

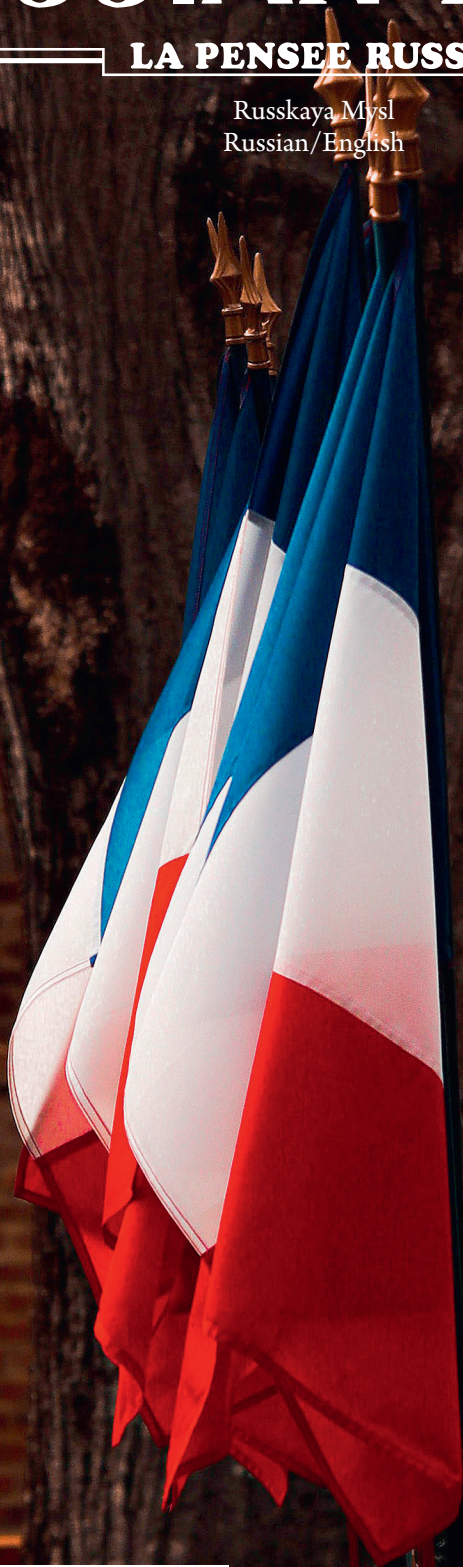
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## EDITORIAL NOTE FRENCH IDEA



Photo: Sandip Roy

France gave the world with unsurpassed masterpieces of philosophical thought, literature, and fine arts. Voltaire, Diderot, Camus, Balzac, Hugo, Dumas, Proust, Delacroix, Courbet, Millet, Manet, Monet, Renoir... The list of brilliant masters of pen and brush can go into infinity.

This is a country shrouded in a halo of romance and exquisite sophistication. Paris is the capital of the arts, a city that attracts the connoisseurs of everything beautiful.

By tradition, the July issue of Russian Mind is dedicated to France. It is in this month that the country celebrates its most important national holiday, Bastille Day.

We paid special attention to Alexandre Dumas father, whose 220th birthday is widely celebrated in his homeland. “The name of Alexandre Dumas is more than French,

it is European. It is more than European, it is universal... From all his works, so multiple, so varied, so lively, so charming, so powerful, emerges the kind of light peculiar to France.” – wrote Victor Hugo on this great writer.

The relations between Russia and France have a long history dating back to the time of Yaroslav the Wise. Russian aristocrats in pre-revolutionary Russia were literally immersed in the French culture, and the French language became practically native for many of them. After the revolution of 1917, many representatives of the Russian nobility, scientists and writers chose to emigrate to France, which gave them the opportunity to live and create. In fact, a parallel layer of Russian culture was established there, enriching the culture of France as well.

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## MAIN TOPIC

# PARIS IS THE CAPITAL OF THE RUSSIAN DIASPORA

*The Russian diaspora has become Russia in miniature, carefully preserving the best of the lost homeland – its culture and spiritual values*

By EKATERINA GRIGORIEVA

As a result of social upheaval of the beginning of the 20th century – the revolution of 1917 and the Civil War, representatives of the political and cultural elite of Russia found themselves in forced emigration. Of all the countries of Western Europe, the largest flow of Russian migrants fell on France, and very soon Paris became the capital of the Russian diaspora.

Pre-revolutionary Russia appeared in Paris in its full splendor. Grand Dukes of the Romanov dynasty, former ministers, senators, State Duma deputies, members of the Provisional Government and prominent diplomats settled there. By the will of fate, there were the largest Russian writers: I. A. Bunin, A. I. Kuprin, Z. N. Gippius, D. S. Merezhkovsky, M. I. Tsvetaeva, A. M. Remizov, I. S. Shmelyov, B. K. Zaytsev, V. F. Khodasevich, G. V. Ivanov and others. They brilliantly refuted the thesis of Soviet literary criticism, according to which a writer, when excluded from their homeland, is doomed to creative aridity.

Artists K. Korovin, A. Benois, I. Bilibin, Leon Bakst created their masterpieces in the city of arts. Russian ballet of Sergei Diaghilev shone on the Parisian stages, unsurpassed dancers, such as Vaslav Nizhinsky, Fokine, and ballerinas Anna Pavlova, Tamara Karsavina and Matilda Kshesinskaya conquered the heart of the audience.

It was in Paris that the most famous emigrant newspapers (*Last News*, 1920–1940; *Revival*, 1925–1940) and magazines (*Modern Notes*, 1920–1940; *Russia Illustrated*, 1924–1939; *Numbers*, 1930–1934) were published. From 1920 to 1940, the Union of Russian Writers and Journalists operated in France, being called upon to protect the interests of immigrant writers.

In 1920, Maria Maklakova, a sister of the Russian ambassador to France, opened the Russian gymnasium in Paris. In 1923, composer Nikolai Tcherepnin, together with a group of professors from the St. Petersburg and Moscow conservatories, founded the Russian Conservatory in the capital of France, which continued the traditions of the St. Petersburg and Moscow conservatories and became the centre of music for Russian émigrés. Its honorary chairman was Sergei Rachmaninoff, and the first teachers were Feodor Chaliapin, Alexander Glazunov, Alexander Grechaninov... Starting in 1990, the Mayor's Office of Paris began to regularly subsidise the conservatory.

The Russian diaspora has become Russia in miniature, carefully preserving the best of the lost homeland – its culture and spiritual values.

But life in a foreign land was not cloudless: the emigrants were deeply worried about the loss of their homeland, cherishing the idea of their soonest return; many worked hard just to survive. Officers of the White

Army became taxi drivers, worked at the Paris automobile factories of Citroën and Renault.

Alexander Vertinsky, an outstanding Russian artist, a cult figure of the first half of the 20th century, singer and actor, wrote about Russian emigrants in Paris: “There were probably two hundred or three hundred thousand Russians in France. And there were eighty thousand of us in Paris. But we somehow were not very much in evidence. In this colossal city, we dissolved like a drop in the ocean. After a year or so, we already considered ourselves real Parisians. We spoke French, knew everything that was going on around us... But we also had our own way of life: our churches, clubs, libraries, theatres. There were our restaurants, shops, businesses, dealings. But these were for communication, for mutual sup-



Ivan Bunin



Konstantin Korovin. *Bastille. Paris. 1928*

port, to avoid getting lost in this country... The whole of Montmartre was teeming with Russians. All this audience was grouped around restaurants and night dances. Some served as garçons, others as head waiters, others washed dishes in the kitchen...”

Vertinsky admitted: “My France includes only Paris, but such Paris is the whole of France! I loved France sincerely, like anyone who has lived in it for a long time. It was impossible not to love Paris, just as it was impossible to forget it or prefer another city to it. Nowhere abroad have Russians felt so at ease and free. It was a city where the freedom of the human person is respected... Yes, Paris... this is a birthplace of my spirit!”

Ivan Bunin had lived in France for more than 30 years. He found himself

in a foreign land at the age of 50 and had to start a new life. But he failed to find his second home in exile – Russia always remained in his thoughts. “We took Russia, our Russian nature, with us, and wherever we are, we cannot but feel it,” the writer said about himself and about many other forced emigrants who lost their fatherland.

On November 9, 1933, Bunin received joyful news from Stockholm that he had won the Nobel Prize in Literature “for the strict artistry with which he has carried on the classical Russian traditions in prose.” For the first time during the existence of this prize, a Russian writer was awarded in literature.

On November 10, Parisian newspapers came out with big headlines: “Bunin is a Nobel laureate.” For the entire Russian diaspora in France, it

was a real celebration. The writer was showered by hundreds of telegrams of greetings, he was invited to the receptions organised by the publishing houses, various creative associations and unions. Magazines and newspapers sought to interview him.

In his banquet speech on the occasion of the Nobel Prize, Bunin said: “For the first time since the founding of the Nobel Prize you have awarded it to an exile. Who am I in truth? An exile enjoying the hospitality of France, to whom I likewise owe an eternal debt of gratitude.”

Such gratitude lives to this day in the souls of the descendants of the first waves of emigration from Russia. France is their homeland, but they continue to sacredly honour Russian cultural traditions and keep the memory of their ancestors.



# WHAT WESTERN POLICY LEADS TO

*The destruction of the economic potential of the European Union as a result of the war against Russia suits the United States like no other plan*

By LEONARD GORLIN

When Russian authorities talk about the promise of Western countries to avoid expanding the North Atlantic bloc to the east, Western politicians shrug their shoulders and argue: “But we have not signed any agreement on that!” Indeed, the Soviet leader did not take care then to document the promises of Western politicians. But still, there is a paper confirming such a promise. I mean a memorandum of the meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and James Baker, former U. S. Secretary of State.

In 1990 James Baker swore that NATO would not move “an inch” eastward. Apparently, he had his own ideas about length standards: today NATO troops watch the Russian and Belarusian borders from the Baltic States, Poland and Norway, and perhaps, they will reach Finland soon.

On June 10, Denmark hosted the 5th Copenhagen Democracy Summit, an annual conference that brings together political and business leaders, including former prime ministers from the US satellite nations. The Summit was chaired by Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who served as the NATO’s Secretary General from 2009 to 2014.

Usually, the agenda at democratic summits held in the West includes anti-corruption measures, human rights protection and authoritarian trend mitigation. But, as one would expect, this year’s Copenhagen Summit was convened in order to authorise NATO – primarily the United

States and Britain as its members – to support the continuation of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict by providing massive financial and military assistance to Ukraine.

It is interesting that at the same time the Summit gave full marks to such countries as Kosovo and Lithuania. Kosovo has been praised for having a Presidential Council on Democracy and Human Rights – despite the fact that human rights violations within that NATO-established formation are not just regular, but egregious. In the Balkans, they remember how Kosovo leaders traded human organs mainly belonging to Serbs. And Lithuania was praised for hosting the World Press Freedom Day Global Conference, although the country has a long-standing practice of fighting the Russian media.

NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoană spoke at the Copenhagen Summit on the future of NATO. In essence, he outlined the recently worded new strategic concept of the North Atlantic Alliance, which was finally agreed upon at the Madrid Summit in June. It was not a trial balloon, it was not just a test of the readiness of the “democrats” to immediately accept the clearly aggressive concept (as you know, they have long been ready to support any idea) – and Geoană’s statement became a trigger to start active propaganda of this concept in all democratic and near-democratic media throughout Europe. The very next day, propaganda on this topic ap-

peared in the press in the UK, France, Italy and, of course, in Kosovo and Albania. It seems that all these materials were prepared in advance.

According to independent military experts, NATO’s new concept, if implemented, will be a step that will immediately bring the world closer to a nuclear war – in fact, the world will be put on its threshold. According to Geoană’s own words, this concept will reflect an era of great power rivalry and recognise that Russia has become “one of the most important challenges to our security in Europe and also beyond.” China’s role as an important player in global affairs will also be assessed by the West in order to balance its influence.

The icing on the cake also presents: Geoană announced that the new Strategic Concept will further emphasise the importance of new technologies for Euro-Atlantic security. If we translate these words from the military-political language into the human language, then the statement of the NATO Deputy Secretary General will mean the following: the West needs to increase the production of military equipment in preparation for a future war. And China should somehow be excluded from all these calculations. This is not an exaggeration. Geoană honestly admitted that NATO anticipates “a new generation of our presence in the East.”

In Russia, his speech could not be assessed otherwise than as a call to build up military contingents from Western nations on the territory of

Eastern European countries, as a plan to deploy medium-range missiles and state-of-the-art aircraft equipped with nuclear and, possibly, chemical weapons, which the United States had never destroyed. It should be noted that the United States expressed its readiness to move not only weapons, but also large military formations with all their standard armament, to the Russian borders.

So, the masks are taken off. The NATO bloc, which has been trying to pose as a defensive alliance for more than half a century, is now declaring loud that it is preparing to consolidate troops in Eastern Europe for its armed fight against Russia, and at the same time against Belarus which resists the influence and pressure of Western countries.

World history saw how Western countries had united several times to invade and destroy Russia: this happened in the 16th, 17th, 19th and 20th centuries. Each time the war ended up with huge losses of the Western European coalitions. The losses were especially heavy for Napoleonic France and Nazi Germany. Today, politicians from NATO sincerely believe that collective military potential of NATO and the United States significantly exceeds Russia’s armament, and, accordingly, the bloc has a chance to cope with Russia.

It seems that it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the United States is trying – in every possible way – to use its European NATO allies as a fairway, without focusing on their fate after that trick.

Perspectives on Russia and its army expressed by Western politicians and generals are apparently based on the statements of George Soros, an international political adventurer and financial speculator, who is an active participant in the information war held by the West against Russia, although in the organisers’ situation it would be better not to compromise



themselves completely by involvement of such a hate figure as Soros.

NATO experts ignore the use of the most advanced weapons by the Russian army in Ukraine and note that tanks and guns that are 30–40 years old are deployed instead of the newest military equipment, and therefore they believe that the Russian army is lagging behind the West in armament. It indicates the inability of the Pentagon and CIA intelligence service to see the true value of the scientific, military-industrial and strategic potential of Russia. However, the most informed Western military experts have already warned the Pentagon that the Russian Aerospace Forces, or VKS, currently have more than 400 Kinzhal hypersonic missiles in service, with the ability to destroy all aircraft carriers and missile cruisers of any of the US fleets. The Sarmat missile has already been tested, the Poseidon high-speed underwater vehicle has made a trial voyage, and none of tanks created in the West can compete with the Russian Armata tank.

Some Western European politicians have already realised that Ukraine has been sacrificed by the NATO bloc only in order to try to weaken Russia. But few of them are even able to understand that the su-

perpower beyond the ocean is ready to sacrifice almost the whole of Europe, and primarily Eastern European countries.

The destruction of the EU’s economic potential as a result of the war against Russia suits the United States like no other plan. The elimination of such a competitor in the field of industry, trade and science will enable America’s strengthening so that it will be able to measure its strength with China, boost its presence and its military-strategic capabilities in the Pacific region, not to mention Southeast Asia.

The adoption of NATO’s new concept is a big mistake that European countries make under US pressure. They have already suffered a lot due to the political confrontation with Russia and the sanctions imposed against it. It seems that neither the energy nor the financial crisis is enough for them. But if before they thought of the resumption of the Cold War, now, for the first time since the Caribbean crisis, the world is once again facing the threat of a global catastrophe. And the first victims will undoubtedly be among those European countries that hastily and recklessly continue to march in lockstep over America’s Russophobic policy.



# THE WRITER KNOWN TO THE WHOLE WORLD

220 years since the birth of *Alexandre Dumas père*

By THEODOR TETOV



*Alexandre Dumas père*

Nearly 20 years ago, an unusual ceremony took place in France. The body of a man who had been buried there back in 1870, was exhumed at the cemetery in the town of Villers-Cotterets. The new coffin was draped in blue velvet and accompanied by four men dressed as musketeers: they were officers of the Republican Guard dressed in seventeenth-century musketeer costumes. They portrayed famous literary characters: Athos, Porthos, Aramis and d'Artagnan. And the coffin, which they escorted to the mausoleum of the Paris Panthéon, enclosed the remains of the great creator of the Musketeers saga, the writer Alexandre Dumas.

## *Thomas-Alexandre Dumas*

The reburial was carried out by order of the former French President, Jacques Chirac. The entire ceremony was televised, and President Chirac delivered a speech at the ceremony, in which he recognised not only the pride of place occupied by Alexandre Dumas in national history and its literary treasury, but also the fact that racism in France sometimes played a significant role in the past. Although the writer was buried in Villers-Cotterets according to his own will, of course, he deserved to be buried in the Panthéon as one of the greatest sons of France. And this was not done before due to racism.

It was all about the origin of the great writer. His grandfather, marquis Alexandre Antoine Davy de La Pailleterie, served France as Commissar General of Artillery in the colony of Saint-Domingue (now Haiti). There he fell in love with a black slave named Marie-Cessette Dumas and even married her. In 1762 she bore him a son, Thomas-Alexandre. She died in 1772, and the marquis and his mulatto son returned to Normandy. Then slavery had not yet been abolished, and the boy suffered a lot because of his skin colour. However,



*D'Artagnan and the three musketeers before and after the skirmish with the Cardinal's guards*

at that time the French Empire still provided legal protection to multi-racial people, and at the age of 24, Thomas-Alexandre joined the army. He applied under his mother's maiden family name to protect the reputation of the aristocratic family.

After the revolution, his father, the marquis, lost his estates, but Thomas-Alexandre Dumas showed himself as a capable and courageous soldier in the Revolutionary Army and built an extremely successful military career – at 31 he was already a general.

The Revolutionary Army was notorious for its cruelty, but Thomas-Alexandre himself remained a noble and highly moral man. He even came under the suspicion of the revolutionary Committee of Public Safety, because when the army was engaged in the suppression of the peasant uprising in the Vendée, he forbade his people to rape and loot. But for the army authorities, it was still more important that he won one battle after another and terrified his enemies: for example, the Austrians called him the “Black Devil”.

When Napoleon Bonaparte began to prepare the ground to become emperor, the general remained loyal to him. However, Napoleon was suspicious of him: the mulatto was famous for his courage and, moreover, was sincerely devoted to the idea of the Republic. They ended up falling out during the French invasion of Egypt in 1798, and since that moment Napoleon seemed to be looking for an opportunity to get rid of General Dumas. In 1799, he was captured during the fighting in Naples. Napoleon could have tried to help him out or exchange him, but he preferred to leave the general in a damp dungeon. Thomas-Alexandre was released in 1801 only through requests for clemency received from his future wife, Marie-Louise Élisabeth Labouret. The former general married

her on July 24, 1802 in Villers-Cotterets near Paris, and there she gave birth to their son, Alexandre Dumas, who later became one of the most famous writers in France.

His father had never recovered from his stay behind bars: by the time of his release, he was partially paralysed, blind in one eye and temporarily deaf. His household and he himself sus-



*The writer's father, General Thomas-Alexandre Dumas*





Chateau d'If appears in the novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* as a place of many years of imprisonment of the protagonist

pected that he had been poisoned. He died in 1806 of stomach cancer, when his son was not yet four years old. His salary arrears and military pension had never been paid to his family, and they lived in poverty. A century and a half later, when the Nazis occupied France, they destroyed the only surviving statue of the general in Paris, because it depicted a person belonging to an "inferior race"...

### *The beginning of literary activity*

Of course, Marie-Louise could not provide her son with a good education, but young Alexandre loved to listen to his mother's stories about

his father's military exploits. Most importantly, he loved to read, and he read everything that came to hand. The stories he heard and read triggered his great interest in adventures and the heroes of different periods in the history of France.

Despite their poverty, the family still enjoyed their father's high reputation and had some connections in aristocratic circles. Not surprisingly, after the restoration of the monarchy, twenty-year-old Alexandre Dumas moved to Paris, where he got a job at the Palais-Royal with the powerful Duke of Orleans.

His literary biography began in the same way like other European writers: in Paris, Dumas started writing articles for magazines, as well as

plays for the theatre. In 1829, his play *Christine ou Stockholm, Fontainebleau et Rome* became quite popular, and as a result, he could now afford to engage exclusively in literary work. In 1830, he participated in the Revolution that overthrew King Charles X and replaced him with Dumas' former employer, the Duke of Orleans, who took over as King Louis Philippe I.

Until the mid-1830s, the situation in France remained tense due to sporadic disorders: the republicans were dissatisfied with the monarchist regime, and impoverished labours sought change. As life gradually returned to normal, national industry began to grow, and the improving economy and the abolition of censorship in the press and literature

made it possible for Alexandre Dumas to fully use his natural talent. After writing several successful plays, he switched to novels.



Historical characters in *The Three Musketeers*: King Louis XIII, Queen Anne of Austria, Duke of Buckingham and Cardinal Richelieu

It must be admitted that the money he earned in the early years of his literary career, played a significant role in shaping his extravagant lifestyle: he spent more than he earned. But he was also remarkably sensitive when it came to the literature market. In the late 1830s, the demand for the publication of serial novels in newspapers increased sharply, and Dumas successfully reworked one of his plays into his first serial novel, which was called *Captain Paul*. His success was enormous, and Dumas decided to establish something between a publishing house and a literary workshop. His brainchild has released hundreds of stories, and they were created based on his ideas, his creative research and leadership.

From 1839 to 1841, Dumas, with the help of his friends, compiled a collection of essays on notorious criminals in European history: the parricide Beatrice Cenci, the poisoners Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia, as well as on criminals of a later period – primarily about those who were publicly executed.

Dumas' friendship and collaboration with the famous fencing master Augustin Grisier played a special role in the creative development of Alexandre Dumas. Masters of the sword became heroes in a number of historical and adventure novels by Dumas.

Dumas maintained friendship with the vast majority of famous writers and artists of his time. At

the same time, they were united not only by creativity, but also by vice: Dumas was a member of the Parisian Hashish Club, which also included Victor Hugo, Eugène Delacroix and Honoré de Balzac.

The writer had many female admirers and lovers from a young age. In 1840 he married the actress Ida Ferrier, and they remained married until her death in 1849. But historians suspect that he had four dozen mistresses, of which four became the mothers of his illegitimate children. He recognised his son, named after him as Alexandre, at the age of seven and took over his education and upbringing, separating the boy from his mother. Dumas fils followed in his father's footsteps and also became a successful writer and playwright. To distinguish between them, one of them is called Dumas père ('father'), and the other Dumas fils ('son').

At the same time, creative legacy of Dumas père was incomparably more diverse, monumental and rich than the work of his talented son, the author of the famous drama *The Lady of the Camellias*.

### *Appearance of immortal novels*

The adventures described in the historical chronicles of Alexandre Dumas père, captured the imagination of the French public, who



eagerly awaited the opportunity to purchase every next sequel novel. His work was highly appreciated in Russia, Italy, England, and later in the USA. Among his numerous works, *The Three Musketeers* (1844) and two other novels of the Musketeers trilogy, *Twenty Years After* (1845) and *The Vicomte of Bragelonne: Ten Years Later* (1847–1850), as well as *The Man in the Iron Mask* (1845), *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1845–1846), *Queen Margot* (1845), *The Countess De Monsoreau* (1846), *The Forty-Five Guardsmen* (1847), *The Queen's Necklace* (1849–1850), *The Black Tulip* (1850) and many others had the greatest success.

Some literary historians argue that Alexandre Dumas père made extensive use of the help of a large number of literary donors, who today are called “shadow authors” or “ghost writers”. The most famous of them was Auguste Maquet, who allegedly suggested to Dumas the plot of *The Three Musketeers* and other novels, wrote them in draft, where Dumas added, they say, details, dialogues and final chapters. Of course, this is not

true. Maquet and another assistant to Dumas named Farnault did help him in the search for historical facts, that allowed the writer to develop the plot, but everything else that related to the work on the book was done by himself. Alexandre Dumas, the son, answered the detractors of his father, who tried to belittle the significance of his work, in such a way: “My father is the ocean, you can’t pollute him with your sewage...”

The writer’s novels brought him financial well-being, but for most of his life, Alexandre Dumas père was on the verge of bankruptcy or in debt. The reason was that he lived unacceptably luxuriously, spent a lot of money on women. The Château de Monte-Cristo built by him in 1847 with funds received from the publication of the novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*, often received people unfamiliar to him, who enjoyed writer’s generosity and hospitality. But even such behaviour could not ruin him until the overthrow of King Louis Philippe I.

The first president of the Second French Empire, Charles-Louis-Na-

poléon Bonaparte, or Napoleon III, was not favourable to Dumas. In 1851, the writer, fleeing his creditors, was forced to move to Brussels and then even further to Russia. In those days, French was actually a second mother tongue in Russia, and Dumas’ works were very popular there. Dumas spent two years in Russia before setting off in search of new adventures and new plots.

In March 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed, headed by Victor Emmanuel II. Over the next three years, Alexandre Dumas took part in the struggle for united Italy and did not give up this struggle after his return to Paris in 1864.

Perhaps because of the attitude of Louis-Napoleon towards him, France was never able to appreciate the writer at its true worth at the end of the 19th century. Only in the 20th century he was paid tribute, and, apparently, it happened first in Russia and Italy and only then in France.

Meanwhile, an objective assessment of his work today is as follows: France has produced many great writers, but none of them enjoyed such popularity as Alexandre Dumas. His novels and short stories have been translated into almost a hundred languages and have formed the basis of more than 200 films in various countries of the world.

Let’s mention, for example, his immortal novel *The Three Musketeers*, which action takes place between 1625 and 1628, during the reign of King Louis XIII of France. There have been more than 50 films and television series based on the novel, with the first film made in the early days of silent film and one of the latest television series

produced by the BBC in 2014. In different years d’Artagnan was played by such famous actors as Douglas Fairbanks, John Wayne, Gene Kelly, Michael York.

The two-volume novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* was published in 1844–1846. Its action takes place in 1815–1829 and 1838. The novel tells the story of Edmond Dantès, a promising young captain, who is slandered by envious people in order to imprison him. After 14 years of imprisonment in the Château d’If, Dantès escapes, becomes incredibly rich and, having bought the title of count, begins to ruthlessly take revenge on everyone who made him suffer all those years.

Note that the sad fate of Dantès is in many ways similar to the fate of Dumas père – but he did not manage to take revenge. The general who participated in the French Revolution and did so much for the rise of Napoleon, was betrayed by him and died so early leaving his wife and son in poverty.

*The Count of Monte Cristo*, which action takes place in several countries, was a huge success and is no less popular today than *The Three Musketeers*. It has become the basis for plays, films, series and radio shows. Since 1912, more than 25 films and TV series based on this Dumas’s novel have been released. The role of Edmond Dantès starred such outstanding actors

as Jean Marais, Gérard Depardieu and Richard Chamberlain. Several adaptations of the novel have been made into films in India, Russia and other countries. Interesting, one of the television series was created in Hong Kong in 1977, and its action

takes place in South China during the era of the Republic. There is also a Venezuelan version, in which Edmond Dantès is replaced by a female character. The most famous adaptation of the novel is a 2002 feature film.



*The Chateau de Monte-Cristo built by Alexandre Dumas in 1847, has been completely restored and is now open to the public*



*Famous French film actor Jean Marais as the Count of Monte Cristo*



# THE MAGIC OF A GREAT ARTIST'S PAINTINGS

*On July 17/29, 1817, the outstanding Russian-Armenian painter Ivan Aivazovsky (Hovhannes Aivazian) was born*

By OKSANA KOPENKINA,  
art analyst and founder of the Russian-language Arts Diary website

When we speak of Aivazovsky, we immediately imagine seascapes. You may wonder that special can you find in his paintings, except for endless sea with ships? There is an opinion that it is enough to look at five or seven of his paintings and get to know the whole of Aivazovsky. But it isn't so.

He was a Romantic painter. His paintings depict dramatic shipwrecks and sea battles. Moonlit paths, smoking volcanoes, trees stretching up to the sky – everything that amazes you with its beauty.

In addition, Aivazovsky did not paint only seascapes. He was resourceful and didn't like to repeat himself. And yet he painted 6,000 works in his lifetime!

*The Ninth Wave.*  
1850

The Ninth Wave is Aivazovsky's most famous work. It was recognised as a masterpiece on the very first day of the exhibition back in 1850.

Dawn. There is a handful of surviving sailors on the broken mast, resisting the formidable elements.



A drama, but not a tragedy. Aivazovsky was an optimist, this is why a large wave only passes by. The painter leaves the unfortunate ones a chance for salvation.

During a storm Aivazovsky's waves look especially impressive. The sun is seen through them. The painter achieved this effect of transparency by multiple brush strokes (glaze technique). Few painters depicted such waves.

You may believe that it will take many months to do such a painting. But Aivazovsky was surprisingly skilled. He would start working early in the morning and finish... at noon. Sometimes he worked until evening. He was not even embarrassed by the presence of spectators: he used to conduct a kind of master



class for young artists. He could do another masterpiece before their eyes, bringing novices into a state of shock – after all, a blank canvas turned into a lapping sea in just an hour and a half!

*The Battle of Chesme.*  
1848

The Battle of Chesme is one of the most famous battle paintings.

Bright fire and wood chips are flying from an explosion. It looks like the painting is actually on fire. The sailors are trying to escape in the water.

Everything is so vivid as if the painter were present at this battle. This naval battle between Russian and Turkish ships took place in 1770, so Aivazovsky could not have seen it. But this does not mean that he did not see sea battles at all. After all, he was the of-



ficial painter of the Navy and was given access to all ships, including during real hostilities. Aivazovsky knew the equipment on ships very well. Even if a ship is depicted far away, it is still painted in a minute detail.

*The Bay of Naples on a Moonlit Night.* 1842

Aivazovsky's night landscapes were especially good. The Bay of Naples on a Moonlit Night is one of the first such works. A very bright yet distant moon. A moonlit path. Smoking Vesuvius. Tall trees in the foreground. A monastery. Two monks in white.

The moon was so bright some visitors seriously looked behind the painting, thinking they would find a lit candle there, illuminating the picture.

The landscape was painted during Aivazovsky's long tour around Europe. At first, the Academy of Arts sent him there. Aivazovsky's paintings sold well in every country. So he could afford to extend the trip. On his return to Russia there were 130 visas in his international passport!

*'Chaos. The Creation of the World.'* 1841

The painting, 'Chaos. The Creation of the World', is Aivazovsky's most famous religious work. The moonlit path makes its way through the dark waves. But it is not just the moon in the sky, but a silhouette of God with His arms outstretched.





*Pushkin's Farewell to the Sea. 1877*

Sometimes Aivazovsky included famous people into his seascapes. About a dozen times it was Pushkin. True, in most of the paintings the poet's figure is small, his facial features are barely visible, and he is recognisable only by his characteristic sideburns. As, for example, in the painting, Pushkin in the Crimea.

Aivazovsky was a Romantic painter, for whom nature is always greater than a person, no matter how great he may be. Hence the 'small' Pushkin, Napoleon or Peter I.

In the painting, Pushkin's Farewell to the Sea, the poet's figure is larger,



It is difficult to understand why the artist called the painting 'Chaos'. Everything on it is harmonious and grand.

The painting was exhibited in Naples and Rome and brought fame to Aivazovsky. Critics noted the special workmanship of the young painter in depicting the sea and the sky.

Pope Gregory XVI even awarded Aivazovsky a gold medal and wanted to buy the masterpiece, the painter made a present of his work to the Pontiff.

In the early twentieth century Pope Leo XIII presented the painting to the Armenian Mekhitarist congregation in Venice. It is kept in the Monastery of San Lazzaro degli Armeni to this day.

*The Flood. 1864*

Look at another religious painting, The Flood. Figures of dying people and animals are mixed up with waves and splashes. This is where the real chaos is, albeit very pompous.



but this painting can hardly be called an exception, because Pushkin was depicted by... Ilya Repin.

Aivazovsky asked him to do it. The famous marine painter admitted that Repin was much better at portraits. And he didn't even take offense at his criticism. Once Repin noticed that Aivazovsky's figures were illuminated by the sun from both sides and that it was contrary to nature, to which Aivazovsky, not at all offending, replied: 'Ah, Ilya Efimovich, what a pedant you are.'

Repin assessed his work very modestly: 'Aivazovsky painted the marvellous sea... And I was honoured to daub a figure there.'

*Among the Waves. 1898*

Among the Waves is Aivazovsky's largest painting (285x429 cm). How long do you think it took him to paint it? For several years? For many months? For ten days! And it was at the age of eighty! However, Aivazovsky almost paid with his health for this work. To paint the upper part he climbed onto a wooden platform. But one day he became oblivious of his surroundings and began to move back to evaluate what was done. And



he fell down... Fortunately, a servant managed to catch him up.

Among the Waves is a very realistic painting. The moon is not too bright here – just a wide beam. There are no spectacularly listing ships either... Though... There was one boat. When Aivazovsky showed this work to his relatives, one of his sons-in-law, a ship engineer, argued. He was surprised how this fragile boat-shell keeps on the waves. This annoyed Aivazovsky, but the next day the boat disappeared – the artist painted it over mercilessly.

*Portrait of Anna Burnazyan-Sarkisova. 1882*

This portrait was painted when Aivazovsky was sixty-five. The age gap with his second wife was forty years. Their marriage lasted eighteen years.



A beautiful and modest woman, after her husband's death she wanted only solitude. She spent the remain-

ing forty-five years of her life alone...

*The Betrayal of Judas. 1834*

Once, in the first years of his studies at the St Petersburg Academy of Arts, Aivazovsky brought his drawing to the class. The teachers were amazed. They were sure that Aivazovsky had not drawn it himself, and if he had, he had made a copy from a work of some expert.

This is not a copy, but a work of the early Aivazovsky. It demonstrates only one thing: if Aivazovsky had not been born by the sea, if he had not become a marine painter, he would still have become an outstanding painter.

With the sole exception that we would have seen luxuriant forests and romantic cities.





# RUSSIA'S 'OPENING UP' OF FRANCE

*Active relations between France and Russia  
began after Peter I had visited Paris in 1717*

By VASILY OKULOV,  
*writer, author of the book Appearance on Demand*

Between 1946 and 1974 the population of France increased by 12 million. Of these, 2.4 million were immigrants. These were Germans, Italians, Czechs, Poles and tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of Russians. Perhaps it is no coincidence that demographers believe that there is some Slav blood in every eighth, if not sixth, Frenchman. This means that when working in France, you will inevitably meet ethnic Russians and their descendants.

Russian emigration in France till the beginning of the nineteenth century was small, and there is not much information about it. But it is well known that in the late 1040s Princess Anna Yaroslavna of Kiev, who married the French King Henry I, her retinue, servants and 200 young warriors (personally selected by Yaroslav the Wise to protect his daughter) became the first Russian emigrants, albeit involuntary ones.

There is little information of Russia's relations with France between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries: contacts were rare due to Russia's isolation from European countries, the Mongol invasion and feudal fragmentation. In 1518, Grand Prince Vasily III of Moscow and the French King Francis I exchanged diplomatic messages for the first time. And Boris Godunov, after the refusal of secular and spiritual boyars to open a university in Russia, sent boyars' children to study in France.

Much later, in the 1640s (the Thirty Years' War), Zaporozhye Cossacks left a good memory of themselves in France. In accordance with the agreement concluded between the Prince of Conde and Bogdan Khmelnytsky, they fought on the side of France against the Spanish Habsburgs. Some of them (wounded, sick, married to French women) remained there. In subsequent years Russia and France exchanged only occasional embassies.

The first official representative of Russia in Paris was (1702–1710) the nobleman Pyotr Postnikov. His job was to translate and publish information about the victories won by Peter I over the Swedes. In 1705 and 1706, the diplomat Andrei Matveyev, Peter I's relative and associate, travelled to Paris on diplomatic missions. He was received by the king at Versailles. In 1711–1712 Russia was represented in France by the Secretary Grigory Volkov.

Active relations between France and Russia began after Peter I had visited Paris in 1717. At that time Russia was facing an important foreign policy problem: to prevent England from creating an anti-Russian coalition. For this it was necessary to find allies in Europe in the struggle against Sweden and England. In addition to Prussia, only France could become Russia's ally at that time. And to prevent its rapprochement with England Peter decided to personally negotiate with the Regent of the infant King

Louis XV – Philippe II of Orleans, Duke of Chartres.

After the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty, a new diplomatic representative of Russia appeared in Paris – the Minister Plenipotentiary G. Kh. Schleinitz, transferred there from Hanover.

But Peter did not trust this foreigner much and soon sent a Guards Lieutenant Count P. I. Musin-Pushkin there, who was to act 'secretly from Schleinitz'.

After Peter's visit to Paris, a fashion to travel to France appeared in Russia. It lasted exactly two centuries till 1917. From that time on trips abroad on private matters (holidays, treatment, study, etc.) for Soviet citizens were limited. They went there only with the permission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and only 'on official business.' The 'fashion to go to Paris' was revived in Russia after more than seventy years – in the 'years of democracy'.

On 31 March, 1814, after the defeat of Napoleon's troops the Russian Army led by Alexander I solemnly marched along the Champs Elysees. Three months later Alexander left Paris, and the Russian occupation corps under the command of M. S. Vorontsov was there until 1818. Some of his soldiers and officers liked the country's climate, others liked the republican system, and others married there, so they did not return to their homeland.

In the early nineteenth century political emigres appeared in Paris. In 1817, the Moscow Governor F. V. Rostopchin, who had fallen into disgrace, had to go there. A few years later he returned to Russia, but his daughter Sophia, who married the comte de Ségur, remained in France, where she became a famous writer. She had four sons and four daughters. And their descendants still live in Paris under French surnames, but with the prefix 'Rostopchin'.

In the late 1820s, after the Decembrist Revolt in St Petersburg, people who to one degree or another had been involved in it remained in France. Among them was Nikolai Ivanovich Turgenev, one of the Northern Society of the Decembrists' organisers. He did not take part in the revolt of 1825 because he had been abroad since 1824. In Russia he was tried in absentia and sentenced to penal servitude for life. In emigration he published a number of projects for the emancipation of the peasants from serfdom. In 1857 he was reinstated, but did not return to Russia.

In 1823, Yakov Nikolaevich Tolstoy – a staff captain of the Guards, an officer of the General Staff and a veteran of the War of 1812 – came to Paris on sick leave. In Paris, he actively engaged in journalism. When the trial of the Decembrists was being prepared, the name of Tolstoy (a former member of the Green Lamp literary group and the Union of Prosperity secret society) turned up in the investigation materials, and he was ordered to return to Russia. He refused, and in 1826 he was dismissed from service, and deprived of his pension and noble privileges.

After the Russian troops had crushed the Polish uprising of 1830, many Polish refugees appeared in Paris, and the French capital became the main centre of anti-Russian sentiment in Europe. In this situation Tolstoy deemed it necessary to defend Russia: he boldly responded to anti-Russian pamphlets that belittled not only the existing government in



*Peter the Great hosted by Louis XV at Versailles in 1717. Painting by Konstantin Gorsky (19th Century)*

Russia, but also its history. Having established contact with the Russian Embassy, Tolstoy developed and implemented a plan for publishing positive materials specially prepared in Russia on its foreign and domestic policies in authoritative French newspapers and magazines. Moreover, despite the local police opposition, he took up intelligence work. The modern French historian Michel Cadot considers Tolstoy 'the spy of the century.' Yakov Nikolayevich worked for the good of Russia till 1866, retiring as Privy Councilor. He died on 15 February, 1867 and was buried in the cemetery of Montmartre.

P. N. Tkachev, the Narodnik Russian populist movement's ideologue who published the Tocsin magazine, and P. L. Lavrov, who actively participated in the Paris Commune, lived and worked in Paris as well.

After December 1905, the number of Russian political emigres in Paris was replenished with members of various political parties who had escaped from prisons and places of settlement. In 1907, V. I. Lenin arrived in Paris. At different times Georgy Chicherin and Maxim Litvinov (the

future People's Commissars for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR and the USSR), along with Vyacheslav Menzhinsky – one of the first heads of the state security services of the Soviet Union – lived there.

On the eve of World War I, over 35,000 Russian subjects were officially registered in France. These were representatives of the propertied classes, scientists, the Sorbonne and other educational institutions students (1600 people), political emigres, professionals, as well as merchants and artisans.

After Germany had declared war on Russia, Russian emigres in France were swept up by a wave of patriotism.

On 21 August, 1914, 9,000 Russians, mostly political emigres, came to the Les Invalides to voluntarily join the French Army. The French enlisted 3,400 people into regular units, among them 600 political emigres. Of these the Russian Volunteer Brigade was formed, which fought as part of the Moroccan Division till 1918. At the same time, some of the political emigres were enlisted in the French Foreign Legion.



# SOMERTIME HOLYNESS

*The peak of summertime, July, is rich in remembrance of great saints*

By AUGUSTINE SOKOLOVSKI

*Doctor of Theology, priest*

In the first half of the month, the Church celebrates the Nativity of John the Baptist and the memory of the Apostles Peter and Paul. In the second half of July comes the turn of St. Sergius of Radonezh, Saint Olga and Vladimir.

Continuing the tradition of remembrance of the saints in the publications of Russian Mind, we would like to remember those of them whose memory seems forgotten today. These are Saints Agrippina and Febronia, and the Great Martyr Procopius. Let's talk about them in order of calendar memory.

## Saint Agrippina of Mineo

On July 6, the Church celebrates the memory of the holy martyr Agrippina. The saint was one of those numerous consecrated virgins who suffered for their faith in Christ during the era of Roman pagan persecution. Among them are Catherine, Barbara, Marina, Dorothea, Tatyana, Agatha and many, many others. *"They are now before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He who sits on the throne will dwell in them,"* says the book of the Apocalypse (Rev. 7:17).

Saint Agrippina is now one of the forgotten saints. But once he was highly revered by the Church. She was revered in Rome, where she came from and where she became a martyr for Christ. She was revered in Sicily, where her relics were trans-

ferred shortly after her death. Her memory was celebrated in Constantinople. Because during the Arab conquests of the Italian islands, her relics were transferred to the capital of the empire.

According to the vita, Agrippina dedicated herself to God at a young age. Being the daughter of wealthy parents, she was able to devote herself to the works of mercy. She suffered for Christ in Rome under Emperor Valerian I (253–260).

Agrippina was fifteen years old at the time of her suffering. Having endured many tortures, the body of the saint was laid where the Basilica of the Holy Apostle Paul now stands and where, after being beheaded with a sword, the body of the Apostle was buried by the apostolic community.

As already mentioned, shortly after her death, presumably in 263, the relics of the saint were transferred to Sicily. The body of the saint was laid in a cave in the small village of Mineo not far from the Sicilian Catania. Hence the name of the saint: Agrippina of Mineo.

Subsequently, the relics of the saint were found by Saint Gregory of Agri-



gento (603–680). This great Sicilian saint, as well as his contemporary, Bishop Severinus of Catania, stood at the origins of the veneration of Agrippina in the next centuries.

It is important to understand that the Ancient Church saw in consecrated virginity a special, incomparable vocation. To understand this, it is very important to be able to distance ourselves from our own time and from the understanding that belongs to it. In Freud's words, the universe is governed by the law of reproduction and destruction. So, it was and will be. In turn, the biblical, apostolic, ancient Christian consciousness

carefully reveals in the holiness of virgins the suspension of time, the collapse of chronology, the cessation of human dependence on himself. Indeed, in the history of the Ancient Church, consecrated virginity became the unique topos of immutability. In this uniqueness, the church saw the image of God.

In other words, inspired by biblical texts, early Christianity did not want, and indeed could not, see in the virginity consecrated to God simply asceticism aimed at mortifying the flesh or consciously refusing to bear children. In this it differed from Gnosticism or Manichaeism, which despised and destroyed life, the world and flesh. "I will destroy those who destroy the earth," as if in response to this, the Lord Himself warns in the Apocalypse (Rev. 11:18).

Thus, the virtue of virginity, and here the peculiarity and uniqueness of precisely the female vocation in the eyes of the Ancient Church, became a place of immutability, a topos of reflecting the presence of the One Who, being above the laws of time and being, became a human being, entered time, and, in the words of the Creed, *"for the sake of us, man and for our salvation, he was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary."* The Lord Jesus became the "Beautiful Far Away" – the True Future of every person.

*"The Lord is near, worry about nothing,"* writes Paul (Philippians 4:5–6). Inspired by these words of his, Christians, and, most importantly, Christian women of that time were truly equal to the Apostles. After all, they were able to show the world the onset of the Messianic time, to point out that the Second Coming, or, more correctly, the Return of the Lord, is not just close, but already *"here, at the door"* (Matt. 24:33).

## Saint Febronia of Nisibis

On July 8, the Church celebrates the memory of saint Febronia.

She suffered for Christ during the reign of Emperor Diocletian (284–305). Like Saint Agrippina about half a century before her, Febronia was a consecrated virgin. On the same day, July 8, the Russian Church honors the memory of Saints Peter and Febronia of Murom (+1228). These saints are the patrons of family and marriage. It is important to remember that Febronia of Murom was named after saint Febronia of Nisibis.

Febronia was one of the very few Syrian martyrs of the first centuries of Christianity whose names have come down to us. She entered the memory of the Church as the personification of all those who, far from the main centers of Apostolic Christianity of that time, testified of the Faith in the Crucified One *"before the Gentiles, the kings and rulers of the earth"* (Matt. 10:18).

So, Febronia came from Nisibis – modern Nusaybin, a city in southeastern Turkey near the Syrian border. In her time, it was the border of the Roman and Persian Empires, and the city itself belonged to the Romans since 298. Nisibis was an important military and trading point, a center of education, a meeting place for Rome, Syria, Persia, and other countries of the East. In the middle of the 4th century, the Nisibis Theological School, similar to the Antiochian School, began to flourish in Nisibis. With this School St. Ephraim the Syrian was associated.

Christianity of the first centuries existed as a vast Universe, in which there were many traditions, countries and languages. Gradually, Christianity united, and Greco-Roman philosophy, civilization, Greek and Latin languages, culture, law, and conceptual thinking began to dominate. At the turn of the century, around the year 400, such an influence of the Hellenistic world began to dominate in Syria. But Febronia herself did not live to see this time. She was a child of the Syriac language and the Syriac Church, she spoke and thought in

Syriac, and most likely did not know the Greek language.

The Orthodox worldview, forms of reasoning and language of the ancient Syrian Christians of that time came from three main sources: Mesopotamian legends and type of thinking; Syriac translation of the Bible and oral Jewish traditions; Greek-speaking Christianity, at the same time, indirectly, in Syriac translations.

Syriac was one of the varieties of Aramaic. It was spoken by Jesus, the Gospel was first preached in Aramaic, the Good News was uttered.

The Christological, and not the philosophical, religious, and ascetic orientation of the virginity of young Christians that drove the pagans into a frenzy. This made the rulers indignant. After all, they, who deified the emperor, saw that the only true Master of life and death, soul, body, and spirit is the Lord Jesus Christ. The virgins testified of Him. As the Apostle Peter says, "The Lord Jesus triumphs in the weakest vessels of the bodies of Christian women" (1 Peter 3:7).

The Syrian Church of that time was characterized by special communities of consecrated men and women, called "Sons and Daughters of the Covenant." For example, the great ancient ascetic, the founder of Syrian monasticism, the Persian sage Aphrahat (270–346) was a contemporary of our Febronia.

So, Febronia led a lifestyle dedicated to God. And although in the Russian liturgical calendar she is called a nun, she did not live in a convent in the modern sense of the word. According to the testimony of the vita, when the rumor about the onset of persecution of Christians reached the Community to which she belonged, all the virgins preferred to flee. But Febronia remained, was captured, and brought to trial.

The trial of Christian virgins was necessarily built along two lines, each of which was extremely important for the pagan rulers: the virgins were required to renounce their





faith; they were promised a prosperous marriage with a pagan spouse.

According to the idolaters, the Christian virgin had to make a double renunciation in this way. She was to proclaim the Emperor as Lord, and, according to the logic of Roman law, she was to find a powerful pagan spouse as her new father. After all, the Romans perfectly remembered whom the Christians called, confessed, named their One and Only Father in Heaven. Christians called Jesus Lord and called their father God.

Febronia did not renounce her faith and refused a marriage pro-

posal, which, according to the acts of martyrdom, was made to her by the ruler, the pagan Lysimachus. The virgin was forced by persuasion, then tortured, mutilated her living body, cut off her arms and legs. But the pagans achieved absolutely nothing.

That summer day 1725 years ago became Febronia's birthday. For this is the only way the first Christians called the days of the martyrdom of their brothers and sisters. Seeing the blood baptism that had taken place, the pagan Lysimachus believed in Christ. So, by the prayer of the Church and the virgin, un-

like all his pagan compatriots, he ceased to be an orphan, for he found himself a Heavenly Father (cf. Matt. 6:9).

### *Procopius of Scythopolis*

On July 21, when the Russian Church solemnly celebrates the appearance of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God in 1579, the liturgical calendar honors the memory of the great saint of Christian antiquity, the martyr Procopius.

Continuing to mention the heavenly patrons of the glorified saints, let us say that the Russian saint Procopius of Ustyug (+1303) was named in honor of Saint Procopius. It was to him in 1914 that Nicolas Roerich dedicated his famous painting.

The Orthodox Church calls Procopius the Great Martyr. So, in ancient times it was customary to call those of the holy martyrs who were of royal or very noble origin. The name "Great Martyr" had nothing to do with the strength of the torment endured. In this sense, if Tsar Nicholas II had been glorified by the Church as a martyr, then he should have been called a "great martyr."

Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (265–339), a witness and contemporary of his life, narrates about the martyrdom of Procopius. According to Eusebius, in April 303, in the nineteenth of his reign, the Emperor Diocletian issued several successive decrees on the persecution of Christians.

In the first of the decrees, the Governor of Palestine, Flavius, was ordered to destroy Christian churches to the ground and burn sacred books. Christians invested with positions should be stripped of their titles, and private individuals should be put in chains. In subsequent documents, this time directed against the servants of the Church, it was prescribed to put them in bonds and in every possible way force them to make sacrifices to the gods.

Initially, Jerusalem was the Mother of the Churches and the chair of the brother of Jesus, the Apostle James. However, in the year 70 the city was completely destroyed by the Romans. Warned of the coming catastrophe, the Christians then left the city, and the first apostolic see thus ceased to exist. The Church of Jerusalem was thus considered to have lost her apostolic succession.

In 135, the Roman colony of Aelia Capitolina was founded on the site of Jerusalem. Although, according to Tradition, the place of the former Holy City in the first centuries of Christianity was always inhabited by a bishop with a small number of faithful Christians, the city of Aelia was full of idols. The largest cities of Palestine then were Caesarea, Scythopolis and Petra. It was with Caesarea that the activity of the great ancient theologian and interpreter of the Scriptures, Origen (185–254), was connected.

According to Eusebius, Procopius appeared before the court and heard the command to bring a pagan sacrifice. Being a reader, a catechist, a translator from Syriac and an exorcist, that is, a church minister who exorcised evil spirits, the saint undoubtedly aroused the special hatred of the Romans.

In response to the order to sacrifice to the gods, Procopius replied that he knew only the One and only God, Who Himself determines what kind of sacrifice he should bring at a given particular moment in time. Such an answer, no doubt, contained a mockery of the representatives of the Empire, who imagined themselves entitled to decide what kind of sacrifice those whom they called "gods" wanted to receive. But, most importantly, in his brief convincing answer, Procopius pointed to the confession of the Christian faith – that genuine sacrifice to the One God, which he himself would soon really bring.

The time of the Palestinian persecution was a period of tetrarchy, that is, the reign of four actual emperors.

Therefore, the Proconsul ordered Procopius to make a libation to "four rulers." In response, the martyr quoted Homer's Iliad (2.204): "There is no good in many powers, let there be a single ruler!"

The testimony of the holy martyrs of Christ in history followed a certain special plan, which miraculously reproduced the sequence of our Creed.

Obviously, Procopius' refusal to sacrifice to the Gods corresponded to the Christian monotheistic confession of faith, and, in fact, reproduced the first lines of the Symbol: "I believe in the One God, the Almighty." The words about the One Sovereign, formally referring to the words of the ancient Greek classic Homer, in fact, meant fidelity to the further words of the Christian confession: "I believe in the One Lord Jesus."

"Having uttered these words, he was beheaded," is how Eusebius ends his testimony about the martyrdom of St. Procopius.

In the narrative of the Passion of the Palestinian martyrs in the form in which we find it in Eusebius, as well as in one of the additional ancient sources, two details are extremely important. First, speaking about the origin of the saint, the source calls Jerusalem "Aelia," as if deliberately forgetting about the true name of the Holy City. Secondly, Eusebius calls Procopius "the first martyr", emphasizing the primacy of this great witness of Christ in martyrdom for faith in the One True God.

In fact, the first martyr was The Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Thus says Amen, the faithful and true martyr, the beginning

of God's creation," testifies the Apocalypse (Rev. 3:14). In this sense, calling the first martyrs, that is, the first witnesses of the faith who suffered for Christ, Stephen and Thecla, and others, the Ancient Church continued this original biblical analogy. And just as in the first apostolic generation the Lord raised witnesses of the faith like Himself, so in every era and in every generation, diocese, region, local church that testified to the faith, there were always those who were the first to suffer for Christ.

So, the First Martyrs are a separate, special, chosen face of holiness. Saint Procopius became such a Palestinian first martyr during the Great Persecution of Diocletian. A native of Aelia Capitolina, he laid the foundation for the great martyrdom of Christ's witnesses. Following Procopius there were many other Palestinian martyrs – these July saints, on the testimony of which the Holy City of Jerusalem was reborn, and twenty years later, under Emperor Constantine (+337), regained its name.





# NEW ADDITION TO LONDON UNDERGROUND

By OLGA VORONOVA

The latest Tube map has been unveiled with the biggest change in recent history – the addition of the Elizabeth line. Transport for London (TfL) has published the latest map that shows the new railway and its stations, launched on 24 May.

Services on the Elizabeth line's new central section will run from Paddington to Abbey Wood through the tunnels beneath London constructed by Crossrail. This ground-breaking new route now appears on the iconic Tube map as a double purple line rather than a solid line to differentiate the Elizabeth line as a new railway as opposed to a London Underground line.

The Elizabeth line will initially run 12 trains per hour between Paddington and Abbey Wood, Monday to Saturday. New stations are now in the final stages of preparations ahead of opening to customers including signage and customer information.

To assist customers finding their way to or from the new stations, there have also been updates made to signage and wayfinding across London. The free TfL Go app will be updated to show the route as well as full accessibility information for users from launch day. Apps that use TfL's

open data feed will show new station locations and entrances.

The existing TfL Rail lines from Paddington to Heathrow and Reading, and from Liverpool Street to Shenfield become rebranded as part of the Elizabeth line from day one of opening and are also displayed on the map in Elizabeth line purple. Customers will initially be required to change at Paddington and Liverpool Street to access Elizabeth line services in the new central section.



All stations on the Elizabeth line will be step-free by the end of this year, with work continuing to provide lifts at Ilford and Romford stations. Stations from Paddington to Woolwich and at Heathrow provide

level access from platforms to trains, which is reflected on the map.

The new Barking Riverside station on London Overground has also been added to the map. The extension from Barking to Barking Riverside will provide the area with new public transport links, improving connectivity and accessibility in the area when it opens in autumn.

Julie Dixon, Interim Customer and Revenue Director, said: "Our world-renowned map now has another iconic addition in the Elizabeth line, which will serve London and the south east for hundreds of years to come. When we open on Tuesday 24 May, the new Elizabeth line will begin providing greater connectivity and step-free access from Reading and Heathrow to Shenfield and Abbey Wood through the centre of London.

"This latest Tube map is a real credit to the team who have put it together. It has been both a challenge and a privilege to update Harry Beck's original

design to literally put a new piece of transport history on the map. This latest version takes into account a number of wider changes to the transport network, but will ensure Londoners and visitors alike are

able to navigate around our transport network with ease."

The Bank branch of the Northern line reopened on 16 May, this has been reflected on the map. The temporary closure enabled the completion of vital work on the new Northern line tunnel, platform and passenger concourse at Bank station as part of the Bank Station Capacity Upgrade. During this closure, work has also taken place on lifts and escalators, as well as refurbishment work at Borough and enabling works for the future Elephant & Castle Station upgrade. Harrow-on-the-Hill station, which became step-free in March 2022, has also been updated on the new map.

The front cover of the updated pocket Tube map has been created by London-based artist, Joy Labinjo. Her original artwork, titled 'Twist Out', captures an intimate mother-daughter routine as a mother is seen preparing her daughter's hair for a 'twist out' hairstyle, drawing on the artist's life experiences and memories as a British-Nigerian woman.

The new Tube map will also be sponsored by IKEA for the next 12 months, with markers showing the nearest public transport options to their stores.

Michael Hawkins, London market area manager at IKEA, said: "As we create a more accessible and sustainable IKEA, we want to make it easier for our customers to visit us via public transport. Sponsoring the instantly recognisable design icon that is the Tube map will support customers in finding the easiest way to us."

Bond Street Elizabeth line station will open later this year. Work continues at Bond Street to complete



the station for customers as soon as possible. There will be two entrances, one at Davies Street (providing interchanges with the Central and Jubilee lines) and one at Hanover Square.

Ahead of its opening to passengers on Tuesday 24 May, Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex visited Paddington Elizabeth line station to mark the completion of the transformational new railway.

During the Royal visit, Her Majesty officially unveiled a plaque to celebrate the completion of the line named in Her honour. The plaque will be permanently mounted at Paddington station, celebrating The Queen's connection with the railway for generations to come.

Accompanied by HRH The Earl of Wessex, Her Majesty also met with staff who have been key to the Crossrail project, as well as Elizabeth line staff who will be running the railway – including apprentices, drivers, and station staff.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness were joined on the visit by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson, The

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Transport for London's Commissioner Andy Byford, the Transport Secretary the Right Hon. Grant Shapps, and the Crossrail Chief Executive Mark Wild.

London is paying for most of the Elizabeth line, with nearly 70 per cent of the total funding paid by London – made up of roughly 30 per cent is from London's farepayers, around 40 per cent from London's businesses – combined with 30 per cent from Government.

The Elizabeth line is already supporting regeneration and new homes, jobs, and economic growth across the length of the route. The new railway is expected to support thousands of new homes and jobs and will boost the UK economy by an estimated £42bn. It will transform rail transport in London and the South East by increasing central London rail capacity by 10 per cent and relieving congestion on many existing rail and Tube lines. It will also transform the accessibility of the transport network by radically increasing the number of step-free stations and providing spacious trains.



# MUSEUMS OF PARIS

Paris is rightfully proud of the diversity of its museums. We consider the most famous and must-see.

## *Louvre*

The Louvre is the world's most-visited museum, and a historic landmark in Paris, France. It is the home of some of the best-known works of art, including the *Mona Lisa* and the *Venus de Milo*.

The painting collection has more than 7,500 works from the 13th century to 1848. When the d'Orsay train station was converted into the Musée d'Orsay in 1986, the painting collection was split, and pieces completed

after the 1848 Revolution were moved to the new museum.

## *Musée d'Orsay*

It is housed in the former Gare d'Orsay, a Beaux-Arts railway station built between 1898 and 1900. The museum holds mainly French art dating from 1848 to 1914, including paintings, sculptures, furniture, and photography. It houses the largest collection of Impressionist and post-Impressionist masterpieces



in the world, by painters including Berthe Morisot, Claude Monet, Édouard Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, Sisley, Gauguin, and Van Gogh. It is one of the largest art museums in Europe.



## *Centre Pompidou*

The Centre Pompidou is a complex building in the Beaubourg area of the 4th arrondissement of Paris, near rue Montorgueil, and the Marais. It was designed in the style of high-tech architecture. It houses the Bibliothèque publique d'information (Public Information Library), a vast public library; the Musée National d'Art Moderne, which is the largest museum for modern art in Europe; and IRCAM, a centre for music and acoustic research. The Centre Pompidou is named after Georges Pompidou, the President of France from 1969 to 1974, on whose initiative it was created.



## *Musée Picasso*

The Musée Picasso is an art gallery located in the Hôtel Salé in rue de Thorigny, in the Marais district of Paris, dedicated to the work of the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso. The museum collection includes more than 5,000 works of art (paintings, sculptures, drawings, ceramics, prints, engravings and notebooks) and tens of thousands of archived pieces from Picasso's personal

repository, including the artist's photographic archive, personal papers, correspondence, and author manuscripts.

A large portion of items were donated by Picasso's family after his death, in accord with the wishes of the artist, who lived in France from 1905 to 1973.



## *Musée Rodin*

The Musée Rodin in Paris, France, is a museum that was opened in 1919, primarily dedicated to the works of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin.

The collection includes 6,600 sculptures, 8,000 drawings, 8,000 old photographs and 7,000 objets d'art.

The Musée Rodin contains most of Rodin's significant creations, including *The Thinker*, *The Kiss* and *The Gates of Hell*.

The gardens around the museum building contain many of the famous Rodin's sculptures. Behind the museum building are a small lake.





# GIRLS' PERFORMANCE IN MATHEMATICS NOW EQUAL TO BOYS

By JAMES SWIFT

In mathematics, the gender gap favouring boys in early grades gradually disappears, according to a new publication by UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report. The report calls for us to think harder about gender inequality and the barriers that still hold girls back from realising their potential.

Deepening the debate on those still left behind, an annual UNESCO gender report, analysed data from 120 countries in primary and secondary education to offer a global picture. The findings show that in the early years, boys perform better than girls in mathematics but, this gender gap disappears later.

This research confirms that the gender gap in learning has closed even in the poorest countries. And in some countries, the gap is now reversed. For example, by grade 8, the gap is in favour of girls in mathematics by 7 percentage points in Malaysia, by 3 points in Cambodia, by 1.7 points in Congo and by 1.4 points in the Philippines.

However, biases and stereotypes are still likely to affect learning outcomes. Even though girls catch up in mathematics in upper primary and secondary education, boys are far more likely to be overrepresented among the highest performers in mathematics in all countries.

In middle- and high-income countries, girls in secondary school are scoring significantly higher in science. Despite this advantage, girls are still less likely to opt for scientific

careers, indicating that gender biases could still be obstacles to the pursuit of further education in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

## *Girls outperform boys in reading*

While girls perform well in mathematics and science, they perform even better in reading. More girls achieve minimum proficiency in reading than boys. The largest gap in primary education is in Saudi Arabia, where 77% of girls but only 51% of boys in grade 4 achieve minimum proficiency in reading.

In Thailand, girls outperform boys in reading by 18 percentage points, in the Dominican Republic by 11 points and in Morocco by 10 points. Even in countries where girls and boys are at the same level in reading in the early grades, as in Lithuania and Norway, the gap in favour of girls rises to roughly 15 percentage points by age 15.

"Girls are demonstrating how well they can do in school when they have access to education. But many, and particularly the most disadvantaged, are not getting the chance to learn at all. We shouldn't be afraid of this potential. We should feed it and watch



Photo: Nikhita S.

it grow. For example, it's heart-breaking that most girls in Afghanistan do not have the opportunity to show the world their skills," said Malala Yousafzai co-founder of Malala Fund.

"Although more data is needed, recent releases have helped paint an almost global picture of gender gaps in learning outcomes right before the pandemic. Girls are doing better than boys in reading and in science and are catching up in mathematics. But they are still far less likely to be top performers in mathematics because of continuing biases and stereotypes. We need gender equality in learning and ensure that every learner fulfils their potential," said Manos Antoninis, Director of UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report.



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