores of what was termed *podgolosochnoye mnogogolosiye* (*podgoloski* polyphony). The IGS publications, in the interest of scientific chastity, eschewed accompaniments altogether, even those of peasant informants, and presented no more than a single-line melodic transcription. Ironically, of course, this was a considerable step backward from Lvov's standard of fidelity to folk performance practice. The reduction to a single definitive line reflected an unconscious utopian idealization." *ibidem*.

[621] *Drammatichesky slovar' ili pokazaniya po al'favitu vsekh Rossiyskikh teatral'nykh sochineniy i perevodov, s oznacheniem imen izvestnykh sochiniteley, perevodchikov i slagateley muzyki, kotoryya kogda byli predstavleny na teatrakh, i gde i v kotoroe vremya napechatany. V pol'zu lyubyashchikh teatral'nyya predstavleniya.* (Dramatic dictionary or indication in alphabetical order of all Russian theatrical works and translations, with the report of the names of famous authors, translators and composers of the music, the time when they where staged in theatres, and the place and date of their publication. For the use of the lovers of theatrical performances.), Tochnoe vosproizvedenie izdaniya 1787 g. S.-PETERBURG izdanie knizhnago magazina "Novago vremeni" 1880. Inside this modern edition, the titlepage hads been reproduced, indicating "Sobrannoy v Moskve v Tipografii A. A. 1787 goda" (Compiled in Moscow in the Typography of A. A. in 1787).

A great number of the staged Russian operas (not exclusively comic) are also collected in the anthology called *Rossiysky featr*, *ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh Rossiyskikh Featral'nykh sochineniy* (Russian Theatre, or Full Collection of all the Russian Theatrical works). The collection, consisting of 43 parts, was issued by the Imperial Academy of Sciences, under the supervision of its Director Ekaterina Dashkova, in the period from 1786 to 1794, when the princess requested a leave of absence, after the mentioned quarrel she had with the empress for the inclusion of Yakov Knyazhnin's tragedy *Vadim Novgorodsky* (Vadim of Novgorod, 1789), which the Empress had claimed was an attack on autocracy (see Chap. III – Part I – En Enlightened Empress).

At the Russian National Library of Saint Petersburg a sort of sequel of this issue is housed in some numbers, with the slightly different title of *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom yazyke imeyushchikhsya* (Full Collection of all Theatrical Works in Russian Language), issued in the capital in 1801.[622] In contrast with the edition issued by the Academy of sciences, this is not an official one, but rather a series of bindings compiled seemingly for the private use of some E. D., identified by the librarians as Egor Davydov. Every collection is only the binding of different librettos together, with title page written by hand on the cover page, possibly by the owner himself. For this reason these volumes do not figure in the catalogue of the library as a unique edition (they are not an edition, actually), the catalogue having recorded their content separately. Nevertheless, every binding was seemingly considered by their compiler as a sequel of *Rossiysky featr*, the numeration of each single volume continuing that of the Academy of Sciences. I was able to identify numbers 46, 47, 49, 54 55, 57, 58, 60, 66, 69, and 74 (all dating 1801), which makes clear the aim of continuing the series with lots of materials, actually including not only original works, but a good deal of translations.

The first issue of *Russian theatre* contains an introduction with the declaration of the main purpose of the publication:

> Любителям словесных наук известно, что у всех как древних так и новейших времен провсещенных народов Феатральныя творения уважаемыя сохраняются в весныя времена издаваемыми в свете полными оных собраниями. Россия хотя и преимущественно может хвалиться обширностью и бокатством своего слова, которое особливо в преславный век Великия ЕКАТЕРИНЫ отличнейшими умопроизведениями достигло до вышней степени совершенства, и что между Российскими Феатральными сочинениями находятся такия, кои остротою мыслей, приятностию и важностию слова, замысловаты шутками, а наипаче насеянными в оных нравоучением способствуя к искоренению предрасуждений и пороков, служат ясным доказательством, что и отечество наше изобилует таковыми полезными сочинениями; но как оныя выходя в свет из разных типографии и продаваясь в розницу,

[622] *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom yazyke imeyushchikhsya* (Full collection of all theatrical works in Russian language), v Sanktpeterburge, 1801 goda, E. D.

> неизбежно подвергаются не только утрате, но с течением времени и самому забвению, умальчивая уже о том, что за неудобностию для желающих иметь оныя у себя все вкупе собранными, остаются многия ез них совсем неизвестными: то Ея Сиятельство Княгиня Екатерина Романовна Дашкова, яко Императорской Российской Академии Председатель, усердствуя о славе отечества своего относительно к распространению пользы Российскаго слова, препоручила издать собрание всех Российских трагедий, комедий, драмм и опер, сколько их собрать возможно будет, надеясь несомненно, что оное послужит как к вяшщему прославлению наших сочинителей, так и вообще к удовольствию публики. И по сему издается теперь первая часть Российскаго Феатра; а за сею и последующия части по порядку непрерывно одна за другою издаваться будут.[623]

[The lovers of the letters know that in every time, ancient and modern, the Theatrical works are respectfully preserved through the edition their complete corpus. Russia can mostly boast of the vastness and richness of its word, which notably in the most glorious century of Catherine the Great through most excellent products of the mind reached a high level of perfection. [Russia can also be proud of the fact] that among Russian Theatrical works there are some that, with their sharpness of mind, agreeableness and importance of the word, intricate jokes, and especially the deep-rooted in them moral teachings that make the eradication of prejudices and vices possible, are a clear proof that our country too is replete with such useful compositions; but since they come out from different printing and retailing, they inevitably are not only lost, but with the passing of time also forgiven, not revealing the fact that for the inconvenience for the ones who wish to have them bought, most of them remain absolutely unknown: Her Excellency the Princess Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, in quality of Director of the Imperial Russian Academy, being zealous for the glory of her fatherland and for the spreading of the useful Russian word, entrusted to publish a collection of all Russian tragedies, comedies, dramas and operas, as many as possible will be collected, hoping that this undoubtedly serve to the glorification of our writers, and in general to the delight of the audience. For now the first part of The Russian Theatre is published; after it the subsequent parts will be issued continuously one after another in order.]

Seemingly, among the aims there was the demonstration of Russian writers to produce their own repertoire, literary and operatic. Seemingly, Dashkova could not have take the initiative without the approval of the Empress herself, who in this phase sympathized with her in her literary tastes, especially in her desire to elevate Russian to a high place among the literary languages of Europe. In the same way we can understand the issue of the collection *Russian theatre* as an outgrowth of that of the language codification.

Here is a list of as many as possible Russian comic operas of Catherine's time:

1772

- The earliest chronologically was *Anyuta*, a one-act comedy with music, which was performed for Catherine by the Court singers at Tsarskoe Selo on 26 August 1772.[624]

[623] *Preduvedomlenie* (Introduction), in *Rossiysky Featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh rossiyskikh teatral'nykh sochineniy*, Chast' I, v Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1786 goda pp. 3-4.

[624] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, p. 320. The libretto was later issued in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVIII, 1789, as *Anyuta, komicheskaya opera v odnom deystvii, Predstavlena v pervy raz v Sarskom sele pridvornymi pevchimi Avgusta 26 dnya, 1772 goda* (Anyuta, comic opera in one act, premiered in Tsarskoe Selo by Court actors on 26 August 1772). According to the *Dramatic Dictionary*: "Сия опера из первых комических на Российском языке играна. Напечатана в

Anyuta is generally considered the ancestress of all Russian small operas and musical comedies. The text, in verses, was written by Mikhail Popov (1742 – ca. 1790), otherwise known as a journalist and folklore collector, former member of the Yaroslavl' troupe that was at the origins of the Russian Court troupe.[625] According to Mooser:

> bientôt se révéla […] écrivain doué d'un talent original, en mettant au jour des chansons qui, comme son livret d'*Aniouta*, évouquaient des scènes et des types empruntés aux moeurs populaires russes.
>
> Pour ce qui concerne plus particulièrement Aniouta, on peut y voir une ébauche encore assez imparfaite, sorte de préfiguration de l'opéra-comique russe qui [...] devait attendre jusqu'en 1777, pour se formuler enfin valablement avec le livret et la partition de *La renaissanse*, joués alors à Moscou.[626]

According to Karlinsky, "Popov's play follow closely the mode of representing peasant life developed be Favart and Rousseau."[627] The heroine, the adopted daughter of a poor peasant, is being forced into a distasteful marriage with a hired hand. A handsome young nobleman named Viktor falls in love with her and, upon investigating her origins, discovers that Anyuta is a noblewoman by birth, the daughter of a colonel and thus a suitable match for himself. The disappointed foster father and the hired hand are easily placated by small sums of money. According to Karlinsky, "While their extreme poverty and very hard life are made explicit in the play, Aniuta and the two peasant men are shown as crude, grasping, foul-mothed creatures. Only the noble Victor is endowed by the author with some semblance of dignity and humanity."[628]

The music for this piece is nowadays lost. It is not clear whether there was an original score composed for it, or if the musical numbers were simply sung to the melodies of currently popular songs (as with the French *timbres*). This second possibility seems more likely to Russian music historians. According to Rabinovich, the composer of the

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Санктпетербурге 1772 года" (This opera is among the first to be staged in Russia. It was printed in Saint Petersburg in 1772), *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 19

[625] Mikhail Ivanovich Popov (1742-1790) was a poet, a writer, and a playwright. An actor with the court theatre under Empress Elizabeth, Popov later attended Moscow University, worked as a secretary for Catherine II's Legislative Commission, and contributed some pieces to the satirical journals of the 1760s. his literary activities are characterized by a tendency toward elements of popular culture. Popov's *Songs, Composed by Mikhailo Popov* (1765) became the first Russian songbook printed under an author's name. He then participated to the publication of Mikhail Chulkov's *Sobranie russkikh pesen* (Collection of Russian songs, 1770-74). Popov also wrote elegies, parables, epigraphs, and made translations from the French. He produced a three-volume adventure novel, *Slavenskie drevnosti* (Slavonic antiquities, 1770-71, 4th ed. 1794).

[626] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 106.

[627] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 120.

[628] *ibidem*.

music was Vasily Pashkevich, who served as a violin player at Court since 1763, and was soon to distinguish himself as a composer of Russian *opéras-comiques*.[629]

Its subject matter, the speech of its peasant characters, its songs and proverbs mark it as a significant innovation in Russian theatrical history. The audiences of Moscow and Saint Petersburg met rarely these elements *in literature*, even though they were present in everyday life. "[…] the fact that the peasant heroine is discovered in the end to have been of the gentry all along […] helped to make more palatable a crossing of class lines which might otherwise have called for protests. It is characteristic of the position of Anyuta's author in the history of Russian literature, that along with Chulkov he was one of the most zealous and serious collectors of folklore."[630] As already anticipated, Popov's *Anyuta* did set the pattern for the numerous comic operas that were written and produced in Russia during the following three decades. According to Karlinsky, Popov's incorporation of native folk songs into his text led his followers to feature such songs, either authentic or imitations, in their plays. The name Anyuta (possibly inspired by Favart's *Annette et Lubine*, known as *Anyuta i Lyubim* in Russian and widely performed in the 1760s and 1770s both in versions set in France and in "adaptations to our customs") became as canonical for peasant heroines in comic operas as Sophia was for young gentlewomen in serious comedy.[631]

The collection Russian theatre records another comic opera in the same year 1772: *Lyubovnik koldun* (The lover magician).[632] The action takes place in a village,[633] where the three sisters Menida, Tanya and Liza live with their aunt Starodumova (Mrs 'Old Thinker'). The action opens with the three girls singing while occupied in housework. The chorus they sing ("Kak trava uvyanet v pole", As the grass fades in the field, I, 1) is foreseen, by the author of the libretto, to be sung on the tune "Chto povyshe goroda

[629] Of Pashkevich himself we do not know a great deal. He was born c. 1742. From 1763 he was a violinist in the court orchestra and later a 'composer of music'. In 1783 he became a chamber musician in Catherine's court and on 1 March was appointed 'Court Kapellmeister of ball music'. 'For differente musical compositions and labours outside his normal duties' he received in 1790 the sum of 1600 roubles. He died in 1800. He is known to be the composer of the operas *The Miser* (1782), *Fevey* (1786), to have partly composed *The Early Reign of Oleg* (1790) and *Fedul and His Children* (1791), and to have edited the opera *As You Live, So Are You Judged* (1792). G. R. SEAMAN, *Folk-song in Russian Opera in the 18th Century*, *Slavonic and East European Review*, 41: 96 (1962: Dec.), p. 151 n.
[630] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 151.
[631] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 120.
[632] *Lyubovnik Koldun, opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii. Sochinena dlya Blagorodnago Obshchestva, I predstavlena v 1772 godu* (The lover magician, comic opera in one act. Composed for the noble society, and staged in 1772), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788, pp. 215-65. According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionaty*, the libretto of the opera was printed by the Moscow university in 1779. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 75.
[633] "Действие в деревне", *Lyubovnik Koldun…*, p. 216.

Saratova", What is higher than the city of Saratov). After singing, the girls comment the text created by Liza, which refers to a separation.[634] Menida and Tanya suggest that the song appeared after the leaving for the city of Milovidov ('Gentle Aspect'). One song each is sung between the spoken dialogues. The girls know that their aunt had called a magician, and they want to ask him about Milovidov, who they don't see since a long time. In the second scene, the aunt announces the arrival of the magician: "great soothsayer, fortune-teller, stargazer and professor, that anyone can think; he can show you the one who's thinking about […]."[635] His main characteristic is that "he always sings, and we also have to answer him by singing, in order to be better understood by him."[636] Tanya sings to the tune "Uzh kak po mostu mostochku" (As along the bridge, the little bridge) her unwilling to ask about anything, because she feels satisfied with her present life ("O bogatstve kto radeet", Who's obliged to richness, I, 2). Menida answers in a very vague way, also singing a song which tune is not indicated. Liza sings on the tune "Akh kak v gorode Kaluge" (Ah! How in the city of Kaluga) the song "L'zya li, chtob mog rebenok" (Is it possible, that my baby), which is met by a harsh comment from her sister Tanya. It will be Starodumova who will try to make peace among the sisters, the dialogue going on interspersed with music numbers (solo and chorus). The magician enters in a strange dress, with a mask and a stick. On the tune "Vy razdaytes', razoydites'" (Make way, step aside) he warns the girls from hiding their thoughts ("Kto svoey ne skazhet tayny, mysli skroet", The one who does not tell the secrets, who hide his thoughts, I, 3), and announces that everything he will sing will come true. After demonstrating his science,[637] he asks to remain alone in the room, takes off his mask and reveals his real identity, and his intention to marry Liza. Starodumova is the first to enter, received by the false magician (who sings on the tune "Akh vzdumal borovik"). She confesses her love for Milovidov, and that of the three sisters too. With a trick, he manages to convince the woman to renounce to him "Trudno tem ne uteshatisya", It is difficult not to be comforted by that, sung to the tune "Ni pit', ni est' ne khochetsya", I'm not thirsty, nor hungry). Through other tricks Milovidov manages to turn the two sisters to other fiancés, (Tanya singing on the tune "Na matushke na Volge", On the mother Volga, Menida on "Kaby znala, kaby vedala", If I knew, if I foresaw), and to push Liza to join him. Milovidov tries to convince Liza to

[634] *ivi*, p. 218.
[635] "превеликой угадчик, хиромантик, астроном и профессор, которой узнает все, что с начала свнта было, что будет; а лучше всего узнает, что у кого на уме; также показывает он, кого кто ни задумает […]."*ivi*, pp. 222-3.
[636] "он безпрестанно почти поет, и так нам надобно ему песнями отвечать, чтоб он лучше нас выразумел." *ivi*, p. 223.
[637] "Ах! Он все знает, все знает!" (Ah! He knows all, knows all!) *ivi*, p. 231.

confess her love (duet "Ne stydis' priyatnoy strasti", Don't be ashamed by a pleasant passion, sung on the tune "Ya kalinushku lomala", I broke a little viburnum, I, 9), but, since she's going to express her feelings only to him, the magician is forced to take off his mask. They agree not to reveal their feeling to the others: by now they separate, and Milovidov will come back in his own aspect (duet "Est'li ya toboy lyubim", If I'm loved by you, on the tune "Zemlyanichka yagodka", A strawberry, I, 9). When Milovidov comes back as if from town, he obviously acts according to the magician's oracle, so that the other women are forcefully brought to concede him to Liza: "now what's to do is to satisfy the general will."[638] The marriage is celebrated with songs on the tunes: "Akh matushka toshnen'ko" (Ah mother, as it is), "V sele bylo Pokrovskom" (In the village of Pokrovsky), "Poshla nasha Paranya" (Our Paranya has gone), "Akh! Po mostu mostu" (Ah! Along the bridge, the bridge).

1774:

- The *Dramatic dictionary* records another opera, staged in Saint Petersburg in 1774: *Arkas i Irisa*, and revived in Moscow for the opening of Maddox's Vauxhall. According to the anonym author, the music by Kertselli was received by the audience with pleasure.[639]

1777

- The first opera to be staged in Moscow was *Pererozhdenie* (The re-birth), staged at the theatre on Znamenka street (before the opening of the Petrovsky theatre) on 8 January 1777.[640] The libretto was written by Matinsky, with music by Fomin.[641] The event

[638] "теперь осталось нам весельем увенчать общее желание." *ivi*, p. 260.
[639] "Маленькая опера с музыкою сочинена г. Майковым на открытие Московскаго публичнаго воксала, gde byla v pervoy raz predstavlena; и потом часто представляема как в ваксале, так и на большом театре. Музыка господина Керцеллия принята была Публикою с удовольствием." *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 20.
[640] *ivi*, p. 105.
[641] Evstigeny Ipatovich Fomin was born in St. Petersburg on 5 August 1761. His father was a grunner in the Tobolsk Infantry Regiment. At the age of six he was sent to the Peterburgian Academy of Arts where he studied clavichord playing under Buini and composition under Sartori and Raupach (who died in 1779). Finishing brilliantly at the Academy (it is learnt from surviving documents tha con completing his studies, he received a financial reward 'for his outstanding achievements'), he was sent in 1782 to Bologna where he studied under the famous composer and theoretician Padre Martini. On 19 November 1783 he had the disticntion of being elected a member of the Bologna Accademia Filarmonica. The following year he returned to St. Petersburg, where he worked till his death in 1800, having been appointed 'répetireur od opera parts' in 1796. There is also evidence that at one time he worked in the chancery under the supervision of

of the first Russian comic opera staged in the old capital was perceived as such, since according to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "No opera was performed at Moscow before this one; nor was it decided to perform it before permission to do so was asked from the public, in order to ascertain whether high-class comedy would not be preferred to opera".[642]

The libretto was issued in 1779 in Moscow, anonymously, and it could be the translation, signed Zakhar Kryzhanovsky, of some foreign play, probably French, that it's hard to identify nowadays.[643] A second version of the same opera will be given two years later by the composer D. A. Zorin, whose music seems to be preserved at the library of the Mariinsky theatre in Saint Petersburg.[644] According to Mooser, the music was not composed, but it was an arrangement of popular songs, "ce qui identifiait cet ouvrage aux pièces à vaudevilles, dont le théâtre parisien de la Foire avait fait une si abondante consommation, durant la première moitié du XVIII siècle."[645]

Vasily Maykov's (1728-1778) *Derevensky prasdnik, ili Uvenchannaya dobrodetel'* (The Village Feast, or Virtue Crowned), "pastoral drama with music in two acts", was staged in 1777 in Moscow with music by Mikhail Kertselli.[646] The libretto does not indicate the performers, but some of the characters are to be played "without singing": it is the case with Nadezhda'a mother, of the Ghost and of the village's *starosta*.[647] The action takes place in the Podmoskov'e, the surroundings of Moscow.

The plot is centred on the love between the shepherd Medor and the shepherdess Nadezhda, which is approved by their master at the condition that the girl responds to the

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Derzhavin, and was well acquainted with L'vov and Pratsch. G. R. SEAMAN, *Folk-song in Russian Opera in the 18th Century…*, p. 155 n.

[642] "Прежде сей оперы никаких еще опер на Московском театре не играли, и не прежде оную играть решились, как испрося у публики позволение сделанным особливо на сей случай разговором, между большею комедиею и сею оперою." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 105-6. English translation by Findeyzen. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 333. Later it was included in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXVIII, 1789, as *Opera Pererozhdenie, Igrannaya na Moskovskom Rossiyskom teatre 1777 goda, Genvarya 8 dnya* (Opera The re-birth, Staged at the Moscow theatre on 8 January 1777).

[643] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 200.

[644] Some extraits of the score have been included also in *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian music in music examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I, Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968, pp. 60-2.

[645] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 200.

[646] According to the *Dramatic dictionary*, the libretto was printed by the Moscow University. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 45. It has been included also in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788, pp. 135-72: [V. MAYKOV], *Derevensky prazdnik, ili Venchannaya dobrodetel', pastusheskaya drama s muzykoyu v dvukh deystviyakh. V. M. 1777 goda, v Moskve* (The village feast, or Virtue crowned, pastoral drama with music in two acts by V. M., 1777, Moscow).

[647] "bez peniya", [V. MAYKOV], *Derevensky prazdnik…*, in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788, p. 136.

young man.[648] While the first act presents the main characters, the young man in love and the reluctant girl, the second opens with a scene (II, 1) representing the good relationships existing between the shepherds and their master: two choruses are interspersed with spoken dialogues of the master and his host, of which the second synthetize the idyllic vision of serfdom:

ХОР
Мы руками работаем,
И за долг себе щитаем,
Быть в работе таковой:
Дав оброк с нас положенной,
В жизни мы живем блаженной,
За господской головой.

ГОСПОДИН.
Коль крестьяне мной довольны,
Сам собой доволени я.
Коль они богаты, вольны,
В том утеха вся моя.

ХОР.
Мы своей всегда судьбою
Все довольны и тобою:
Лошадей, коров, овец
Много мы имеем в поле,
И живем по нашей воле:
Ты нам барин и отец.[649]

[CHORUS
We work with hands,
And consider our duty,
To do like this at work:
Having given the tax we should pay,
We live in a beatific life,
Following the head of our master.

THE MASTER.
If peasants are satisfied with me,
Also I am satisfied.
If they are rich, free,
In this lays my comfort.

CHORUS.
We are all satisfied
With you and our destiny:
Horses, cows and sheep
In the field we have in numbers,
And we live according to our will:
You are for us master and father.]

[648] In this sense shows the relationships between the serfowner and his serfs as amiable.
[649] [V. MAYKOV], *Derevensky prazdnik*..., p. 157.

The harmony is interrupted by the arrival of the Gypsies (already announced to Medor and Nadezhda by a shepherd in the trio that concludes the first act (I, 5)). The master and his host's approach to them strongly contrasts their attitudes towards serfs:

> ГОСПОДИН.
> Сии плуты как птицы несеныя, ни оруют ни сеют, а сыты бывают: то-то истинные тунеядцы![650]
>
> [THE MASTER.
> These cheats are like brought-about birds, they don't cry, don't seed, but are always satiated: they are real parasites!]

Their arrival and ingenuous request for the re-establishment of the bribe system for judges gives the pretext for a digression referring to Catherine II's principles of justice:

> ГОСПОДИН.
> У нас ныне не такое время, чтоб так криво разсуждали; взятки совсем выводятся, да и судей таких мало, которые бы чести своей не хранили. Правда, что в семье без урода, да и то так же правда, что те, которые хранят свою честь и не богаты; да что же делать, что они не так щастливы, как бы им быть должно? Ежели бы об них была известна МУДРАЯ НАША ЗАКОНОДАВИЦА, ОНА бы их конечно наградила. Да та беда, что не все до ушей ЕЯ доходит, а Государь не сердцеведец. […][651]
>
> [THE MASTER.
> Today it is not that time, when one must think in that way; bribes are being taken out, and there is few judges who would not take care of their honour. It is true that a family there's always a black sheep, but it is also true that those who preserve their honour are not rich; what is to be done, if they are not so happy, as they should be? If OUR WISE LAW-GIVER knew about them, SHE would certainly award them. The real misfortune is that not all gets to HER ears, the Sovereign is not a diviner. […]]

The chief of the Gypsies reads the hand of the master and of the village *starosta*. He is discovered in getting bribes, so the master reprimands and admonishes him, though forgiving him (III, 3).

The main plot continues when Medor arrives, asking the master to convince Nadezhda of the durability of his feelings towards her. The master asks the gypsy to read his hand, then he personally tries to convince the girl (III, 4). Nadezhda's mother arrives in the last scene, and finally the two shepherds are joined in marriage, the opera ending with a chorus in the form of a *vaudeville*.

- 1777 was also the year of Maykov's *Derevensky vorozheya*, an imitation of Rousseau's *Le devin du village*, staged at the Moscow Foundling Home with music by

[650] *ivi*, p. 158. The politically uncorrect utterance is moderated by the host: "Не одни Цыгане сего названия достойны, их у нас много: всяк неделающий пользы обществу, есть тунеядец, как на пример…" (Not only the Gypsies deserve such a name, we have many of such people: anyone who does nothing for the society is a parasite, such as for instance…), *ibidem*.
[651] *ivi*, p. 163.

Johann Kertselli, who worked then as a music teacher. According to Karlinsky "Styled as "a pastoral drama with music in two acts," Maikov's play begins with the mannered wooing of a coy shepherdess by an eloquent shepherd. […] In the second act the lovers are duly betrothed, with the kindly aid of their owner. Other assembled serfs chant the praises of their wise master. An ideal relationship seems to exist [as well as in *Derevensky prazdnik*] between serfs and their owners."[652]

1778

- In 1778 Nikolay Nikolev's "drama with voices" *Rozana i Lyubim* was premiered in Moscow, and later regularly played in both capitals until the end of the century. According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "the part of Simeon Lesnik, played by Mr Ozhogin, was his appreciated debut; because through it he became famous in comic and in the best bouffon parts."[653] The music was composed by one of the members of the Kertselli family. According to Karlinsky, "Nikolev's libretto was a Russification of two of Favart's greatest successes: *Annette et Lubin* and *Ninette à la cour*": a comic opera about a peasant maiden abducted by an amorous nobleman who eventually repents and returns her to her father, so that she can marry the young fisherman she loves.[654]

Rozana i Lyubim was one of those operas that were long time considered reactionary plays, as long as it depicted an idyllic picture of the life of peasants in serfdom.[655] While Russian playwrights and poets wrote comedies with music that reflected, with greater or lesser fidelity, the situation of the humbler classes of the time (peasants, both enserfed and free, artisans, lower ranks in the army and the navy, and, eventually, the merchant class and even the clergy), commentators in later centuries have

[652] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, p. 322.
[653] "роль Симеона Лесника, которую играл г. Ожогин, была первая для его преимущественно одобрена; ибо чрез оную он стал известнен в комичесим операци лучшим в ролях Буфонских." *Drammatichesky slovar'*, p. 119. The libretto was issued by Novikov at the Moscow university tipography in 1781. Later, it was included in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXII, 1788, as *Rozana i Lyubim, Drama s golosami, v chetyrekh deystviyakh, Sochinena v 1776 godu, V pervoy raz predstavlena na Moskovskom teatre v 1778 godu* (Rozana and Lyubim, Drama with voices, in four acts, Composed in 1776, Premiered at the Moscow theatre in 1778).
[654] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 121.
[655] The work had been defined "a typical example of a reactionary comic opera." B. N. Aseev, *Russky dramatichesky teatr* (Moskva, 1958, p. 315), and a "reactionary feudal idyll" by Keldysh (*Russkaya muzyka XVIII veka*, Moskva, 1965, p. 259). Moreover, because of this reputation, *The Village Feast* has been excluded from the collections of Maikov's poetry and plays in postrevolutionary times. It can be found in *Sochineniya i perevody V. I. Maykova*, ed. L. N. Maikov (St Petersburg, 1867). S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, p. 322 n.

often chosen to see such works not as Russification of French contemporary models, but as denunciations of serfdom based on the playwright's observations of concrete social realities. This vision endured till modern time, when Gerald Seaman states that "in the hands of skilled librettists and musicians […], peasant figures were sometimes raised to tragic heights."[656] The reference is to the supposed struggle for democratic instances and the abrogation of serfdom. This vision though was strongly influenced by later ideas, and does not correspond to the time when these works were created. As Karlinsky points out in fact, both authors of comic operas and their spectators considered the institution of serfdom a given of Russian life, which, like all human institutions, was capable of being abused.[657] According to the scholar,

> It is a measure of the freedom of Russian literature from censorship pressure in the reign of Catherine II prior to the French Revolution that the social issues raised by serfdom could be reflected in comic opera as openly as they were. Certainly the more outspoken examples of this genre could not have been published or performed in the reigns of Alexander I or Nicholas I half a century later. Yet in the 1770s and 80s these works were produced at Catherine's court, in open public theaters, and played by serf actors in the private theaters of wealthy magnaes. Nor it there any indication that the empress and the upper hierarchy felt themselves indicated by the depiction of the abuses of serfdom in comic opera […].[658]

Anyway, such criticism was permitted only when it attacked the abuses of serfdom and not the institution itself, as demonstrated by the different destiny of Radishchev's *Journey from Saint Petersburg to Moscow*.[659]

- *Prikashchik* (The Bailiff) in one act on libretto by N. P. Nikolev was staged with certain success at the Znamenka theatre in July 1778, with music by the French François-Joseph Darcis, who had just moved to Moscow.[660] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "this little drama amused the audience thus honouring its composer,"[661] and was repeated 26 times until 1799.

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[656] G. R. SEAMAN, *Folk-song in Russian Opera in the 18th Century…*, p. 145.
[657] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, pp. 121-2.
[658] *ivi*, p. 322.
[659] In the destiny of Radishchev a role was played also by the time when his work appeared: while these ingenuous comic operas appeared in a period of relative stability of the Empress on the throne, *Journey from Saint Petersburg to Moscow* was issued after the French revolution, which marked in Catherine Ii's rule the end of tolerance towards any kind of opposition to her govenrment.
[660] Born in Pars in 1759, Darcis studied for a short time with Grétry, and at the age of only thirteen years composed the one-act *opéra-comique Le bal masqué*, staged on 1 April 1772 at the Comédie Italienne. Two years later he had his *La fausse peur* staged in the same theatre. He was nineteen years old when he arrived in Moscow. According to the *Dramatic dictionary*, Darcis "в молодом возрасте втож время, кончил жизнь свою к чувствительному сожалению любителей музыки." (he committed suicied at a very young age, provoking the pity of the music lovers.) *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 110.
[661] "Сия маленькая драма довольно увеселяла публику к чести сочинителя." According to the *Dramatic dictionary*, the libretto was printed by Novikov in the Moscow university tipography in 1781.

1779

- In 1779 a 'pastoral' in two acts entitled *Tshchetnaya revnost', ili Perevozchik Kuskovsky* (Vain jealousy, or The Ferryman from Kuskovo) was staged in the Open air theatre (Vozdushny teatr) in Kuskovo.[662] The libretto was the work of some Vasily Kolychev, possibly a serf of the Sheremetev family, whereas the music was the arrangement of several pieces from French *opéras*-comiques, made by an unknown arranger (possibly Ivan Kertselli). The opera, which counts among the protagonists the shepherdess Anyuta, was printed in Moscow in 1781 it, together with its sequel, *Gulyane, ili Sadovnik Kuskovskoy* (The promenades, or The gardener of Kuskovo), comic opera in one act with music by Johann Kertselli, libretto by Kolychev.[663]

Two other operas staged in the same year are:

- *Finiks* (The phoenix), "drama with voices" in three acts on a Turkish subject, by Nikolev, with music by an unknown author;[664]

- *Shchastie po zhereb'yu* (Fortune by lot), *komicheskaya opera* in one act by Ablesimov, staged on 9 March 1779.[665]

- The greatest success of the year 1779 was *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchink i svat* (The Miller Magician, Cheat and Matchmaker), Russian comic opera in three acts,[666] on

Drammatichesky slovar'..., pp. 110-1. Later, it was included in *Rossiysky Featr...*, Chast' XXII, 1788, as *Prikashchik. Drammaticheskaya pustel'ga s golosami, v odnom deystvii. Sochinena v 1777 godu. V pervy raz predstavlena na Moskovskom teatre v 1778 godu* (The bailiff, Dramatic play with voices, in one act. Composed in 1777. Premiered at the Moscow teatre in 1778).

[662] [V. KOLYCHEV], *Tshchetnaya revnost'...*. The libretto is housed at the Historical Library of Moscow.

[663] [V. KOLYCHEV], *Gulyane, ili Sadovnik Kuskovskoy, Posledovanie opery Perevozchik Kuskovsky. Malaya opera v odnomyavlenii. Rechi tovo sochinitelya, Muzyka g. I. I. Kertselli* (The promenades, or The gardener of Kuskovo, Sequel of the opera *The Ferryman from Kuskovo*. Little opera in one scene. Words of the same author, Music by I. I. Kertselli). Exemplars are housed at the St. Petersburg Russian Museum, at the University Library of Göttinghen, and at the Historical Library of Moscow (GPIB).

[664] *Finiks, Dramma s golosami, v trekh deystviyakh. Sochinena v 1779 godu* (The phoenix, Drama with voices in three acts. Composed in 1779), in *Rossiysky Featr...*, Chast' XXII, 1788.

[665] Published by the Moscow University in 1780. *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 159-60. Later included in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy...*, Chast' 49, 1801, as *Shchastie po zhereb'yu, komicheskaya opera v odnom deystvii. Sochinena A. Ablesimovym 1779 goda Marta 9 dnya, V Moskve, V Universitetskoy Tipografii 1780 goda* (Fortune by lot, comic opera in one act. Composed by A. Ablesimov on 9 march 1779, At the University typography, 1780).

[666] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, the libretto was printed in Moscow in 1782. *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 78. Later the libretto has been published in a great umber of editions. Some examples: [A. O. ABLESIMOV], *Komicheskaya opera Mel'nik, koldun, obmanshchik i svat, v trekh deystviyakh, Sochinena A. ABLESIMOVYM, Predstavlena v pervy raz na Moskovskom teatre Genvarya 20 dnya 1779 goda* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, in three acts, Written by A. Ablesimov, Premiered at Moscow theatre on 20 January 1779), in *Rossiysky featr...*, Chast' XXX, 1789; A. O. ABLESIMOV, *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat, opera komicheskaya* (The miller magician, cheat and

libretto by Aleksandr Ablesimov (1742-1783), a journalist of the period and the author of several other librettos.[667] It was initially performed in Moscow, at the Znamenka theatre, on 20 January 1779.[668] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*,

> Сия пьеса столько возбудила внимания от Публики, что много раз с ряду была играна, и завсегда театр наполнялся; а потом в Санктпетербурге была представлена много раз у Двора, и в случившиемся на тогдашнее время вольном театре у содержателя г. Книпера была играна с ряду двадцаить сем раз; не только от национальных слушана была с удоволствием, но и иностранцы любопытствовали довольно; кратко сказать, что едва ли не первая Руская опера имела столько восхитившихся спектатеров и плескания.[669]

[This play raised so much attention among the Audience, that it was played many times without a break, and the theatre was always full; later in Saint Petersburg it was performed many times at Court, and in Knipper's Free theatre that existed at that time it was staged twenty seven times in a row; it was received with pleasure not only by Russians, but also foreigners were very curious; in short, hardly an early Russian opera had so many enthusiastic spectators and applauses.]

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matchmaker, comic opera), in *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy russkikh avtorov, Sochineniya Ablesimova* (Full Collection of works by Russian authors, Works by Ablesimov), edited by A. Smirdin, SPb., v tip. Ya. Treya, 1849, pp. 1-53; A. O. ABLESIMOV, *Komicheskaya opera Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat, v trekh deystviyakh, Izdanie 3-e* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, in three acts, Third edition), edited by A. Smirdin, C.-PETERBURG, Izdanie A. S. Smirdina [1900]; A. O. ABLESIMOV, *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat, komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh (1779) s biografiey avtora* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, comic opera in three acts (1779) with a biography of the author), Peterburg, Izdanie teatral'nogo otdela narodnogo komissariata po prosveshcheniyu, 1919.

[667] Aleksandr Onisimovich Ablesimov (1742-1783) was a representant of the satirical literature raised in Russian journalism in the 1760s. As many literary men of his time, Ablesimov was a state functionary, and spent many years in military service. He started his literary activity as a copyist for A. P. Sumarokov. When his first poetry essays were published on the journal *Trudolyubivaya pchela* (The industrious bee) in 1759, they were soon included in the full collection of works by the greater and more known poet. As a contemporary of Nikolay Novikov, Ablesimov collaborated with him. In 1767 they both took place in the commission for the compilation of the new legal code; Ablesimov wrote articles and essays on his journal *Truten'* (The drone), written under the pseudonym of Azazev Azazezov, and asked him for help in issuing his ou journal *Razkazchik zabavnikh basen* (The teller of funny tales, 1781). In 1767 he gained much success with the pubblication of his *Skazki i basni* (Tales and fables), As a librettist, he began with the comedy in five acts *Pod''yacheskaya Pirushka* (The feast), which was though not performed nor issued, and is nowadays lost. Apart from his success *The Miller*, he was also the author of *Schast'e po zhereb'yu* (Fortune by lot, music by an unknown composer, 1779), *Pokhod s nepremennykh kvartir* (March from the permanent quarters, music by M. Ekkel, 1782), and the allegorical prologue *Stranniki* (The wanderers), commissioned to him for the opening of the Petrovsky theatre. I. SOSNOVTSEVA, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat – Opera komicheskaya A. Ablesimova i M. Sokolovskogo* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, Comic opera by A. Ablesimov and M. Sokolovsky), in M. M. SOKOLOVSKY, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat, Opera, Partitura* (Miller-witch, cheat and marriage-broker, Opera, Score, according to the English translation of the same edtion), edited by I. A. Sosnovtsevaya, Moskva, "Muzyka" 1984, p. 229; A. O. ABLESIMOV, *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat, komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh (1779) s biografiey avtora* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, comic opera in three acts (1779) with a biography of the author), Peterburg, Izdanie teatral'nogo otdela narodnogo komissariata po prosveshcheniyu, 1919, pp. 3-6.

[668] *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 77. According to Mooser: "Une fois encore, on le voit, la scène moscovite du prince P. V. Ouroussof et de Michel Maddox avait bien servi la cause de l'art national et contribué de la façon la plus efficiente, à lui attirer les suffrages de la foule". R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 228. According to Findeyzen, it was later staged on 3 February 1781 in Saint Peterburg, and on 5 May 1782 in Moscow. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 333. According to Findeyzen, in Moscow its success was so great that a special setting for the production of the opera was commissioned from the famous court painter Pietro Gonzaga. *ivi*, p. 335.

[669] *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, pp. 77-8.

Actually in Saint Petersburg *The Miller-Magician* gained the same success as in Moscow, and it was staged many times starting from the *première* on 3 February 1781, both at Knipper's Free theatre and at the Court theatre.[670] According to Karlinsky,

> The Miller brought about a host of imitations, spread the renown of the genre of comic opera throughout Russia, and became a favourite for amateur theatricals (Vissarion Belinsky, the future critic, played the part of the father in an amateur student production in the late 1820s). It retained its popularity well into the nineteenth century and has occasionally been revived in Soviet times.[671]

One of the numerous progeny that Rousseau's *Le devin du village* engendered all over Europe, as Karlinsky points out,[672] *The Miller* shows the unlikely predicament of a free peasant (Ankudin) who is married to an impoverished noblewoman (Fetin'ya) and of their daughter, named of course Anyuta, who is in love with the neighbouring farmer Filimon. Each of the parents wishes the daughter to marry into his or her own social class. The miller of their village, Fadey, who moonlights as a quack magician, helps the young couple by convincing the parents that the young man is fatally predestined to be Anyuta's husband. The miller subdues the parents' social prejudices with the argument that an independent farmer who owns his own homestead is a peasant and a nobleman at the same time: "Have you heard? He is a peasant-landowner, and a peasant-landowner is a noble and a peasant at the same time."[673] The word the author chooses is '*odnodvorets*', which had been discussed by translators of foreign works centred around *paysannerie* (see Chap. III – Part II – Translation as Appropriation in Russian Operatic Repertoire).

The vision of the librettist we can have today is different if compared to that of the most part of soviet musicologists. According to Sosnovtseva, for instance, the librettist as member of the progressive *intelligentsiya* of Catherine II's time, had among his favourite themes that of the peasant sorrow due to their condition of serfdom, and as a consequence the struggle for the abolishment of this institution.[674] This actually had been the aim of such works as Radishchev's *Journey from Saint Petersburg to Moscow*, but in this comic

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[670] A. O. ABLESIMOV, *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat, komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh (1779) s biografiey avtora* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, comic opera in three acts (1779) with a biography of the author), Peterburg, Izdanie teatral'nogo otdela narodnogo komissariata po prosveshcheniyu, 1919, p. 5

[671] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 125.

[672] *ivi*, pp. 124-5.

[673] "Слышались? Он ОДНОДВОРЕЦ, а ОДНОДВОРЕЦ и дворянин и крестьянин всё один." M. M. SOKOLOVSKY, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat, Opera, Partitura* (Miller-witch, cheat and marriage-broker, Opera, Score, according to the English translation of the same edtion), edited by I. A. Sosnovtseva, Moskva, "Muzyka" 1984, p. 168.

[674] I. SOSNOVTSEVA, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat – Opera komicheskaya A. Ablesimova i M. Sokolovskogo* (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, Comic opera by A. Ablesimov and M. Sokolovsky), in M. M. SOKOLOVSKY, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat…*, p. 229.

opera, as in others that will follow in this chapter, the illegitimate existence of serfdom is not tackled at all. Sonovtseva justifies this with the just passed by repression of the peasant revolt led by Pugachyov (1773-74), and by the decadence of the democratic movement,[675] but the impression nowadays, in having a general view of the whole repertoire of comic operas in the larger context of Russian literature of these years, is rather that the main interest of the librettists was the recovery of the Russian lifestyle that preceded (in their view) the foreign influence, and had instead been preserved in the rural and lower layers of the society. It was rather a message directed to the aristocracy, accused by that time to have abandoned their origins and espoused exclusively the Western, and first of all urbanized customs.[676] The idea was bound also to the Enlightenment idea of the *bon sauvage*, that is the restoring of a situation of balance between mankind and nature, which was told to be lost in a false development. It's no accident that such an idea took a form that appears, here in *The Miller* but also in further Russian comic operas, mutuated from the French theatrical model coined by Rousseau in his *Le devin du village* (1752). The action is led by spoken dialogues, interspersed with small airs, which assume no more the form of the Italian arias that Sumarokov had practiced in his operas: they rather recall French small *airs*; the vaudeville form chosen for the finale betrays also the influence of the French form of *opéra-comique*, which we have seen was in great fashion at this time. The same can be said of the presented characters: the comic-old couple (Ankudin and Fetin'ya), the young and sentimental couple (Anyuta and Filimon), and the buffoon character (the miller Faddey).

What is new in the opera, and gained it so much success, is the treatment of a neutral subject through the lens of Russian everyday context. Ablesimov was interested in the folkloric elements of popular art (songs and tales), which he shared with such contemporaries as M. I. Popov, M. D. Chulkov, V. A. Levshin. According to Rogger, *The Miller* "brought into literature, onto the stage and before the public, aspects of Russian life which had heretofore been shunned or neglected: wedding-songs, some genuine turns of speech, and folk expressions."[677] Let's start from the textual aspect. The author presents a humorous, comic and sympathetic image of the Russian people, seemingly trying to have them showed as realistically as possible, recurring to their simple language (*prostorechie* in contrast with Russian literary language), exclamations and proverbs, which still

[675] *ivi*, p. 229.
[676] Let's consider the fact that, although created for the Moscow public theatre, the opera was later performed also at court, and anyway the audience who could allow himself to but a ticket for the theatre entry long time belonged to the most high layers of the society.
[677] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, pp. 151-2.

nowadays gives the impression that it was written in an authentic-sounding peasant dialect (think of such expressions as "nutka", "povorozhi-tka", "ni byt' tak", or to the dialectal variant "poshol bola dozzhik" instead of "poshol bylo dozhdik", There has been a good deal of rain).

As seen, the *Drammatichesky slovar'* too acknowledges the Russianness of its plot and music. The latter is a *pastiche* of Russian folk songs arranged by the conductor Mikhail Sokolovsky.[678] Later, the interest towards this work being increasingly great, E. I. Fomin revised the score: his is the version that was continuously revived in Russian theatres all along the next centuries. Possibly during the revision an overture was added, which soviet musicologists hold is by the Czech composer E. Vaňura, who lived and worked in Russia in this period. Thus, it is not to Sokolovsky that the music presented by Findeyzen in the following examples belongs:[679]



Example No. III, 7 – *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, *Uvertyura*, measures 1-6



Example No. III, 8 – *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, *Uvertyura*, measures 40-44

[678] Almost nothing is known about Mikhail M. Sokolovsky. The approximate date of his birth is 1756, while the date of his death is not know. He was a violinist in the Maddox theatre in the late 1770s and 1780s, and taught singing in the music classes of the Moscow University. He might have worked as conductor with the orchestra as well. The autograph score of his opera, the only one known by him, is lost nowadays. I. SOSNOVTSEVA, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat – Opera komicheskaya A. Ablesimova i M. Sokolovskogo…*, pp. 225-54.

[679] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, pp. 335-6.

According to the musicologist, "The overture is of a type to which even romantic composers of the 19th century, such as Verstovsky and Dargomyjsky adhered: a pot-pourri rather than a symphonic structure. It runs smoothly, and some of the tunes in it are more or less Russian in character […]"[680] Possibly due to the practice of performing it at the beginning of the opera, it was included in the score, and published as an integral part of it by Pyotr Jurgenson in 1884.[681] Apart from some changes, it is taken from the first part of his *Russian symphony, consisting of Ukrainian tunes* (*Russkaya simfoniya, sostavlennaya iz ukrainskikh pesen*), which Vaňura issued in 1790 in his *Muzykal'ny zhurnal dlya dam* (Music journal for ladies), in Saint Petersburg.[682]

The score is one of the most ancient to have bee preserved, but long time it has been being performed in the revised version by Fomin. Quite recently it has been published in a modern edition, which aim was to restore Sokolovsky's original.[683] The availability of both libretto and score gives us the possibility of understanding how these operas were conceived and composed.

The orchestra, which includes flute, clarinet, two horns, two violins (I and II), altos, cellos and bass, does not really include real Russian balalaikas, as reported y Findeyzen:[684] the libretto prescribes a *balalaika* on the staged, as far as in the final scene (III, 6) the miller sings accompanying himself with the instrument, which sound is reproduced through the *pizzicato* of the strings:[685]

[680] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, pp. 335-6.
[681] [E. I. FOMIN], *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, *Opera, Dlya peniya s forte-piano*, Tekst A. Ablesimova, Muzyka Fomina (The miller magician, cheat and matchmaker, Opera, For singing with piano, Text by A. Ablesimov, Music by Fomin), M., P. Jurgenson [1894]
[682] I. SOSNOVTSEVA, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat – Opera komicheskaya A. Ablesimova i M. Sokolovskogo…*, pp. 239-40.
[683] M. M. SOKOLOVSKY, *Mel'nik-koldun, obmanshchik i svat, Opera, Partitura…*. Some extraits of the score have been included also in *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian music in music examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I, Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968, pp. 113-38.
[684] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, pp. 335-6.
[685] An orchestral choice, though, which will be often espoused by composers to represent the traditional Russian instrument by means of a Western orchestra.



Example No. III, 9 – *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, The miller's song, III, 6, Sosnovtseva, p. 161.

In the libretto, Ablesimov indicates the folk-tunes to which his lines were to be sung, so that the composer had merely to adjust the music to the solo numbers and write accompaniments. Among the referred folk tunes the libretto prescribes the following songs, to which new texts have been composed, more coherent with the plot:

- "Kak vechor u nas so polunochi" (When the night after midnight, No. 1, sung by the Miller in I, 1): ascribable, by analogy of the text of its second strophe ("Na zare-to bylo da na utrenney") to a song about Stenka Razin included in Chulkov's collection (II, No. 134, "Na zare-to bylo, brattsy, na utrenney");

- "Kak khodil gulyal molodchik" (A young man walked, meandered, No. 4, "Vot spoyu kakuyu pesnyu", Filimon, I, 4): the analogous of the song "Kak khodil, gulyal Vanyusha", included in L'vov-Pratsch's collection (II, *Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 25):





Example No. III, 10 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 4, "Vot spoyu kakuyu pesnyu", Filimon, I, 4, Sosnovtseva, pp. 30-1.



Example No. III, 11 - "Kak khodil, gulyal Vanyusha", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, II, *Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 25

- "Zapadala put' dorozhen'ka moya" (My way went under, No. 6, "Ya povedayu tosku-pechal' emu", Filimon, I, 4): this melody was included in the collections of Trutovsky (I, No. 9) and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 5):



Example No. III, 12 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 6, "Ya povedayu tosku-pechal' emu", Filimon, I, 4, Sosnovtseva, p. 48



Example No. III, 13 – "Oserdilsya moy miloy drug na menya", Trutovsky's collection, I, No. 9



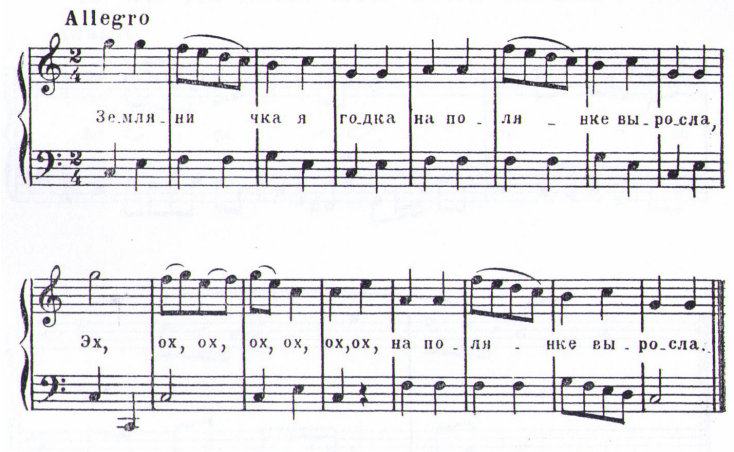
Example No. III, 14 – "Oserdilsya moy miloy drug na menya", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 5

- "Vy rechen'ki rechen'ki" (You brooks, brooks, No. 7, "Ne kruchin'sya, molodets", Duet of the miller and Filimon, I, 4, achieving the first act): acknowledged as the song "Akh rechen'ki, rechen'ki" included in Chulkov's collection (II, No. 170);

- "Zemlenichka yagoda" (A strawberry, No. 8, "Vo svoey ya mladosti", Anyuta, II, 1): the melody, already used in the opera *Lyubovnik koldun*, was included in the collections by Trutovsky (I, No. 11) and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 20):



Example No.III, 15 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 8, "Vo svoey ya mladosti", Anyuta, II, 1, Sosnovtseva, p. 64.



Example No. III, 161 – "Zemlenichka yagodka", Trutovsky's collection, I, No. 11



Example No. III, 17 – "Zemlenichka yagodka", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni plyasovye ili skorye*, No. 20

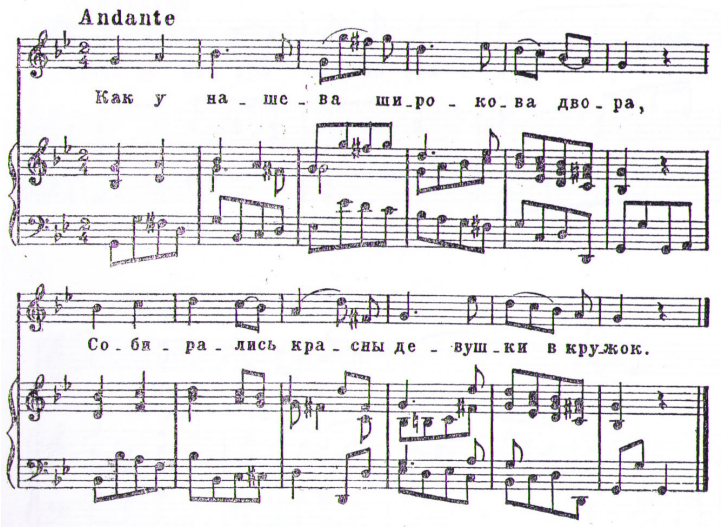
- "Kaby znala, kaby vedala moy svet" (If I knew, if I saw my darling, "Kaby ya, mlada, uverena byla", No. 9, Anyuta, II, 1): the song was known under different titles. The one indicated by the author recalls the texts it was associated to in the opera *Lyubovnik koldun* (1772). In songs collections it appeared in Chulkov (I, No. 167), Trutovsky (II, No. 9), and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 19):



Example No. III, 182 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 9, "Kaby ya, mlada, uverena byla", Anyuta, II, 1, Sosnovtseva, p. 68



Example No. III, 19 - "Kak u nasheva shirokova dvora", Trutovsky's collection, II, No. 9



Example No. III, 20 - "Kak u nasheva shirokova dvora", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni protyashnye*, No. 19.

- "Akh! Na shtozh bola! Akh! k chmuzh bola" (Ah, why did it happen! why did it happen, No. 11, Fetin'ya, II, 4): its melody was included in Trutovsky (III, No. 7) and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 24):



Example No. III, 213 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 11, "Akh! Na shtozh bola! Akh! k chmuzh bola", Fetin'ya, II, 4, Sosnovtseva, pp. 80-1



Example No. III, 22 – "Akh na chtozh bylo, da k chemuzh bylo", Trutovsky's collection, III, No. 7



Example No. III, 23 – "Akh na chtozh bylo, da k chemuzh bylo", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni protyashnye*, No. 24

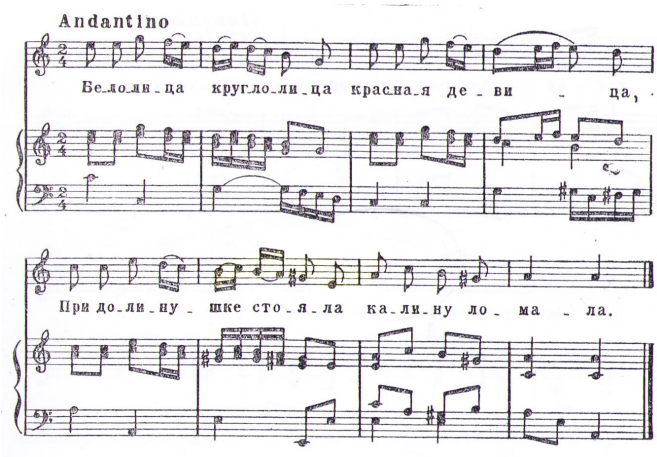
- "Pri dolinushke gulyala" (I was walking near the valley, "Stanu svata dozhidat'sya", No. 12, Filimon, II, 6): this song was known under different titles: as "Belolitsa, krugolitsa, krasnaya devitsa" it was included in the opera *Anyuta*. As "Belolitsa, krugolitsa" it was included in Chulkov (III, No. 105), Trutovsky (II, No. 31), and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 26):



Example No. III, 24 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 12, "Stanu svata dozhidat'sya", Filimon, II, 6, Sosnovtseva, pp. 83-4



Example No. III, 254 – "Belolotsa kruglolitsa", Trutovsky's collection, II, No. 31



Example No. III, 26 – "Belolotsa kruglolitsa krasnaya devitsa", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni protyashnye*, No. 26

The last three songs were taken from the traditions wedding ritual (*svadebnyya pesni*), and are actually sung by a three-part chorus of maidens, as in the popular practice:



Example No. III, 27 – *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, III, 1, the second wedding song, edited by Sosnovtseva, p. 132.

Their original title is not indicated: "Shto bez buri, bez vikhory", "Toshnen'ko mne mladoy v devkakh byt'", and "Vechorta mne koson'ku" (all in III, 1). These tunes do not appear in any folksong collection, a fact that suggests the creation *ex novo* by the composer.

The composer added to this two more popular tunes for the numbers 2 (the miller's song "Kto umeet zhit' obmanom", The one who can life in dishonesty, I, 1) and 15 (Anyuta's song "Vot moya, vot napast'", This is it, my disgrace, III, 2). The melody of the first is based on the famous tune "Vniz po matushke po Volge", which was published in several collections of the time (Chulkov, II, No. 190, Trutovsky, II, No. 5; L'vov-Pratsch, *Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 21):





Example No. III, 28 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 2, "Kto umeet zhit' obmanom", The miller, I, 1, Sosnovtseva, p. 20



Example No. III, 295 – "Vniz po matushke po Volge", Trutovsky's collection, II, No. 5



Example No. III, 30 - "Vniz po matushke po Volge", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 21

The latter (No. 15) is inspired by the song "Po goram, po goram" (Through the moutains, through the mountains, in turn based on the melody of "Podoydu, podstuplyu", I will go, I will rise), included in the collections of Trutovsky (I, No. 13) and L'vov-Pratsch (*Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 1):



Example No. III, 31 - *Mel'nik koldun, obmanshchik i svat*, No. 15, "Vot moya, vot napast'", Anyuta, III, 2, Sosnovtseva, p. 138



Example No. III, 326 – "Po goram, po goram", Trutovsky's collection, I, No. 13



Example No. III, 33 - "Po goram, po goram", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, *Pesni protyazhnye*, No. 1

According to Chayanova,

> Музыкальная критика XIX века отмечала, что фоминский «Мельник» почти сплошь составлен из коротеньких песенок, его дуэты не более, как чередующиеся соло, а хоровых номеров автор тщательно избегает, ограничиваясь хоровым припевом к сольным куплетам.
>
> Однако, по своему характеру «Мельник» должен вполне угодить публике своего времени, прельщая партер партией Мельника, выдержанной в классических итальянских канонах басса-буффо, и раек – залихватскими народными песными.[686]

[The music critic of the 19th century noticed that Fomin's *The Miller* consists almost entirely of short songs, and that its duets are nothing but alternating solos, whereas the composer thoroughly avoided choruses, limiting himself to chorus refrains to solo couplets.

Anyway, for his character, *The Miller* must have fully satisfied the audience of its time, charming the parterre with the role of the Miller, which observes the classic Italian canons of *basso buffo*, and with the bold popular tunes in the spirit of *rayok*.]

[686] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, pp. 192-3.

Apart from the libretto's qualities, the success of *The Miller* was mostly due to the right choice of the folk tunes, which not only gave the plot the necessary *coleur locale*, but also contributed to the expressive strength of the characters, as in the choice of lyric songs for the female characters. Moreover, the composer succeeded in choosing the features of the wedding songs for the scene of the engagement of Anyuta and Filimon: the three wedding songs create the first *devichnik* (hen party) scene ever appeared in Russian opera.

- The only comic opera to enjoy a success comparable to *The Miller* was *Sanktpeterburgsky gostiny dvor* (The Saint Petersburg bazaar), *opera komicheskaya* in three acts, staged at Knipper's independent theatre in Saint Petersburg on 26 December 1779, and in Moscow on 25 October 1783.[687]

The libretto written by Mikhail Matinsky,[688] who worked on it while he was completing his studies in Italy. He was also thought to have composed the music for this piece,[689] but more recent research casts serious doubts on the assumption that Matinsky ever composed any music at all.[690]

The opera gained resounding success, which supported its stay in repertoire at least till the 19th century. For the Moscow staging in 1791 the libretto was reprinted, and later on issued until 1799. The opera exists in two versions: the second, revised by Matinsky and with music rearranged by the Court composer Vasily Pashkevich, was performed in 1792 under the title *Kak pozhivyosh', tak i proslyvyosh'* (You shall be known by the way you live), and was staged at the Court theatre of Saint Petersburg on 2 February 1792. The

[687] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 333.
[688] Possibly an illegitimate son of his owner count S. P. Yaguzhinsky who, aware of his intelligence and talent, sent him to study in Italy. Upon his returning to Russia, Matinsky was given his freedom and became a teacher of mathematics and geeography at the Smol'ny Institute. His later writing efforts were devoted to textbooks on geography and geometry. It was during his stay in Italy that Matinsky wrote what is certainly the most original Russian comic opera of the eighteenth century. Matinsky was once told to have composed the music for this piecee; more recent research casts serious doubts on the assumption that Matinsky ever composed any music at all. S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Comic Opera in the Age of Catherine the Great…*, p. 323. Matinsky was born a serf, possibly an illegitimate son of his owner. Aware of his intelligence and taletns, the owner sent him to study in Italy. Upon returning to Russia, Matinsky was given his freedom and became a teacher of mathematics and geography at the exclusive boarding school for the daughters of the highest nobility, the Smol'ny Institute. His later writing efforts were devoted to textbooks on geography and geometry. It was during his stay in Italy that Matinsky wrote what is certainly the most original Russian comic opera of the 18th century.
[689] Because of what reported in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 38.
[690] For a summary of this research see *Istoriya russkoy muzyki, XVIII vek chast' vtoraya, tom III* (History of Russian music, 18th century, second part, vol. III), edited by Yu. V. Keldysh Moskva, «Muzyka» 1986, pp. 65-79.

first version of the text remained better known, but the musical contributions of Pashkevich were incorporated into it in subsequent performances.[691]

According to the *Dramatic dictionary*,

> Успех сочинителя оной оперы, забавное зрелище и нарядной спектакль в Российских древних нравах приносят честь сочинителю. Театр представляет по обычаю Российскому древнему подъяческую нарядную свадьбу. Характер жениха играющий Московскаго Российскаго театра актер г. Залфшкин совершенно обращает на себя внимание Публики, принося ей забавное зрелище. Яасто сия пиеса представляется на Российских театрах как в Санктперетербурге так и в Москве. Когда в первой раз отдана была на театре сочинителем в Санктпетербурге содержателю вольнаго театра Книперу, то была представлена раз до пятнацати сряду, и никакая пиеса не дала ему столько прибытка, как оная.[692]

[The success of this opera's author, the amusing show and the lively performance in ancient Russian customs are an honour to the composer. The theatre represents according to the ancient Russian use a lively wedding. The character of the fiancé played by the actor of the Moscow Russia theatre Mr Zalfshkin totally concentrate on his won the attention of the audience, bringing him an amusing performance. This play has often been staged at Russian theatres both in Saint Petersburg and in Moscow. When it was given for the first time in Saint Petersburg by his author to the owner of the independent theatre Knipper, it was staged up to fifteen times, and no play has gained him so much profit as this one.

From the point of view of the libretto, "Matinsky's use of an urban middle-class dialect for literary purposes was a pioneering event, leading in a dialect line, via the merchant-class plays of Peter Plavilshchikov, Alexander Shakhovskoy, and Gogol's *Marriage* to the plays of Alexander Ostrovsky".[693] The opera in fact, as Karlinsky had pointed out, seems to owe less to a recognizable foreign model than does any other work of this genre.[694] There is no young peasant heroine and, in fact, no love story at all. Matinsky turned his attention instead to the merchant class. "In so doing, he discovered an entirely new social and dramatic dimension that nineteenth-century Russian drama was to explore and populate."[695] The central character in the wealthy but miserly, avaricious and heartless merchant Skvalygin (Mr 'Tightwad'), a greed and unprincipled moneylender, who is shown both in his family life, with his doting, alcoholic wife Solomonida and his stupid daughter Khavron'ya, and in his varied business practices. Here is philosophy of life (I, 2):

СКВАЛЫГИН

[691] For more details on the differences between the two versions see Findeyzen, *Ocherki po istorii muzyki…*, vol. 2, pp. 224-30.
[692] *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 39-40.
[693] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 127.
[694] *ivi*, p. 126.
[695] Karlinsky refers to spoken drama, rather than to musc theatre. S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 126.

> Добродетель есть не что иное, как дурная привычка, и кто ею сильно заразится, тот остается во весь свой век в презрении и бедности; а кто один только вид добродетельнаго представляет, тот называется разумной и честной человек, и живет благополучно.[696]
>
> [SKVALYGIN
> Virtue is nothing more than a bad habit, and those who are stringly infected by it live their whole life in contempt and poverty; on the contrary, those who only appear to be virtuous, they are called intelligent and honest people, and live safely.]

Skvalygin forms an alliance with his prospective son-in-law, an equally corrupt retired civil servant named Kryuchkodey (Mr 'Caviller'), who makes a practice of involving transient out-of-town peasants in horse-cart accidents and then extorting money from them for imaginary damages. Skvalygin and Kryuchkodey cook up a complicated financial swindle designed to victimize an army officer and two society ladies who had been careless about getting their dealings with Skvalygin certified and documented. In the second act, the victims invade Skvalygin's home during the engagement party (*devichnik*) for his daughter and Kryuchkodey, but can obtain no satisfaction. Eventually the two sharpers are punished, according to the custom them obtaining in plays; and a final chorus is sung to the words (III, 7): "Reign, holy truth, reign in our times!"[697]

The centre of the opera is though not the plot itself, but the extremely colourful picture of the everyday life of merchant class to which the main characters belong. According to Karlinsky,

> From the very first two scenes, one showing Skvalygin putting the squeeze on the other merchants in the bazaar arcade and the other bringing in the two subsequently victimized noblewomen to bargain in a vocal sextet with four of the merchants, Matinsky displays a truly admirable grasp of the milieu and a profusion of dramatic invention. One original scene follows another throughout: the bargaining of the crafty merchants with their capricious customers; the indignant aria of the peasant (in the northern tsokanie dialect), forced to pay damages for the accident he knows was caused on purpose; Skvalygin's stingy dispositions for the engagement party refreshments, clashing with the hospitable inclinations of his wife; the carousing of the previously prim and sedate merchants' wives who are briefly left alone with the liquor supply; and the complex and ingenious plot stratagem that brings the villains to justice.
>
> All these scenes achieve a genuine dramatic impact. None of them seems to have any precedent in foreign or Russian comic traditions.[698]

[696] M. A. Matinsky, libretto of the opera, in V. A. PASHKEVICH, *Kak prozhivesh', tak i proslyvesh', ili Sanktpeterburgsky gostiny dvor* (Like life, like reknown, or The St. Petersburg Gostiny Dvor), Opera, Score, Publication, Editing, Piano arrangement, research and comments by E. Levashev, Moscow, State Publishers "Music" 1980, p. 67.

[697] "Царствуй истина святая, Царствуй в наши времена!" M. A. Matinsky, libretto of the opera, in V. A. PASHKEVICH, *Kak prozhivesh', tak i proslyvesh'…*, pp. 406-7. Eng. Transl. By M. D. Calvocoressi, quoted from N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 337.

[698] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, pp. 126-7.

As to the music, as well as in *The miller magician*, it was inspired to Russian popular tunes, although in this case the composer seems to have preferred to compose themes in reference to folk-song, but avoiding exact quotations.

According to Findeyzen "The Overture, with its attractive, live, and entirely vernacular main theme is one of the best of its time."[699]

According to Evgeny Levashev, its two main themes are close to popular tunes, respectively the first to the song "Kapitanskaya doch'" (L'vov-Pratsch, No. 61), the second to "Vo donskikh vo lesakh" (L'vov-Pratsch, No. 90).[700] Here is the first one compared with the song:



Example No. III, 34 – *Sankt-Peterburgsky gostiny dvor* - Overture



Example No. III, 35 – "Kapitanskaya doch' ne khodi gulyat' v polnoch'" Lvov'-Pratsch, No. 61

[699] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 337.
[700] E. LEVASHEV, *Kommentariy* (Comments), in V. A. PASHKEVICH, *Kak prozhivesh', tak i proslyvesh'…*, p. 500.

Solomonida's aria "Muzhenek moy dorogoy" (My husband, my darling, I, 1) also appear to be drawn from the folksong "Ya po svetlitse khozhu", which was included in both Trutovsky's and L'vov-Prastch's collections:



Example No. III, 36 - *Sankt-Peterburgsky gostiny dvor*, Solomonida's aria, meas. 6-15



Example No. III, 377 - "Ya po svetlitse khozhy mlada khozhu" – Trutovsky, No. 27



Example No. III, 388 – "Ya po svetlitse khozhy mlada khozhu" - Lvov'-Pratsch, No. 54

Very successful were the numerous female choruses in the engagement scene (II, 1 to II, 7, Nos. 10-17), which virtually occupy all the second act. Here also there cannot be identified exact quotations, but the melodies have been acknowledged for their popular character. All choruses are in three voices, two of them singing often in unison or

following parallel movement at a distance of third or sixth. According to Karlinsky they point the way for future treatment of similar material by Glinka, Chaykovsky, and even Stravinsky.[701] This is to be intended in very short themes 'obsessively' repeated without variation in the melody, but with variations in the accompanying orchestra, in the practice, called 'changing-background' or 'ostinato' variations (to Russian and Soviet musicologists 'Glinka variations'), which Glinka, for instance, used in his *Fantasia on Two Russian Themes* also known as *Kamarinskaya*. Here is an example drawn from chorus No. 13, which recurs to the same song that was used by Fomin in his opera *Koldun, vorozheya i svakha* (The magician, the fortune teller and the matchmaker, 1791). The text is a variant of a song included in Chulkov's collection (No. 45).



Example No. III, 399 - *Sankt-Peterburgsky gostiny dvor*, Chorus No. 13 – "Druzhnkka khroshenkoy!"

The year 1779 was particularly fruitful in the production of Russian operas of this genre. According to Mooser,

> Le 7 November 1779, en effet, un opéra-comique russe fut joué, pour la première fois, sur la scène de la cour à laquelle, jusqu'alors, seuls des ouvrages lyriques italiens et français avaient eu accès. A la vérité, le Théâtre du Palais avait précédemment accueilli trois partitions lyriques composées sur des textes russes originaux: *Céphale er Procris* en 1755, *Alceste* en 1758, et *L'asile de la vertu* en 1759. Toutefois il ne s'agissait pas là d'oeuvres spécifiquement russes, car elles appartenaient à des musiciens étrangers et, en dépit de la langue dans laquelle leurs livrets étaient rédigés, elles ne pouvaient être considerées comme des véritables productions nationales.

[701] There are phrases in the betrothal scenes of both *The Miller* and *The Saint Petersburg Bazaar* that have their exact counterparts in the text of his *Les Noces*.

> Tout autre était le cas de *L'accident de la voiture* dont la cour eut la primeur le 7 Novembre car, cette fois, le compositeur Vassili Pachkévich, comme le librettiste Jacob Borissovitch Knjajnine, étaient des auteurs du cru. Et le fait que leur ouvrage ait été admis sur la scène impériale atteste que l'effort accompli depuis quelques années par le Théâtre de Moscou, en faveur de l'opera national, avait porté ses fruits et attiré enfin l'attention des milieux officiels qui, jusque-là, n'avaient eu d'oreilles que pour l'art étranger.[702]

The original title of this opera is *Neschastie ot karety* (A misfortune from a carriage), in two acts, often staged on different Russian theatres after the première at the Hermitage.[703] The Empress and her son were present and their manifest pleasure and approval contributed to the work's resounding success. The success is witnessed by the fact that soon the opera was included in the repertoire of Knipper's Independent Theatre, which gave numerous performances, repeated also by the Imperial Scenes and by the Moscow theatres, as the issues of the libretto attest.[704] The opera went on being produced throughout the country well into the second decade of the 19th century.

The libretto was the work of Yakov Borisovich Knyazhnin.[705] The playwright used to transplant Russian medieval rulers into the borrowed plot and framework of the better-

[702] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens..*, II, p. 238.
[703] According to Findeyzen it was staged on 27 February 1779 in St. Petersburg, and on 26 July 1780 in Moscow. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 333.
[704] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, the libretto was printed at the Moscow university by Novikov in 1781. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 93. Later it was included in the collection *Rossiysky Featr…*, chast' XXIV, 1788, as [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Neschastie ot karety komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh, predstavlennaya v pervy raz, v Prisutstvii EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA, i IKH IMPERATORSKIKH VYSOCHESTV v Ermitazhe. Slova sochineniya Gna. Knyazhnina. Muzyka Gna. Pashkevicha. 1779 goda, Noyabrya 7 dnya* (A misfortune from a carriage, comic opera in two acts, premiered in the Presence of Her Imperial Majesty and Their Imperial Highnesses at the Hermitage. Words are written by Mr Knyazhnin. Music by Mr Pashkevich, 7 November 1779), pp. 3-100.
[705] Yakov Borisovich Knyazhnìn (1742 – 1791) was born into a family of provincial nobility (his father was the vice-governor of the province of Pskov). He received a thorough education at the gymnasium attached to the Academy of Scinces in St. Petersburg and at a private boarding school. He acquired not only the good knowledge of French language and literature that was customary for all Russian writers of his time, but also a knowledge of Italian literature. He was eventually to translate into Russian Giambattista Marino's narrative poem *La strage degli innocenti* and several of Goldoni's comedies, as well as four tragedies by Corneille and Voltaire's early epic *La Henriade*. Knyazhnin entered the civil service as an official translator at the age of seventeen. Five years later, in 1762, he transferred to the military, where he was to remain for a number of years. He made his debut as a playwright in 1769 with the tragedy *Dido*, a free adaptation of Pietro Metastasio's popular libretto *Didone abbandonata*. In addition to Metastasio's libretto, Knyazhnin's *Dido* drew on some of Metastasio's French imitators, as well as directly on the *Aeneid*, and, in its structural aspects, on the example of Sumarokov's tragedies. He was the husband of Ekaterina Sumarokova, a father, and a recognized playwright when, in an uncontrolled access of gambling fever, he gambled away not only his own estate, but some 6000 roubles from the funds of his regiment. As a result of the nasty scandal that ensued, Knyazhnin was tried, deprived of his nobility, and demoted to army private. After serving for a time as a common soldier, Knyazhnin was dismissed from the military service. It was during his period of disgrace that he did most of his literary translations from French and Italian. Whithin five years after his trial, he was fully pardoned and reinstated with the rank of captain. Soon after his reinstatement in 1778, he was given a new civil service position as an aid to Ivan Betsky, the official in charge of Catherine's educational reforms. He also taught Russian literature at the Infantry Corps of Nobles, where among his students were the future Sergey Glinka and Ozerov. This was the period of his greatest productivity as a dramatist. Between 1779 and 1791, he wrote seven tragedies, four comedies, five comic operas, and a considerable body of lyric and satirical poetry. S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, pp. 132-4.

known French and Italian tragedies of his time.[706] In its first few scenes, *Misfortune from a Coach* looks very much like one more adaptations of Favart's *Annette et Lubin*, but the action takes place in a village near Saint Petersburg. A pair of peasant lovers, named Anyuta and Luk'yan, are prevented from getting married in the very day of their wedding, by another stock character from Favart, the jealous bailiff Clement, who wants Anyuta for himself. Anyuta, Luk'yan, and Klementy are all serfs, belonging to a silly Gallomaniac couple named Firyulin ('Mr and Mrs Ninny'), whose aim in life is to ape whatever new fashions appear in Paris. According to Rogger,

> The Firyulins, master and mistress, are like all the other Russian Parisians except that they have carried their Francomania to logical and horrible extreme. Not only are they ready to exchange good Russian gold for foreign trinkets; they are willing to barter "Russian trash," Russian "souls," for the shoes, caps, and carriages from Paris without which they cannot let themselves be seen in polite society. With these articles, as much as with the bits of French they speak and the French name by which they call their steward, they think they have contributed their mite to the enlightenment of Russia. "Barbaric nation! Savage country! What ignorance! What coarse names! How they offend the delicacy of my ear!" This is how Firyulin greets his homeland, and his wife remarks with horror that in their village, so close to the capital, no one speaks French, quite unlike French, where even at a hundred versts from the capital everyone does.[707]

Owners of many carriages, the Firyulins have decided that they must have a new model of coach that is in fashion in France. To raise the money for the coach, they want to sell some of their serfs into military service, a type of transaction that was one of the ugliest ways of abusing the serf-owners' privileges, because the drafted peasant would still remain their slave, but would in addition be parted from his family and friends for the next twenty-five years. Klementy is authorized by his owners to call himself by the French version of his first name, Clément, which other peasants think is a new rank to which Klementy has been promoted. They accordingly offer him their congratulations. To get rid of Luk'yan as a rival for Anyuta's hand, the bailiff indicates him to be recruited.

On the advice of the Firyulins' house jester Afanasy, Anyuta and Luk'yan make a plea to their owners not to be parted, speaking in exaggeratedly sentimental terms and using French forms of address. This ploy serves to establish the proper literary point of reference for arousing the Firyulins' sympathy. As long as they saw the young couple as Russian peasants and serfs, the Firyulins were impervious to pity. But sentimentalist *clichés* and French words put everything in a different perspective. Now the owners are horrified that they were about to separate two loving hearts. The bailiff's decision is

[706] e. g. From Racine's tragedy *Andromaque* he drew the plot for his *Vladimir and Yaropolk*; the tragedies *Vladistan* and *Olga* were inspired by various aspects of Scipione Maffei's tragedy *Merope* as well as by Voltaire's play of the same name that was adapted from Maffei.
[707] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 61.

overruled: Anyuta and Luk'yan will marry and join their masters in the city as their new chambermaid and valet, at the condition to speak Russian never more:

ЛУКЬЯН [*на коленах.*]
Monseigneur! Зжальтесь над нами.
АНЮТА [*на коленах.*]
Madame! Вступитесь за нас.
ФИРЮЛИН.
Monseigneur! Madame! Встаньте, вы меня этими словами в такую жалость привели, что я слез удержаться не могу.
[…]
[*грозя прикащику.*]
Monsieur Леман, ты бездельник.
ФИРЮЛИНА.
Mon cher! Соеденим их; они достойны друг дргуа, и достойны жить при нас.
ПРИКАЩИК.
Разве вы изволили отдумать покупать?
ФИРЮЛИН.
Нет, но у меня еще много людей и без него, а мне такой лакей надобен, которой бы знал по Французски, чтоб ездить за мной. [*к Лукьяну*] Соглашаетешься ли ты никогда не говорить по Руски?
ЛУКЬЯН.
Я вам клянусь, а ето мое последнее Руское слово.[708]

[LUK'YAN [*on his knees.*]
Monseigneur! Have mercy of us.
ANYUTA [*on her knees.*]
Madame! Stand up for us.
FIRYULIN.
Monseigneur! Madame! Leave on, with your words you brought me to such a compassion, that I can't keep my tears.
[…]
[*menacing the bailiff.*]
Monsieur Clément, your are an idler.
FIRYULINA.
Mon cher! Let's join them; they are worth one of each other, and worth of living with us.
THE BAILIFF.
Are you going to give up the purchase?
FIRYULIN.
No, but I have lots of people even without him, and I need such a lackey, who speaks French, to accompany me. [*to Luk'yan*] Do you agree on never ever speaking Russian?
LUK'YAN.
I swear not to do it, and this is my last Russian word.]

According to Satta Boschian, "Knyazhnin, who was friend with L'vov, Kapnist, and Fonvizin, and who had lived among the privileges and had abused of them, possibly wanted to tackle with new consciousness the contradictions that made for him too so complex the recovery of Russian values and the fixation of a national identity".[709] Rogger quotes the opera as a castigation of Gallomania as the source of the peasants' ruin and

[708] [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Neschastie ot karety…*, pp. 96-7.
[709] "Probabilmente Knjažnin, che era amico di L'vov, di Kapnist, di Fonvizin e che era vissuto in mezzo ai privilegi e ne aveva abusato, voleva affrontare con nuova consapevolezza le contraddizioni che rendevano anche per lui tanto complesso il recupero dei valori russi e la fissazione dell'identità nazionale." L. SATTA BOSCHIAN, *L'Illuminismo e la steppa…*, p. 340.

misery:

> Their representation on the stage and in the pages of the satirical journals turned into a protest not so much against the foreigner or his fashions, as against the effects these had in Russian life. A social protest made in the name of an oppressed class, whose deplorable situation was pictured as a direct consequence of its masters' xenomania […]. The very fact of the peasants' appearance, the sharp contrast of his long-suffering figure to the foppish caricature of his master, was an invitation to audiences and readers to ask which of the two was the better Russian, which of the two did more for his fatherland, which of the two was more truly "national". With Ya. B. Knyazhnin (1742-1791) begins the conscious attempt to take the problem of Francomania out of the realm of broad comedy and to locate it in a social class. There is much that is tragic in his "comic opera," and it is the tragedy of the peasants' situation, abandoned to their masters' caprice, that directs sympathy to them as a group rather than to the figure of an abstractly personified virtue-Mr. Pureheart or Mr. Goodheart.
>
> In showing the dissoluteness of a class which had divorced itself from its native soil, which had torn up its roots in the Russian countryside, Knyazhnin adumbrated the first note of a large and important theme of Russian nationalism: the true source of the national life and strength is the patriarchal village, where peasant and lord live in harmony, dedicating their lives to each other, to country, and to Tsar. It is still a far cry to what Turgenev called the mystical kneeling before the peasants' sheepskin, but the discovery of the gulf between the frenchified master, the *barin*, and his serf was an important first step.[710]

The decline of the patriarchal principle and the dissolution of the familial bonds between lord and serf, according to the scholar, are illustrated by an incident at the end of the play. Anyuta's father, happy over the joyous resolution which has allowed his daughter to marry her beloved after all, gratefully addresses Firyulin as father (*otets*), only to be interrupted impatiently by his master: "Creature! How dare you call me father? Perhaps my father was your father. I don't want to be father to such swine. Don't you dare call me that in future!" The historian points out that the incident is almost identical with one reported in the satirical journal *Truten'* (The Drone) in which a village elder reports to the *barin* that he has carried out the orders for punishment of a peasant who dared call him father:

> From Anthony, because he called you father, not Lord, in his petition: five rubles. He has also been publicly whipped. He said: 'I did it from studipidy,' and henceforth will no longer call you father." From a protector and powerful friend of his peasants, the master has become an absentee landowner who resides in the capital, a man indifferent to their interests, their way of life, a foreigner to the place that formerly was their joint sphere of activity. For the new-style landowner, the village is little more than foreign or conquered territory, to be exploited at will, without regard for the conservation of its human or natural resources. "You wrote that the harvest has not turned out well," Firyulin tells his steward. "That is not my affair, and it is not mu fault that our soil is not as good as the French. I order and beg of you not to ruin me: find the money where you will. … Are there no men fit to be sold for recruits? Well, then, take them and sell them".[711]

Even the happy resolution of the opera does not soften the underlying tragedy. "It is not a change of heart or character on the part of the Firyulins which saves Lukyan and

[710] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 60.
[711] *ivi*, pp. 61-2.

Anyuta, - the scholar continues, - but once again a whim, a whim which might just as easily have turned against them. […] the salvation is only for Lukyan and his bride, since Firyulin still wants his carriage and announces that there are other peasants he can sell."[712]

The people/peasantry, by contrast, assume some of the attributes of the folk, a concept that was to play such an important role in the nationalism of the romantics. This is true notably in the case with the jester Afanasy, whose lines are full of the astuteness acknowledged to the Russian people in other comic operas, and to whom belong the idea of tricking the masters and the bailiff. An example of his humour is given by his aria of the first act (I, 6):

> И вам не дурно было, когдаб вы шутить умели.
> *АРИЯ.*
> *Полезным быть, нет хуже ничего.*
> *На свете таково:*
> *Кто шут, кто плут,*
> *Тово не гнут:*
> *А тот страдает,*
> *Кто работает.*
> *О чем грустить, стонать;*
> *На свете все плевать, плевать.*
> *По дудочке чужой плясать вот вся наука,*
> *Быть шутом, плутом, в том вся штука.*[713]
>
> [It would be not bad, if you too could joke.
> ARIA.
> To be helpful, it what is worst.
> The world works like this:
> Who's a jester, who's a cheater,
> He is not bent:
> But the one who suffers,
> Who works hard,
> He has what to grieve, to howl for;
> You have to spit, to spit on the whole world.
> The philosophy tells to dance to someone else's flute,
> To be a jester, a cheater, that's all folks.]

The text had been set to music by Vasily Pashkevich. The score is one of the few that has been preserved. According to Mooser (who in turn refers to Rabinovich),

> […] la partition […] offre des traits si spirituels et, par son inspiration mélodique autant que par la dextérité de son écriture, elle s'avère si nettement supérieure à tous les ouvrages dramatiques précédemment données par les musiciens du pays, que l'on est en droit de considérer *L'accident de la voiture* comme le premier en date des opéras-comiques russes véritablemente dignes de ce nom.[714]

[712] *ivi*, pp. 62-3.
[713] [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Neschastie ot karety…*, p. 81.
[714] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 239.

I had no access to the score, but from the libretto it is possible to deduce that the form was that typical of the French *opéra-comique*: spoken dialogues interspersed with musical numbers, which, possibly due to Metastasio's influence on Knyazhnin, are indicated with the typical Italian operatic vocabulary: *arias* for solo numbers (3 for Luk'yan, 1 for Anyuta, 1 for the bailiff, 3 for the jester), and a *Tertset* (Trio), for Trofim, Anyuta, Luk'yan. The opera includes also duets, both of them between Lyk'yan and Anyuta, and two ensembles at the end of the first (The bailiff, Trofim, the jester, Luk'yan, Anyuta) and the second act (The jester, Lyk'yan, Anyuta, Trofim, and chorus of Russian peasants).

1780

- The tendency of *opera komicheskaya* to depict a wide range of social groups led Russian playwrights of the period into some unusual paths. It was the case with Mikhail Kheraskov (1733 - 1807), who tried his hands at opera with *Dobrye soldaty* (The Good Soldiers, 1780),[715] and Yakov Sokolov, of whom nothing is known except that he was "a student of philosophy" in the city of Yaroslavl', who wrote the text of *Stavlennik* (The Candidate Priest), which was performed by divinity students in Yaroslavl' in 1780.[716] According to Karlinsky, the novelty of the former piece was in its regimental milieu, for which the music by Hermann Raupach provided an appropriately military background, with bugle calls and sung marches. One of these marches, "My vas lyubim serdechno…" (We love you from the heart…), entered folklore; it became a favourite song of Russian soldiers in the 19th century and was still popular as late as World War I. It was cited as such in a highly ironical context in Gogol's comedy *The Gamblers* (1842), where it is sung in honour of the man to whom the gamblers have just apparently won a great amount of money.[717]

According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "This opera, full of the best choruses, which are an honour to their author, music by Mr Raupach, was sufficiently

[715] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 128. The heroine of the work in unjustly accused of theft while wandering about like Micaela in search of her missing soldier-lover. There are a phenomenal number of scenes in which people find their long-lost relatives.
[716] *ivi*, pp. 128-9.
[717] "Мы вас любим сердечно, / Будь ты начальник наш вечно! / Наши зажег ты сердца, / Мы в тебе видим отца!" (We love you from the heart, / Be our chief forever! / You kindled our hearts, / We see a father in you!), Scene XVIII. M. V. GOGOL', *Igroki* (The gamblers), in *Sobranie khudozhestvennykh sochineniy v pyati tomakh* (Collection of art works in five volumes), tom IV, Moskva, Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR 1961, p. 327.

praised by the audience. It was staged many times at the theatres of Saint Petersburg and Moscow. It was printed at the University typography by Novikov in 1782."[718] The opera was staged also by the maidens of the Foundling Home.[719]

- To the same tendency of broadening the milieus of provenance of the protagonists belongs *Stavlennik* (The Candidate Priest), in which comic opera invaded the realm of the Russian clergy, who were a separate caste in pre-Revolutionary times. Premiered by divinity students in Yaroslavl' in 1780, published in *Russkaya starina* (Russian antiquities),[720] the story deals with a competition for a job left vacant by the death of a parish priest. The leading candidate is Foma (Thomas), son of a wealthy priest, whose main qualifications for the job are a sonorous, low-pitched voice and a large supply of money his father has provided for bribes.[721]

- The same year saw the staging, in Moscow, of *Matrosskie shutki* (*Seamen's tricks*), in two acts, libretto by an unknown literary-man-amateur, possibly Pavel Ivanovich Fonvizin, the brother of the more known Denis Ivanovich, author of the plays *The brigadier* and *The minor*.[722] The libretto was set to music by the director of the Maddox theatre Sébastian George, who, as far as it's nowadays known, did not compose music for any other Russian opera.[723] It is a further example of the enlargement of subjects to different categories of the Russian population. The protagonist is in fact the seaman Provor, who comes back to his native town after seven years, wearing a mask who makes him unrecognizable. Although he never wrote to his *fiancée* Krasana, the girl has remained faithful to him, and with the help of her mother Shumida and the bailiff (this time, a benign

[718] "Сия опера, наполненна лучшими хорами к чести сочинителя, музыка г. Раупаха, похваляема была довольно Публикою. Играна была много раз на Санктпетербургском и Московском театрах. Напечатана в Университетской типографии у г. Новикова в 1782 году." *Dramtichesky slovar'…*, pp. 47-8.

[719] *Dobrye soldaty, Komicheskaya opera, Sochinennaya na Rossiyskom yazyke* (The good soldiers, Comic opera, Composed in Russian), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVIII, 1789. The score might be housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

[720] *Russkaya starina* (Russian antiquities), St. Petersburg, June 1875, pp. 277-300.

[721] For more details see S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 129.

[722] I. M. BADALICH, P. N. BERKOV, *Komicheskaya opera "Matrosskie shutki" i ee avtor* (The comic opera *Seamen's tricks* and its author), *XVIII vek* (18th century), Sbornik 4, M. – L., Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR 1959, p. 424

[723] Issued by the Moscow university typography in 1780. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 76. Later included in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXIV, 1788, pp. 137-94, as *Matrosskiya shutki, opera komicheskaya. Operu sochinil Lyubitel' Literatury. Muzyku delal Sebastian Zhorzh* (Seamen's tricks, comic opera. The opera was composed by a lover of literature. The music by Sébastan George). The opera is also preserved in two manuscripts, a copy and the original, which are housed respectively at LGTB and at the Manuscript section of the IRLI. I. M. BADALICH, P. N. BERKOV, *Komicheskaya opera "Matrosskie shutki" i ee avtor…*, pp. 422-5.

character), their wedding is organized and celebrated. According to Badalich and Berkov, the manuscripts do show a particular orthography (*akayushchaya orfografiya*), which reports in writing the original pronunciation of words by seamen, an interesting aspect of 'realism' of the text that was cleaned up in the version printed in *Russian theatre*, and that, possibly, affected also the other librettos printed in the collection.[724]

- In the same year some critics record the *opera komicheskaya Torzhestvo dobronraviya nad krasotoyu* (The triumph of purity over beauty), in five acts, on libretto by Nikolay Perepechin, published in Moscow in 1780[725] and later in the 26th volume of the collection *Rossiysky featr*.[726] The music has been erroneously ascribed to Bullandt, who could not be the author, having arrived to Russia only in the last months of 1780.[727] The very feeble plot is based on the love between Nravolyub ('Moral's lover') and Tikhonrava ('Quietly moral'), whom some friends and family members try to separate in favour to the more beautiful but proud Krasochesta ('Proud of her beauty'). Differently from other previously analysed plays, this opera is entirely written in verse (most of them octo-syllabic, or seven-syllable lines), which suggests that the play was entirely sung, no typographic distinction existing, as in the prior plays, between sung and spoken parts.

[724] I. M. BADALICH, P. N. BERKOV, *Komicheskaya opera "Matrosskie shutki" i ee avtor…*, p. 424. According to the authors, the manuscript housed at IRLI contains also the names of the actors: Shusherin as Provor, Shilin as Prolaz, Ozhogin as Stepan, Zalyshkin as Ermolay, Pomerantsev as the bailiff, some 'Parasha' as Krasana, some 'Natasha' as Priyata, Madame Poerantseva as Shumida. *ivi*, p. 425.

[725] [N. PEREPECHIN], *Torzhestvo dobronraviya na krasotoyu Opera v pyati deystviyakh Sochinena N. P.* (The triumph of purity over beauty, Opera in five acts Written by N. P.), v Moskve U Universitetskoy tipografii, u N. Novikova. 1780 goda.

[726] The libretto was issued by Novikov at the Moscow university typography. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 141. See also [N. PEREPECHIN], *Torzhestvo dobronraviya na krasotoyu…*, in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVI, 1788, pp. 3-66.

[727] Antoine Bullandt (or Antonín Štěpán, or Anton Bulant, Bulan, Byulan), was born in Mělník, Bohemia, in 1751. Composer and bassoonist, he was active in France and Russia. He went to Paris in about 1771 or 1772, and there published his first known works, the quartets op. 2, in 1772. On the title page of his *Quatre sinfonie a grand orchestro* op. 5 (1773) he is identified as 'Virtuoso di Musica de S. E. il Sigr. Marchese di Branca's; the opus is dedicated to the tsar's chamberlain, count Stroganov, a well-known patron and lover of the arts, who was visiting Paris during this period. This connection with the Russian court might have led to his setting in St. Petersburg starting from 1780, the musician having possibly given his first concert as a virtuoso bassoonist on 20 November of the same year. In June 1783 he was engaged as a bassoonist at the Russian court, and soon thereafter successfully produced the first comic opera *Zbitenshchik* (The hot mead seller). This was followed by a number of other Russian-language operas in both St. Petersburg and Moscow until 1799. In 1784, having bee outsted from his post as a bassoonist, Bullandt opened a shop for the keyboard instruments imported from England. He later possibly sold music from this shop, as well as string and wind instruments. In 1785 he was re-engaged as a bassoonist with the first orchestra of the Imperial Theatres, a post, which he held until 1792 or until his death. In 1787 he wrote a prologue with choruses and ballets to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Catherine II's reign; he might have accompanied the empress to Moscow for its first performance and remained there for a year or two, as four comic operas attributed to him were produced in 1787-88. Bullandt was a founder-director of the St. Petersburg Philarmonic Society (1802), which granted him a small pension in 1821, shortly before his death. See the entry by B. S. Brook, R. Viano and J. Brabcová in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by S. Sadie, vol. 4, London, Macmillan Publishers 2001, pp. 596-7.

Unfortunately the performers are not indicated in the libretto, and as far as I know the music for the pièce is lost.

- 1780 saw also the staging of *Kuznets*, *opera komicheskaya* in one act, staged in Saint Petersburg and often played in Moscow Vauxhall. According to the author, it consisted of only three characters.[728] The opera could be identified with S. Vyazmitinov *Kuznets lekar'*, itself a remake of Philidor's *Le maréchal-ferrant*.[729]

1781

- The following season saw the staging of *Novoe semeystvo* (The new family), *opera komicheskaya* in one act, with music by some Freulich a German possibly at service of count Zakhar Grigor'evich Chernyshev. The opera was in fact staged for the first time in Yaropol'sk (ca. 120 km from Moscow), by noblemen-amateurs, in the house of count Chernyshev, and then staged in the public and private theatres of Saint Petersburg and Moscow.[730] The libretto is ascribed to count S. K. Vyazmitinov, issued in Moscow in the same year. The opening of the curtain in accompanied by a "song of many voices",[731] possibly a folkloric song introduced to give the collocation a touch of *coleur locale*.

1782

- Possibly 1782 was the year when *Skupoy* (The miser), Russian comic opera in one act on libretto by Yakov Knyazhnin and music by Pashkevich, was premiered. The libretto was issued in Saint Petersburg in 1787, in the edition of the complete works by Knyazhnin, and quotes the composer as the author of the music.[732] Since it was printed in the capital, it is possible the opera was staged there, possibly at Knipper's theatre. This idea is supported

[728] *Drammatichesy slovar'...*, p. 71.
[729] *ivi*, p. 71.
[730] Libretto printed by Novikov at the Moscow university in 1781. *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, pp. 93-4. Later the libretto was included in the collection *Rossiysky featr...*, Chast' XXIV, 1788, pp. 233-79, as [S. K. VYAZMITINOV], *Novoe semeystvo Komicheskaya opera v odnom deystvii* (The new family, Comic opera in one act).
[731] "При открытии занавеса слышна за кулисами вдали песня многих голосов", [S. K. VYAZMITINOV], *Novoe semeystvo...*, p. 235.
[732] Later it was included in the collection *Russian Theatre*: [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Skupoy Opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii* (The miser, comic opera in one act), in *Rossiysky featr...*, Chast' XXX, 1789.

by the *Dramatic dictionary*: "Premiered in Saint Petersburg, and staged many times in Moscow, both in the big Petrovsky theatre, and in Moscow [*sic*]."[733] Moreover, "The audience liked the text and the music; and first of all: its monologue, imitating the Miser's monologue in Molière, set in recitative, is an honour to the composer."[734] With exception of the overture, the score is preserved, and had also a modern edition in 1973.[735]

- In 1782 another opera was premiered, in Novgorod, titled *Netrusov ili vor v sadu* (Netrusov, or The thief in the garden; Mooser tranlsated it as *Celui qui n'est pas poltron, ou Le voleur dans le jardin*). The opera is recorded by the *Dramatic dictionary* as a translation from German by F. Gensh, which I was not able to identify. The libretto was published in Moscow in 1782.[736]

- The year 1782 saw the staging of another great success in the genre of Russian comic opera, *Zbitenshchik* (The hot mead seller), staged by the Russian court troupe in Saint Petersburg.[737] The work owes its title to the protagonist, the *sbitenshchik* Stepan, that is an itinerant vendor, who went in the winter selling *sbiten'*, a non-alcoholic hot drink consisting of an infusion of honey and spices in boiling water. The libretto in three acts is attributed to Yakov Borisovich Knyazhnin;[738] according to Mooser,

[733] "Представлена в первой раз в Санктпетербурге, и много раз в Москве, как на большом Петровском театре, так и в Москве бывает играна." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 130.
[734] "Сочинением и музыкою довольно нравящаяся публике; а что более сего: монолог оной, подражая монолого Скупаго из Моллиера, будучи расположен речитативою, приносит отменную честь сочинителю." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 130.
[735] V. A. PASHKEVICH, *Skupoy* (The miser), Opera, Score, Publication, Piano arrangement and research by E. Levashev, Moscow, State Publishers "Music" 1973. Before this edition, excerpts were included in *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian Music in Music Examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I-II Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968-69.
[736] *Netrusov ili Vor v sadu. Opera komicheskata v odnom deystvii, perevedena s Nemetskago yazyka Fedorom Genshem, nadpisana Moskovskago Pocht-Amta Direktoru g. Pestelyu. Predstavlena byla v pervoy raz na Nizhegorodskom teatre* (Netrusov, or The thief in the garden. Comic opera in one act, translated from the German by Fyodor Gensh, dedicated to the Director of the Moscow Post office Mr Pestel'. Premiered at the theatre of Nizhny Novgorod); *napechatana v Universitetskoy tipografii u N. N. 1782 goda*, recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 91.
[737] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "представлена в первой раз на Придворном театре в Санктпетербурге. В роле збитеньщика Придворный Российский актер г. Черников отменно талант свой изъявил к забаве зрителей. Потом часто повторяема была и в Москве на публичном театре к удовольствию поблики." (Premiered at the Court theatre of Saint Petersburg. In the role of the hot mead seller the Russian Court actor Mr Chernikov showed his talent for the amusement of the spectators. Later on tit was often revived also in Moscow in the public theatre for the pleasure of the spectaors.) *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 60. According to Karlinsky, first performed in 1784. S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 144. Findeyzen records other stagings in Saint Peterbsurg on 11 May 1787, and in Moscow on 17 April 1789. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 339.
[738] [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Komicheskaya opera Zbiten'shchik v trekh deystviyakh* (The hot-mead seller, comic opera in three acts), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXX, 1789.

> Incité sans doute par la sensationnelle réussite du *Meunier sorcier, fourbe et marieur* que son confrère A. Ablessimof avait donné quatre ans auparavant et qui avait immédiatement fait accourir les foules, le poète J. B. Kniajnine, dont plusieurs ouvrages avaient déjà connu le succès, s'avisa d'écrire, lui aussi, un opéra-comique portant à la scène des types et des traits empruntés à la vie quotidienne russe. Mais alors que son modèle avait créé de toutes pièces son intrigue et les personnages de celle-ci, l'imitatif de Kniajnine - le mot est du grand poète Pouchkine - jugea ne pouvoir mieux faire que de pasticher... *L'école des femmes* et *Le barbier de Séville* dont il transporta certains détails de l'intrigue, sur le plan des moeurs populaires de son pays.
>
> Sevi par une musique faciel et assez élémentaire à laquelle Anton Bullandt s'était imaginé candidemente donner un caractère russe, mais où se manifeste, bien plutôt, le souvenir lointain de l'*opera buffa* italien.[739]

As suggested by Mooser and later by Karlinsky, Knyazhnin based this opera on Molière's *L'école des femmes* (1662) and its two eighteenth-century descendants: *On ne s'avise jamais de tout* by Sedaine (1761) and *Le barbier de Séville* by Beaumarchais (1775).[740] Moving the action to contemporary Russia, Knyazhnin turned the barber Figaro into the mead seller Stepan. Molière's Arnolphe, who out of vanity changed his name in Monsieur de la Souche (he corresponds to Tue in Sedaine and to Bartolo in Beaumarchais), becomes the Russian merchant Makey, who took the name of Voldyryov ('Mr Blister') because he thought it would make him sound like a nobleman. In the plot the Russian officer Izved, in love with Voldyryov's ward, disguises himself as an old woman in order to get to speak to her, just as his predecessor Dorval did in Sedaine's play.

The play remained in repertoire up to the following century,[741] as a rival to *The miller magician* both in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Its success is attested by the fact that referring to this opera in 1789 the actor Pyotr Plavil'shchikov wrote the comedy *Mel'nik i Sbitenshchik – soperniki* (The miller and the hot mead seller rivals), where the protagonists of the two operas appear together on the stage to amuse the audience.[742]

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[739] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 252.

[740] More precisely, according to Karlinsky, in comparison to *Saint Petersburg Bazaar* and the sentimental comedy *The Salesclerck* by Plavil'shchikov, *The Hot-Mead Vendor* does not really russify Molière, Sedaine, and Beaumarchais, but merely adds to them a few touches of *coleur locale*. S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 145.

[741] According to the journal *Vestnik Evropy* (The messenger of Europe) it was staged in Moscow in 1810, with theparticipation of the singers Lisa Sandunova and P. V. Zlov in the main roles, who granted its success. *Vestnik Evropy* (The messenger of Europe), January 1810, p. 71. Later on it was revived also in St. Petersburg, gaining some success, although the repertoires included already works by composers of later generations, such as Boieldieu, Rossini, Auber, Meyerbeer and Glinka.

[742] In the play, the hot-mead vendor and the miller appear as rivals for the same beloved girls, who perfers them a peer of her, a peasant. The comedy was not only a pretext for amusement, but also a dichiarazione di poetica: through the joke, Plavil'shchikov expressed his preference for Ablesimov towards Knyazhnin, the first's opera having been attacked of disregarding the rules of the classical theatre, but, according to the actor and playwright, had expressed the national character with more fidelity and strength, in an original play, and not through the remake of a European play, a practice to which Knyazhnin was more keen. To be more precise, in the article *Prodolzhenie o zrelishchakh* (More on performances), Plavil'shchikov had expressed also his doubts concerning *The Miller*: "<…> я не могу терпеть ни кабаков, ни крючков винца, ни треухов, ни плетищев, ни живых лощадей на театре, или от того, что пение персхитрив естество ни

Moreover, in 1793 Vasily Levshin produced a sequel of Knyazhnin's opera, the *opera komicheskaya* in one act *Svad'ba Voldyreva* (The Marriage of Mr Voldyrev),[743] which was set to music by Mikhail F. Kertselli with great success. This was the last dramatic play by Levshin. As Findeyzen suggests, it was probably as a "pendant" to *Le mariage de Figaro*, even though the plot has nothing in common with Beaumarchais' comedy, and only the names of the principal characters connect it with Knyazhnin's opera.[744]

The music of *Sbitenshchik* was composed by the Czech bassoonist Anton Bullandt, who lived in Russia and worked as Court musician from 1780 until his death in 1821 and whose only important composition was this one. Bullandt's score was not published, but three manuscripts seem to have been preserved: in one of them (dating 1784), which I did not personally see, the text is written in Latin letters, a fact that suggests, according to Mooser, that it is the autograph score, because by the time he wrote the opera the composer was not able to speak Russian and to write in the Cyrillic alphabet.[745] According to Findeyzen, the preserved orchestral parts have allowed to piece together the Overture, fragments of which are reproduced in his *History of music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800*.[746] The exemplar housed at the manuscript section of the Russian National Library, which Findeyzen possibly did not see, is complete of the overture too.[747]

1783

чего больше не производит, как только приятность для нвшего уха; нр в мельнике и ухо мое страдало; последняя однакоже Ария, где мельник делает описание однодворуц, мне показалась хороша и мусика приятна." [P. A. PLAVIL'SHCHIKOV], *Prodolzhenie o zrelishchakh* (More on performances), in *Utra…*, August, List 1, p. 69.

[743] Libretto by V. Levshin published in Kaluga in 1793. See also [V. A. LEVSHIN], *Svad'ba Voldyreva, opera komicheskaya v odnom deystvii* (Voldyryov's marriage, comic opera in one act), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XLII, 1794, pp.109-56.

[744] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 340.

[745] From one of these exemplar, housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre, Findeyzen drew the numbers, which extracts he published in his *Ocherki po istorii muzyki v Rossii s drevneyshchikh vremen do kontsa XVIII* veka: the main and secondary themes of the overture, the protagonist's aria "Vot sbiten', vot sbiten'" (Here is the hot mead), and the duet of Pasha and Izved "Pashen'ka zhizn' moya" (Pashen'ka my life). N. F. FINDEYZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800…*, vol. 2, pp. 300-3.

[746] N. F. FINDEIZEN, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800…*, II, pp. 304-5.

[747] The title page of the manuscript reads as follows: *Opera Zbitenshchik, Sochineniya Gna Knyazhnina, Muzyka Gna Byulana, 1783 go Godu v S. Peterburge* (Opera *The hot mead seller*. Work of Mr Knyazhnin, Music by Mr Bullandt, 1783 in St. Petersburg). The score is housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library (OR RNB, F. 550, Q. XII. 5).

- *Tochil'shchik* (The knife grinder), opera in two acts by Nikolev, staged at the Petrovsky theatre on 27 April (?) with music by an unknown author; libretto published in Moscow.[748]

- *Kofeynitsa* (The coffee seller), comic opera in three acts by I. A. Krylov: the opera represents the mores of little landowners of the province. The action is centred around a witch who reads the coffee grounds in order to discover the most inner secrets of the landlords.

1784

- *Opekun professor, ili Lyubov' khitree krasnorechiya* (The keeper-professor, or Love is more clever than eloquence), jocose opera by N. Nikolev.[749] Its plot is based on the typical situation of the keeper wanting to marry a young woman (Eliza), being interested in her heritage. Finally the maiden is joined with her lover Milon thanks to a tricky ploy.

- *Muzh'ya zhenikhi svoikh zhen* (Husbands, *fiancés* of their own wives), Russian comic opera in two acts on libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin issued in Saint Petersburg without date.[750] As it seems, it was premiered on 31 January 1784. The author of the music is doubt, the hypothesis of Bullandt seeming to be proved wrong by the fact that in his supplication to his *Zbitenshchik* he does not refer to this opera.

- In the 1780s the interest raised towards exotic and favolistic subjects, most part of

[748] *Tochil'shchik, Opera v dvukh deystviyakh. Sochinena v 1780 godu. V pervoy raz predstavlena na Moskovskom teatre v 1783 godu* (The knife grinder, Opera in two acts. Written in 1780. Premiered at the Moscow theatre in 1783), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXII, 1788. Chayanova and Stasov ascribe the score to Fomin, without carrying any evidence. See O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, and V. V. STASOV, *Russkie i inostrannye opery, ispolnyavshiyasya na imperatorskikh teatrakh v Rossii v XVIII-m i XIX-m stoletiyakh* (Russian and foreign operas performed in the Imperial Theatres of Russia in 18th and 19th centuries), Sanktpeterburg, red. Russkoy muzykal'noy gazety (Russian musical gazette), 1898.

[749] The author of the *Dramatic dictionary* records it as *Opekun uchitel', ili Lyubov' khitree elokventsii* (The keeper-teacher, or Love is more clever than eloquence). *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 101. The full title is *Opekun professor, ili Lyubov' khitree krasnorechiya, shutlivaya opera. Sochinena v 1782 godu. V pervy raz predstavlena na Moskovskom teatre v 1784 godu* (The keeper-professor, or Love is more clever than eloquence, jocose opera written in 1782. Premiered at the Moscwo theatre in 1784), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXIV, 1788, pp. 3-62.

[750] The libretto is included a later Knyazhnin's collections of works: YA. B. KNYAZHNIN, *Sochineniya Knyazhnina* (Knyazhnin's works), tom II, Izdanie Aleksandra Smirdina, V tipografii knizhn. Mag. P. Krashennikova i komp, 1848; YA. B. KNYAZHNIN, *Komedii i komicheskie opery* (Comedis and comic operas), edited by A. Yu. Veselov and N. A. Gus'kov, Sankt-Peterburg, "GIPERION" 2003.

which are bound to the name of Prince Dimitry Petrovich Gorchakov. His first opera was *Kalif na chas* (Caliph for an hour), *opera komicheskaya* in four acts, with his own music, staged at the Petrovsky theatre in 1784.[751] According to the *Dramatic dictionary*, "In this opera the primary disposition of the theatre and the spectacle is funny. The character of the cobbler is played by the actor Mr Ozhogin at his maximum, and brings great pleasure to the spectators."[752] The libretto in fact records the names of all the performers.[753] The action takes place in Bagdad, where the cobbler Abdalla is joked by the caliph himself, who by means of a sleeping powder persuades him to be the caliph and to be able to punish one of his servants. When the cobbler is arrested and taken to the sultan because of his declarations, the caliph himself explains his joke, and join in marriage Abdalla's daughter with her *fiancé*. The plot, carried by spoken dialogues and interspersed with music numbers (solo, ensembles and choruses), is just a pretext for a digression in the Eastern spirit of *One thousand and one nights*, in fashion at that time also thanks to the space distance which allowed the expression of political thoughts through metaphors.

1785

- *Aleksey i Nataliya*, comic opera by unknown authors staged on 24 September 1785 at the Petrovsky theatre.

- In the summer 1785 Sheremetev opened his new theatre in Kuskovo: on the occasion his troupe staged the Russian comic opera in two acts *Razluka, ili Ot'ezd psovoy okhoty iz Kuskova* (The separation, or The departure from Kuskovo for the hunting with dogs), which text and music were most likely serfs of the Count who had remained

[751] O. CHAYANOVA, *Teatr Maddoksa v Moskve…*, p. 194.
[752] "В оной опере преимущественное расположение театра и спектакль забавен. Характер чеботаря играющий актер г. Ожогин представляет в пущей своей силе, чем отменное приносит удовольствие зрителям." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 67-8. According to it, the libretto was printed in Moscow at the Thetre typography of Mr Kaludii in 1786. ("Напечатана в Москве в театральной типографии у г. Клаудия 1786 года.", *ibidem*). Later it was included in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVI, 1788, pp. 67-146, as [D. P. GORCHAKOV], *Kalif na chas, komicheskaya opera v chetyrekh deystviyakh. Sochineniya K. D. Gorchakov* (Caliph for an hour, comic opera in foru acts, Written by P[rince] D. Gorchakov).
[753] Mr. Lapin as the Caliph Harun al Rashid, Mrs Noskova as the sultana Zobenida, Mr Azersky as Giafar, Mr ugryumov as the chief of the eunuchs, Mezrur, Mrs Sokolovskaya as Fat'ma, the cobbler Abdalla's wife, Mrs Vinogradova as his dughter Roksana, Mr Kolesnikov as her fiancé Hassan, Mr Baksheev as Abdalla's labourer, Mr Zalyshkin as doctor Abulnfidar. The cast included also several singers as the Caliph's wives, his guards and civil servants. [D. P. GORCHAKOV], *Kalif na chas…*, p. 68.

unknown.[754] The opera, as that especially composed for the Sheremetev theatre, is a tribute to the beauty of the estate and the hospitality of its owners, and is characterized by the coincidence of the fictitious place, where action is collocated and the real place where it was staged – the outdoor theatre in the garden of Kuskovo.[755]

1786

- *Khlor-tsarevich, ili Roza bes shipov, kotoraya ne koletsya* (Khlor-Tsarevich, or The rose without prickles, which does not sting), anonymous, possibly with text by D. Khvostov. The libretto was printed in Saint Petersburg in 1786, and later included *Russian theatre*.[756] According a note written by Aleksandr V. Khrapovitsky in his journal on 9 December 1786, the opera was staged few time before this date.[757]

- *Radost' dushin'ki* (Dushin'ka's happyness), *comédie lyrique* followed by a ballet, in one act, staged at the Court theatre on 12 October 1786 at the Court's Hermitage theatre. The libretto belongs to I. Bogdanovich (1743-1803), a civil servant of the Ministry of Foreign affairs. The plot is poor, mostly consecrated to *buffoonery* tricks. It was published the same year in Saint Petersburg, and later included in the collection *Russian Theatre*.[758]

[754] - *Razluka, ili Ot'ezd psovoy okhoty iz Kuskova, Komicheskaya opera v dvukh deystviyakh s eya posledovaniem v odnom deystvii sochinennaya *** **** V pervoy raz predstavlena v sele Kuskove v sadu na otkrytom teatre sobstvennymi ego Siyatel'stva Grafa Petra Borisovicha Sheremeteva pevtsami i pevitsami. Iunya 29 dnya 1785.* (The separation, or The departure from Kuskovo for the hunting with dogs, Comic opera in two acts with its sequel in one act written by *** ****. Premiered in the village of Kuskovo in the oper air theatre by the singers of Her Excellency count Pyotr Borisovich Sheremetev. 29 June 1785) Pechatana s dozvoleniya Upravy Blagochiniya, V Moskve, v vol'noy Tipografii Ponomareva, 1785 goda.

[755] For a description of the theatre, which has not survived, see N. N. LIBAN, *"Vozdushny teatr" v Kuskove* (The 'outdoor theatre' of Kuskovo), in *Teatral'noe prostranstvo, Materialy nauchnoy konferentsii (1978)* (The theatrical space, Proceedings of the conference), Moskva, Gos. Muzey izobr. Isk-va im. Pushkina 1979, pp. 281-90.

[756] - *Khlor-tsarevich, ili Roza bes shipov, kotoraya ne koletsya, Inoskazatel'noe zrelishche v trekh deystviyakh. 1786 goda* (Khlor-Tsarevich, or The rose without prickles, which does not sting, allegoric performance in three acts. 1786), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXIV, 1788, pp. 195-232.

[757] CATHERINE II, *Pis'ma Ekateriny Velikoy k A. V. Khrapovitskomu* (Letters of Catherine the Great to A. V.. Khrapovitsky), in A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Dnevnik A. V. Khrapovitskogo c 18 Yanvarya 1782 po 17 sentyabrya 1793 goda. Po podlinnoy ego rukopisi, s biograficheskoyu stat'eyu i ob'yasnitel'nym ukazatelem Nikolaya Barsukova, chlena Arkheologicheskoy komissii* (A. V. Khrapovitsky's journal from 18 January 1782 to 17 September 1793. From his authentical manuscript, with a biographical note and an explanatory Index by Nikolay Barsukov, member of the Archaelogical Commission), edited by N. Barsukov, Moskva, V Universitetskoy tipografii 1901, p. 390.

[758] *Radost' dushin'ki, liricheskaya komediya, posleduemaya baletom, v odnom deystvii. Predstavlena v pervy raz, v prisudstvii EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA, na pridvornom teatre, Oktyabrya 12 dnya 1786 goda* (Dushin'ka's happyness, comédie lyrique, followed by a ballet, in one act. Premiered in the presence of Her Imperial Majesty, at the Court theatre, on 12 October 1786.), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXIV, 1788, pp. 102-36.

The score, but an unknown composer, seems to be lost, even though according to Arapov the opera remained in repertoire for quite a long time.[759]

- *Baba-Yaga*, *opera komicheskaya* in four acts by Dimitry P. Gorchakov staged in 1786 with music by Stabingher.[760] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "This opera is pretty amusing in the discourse of the part of the fairy baba-yaga, in her strange custom and allure, and in the different change of sets in the opera."[761] The choice of the subject attests to the interest in Russian folklore and fantastic popular beliefs which was developed during the following century up to the Mighty Handful.

- *Shchastlivaya Tonya* (Lucky Tonya), on libretto in four acts by Prince Dimitry Petrovich Gorchakov, staged in Moscow in 1786 with music by Stabingher.[762] According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "Received by the audience with considerable benevolence. Hardly another of the Russian operas was praised so much."[763]

- *Beshenaya sem'ya* (The crazy family), comic opera in three acts on libretto by Ivan Krylov,[764] staged at the Saint Petersburg Court theatre in 1786. The music was composed by the German violin player at Court Otto Ernst Tewes.[765] The opera appears not to have gained any success.

1787

In 1787 Bullandt is thought to have produced three Russian comic operas:

[759] P. ARAPOV, *Letopis' russkogo teatra…*, p. 133. The author of these memoirs, though, is not always reliable.
[760] [D. P. GORCHAKOV], *Baba Yaga, komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh i s baletom* (Baba Yaga, comic opera in three acts with a ballet), V kaluge 1788 goda.
[761] "Оная опера довольно забавна в разсуждении роли *феи бабы-яги*, как странным своим одеянием и ездою в ступе, так и разными в оной опере переменами и декорациями." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 165.
[762] The libretto was printed in Moscow by the Theatrical typography of Khristof Klaudii.
[763] "Публикой принята с отменной благосклонностью. Едва ли из русских опер подобно была восхваляема другая." *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 161-2.
[764] The libretto was issued in St. Petersburg, and then included in the collection *Russian theatre*: [I. A. KRYLOV], *Beshenaya sem'ya Komicheskaya opera v trekh deystviyakh Ivana Krylova* (The crazy family, Comic opera in three acts by Ivan Krylov), in *Rossiyskiy Featr...*, Chast' XXXIX, 1793.
[765] Erranously ascribed to Fomin, the score belongs to Tewes, as indicated in the score housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. A manuscript score of its II and III acts (the latter seemingly incomplete) is housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB O. R. F. xii, 39/1; F. xii, 39/2). It comes from the Imperial Foreign Library of the Hermitage.

- *Milozor i Prelesta* (Milozor and Prelesta), in three acts, libretto possibly by Nikolay Perepechin, issued in Moscow in 1787;

- *Le bon sorcier*, *opéra dramatique* in five acts, libretto by an unknown author, issued in Moscow in 1787, which I leave in the French translation because I was no able to identify the Russian original;

- *Le pêcheur et l'esprit*, in three acts, libretto by Ya. B. Knyazhnin issued in Moscow in 1788 (idem).

Milozor i Prelesta, differently from other libretti by Perepechin, is written in prose, with only airs written in verse, and distinguished typographically, in Italics, from the spoken dialogues. The plot is most typical: Milozor and Prelesta love each other, but they cannot marry because of his poor economical condition. Moreover, the counterman of the village wants her to marry someone else in the town. Finally, Milozor is acknowledged as the son of the village master (Dobronrav, 'of good customes'), who can thus allow the wedding.[766]

- *Lyubov' oprovergaet soyuz druzhestva* (Love disproves the conjunction of friendship), *opera komicheskaya* in five acts, libretto by I. Mikhaylov, a student of the Moscow University, issued in Moscow in 1787 and later included in the collection *Russian Theatre*.[767]

- *Shchastie ot priezda gospodina ili Nagrazhdennoe userdie zemledel'tsov* (Happiness from the arrival of the master, or The peasants' zeal rewarded), *opera komicheskaya* in three acts, composed in Kaluga in 1787.[768]

- *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi* (Pygmalion, or The strength of love), libretto by V. Maykov,[769] which, according to Mooser, had already been set to music by a violin player

[766] [N. PEREPECHIN], *Milozor i Prelesta, opera komicheskaya* (Milozor and Prelesta, Comic opera), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVI, 1788, pp. 147-282.
[767] [I. MIKHAYLOV], *Opera Lyubov' oprovergaet soyuz druzhestva, v pyati deystviyakh. Sochineniya []kago Imperatorskago Universiteta uch. IVANA MIKHAILOVA* (Opera *Love disproves the conjunction of friendship*, in five acts. Composed of the student of the [Moscow?] Imperial University Ivan Mikhailov), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXVIII, 1789.
[768] *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 160.

and composer by the name of Pomorsky.[770] The second version belongs to Stabingher. It is also possible that it was staged later, because the libretto was published in 1799.[771] The text, though surely owing something to Rousseau's *mélodrame*,[772] is treated by Maykov freely, with the addition of more characters (Venera, Kupidon, The Idol and Gemon, who is Pygmalion's confidant). This possibly happened through the mediation of Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Pygmalion* (1748), in which the statue is not brought to life by the artist, but by Cupid's help, although there is no evidence that the author knew the opera. Moreover, Maykov changes the protagonist's identity from that of a sculptor to that of a king, leaving aside Rousseau's reflection on the power of art, and possibly trying to heighten the scale of his work. This is suggested also by the choice of expressing all dialogues in verses, including those of Cupid, who is the only character who plays "without singing".[773]

- 2 January 1787 in Saint Petersburg the second comic opera by E. I. Fomin was staged: *Yamshchiki na podstave* (Postal coachmen at the relay), in one act on libretto by N. A. L'vov, published in Tambov in 1788. According to the interest L'vov had showed towards Russian folklore, the libretto is in line to that of Ablesimov's *Miller Magician*. According to Karlinsky "it utilized the traditional musical lore of those drivers who transported travellers across the vast Russian plains and whose singing was to inspire so

[769] The libretto, which title reads [V. MAYKOV], *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi. Drama s muzykoyu v odnom deystvii* (Pygmalion, or The strength of love, Drama with music in one act), was included in the 18th part of *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XVIII, 1788, pp. 173-214.

[770] Nikolay Grigor'evich Pomorsky (1747-1804) studied with his father and with J. Starzer, with whom he went to Vienna in 1762. Having come back to Russian on 1 September 1763, he was hired as violin player in the first Court orchestra. With the ukaz of 23 April 1765 he was sent abroad again, and spent two more years in Vienna with Starzer; in 1768 he was in Paris together with the dancer T. S. Bublikov. At the beginning of 1769 he came back to St. Petersburg, where he worked as a chamber musician, as a director (since 1784), and as 'repertitor' of the Russian opera (since 1789). In 1800 he was appointed 'repetitor' and composer of the Russian theatre, replacing E. I. Fomin. See the entry by A. L. Porfir'eva in *Muzykal'ny Peterburg*, vol. 2, pp. 381-2.

[771] If it is so, it was possibly a revival, the quoted libretto having been published in 1779 in the typography of the Moscow university. *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 106.

[772] Compare, for instance, the scene of the humanization of the statue: "ИСТУКАН. Бежишь от глаз моих мя крыющая ночь. […] Я вижу свет теперь, я живость ощущаю. [*прикасаясь себе.*] Прикосновение грудь чувствует моя. / Се грудь, се рамена, се руки; это я! / Смягчилися во мне все тверды члены... [*Прикасается подножию, на котором, быв истуканом, стояла.*] А это уж не я! .. о чудныя премены!" (THE IDOL. Run away from my eyes, night, my jailer. […] Now I can see the light, I can feel the life. [*touching herself*] My bosom feels the touch. / This bosom, these shoulders, these hands: this is me! / My hard members have gotten soft… [*Touching the stand, on which she stood, when she was an idol.*] And this is not me!.. oh miraculous changes!) [V. MAYKOV], *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi…*, pp. 199-200, with the same scene in Rousseau: "GALATHÉE *se touche, et dit:* Moi. PYGMALION, *transporté*. Moi. GALATHÉE, *se touchant encore*. C'est moi. […] GALATHÉE f*ait quelques pas, et touche un marbre*. Ce n'est plus moi." J. – J. ROUSSEAU, *Oeuvres complètes de J. – J. Rousseau, réimprimées après les meilleurs textes*, edited by L. Barré, Tome Huitième, Paris, J. Bry ainé, 1857, p. 198.

[773] "bez peniya", [V. MAYKOV], *Pigmalion, ili Sila lyubvi…*, p. 174.

many of the later Russian poets, from Pushkin to Annensky."[774] Here the scholar refers to the textual component of the songs, but the same can be said about the musical part of the opera. This can possibly be read as the foundation of a tradition, Glinka himself having referred to a coachman song in his *A Life for the Tsar*, one of the very few exact quotations he introduced in the score.

The score of *Yamshchiki na podstave* is preserved: excerpts of it were published by Ginzburg in his anthology, and in 1977 a modern edition was issued in the quoted series *Monuments of Russian Art Music*.[775] Recently it has been studied in an essay of Richard Taruskin,[776] in which two main points seem particularly worth of attention.

The opens with a couple of *protyazhnye pesni*, a widespread genre of Russian song characterized by a responsorial structure performed by an intoner (*zapevalo*) and a heterophonic chorus (in Russian *podgoloski*). The second song, *Vysoko sokol letaet* (The hawk soars aloft), is presented in a high style, according to the scholar "the highest at which any Russian opera before Glinka ever aimed."[777] Moreover,

> The choruses stoutly evince the new view - a proto-Herderian view - of folk as unself-conscious bearer of native wisdom, *lore* in its most ancient and distinguished sense. The subject matter is literally lofty; the singers do not entertain their betters but gladden or console themselves; theirs is music not for listeners but for the singers' sake - an artless art for the sake of art. […] The choral textures in the Lvov-Fomin choruses are astonishingly faithful, for the date, to those of genuine oral heterophony. Unlike virtually any choral texture by a composer in the cultivated tradition […] these choruses of Fomin's are genuinely heterophonic: at virtually no time can any one voice in them be unequivocally identified as the carrier of the main tune. The mode hovers between the minor (with cadences on the tonic) and the relative major (with cadences on the dominant), reproducing the salient characteristic of the so-called mutable mode (*peremennïy lad*) of genuine folklore. At the same time, aspects of the harmony show definite "Westernized" traits, such as the use of applied dominants and the harmonic minor.[778]

On the other hand, the opera contains also different uses of the folklore, which Taruskin considers not "nationalistic" at all. The scholar refers to the scene in which the driver Timofey, spared from an unjust conscription that would separate him from his bride Fadeevna, dances with his wife and with the balalaika on the tune of (A birch tree rustled in the field), which was to be later adopted by Chaykovsky for the finale of his *Fourth*

[774] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 128.
[775] *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian Music in Music Examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I, Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968; E. I. FOMIN, *Yamshchiki na podstave*, *Opera*, Partitura, publikatsiya i perelozhenie dlya fortepiano I. M. Vetlitsynoy, Issledovaniya Yu. V. Keldysha i I. M. Vetlitsynoy (Postal coachmen at the relay, Opera, Full score, Publication and arrangement for piano by I. M. Velitsina, Research by Yu. V. Keldysh and I. M. Velitsina), *Pamyatniki russkogo muzykal'nogo iskusstva* (Monuments of Russian art music), Vypusk 6, Moskva, Izdatel'stvo «MUSYKA» 1977.
[776] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the folk…*, pp. 3-24.
[777] *ivi*, p. 12.
[778] *ivi*, pp. 12-3.

Symphony, and by Balakirev in his *Overture on Russian Themes* (1858). The balalaika is represented by pizzicatos, a feature to which Glinka will recur in the accompaniment of the oarsmen's chorus in the first act of his opera *A Life for the Tsar*. According to the scholar though, "Yet despite all these adumbrations of the standard Russian repertoire, there is nothing in the least "nationalistic" about Fomin's use of folklore here"[779]. The quoted trio is an essay in low style as befits low-born characters, as it emerges from the libretto: the characters sing not in spontaneous exuberance but to entertain and thank the noble officer who has intervened to straighten out their predicament; the words themselves have been adapted to praise him: "Golden days have dawned, / the fair maid and her love have been reunited, / oh, yes indeed, reunited / by our kind commanders, / oh yes indeed, our commanders." [780] The musicologists affirms that this number falls into line with contemporary European representations of the folk, recalling the analogous trio of Simon, Jane and Luke in Thomson and Haydn's *The seasons*. That is just what folklore and folklorism represented in aristocratic 18th-century Europe: peasants as opposed to people. In this line Chaykovsky would treat the choruses and dances of the first act of his *Evegny Onegin*, or the chorus of maidens picking berries in the third scene.[781]

So two different uses of folklore can be detected in the same opera. The latter appears analogous to similar scenes highlighted in Maykov's opera *The village feast*, or in *The king at the hunt*, or also in Catherine's operas (see below). Rather than absence of nationalism, I see in such scenes (which undoubtedly deny the vision of *opera komicheskaya* as a mean of the struggle against the system of serfdom) the particular declination that nationalism will take in Russia, at least before the rising of the later movement of slavophilism in the second half of the 19-th century. This proto-nationalism was deprived of any egalitarian element, aimed as it was at the preservation of the present hierarchy.

1788

[779] *ivi*, p. 8.
[780] Eng. Transl. By R. Taruskin in R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the folk…*, p. 9.
[781] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the folk…*, pp. 10-11.

- *Pivovar, ili kroyushchiysya dukh* (The brewer, or the hidden spirit), comic opera in four acts by unknown authors, staged in Moscow in 1788.[782] According to Stasov, this was a translation from French, which I was not able to identify.[783]

- *Vecherinki, ili Gaday, gaday krasavitsa* (Soirées, or Guess, guess beauty!), staged at the Saint Petersburg Court theatre with music by E. I. Fomin, which is nowadays lost. The libretto was printed in the city in the same year.

- *Tsygan* (The Gypsy), comic opera in two acts by an unknown librettist staged on 14 June 1788.[784] Its music is traditionally attributed to Bullandt, though without certain evidence.

- *Neudachnaya zhenit'ba* (The Unfortunate Marriage), on anonymous libretto set to music by Stabingher, staged at the Petrovsky theatre in February (second staging on 19 February).

1789

Mooser records four more operas staged in 1789:

- *Plenira i Zelim*, by prince A. M. Beloselsky-Belozersky set to music by Ivan or Mikhail F. Kertselli, and staged in Moscow in an imprecise date;[785]

[782] - *Pivovar, ili kroyushchiysya dukh. Komicheskaya opera v chetyrekh deystviyakh. S ukaznago dozvoleniya. V Moskve v tipografii pri Teatre u Chr. Klaudiya, 1788 goda* (The brewer, or the hidden spirit. Comic opera in four acts. With the imprimatur. In Moscow, in the theatre typography of Khr. Klaudii, 1788), in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom jazyke imeyushchikhsya* (Full collection of all the theatrical works existing in Russian), Chast' 46, v Sanktpeterburge, 1801 goda, E. D.

[783] STASOV, *Russkie i inostrannye opery, ispolnyavshiyasya na imperatorskikh teatrakh…*

[784] Issued in Moscow in 1788: *Malaya opera Tsygan v dvukh deystviyakh, izhdiveniem Nikity Vodop'yanago, S ukazanago dozvoleniya. V Moskve, v Tipogr. pri Teatre u Khr. Klaudiya, 1788 goda.* (Little opera The Gypsy in two acts, by Nikita Vodop'yany, With the imprimatur. In Moscow, in the theatre typography of Khr. Klaudii, 1788), in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy…*, Chast' 58, 1801.

[785] The libretto, in three acts, was issued in 1789, and later included in the collection *Russian theatre*: [A. M. BELOSELSKY-BELOZERSKY], *Plenira i Zelim, Opera v trekh deystviyakh, Sochinena B. B.* (Plenira and Zelim, Opera in three acts, Composed by B. B.), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXXVII, 1791.

- *La belle et le fantôme*, comic opera in one act on libretto by prince A. M. Beloselsky-Belozersky, set to music by an unknown composer, which I was not able to identify.[786]

- *Troe lenivykh* (The three idlers), comic opera in one act by Ya. B. Knyazhnin, set to music by an unknown composer.[787]

- the anonym *La double métamorphose, ou La gai savatier*, staged in Moscow on 1 January and revived in the following years. I was not able to identify the original title.

- On 29 June 1789 the Russian theatre of Saint Petersburg premiered *Pritvorno-sumasshedshaya* (The false madwoman), comic opera by Ya. B. Knyazhnin, an imitation of Jean-François Regnard's *Les Folies amoureuses* (1704), comedy in verse in three acts. The libretto was written already in 1787, because it is included in Knyazhnin's collection of works of that year. The music was composed by Gennaro Astaritta, and is a further example of the collaboration between Russian librettists and Italian musicians in 18th century. Astaritta's manuscript is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre, titled *La finta foletta*. According to the scholar, this suggests that the opera was performed also in Italian, but there is no evidence of it.[788] The opera was revived at the Petrovsky theatre on 21 January 1795, gaining a certain success.

1790

- *Nevesta pod fatoy* (The bride under the veil), *opera komicheskaya* in one act by an unknown librettist, staged in Moscow in 1790.[789] The composer of the music is still unknown, the frequent attribution to Fomin notwithstanding.

[786] (libretto alla publicka stampato nel 1789)
[787] The libretto was issued in 1789, and later included in the collection *Russian theatre*: [YA. B. KNYAZHNIN], *Troe lenivykh Opera v odnom deystvii* (The three idlers, Opera in one act), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXXVII, 1791.
[788] A microfilm reproduction of the same score is housed at the library of the conservatory "Santa Cecilia" in Rome but, due to technical problems, it was impossible for me to have access to it by the moment of writing the present work.
[789] Later the libretto was included in the collection *Russian theatre*: - *Nevesta pod fatoy, ili Meshchanskaya svad'ba, Komicheskaya opera, Bez nablyudeniya teatral'nykh i stikhotvorcheskikh pravil* (The bride under the veil, or the petty bourgeois marriage, Comic opera, Without observing the rules of theatre and versification), *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXXVII, 1791.

- On 7 January 1790 a comic opera titled *Pesnolyubie* (Melomania) was staged at the Hermitage theatre. The libretto, though anonym in the publication,[790] was written by Aleksandr V. Khrapovitsky, secretary of Catherine II, and the music composed by the Spanish Martín y Soler, who had been appointed at the Russian troupe after the disbanding of the Italian one.[791] The opera is a Russian remake of Grenier's libretto *La mélomanie*, *opéra-comique* in one act, set to music by Stanislas Champein in 1781. In the plot the landowner Melodist forces his servants to practice music. He wants to marry one of his daughters, Adagio and Allegro (i. e. Agaf'ya and Agrafena) to the neighbour's son, Tenori, who studied singing in Italy. The action is centred around the competition between the young landowner Tenori and Ruslan. At the end Tenori marries a daughter, Ruslan the other. According to Gozenpud, the libretto influenced the later *Lyubovnaya pochta* (The love mail) by Aleksandr A. Shakhovskoy, set to music by Catterino Cavos in 1806.[792]

- On 22 August 1790 the Petrovsky theatre staged an opera recorded by Mooser as *Cupidon ermite*, which I was not able to identify.[793]

1791

- *A celui qui évoquera le passé, qu'on arrache un oeil*, *comédie lyrique* in three acts on libretto by V. Levshin, staged in Kuskovo.[794] The score, nowadays lost, was by Ivan Koessler (or Kessler), possibly a musician at Sheremetev's service.

- *Koldun, vorozheya i svakha* (The magician, the fortune teller and the matchmaker), comic opera in three acts on libretto by I. Yukov, staged in Saint Petersburg, which libretto was issued two years before in Saint Petersburg, and included in the

[790] According to Mooser, the only extant exemplar of the score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. The opera was mentioned by *Otecestvennye zapiski* still in 1821 (no. 16, p. 132). See R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 550.
[791] The *Indice de' teatrali spettacoli* for the years 1789-90 mentions him as "direttore e compositore della compagnia russa". According to Mooser, he was appointed also at the Theatre School, according to a contract signed on 1 October 1790. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, pp. 456-7.
[792] A. A. GOZENPUD, *Muzykal'ny teatr v Rossii…*, pp. 154-5, and my *"Ivan Susanin" di Catterino Cavos…*, pp. 99-100.
[793] *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* (St. Petersburg gazette), September 1790. Mooser states that it cannot be *L'amour ermite* by M. F. Blasius, which was created in Paris only in 1793. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p.
[794] According to Mooser, the libretto was published in Moscow in 1791. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 590.

collection *Russian theatre*.[795] The music was composed by Fomin, but the score is nowadays lost. The subjects partially repeats that of the *Miller Magician*.

1793

- *La charmeuse de coeurs*, which Russian original I was not able to identify, staged in Moscow; libretto by some I. Ivanov issued in Moscow in 1793, and later included in *Russian Theatre*. The music, ascribed to Matinsky, is nowadays lost.

1794

- In July 1794 a new comic opera, by unknown authors, was staged in Chernigov (600 km South-West from Moscow): *L'ignorances vaincue*, which I was not able to identify.

In Moscow the same year Ivan F. Kertselli have three comic operas of his staged:

- *Korol na okhote* (The king at the hunt);

- *Svoya nosha ne tyanet* (The burden is not heavy if it's yours), libretto in two acts by V. A. Levshin;[796]

- *Mnimye vdovtsy* (The supposed widowers), *opera komicheskaya* in three acts by Vasily A. Levshin.[797] Although structured as a spoken drama interspersed with music numbers, it contains not only little airs, but also a Finale (act I) including six characters and some others music ensembles (a trio concludes the second act, a chorus the opera).

[795] *Koldun, vorozheya i svakha, opera komicheskaya v trekh deystviyakh* (The magician, the fortune teller and the matchmaker, comic opera in three acts), V Sanktpeterburge 1789; [I. YUKOV], *Koldun, vorozheya i svakha, opera komicheskaya v trekh deystviyakh* (The magician, the fortune teller and the matchmaker, comic opera in three acts), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXXVII, 1791.
[796] The libretto was initially published in Kaluga in 1794. Later it was included in the collection *Rossiysky featr*: [V. A. LEVSHIN], *Svoya nosha ne tyanet, opera komicheskaya v dvukh deystviyakh* (The burden is not heavy if it's yours, comic opera in two acts), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XLII, 1794, pp.157-230.
[797] Issued in Kaluga in 1794 and later included in *Rossiysky featr*: [V. A. LEVSHIN], *Mnimye vdovtsy, opera komicheskaya v trekh deystviyakh* (The supposed widowers, comic opera in three acts), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XLIII, 1794, pp. 5-104.

Korol na okhote (The king at the hunt) by Vasily Levshin, with music by Ivan F. Kertselli.[798] It is the Russian version of the subject of the French comedy "mêlée de morceaux de musique" *Le roi et le fermier* by Sedaine with music by Monsigny.[799] The plot is organized differently, and collocated in an indefinite village. The Russification is visible in the names, notably the heroine Anyuta instead of Jenny. The play is deprived of any denunciation of serfdom, full at contrary of declarations of love for the king by the main peasant-characters. Although the sovereign is referred to as *korol'* and not *tzar'*, one of these declarations seems to be a clear reference to Catherine II's enlightened ventures and ideals, which has no correspondent in Sedaine's original:

> ИВАН.
>
> Там от мала до велика, ни о чем больше не говорят, как об нашем милосердом Короле; всегда что нибудь есть то сказывают: он бедным учредил пропитание; для больных и увечных завел домы; по городам устроил училищи, в кои всяк без платы может отдавать детей своих. Еще для несчастных младенцов: где всякая спасенная жизнь на нево указывает: вот друг человечества! Со славою защитил государство от врагов и завистников; разширил пределы онаго без пролития крови; издал мудрые и спасительные законы… Словом сказать: все ево хвалят и любят; по тому что он сам любит их как детей. Заслуги награждает, пороки истребляет, но не мечем, а кротостью. Всево больше прославляют ево милосердие: всяк может к нему писать как к другу, о своих нуждах. Он не мстит и злодеям своим: казнит их прощением. – Да кто все перечтет! Надобно целой год говорить, и тут не перескажешь.
>
> МАКСИМ.
>
> Это сущая правда! Я от отца своего слыхал: что бывало, на всякой дороге виселицы, да колеса; однакож резывали людей в городах под окнами. А ныне мы дивимся, когда услышим: поймали разбойника. – Милосердие сердца смягчает, а меч ожесточает.[800]

[IVAN.

There from the young to the old, everyone speaks about our clement King; they always say something about him: he organized the food for the poor people; he created houses for the sick and lame people; he opened schools in the streets where everyone can give his children without paying. Moreover for unfortunate kids: where any saved life indicates to him, there's a friend of mankind! He gloriously defended the country from enemies and envious people; he enlarged its boundaries without shedding any blood; he issued wise and redeeming laws… To say it in one word: all praise and love him; because he himself loves them as they were his children. He rewards the services, destroys evil, not through sword, but through meekness. They praise his clemency most of all: anybody can write to him about his needs, as to a friend. He does not take revenge on his evildoers: he punishes them through mercy. – What else to say! One should speak a whole year, and he still will not say all.

MAKSIM.

It is the real truth! I heard from my father, that it happened that in every street there were scaffolds and wheels; at that time they used to quarter people under the windows. Today on the contrary we marvel when we hear that a bandit is captured. – Heart's clemency mitigates, whereas the sword exacerbates.]

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[798] The libretto was published in Kaluga in 1793, and later included in *Rossiysky featr*: [V. A. LEVSHIN], *Korol' na okhote, opera komicheskaya v trekh deystviyakh. Trudy Vasiliya Levshina i Ivana Fr. Kertseliya* (The king at the hunt, comic opera in three acts. Work of Vasily Levshin and Ivan Fr. Kertselli), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XLII, 1794, pp. 1-108.

[799] [R. D. SEDAINE], *Le roi et le fermier, Comédie en trois actes: mêlée de morceaux de musique. Représentée pour le première fois par le Comédiens Italiens Ordinaires du Roi, le lundi 22. Novembre 1762, Par M. Sedaine. La musique de M. de M****. A Paris, Chez Claude Hérissant, Imprimeur-Libraire, rue Neuve Notre-Dame, à la Croix d'Or. MDCCCLXII.

[800] [V. A. LEVSHIN], *Korol' na okhote, opera komicheskaya v trekh deystviyakh. Trudy Vasiliya Levshina i Ivana Fr. Kertseliya* (The king at the hunt, comic opera in three acts. Work of Vasily Levshin and Ivan Fr. Kertselli), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XLII, 1794, pp. 79-80.

The critics are focused on the abuses made by the sovereign's courtiers (count Vetrov's attempt to Anyuta's virtue), which are amended in the end by the king, once he knew about them.

Mooser refers to other operas, which I could not identity, reporting only the French translation of their titles:

- *Trois mariages d'un coup, ou Comme on fait son lit, on y couche. Opéra-comique en deux actes. Composition d'André Jeltov. Musique de Mr. F. Kers. [sic]. Représenté pour la première fois sur la théâtre particulier de noble Nicolas Féodorovitch Kolytchef, par ses propres acteurs. Edité à Moscou, à la typographie privée de A. Réchetnikof, année 1794*; music by Frants Kerzelli composed for a private theatre.[801]

- *Le clerc maleureux en amour*, in two acts, staged (in 1795?) at the Petrovsky theatre, possibly with music by Pashkevich. The libretto by some I. Niékhatchin was printed in Moscow.

- *Les jeunes peuvent tromper plus aisement que les vieux*, Russian *comédie lyrique* in one act staged by noblemen-amateurs at the private theatre of prince V. I. Shcherbakov in Litvinovo (near Moscow). The libretto by V. A. Levshin was printed in Moscow in 1796,[802] and set to music by Ivan F. Kertselli. The opera was revived in 1802 at the Petrovsky theatre.

- *Olinka, ou Le premier amour*, in two acts, text and music by prince A. M. Belosel'sky-Belozersky, staged in the private theatre of A. E. Stolypin in Yasny, near Moscow. Issued in Moscow in 1790, the libretto was considered disgraceful by Paul I, who obliged the author to revise it, in order to have it staged at the Petrovsky theatre in 1801. Mooser's opinion is that the score, Belosel'sky-Belozersky not being a composer, was a collage of popular tunes adapted to the text.

Other operas, which performances remain hard to date, are:

[801] Exemplars of the libretto are housed at the Russian National Library (RNB) and at the State Central Theatrical museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" in Moscow.
[802] Exemplars of the libretto are housed at State Central Theatrical museum "A. A. Bakhrushin" in Moscow.

- *Pokhod s nepremennykh kvartir* (March from permanent quarters), *komicheskaya opera* in three acts, written by Ablesimov and set to music by Ekkel. Often staged at the Moscow theatre. According to the author of the *Dramatic dictionary*, "This pièce was received quite well by the audience. In it the author showed in details both the needs and the charms of the soldiers' life."[803]

- *Tunissky pasha* (The pasha from Tunis), *opera komicheskaya* in two acts on libretto by Matinsky set to music (not preserved) by Pashkevich, and often staged in Saint Petersburg and Moscow.[804] It was possibly a remake of the German *Der Bassa von Tunis* by F. A. Holly, staged on 18 January 1776 at the German theatre.

- *Ptitselov* (The bird hunter), pastoral opera, in one act on libretto by Nikolay Perepechin.[805] The opera is less bound to Russian *realia* than the others by the same author, possibly due to the genre: the names of the characters (Milibeya, Likast, Kleona, Menalk) recall Greek shepherds rather than Russian peasants. The plot is once more very simple, telling the love story between the couples Milibeya and Likast, and Kleona and Memalk. In the libretto, the music numbers are indicated referring to Italian forms: five arias, a trio, three duets, and a quartet achieving the act.

- *Opasnaya shutka, opera komicheskaya* in one act.[806]

- *Milena*, comic opera in one act by some F. G., possibly a serf of prince Pyotr Mikhailovich Volkonsky, on libretto by some O. L., without place nor date.[807] Prince Volkonsky had in fact a private theatre in the provincial estate of Samotek. The initials of the names suggest the idea of their appartenance to aristocracy, who used to remain hidden behind the initials in conformity with the social codex, according to which a professional occupation with music was incompatible with high rank or noble title.

[803] "Оная пиеса довольно хорошо принята публикою. Г. Сочинитель показал в оной пиесе подробно все солдатския нужды, так как искусившейся в сей части." *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 108.
[804] *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 145.
[805] [N. PEREPECHIN], *Ptitselov, Pastush'ya opera, v odnom deystvii* (The birder, Pastoral opera, in one act), in *Rossiysky Featr…*, Chast' XXVIII, 1789.
[806] - *Opasnaya shutka, komicheskaya opera v odnom deystvii* (The dangerous joke, Comic opera in one act), in *Rossiyskiy Featr...*, Chast' XXXIX, 1793.
[807] *Drammatichesky slovar'...*, p. 80

The success of comic opera in Russia induced also the two leading lyric poets of the 1780s, Bogdanovich and Derzhavin, to try their hand at it. Their librettos were not set to music or performed, but they were published and read. It was the case with Ippolit Bogdanovich's (1744-1803) "drama with choruses and ballet" *Slaviane* (The Slavs, 1788),[808] and with Gavrilo Derzhavin's (1743-1816) numerous tragedies, dramatic prologues, magic operas, and comic operas that fill more than six hundred pages of the fourth volume of his collected works.[809] His two opera librettos were published posthumously, and there is no agreement among scholars whether they were written in the early 19th century or date from the heyday of Russian comic opera in the 1770s and 1780s: *Durochka umnee umnykh* (A foolish girl outsmarts the smart) is patterned after Ablesimov's *The Miller Magician*, with additional figures drawn from *True to Life* by Verevkin, and from the oral folk play *The Boat*;[810] *Dobrynya* draws its subject and characters from *byliny* (The word is derived from the past tense of the verb "to be", in Russian *byt'*, and implies "something that was."), the ancient epic narrative poems of the oral tradition, which were deemed to be so frequently exploited in the following century.[811]

Before the 18th century was over, there were some 150 *komicheskie opery* written and performed. The popularity of this genre, as requested by Plavil'shchikov, had its impact on the relaxation of the three classical unities, on the acceptance of Russian folk song as raw material for Western-style musical composition, and on the ode of representing peasants and merchants on the Russian stage by later playwrights.

According to Findeyzen, the above sketch of the incunabula of Russian opera shows that

> during the first period of their existence, the public theatres of both Russian capitals were not exclusively concerned with producing foreign operas translated into Russian – although their repertory included a great many of the operas popular at that time in Western countries – but, besides the countless works written in would-be "Russian style" by foreign composers living in Russia, produced a fair amount of operas by native Russian composers, among whom Matinsky, Pashkevich, and particularly Fomin may be said to have laid a more or less solid foundation for the genuine national school which developed a few decades later.[812]

[808] For more details see S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 130.
[809] *Sochineniya Derzhavina*, edited by Ya. Grot, S. Peterburg 1874, vol. 4.
[810] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 131.
[811] More details on Derzhavin's *Dobrynya* can be found in A. O. DYOMIN, *"Teatral'noe predstavlenie s muzykoyu "Dobrynya"" G. R. Derzhavina i odnoimennaya "Geroicheskaya pesn" N. A. L'vova* ("The theatre performance with music *Dobrynya* by G. R. Derzhavin" and "Heroic poem" the of the same name by N. A. L'vov), in *N. A. L'vov i ego sovremenniki: literatory, lyudi iskusstva* (L'vov and his contemporaries), Sank-Peterburg, Sankt-Peterburgsky nauchny tsentr RAN 2002, pp. 52-7.
[812] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 340.

Referring to the first part of the quote, the position according to which the Russian elite audience was interested only to foreign productions is denied by facts.[813] According to Mooser,

> De fait, à sa mort, Catherine II laissait dans un état extraordinairement brillant l'institution qu'elle avait héritée de la tsarine Elisabeth Pétrovna. Richement dotées, bénéficiant du talent d'artistes choisis avec discernement parmi les meilleurs de leur temps, les scènes impériales ne le cédaient plus en rien à celles de Berlin, de Vienne, de Paris et de Londres. Et leur activité intelligemment dirigée avait propagé le goût de l'art jusque dans les provinces éloignées de l'Empire.[814]

Moreover, "favorisés par une souveraine à l'esprit clairvoyant, la musique et le théâtre avaient accompli des progrès incessants, permettant enfin l'éclosion d'un art autochtone qui, après les balbutiements du début, allait bientôt s'imposer à l'attention de l'Europe entière."[815]

Not only the Empress favoured the development of *opera komicheskaya* as an equivalent of Italian opera *buffa*, French *opéra-comique* or German *Singspiel* (or other analogous genres in different nations). She also contributed to the enlargement of its repertoire by writing her own librettos in this genre, a fact, which in my opinion is itself the very evidence of her support to the Russian theatrical development. The librettos Catherine wrote, often in collaboration with her secretary Aleksandr Khrapovitsky (himself, as seen, the author of at least one libretto, *Pesnolyubie*), have often been judged in the past as feeble proves of dramaturgy, also due to the scant knowledge of the language by a woman who did not know Russian as mother tongue. Nevertheless, the quality reached by the author does not change the very fact that the Empress, trying her hands in the genre of Russian comic opera, aware of the resonance her librettos would have as the product of a sovereign, is a proof of the role she wanted this genre to have in public performances. This idea is supported by Mooser, who acknowledges the influence that her librettos had on the establishment of the genre in the audience's reception.[816] My impression is so that the tsarina expected from her theatrical production more than "trifles, means of distraction", as Karlinsky has written.[817] In any case, the scholar agrees that

[813] "Catherine the Great (1762-1796) promoted only Italian music." M. D. CALVOCORESSI, *Panorama della musica russa* (original title: *A Survery of Russian Music*), edited by L. Fuà, Milano, Tarantola 1947, p. 25.
[814] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 639.
[815] *ivi*, II, p. 639.
[816] "Iniziative qui, - Mooser points out, - on l'imagine bien, aura pour conséquence de faire reconnaître définitivement les droits du genre nouveau, et de lui assurer une audience toujours plus empressée auprès du grand public." R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 239.
[817] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 90.

"because these plays were widely performed and otherwise circulated throughout her reign, they remain a fact of the social and cultural scene of the period."[818]

Mostly due to the mentioned prejudice, these librettos have not been studied as manifestation of the growing national consciousness (in the official declination, in this case) in operatic repertoire.

Catherine was the author of five librettos of comic operas:

1) *Fevey*, 1786;

2) *Novogorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich* (Boeslavich, the hero of Novgorod), 1786;

3) *Krabry i smely vityaz' Arkhideich* (The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich), 1787;

4) *Gorebogatyr' Kosometovich* (The ill-fated knight Kosometovich), 1789;

5) *Fedul s det'mi* (Fedul and his children), 1791.

These librettos too contain clear references to the French models so long perpetuated on the Russian scene; they were though generally based on old folkloric tales, often drawn from the genre of *byliny*, the Russian epos, to which the Empress assigned always a moralizing role. As we shall see, on her request they made large use of folklore also in the music setting.[819]

Needless to say, the operas gained much success: staged at the Court and at the public theatres, they were among the few operas that obtained the edition at their time (at least in a piano score), a fact that, although, does not tell much about the real appreciation of the audiences.

The first libretto written by Catherine was *Fevey*, in four acts, set to music by the Court violin player Vasily Pashkevich, who had already demonstrated his talent as a composer in the above-mentioned operas.[820]

Despite the uses of time, the opera was premiered at the public Stone Opera House (Kamenny teatr) on 19 April 1786, and only later it was staged also at the Hermitage.[821]

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[818] *ivi*, p. 90.

[819] These features were pointed out by the historian S. N. Glinka yet in 19th century. In his memoirs he recalls: "Aussi, ses ouvrages en ce genre, dont l'action est généralement empruntée à de vieux contes, font-ils une large place à la musique populaire, ce qui explique la faveur qu'ils rencontrèrent instantanément auprès du grand public russe". Quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 15.

[820] [CATHERINE II], *Fevey. Komicheskaya opera, sostavlennaya iz slov skaski, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy; predstavlena byla v Sanktpeterburge u Dvora* (Fevey. Comic opera, composed by the words of the tale, Russian songs and other compositions, staged in St. Petersburg at Court). Napechatana pri Akademii nauk v 1782 goda, recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, p. 148.

The libretto was printed in Saint Petersburg in 1786 by the Academy of Sciences, and later included in the collection *Russian Theatre* and re-printed also together with the piano score,[822] put on sale on *Sanktpeterburgskie vedomosti* of 14 September 1800. Preceded by the libretto, the score was printed in a small format (8°) in a run of 100 exemplars, and carries two title pages. The second affirms that the author of the piano reduction was Ivan Pratsch, author of the quoted collection of folksongs. The same score was later re-printed in Moscow by Jurgenson in 1893.[823]

On stage the opera had no long life. On 17 October 1790 it was revived at the hermitage, as attested by Khrapovitsky memoirs.[824] Here is how count Valentin Esterhazy (1740-1805), who was in Saint Petersburg charged with diplomatic missions, recalled the performance staged in 1791 at the Hermitage:

> Hier j'y ai été encore [à l'Ermitage], à un opéra russe dont le musique était toute des anciens airs du pays. Au loin, on fait des accompagnements; il y en a de fort jolis, mais d'autres fort baroques. L'Impératrice en a fait graver la partition, et je tâcherai d'en avoir un exemplaire, car il ne se vend pas.
>
> Les paroles son de Sa Majesté. Le spectacle est superbe. La scène se passe en Russie, dans l'ancien temps. Tous les costumes sont de la plus grande magnificence, faits d'étoffes turques de ce temps-là, et comme on les portait alors. Il y a une ambassade de Kalmoucks qui chantent et dansent à la manière tartare, des Kamtschadales vêtus à la manière du pays et dansant aussi les danses du Nord de l'Asie, enfin une ambassade chinoise qui amène au prince, fils du Tzar, la princesse qui lui est destinée.
>
> La ballet qui termine l'opéra est dansé par Pique, Mme Rosy et quelques autres bons danseurs. On y voit tous les peuples différents qui composent l'Empire. Je n'ai jamais vu un spectacle plus varié et plus magnifique; il y avait plus de cinq cents personnes sur le théâtre… Nous étions pas cinquante spectateurs, tant l'Impératrice est difficile pour ceux qu'elle admet dans ses Ermitages.[825]

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[821] According to Khrapovitsky's journal, "19 [April] – The opera Fevey was premiered at the Stone theatre house." ("19 - [апреля] Представлена в первый раз на Каменном театре опера Февей.") A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski A.V. Khrapovitskago, stats-sekretarya Impetratritsy Ekateriny vtoroy. Izdanie polnoe, s primechaniyami* (Memoirs of A. V. Khrapovitsky, state-secretary of the Empress Catherine II. Full edition, with notes), edited by G. N. Gennadi, (1st ed. Moskva, V Universitetskoy tipografii 1862), Moskva, Soyuzteatr 1990, p. 8.

[822] [CATHERINE II], *Opera komicheskaya Fevey, Sostavlena iz slov skazki, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy* (Comic opera Fevey, Composed of the words of the tale, Russian songs and other works), V Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1786 goda; [CATHERINE II], *Opera komicheskaya Fevey, Sostavlena iz slov skazki, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy* (Comic opera Fevey, Composed of the words of the tale, Russian songs and other works), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XX, 1788, pp. 3-54; [CATHERINE II], *Opera komicheskaya Fevey* (Comic opera Fevey), V S. P.burge, v Tipografii Gornago Uchilishcha 1789 g.; in the same edition: *Muzyka opery komicheskoy Feveya, Soch. V. Paskevicha dlya klavir s golosami perelozhennaya I. Prachem* (Music of the comic opera Fevey, Composed by V. Paskevich, arranged for piano and singing by I. Pratsch), V. S. P. burge v Tipografii Gornago Uchilishcha.

[823] [V. A. PASHKEVICH], *Muzyka opery komicheskoy Feveya, Soch. V. Pashkevicha dlya Klavir s golosami perelozhennaya M. Prachem*. (Music of the comic opera Fevey, by V. Pashkevich, Arranged for piano and singing by M. Pratsch) S.-Peterburg u I. Yurgensona [1893].

[824] "17 - . В Эрмитаже после бала и ужина дан Февей, в два дни изготовленный, не был игран 4 года. […]" (17 [April] – At the Hermitage, after the ball and the dinner Fevey was performed, prepared in two days, which has not been staged for four year. […]) A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski…*, p. 234

[825] *Lettres du comte Valentin Esterhazy à sa femme. 1784-1792* (Paris, 1902), quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 442.

The plot was drawn from a tale the Empress had written some time before,[826] which the Empress had had translated into French and sent to Grimm, thus witnessing the importance she gave to the national character of her work.[827] The tale was published on Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire*.[828] In the opera, as well as in the tale, the author had recurred to borrowings from folkloric poetry.[829] Later the Empress had sent to him the score, pointing out, in a letter dated 12 October 1786, that "Entre autres, il y a un air kalmuck qui a fait grande fortune ici, de même que toute cette babiole qui votre très humble servante a accomodée."[830] Indeed, in this opera too the composer recurred to borrowings from the most famous popular tunes. Both the quoted testimonies refer to the Kalmuk tune, and the former refers to 500 persons on the stage, and to the whole Empire represented on it. Rather than a simple amusement for the Empress, this sounds like one more performance of the crown showing her power, addressed to the Court. In a manner which seems similar, Glinka had planned his Ruslan and Lyudmila achieving with a divertissement danced by exponents of the farest ends of the Empire.[831]

In 1786 Catherine gave the libretto for *Novgorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich* (Boeslavich, the hero of Novgorod), in five acts, which was set to music by Evstigney Ipat'evich Fomin. The libretto is drawn from the Novgorod cycle of *byliny*, the ancient folk poems that folklorists were only beginning to collect in the 18th century. The opera includes among its characters the standard *byliny* heroes Vasily Buslaev (with his mother Amelfa Timofeevna) and Sadko (a century before Rimsky-Korsakov's opera), recognizable despite an odd spelling of his name (Satko).[832] The plot recalls the anecdote according to which the hero Vasily Boeslavich defeats Novgorod's boyars.

According to Calvocoressi Fomin's score is lost nowadays.[833]

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[826] In modern edition the tale can be read in [CATHERINE II], *Skazka o Tsareviche Fevee* (Tale about the Tsarevich Fevey), in *Ekaterina II, Sochineniya* (Catherine II, Works), edited by V. K. Bylinin and M. P. Odessky, Moskva, "Sovremennik" 1990, pp. 126-36.
[827] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 439.
[828] The tale was published on Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, Etc. Revue sur les textes originaux comprenant outre ce qui a été publié à divers époques*, September 1790, T. XVI, pp. 85-98.
[829] As she informed her readers, the Empress for the libretto had employed the language of the original tales. H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 152.
[830] *Recueil Sté impériale d'histoire*, T. XXIII, quoted from R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 442.
[831] M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Glinka's Three Attempts at Russianness*, in *Russian Music and Nationalism…*, notably pp. 117-27.
[832] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 89.
[833] M. D. CALVOCORESSI, *Panorama della musica russa…*, p. 32.

The opera was staged on 27 November 1786 at the Hermitage theatre. The libretto was printed in Saint Petersburg in 1786 and 1793, and included in the *Russian theatre* collection.[834] The score is lost nowadays, whereas according to Mooser the vocal and orchestral parts are housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

The following year Catherine II wrote the libretto for *Krabry i smely vityaz' Arkhideich* (The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich).[835] The opera was premiered at the Bol'shoy-Kamenny theatre on 27 September 1787 with the title of *Ivan Tsarevich*. The plot in fact was inspired to popular tales about the legendary prince Ivan. Possibly, as in the case with the previous opera, verses for the closed numbers were edited by her secretary A. V. Khrapovitsky.[836] The libretto was published in Saint Petersburg, and later included in *Russian Theatre*.[837]

It was set to music by Ernest Vaňura, who published several numbers of the score in his *Journal de musique pour le Clavecin ou Pianoforte, dédié aux dames*, in 1790 in Saint Petersburg. According to Mooser the score is nowadays housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre.

Later on, the opera was performed at the Public Stone House until 1796. At the beginning of 19th century, sets, which were made by Francesco Gradizzi, were brought to Moscow for its staging in 1802 to 1805.

[834] [CATHERINE II], *Novogorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich, opera komicheskaya, sostavlena iz skazki, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy* (Boeslavich, the hero of Novgorod, comic opera composed by the tale, Russian songs and other works), V Sanktpeterburge pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1786 goda; [CATHERINE II], *Novogorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich, opera komicheskaya, sostavlena iz skazki, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy* (Boeslavich, the hero of Novgorod, comic opera composed by the tale, Russian songs and other works), Vtorym tisneniem (second edition), V Sanktpeterburge pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1793 goda; [CATHERINE II], *Novogorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich, opera komicheskaya, sostavlena iz skazki, pesney Ruskikh i inykh sochineniy* (Boeslavich, the hero of Novgorod, comic opera composed by the tale, Russian songs and other works), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XX, 1788, pp. 55-100.

[835] *Khrabroy i smeloy vityaz' Arkhideich. Opera komicheskaya v pyati deystviyakh; materiya vzyata iz starinnykh Ruskikh skazok. V pervoy raz predstavlena byla v Sanktpeterburge s naivelikolepneyshimi dekoratsiyami 1787 goda v Oktyabre mesyatse* (The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich. Comic opera in five acts; the subject is drawn from ancient Russian tales. Premiered in St. Petersburg with most magnificent sets in October 1787). Napechatana v Sanktpeterburge pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk togozh goda, recorded in *Drammatichesky slovar'…*, pp. 152-3.

[836] Khrapovitsky mentioned it in his diary on 16 May 1786: "16- За переписку получил благодарность; показывал начатую оперу Ивана Царевича." (16 – Acknowledgement fot the copy; I showed the opera *Ivan Tsarevich*, which I began) A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski…*, p. 8.

[837] [CATHERINE II], *Opera komicheskaya Khrabroy i smeloy vityaz' Arkhideich* (Comic opera The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich), V. Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1787 goda; [CATHERINE II], *Opera komicheskaya Khrabroy i smeloy vityaz' Arkhideich* (Comic opera The brave and fearless knight Arkhideich), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XX, 1788, pp. 101-51.

On 8 December 1788 Vicente Martín y Soler, who at that time served as *Kappellmeister* at the Imperial Theatres, received by Catherine the commission of the music for her new opera in five acts *Gorebogatyr' Kosometovich* (The ill-fated knight Kosometovich). The idea of recurring to his service had been given to Catherine by count Aleksandr M. Dimitrev-Mamonov (1758-1803), great music lover, and her official favourite. Initially the music had been entrusted to him together with Ernest Vaňura, but the score shows that the Spanish composer was the only to deal with the opera.[838]

According to the journal of Catherine's personal secretary, he was deeply involved in the creation of the libretto, which was achieved on 9 December 1788:

«21 - . [October] […] Для составления оперы о Фуфлиге, поднес «Езду в остров любви, Дейдамию» и трагедии Ломоносова, из коих надобен «Мамай». Сказано: «Будет хорошо». - ».

«27 - . [October] […] Сказывал Ню Сю Козлов, что во время волосочесания, читали письменнаго Фуфлыгу и много смеялись: не знаю, кто сыскал сказку о рыцаре сем.»

«22 Ноября. […] Тут прочли начало известной оперы; «Фуфлига негодится, надобно другое имя; Гр. А. М. Дмитриев-Мамонов придумает.» - Мне дадут делать стихи, и я сказал, что буде [sic] угодно назначить только содержание в прозе, то сделать можно арии.»

«23 Ноября. По вчерашним словам для имени герою, подал несколько анаграм из Густава, и арию, начинающуюся: «Геройством надуваясь»; она похвалена, и я поцеловал ручку. - Сказали, что отдадут мне делать стихи. - »

«24 Ноября. Герою известному имя еще не найдено. - Сказал я: вошед в материю, само по себе выйдет из его характера.»

«26 Ноября. Пред известною оперою решились напечатать сказку о Горе-богатыре Косометовиче, которую и начал я тогда же переписывать. […]

27 - [novembre] Читано продолжение сказки. […] 28 - Переписывал продолжение сказки. […] 29 - . Отдано продолжение сказки и дополнения к тому, что было уже мною переписано, с тем, дабы заставил кого у себя все переписать сначала. - Тут при чтении замечен безрукой ста[141]рик (Комендант Нейшлота).»

«30 Ноября. Поднес сказку, моим Секретарем переписанную. - «Много ли он смеялся?» - Я переписал предисловие к читателю.»

«1 Декабря Два раза призван был для слушания продолжения сказки; много смеялись и спрашивали: «Смешно ли?» - »

«2 - . [December] […] При волосочесании приказано взять самому на столе конец сказки и переписать. - Переписанную сказку привез сам в 5-ть часов после обеда; […]»

«3 Ноября. Во вчерашнюю сказку вписал две прибавки.»

«4 - . [November] Получил для переписки 1-й акт оперы Горе-богатыря Косометовича, составил арию, и весь день упражнялся в переписке. […]

5 - . Поднес 1-й акт, получил благодарность, но приказано выставить арии при валянии на траве, таскании изюму и играний в свайку; правда, что они были натяжкою.»

«6 - . […] Прочитывали поднесенный мною 2-й акт; тут сказано: «Не надобно так говорить о храбрости,» и выкинули следующую арию:

Единой храбростью своею,
Сломить себе всяк может шею;
Не будь на храбрость торовать,
Во век не будешь виновать.

Вместо ея апробована написанная теперь в пиесе, и тогда же мною сочиненная:

[838] Actually Vaňura is mentioned by Khrapovitsky in relation to this opera: "9 Декабря. Отдана мне на руки опера Горе-богатырь, с тем, чтоб поставить на феатр, и с апробации Графа А. М. Дмитиева-Мамонова сочинить музыку Мартинию и Ванжуре." (9 December. I received in my hands the opera *The Ill-Fated Knight*, in order to have it staged, and, with the approval of count A. M. Dmitriev-Mamonov, to have the music composed by Martini and Vaňura.) A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski…*, p. 144.

«Мы смелости не доказали,»

и проч. Получил для переписки 3-й и 4-й акт. - Сидя за сею работою целый день, не мог кончить, однако удалил весь 3-й акт.

7 Декабря. Ничего не поднеся, получил 5-й акт, и извинился, что не успел доделать 4-го. - «Вчера был праздник; не всегда работать хочется; я сама ничего почти сделать не могла». Таки образом подстрекнутый, во дворце еще по утру сочинил арии для 4-го акта и некоторыя для 5-го, и приехав домой, кончил всю оперу и до семи часов вечера переписал, однако не ходил за стол обедать.»; «8 - . Поднес вся оперу в пяти актах; - оставилил у себя. Позван после прочтения, и сказано, что хороши прибывки мои и стихи. - Поцеловал ручку. «Она бюрлеск; надобно играть живее и развязнее, и в том костюме, как играют мельника.» - »; «9 Декабря. Отдана мне на руки опера Горе-богатырь, с тем, чтоб поставить на феатр, и с апробации Графа А. М. Дмитиева-Мамонова сочинить музыку Мартинию и Ванжуре.»[839]

[«21 - . [October] […] For the composition of the opera on Fufliga, I brought *Travel in the isle of love*, *Deudamia* and the tragedies by Lomonosov, among which *Mamay* is necessary. [She] said: «It will be fine».

«27 - . [October] […]Nyu Syu Kozlov said that during the hairdoing they read the writing of Fufliga and laughed a lot: I do not know who has found the tale aout this knight.»

«22 Noember. […] Immediately read the beginning of the famous opera. «Fufliga does not fit, we should look for another name; Count A. M. Dmitriev-Mamonov will invent it.» - I will be charged to write the verses, and I said that it would be good to indicate their content in prose, and then it will be possible to write the arias.»

«23 November. According to yesterday's words about the name of the hero, I proposed some anagrams from Gustav, and an aria, which begins: «Geroystvom naduvayas» [Puffing up with heroism]; it was praised, and I kissed the hand. – [She] said that I will be charged of the verses. - »

«24 November. Still a name has not be found for the famous hero. – I said: once entered the subject, it will come out itself from his character.»

«26 November. Before the famous opera [she] decided to print the tale about the Ill-fated knight Kosometovich, which I began to copy. […]

27 - [November] Read the continuation of the tale. […] 28 – I copied the continuation of the tale. […] 29 - . Given the continuation of the tale and the addition to what I had already copied, in order to find someone to copy ita gain from the beginning. – During the reading the old man without a hand was noticed (Commandant Neyshlota).»

«30 November. I brought the tale, copied by my secretary. - «Did he laugh a lot?» - I copied the foreword to the reader.»

«1 December I was called upon twice in order to listen to the continuation of the tale; [she] laughed a lot and asked: «Is it funny?» - »

«2 - . [December] […] During the hairdoing ordered to take to me the end of the tale in order to have it copied. – I brought the copied tale at five in the afternoon; […]»

«3 December. Two additions have been written to the yesterday's tale.»

«4 - . [December] I received for the copy the first act of the opera *The Ill-Fated Knight Kosometovich*, composed the aria, and spent the whole day in correspondence. […]

5 - . I broguht the first act, received appreciation, but I was asked to insert an aria for the wallowing on the grass, collecting raisin and playing fid; honestly, they were very hard.»

«6 - . […] Read the second act, which I have brought; and said: «One should not talk this way about courage,» and ignored the following aria:

With his only courage,
Anybody can break his neck;
Do not be generous in courage,
You will not be guilty all your life.

At its place now in the play it was approved this one, which I have written myself:

«We did not show bravery,»

etc. I received the third and fourth act for the copy. – Working on this the whole day long, I could not finish it, but achieved the whole third act.

7 December. I did not bring anything, received the fifth act, and excused for haiving not finished the fourth. - «Yesterday was a holy day; one does not always will to work; I myself could do almost nothing». Spurred this way, at the palace yet in the morning I composed the arias of the fourth act and some of the fifth, and once arrived home, I finished the whole opera and copied it up to seven in the night, without having lunch.»; «8 - . I borught the whole opera in five acts; - [she] kept it. After the reading I was called upon, and

[839] A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski…*, pp. 123-44 *passim*.

was said that my additions and verses were good. – I kissed the hand. «It is burlesque; one should perform it in a more lively and insolent way, in the custom in which they play *The Miller*.» - »

«9 December. I received the opera Gorebogatyr', in order to stage it at theatre, and, with the approbation of count A. M. Dmitriev-Mamonov, to have the music composed by Martini and Vaňura.»]

The opera was premiered at the Hermitage theatre on 29 January 1789 for the Court, which showed great appreciation. According to Mooser, the opera "fit quelque bruit, en raison de l'auguste personnalité qui y était persiflée de façon assez claire pour qe chacun pût, sans peine, reconnaître qui elle était."[840] The opera in fact contained quite explicit allusions to the king Gustav III of Sweden, who one year before had declared was to Russia and had expressed his intentions to take Saint Petersburg and pull down the monument to Peter I that Catherine had so significantly erected (see Chap. III – Part I – En Enlightened Empress), inviting the ladies of the Empire at a mass that had to take place in the Saint Isaac's cathedral. The Empress wanted to laugh at the crazy presumption of the king, and made him the protagonist of her play, without openly mentioning him, in order to avoid the comments of the foreign ministers. The fictitious name Kosometovich derived from *kosoy*, cross-eyed, and was chosen after a series of proposals by Khrapovitsky.

After the première, the opera was revived on 31 January 1789 for the grand duke Pavel Petrovich and his son Aleksandr Pavlovich, on 5 February in the presence of Potyomkin, and further, always in private form in order to avoid the king's grievance.[841] On 25 April libretto and score were sent to Sheremetev in Moscow, where its staging was possibly planned.[842]

The libretto was printed in Saint Petersburg.[843] As for the score, the autograph by Martín y Soler is considered lost, whereas a copy might be housed at the Library of the Mariinsky theatre. The copies I had access to are those housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library of Saint Petersburg: a manuscript copy of the score, and a

[840] R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 537.

[841] Mooser records revivals on 17 April and on 12 September at the Hermitage, and on 12 July at Tsarskoe Selo. R. - A. MOOSER, *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, II, p. 540.

[842] Lepskaya does not record such a staging, while other operas by Catherine, notably Novgorodsky bogatyr' Boeslavich and Fevey wre actually staged. L. A. LEPSKAYA, *Repertuar krepostnogo teatra Sheremetevykh, Katalog p'es* (The repertoire of the feudal theatre of the Sheremetev family. A catalogue of the performances), Mosvkva, Gos. Tsentr. Teatral'ny muzey im. A. A. Bakhrushina 1996, pp. 126, 128.

[843] [CATHERINE II], *Skazka o Gorebogatyr' kosometovich i opera komichskaya iz slov skasi sostavlennaya* (Tale about the ill-fated knight Kosometovich and comic opera composed from the words of the tale), V Sanktpeterburge V Tipografii Gornago Uchilishcha 1789; in the same edition: [V. MARTÍN Y SOLER], *Muzyka opery komicheskoy Gorebogatyrya Kosometovicha sochineniya G. kapel'meystera Martina, dlya klavir s golosami perelozhennaya G. Prachem* (Music of the comic opera The ill-fated knight Kosometovich by Mr Martini, arranged for piano and singing by Mr Pratsch).

manuscript reduced version for the cembalist.[844] The two versions differ in that the first consists of 33 numbers, the latter of thirty.

A piano score of the opera was made by Ivan Pratsch and published in a small size (8°), preceded by the libretto, in Saint Petersburg in 1789.[845]

According to the use of the time, the composer often recurred to Russian popular tunes. For instance, the first theme of the overture quotes the folksong "Vy razdaytes', rastupites'":



Example No. III, 40 – *Gorebogatyr' Kosometovich* – first theme of the Overture – measures 13-20

The song was included in Trutovsky' and L'vov-Pratsch's collections. A comparison between the two versions suggests that the song was included by L'vov after Martín y Soler's version, the key and the development of the melody being closer to the latter:



Example No. III, 41 – "Vy razdaytes', rastupites' dobrye lyudi" – Trutovsky, No. 88.

[844] [V. MARTÍN Y SOLER], *Muzyka opery komicheskoy Gore Bogatyrya Kosometovicha, v sluzhbe pri Dvore eya Imperatorskago velichestva Sochinaniya G. Kapel'meystera Martina* (Music of the comic opera The ill-fated Knight Kosometovich, composition of the Kappelmeister Mr Martini, in service at the Court of Her Imperial Majesty), Copy of the full score, housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library of Saint Petersburg (OR RNB), F. XII. 64; [V. MARTÍN Y SOLER], *Ruskaya opera Gore Bogatyr' Soch. G-na Martini* (Russian opera The ill-fated Knight, Composed by Mr Martini), manuscript copy of the version for the cembalist, housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library of Saint Petersburg (OR RNB), F. XII. 62.

[845] [V. MARTÍN Y SOLER], *Muzyka opery komicheskoy Gorebogatyrya Kosometovicha sochineniya G. kapel'meystera Martina, dlya klavir s golosami perelozhennaya G. Prachem* (Music of the comic opera The ill-fated knight Kosometovich by Mr Martini, arranged for piano and singing by Mr Pratsch), in [CATHERINE II], *Skazka o Gorebogatyr' kosometovich i opera komichskaya iz slov skasi sostavlennaya…*



Example No. III, 42 - "Vy razdaytes', rastupites' dobrye lyudi" – L'vov-Pratsch, No. 88

Fedul s det'mi (Fedul and his children) is the last and most popular of Catherine's librettos, "a straightforward compilation of Russian peasant song texts, gleaned from folk-song harmonization available at the time."[846] Their arrangement and harmonization were entrusted by Catherine to Vicente Martín y Soler and Vasily Pashkevich.

The opera, in one act, was premiered on 16 January 1791 at the Hermitage theatre,[847] and published the following month.[848] A modern edition of the score, which is an unabridged facsimile of the edition published in 1895 by P. Jurgenson in Moscow, is nowadays available.[849]

The music consists of ten numbers, of which Martín y Soler composed the following:

-the duet No. 2, Fedul's *Allegretto vivace* No. 3;

-the children's chorus No. 4 "Ekh, ekh, chto batyushka", Eh, eh, what daddy;

- the children chorus No. 6 "Ekh, ekh, kak batyushka", Eh eh, how daddy…;

- Dunyasha's song No. 9 "Vo sele, sele Pokrovskom", In the village of Pokrovsky;

- the chorus No. 10 "My pozdravlenie prinosim", We congratulate.

Vasily Pashkevich composed the others:

[846] S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 89.
[847] On 27 January 1791 according to Findeyzen. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 338.
[848] [CATHERINE II], *Fedul s det'mi, opera v odnom deystvii* (Fedul and his children, opera in one act), Vo grade Sv. Petra, Pechatano v Imperatorskoy Tipografii, 1790; an exemplar of the libretto is housed at the Moscow Book Museum (RGB MK), without date or place of edition: [CATHERINE II], *Fedul s det'mi, opera v odnom deystvii* (Fedul and his children, opera in one act).
[849] V. MARTIN Y SOLER, V. PASHKEVICH, *Fedul and children, Opera, Vocal score*, Elibron classics 2006, which is the modern reprinting of [V. MARTÍN Y SOLER, V. A. PASHKEVICH], *Fedul s det'mi, opera v odnom deystvii, Muzyka g. Martin i g. Paskevicha* (Fedul and his children, opera in one act, Music by Mr Martini and Mr Paskevich). Moskva u P. Yurgensona [1895]

- The Overture

- the chorus No. 1 “Devki skachut, krasny plyashut”, The girls jump, the beautiful girls dance;

- the children’s chorus No. 5 “Ekh, ekh, na Dunyu oserdilsya”, Eh, eh, he went on at Dunya;

- the chorus No. 7 “Ekh, ekh, delo idet k piru”, Eh eh, the affair is ending in a banquet;

- Fedul’s song “Ekh, ekh, ne ladno, ne ladno”, Eh eh it is not good.

It contains popular tunes, such as Dunyasha’s song “Vo sele, sele Pokrovskom” (In the village of Pokrovsky, No. 9), which words constitute a warning to her father to marry to a peer of his. The song is attributed to Elizabeth Petrovna, who appears to have composed it before her ascension to the throne.[850] As in previous cases, the song appears in both Trutovsky’s and L’vov-Pratsch’s collections:



Example No. III, 4310 – V. Martín y Soler, *Fedul and His Children*, Dunyasha’s song No. 9, measures 11-26

[850] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas…*, p. 338.



Example No. III, 4411 – "Vo sele, vo sele Pokrovskom", Trutovsky's collection, No. 14



Example No. III, 45 - "Vo sele, vo sele Pokrovskom", L'vov-Pratsch's collection, No. 68

Other 'Operatic' Genres in Russian Production

Comic opera was not the only genre in which Russian playwrights tried their hands introducing progressively 'more Russian' themes and materials. In the last quarter of the 18th century serious and celebrative performances were also staged, which can be indirectly traced back to operatic theatre. Here I don't have the possibility of an in-depth examination, and I simply report the information, which I was able to gather, in order to foster possible further research:

- *Prolog Torzhestvuyushchy grad Vladimir* (Prologue for the triumph of the city of Vladimir), staged for the institution of the Governorate of Vladimir in November 1778.[851]

- *Khram obshchiya radosti* (The temple of the general jubilation), libretto by the machinist Giuseppe Brigonzi, set to music by Federico Torelli, Vasily Pashkevich and other composers.[852] Staged in Saint Petersburg on Catherine II's name day on 24 November 1780. It was sung partly in Russian and partly in Italian, the Russian translation having been made by Zakhar Kryzhanovsky.[853] Ballets were created by Canziani.

- *L'heureuse Russie, ou Le jubilé de vingt-cinq ans*, by M. M. Kheraskov, with music by Anton Bullandt. It was staged on 28 June 1786, on occasion of the passage of Catherine II from Moscow, on her way back from the journey to the Southern provinces of the Empire, which she undertook in the last months of 1786 together with the new favourite Aleksandr Matveevich Dimitriev-Mamonov (1758-1803). The prologue was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of her rule.[854]

[851] *Prolog torzhestvuyushchy grad Vladimir, Vo odnom deystvii. Sochinenny Mikhaylom Prakudinym, Leybgvardii Ofitserom i vol'nago Rossiyskago Sobraniya, chto pri Imperatorskom Moskovskom Universitete, Chlenom, na sluchay otkrytiya VLADIMIRSKAGO NAMESTNICHESTVA 1778 goda, Noyabrya […] dnya* (Prologue for the triumph of the city of Vladimir, In one act. Composed by Mikhayl Prakudin, Official of the Gaurds and Member of the Russian Assembly at the Imperial Univesity of Moscow, for the opening of the GOVERNATORATE OF VLADIMIR on […] November 1778), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXX, 1789.
[852] The catalogue of the Russian National Library (RNB) records it as: *Khram obshchiya radosti: Teatral'noe zrelishche s muzykoyu na ital'yanskom yazyke* (The temple of the general jubilation, theatrical performance with music in Italian), Spb. Tip. Mor. Kadet. Korpusa, 1780.
[853] The libretto was published in Italian and Russian at the moment of the production (an exemplar is housed at the Russian National Library of St. Petersburg (RNB).
[854] N. P. Sheremetev too was to give a party in honour to Catherine II's visit, with the staging of Grétry's *Les mariages samnites* (see Chap. III – Part I – The Theatre in the *Usad'ba* and the Sheremetev Theatres).

- *Torzhestvuyushchy Parnass* (The triumphant Parnassus), prologue for the recovery from the vaccination from varila of Catherine II and her son, written most probably by Vasily Maykov.[855]

- The tragedy *The Clemency of Titus*, staged with choruses and ballets.[856]

- The tragedy *Vladisan*, also staged with choruses.[857]

- A Prologue was staged for the opening of the Public school in Tambov, with music by some Zhuravchenko and Raupach (form his *Al'tsesta*), performed by the serfs of several noblemen in the house of the governor of Tambov Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin.[858]

- Potyomkin's 'farewell to Catherine and Saint Petersburg' party organized at his Tauride Palace on 28 April 1791 is possibly to ascribe to this kind of events. The feast, described in details by Derzhavin, saw the participation of such composers as Giuseppe Sarti and Osip Kozlovsky, of whom the Polonaise to Derzhavin's text "Grom pobedy razadavaysya" remained as a symbol of the autocratic power, bound to the image of Catherine II.[859]

[855] *Torzhestvuyushchy Parnass, Prolog po vyzdorovlenii ot privivnyya ospy EYA IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA i EGO IMPERATORSKAGO VYSOCHESTVA, Sochinenie V. M.* (The triumphant Parnassus, Prologue for the recovery from the vaccination from varila of her imperial majesty and his imperial highness, Composition by V. M.), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXX, 1789.

[856] *Titovo miloserdie Tragediya v trekh deystviyakh, Vol'nymi stikhami s khorami i baletami, k onoy prinadlezhashchimi* (The Clemency of Titus, Tragedy in three acts, In free verse with its own choruses and ballets), in *Rossiyskiy Featr…*, Chast' XXXII, 1790.

[857] *Vladisan Tragediya v pyati deystviyakh s khorami* (Vladisan, Tragedy in five acts with choruses), in *Rossiyskiy Featr…*, Chast' XXXII, 1790.

[858] *Prolog na otkrytie v Tambove narodnago uchilishcha, Predstavlen v den' Tezoimenitstva EYA IMPERATOSKAGO VELICHESTVA Blagorodnym obshchestvom* (Prologue for the opening for a public school in Tambov, Staged in the name day of her imperial majesty by the noble society), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXX, 1789. "Muzyka, Pervy khor - Gospodina Zhuravchenka, nakhodyashchagosya pri dolzhnosti v Tambovskom namestnichestve, Vtoroy khor – Gospodina Raupakha iz opery Al'tsesta glas slavy pronizay vselinu" (The music of the first chorus is of Mr Zhuravchenko, in service at the Tambov governorate, the second chorus is "Glory's eye do permeate the universe" by Mr Raupach from his opera *Alcestis*)

[859] The *Polonaise* was thus quoted in triumphant orchestration by Chaykovsky in *The Queen of Spades* to mark the arrival of Catherine (who could not appear as a character on the stage) at the party were the two protagonists Liza and Hermann personally meet for the first time (II, 1), and with satirical intent by Shostakovich in the opera *The nose*, to mark the low-rank exponent of state, the policeman, surprising the barber in getting rid of the nose he found in his breakfast pie (I, 1).

- In 1792 the Petrovsky theatre staged the melodama *Orfey*, libretto in two acts Ya. B. Knyazhnin set to music by Fomin.[860] According to the libretto included in the collection *Russian theatre*, the same text had already been set to music by Federico Torelli, but his music seems to be nowadays lost. The score by Fomin, on the contrary, has been preserved, and published in 1953 by B. Dobrokhotov.[861]

- On 22 July 1795 the performance of *Zel'mira i Smelon, ili Vzyatie Izmaila* (Zel'mira and Smelon, or The taking of Izmail), on libretto by Pavel S. Potyomkin and music by Jozef Kozłowski (known in Russia as Osip Kozlovsky) took place at the Sheremetev theatre of Ostankino (see Chap. III – Part I – The Theatre in the *Usad'ba* and the Sheremetev Theatres). The performance focuses on the topical issue of the battle of Izmail in the Russo-Turkish war; it responded to one of the first nationalist outbursts experienced by Russia in relation to their military campaigns. The genre, "liricheskaya drama," appear the imitation of the analogue one of French *drame lyrique*. The work of count Pyotr Nikolaevich Sheremetev then went beyond the simple 'faithful' reproduction of French plays, but it was taking to a local production that gives even greater significance to this experience from the perspective of achieving autonomy. The libretto was issued anonymously in Saint Petersburg in 1795.[862] The score, which manuscript according to Mooser is housed in the archives of the Ostankino Palace, is lost nowadays. According to Varvara Aleksandrovna Rakina, chief librarian of the Archive of the Moscow Palace-Museum Ostankino, Mooser possibly referred to manuscript score and orchestral parts registered in the inventory of the Sheremetev library compiled by Dmitry Nikolaevich Sheremetev, the son of Nikolay Petrovich. The library, housed in Saint Petersburg in the Fontanny Dom (House on the canal Fontanka), was then dispersed.[863] Since the opera was run only in Sheremetev Theatre, in all likehood the manuscript existed only in one exemplar. According to Galina Viktorovna Kopytova, curator of the library of the Russian Institute of Art History of Saint Petersburg, the library houses two fragments of its vocal

[860] *Orfey melo-drama, Muzyka G. Torelli* (Orpheus, melodrama, Music by Mr Torelli), in *Rossiysky featr…*, Chast' XXX, 1789.
[861] E. I. FOMIN, *Orfey, muzykal'naya tragediya (melodrama), Partitura* (Orpheus, musical tragedy (melodrama), Orchestral score), edited by B. Dobrokhotov, Moskva, Gos. Muz. Izdatel'stvo 1953. Some extraits of the score have been included also in *Istoriya russkoy muzyki v notnykh obraztsakh* (History of Russian music in music examples), edited by S. L. Ginzburg, t. I, Moskva, Izd. «Muzyka» 1968, pp. 383-405.
[862] [P. S. POTYOMKIN], *Zel'mira i Smelon, ili Vzyatie Izmaila. Liricheskaya dramma*. (Zel'mira and Smelon, or The taking of Ismail, Drame lyrique), V Sanktpeterburge, Pechatano v Tipografii Korpusa Chuzhestrannykh Edinovertsov 1795. Publicka, ma anche RGB
[863] According to Varvara Aleksandrovna Rakina, no one still has tried to recontruct this phenomen of dispersion.

parts.[864] The opera represent one of the first attempts at creating a Russian opera of greater scale if compared to the discussed *opery komicheskie*.

Possibly to this genre it is possible to ascribe the two historical dramas Catherine II wrote in 1786, *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega* (The early reign of Oleg) and *The Life of Ryurik*. On the one hand their conception was possibly influenced by the rediscovery of antiquities that had spread in Europe with renewed the taste for classicism and archaeology that anticipated Romanticism.[865]

On the other, they attested to the interest Catherine had demonstrated towards history, which was clearly seen as a mean of transmitting the sovereign's 'scenario'. And in fact both of them were not only successfully staged, but also printed and translated in French and German.[866] According to Rogger, together with language and literature, history had been one of the Academy's primary concerns since the very beginning, , and the collection and publication of the treasured memorials of the deeds of ancestors was one of its foremost tasks. Those who were closely associated with the work of the Academy, men like count A. I. Musin-Pushkin, Boltin, and Shcherbatov, did not need to be reminded of the importance of the historical research.[867] The work of the Russian Academy helped to make the distant past appear in a more favourable light. When the French *émigré* Senac de Meilhan, in 1790, proposed that he write a history of Russia in the 18th century, Catherine imposed him the condition not to assert that Russia before Peter I had had neither laws nor institutions, because Russia had been on one level with the rest of Europe, but only the turbulent years of the late XVI and early XVII centuries had held up her progress for some forty or fifty years.

On the contrary, the traditional image of Peter I as the promoter of modern (that is Westernized) Russia was strongly revised. In fact, as Satta Boschian points out, the question of history posed a problematic question: to exalt Peter I's gestures meant to prove wrong the Russian nature's greatness, to which the sovereign had replace a Western model; at the same time, to enhance the Russian character could mean to proof wrong the conduct of Peter I, and consequently of his successors Elizabeth and Catherine II herself,

[864] KR RIII, F. 2, Op. 1, ed. khr. 1295, l. 120 and l. 175-6. G. V. KOPYTOVA, *Sheremetevskoe sobranie* (The Sheremetev collection), in *Iz fondov Kabineta rukopisey Rossiyskogo Instituta Istorii Iskusstv* (From the funds of the Cabinet of manuscripts of the Russian Institute of Art History), vyp. I, Sanktpeterburg 1998, pp. 202-29.
[865] G. PESTELLI, *La riscoperta dell'antichità classica* (The rediscovery of the classical antiquity), in *Storia della musica a cura della Società Italiana di Musicologia* (History of music edited by the Italian association of musicology), vol. 7, Torino, EDT 1991, pp. 55-8.
[866] E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare*, *PMLA*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (Sep. 1932), p. 803.
[867] H. ROGGER, *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia…*, p. 244.

who had posed their rule in line with it. The revision of the interpretation of Peter I's image was another mark of the shift of Catherine's ideology from Western Enlightenment to the rediscovery of Russian ancestral values (which was itself a component of Westernization, but better fitted the situation). This change is visible in some claims at Peter I recorded by Princess Dashkova, who in her memoirs recalls a conversation had in Vienna with prince Wenzel Anton Kaunitz, chancellor of Austria:

> Il [prince Kaunitz] affirma que la Russie avait d'éternelles obligations à ce souverain, comme à son créateur sous le rapport politique. Je lui demandai la permission de récuser le fait; j'attribuait le triomphe de cette idée à l'erreur et a préjujé des écrivains étrangers tous intéressés, comme il était facile de le concevoir, à propager une opinion qui pouvait être flatteuse pour eux et leur nation; en effet, Pierre Ier ayant introduit en Russie une multitude d'étrangers, il est certain que la gloire de son oeuvre pouvait être partagé jusqu'à un certain point par les instruments de sa prétendue creation.
>
> Avant la naissance de ce monarque, la Russia, fis-je observer, avait fait de grandes conquêtes. Depuis longtemps Cazan, astrakhan, la Sibérie, ainsi que la riche et belliqueuse nation connue sous le nom the la Horde dorée, avaient été soumis à nos armes; longtemps meme avant qu'aucun de ses ancêtres accupât le trône, les arts avaient cherché un refuge en Russie et y étaient chéris. Nous pouvons nous glorifier aussi de posséder des historiens qui ont laissé plus de manuscripts que de tous les chroniqueurs réunis du reste d'Europe.[868]

To Kaunitz's observation that Peter had made Russia emerge in the European context, and put her into contact with the other countries, the princess replied:

> […] un vaste empire tel que le nôtre, avec ses ressources de richesse et de puissance, n'a pas besoin pour s'agrandir de l'aide de l'étranger; et quand il est bien governé" – a reference to Catherine's image of justice, - "non-seulement il deviant inexpugnable dans sa propre force, mais encore il attire les royaumes vers lui.[869]

This was what Catherine had demonstrated with the conquests of the southern territories, which had earned her the title of *Velikaya* ('The Great'). But Catherine had something more than the qualities of the legendary sovereign: she had combined his ideas of progress to a more human and civilized ruling, inspired as it had been by enlightened ideals. This was exactly what Peter lacked in Dashkova's interpretation:

> [….] cet home extraordinaire […] possédait le genie, l'activité, un zèle evident pour le progress de son pays; mais combine ces qualities étaient balancées par son manque total dièducation et la tyrannie de ses passions désordonnées! Cruel et brutal, it traitait sans distinction tous ceux qui étaient soumis à son pouvoir comme autant d'esclaves qu'il croyais nés pour souffrir.[870]

Here the reference is to the compulsory service Peter I had imposed to nobles, treating them "without distinction", whereas Catherine, in one of the contradictions that

[868] E. R. DASHKOVA, *Mémoires De La Princesse Daschkoff*..., p. 141.
[869] *ibidem*.
[870] *ibidem*.

were outlined by her opposition, had restored the Chart of the nobles' privileges, and avoided to tackle the issue of "serfs". Moreover, Peter I had made Russia forget it initial values, among which the language, in favour to Westernization of culture:

> S'il eût eu réellement l'esprit d'un grand législateur, il eût laissé l'exemple des autres nations, les effets du commerce et l'inévitable réforme du temps peser de leur poids réuni pour amener ces progrès qu'il introduisit par la violence; ou bien, s'il avait été instruit à estimer les nobles et respectables qualities de nos ancêtres, jamais il n'eût songé à effacer l'originalité de leur caractère en y mettant le cachet des habitudes et moeurs étrangères qu'il élévait tant au-dessus des nôtres. […] dans mon opinion, il semblait oublier ses devoirs de souverain quand il dépensait son temps à Sardaam, travaillant de ses propres mains et apprenant les mots et idiotismes hollandaise par l'introduction desquels il corrompit ensuite la langue russe, ainsi que cela resort de ses édits et de tout notre vocabulaire maritime.[871]

It is possibly in this view that Catherine in her historical plays tackled the early Russian history, in order to demonstrate that Rus' was great even before Westernization, greatness being a peculiarity of its culture independently from the imitation of the West.

The Life of Ryurik was a magnificent performance with folk-character choruses and ballets intended to mark the apotheosis of the absolute monarch and the ideas Catherine expressed in her *Zapiski kasatel'no russkoy istorii* (Notes on the Russian history, 1783-84): the history as guided by the monarch's will, the exemplar obedience of the people, which was accompanied with the capacity of immediate comprehension and all the virtues. These ideas were expressed by the Empress in the section *Byli i nebylitsy* (True stories and fairy tales) as an answer to the twenty questions Fonvizin had posed her on the journal *Sobesednik* (1783-84), notably to his question about the Russian national character.

The action is set in the 9th and 10th centuries. The subject is drawn from one of the first chapters of Vasily N. Tatishchev's *Istoriya Rossiyskaya* (Russian history, 1768). The prince of Novgorod Gotomysl' on the verge of death ordered to call his three nephews Ryurik, Sinyav and Truvor in order to rule the country. His grandson Vadim, who had hoped in vain to obtain the throne, fomented a rebellion, so that Ryurik, the eldest and most charismatic of the brothers, opposed to Vadim and had him captured. Ryurik forgave him through the intercession of his wife Edvinda, thanks to the courage and frankness he showed. Impressed by this act, Vadim promised obedience. According to Catherine, Ryurik represented the enlightened sovereign, generous, father and guide for his people, clement towards enemies, among whom there was Vadim, who, once defeated,

[871] *ivi*, pp. 141-2.

acknowledged Ryurik's spiritual supremacy.[872]

Both Catherine's historical performances are described by the author as "imitation of Shakespeare, without the observance of the usual rules of theatre."[873] As in the case with *The Life of Ryurik*, I will not deep into the influence Shakespeare's historical plays had on Catherine's dramas, which has already been analysed by other scholars.[874] According to the scholar,

> In her handling of historical material […] she retells historical events with little attempt to inform them with dramatic feeling. Her characters, for the most part, are wooden representations, simple mouthpieces for uttering her own moral sayings, or for retailing the dry facts which she has culled from history books. Occasionally her mains figures, such as Rurik, Vadim, and Oleg, are real personalities, but of Shakespeare's genius for portraying a huge canvas containing a variety of characters that breath with the genuine pathos, tragedy, and comedy of life, she has none. Only in the type of play, and in the free nature of her dramatic form do the *Life of Rurik* and *The Beginning of the Rule of Oleg* resemble closely the historical plays of Shakespeare.[875]

Anyway, *Oleg* is said to have followed Ryurik in the same manner as Shakespeare's *Henri V* went after *Henri IV*. The performance was premiered on 15 October 1790[876] at the Hermitage scene on, in the presence of a very selected audience, and with an extraordinary pompous staging.[877]

After the death of Ryurik, his son Igor', prince of Novgorod, ruled under the regency of the uncle Oleg. The play rapidly represents the foundation of Moscow by Oleg (Act I), his journey to Kiev in order to respond to the city's emissaries who denounced Oskold's will to instil Christianity in the realm without the permission of the central power; Oskold's departure from Kiev (Act II); the wedding between Igor' and Prekrasa (Act III); Oleg's campaign against Constantinople (Act IV), his victory and the celebrations organized by the Greek Emperor Leo celebrates in his honour, with dances and the staging of a fragment of Euripides's *Alcestis*. In the final scene, Oleg leaves the

[872] According to Simmons, "Catherine seems to have intended Rurik, with his bravery, wisdom, and sense of justice, to represent the incarnation of Russian kingship and patriotism." E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare…*, p. 803.
[873] With regard to this see E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare…*, pp. 790-806.
[874] E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare…*, p. 805. Among these, Simmons mentions the popular wedding songs, the appearance of the nymphs dancing on popular tunes, and the idea of the play in the play. See also L. DONNELS O'MALLEY, *The Dramatic Works of Catherine the Great,* Aldershot, Ashgate 2006.
[875] E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare…*, p. 805.
[876] 22 October 1790 according to Findeyzen. N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas*, Eng. Transl. By M. D. Calvocoressi, *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Jul. 1933), p. 338. Elsewhere 26 October 1790.
[877] Karlinsky defined it "the most lavishly mounted stage presentation in the history of Russia." S. KARLINSKY, *Russian Drama from Its Beginnings to the Age of Pushkin…*, p. 88.

shield of Igor in the hippodrome, so that it can be admired by his descendants, and the Emperor Leo declares him a wise and courageous prince.

Simmons has pointed out the scenically the play is on lager scale than the *Life of Ryurik*, and again the unities are completely ignored.[878] Moreover, the freedom from the rules of classic theatre, declared in the title itself, in particular of the unity of the place of action (the action being set in Moscow, Kiev, and Constantinople), according to Catherine's secretary Aleksandr Khrapovitsky, casts the performance in the genre of opera: on 6 September 1789 Khrapovitsky noted in his journal "Asked about the unfinished Igor'. "Nous verrons quel succès aura Oleg? Il n'y a pas d'unité de lieu. C'est plutôt un opéra."[879]

The empress commissioned the music to her *maestri di cappella*, as it was for the other librettos of hers. As the memoirs of Khrapovitsky allow to reconstruct, the music was initially commissioned to Cimarosa. In 1789 he composed a "Chorus of warriors", possibly intended to the performance. Khrapovitsky records in his diary, on the date of 5 September 1789, a comment attesting that the empress did not appreciate the chorus.[880] For this reason she decided to transmit the text of her opera to her former favourite and secret husband Potyomkin, in order to have it set to music by Sarti. The composition of the music was finally entrusted to Giuseppe Sarti, Carlo Canobbio[881] and Vasily Pashkevich. Canobbio

[878] E. J. SIMMONS, *Catherine the Great and Shakespeare…*, p. 804.
[879] "Спросили о неконченном Игоре. «Nous verrons quel succès aura Oleg? Il n'y a pas d'unité de lieu. C'est plutôt un opéra»." A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski A. V. Khrapovitskago, stats-sekretarya Impetratritsy Ekateriny vtoroy. Izdanie polnoe, s primechaniyami* (Memoirs of A. V. Khrapovitsky, state-secretary of the Empress Catherine II. Full edition, with notes), edited by G. N. Gennady, (1st ed. Moskva, V Universitetskoy tipografii 1862), Moskva, Soyuzteatr 1990, p. 205.
[880] "Непоказался хор Чимарозов для Олега: «Cela ne peut aller: я послала Олега к Князю, пусть музыку сочинит Сарти." A. V. KHRAPOVITSKY, *Pamyatnye zapiski…*, p. 205. Cimarosa's autograph score of *Coro dei guerrieri* is located in the Naples Music College Library (Library of the Conservatory of Naples, 18.3.3-3: cc. 24), and carries an Italian text. A manuscript score is housed at the library of the Mariinsky theatre. T. YAMADA, *Coro dei Guerrieri: the sources*, in the booklet of the CD *Atene Edificata. Coro dei guerrieri…*, p. 25.
[881] Violin player, composer and music director, Carlo Canobbio was probably born in Venice (in 1741?), where he figures firstly as associated to Luigi Marescalchi as a publisher, later as a ballet composer. In 1773 he gave infact ttwo ballets for the S. Samuele theatre: *L'eroico amor d'Alceste and La pastorella impertinente*. Two years after (1775) he gave *Andromeda e Perseo*, and in 1776 *Andromaca*, a ballet included in Giuseppe Sarti's opera *Farnace*, again at S. Samuele, where, according to the *Indice de' spettacoli* of Milan, he worked as a music director and violin plyer. In 1778 he composed the ballet *La schiva fedele* of G. Amendola's scenery, and some other small vocal works. When on 24 February 1779 he performed as a violin player together with the singer Anna Morichelli-Bosello at the Trieste theatre, he was announced as future artist of the Russian Empress's theatre, as annotated by a contemporary. Infact, he was engaged at the Russian Court's service on 30 May 1779, as a director of the Italian opera and a composer of ballet music. He wrote the music for the ballet that were introduced in Paisiello's *L'idolo cinese* (Tsarskoe Selo, 30 August 1779), and his *Alcide al bivio* (Court theatre at the Winter Palace, 6 December 1780). In 1781 he gave the great ballet *Don Juan*, in three acts, set to music on a scenery by Francesco Rosetti, who had entered the Court's service four years before. After a period of activity in Italy, during which he created

composed the music for the overture, the entr'actes and a march in the second act; Pashkevich composed the choruses of the third act (the wedding), whereas Sarti composed the three first scenes of the first act, and the great choruses of act V.

The full score of the play was engraved and published in Saint Petersburg in 1791 at the government's expenses.[882] In 1893 it was reprinted by Jurgenson in Moscow.[883]

As it seems, Canobbio was responsible for the most stylistically neutral elements of the score. Anyway, he also introduces folk themes, such as the traditional tune of the "Kamarinskaya," which he presents in an adulterated rhythm of a regular court minuet in the entr'acte to the third act, working it out in variations, thus anticipating Glinka's variations. Here is an excerpt from the 1893 piano reduction:[884]



Example No. III, 46 – C. Canobbio, *The Early Reign of Oleg*, Entr'acte to act III, measures 1-4.

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the ballet *Cupido trionfatore* for Antonio Pio's *Nettuno ed Egle* (Venice, 1783), and *La discesa d'Ercole all'Inferno*, danced during the staging of Francesco Antonelli's *Catone in Utica* (Naples, 1784), he returned to St. Petersburg in 1784, and created some music for the 'dramma giocoso' *Amore artigiano*, on Goldoni's libretto. The indication on the libretto, issued in St. Petersburg in 1785, makes one think that Canobbio composed the music for the opera, but it's more likely that he composed, as used, the music for the ballets. Infact, the *Archives of the Imperial Theatres* record an opera with the same title, which music was ascribed to the Tcheque composer Florian-Leopold Gassmann, given in Vienna in 1767 and in the Russian capital in 1785-86. On 20 Novembre 1789 Canobbio seto to music the ballet *Arianna e Bacco*, in one act, which scenery had been conceived by Giuseppe Canziani. After taking part to the composition of Catherine II's opera *The beginnings of the Reign of Oleg*, Canobbio continued composing the ballet *Piramo e Tisbe*, in four acts on a scenery by Giuseppe Canziani (St. Petersburg's public theatre, 20 September 1791). In the same period, due to the difficult financial conditions of the Court's theatres Canobbio lose his position of music director, but kept those of ballet composer and first violin in the Court's orchestra. When in 1795 the Italian composer Gennaro Astaritta arrived in St. Petersburg and took with him a new private troupe of opera *buffa*, Canobbio could continue working as a music director for that troupe's stagings. In 1979 he issued *Six sonates pour la guitarre accompagnées d'un violon avec sourdine, oeuvre II*, whereas in 1803 he gave his last work, the 'ballet héroico-pantomime en 5 actes' *Castor et Pollux*, by Charles Le Picq, which scenery was issud the same year in St. Petersburg. He died in St. Petersburg on 6 March 1822. For further details see the article R. A. MOOSER, *Violonistes-compositeurs italiens en Russie au XVIIIe siècle. VII. Carlo Canobbio VIII. Giovanni-Mane Giornovicchi dit Jarnowick*, *Rivista musicale italiana*, LII (1950), pp. 55-70.

[882] [C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega, podrazhanie Shakespiru bez sokhraneniya featral'nykh obyknovennykh pravil* (The early reign of Oleg, An imitation of Shakespeare, without the observance of the usual rules of the theatre), [full score] Pechatano v Tipografii Uchilishcha 1791 goda.

[883] [C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega, podrazhanie Shakespiru bez sokhraneniya featral'nykh obyknovennykh pravil* (The early reign of Oleg, An imitation of Shakespeare, without the observance of the usual rules of the theatre), reduction for piano and voices, Moskva u P. Yurgensona, S.-Peterburg u I. Yurgensona, Varshava u G. Zennevald'd [1893]

[884] [C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega…*, reduction for piano and voices, p. 27.

Pashkevich's three-part female choruses, as composed to stage the wedding, recall other similar moments of *devichnik* (the wedding party) in previously discussed comic operas. Russian tunes could not have been excluded from the most Russianized section, and indeed, in order to give the pieces the necessary *coleur locale*, included three folk-songs.

Sarti recurred to the ancient Greek modes in his setting of the four solemn choruses in act III, which texts were borrowed, as declared in the libretto, from Lomonosov's poetry, as well as for the scenes drawn from the Greek tragedy. Calvocoressi pointed out that in his choice Sarti gave "proof of considerable rigidity and certain arrogance."[885] The choice and its legitimation are declared in an *Explanation* (*Obyasnenie*) that precedes the score, apparently written by Sarti himself and translated into Russian by Nikolay A. L'vov.[886] According to Bella Brover-Lubovsky,

> Notwithstanding the Russian subject matter and those folk musical elements deliberately employed by Sarti's colleagues in order to construct a national identity, this stylized representation of ancient Greek music was conceived as the artistic apex of the entire work.[887]

Indeed, Sarti's artistic maturation had occurred in a local climate that developed a cultural tradition of glorifying the ancient music and blaming the progress of modern music for losing the moral purpose to which the Greeks had destined it. He himself had studied with Francescantonio Vallotti, who represented the Pythagorean branch in North-Italian musical thought, and later with Giambattista Martini (Padre martini), the foremost adept of the ancient music revival. As his disciple, "Sarti's acquaintance with the Greek heritage would have been considerable."[888]

In other respects, the Greek element of *Oleg* had an important underlying raison. The material for the text was drawn, as declared in the anonymous introduction that precedes the score, from Catherine's *Notes on the Russian History*.[889] This suggests the idea that the performance was intended to represent Catherine's own vision of history, and

[885] "prova di una notevole rigidezza e di certa prosopopea." M. D. CALVOCORESSI, *Panorama della musica russa*, edited by L. Fuà, Milano, Tarantola 1947, p. 32.
[886] [G. SARTI, N. L'VOV], *Obyasnenie* (Explanation), in [C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega, podrazhanie Shakespiru bez sokhraneniya featral'nykh obyknovennykh pravil…*, full score, pp. iii-vii.
[887] B. BROVER-LUBOVSKY, *The Early Reign of Oleg: Catherine the Great, Giuseppe Sarti and the Musica Antica Revival*, in *Early Music: Context and Ideas*, edited by A. Sitarz, Krakow, Musica Iagellonica 2007, p. 275.
[888] *ivi*, p. 276.
[889] *Preduvedomlenie* (Introduction), in [C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega…*, full score, pages not numbered.

so, of politics. Indeed, the performance was intended to extol Russian military power – the recent victory in the second Turkish War of 1787-91 (later celebrated also in *Zel'mira i Smelon*, 1795) and the preparation of the invasion of Constantinople: in 1792 the Yassy treaty was to be signed, establishing Russian rule in Bessarabia and Caucasus and the political liquidation of the Crimean Khanate, annexed to the Russian Empire as a buffer zone serving to protect the southern boundaries from the Turks.

The expansion of the Russian empire during Catherine's reign was one of the main criteria of identification of the country the Empress tried to put emphasis on. According to Wortman,

> The personal devotion to the sovereign and the adoption of her Westernized culture became the principal bond uniting the various nationalities of the empire. Catherine's method of rule in the new territories was to co-opt native elites and to assimilate them into the Russian nobility, continuing a process of broadening and diversifying the imperial elite. […] But although the manner was cosmopolitan, the rhetoric and styles of Catherine's reign left little doubt about the predominance of the Great Russian nobility. Imperial patriotism with a Great Russian coloration was a theme of late eighteenth-century history and literature. Catherine the Great, the only Russian ruler since Riurik to have no Russian parent, extolled the glory of the Great Russian elite, who had achieved the conquest of empire. Again the woman represented the cultural ideal, and Catherine introduced "the Russian dress" for the ladies-in-waiting and other highly placed women of the court to wear at important processions and holydays. The Russian dress attached native elements, taken from seventeenth-century robes, to a Western-style evening gown. […] It became standard attire for women attending important formal occasions in the court during the nineteenth century.[890]

The emphasis on Catherine's conquests was part of the image of Russia that Catherine has been constructing during her reign. The annexation of southern territories was celebrated by the six-month journey Catherine went through in 1786-87, in which Catherine dramatized the military and cultural successes of her reign. According to Wortman,

> Catherine believed that such displays would refute foreign beliefs that Russia was a great desert. […] The spectacle of happiness and transformation was presented to an audience of court dignitaries and foreign envoys-of Britain, France, and Austria.
>
> On the way to and from the new territories, Catherine participated in numerous staged demonstrations of mutual fealty between herself and the Russian nobility.[891]

In this respect, Potyomkin's party at the Tauride Palace, and the staging of *Zel'mira i Smelon* at the Sheremetev theatre in 1795 can be considered part of this aspect of her nationalism.

Now, the expansion of the empire was accompanied with more emphatic statements of Russia's equivalence with ancient Empires. According to Wortman,

[890] R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power*..., pp. 66-7.
[891] *ivi*, p. 70.

> Russia's expansion to the south was glorified nor merely in terms of national greatness of interest, but as a recreation of Hellenic antiquity. Poets invoked Greek referents to glorify the southern conquests. […] With the conquest of the Black Sea littoral and then the Crimea in 1785, Catherine envisioned a Russian restoration of the Greek empire centered in Costantinople, "the Greek project."[892]

In the case with *Oleg*, besides depicting an event from early history of Russia (Rus'), the play dramatized Catherine's preparation for the famous and yet unrealized "Greek project", which was intended to revive of the Greek Empire on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, and to set of Catherine's grandson, Paul Petrovich's son the grand duke Konstantin Pavlovich (1779-1831), on the Greek throne.[893] According to this project, the grand duke's birth was celebrated by a new coin, which showed the image of the Saint Sophia Cathedral on the reverse; Greek poetry was recited in original on the special event dedicated to his birth; the grand duke himself was reared by a Greek nurse, and his first servant and childhood friends were Greek. Since his birth, Konstantin Pavlovich was prepared by his grandmother to become the emperor of the restored Byzantine Empire.[894]

In this sense, the idea of recurring to Greek modes together with Russian tunes appears coherent with the entire project of the opera. Moreover, in his article *Ruslan i Lyudmila M. I. Glinka, K pyatidesyatiletiyu etoy opery na stsene* (M. I. Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. For the 50th anniversary of this opera on the stage), published in the same year of the 19th-century edition of *Oleg*'s score, Vladimir Stasov pointed out Sarti's attempt at introducing in the themes features peculiar to the ancient melodies (Greek and sacred).[895] Although Sarti's attempt is considered by the critic a failure due to the insufficiency of the composer's talent and creative strength, Stasov points out his merit for the history of Russian and consequently European music, considering it an important

[892] *ivi*, p. 68.
[893] Catherine intended to put on the Muscovite throne his first son, grand duke Aleksandr Pavlovich, but, as mentioned above, did not have the time to express her plans due to her sudden illness (see Chap. III – The Short Reign of Paul I).
[894] Catherine nurtured the hope that by educating the heir to the throne she could help to transform the Russian political system. According to Wortman, "The absorption with the training of the heir reflected a general shift from a baroque to a neoclassical conception of a monarch. No longer the subject of Olympian metaphors, the monarch ascending the throne had to aspire to the higher qualities attainable by men." He was mortal, and had to learns to obey as to command, and was no more to be lauded as "an earthly god". R. S. WORTMAN, *Scenarios of power…*, p. 73.
[895] Stasov refers to "diatonizm i svyazannuyu s nim svoebraznuyu sistemu kadentsiy." (diatonism and the original system of cadences bound to it) V. V. STASOV, *Ruslan i Lyudmila M. I. Glinka, K pyatidesyatiletiyu etoy opery na stsene* (M. I. Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. For the 50th anniversary of this opera on the stage), S.-Peterburg, Tipografiya Imperat. Spb. Teatrov (Glavn. Upr. Udelov) 1893, p. 304.

precedent to the use of *kant* in Russian 19th-century opera, and suggesting the possibility of his influence on Glinka.[896]

Moreover, the Russian writer casts serious doubts on Sarti's actual authorship of the idea, suggesting that Nikolay L'vov was not a simple translator of the explanatory note, but its real author, the composer being its simple executor.[897]

In the years when the opera was prepared and stage, L'vov was working at his *Collection of Russian Popular Songs*, for which, as mentioned above, he gathered the tunes and prepared the introductory text. He was a great admirer of ancient Greek culture and its music, and in the introduction he drew a parallel to the Russian tunes he was studying and their possible origin from Greek music:

> Древние Греки у Египтян с протчими художествами и музыку довели оную до такова совершенства, <…> что действие оной кажется нам чудесами или ложью чудесам соседственною. Они музыку свою разделяли на Теоретическую или Умственную, на Практическую или Исполнительную. Сия последняя разделена была опять на 2 части на Мелодию и на Рифмонию, то есть на Мелодическую и Армоническую. Сие древних Греков разделение музыки разделяет весьма естественно и наше народное пение. Мы называем Армонические песни Протяжнми, а Мелодические Плясовыми.
>
> <…> К удовлетворению желания любителей древней музыки отец Киршер и г. Бюретт по долгом и трудном изыскании нашли и перевели на нынешние наши ноты два отрывка древней Греческой музыки Гимн Немезиде, и Оду Пиндврову. Исследовав сию последнюю с примечанием, к удивлению находим, что мы в народном пении нашем наследовали от древних Греков не только разделение оного на две части; но в протяжных песнях и некоторое ощутительное подобие Мелодии и образ сложения оных: ибо старинная наша песня под No. 34 ["Vysoko sokol letaet"] и многие другие начинаются выходкою одного голоса, а возвышаются потом общим хором. Так точно расположена и Ода Пиндарова, имеющая характер пения, Canto fermo, Италианцами называемного. Большая часть наших протяжных песен сей же самый характер имеют.[898]

[The ancient Greeks developed from the Egyptians, together with other arts, also music, to such a perfection. […] that its effect seems to us a miracle or the mirage of a miracle. They distinguished their music into Theoretical or Intellectual, and Practical or Performing. The latter was in turn divided into two parts, Melody and Rhythmic, that is Melody and Harmony. This distinction of the music by the ancient Greeks fits much naturally also to our popular singing. We call Harmonic the drawn-out songs, and Melodic the dance songs.

[…] For the pleasure of the lovers of ancient music father Kircher and Mr Buret after a long and hard research found and transcribed in modern notation two fragments of the ancient Greek music – the Hymn of Nemesis and Pindar's Ode. Having studied the latter with attention, we find with wonder that in our popular singing we inherited from ancient Greeks not only its distinction in two parts, but also in the drawn-out songs considerable similarities of their Melody and composition: because our ancient song No. 34 ["The hawk soars aloft"] and many others begin with the entry of one voice, and then the whole chorus resounds. Pindar's ode is structured like this, having the character of singing, in Italian called Canto fermo. A great part of our drawn-out songs have the same character.]

L'vov pointed out the similarity to Greek ancient music of other genres too of the popular songs:

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[896] *ivi*, p. 305.
[897] *ivi*, pp. 300-2. Similar doubts were cast by Mooser in his *Annales de la musique et des musiciens…*, III, p. 553.
[898] [N. A. L'VOV], *O russkom narodnom penii…*, pp. 38-9.

> Святочные и подблюдные наши песни более еще доказывают, что мы в народном пении много заимствовали от Греков. Старинная Греческая игра и песня по ныне еще известная под имянем Клидона есть тоже самое что у нас подблюдные песни. <…>
>
> К русской Клидоне прибавили уже Славяне свой любимой припев, которого у Греков не было: они припевали и мы тоже поем слава, главное божество Славянскаго народа, коего имя заимствовали они от великих дел своих, и которое весьма часто употребляли не только в песнях, но и в собственном названии людей. Жив жив курилка, есть также игра Греческая.[899]

[Our *svyatochnye* and *podblyudnye* songs demonstrate once more that in our popular singing we absorbed much from the Greeks. The ancient Greek game and song still known nowadays under the name of Klidon is the same as our *podblyudnye* songs. […]

To the Russian Klidon the Slavs have added their favourite refrain, that the Greek did not have: the repeated singing and we too sing «slava» [glory] , the main divinity of the Slavic people, the name of which they inherited from their great deeds, and which they often used not only in songs, but also in proper names for people. «Zhiv zhiv kurilka» [The ember is alight, is alight], too, is a Greek game.]

This idea was later carried on by Guthrie in his *Dissertations sur les Antiquités de Russies* (1795), in which the myths, rites, and other Russian customs were "compared to similar objects among the Ancients, and notably among the Greeks", as the full title of the work reads.[900] In the dedication of his work Guthrie expansively refers to the considerable personal interest of Catherine in "learned research" focusing on the interrelationships between ancient Greek and Russian art.

The relationship between ancient Greek music and Russian folksong, in which L'vov believed, appears to be used in this opera in order to represent Catherine's "Greek project" in music. The passage from folk quotation to its Greek ancestor in the opera seems to embody a wider vision of Russia as the Empire it was to become, folksong having ascended to a wider, "universal" dimension. According to Lurana Donnels O'Malley, notably the performance of *Alcestis* "reveals the apparatus of Catherine's ownership of the display".

> By emphasizing the containment of Euripides within *Oleg*, she also emphasizes the containment of Russia's historical past within her own contemporary Empire. One has only to raise a curtain to be drawn into ninth-century Byzantium, and to raise yet another curtain to be transported to ancient Greece. Time, culture, space, style – all are collapsed and contained by the boundaries of the performance of Oleg for which Catherine herself raised the curtain.[901]

In this sense, Russian opera seems to replace, at the end of the century, Italian opera *seria* in the celebrative function it had at the moment of its import to the country. The form too of this performance, staged with magnificence and including large masses of

[899] *ivi*, p. 41.
[900] M. GUTHRIE, *Dissertations sur les antiquités de Russie*….
[901] L. DONNELS O'MALLEY, *The Dramatic Works of Catherine the Great*…, p. 166.

extras and singers for the choruses, recall that of a Baroque spectacle, possibly foreshadowing the manners of Gluck's *tragédie lyrique*.

Conclusions

At the time that I have chosen as starting point of the present work, the beginning of the third decade of 18th century, opera was perceived exclusively as an import product. Opera *seria*, in particular, was the most magnificent means of representation of the ruling class in every European country. After Peter I's Westernization, Russia too was imagined by its rulers, as a European country, and needed to provide itself with all the necessary means to shine as a peer among the others.

During Anna Ioannovna's rule though, as it had been with Peter I due to the forced process of Westernization, early proto-nationalistic claims were brought about as opposition forces. Whereas Empress Anna (and her main supporter Bühren) suffered from these appeals, her successor Elizabeth Petrovna adopted and combined them to the ideas of modernization of the country bound to the figure of her father.

While espousing the Western ideas of the Enlightenment, her successor Catherine II, especially in the second half of her reign, adopted a 'Russian pose' that prevented national claims to be raised by opposition. The Empress perceived in the growing national consciousness a danger, due to the overly progressive ideas it was bound to within the set of ideas imported from Western Europe and indebted to the Enlightenment. Having initially espoused part of these ideas, and finding herself in the impossibility to pursue them to their logical consequences (due to the peculiar social conditions and state structure of the country), the Empress tried to locate in the re-discovery of Russian original values a way of defending herself from the possible accusations of illegitimacy, and from the increasingly opposing forces of radical *intelligentsiya*. The parenthesis of Paul I's reign was too short to affect the evolution of Russia in the direction of a growing self-knowledge or, rather, of a country defining itself.

Music theatre, as a part of the culture nurtured in Russia since the beginning of Anna Ioannovna's reign, reflected this general evolution in various ways, which I have tried to detect in the three parts of this research. The discontinuity of the Russian reigns and policies notwithstanding, an uninterrupted line can be seen in the permanence of opera as a mirror of the Court 'scenario' (according to Wortman's use of the term).

During Anna's reign, Russia represented itself as a Western country like any of the other state entities in Europe, so that the production of Italian opera (*seria*, mainly)

demonstrated the 'Europeanness' of the Court. The activity of the first Italian troupes at the Peterburgian court appears in line with that of any European court. It demonstrated that Russia too had the means to support a primary and lavish theatrical activity.

During the Elizabethan reign a more stable presence of theatrical troupes demonstrated that a production *in loco* was also a possibility. Although the prevailing genre, 'Metastasian' opera, was one of the most cosmopolitan, the mentioned proto-nationalistic pressures stressed the need to adapt opera production more concretely to the Russian reality, in order to project it clearly to an audience that had to acknowledge the achievements of the present sovereign (as synthetized in *La clemenza di Tito* and its prologue *La Russia afflitta e riconsolata*, 1742). Elizabeth addressed her message to her people, and in this way a broader concept of "people" and "audience" alike was instated. This trend was practically mirrored in the broader access of the upper middle-class to opera performances.

This process was further increased during Catherine's reign, to the point of including, at least in principle, *all* the people as possible audience of opera. It is significant in this context that the coronation festivities took place in the streets of Moscow, and involved the entire city in an unprecedented event. The means of expression of the Court being the same that had been established by her predecessor, Catherine however led them to their extreme consequences by letting Court connected theatres to be opened, not only in Saint Petersburg but also in Moscow, such as the Peterburgian Bol'shoy theatre, which became public in 1783.

Possibly in correspondence to this broadening of audience, that entailed its inner social differentiation, also the repertoire did shift from the crowned protagonists of Metastasian opera to the lower social ranks of comedy, down to the serfs portrayed in Russian *opera komicheskaya*.

Together with a change in the transmitted 'scenario', the evolution of theatrical activity in Russia, which was increasingly intense and diverse, brought about an increasing confidence of local personnel with the practice of theatre itself, the main features of this art, the rules it was governed by, and the technical means necessary to its production.

Although traditionalist critics usually pointed out the excessive attention of the Court towards foreign masters, and the neglect of local ones, a fresh look at the main initiatives of the Court reveals instead that it cultivated the project to progressively make

Russian theatre independent: experiences such as the dance school founded by empress Anna, the Russian troupe founded by Elizabeth and the various educational institutions supported by Catherine (which included theatre among studies), together with the practice to send artists to Italy for training, attest the desire to create a new generation of Russian theatre personnel, intended to replace foreigners in due time. This can be ascribed also to the financial aspect, repeatedly faced by the institution of Imperial Theatres and its Directorate. The project of emancipating theatre from the foreigners, although not completely fulfilled, led eventually to the emergence of a generation of librettists-playwrights (A. P. Sumarokov, V. I. Maykov, A. V. Levshin, M. A. Matinsky, N. A. L'vov and others) as well as composers of Russian breed (V. A. Pashkevich and E. I. Fomin among others).

Together with the theatre personnel, the audience too was progressively familiarized with theatre and music theatre through various means such as Stählin's journalistic activity, the chronicle of staged performances (1730s), the issue of staged librettos (for the sake of a better comprehension of the play in foreign languages, but also available to those who were not allowed to performances), and the public advertisement when theatres finally became open to paying audiences (1783). The press began to deal with theatre issues and the same protagonists of the discussion, increasingly aware, increased in number together with the expansion of a new social class, the *raznochintsy* (literally 'men of different ranks'), which progressively occupied the space of culture, formerly privy purse of the aristocracy, and became the core of Russian *intelligentsiya*. More people were thus allowed to the theatre, and at the same time the audience was more and more informed on issues concerning the theatre; to the point when an outburst of local production emerged, reaching its peak in the last quarter of the century. The increased knowledge of the theatre, together with the progressive self-knowledge of Russian people, led to the desire to develop a repertoire of its own, always in line with the main prerogatives of the other European theatrical venues.

The way in which the Russian producers of theatre conceived their work certainly reflected the initial import character of music theatre: foreign models were followed, in their evolution from classicism to sentimental drama, and were progressively integrated in theatre practice through the means of translation: from those prepared exclusively for the sake of comprehension, to those artistic remakes intended for 'literary' reading, and finally up to translations intended for stage delivery. The language was thus a means towards

reception, and at the same time it was through this practice that language itself was subject to experimentation and codification.

However, the reception itself of foreign operatic models, as I have tried to point out, was peculiar to the Russian context since its very beginning. Several documents are witness to the difficulty with which Russian audiences perceived Italian recitatives. Stählin attests at stagings with recitatives replaced by spoken dialogues; the Moscow version of *La clemenza di Tito* witnesses the shortening of those in the original libretto. While this can be considered a widespread practice in Europe, the translation of foreign music plays for the staging and the production of Russian comic operas accounted frequently for the *complete* elimination of recitatives.

The preference accorded to spoken dialogues though, is perhaps due not only to the difficulty of standing a long performance, but rather to the perception of them as 'unrealistic'. Because of the strong influence of French culture, theatre arrived in Russia in the form of the French classicism, in which verisimilitude was one of the most important values. Music theatre, as it seems, was evaluated in Russia according to the parameters of French spoken theatre, instead of those peculiar to opera. For sure, Italian music was highly-valued in Russia, but at the same time it was perceived as something alien, to the naturalness of expression, and to the coherent development of the action. I came to the conclusion that music theatre, although responding to peculiar rules, due to the history it went through in Russia - which was common to the history of spoken theatre - was taken into consideration according to similar criteria, as suggested by the models that Sumarokov followed in his opera librettos, for instance. That means that opera was considered in Russia first of all as *drama*, and music as an embellishing element, rather than its principal means of expression. Relegated to single pleasurable moments, it was not the bearer of the action (be it 'inner action' as in Metastasian opera), nor the synthesis of the main (contrasting) forces determining the dramatic development. This seems coherent with the characteristics that Russian opera took, both in the form of the more frequent comic opera and in serious operas such as Catherine's *Early Reign of Oleg* (1790).

This leads us to a further point, that is, the changing role of opera, from its appearance on the Russian stage up to the end of the century: from the initial status of *seria* during the reign of Catherine (but starting already in Elizabethan time, with the arrival of the first troupes of Italian *buffi*) the ceremonial function within the most important State events gradually passed on to the genre of *buffa*. I am referring especially to the last commissions that Paisiello received from the Court, also for events such as the official

meeting of two sovereigns (Catherine II and Joseph II in Mogilev), but also to those received by foreign composers for Russian works: Martín y Soler, Cimarosa, Sarti and Canobbio were asked to compose music not for foreign librettos and subjects (or for librettos produced in Russia by foreigners in foreign languages), but for Russian ones. These works belonged both to the comic and serious genres. Except for Paul I's anachronistic attempt at restoring Italian *seria* in its previous function, a loop seems to come to a close with the end of the century, when Russian opera comes abreast of Italian opera as the leading ceremonial event, and in the role of main vehicle of transmitting the Court's cultural project. Though in an evolved theatrical practice (within performances given more frequently and in more numerous and public theatres), the function of bearer of the Court's image is confirmed by the celebration of such repertoire as one of the achievements of Russian rule, attested by the collection *Russian theatre*, a peer with other symbols of Russianness (the Russian Academy, its *Grammar* and *Dictionary*).

The Court exploited these means for the same propagandistic purposes. Differently from the Soviet understanding of *opera komicheskaya* as a means of political opposition (notably to serfdom), I have tried to demonstrate that Russian comic opera often expressed ideals of loyalty to the sovereign (generally represented by officers or masters-landowners, because members of the Imperial family could not appear as characters on stage), as part of Catherine's proto-nationalism; the struggle against abuses was part of Catherine's image as Minerva, the sovereign carrying on justice. Any criticism should be expressed *within* an untouchable hierarchy, which remained outside the realm of allowed discussion (as demonstrated by the case with Knyazhnin's *Vadim*). According to Marina Ritzarev,

> It is no accident that Pashkevich was chosen by Empress Catherine II to set to music her own folksy librettos, in which she shrewdly manifested her policy of official nationalism. To be fair, comic theatre in the last third of the eighteenth century was so popular among the enlightened circles of St Petersburg and Moscow, and the public consciousness reflected by this theatre was so multicoloured and active, that the interweave between official nationalism and the revolutionary outlook expressed by Alexander Radishchev, whom the Empress had arrested, was sometimes quite subtle. The same was true concerning not only opera but also collections of folk songs as well as the activity of Lvov's famous late eighteenth-century salon, which anticipated Stasov's nineteenth-century circle that nourished 'The Mighty Five'. In the eighteenth century, like the century to follow, *Russian*, *Rus'ian* and *a là Rus* [sic] were not always interdistinguishable.[1]

One last issue is introduced by the above-mentioned quotation. Following Karlinsky, we could not avoid pointing out the imitative character of such production, which, through the means of translation in the particular version of *sklonenie na russkie nravy* (adaptation to Russian customs), enabled Russian authors to appropriate foreign

[1] M. RITZAREV, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2006, pp. 5-6.

models, notably French (from Classicism to *opéra-comique*). As recalled in the introduction to the present work, traditional historiography did not recognize this production either as authentically Russian, or as a lively genre from the artistic point of view. On the contrary, I believe that this corpus of works should be considered as the real, Russian version of the cosmopolitan comic opera, in the form of a specific brand, *komicheskaya opera*, parallel to opera *buffa*, *opéra comique* and *Singspiel* in other linguistic areas. According to Findeyzen, the sketch of the incunabula of Russian opera shows that

> During the first period of their existence, the public theatres of both Russian capitals were not exclusively concerned with producing foreign operas translated into Russian – although their repertory included a great many of the operas popular at that time in Western countries – but, besides the countless works written in would-be "Russian style" by foreign composers living in Russia, produced a fair amount of operas by native Russian composers, among whom Matinsky, Pashkevich, and particularly Fomin may be said to have laid a more or less solid foundation for the genuine national school which developed a few decades later.[2]

This production (including, as we have seen, also the 'foreign' works produced in Russian, as in the case with *La finta amante*) self-assessed as 'Russian operas', and at least in intention Findeyzen acknowledges Russian opera as a *project* supported by the Court, in contrast to the idea of its neglect (expressed also by Mooser), summarized in Calvocoressi's utterance that the Russian Court (represented by Catherine the Great) "promoted only Italian music."[3]

Nevertheless, Findeyzen refers to the character of this production as to "would-be "Russian style"", in opposition to the "genuine national school which developed a few decades later", thus limiting the Russianness of these experiences, in reference to the great landmark of the "Russian style" formulated by the Mighty Handful, which had its own peculiar features.[4] It is in the aspect of music that the musicologist raises this limitation, notably referring to the use of music folklore.

Russian *opera komicheskaya* made use of folklore as raw materials in order to embody Russianness, which it had tried to obtain in its textual element through the process of "adaptation to the Russian customs." From the point of view of the music too, this genre meant to be acknowledged as Russian, in order to fill in the gap between content and form

[2] N. FINDEIZEN, *The Earliest Russian Operas, Eng. Transl. By M. D. Calvocoressi, in The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Jul. 1933), p. 340.
[3] M. D. CALVOCORESSI, *Panorama della musica russa* (original title: *A Survery of Russian Music*), edited by L. Fuà, Milano, Tarantola 1947, p. 25.
[4] For a recent critic analysis of the features of the 'Russian style' see M. FROLOVA-WALKER, *Russian Music and Nationalism, From Glinka to Stalin*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press 2007, notably pp. 140-225.

(means of expression). Plavil'shchikov's remarks contrasting Russian tunes to Italian singing testify that folklore was not, by that time, a subject of discussion in terms of Russianness, but rather in terms of aesthetic value.

Certainly, from this perspective one should not infer that the 'Russian style' that Findeyzen referred to is to be dated almost a century before its theorization and realization. To this temptation I've tried to resist, together with that of defining how much Russianness can be found in the production of the Russian school, or in the prior one. This approach, that seems to live through on in our century, seemed to me the most exposed to demolishing critics, since ascending to pureness (Russianness in this case) is an utopian task, and is also one of the most exceptionable points in nationalist theories, in their worst meaning. Distinguishing, from our contemporary point of view, supposedly authentic Russian elements from foreign ones seemed to me to return to the approach I am trying to overcome, the same as opposing nationalism to nationalism. As I expressed in the introduction to my research, my intention was to overcome the approach, which had become traditional, of interpreting one period's production through the criteria of another, itself subjected to the passing of time. I have better tried to refer to contemporary witnesses, in order to understand in a homogeneous way intentions, facts and reception of the time.

In the operas I examined, different uses of folklore can be detected, as pointed out by Taruskin in the case with *The coachmen at the relay*.

As I have tried to outline, the use of the folkloric material reflected its treatment in coeval collection of folk songs, the most representative of which was the *Collection of Russian popular songs with their music*, edited by Nikolay L'vov and set to music by Johann Pratsch.

This treatment of folklore has been harshly judged by musicians and scholars of later times, especially in the second half of the 19th century (notably by Balakirev), when another use of folklore was theorized and practiced. That is why Findeyzen cannot define the work of prior composers as 'Russian style', but understands their use of folklore as imperfect attempts at what was to come an evidently anti-philological approach.

In a similar way, despite the totally different position of the musicologist, Taruskin considered equally not corresponding to 'nationalism' the use of folklore in support of autocracy and the status quo, nor that most spontaneous expression of Russianness, the particular use of chorus.

Espousing Taruskin's motto "Russia is large and contains multitudes," [5] I considered both of them expression of the proto-nationalism of Catherine's time, both responding to the position of L'vov and his contemporaries, which the musicologist had referred to as "a monument to that largeness and to those multitudes, and a memento of the Russian nation's brief flicker of Enlightenment."[6] After all, autocracy was never an extraneous element in Russia.

If different uses of folklore can be equally ascribed to attempts at creating *a* (and not *the*) Russian style, each responding to different variants of this idea (attested by such witnesses as that of Plavil'shchikov), 'Russian opera' as conceived by the exponents of the Mighty Handful is not the only way for an opera to be 'Russian'. The accuse of inadequacy to Russian criteria formulated by the group almost a century afterwards, and extended to the work of Mikhail Glinka, though often related to Russianness, must be considered more under the aspect of form and response to new aesthetic requirements (be it Romanticism, Wagnerism, or else). Rather than not-Russian-enough, these operas probably lacked more in terms of 'modern' dramaturgical coherence, being moulded according to parameters of verisimilitude typical of the 18th century.

Rather than absence of nationalism in the scene with the officer in *Coachmen at the relay*, or in analogous moments in *The village feast*, *The king at the hunt* or Catherine's operas, I saw in such episodes the particular shape that nationalism would take in Russia, at least before the rising of the later slavophilism in the second half of the 19th century. This proto-nationalism was deprived of any egalitarian element, aimed as it was at the preservation of the hierarchy.

Having pointed out the common origin of nationalism in all European nations, as a cosmopolitan phenomenon that in Russia is considered part of the Westernization process, the permanence of a strong hierarchical principle distinguishing *krest'yane* (peasants) from *barin* (the master) needs further explanation. In my opinion, this peculiarity can be ascribed to two factors. One is the relatively late development of a bourgeoisie in Russian society, which was still structured according to the *Ancien régime* standards, and characterized by the institution of serfdom (In the section regarding translation, the difference between the European free peasant and his analogous in Russia has been

[5] R. TARUSKIN, *N. A. Lvov and the Folk*, in *Defining Russia Musically*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press 1997, p. 24.
[6] *ibidem*.

discussed, with respect to the need of making a distinction, while translating, between serf and *odnodvorets*).

The second factor seems to me the circumstance that the 'proto'-nationalism (which I've tried to describe in different aspects of the Russian cultural life), as rediscovery and appraisal of national values, was carried out by the sovereign herself in order to ward off or overcome the dangerous break between state authorities and *intelligentisya* hovering on Russia since the import of Enlightenment culture. This phenomenon characterized the reigns from Catherine II up to Aleksandr I and Nicholas I at least. Catherine had made this task her own especially in order to legitimize her rule and to anticipate opposing nationalist forces (as Anna Ioannovna had suffered from). The following sovereigns followed this line in order to create and preserve the unity of the country: during Napoleon's campaign and during the following Restoration, nationalistic movements were bound to the defence of the homeland, thus binding the ethnic concept of nation and the geographic one of homeland, in a process that was part spontaneous, and part prompted by the Court. During the Restoration, that is the second part of Aleksandr I's rule and the reign of his successor Nicholas I, the idea of Nation and that of homeland were subject to two divergent evolutions. The generation of the Patriotic war evolved it along the more 'democratic' and progressive line that led to the insurrection of Decembrists. The State authorities and the sovereigns tried instead to direct it towards the primary respect of the hierarchy, as formulated by Nicholas I's minister of culture Sergey Uvarov in the theory taking the name of *Ofitsial'naya narodnost'* (Official Nationality). The chronological boundaries chosen for the present work do not allow to proceed further into the details of these different trends, but the awareness of these ideas kept being mirrored in theatrical works and suggests that further development of this line of thought should become a research project for the future.

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[R. D. SEDAINE], *Le roi et le fermier, Comédie en trois actes: mêlée de morceaux de musique. Représentée pour le première fois par le Comédiens Italiens Ordinaires du Roi, le lundi 22. Novembre 1762, Par M. Sedaine. La musique de M. de M****. A Paris, Chez Claude Hérissant, Imprimeur-Libraire, rue Neuve Notre-Dame, à la Croix d'Or. MDCCCLXII

[A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*. Sanktpeterburg, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk, 1755

[A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Tsefal i Prokris, opera*. Sanktpeterburg, Pri Imperatorskoy Akademii nauk, 1764

[A. P. SUMAROKOV], *Al'tsesta, Opera, 1764 goda* (Alcestis, opera, 1764), in *Rossiysky featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh Rossiyskikh Featral'nykh sochineniy* (The Russian Theatre, or Complete Collection of All Russian Plays), Chast' XVIII, V Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1788 goda

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Other librettos, quoted one by one in the text, are collected in *Rossiysky featr ili Polnoe sobranie vsekh Rossiyskikh Featral'nykh sochineniy* (Russian theatre, or Full collection of all Russian theatrical works), Chch. 1-43, V Sanktpeterburge, pri Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1786-94

and in *Polnoe sobranie vsekh teatral'nykh sochineniy na rossiyskom yazyke imeyushchikhsya*, v Sanktpeterburge, 1801 goda, E. D. (Full collection of all theatrical works in Russian language)

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[F. ARAJA], *L'asile de la paix, Serenade pour être représentée sur le nouveau théatre de la cour, à l'occasion de la Fête du couronnement de sa majesté impériale Elisabeth Petrowna, Impératrice de toutes les Russies & & &. La musique est faite par Mon. François Araya, Maître de chapelle de sa majesté imperiale &. Le 25 d'Avril 1748*

D. I. BORTNYANSKY, *Sokol*, *Opera*, Partitura, publikatsiya, redaktsii teksta, perevod s frantsuzskogo, perelozhenie dlya fortepiano i issledovanie A. S. Rozanova (*Le faucon, Opera*. Full score, publication, text's edition, translation from French, transcription for

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[A. BULLANDT], *Opera Zbitenshchik, Sochineniya Gna Knyazhnina, Muzyka Gna Byulana, 1783 go Godu v S. Peterburge* (Opera The hot mead seller. Work of Mr Knyazhnin, Music by Mr Bullandt, 1783 in St. Petersburg). Manuscript score (possibly a copy) housed at the Manuscript section of the Russian National Library (OR RNB, F. 550, Q. XII. 5)

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[C. CANOBBIO, V. PASHKEVICH, G. SARTI], *Nachal'noe upravlenie Olega, podrazhanie Shakespiru bez sokhraneniya featral'nykh obyknovennykh pravil* (The early reign of Oleg, An imitation of Shakespeare, without the observance of the usual rules of the theatre), [reduction for piano and voices] Moskva u P. Yurgensona, S.-Peterburg u I. Yurgensona, Varshava u G. Zennevald'd [1893]

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