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## EDITOR'S LETTER

# GOOD AS DUTY

*Russian historian Vasily Klyuchevsky believed that “the true purpose of charity is not to do good, but to have no one in need of good”*

By KIRILL PRIVALOV



September 5 is celebrated globally as International Day of Charity. It was established 10 years ago by the UN General Assembly. The purpose of the Day is to draw everyone's attention to the activities of charitable organisations, volunteers and, of course, those who were called “patrons” and “philanthropists” in ancient times. The date was dedicated to the anniversary of the passing away of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. This amazing woman devoted her whole life to serving the poor – first in India and then in other countries.

The Roman Gaius Cilnius Maecenas, who lived in the 1st century BC, had luck to remain in the memory of grateful descendants. Moreover, unlike Herostratus and Midas, or other more real characters, he went down in history as a hero. He patronised culture and arts, laid the foundation for charity as a special form of social support. Subsequently, patronage and charity have become

the most important components of social progress.

For Russia, the “golden age” of philanthropy falls on the years at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The conversation that took place ten years ago, but still lives in my memory as if it were yesterday, was focused on that era. And let's start with the hospital, popularly known as Botkin Hospital.

“Initially, it was named after Soldatyonkov. Kozma Terentyevich Soldatyonkov was an Old Believer merchant. In just a few decades at the end of the 19th century, a whole trading and manufacturing empire grew up under his leadership from a small silk weaving production in Pavlovsky Posad near Moscow”, Constantin Constantinovich Melnik-Botkin said. The last man in the glorious Botkin family, he spent his life in France and achieved a career worthy of any Russian refugee in a difficult emigration period. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, he was a security and intelligence counsel to Prime Minister Michel Debré and President Charles de Gaulle. And after leaving big politics, Constantin Constantinovich became a famous writer, whose books were published, by the way, in Russia, too.

But the main thing in the life of this respectable man, who managed to keep a Russian soul in émigré, was to preserve the memory of his glorious ancestors. First of all, of the remarkable galaxy of the Botkin doctors, the last of which, the honorary physician Evgeny Sergeevich, the grandfather of Constantin Melnik-Botkin, was shot in the Ipatiev

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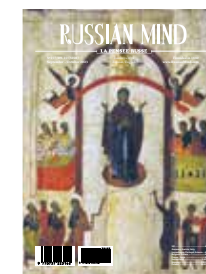
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Late 14th century



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Mother Teresa in 1995

House along with Emperor Nicholas II and his family.

“Those few institutions that were considered personalised in Russia, most often bore the names and surnames not of their benefactors, but of their relatives, wives, children, parents, just close people, who deceased untimely and tragically”, Constantinovich continued. “If the institution received the name of its benefactor, then, as a rule, it happened after his death according to his last will and testament. And even then, in the case of medical institutions, they were often named not in honour of their patrons, but to mark famous doctors. Take, for example, the Moscow City Clinical Hospital named after S.P. Botkin.

Kozma Soldatyonkov owned shops and banks, tenement houses and factories, including the famous Kreenholm Manufacturing

Company in Narva. He was a politician and stock trader, a collector of paintings, many of which are now exhibited in the Tretyakov Gallery and the Russian Museum, and the owner of a publishing house with a bookstore. In addition, Soldatyonkov, who received the nickname *Cosma de Medici* from his contemporaries for his patronage of the arts (in association with Cosimo Medici who was the Florentine duke and philanthropist), was friends with my ancestors, writer Vasily Bot-

kin and art historian Nikolai Botkin. Through them, he also met my great-grandfather Sergey Petrovich Botkin, a famous doctor.

In the second year of the 20th century, Kozma Terentyevich, a merchant of the first guild, an honorary citizen of Moscow, died and was buried at the Rogozhsky cemetery. According to his will, two million rubles (in those days, an incredible amount!) were allocated from Soldatyonkov’s huge capital for the construction of a no-charge hospital for the poor in Moscow. It was intended to service people of all religions, any estates and titles as it was indicated in the will. Especially for this project, the Moscow City Administration allocated ten dessiatines of land in the Khodynka Field in 1903. Construction began in 1908, and in 1910 the official opening of the hospital took place.”

We are sitting in the small apartment of Melnik-Botkin in the 15th Arrondissement in Paris, once so beloved by Russian emigrants. In close proximity to us is the Church of Saint Seraphim of Sarov in the rue Lecourbe, where paper bags with food for the poor were distributed on weekends... We, sinners, were unaware that the grandson of Dr. Evgeny Sergeevich Botkin, who was later canonised for his devotion to professional duty and generosity of heart, was already terminally ill. That literally in a few months Constantin Constantinovich would leave earthly life forever... But now, he keeps talking and talking, as if in a hurry to share his innermost thoughts with me.

“My grandfather recalled how quickly the Soldatyonkov Hospital was built. The Moscow City Administration managed a huge amount left by *Cosma de Medici*. On an April day in 1908, the first stone was laid in the foundation of the future medical institution. And already at the end of 1910, the hospital opened its doors to all those who suffered. On the day of the *inauguration*, as it was then called, the hospital did not yet have enough beds to serve all those seeking help. But just a year later, by 1911, 245 beds were organised in six out of the planned twelve buildings. In addition to the hospital, the clinic had an admissions department, an outpatient clinic, a kitchen, a laundry room, a pantry, a bathhouse, a pharmacy, a boiler room and, of course, its own anatomical theatre.

It is not surprising that the Soldatyonkov institution quickly gained popularity in Moscow and beyond. And on the tenth anniversary of the hospital, the Moscow authorities honoured the memory of Sergey Petrovich Botkin as one of the founders of Russian clinical medicine and the founder of military field therapy, by adopting a decree according to which the hospital was named after him.

However, these are well-known facts. And only few people know that we, the Botkins, had our own small hospital for the poor in Saint Petersburg – in the family we affectionately called it the *small hospital*. All treatment and care in it were for free. The Botkins, young and old, worked in it helping my grandfather. During the Second Patriotic War, as we called the First World War, all the wards were given to the wounded. It was there, by the way, that my father, a guy from near Poltava who had been a hero at the front and received the Saint George Cross for this, saw my mother for the first time while he was being treated there. He met her and, one might say, fell in love for the rest of his life...

But even then, by the end of the 19th century, when Russia was developing at a rapid pace that was not available to other countries, the need periodically arose for... *regulation* (it seems like Constantin Constantinovich sometimes thinks in French and picks Russian words with difficulty. – K.P.), more precisely, the coordination of the efforts of domestic philanthropists. I must say: the conditions existed for that with a minimum of administrative obstacles – in comparison with our times – and with the then proximity of business to the government institutions in Saint Petersburg and Moscow. Patronage allowed yesterday’s peasants and their children to network at the highest level. The descendants of serfs took off into the high society of the Russian capitals on a philanthropic lift, enriching the national elite and adding fresh blood to it. Remember how General de Gaulle used to say: ‘Strive to rise as high as possible. There are fewer people’...”

What does this president’s maxim mean, next to whom Constantin Melnik-Botkin had worked for so many years in the difficult times of French history: the war in Algeria, the conspiracy of the OAS? However, the



Constantin Constantinovich Melnik-Botkin

answer is clear. Alexander I issued a law – pay attention to the wording! – “On the rejection of donations from vicious people and their non-rewarding for that.” This document was supplemented by special decrees, according to which state awards and state ranks were prohibited in gratitude for charity. But... In Russia there was one very important “but”!

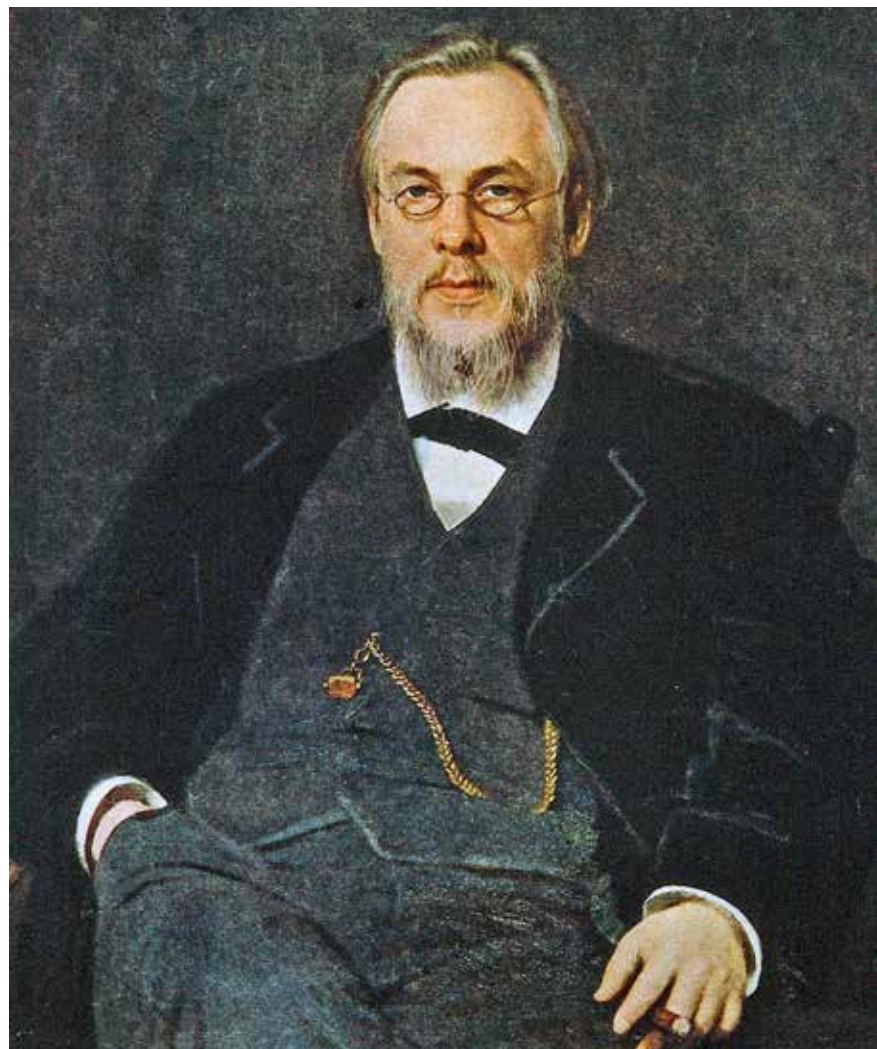
“A textbook example is the acquisition of the nobility by the Moscow merchant Gavrila Gavrilovich Solodovnikov, who became famous for his enormous wealth and at the same time for his fantastic stinginess”, Constantin Constantinovich smiles cunningly with fox eyes. “Solodovnikov, being a hereditary Serpukhov merchant of the third guild, made a huge capital in the wholesale trade. He moved to Moscow, rose to the rank of merchants of the first guild, managed steamships, banks, railways, but did not change his modest lifestyle. He ate yesterday’s buckwheat porridge and fired up the stove in his house with crates that he forced tenant contractors to return to him from his own stores.”

In other words, Solodovnikov quickly turned into a symbolic figure

in Moscow as a caricatured nouveau riche worthy of the pen of Saltykov-Shchedrin. And he could not file a lawsuit for the protection of dignity: to do so at that time in Russia, he should be noble... The son of a merchant of the third guild dreamed of worming into the nobility. For example, to become a state councillor! But to achieve this, it was necessary to perform some glorious feat in the field of charity. How did they do it? Those wishing to receive a noble title came to the city government and asked how they could help their “beloved city”. The applicant was given a task, he successfully completed it, and the city government sent a petition to the emperor...

So, the entrepreneur sent a request to the Moscow authorities, and they offered him to build... a sexually transmitted diseases (STD) clinic! The delicacy of the situation was that, according to the then Russian laws, an object donated to the city was given the name of the donor. This means that the hospital built by Gavrila Gavrilovich should have been called the Solodovnikov STD Clinic. Our subject despaired! Having imagined a sign above the gates of





*Portrait of Sergey Petrovich Botkin by I. N. Kramskoy. 1880*

the institution, the merchant decided to postpone back door entering the privileged class.

For the whole two years, Gavril Gavrilovich strolled along the corridors of power in search of the “right person” to solve the problem once and for all, but this time the officials turned out to be incorruptible: Moscow desperately needed a clinic for skin and venereal diseases! Solodovnikov could only give up, but he graciously asked that his name and surname not be included in the name of the medical institution. In February 1895, an institution built at the expense of the merchant Solodovnikov appeared in the Maidens’

Field, which soon became part of the clinical campus of Moscow University. The stubborn Gavril Gavrilovich finally received the nobility... And people are still being treated in the clinic at the First Medical Institute.

“And what happened?” I asked. “He gave 200-300 thousand rubles for the reason that you consider good and instantly shorten, say, five years, which are officially necessary for advancement in the rank.”

“But is that really bad? After all, the whole society was the winner from such a system”, Constantin Constantinovich reassured me. “And merchants-philanthropists were more at ease. Of course, they did not receive

the salary attached to their rank. Because they did not need it! Their gain was different: having received the right to wear the uniform of an official, they gained the opportunity to enter high government offices with their heads up. They expanded their network, went out into the world... There were prerequisites for creating a community of philanthropists made up of merchants, officials, and politicians. By the beginning of the 20th century, charity had turned into a truly popular movement in Russia. Merchant dynasties, intermarried with noble clans, competed who would donate more to good deeds.

According to my mother, Evgeny Sergeevich Botkin believed that the war against the Germans, being absurd in its own way but at the same time doomed to the victory of mighty Russia, would certainly serve to gradually unite the domestic charitable movement. This would have happened, if not for the German intrigues, the Bolshevik coup and the betrayal of the Romanovs by the West. Having organised the 1917 revolution in Russia with all its horrors and savages, Europe, America and Japan disrupted the Russian national modernisation, which could have been given a powerful impetus by philanthropic forces ready to unite.”

“The charitable forces of the country were not allowed to unite”, I said. “This is the fault of the Russian intelligentsia, which lost its patriotic idea against the backdrop of Marxist demagoguery, and the spineless authorities, who did not realise the requirements of the time, and the philanthropists themselves, who sometimes got into dubious, pseudo-liberal political games too actively and enthusiastically. Let us recall at least the millionaires Morozov and Mamontov, who actively sponsored the Bolsheviks and even flaunted it... They did not take into account experience, which shows that charitable



*Hospital named after K. T. Soldatyonkov in the Khodynka Field. Moscow. 1913*

initiatives undertaken in due time often prevent the emergence of social tension sources.”

“Yes, they might dissolve them,” Constantin Constantinovich agrees with me. “But the war and the economic and political crisis caused by it prevented the protection mechanisms from proper functioning. The fact is that large-scale charitable activity requires that the actors hold the same entrepreneurial talents as the acquisition of initial capital. In Russia, a century ago, the most gifted people in society were engaged in philanthropy – both on the part of business and on the part of the authorities. The idea of their unification for saving the country clearly hovered a century ago in the air of Saint Petersburg.”

Constantin Constantinovich was right: the prerequisites for this in Russia could be traced since the end of the 19th century. Say, at least the “road of life”. This is how native Muscovites call Bolshaya Pirogovskaya Street. And yet another name for it is “Alley of Patrons”. Believe me, nowhere in the world today can you find such a large-scale example of collective philanthropy as the development and refurbishment of this quarter in Khamovniki district. Since ancient times, this area – between the Garden Ring and the Novodevichy Convent – where the distant ancestors of today’s Muscovites went to the meadows for haymaking, was called the Maidens’ Field.

In 1885, more than 18 hectares of land were allocated on the wastelands of the Maidens’ Field for the construction of new clinics for the Medical Faculty of the Moscow Imperial University. The famous surgeon Nikolay Vasilyevich Sklifosovsky was the initiator. The funds were invested in the construction by the city authorities and, above all, by private benefactors; this is how Morozov, Khludov, Shelaputin, Bazanov hospitals, Alekseevskaya outpatient clinic appeared.

In total, 13 buildings were erected in the Maidens’ Field, which housed 15 clinical institutions being the best in terms of infrastructure and equipment for the time, not only in Russia, but in some European countries too... But the point is not in entertaining stories about Russian patrons and their exploits (you can’t use different, less loud word for their charity activities), but in lessons taught us by the past.

You can’t argue here. It would be good to remember this for modern Russian oligarch patrons and others like them. As Pushkin wrote: “A fairy tale is a lie, but there is a hint in it, a lesson to good fellows.” But the history of charity in Russia is not a fairy tale, it is an instructive story about those who perceived the good of the nation as their duty.



*Evgeny Sergeevich Botkin, honorary physician of the family of Nicholas II. 1917*



# PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS

*On 14 October the Local Orthodox Churches that follow the Julian calendar celebrate the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God*

By AUGUSTINE SOKOLOVSKI,  
*Doctor of Theology, priest*



Икона «Покров Пресвятой Богородицы», Новгород, 1401–1425

The very word “Protection” means patronage, intercession and help. It is deliverance and its continuous presence both with us and above in Heaven. A considerate attitude to God and to the remembrance of His deeds in history helps us see the times given to man from a different, sacramental perspective. It is important to remember that, according to the Gospel, the Kingdom of God has drawn near, and it is within us (cf. Lk. 17:21). The time, and especially the time of the Church – that is, the plan of the liturgical cycles, is the “musical instrument” of the Holy Spirit with the help of which God approaches us.

The establishment of each Church feast is associated with certain circumstances in history. As a rule, one or another Local Church would first introduce the celebration within its jurisdiction. Eventually it could spread to other countries and jurisdictions. Thus, the celebration of the Nativity of Christ was originally established in the Church of Rome, and the Meeting of the Lord – in the Church of Jerusalem.

Liturgical theology deals with the study of these processes. The origin of the Feast of the Protection has been studied in sufficient detail. Much less attention was paid to studying its theological aspect.

Liturgical scholars maintain that this feast owes its origin to the Church of Constantinople. There is nothing unusual in this,

since for about half of its history that spans 1000 years the Russian Church was a metropolis of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In 1589, at the request of the Russian Tsar, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchs established a patriarchate in Moscow. Thus, our Church became one of the “titular” patriarchates in Orthodoxy.

The word “titular” in this case is a mere statement of the fact that the see of the city of Moscow was not founded by the Apostles and was not approved by the Roman emperors. It appeared much later in history, yet its role in the destiny of the world and the faith cannot be overestimated.

The elevation of the Russian Church to the rank of patriarchate should not be perceived by analogy with the modern independence of states from one another. The Eucharistic communion of the Churches – the Greek, Balkan, Russian, Georgian and others – continued. It is evidenced by the preservation of the previous celebrations in their liturgical calendars.

It is extremely interesting that in its original meaning the Protection of the Theotokos signifies thanksgiving to God for the Protection of the Virgin Mary, Her intercession, help and patronage, which were revealed throughout the long history of Constantinople. “Thy city,” as the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete, which is read at the beginning of Lent, says addressing the Theotokos. The Roman capital on the Bosphorus regarded itself as the city of the Most Holy Virgin.

The consecration of the city took place on 11 May 330. Beyond all doubt, it is not only a secular, but also a Church commemoration.

In the Roman Empire many cities became capitals. For this or that city would become a capital when the emperor stayed in it for quite a long time. However, Constantine

undoubtedly wanted more. For he founded not just a city, but New Rome. Unlike the pagan Rome, full of idols on the banks of the Tiber, New Rome on the Bosphorus was supposed to be Christian from the beginning.

The recognition of Christianity as the State religion was a genuine revolution. This unique Revolution in Christ had three main stages: the legalization of Christianity; convening an Ecumenical Council; the Baptism of Constantine on his deathbed in accordance with the practice of that time.

The fact is that at the beginning of the reign of Constantine Christians in the Empire were a tiny minority. However, the Emperor made his choice. In 313 Constantine signed the Edict of Milan, which legalised Christianity and it was no longer subject to persecution.

Twelve years later, in 325, the Ecumenical Council took place in the city of Nicaea. It was attended by the most prominent Christian bishops of that time. Constantine took an active part in the formulation of its dogmatic decrees. This event marked the beginning of a new era. According to Tradition, 318 Church Fathers took part in the Council. This number is unlikely to be historical, since it corresponds to Biblical symbolism. Precisely 318 servants of the Forefather Abraham participated in the Biblical battle with the wicked tribes, the aim of which was to rescue his nephew Lot from captivity (cf. Gen. 14:14). Thus, the contemporaries of the “Constantinian events” and their descendants sought to give the events of secular Roman history a Biblical dimension. It should be noted that the later theological understanding of the Feast of the Protection after many centuries followed a similar logic.

Orthodoxy thus received a new dimension. Henceforth, it meant

the formulation of the dogmatic theology officially approved in the Empire. This period in the history of the Church, called “Constantinian”, was extremely long and did not end until 1917 when the Russian Empire collapsed. The definition of Orthodoxy as “the official doctrine” has retained its significance to this day.

The Church Fathers of that time believed that Constantine’s cross-over to Christianity and then his Baptism in 337 shortly before his death, according to the common practice of his time, was the work of the Holy Spirit. Following the “father of Church history” Eusebius of Caesarea (265–339), in their writings they asserted that the emperor was inspired by God Himself. The universe was becoming Christian, and Christianity – not only in theory, but also in practice – was becoming a universal – that is, catholic [in the sense: “universal”, not “Roman Catholic”] confession of faith for all. The foundation of the City of Constantinople was intended to serve this providential purpose.

It is worth noting that the consecration of New Rome initially had no Church significance. The local bishop was an ordinary bishop subordinate to his metropolitan. As late as 451 the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon gave the bishop of the new capital the status of the senior bishop in the Eastern Church. In fact, it was a paradoxical analogue of the future status of the Bishop of Rome in the West. But then this decision, the so-called Rule 28, for centuries did not receive the approval of the Universal Church.

Apart from the Church Fathers of that time who approved and praised the act of Constantine, there was a lonely voice that contradicted them. Truly, it was an incredible, too early example of the so-called “lateral thinking”! In terms of its degree of difference from the consensus of





*Icon of the Protection. Novgorod (Russia). 1401–1425*

others, this voice was probably akin to postmodern thinking. Saint Augustine of Hippo (354–430) in his work *The City of God* wrote that Constantine undoubtedly did a lot of good. However, he founded a city, which was named after him. And in this, if we refer to the Holy Scriptures, he... became like the first Forefathers who lived long before Christ. According to the first chapters of the Bible, they became the founders of cities that they named after themselves (cf. Gen. 4:17).

Perhaps this prophetic insight of Augustine partly helps us comprehend the inconsistency and tragedy associated with the history of this great city. Constantinople was of great importance in the development of Orthodoxy as the Universal Faith, and, at the same time, contributed to the gradual division of this single confession into the communion of five Patriarchates, and then their mutual alienation.

In 1930, the new Turkish authorities renamed Constantinople to Istanbul. But despite this, New Rome founded by Constantine on the Bosphorus simply could not cease to exist. For “manuscripts don’t burn”, and the City of Constantinople is a precious page of history, written by the service and communion in the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ of the multitudes of saints who shone forth in the Great City. The most surprising thing is that Constantinople undoubtedly continues to live in the “manuscripts” of Russian Orthodox worship. The celebration of the Protection is the most important confirmation of this.

Though the Protection is not the only Constantinople’s feast in Russian tradition, it is the most important among other “metropolitan” feasts of our Church calendar. Besides, unlike the place of its origin, where this feast has always been of minor importance, it was in

the Russian Church that it was destined to become truly significant.

The word “Liturgy”, which is well-known to us from Church usage, means “public work” or simply “worship”. The common service to God in prayer is a unique characteristic of the Old Testament Biblical and Christian heritage. It is based on the conviction that God is a Person and a living Being Who hears, loves, and waits for the person He created to turn to Him. It is in the Bible that the rule of prayer is written, on which the spiritual life of Christians should be built: “If thou... rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee..., first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Mt. 5:23, 24).

Man depends on God, on His mercy and forgiveness. But in the New Testament Jesus makes forgiveness dependent on whether the person has forgiven his neighbour, and, most importantly (and perhaps it is the most difficult thing), whether he is forgiven by him. It appears that God makes Himself dependent on the decisions of man. And such a message is peculiar only to Christianity. In the light of this, the liturgical feasts as the place of the common prayer of the faithful become very significant.

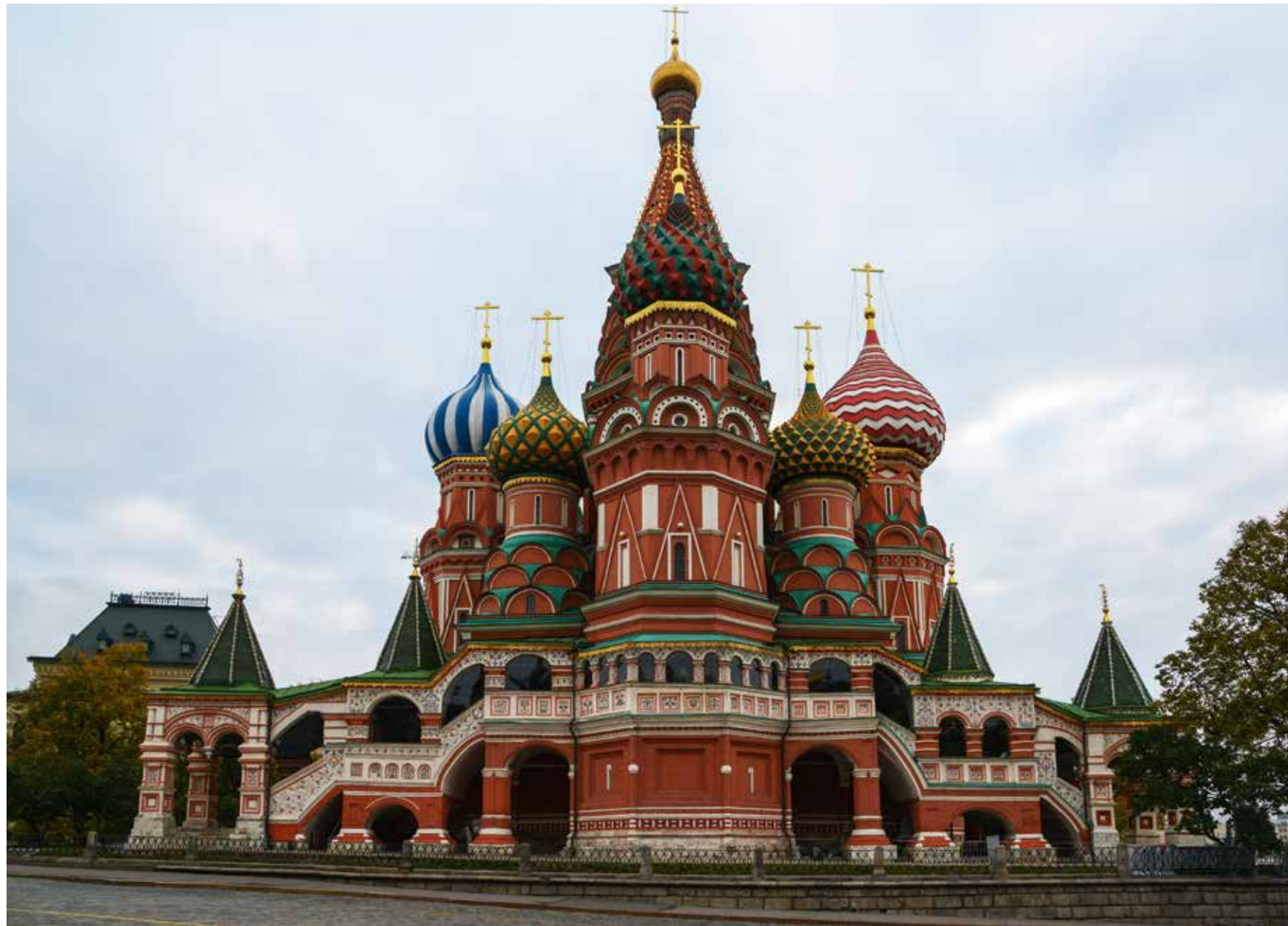
An unforgettable special common Liturgy for the entire Russian Church was celebrated in the second half of the last century precisely on the Feast of the Protection. The fact is that in Russia’s vast expanses there were then only two theological academies. Thus, all the future Orthodox clergy studied in one of them, knew one another from the time of training and remembered those common traditions that once determined their strict seminary environment for many years. The main church of the Moscow Theological Academy, and therefore the principal feast of its teachers and students, was dedicated to the Protection of the Mother of God.

In fact, during the time of persecution of the faithful, when the Church was extremely marginalized within Soviet society, the Holy Protection was the only day in the year when the doors of the Academy in the area of the Holy Trinity-St Sergius Lavra would open. The Patriarch would come to visit the students. The Russian Church had very few bishops, and most of them would come to the feast to pray within the walls of what they called their home. It was the common worship of the Church, the Liturgy as it is, in thanksgiving to God for the gift of theological education, which then, in the era of persecution, was a truly unique gift. This now forgotten aspect of the Russian Holy Protection should not fall into oblivion!

Unlike the most important feasts of the Orthodox Church, which, in accordance with Biblical practice, last several days, the Protection is celebrated for only one day. This celebration, which was so exceptional in the recent past, annually became for all who served the Russian Church after graduating from the Moscow Academy a simultaneous farewell to this day and to one another till next year. At the same time, there is such a strong theological component in the symbolism of this festival: you can always return to the idea of the help of the Theotokos throughout the history of God’s people. In this regard, the tradition of the weekly singing of the Akathist to the Protection of the Theotokos on Wednesday is maintained at the Moscow Theological Academy to this day.

“The past no longer is, and the future is not yet,” Blessed Augustine once wrote. It is believed that it was this saint and thinker who managed to partly reveal for future generations the essence of the Biblical understanding of time. In contrast, a magical consciousness presupposes a fundamental refusal to





*Cathedral of the Intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos on the Moat (also known as Saint Basil's Cathedral). 1555–1561*

recognise the past as the past. It insists on the possibility of returning the past through certain mental or physical manipulations. Prophetically denoting the return of Western humanity to this pre-Christian way of thinking, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) proclaimed the idea of “eternal return”. From a Biblical perspective, the past must be understood as irreversible.

In Russia with its harsh climate, even when summer, like holiness, breaks through the damp and cold everyday routine in order to say goodbye till the next year, the feast of the Protection has acquired a special meaning. Indeed, according to the old Church calendar, which our Church adheres to, it falls on 14 October and thus completes the first half of the autumn. It used to snow

for the first time on the feast of the Protection. The snow-white cover emphasized that Heaven through the “windows” of the Church feasts takes part in our lives. In the twenty-first century such localization of memories is becoming less and less clear. After all, days have long ceased to be associated with Biblical events. They pass imperceptibly: alas, they have become just dates. In

their attempt to give time a new, additional dimension, the Church feasts are really vital.

Time has been given to us to learn to say goodbye. The Book of Revelation of John the Evangelist reminds us that Christ already stands at the door: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Rev. 3:20). These words of the Apocalypse speak of a supper. The theme of the meal is one of the key Biblical sub-

jects. It reminds us about the communion between man and God; and it also reminds us about the last earthly supper, which Christ had with the disciples. Knowing about His forthcoming death, the Lord took bread and wine into His hands. He called the Bread, His Body, and the Wine, His Blood. Thus, He revealed that His Passion was completely voluntary. At the same time,

He anticipated His death by giving His entire self to His disciples and the world.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13). This key quotation for understanding the essence of the Gospel of John was pronounced in the environment of the Last Supper. Like the whole event of the Supper, these words point to the voluntary nature of the Lord’s Passion. Anticipating His Crucifixion in the mysteries of His Body and Blood, Jesus announced that He would not be crucified on the Cross because of unfortunate circumstances but would give His life for the salvation of the world that God loved (cf. Jn. 3:16).

Christ was crucified in Palestine, which was then part of the Roman Empire. Despite the desire of the Biblical people to regain their independence, it was Roman ideas that determined general everyday life. It is important that the Romans then believed that he who, though innocent, experienced the deepest suffering, comprehended the truth in a special way. Thus, the tidings of Christ were ready to be spread where paganism had previously dominated.

Jesus is the Harvester of Sorrow so that we may rejoice. So paradoxically and unexpectedly did the Roman society of that time ripen for the harvest of the Gospel (cf. Jn. 4:35). Thus, in the amazing succession of miracles, signs, and, importantly, the all-powerful weakness of God, Who, in fulfilment of the words of the Prophet Isaiah, Himself reforged the sword of His Wrath for the mercy of the Eucharist (cf. Is. 22:4), the Holy Spirit made people participants in the hospitality of the Word. At the Last Supper the Lord gave the disciples His Body and Blood. This means that after taking upon Himself all that is ours He Himself

gave us all that is His. So, the Virgin Mary, Joseph, the Apostles and all those who were close to Him in His earthly life, and, most importantly, in the moments of His suffering, became by the gift of grace close to us. In this new Divine kinship with us the Biblical essence of the celebration of the Holy Protection is revealed.

Even though the Feast of the Protection is of Constantinople origin, according to some, it was originally a Russian festival. Introduced at the dawn of the history of the Russian Church, it began to be celebrated in some other (Balkan, Georgian) Orthodox Churches. In this sense, the amazing gift of the Russian tradition with regard to the Celebration of the Holy Protection lies above all in the ability to see a deep, lofty content through the prism of the historical events of the salvation of the city. The political meaning of the veneration of the Mother of God as the Patroness of the Eastern Roman Empire was replaced by the theological understanding of the intercession of the Virgin Mary for all the people of God. The repeated deliverance of the capital from sieges by enemies began to be understood as the incessant participation of the Theotokos in the destinies of human history.

Over the first centuries of its eventful history, the Russian Church did not produce a single prominent thinker or theologian. However, “theology in colours”, as ancient Russian icon-painting was later called, became a great substitute for philosophy not formulated in words. Similarly, the Feast of the Holy Protection, which for contemporaries of the events in the history of Constantinople and their descendants was a mere miracle of the Theotokos, was revealed in Russian tradition as the personification of Her involvement in the Divine economy.



# THE RUSSIAN TSAR'S HUT

*The Swallow's Nest villa, once owned by the Russian Emperor Alexander III, has been preserved in Denmark*

By NADIA KNUDSEN,  
a journalist, International Press Centre, Denmark



Portrait of Alexander III by I. N. Kramskoy. 1886

Contrary to the popular opinion about the love of the incredible luxury of the decoration of summer palaces and castles, where Emperor Alexander III and his spouse Maria Feodorovna spent their holidays, in Denmark the royal couple lived in their own “hut” built near the Fredensborg Palace, the summer residence of the Danish monarchs of the Glücksburg Dynasty, who succeeded the Oldenburg family.

This wonderful house, hidden on a hillock at the edge of a forest near the splendid palace, was initially chosen for the numerous guards of Alexander III. He would come here to spend a fortnight in the summer in the company of his Danish relatives – King Christian IX, who was nicknamed the “father-in-law of all Europe”, and his wife Queen Louise, nee Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt. The emperor also enjoyed fishing on Lake Esrum beside the palace. The following phrase immediately comes to mind: “When the Russian Tsar is fishing, Europe can wait!”

Svalereden (“Swallow’s Nest”) was the name of a villa built in the then popular Swiss style. It was bought by Alexander III and then rebuilt in the Russian style – with intricate carved patterns on the facade, gilded doorways and spectacular interior decoration. It stood on an elevation, on granite boulders, safely hidden behind a beech grove from prying eyes.

At that time the royal Fredensborg Palace was the official summer residence of the Danish kings of the Glücksburg Dynasty, who succeeded the Oldenburg family. This

palace was set up in 1721 by the architect Johan Cornelius Krieger by order of the Danish King Frederick IV and called the “Peace Palace” on the occasion of the end of the Great Northern War, which had lasted almost two decades.

The Great Northern War did not prevent Frederick IV from making a long trip through Italy and, admiring the beauty of breathtaking landscapes and paintings by medieval artists, to make an impressive collection of Venetian glass. Following the wise advice of his gesants (as ambassadors were called at that time), he stayed away from battles. And only when the Russians defeated the Swedes did the King of Denmark declare war on Sweden and on 12 November 1709 invade its southern lands with 15,000 troops. However, having been defeated in March 1710, he fled to Denmark and, handing over command of the troops to his valiant generals, he returned to his usual pursuits: ruled the kingdom, built the magnificent Fredensborg Palace and won the hearts of charming ladies – here his victories were won much more easily than on the battlefield. Despite the fact that the king had been married since 1695 to Louise of Mecklenburg, the queen Consort and the mother of the heir to the throne, Crown Prince Christian (VI), he married the aristocrat Elisabeth von Vieregg, becoming a bigamist. Unfortunately, she died in childbirth a year later. But soon the King had a new mistress.

In 1711 there was an outbreak of bubonic plague in Denmark, which wiped out a third of Copenhagen’s population, almost 20,000 people. The king with his retinue and most of the aristocrats and nobles had moved in advance to the Jutland peninsula, where they waited until the epidemic was over. And there, at a high-society fancy-dress ball in the medieval Koldinghus Castle,



St Alexander Nevsky's Orthodox Church in Copenhagen

King Frederick IV fell in love with the young Anne Sophie Reventlow, the Grand Chancellor’s daughter. Knowing that the king was frivolous, her mother took her to their family manor of Clausholm to prevent her from becoming one of his favourites. But this only fueled the king’s boldness, and he simply kidnapped the nineteen-year-old beauty, later marrying her and becoming a bigamist again. In Denmark it is called “a left-handed marriage” and, by the way, according to the law of 1683, “anyone who has

a legitimate husband or a wife and commits bigamy shall be beheaded.”

But the king is above all laws. So Frederick IV built himself a wonderful family nest, the Fredensborg Palace, in a far and remote place, and there he hoped to live out his days in love and happiness, far from the rumours of this world.

So, he called his new luxurious residence the “Peace Palace” also because he wanted peace of mind. And there Frederick IV, who had twice become a bigamist, just waited for the





*Alexander III and Maria Feodorovna. 1890*

death of his queen consort. That happened in 1721, and on the following day he crowned his favourite Anne Sophie queen.

Exactly nine years later, the amorous monarch passed away at the age of fifty-nine. His son from the first marriage, Crown Prince Christian, ascended to the throne and immediately sent his stepmother Anne Sophie to her family manor of Clausholm (depriving her of the crown and all the privileges), where she spent

her widowhood until her death in 1743, albeit with a good monetary allowance.

The Fredensborg Castle was forgotten and, as if in a fairy tale, fell asleep for 100 years like a sleeping beauty. The monarchs avoided it until one day there was a fire in another ancient royal palace – Frederiksborg. The Danish king Frederick VII, married to the ballerina Louise Rasmussen (his third wife) from 1850, chose this beautiful medieval palace

as his winter residence and, like many Danish monarchs from the Oldenburg family who ruled Denmark for 400 years, tried not to contradict his spouse, a flighty ballerina. She ordered the servants to light up all the fireplaces on the frosty night of 17 December 1859, and the curtains in the knights' hall caught fire, and the lake by the palace was covered with ice, so there was nothing to put out the fire with! Throwing their clothes hastily into the carriages, the king and his wife fled to another palace, the very "Peace Palace", which was fifteen kilometres away. A couple of days later they returned to Copenhagen, to the elegance and comfort of the official residence of Amalienborg.

In 1863, King Christian IX, Princess Dagmar's father, appreciated the luxury and splendour of the palace's interior, making it his summer residence, where he cordially welcomed his adult daughters and sons.

Louise of Hesse, Christian IX's wife, knew much about the practice of royal intermarriage and managed to become related not only to the English and Swedish royal families, but also to secure strong family bonds with the Romanovs, giving Princess Dagmar in marriage to Tsarevich Alexander in 1866, and marrying her middle son Wilhelm (from 1863 – King George I of Greece) in 1867 to the Russian Grand Duchess Olga Constantinovna Romanova, the Tsarevich's cousin. Dagmar became the Russian Empress Maria Feodorovna in 1881, and Olga Constantinovna became the Queen of the Hellenes in 1867.

Judge for yourselves how successful the marriages of the other children of Christian IX were. The eldest daughter, the beautiful Alexandra, was married in 1864 to Prince Edward of Wales, who, having ascended the throne in 1901, gave her the crown of Great Britain. The youngest son, Prince Valdemar of Denmark, was married in 1885 to the French

Princess Marie of the Orleans family, and the daughter Thyra was married to the German Duke Ernest Augustus of Hanover in 1878. In 1869 Crown Prince Frederick married Princess Louise, the Swedish king's daughter, in order to strengthen the bonds of marriage with the neighbouring powerful country, his eternal enemy.

This is why Europe's fate was sometimes decided here, in the Fredensborg country palace, when everyone was staying in their Danish home in the summer. For example, as long as Alexander III was alive, Empress Consort Maria Feodorovna would spend summer holidays with her husband and children at the royal Fredensborg residence, thirty-five kilometres away from the Danish capital.

And this is what Alexander III's youngest daughter, Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna, wrote about it in her reminiscences: "At the end of the summer we would travel either to the Crimea (to Livadia) or to Denmark – my mother's homeland. We would get to Copenhagen on the royal yacht-ship. I remember that at first it was a beautiful steamer, which started rocking violently once the sea was slightly stormy, which, however, was almost always the case in the Baltic Sea!"

The journey from Kronstadt or from Peterhof usually took between four and five days in my early childhood. Later we would get there in thirty-six hours on the Polar Star yacht. The Imperial ship was always accompanied by two or more military destroyers. But what surprised me most when I was a child was the fact that we always had a cow on board. It was supposed to supply us, the royal children, with fresh milk in the morning, which it did, as a rule, though it was terribly seasick on the voyage, as were, indeed, some other passengers on the royal ship as well.

When our yacht entered the harbour of Copenhagen, bypassing

ancient forts, and was anchored at the old royal customs house of Toldbold, a cannon salute was immediately heard and a royal boat was lowered to us from the shore on oars. King Christian IX of Denmark and Queen Louise were on it – they would go up on deck to greet us on our arrival and then, taking everyone, they would send us to the Fredensborg residence, which is thirty-five kilometres north-east of Copenhagen. There we could frolic and play with our grandfather, King Christian, who enjoyed it, and he did it often, unlike Queen Louise, our grandmother, who did not allow herself to do this, but I still loved her very much.

As a rule, many of us children came to visit the 'grandfather of all Europe' from Russia, England, Greece, Austria and Sweden, in addition to the little Danish princes and princesses. There were often over twenty or even two dozen grandsons and granddaughters. My grandmother, Queen Louise, would sometimes take me with her to the park where there were plenty of roses, and there she taught me how to pick a beautiful bouquet.

Most of all as a child I was attached to my uncle, Prince Valdemar, and his French wife Marie, whose children I adored. They lived nearby in the Bernstorff Palace and often came to us for dinner. I would carry their baby Viggo piggyback and run around with him merrily – he was very lovely.

But when we children fell ill, then all two dozen simultaneously. One day my cousin, the Danish prince and the future King Christian X, caught chickenpox and came to the Fredensborg Palace, infecting all of us, the other children, one by one. My three English cousin sisters were lying in one hall with a fever, while their two older brothers and a couple of Greek cousin brothers were lying in beds in another guestroom of the palace, etc. And we were allowed to see them in order to catch it as soon

as possible and get over it. Misha [Grand Duke Mikhail, the youngest son of Alexander III and Maria Feodorovna – N.K.] and I were the last children who contracted chickenpox. And oddly enough, all of us had the most joyful impressions."

This is how the historian Inger-Lise Klausen wrote about the Russian royal couple's summer holidays, referring to the diary of the Danish royal court's chamberlain Peter Rerdam: "On 25 August 1883 the Fredensborg Palace, everybody at the royal court is ready to receive guests and members of the royal family from Europe. Representatives of aristocracy in the small town where the palace is situated gladly share this news with each other and say that it is rumoured that over time it will become the summer residence of the Russian Kaiser [as the Danes called the Russian tsar – N.K.]."

On 30 August 1883, on board the royal yacht Emperor Alexander III with Empress Maria Feodorovna and their children arrived in the harbour of Copenhagen. They were warmly welcomed by King Christian IX of Denmark with his wife Queen Louise, as well as King George I of the Hellenes and Prince Valdemar of Denmark, who for some time had been going side by side with them on the royal ship Dannebrog, escorting them to the port of the Danish capital."

The same evening after the banquet the royal chamberlain noted in his diary: "The summer at the Fredensborg residence has commenced. The royal couple attracts the attention of all guests. Maria Feodorovna is charming, young and fresh; and the Russian Emperor is still tall and slender, like a knight, with blue eyes and feels at ease here, though I noted a decent retinue of his personal guards, who follow him so discreetly that it is sometimes quite hard to notice them. All in all, this Indian summer is sunny and is seething with





*Emperor Alexander III's family. 1889*

fun, smiles and joyful meetings at home. Everything is so picturesque that Queen Louise after a successful photo session on the steps of the palace has already sent for the famous Danish artist Laurits Tuxen to Amsterdam so that he could come and paint everyone together on canvas in the garden living-room of Havesalen.”

And further:

“On 9 September 1883 there is peace and quiet in the Fredensborg Palace. In the morning the royal couple and most of the guests went to Copenhagen to take part in the consecration ceremony of a Russian Orthodox church, which Emperor Alexander III built in the city centre as a gift to his wife, the Tsarina. They had the church consecrated in honour of St Alexander Nevsky, and

with its three gilded domes it immediately became an exotic curiosity amid the grey facades of mansions owned by aristocrats. And it was very expensive – it cost the Russian government 300,000 roubles to build it, and 70,000 roubles – from the Tsar’s personal pockets.

On 11 September 1883 the whole royal family was back at the Russian church, this time to celebrate the name day of Alexander III. And by the evening everybody gathered for the so-called ‘tafel’, a sumptuous dinner party at the Fredensborg Palace for such an occasion. And it was opened by King Christian IX. With a glass of champagne in his hand he greets his dear son-in-law with the words: ‘Let’s celebrate this wonderful day together with joy, harmony and happiness!’ At these words the musicians played the national anthem of the Russian Empire, God Save the Tsar! And on 18 September 1883 Many guests from England arrived in Fredensborg, apart from the heir to the throne, Prince Edward (VII) of Wales, with his wife Alexandra and nineteen-year-old son, Prince Albert, who are already there. Including the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr William Gladstone, with his wife, daughters and entourage of gentlemen, and on his English steamer Pembroke Castle.

Though, in my view, he resembles the owner of the restaurant in Copenhagen where I often have dinner, but everyone with one voice calls him ‘the grand old man’, and it’s a rare fortune to have a European representative of this rank as a guest.

After a dinner party at the Fredensborg Palace everyone was invited for the next day to an equally exquisite reception on board his English ship, where champagne and Rule Britannia delighted the guests inexpressibly and immensely.

The summer was nice, and the guests did not leave the Fredensborg summer residence until early

October. In addition, all thirty-two members of the large royal family with their children and household managed to sit for the artist L. Tuksen, who miraculously persuaded the Russian Emperor to stand for forty-five minutes for his sketch, and he painted the charming little one-year-old Olga in pink from memory.”

Such a strong interest in the personality of the Russian Tsar Alexander III is quite understandable because on 15 March 1883 at the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin a glorious ceremony of his coronation took place. And the Danish Princess Dagmar, who had married Tsarevich Alexander in 1866, converted to Orthodoxy and changed her name to Maria Feodorovna, received the royal crown fifteen years later to the great pride of King Christian IX and Queen Louise, who became related to such a great power.

According to Danish historians, Emperor Alexander III was happy to visit his European relatives in Denmark.

The same chamberlain wrote in his diary: “The little ones just adored him, and he knew how to treat them properly. They surrounded him once he went out for a walk in the park after breakfast, and followed him down the alley to the skipper’s bridge, where they made toy boats and yachts together with the skipper Petersen, drew them on paper, and then launched them in a stream. Tall (height: 1 m 87 cm) and strong, the emperor always ‘cut the fairway’ of the palace alleys with a bunch of nephews holding his hands, with the rest of the princes and princesses running after him, adjusting to his running stride, and listening to his stories with fascination. When he started running at full speed, a flock of princes and princesses would tear along after him, racing with one another, and, unable to catch up with him, would



*Alexander III's “hut” in Denmark*

fall on the grass while laughing. Then he would sit down on a park bench and put the little ones on his lap, bouncing them up and down.

Sometimes the older children caught up with him on children’s carts pulled by two donkeys. And when they invited him to ride with them, he agreed, got into the cart, and then everybody fell about laughing, because the poor donkeys could

not even move. The Russian sovereign was a strong man! And the children adored him.”

One day the emperor decided to buy a villa in Denmark. And, as Danish historians write, on 10 September 1885 during summer holidays at the Fredensborg Palace he announced this at a royal banquet, addressing King Christian IX: “The warm welcome here is so dear to me that I want





*Fredensborg Palace, the Danish royal family's summer residence*

to purchase land with a villa nearby to own it. Is there one in the area?" And the "Kaiser" chose the Swallow's Nest villa for himself. Once it had been intended as a wedding gift to the Danish Prince Valdemar, Maria Feodorovna's younger brother, who in June 1885 married Princess Marie of Orleans. But he became the owner of an English villa, closer to the seaside. Over time the villa was owned by a royal judge named A. Grove, who at first did not want to part with it in any way. But on 20 October 1885, after two months of bargaining and persuasion, the Russian Emperor, adding gold coins to the price with his generous hand, obtained the villa for 25,000 kroner.

It took some time to rebuild it. Craftsmen decorated its attics and pediment with elegant patterned woodwork, and the Danish Swallow's Nest began to look very

"Russian". The living-rooms were furnished with elegant fittings, the floor was covered with wonderful Persian carpets, and the walls were adorned with splendid paintings.

The villa immediately changed its name to "Kaiser's villa" and after all the alterations, in 1889 it was ready to receive the Russian Tsar and his family for summer holidays. Maria Feodorovna was delighted with the villa and immediately dubbed it her "Gatchina in miniature".

The Russian Emperor Alexander III loved his "hut" so much that at Easter in 1890 he presented his wife Tsarina Maria Feodorovna (following a well-established tradition) a golden Faberge egg with a model of the villa inside!

It is known that on 17 September 1891 in the "hut" the emperor arranged a dinner party in honour of his mother-in-law, Queen Consort

Louise of Denmark, to celebrate her birthday with the family. In reality her birthday was 7 September, but the most important thing was that it was a wonderful joyful celebration, at which the Russian Tsar Alexander III was both a cook and a servant. He graciously served dishes to his dear guests, wearing an apron, as did his brother-in-law Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark and his three daughters – princesses: the sixteen-year-old Louise, the thirteen-year-old Ingeborg and the eleven-year-old Thyra. They acted as real cooks, set the table and served the guests with delicious food with jokes. It was a lavish feast, wine flowed like water, and it was a great fun!

In that year, which was later dubbed at the court the "Kaiser's year", the royal couple stayed in Denmark, as usual, for almost six weeks. They arrived on two royal yachts, the *Polar*

*Star* and the *Tsarevna*, which on 24 August 1891 were met in the Copenhagen harbour by King Christian IX of Denmark with King George I of Greece and Crown Prince Frederick (VIII), heir to the Danish throne. And all three of them, the monarchs and the crown prince, who had had come to the capital by a special train from the Fredensborg Palace, were unrecognisable, as the Danish royal court's chamberlain noted in his diary: "Goodness gracious! I can't tell who is who. They are wearing the uniforms of Russian military cavalrymen, and the Russian Emperor Alexander III himself came on deck in The blue uniform of the Royal Danish Guards! Well, I never!"

The fact is that at one time Alexander III had awarded his Danish father-in-law the rank of honorary colonel and presented him with a uniform (a dark frock coat of a colonel of the Seversk Dragoon Regiment and a service cap with a red band, which is now kept at the War Museum in Copenhagen). Judging by Danish historical documents, King Christian IX used to sport this uniform at receptions and dinner parties, was very proud of it and usually wore it to holes. Here is what Tsarina Maria Feodorovna wrote about it in a letter to her mother, Queen Louise of Denmark on 29 January / 10 February 1898: "...Send me dad's sizes immediately, because I promised him a new uniform for his birthday, and he keeps forgetting to send me his size and his head circumference for the cap, which, by the way, has become moth-eaten, but he went to the table and everywhere in it; to my horror, right in the middle of the red cloth the hole was fixed with black silk, which doesn't befit royals!"

Incidentally, the royal couple later replaced the yacht with a new one, and, of course, they ordered it in Denmark, which was famous for its shipyards and expert shipbuilders. The

choice fell on the then famous Burmeister & Wain (B&W) company.

In 1893 Alexander III ordered this ship, which was called the *Standard* and he personally took part in the keel laying for it at the shipyard. This is how the royal chamberlain wrote about this event in his diary: "Members of the royal family were present at the keel laying ceremony for the ship at Refshaleøen, at the docks of the shipyard, and at the celebration, which was held with great pomp to the Russian orchestra's music."

Empress Dagmar solemnly placed a silver plate with an inscription against the keel; the talisman, blessed by such hands, will undoubtedly attract good spirits to guard the new luxurious vessel, which by the design should surpass the *Polar Star* both in size and grandeur, which already means a great deal.

Then Emperor Alexander III hammered a couple of nails into the keel. Many royals who were present there followed his example and each of them hammered a nail into the keel and wished the *Standard* good luck. When the celebration was over, all the members of the royal family returned to Fredensborg."

Alexander III never saw his yacht finished. He passed away on 20 October 1894. Nicholas II decided that the ship should be launched on his father's birthday, 26 February.

After her husband's death, Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna never returned to her Danish "Gatchina in miniature". Like the Fredensborg Palace, the villa was full of memories that discouraged the soul and prevented the trauma from healing. And though thanks to the efforts of the staff and the servants the villa was ready to receive royal guests from Russia, the dowager Empress avoided visiting the villa. Coming to her native Denmark for summer holidays, she and her younger children – the daughter Olga and the son Misha – preferred to stay at the

Bernstorff Palace, where her brother, Prince Valdemar (with whom she was on friendly terms), lived.

After returning to her motherland after the Revolution and the Civil War in 1919, the Dowager Empress made her home at her Villa Hvidøre by the sea, where she passed away on 13 October 1928 aged about eighty-one.

And the "Kaiser's villa", according to the will, was inherited by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna. But Olga, the Russian Tsar Alexander III's beloved daughter, did not like this villa either, and in 1929 she sold it to new owners. They renovated it in their own manner both inside and outside and then sold it. Later it changed hands more than once until in 2010 it was acquired by the spouses Henrik and Maria Christensen, the current owners, through whose efforts the historic villa almost returned to its former glory, albeit without traces of royal splendour.

As for the Fredensborg Palace, which was so loved by King Christian IX and his wife Queen Louise, its status has not changed since then. And just like them, now the eighty-three-year-old ruling monarch, Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, King Christian IX's great-great-granddaughter, uses the palace's grand chambers as her summer residence and entertains her sons and their families here, following the tradition. And all of them pose for the Danish press and artists. The queen always treats guests to tea, using an old dark blue tea set of fine Russian porcelain with gilding, and, as the *Illustreret Tidende* Danish magazine wrote back in 1889, "it is so amazing that you can't take your eyes off it!"

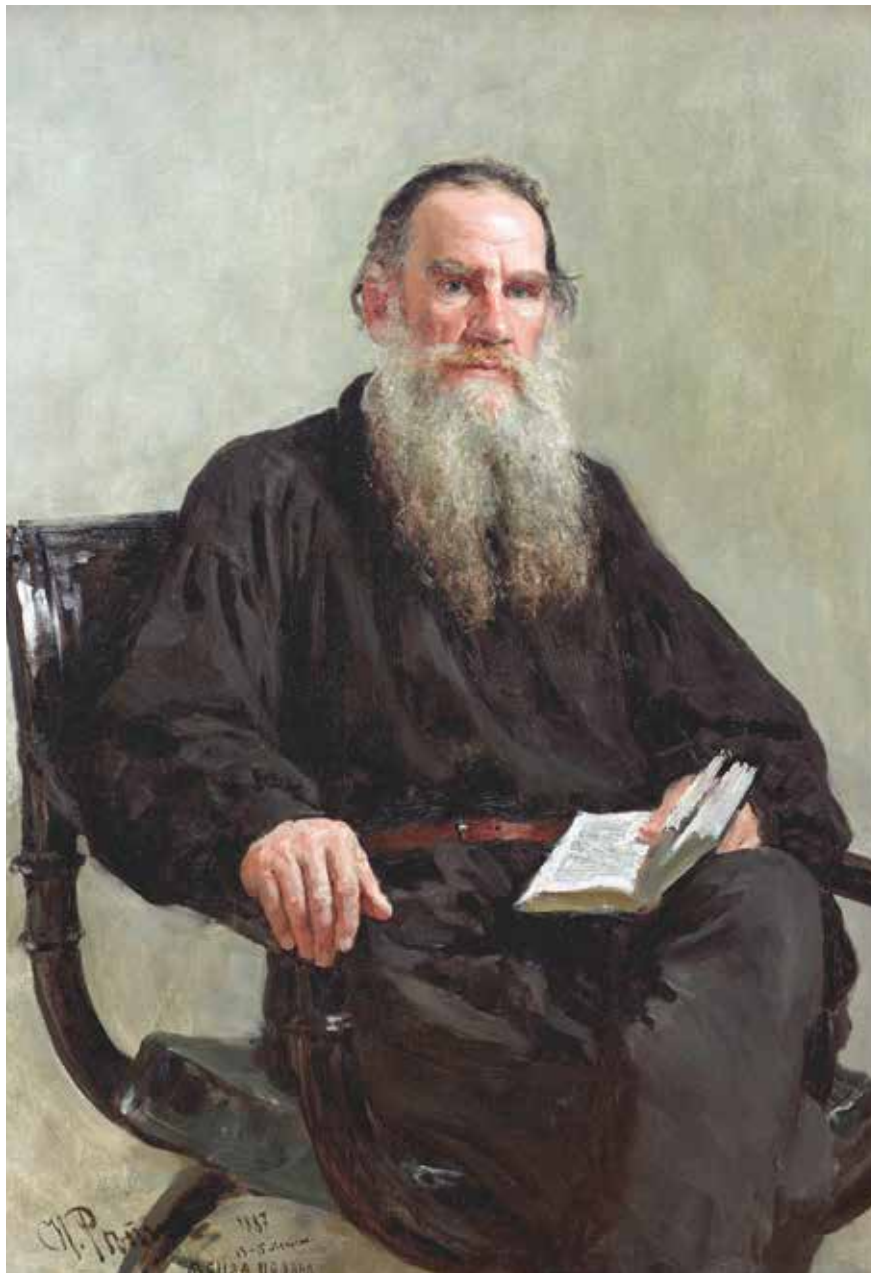
The Russian factory-owner Kornilov's unique tea set and the "hut" of the Russian Tsar Alexander III have been preserved in Denmark thanks to the Danes' economy, which is sometimes confused with stinginess.



# THE GREAT SEEKER OF THE TRUTH

*The 195th anniversary of the birth of Leo Tolstoy*

By PAVEL BASINSKY,  
twice Big Book Award winner



Portrait of Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy by Ilya Repin. 1887

Leo Tolstoy did not invent a *tolstovka* sweatshirt, did not walk barefoot and did not pose for Ilya Repin with a plow... Along with such reader's misconceptions, there are other hardly harmless myths about the great writer and thinker.

*Pridefulness was the main of Tolstoy's inner qualities; it manifested itself both in his philosophical activity and in everyday life.*

– I don't know what, in fact, is Tolstoy's pridefulness. Is it that he was looking for his truth and did not stop along the way? Many people don't like it. Many believe that one must stick to some obviously existing truth and serve it. But Tolstoy couldn't do that. If this is his pridefulness, let's call it pridefulness, but that's what makes him interesting.

As for everyday life, he was an extremely delicate person, he loved his children, raised them, taught them Greek, mathematics, astronomy, took care of their physical culture. When they were very young, he took them with him to the Samara province, so that they could feel nature and learn to love it.

But you need to understand that Tolstoy, especially in the second half of his life, was so preoccupied with a mass of affairs, both creative and philosophical, correspondence and many other tasks, that he could not commit himself entirely to his family. Moreover, that would even be wrong. Therefore, there was a certain conflict here, and this is a conflict

among a creative person and his family members, but pridefulness had nothing to do with it. In addition, Tolstoy did not solve the problem in the worst way.

*Tolstoy is responsible for the fact that a revolution happened in Russia. Lenin's article "Leo Tolstoy as a Mirror of the Russian Revolution" also contributed to strengthening this opinion.*

– Yes, in this sense, Lenin, who organised the October Revolution, successfully rolled over on Tolstoy. I always say that everyone was responsible for the revolution: the intelligentsia, the Church which was not reformed and stayed in the position of the dominant ideology, the tsar and his inner circle, the nobility who ceased to serve the monarchy and dealt with some private problems of their own. For example, the nobles sold grain and left to lose this money in Baden-Baden.

So you need to understand this, everyone has completely missed Russia, including Tolstoy as a thinker of his time, as a person who was listened to. I absolutely disagree with his denial of the state, his denial of the army.

But don't put all the blame on Tolstoy. Tolstoy, by the way, was against the revolution and did a lot to soften the morals of his time, to return people to morality, to Christianity.

*Leo Tolstoy was an unbeliever, he completely denied faith and led people in this sense.*

– Tolstoy was offended most of all when they said that he turned people away from faith. He argued that the main thing he was talking about was that there was no life outside of faith in God. Another thing is that Tolstoy denied the church form of faith. However, there are many people who believe, but they have problems with the Church. And they find the truth in Tolstoy's research. I don't see anything wrong with that.

In addition, many people (and this is a common phenomenon), starting to get carried away by Tolstoy, then come to the Church. This happened especially often in Soviet times. Even earlier, many Tolstoyans then turned towards the Church.

*Tolstoy the writer and Tolstoy the thinker are two different figures. And*

*Experimental science, then, is concerned only with positive knowledge and reveals the greatness of the human intellect whenever its investigations do not enter into ultimate causes. And, on the other hand, speculative science reveals the greatness of the human intellect only when it completely removes all questions concerning the sequence of causal phenomena and examines man only in relation to an ultimate cause. Metaphysics or speculative philosophy occupies the extreme end of the spectrum of speculative sciences. This science clearly raises the question of what I am and what the universe is, the question of why I live and why the universe exists. And since its very beginning it has always answered in the same way. Whether the philosopher calls the essence of life that is within me and all living creatures an idea, a substance, a spirit, or a will, he is still saying that this essence exists and that I am this essence; but why it is there he does not know, and if he is a precise thinker, he does not answer. I ask, "Why does this essence exist, and what comes of the fact that it is and will be?" And not only does philosophy fail to answer, but all it can do itself is ask the same question. And if it is a true philosophy, then the sum of its labour lies in putting this question clearly. And if it holds firmly to its task, then it can have only one answer to the question of what I am and what the universe is: all and nothing. And to the question of why the universe exists and why I exist it can only reply: I do not know.*

*Thus no matter how I twist and turn the speculative answers of philosophy, I can obtain nothing resembling an answer; not because, as in the case of the clear, experimental sciences, the answer does not relate to my question, but because even though the sum of the intellectual labour is here directed toward my question, there is no answer. And instead of an answer, all one can obtain is the very same question put in a complicated form.*

**Leo Tolstoy. Confession (as translated by David Patterson)**

*Tolstoy in the last years of his life got exhausted as a great writer, having taken up mainly philosophical questions.*

– I categorically deny that opinion. Already in *War and Peace*, and even in earlier works, Tolstoy appears as a philosopher. And many of his journalistic things are written with artistic persuasiveness. It is worth reading, for example, his response to the Synod, where he writes that "I can't go back to what I just left with such suffering, just as a flying bird

cannot enter the shell of the egg from which it came out." This is an amazing artistic image.

As an artist, Tolstoy was always on top and never fell down. With all his seemingly denial of pure art, at the end of his life he wrote *Hadji Murat*. And during the period of his philosophising he wrote such works as *Master and Man* and

*Father Sergius, The Kreutzer Sonata and The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, and other things that became diamonds of Russian prose.

Even *Resurrection* – a definitely didactic novel, where the pointing finger somewhat impedes the free flow of the narrative – contains fragments written much stronger than *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. Because after all, Tolstoy was continuously growing up as an artist.





Portrait of L. N. Tolstoy and S. A. Tolstoy by I. E. Repin. 1907–1911

Another thing is that he could not repeat himself, could not write one historical novel after another, one family novel after another, and was constantly looking for new ways. And as a person who is looking for new ways, he sometimes stumbles, makes mistakes.

Tolstoy is interesting in his search for new ways. He writes first a huge epic, then a family novel, then short children's stories, folk stories, then absolutely wonderful short novels. Tolstoy's creative heritage must be considered on progress and not as a competition between the early Tolstoy and the late Tolstoy.

*Tolstoy constantly taught everyone.*

– This is also a rooted myth about Tolstoy as a kind of gloomy, self-confident preacher who taught everyone at the end of his life.

Tolstoy spent his whole life analysing his own behaviour in his diaries, he had to figure out life for himself rather than teach others. He expressed the thoughts that he came to, but he never imposed them on anyone.

Another thing is that around him there was a semblance of a sect of Tolstoyans who tried to somehow document the ideas of Leo Nikolayevich and make them absolute. But for Tolstoy they were never absolute. For him, the presence of God was absolute, but everything else – he sought, tried, he suffered, and so on.

*Pharisaism of Tolstoy. Remember the fact that Sofya Andreevna, worrying about her husband, tried to add ground meat to a vegetarian dish for him, but he, propagandising love for his neighbours, shouted at her.*

– From a certain moment, Tolstoy became a staunch vegetarian, he avoided meat and fish. He believed that a person should not eat “the mutilated corpses of animals.” Sofya Andreevna, taking care of him, indeed, sometimes poured meat broth into mushroom broth, he noticed this, but did not get angry. He sometimes laughed it off, but sometimes he said: “Sonechka, I am ready to eat meat broth every day, if only you would not lie to me.” And there was no hypocrisy.

He respected other people's beliefs. There are vegetarians who immediately begin to convince others at the table that you can't eat meat. At the Tolstoy's table there were always people, including those who lived in the house, who ate meat. Sofya Andreevna herself ate meat, and that was okay, there were no



Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy on arable land by I. E. Repin. 1887

really terrible quarrels because of this.

*Tolstoy's works can be read separately, without researching the personality of the writer.*

– This is one of the troubles of reading Tolstoy's works. In fact, they cannot be fully understood without understanding the personality of the writer. His work does not exist in isolation from his personality.

There are writers for whom it is enough to read only their texts. This is especially relevant to French literature, where the text should speak for itself. For example, it includes the works of Flaubert, Balzac, Zola.

Of course, Tolstoy's texts speak for themselves, but it is impossible to understand their full depth without knowing Tolstoy's worldview, his personal characteristics, his

relationships with loved ones, with the state, with the Church. Tolstoy is a masterpiece as a person. And the life immediately surrounding him flowed into his works, as happens in *War and Peace*, in *Anna Karenina*.

On the other hand, creativity influenced his life in a certain way, including his family life. That is why I believe that knowledge of Tolstoy's personality, even some hidden moments of his biography, is absolutely necessary. But a full-fledged biography of Tolstoy has not yet been written in our country.

*You should not study Tolstoy's novels at school: they are not understandable for high school students.*

– I understand the problem of modern schoolchildren who cannot read long periods in *War and Peace*, especially historical digressions. And

I am absolutely not against adapted, abridged versions of the novel. Why not? But it is important that the children still have an idea of what *War and Peace* is about, what *Anna Karenina* is about.

We have the wrong point of view that it is too early to study Tolstoy at school, it should be read at a much more mature age. What can children understand? But if children do not start reading Tolstoy's novels at school, they will never read them as adults. Here we need to work ahead of the curve, giving children smarter things than their development even allows them to perceive. They will remember it later and decide to come back to that reading or not. But, if they are not offered that at school, they will never come back to that, I am absolutely sure of it.



# MUSIC IN ANY WEATHER!

*6th Musical open-air festival Summer. Music. Museum*

By LOLA ODINTSOVA

“Please, dress for the weather and be sure to take raincoats and blankets with you. Try not to open umbrellas above your head, so as not to block the view of the spectators who are sitting behind you.”

These recommendations, distributed for several months in a row among all media outlets in the Moscow region, were very useful to music lovers this last summer. The weather really was unpredictable in the vicinity of the first capital. This, as they say, is half the trouble, if not for one “but” inevitable under the circumstances: the music festivals covered below were held in the open air.

...In the morning, clouds hung over the golden domes of the Resurrection Cathedral of the New Jerusalem Monastery. Rain, according to the forecasts of meteorologists of all stripes, was expected any minute. But when the downpour hit the defenseless rows of the thousands of classical music fans gathered in the amphitheater of the New Jerusalem Museum, it still turned out to be an unpleasant surprise. And yet no one – not a single living soul! – did leave a unique performance. No heavenly thunders could stop the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff!

“Yes, the program of the 6th open-air festival Summer. Music. Museum is dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian composer,” conductor Dmitry Jurowski said in an interview to Russian Mind. A junior representative of the famous musical dynasty, he became this year’s artistic director of the forum. “As always, the program of the festival is extremely rich. It includes Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No. 2



Photo: [njerusalem.ru](http://njerusalem.ru)

and Symphony No. 2 in E minor performed by the State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia “Evgeny Svetlanov”, and the works of N. Rimsky-Korsakov, A. Glazunov,

A. Arensky, S. Taneev... Our choice is understandable. All these masters influenced Rachmaninoff’s work. Therefore, the festival is dedicated to them as well.”

Characteristically, the open-air festival at the picturesque foothills of the unique New Jerusalem Monastery took place just a few days after the 9th International Tchaikovsky Arts Festival, held in neighbouring Klin. The music festival continued

dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great opera singer Feodor Chaliapin. The ballet evening was presented by the play Carmen Suite performed by the ballet troupe of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia, participating in the fes-

Yusupovs. On the summer stage, the guests listened to performances by the jazz bands of Petr Vostokov and Vadim Eilenkrig, the Moscow Piper Orchestra and many other performers. Then the Barocco Nights Festival began there: its program included works by Antonio Vivaldi, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Henry Purcell.

Global music stars, such as virtuoso pianist Denis Matsuev, opera singer Ildar Abdrazakov, artistic director, conductor and soloist of the Moscow Soloists ensemble Yuri Bashmet, performed at the festival Summer. Music. Museum, which took place on July 5–9.

The sensation of the program in New Jerusalem was the performance of the young musician Ivan Bessonov, the winner of the 1st S. V. Rachmaninoff International Music Competition. “My favourite composers are Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev and also Ravel,” Ivan Bessonov shared his thoughts with Russian Mind immediately after his performance. “I play Rachmaninoff with a special feeling, probably, it’s spiritual affinity... The audience at outdoor festivals is special. They listen to you with bated breath... It is so in New Jerusalem, next to the majestic Resurrection Monastery. In Saint Petersburg, my hometown, and in Moscow, listeners and spectators seem to be studying you: will you be able to excite them, will you not disappoint them? But at the festival Summer. Music. Museum in New Jerusalem, the audience immediately trusts you, and you want to play for them with a special enthusiasm.”

It must be said that Bessonov, who played Rachmaninoff’s unique Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini for piano and orchestra in A minor, succeeded in full.

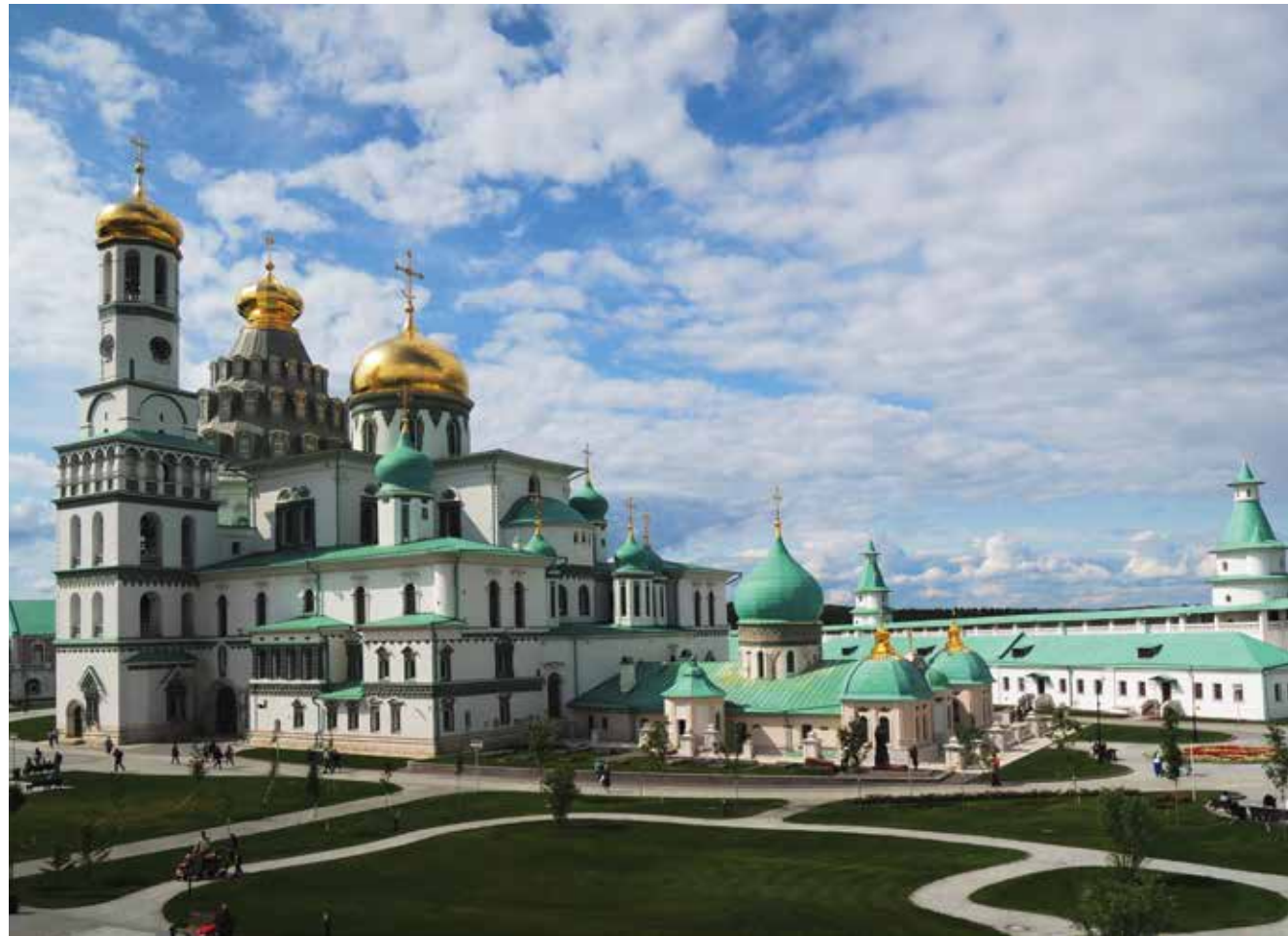
Two days of the festival were announced as the days of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia. For the first time it joined the open-air festival in

for six days on the Large meadow of the State Memorial and Musical Museum-reserve of P. I. Tchaikovsky and in Sestroretsky Park. The opening gala concert of the festival was

tional for the first time.

The summer season of outdoor concerts near Moscow opened in the Arkhangelskoye Museum-reserve, the estate of the Princes





*Resurrection Cathedral of the New Jerusalem Monastery in Istra near Moscow*

the Moscow region in full force: choir, orchestra, soloists. In total, more than 170 performers on stage! Rachmaninoff's opera *Aleko* in a concert version and the poem *The Bells* were presented to connoisseurs of classical music.

"We are very pleased to take part in the festival Summer. Music. Museum, said Vladimir Urin, General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia. "The high quality of performance, interesting programs, conceptual unity and, of course, the special atmosphere of New Jerusalem as the Russian cultural shrine, made the festival the most interesting musical event of the summer... Perhaps the place itself – Russian Palestine – and close proximity to the temple of one of the most

significant museum complexes in Moscow land, and also its very air, attached special strength and depth to Rachmaninoff's works."

What to add here? During the first five years, outstanding masters and ensembles performed on the New Jerusalem stage: violinist Maxim Vengerov, pianists Nikolai Lugansky, Andrei Korobeinikov and Kirill Gerstein, cellist Mischa Maisky, conductors Vladimir Jurowski, Andrey Boreyko, Alexander Rudin, singers Albina Shagimuratova and Anna Aglatova, the Russian National Orchestra and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra Musica Viva... You can't list them all!

And all these years, the festival is led by its president, People's Artist of Russia, head of the Moscow

Regional Philharmonic Maksim Dunayevsky. "Rachmaninoff's music is an all-consuming, reigning beauty, it radiates an extraordinary, divine light," Dunayevsky said. "In order for the festival of classical music to gain momentum, it is necessary, as experience shows, to work for at least ten years. Only after such a period the festival gathers pace, gains authority, acquires the necessary connections. This is not my idea, this is pure practice of various festivals in different countries... But the music festival in New Jerusalem is an exception to the rule: figuratively speaking, it grew up in just five years. This year it is held for the sixth time, and look at its participants! What an audience!.. Long live great music!"



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