



Catherine the Great

(1729–1796)

HILDE HOOGENBOOM

As Empress Catherine the Great forged her own Russian identity, so did Russia. During Catherine's reign from 1762 to 1796, Russia discovered itself not only as European, but as a multinational and multiconfessional empire, and as Russian. A German, Catherine, with her legendary practicality, Russified herself, and at the same time promoted herself as a European ruler and Russia as a European nation. Yet she also inherited a vast Eurasian empire that doubled its population under her rule; until 1991, Russians and Russian Orthodox believers would make up less than fifty percent of its inhabitants. By the end of the eighteenth century, these tensions between Russia as a nation and as a diverse empire would come under pressure from new nationalist ideals.

After she arrived in Russia on February 9, 1744, at age fourteen from a small German state, Princess Sophie Auguste Frederike von Anhalt-Zerbst converted from Lutheranism to Russian Orthodoxy on June 28, became Grand Duchess Ekaterina Alekseevna, and began to learn Russian; over a year later, on August 21, 1745, she married the heir to the throne. She was crowned Empress Catherine II on September 22, 1762, after she took power in a coup d'état on June 28 against her husband, Peter III (b. 1728, r. 1761–62)—the nephew of Empress Elizabeth I (b. 1709, r. 1741–61)—who was murdered. Peter III was half German, the son of Elizabeth's sister Anna and Charles Frederick, the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, and showed his devotion to King Frederick II (the Great) of Prussia (b. 1712, r. 1740–86) during his short rule when he ended the Seven Years' War (1756–63) with Prussia by returning land Russia had won. He then changed the color of the uniforms of the elite Russian guard units from their traditional green to Prussian blue. During her coup, Catherine used Peter's Prussophilia against him and wore a green guard's uniform to show her Russian colors. After the coup, her equestrian portrait as Russian ruler in the uniform of the Semenovskii Regiment by the Danish court painter Vigilius Eriksen (1722–83) made this point as well. Catherine had many copies made of this portrait, as well as of her coronation portrait by Eriksen, which were sent to the courts of Prussia, England, and Denmark. In the 1760s, he also made a portrait of Catherine dressed in national

costume—with a *kokoshnik*, a traditional Russian headdress, as a *matushka*, or little mother—of which copies were made. Thus Catherine used different portraits of herself as a military leader, as empress, and as mother to her people, to represent herself variously as a Russian sovereign nationally and internationally.

Throughout her reign, in contrast to Peter III, Catherine was careful not to be too German, and the fact that we associate Catherine with French, and the French enlightenment and culture, is a testament to how well she succeeded in controlling her image. A typically polyglot European aristocrat, Catherine learned French from an early age that she might aspire to a royal marriage, which facilitated her assimilation into the Francophone Russian court and nobility. But her first language was German—and like French, she learned Russian; her papers are mainly in French and Russian, which she used for official business, with some letters in German. Nineteenth-century critics complained that she knew no language well and made mistakes in all three languages. In fact, she knew all three languages fluently, and her spelling mistakes were ordinary in the eighteenth century, when languages were not yet standardized. In the nineteenth century, “good” French became a status symbol and was synonymous with an elite education; Catherine’s critics anachronistically applied this new standard to her writings. In an era when rulers were an international elite, Catherine was able to make herself at home in Russia by becoming Russian through religion and language, and by her always ardent defense of Russia against European criticisms that the nation and its people were primitive, and she was an Asiatic despot.

Catherine shared the enlightenment ideal of human beings as similar in possessing reason and thus being educable, yet she also followed the widely accepted ideas of Baron de Montesquieu, who argues in *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) that peoples develop differently and organically according to a country’s climate and geography. Throughout her reign, Catherine defended Russia and Russians against criticisms by Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, the historian Claude-Carloman de Rulhière, and others by arguing that they did not know anything about Russia, which was true. But Russians also knew their empire poorly. After the publication of *Voyage in Siberia* by Chappe d’Auteroche in 1768, which similarly criticized Russia, Catherine ordered the Academy of Sciences to make expeditions, reports, illustrations, and maps in a survey of Russia. Catherine’s “Academy Expedition” recalled Peter the Great’s “Great Northern Expedition” of Siberia in the first half of the eighteenth century, which established Siberia as Asian and Russia as European, not only in surveys and on maps, but through the activity of participating in European explorations and mapmaking.¹ Peter had founded the Academy of Sciences in 1724 and staffed it with German scientists. Surveys brought back accounts of geography, resources, flora, fauna, and of different peoples and languages, and the Russian Empire gained the distinction of not only being the largest, but also of having the most diverse population. Moreover, many of the scientists and explorers who would survey and write about the Russia Empire were foreign, as were many officers in Russia’s military, yet they were all Russian subjects in that they served the Russian state. By the early nineteenth century, this educated international elite, like the rulers they served, would be newly defined

and restricted by their national origins, and would learn to compensate for their cosmopolitan origins by going national.

Catherine promoted ethnic and religious tolerance because she subscribed to theories that advocated population growth for the success of Russia's military and economy, which she believed to depend on agriculture and thus to require adequate population density. Her ideas on the economy were part of the debates about the economic importance of agriculture versus industrialization that were taking place across Europe and in America. On October 14, 1762, a month after her coronation, Catherine instituted a settlement program with financial incentives and the promise of religious freedom to encourage immigration. On July 22, 1763, she named Count Grigory Orlov (1734–83)—her favorite (1760–72) and father of her second son, Aleksei Grigorevich Bobrinsky (1762–1813)—president of the new Chancery of Guardianship for Foreigners, with an initial annual budget of 200,000 rubles. Orlov kept his post for ten years, even when he was no longer her favorite, and the program cost the state 5.5 million rubles by 1770. Nearly 30,000 Germans came to farm the Volga area with offers of subsidies. Ottoman Christians were invited with the promise of religious freedom. Catherine lifted the double tax Peter the Great had levied on Old Believers and encouraged them to return from the north with freedom to settle where they wished.²

Catherine tried to work with local traditions, privileges, and laws while promoting uniform Russian laws through a process she called "Russification." S. I. Ozhegov defines *obruset'* as "to become Russian in language and customs."³ The writer, lexicographer, and ethnographer Vladimir Dal' (1801–72) includes the saying, "The Karelians and Mordva have gone native in Russia, but Yids take forever to Russify."⁴ These definitions, similar to the first use of "Russify" in English at the end of the nineteenth century, indicate the linguistic and cultural roots of national identities that became part of debates about nationalism only in the nineteenth century.⁵ But Catherine was mainly interested in policies that promoted political and legal structural integration with Russia of areas that had diverse ethnic groups and religions. For the most part, Catherine's policies left national and religious differences alone.

In February 1764, Catherine explained her principles of uniform governance for non-Russian provinces in her instructions (in Russian) to her new procurator-general, Prince Aleksandr Viazemsky (1727–96), who would be her most important administrator:

Little Russia, Livonia, and Finland are provinces governed according to privileges that have been confirmed; to destroy them by revoking them all suddenly would be unseemly—but to call them foreign and to treat them as such would be more than a mistake, it can be called really stupid. These provinces, as well as Smolensk, should, by the simplest means, be brought to the point when they Russify and stop yearning like wolves for the woods. The approach to this is very simple if sensible people are appointed rulers of these provinces; when there is no longer a hetman in Little Russia we must strive to make the name and legacy of hetmans disappear and let no one be appointed to that post.⁶

By late February or early March 1764, Catherine had made life so difficult for hetman Kirill Razumovsky that he apparently asked to be relieved of his post. His position was abolished and Little Russia was put under the administration of Governor-General Peter Rumiantsev, whose secret instructions were to Russify Ukraine's governmental structures.⁷ Always practical, Catherine did this despite her personal debt to Razumovsky, who had been Empress Elizabeth'smorganatic husband, had helped lead Catherine's coup, and held positions in her new government.

The ethnic diversity of the Russian Empire was also on view in the Legislative Commission of 1767, which Catherine convened to aid in the creation of a new code of laws to succeed the Code of 1649, Russia's first legal codex. Catherine's innovative legislative exercise called for the election of representatives of three of the four estates (the nobility, merchants, and free peasants, but not the Church) and of areas with their own laws: the Baltic Provinces, Little Russia (including various Cossack hosts), and the non-Russian tribes. Tribesmen constituted the third largest group of representatives, nearly ten percent (54 out of approximately 570).⁸ The semi-autonomous regions debated whether a Russian assembly could draft laws for them, but of even greater concern were the differences in social standing between delegates. Tensions over the legal rights that defined the estates (especially the rights of the nobility), rather than between ethnic groups, marked the deliberations, an indication that national differences had yet to become the divisive force they would be from the nineteenth century up to the present.⁹

From 1764 to 1787, Catherine made several well-publicized trips both to see her empire and to be seen by her new subjects; she spent three and a half years of her thirty-three-year reign traveling.¹⁰ In the Baltic provinces, Little Russia (Ukraine), Belarus, and the Crimea, Catherine faced the problem of border areas that had different privileges and laws than the rest of Russia, especially regarding the nobility, serfs, judiciary, and taxation. In June 1764 she toured the Baltics for three weeks, visiting Reval in Estonia and Riga in Livonia, and going as far as Mitau in Courland, the only time she would ever leave the Russian Empire, before returning hastily to deal with the murder of Ivan VI. Although German was the lingua franca of the Baltics, official speeches were in Russian and Catherine went to Orthodox services.¹¹ In Livonia, in an experiment to improve the condition of serfs, agrarian reform was introduced in an area with extensive state lands, whereas nobles in the Landtag agreed to legal reforms for serfs, the Patent of April 12, 1765. But Catherine's Legislative Commission would make clear that the Russian nobility did not want to reform serfdom, but rather wished to increase their control over serfs; Catherine needed their support and shelved the subject. In 1767, before the opening of the Legislative Commission, she traveled down the Middle Volga, visiting Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Nizhnii Novgorod, Kazan', the ruins of Bolgary, and Simbirsk—areas that had been conquered by Ivan the Terrible two centuries earlier and would soon erupt in the Pugachev rebellion.

Not since the sixteenth century had Russia expanded on the scale it would under Catherine, nearly doubling its population from 23.2 to 41 million and increasing its territory by 11,000 square miles, to 305,794 square miles.¹² This process began two

centuries earlier when Tsar Ivan the Terrible conquered the khanates of Kazan' and Astrakhan' in 1552. In 1721, Peter the Great looked to Europe and Rome, and away from the Byzantine Empire, when he claimed the title emperor and declared Russia to be a European empire. Catherine took up the military goals of her predecessors as she expanded Russia south toward ports on the Black Sea, west toward Poland, and northwest along ports on the Baltic Sea, and participated in the European wars between the great powers of England, France, Prussia, Austria, and the Ottoman Empire. She launched the First Turkish War (1768–74) and took Moldavia and Wallachia, which in the First Polish Partition (1772) she traded for parts of Belarus and Latvia. In 1783, Russia annexed the khanate of Crimea from Turkey, but it was again in play during the Second Turkish War (1787–92), as Russia moved southeast toward Constantinople (Istanbul) under Prince Grigory Potemkin's Greek project, which would have put Catherine's grandson Constantine on the throne of a Greek empire. The Treaty of Jassy (1792) recognized Russia's annexation of the Crimea, and led to the founding of Odessa, Russia's first port on the Black Sea since the twelfth century. Russia increased its land farther along the Black Sea, and in two more successive Polish Partitions (in 1793 and 1795), erased Poland from the map and took over Lithuania, Courland, and the remains of Belarus and Ukraine. When she died, Catherine was preparing to send armies to France together with Austria and Prussia in the First Coalition against Napoléon, and to Armenia and Georgia, where Russia had again established a protectorate.

In 1767, in a letter from Kazan' to France's greatest eighteenth-century public intellectual, Voltaire, Catherine contemplated the impossibility of bringing together Europe and Asia in her empire. Voltaire supported Catherine as a European sovereign, limited by natural rule of law, a position that Catherine promoted in her letters to him, and every letter in their famous correspondence begins with a short dance of mutual flattery. In this letter, she referred to a panegyric of herself, just published by Voltaire, *Lettres sur les panégyriques*, under the pseudonym Irénée Aléthès, professeur en droit dans le canton Suisse d'Uri. While traveling, she and her entourage translated Jean-François Marmontel's *Bélisaire* (1767), a history of the great Roman general (c. 500–65) who led the Byzantine army to conquer lands the Romans had lost, and which was dedicated to her; she translated chapter 9, "On the Ruler." Since 1765, she had been researching and writing her *Great Instruction*, a statement (in French) of her legislative principles that would confer legitimacy on her as an enlightened ruler when published in several languages in 1768. This letter expressed Catherine's awareness that the intellectual framework she brought to her job was only a first, limited step in dealing adequately with the diversity that the Russian Empire presented.

Kazan, May 29, 1767

I had threatened to send you a letter from some shack in Asia and I am keeping my word today.

It seems to me that the authors of the anecdote about Belisarius and of the letter about the panegyrics are close relatives of the Abbot Bazin [one of

Voltaire's pseudonyms], but wouldn't the gentleman prefer to publish all panegyrics to people after their death, for fear that sooner or later they prove unworthy, given the inconsequentiality and instability of human affairs. I do not know if after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes people took the panegyrics of Louis XIV seriously.¹³ The refugees at least were not disposed to give them much weight.

I beg you sir to use your credit with the learned man of the Canton of Uri, that he not lose his time in composing a panegyric to me until my death. The laws about which so much has been said are after all not yet completed. And who can say if they are good. It is posterity and not us in truth who will be able to judge their goodness. Consider, I beg you, that they must serve both Asia and Europe. And what difference in climates, in people, in habits, and even in ideas. Here I am in Asia, I wanted to see this with my own eyes. There are in this city twenty different peoples who do not at all resemble each other. Yet a garment must be made that will fit them all. They may well find for themselves general principles, but what of the details? And such details! I would say that there is almost a world to create, to unite, to preserve. I wouldn't even finish and still there are too many details of all kinds. If all of this doesn't succeed, the scraps from my letters that I found cited in your latest publication will seem ostentatious (what do I know?) both to the impartial and to those jealous of me, and in any event my letters were only published out of respect and are not fit for print. It is true that it is very flattering and does me honor to see the sentiment with which the author of the letter on the panegyrics composed all this. But Belisarius says that just such a moment is dangerous for my kind. Being always right, Belisarius no doubt will not be wrong in this either. The translation of this latest book is finished and is going to be printed. To test this translation it was read by two people who did not know the original. One exclaimed that he would have had his eyes put out to be Belisarius. He would have been amply recompensed. The second says that he would be jealous of the other.¹⁴ In closing, sir, receive this evidence of my recognition for all the marks of friendship that you have given me, but if possible, keep my scribbles out of print.

Catherine¹⁵

In this letter, Catherine raised the main problem that her empire presented, which was to devise a general pattern of administration that nevertheless would accommodate the particular details of many peoples. Throughout her reign she constantly studied how different countries arranged their administration of the various estates, geopolitical divisions, judiciary, and finances to devise plans that were suited to Russia and its diverse population and were effective. The many notes and drafts of plans in her own hand found in archives demonstrate the extent to which these projects consumed her time, intellect, imagination, and energy.

In her correspondence with Voltaire, which was widely read in France and published after he died in 1778, Catherine made sure she was seen to be studying gov-

ernance, and presenting herself as an enlightened European ruler. During the first Russo-Turkish War from 1768 to 1774, Catherine wrote Voltaire more letters than at any other time, to promote her version of the war as a triumph for civilization against what she and Voltaire called Mustafa and the Muslim infidels. Catherine knew that many Europeans, including Voltaire, wondered if Russia could become a civilized European nation, and that they saw little difference between Turks and Russians; thus, her wars against the Ottoman Empire were an opportunity to represent herself and Russia as European and civilizing. At this time, Catherine even invited Voltaire and Diderot to come visit; Diderot did and was disappointed because Catherine was less receptive to his ideas in person. The Comte de Ségur recounted an anecdote from their meetings that underscores her practical concerns: "Monsieur Diderot . . . [i]n all your plans for reform you forget the difference between our two positions: you work only on paper, which tolerates everything; it is smooth, supple, and offers no resistance to either your imagination or your pen; whereas I, a poor Empress, work on human skin, which is much more irritable and ticklish."¹⁶

In response to the Pugachev Revolt of 1773–74, Catherine embarked on a decade of administrative reforms that fundamentally restructured local government to increase centralization and local control, especially in troubled areas. In 1780, Catherine traveled to the new western provinces after the first Polish Partition to inspect firsthand the results of her Gubernia Reform, enacted on November 7, 1775. She replaced Peter the Great's provinces with gubernias comprising uniform numbers of male inhabitants and further divided into *uezdy*, and designated and created capital cities and towns, which increased the urban population; these reforms lasted until 1917. Her judicial reforms, which created additional levels of courts to improve their efficiency, remained in place until Alexander II's great reforms of 1864. Catherine also instituted schools, hospitals, and poorhouses.

Catherine believed that education could shape and civilize Russians and tribesmen alike into citizens of her empire. In 1780, in the midst of these reforms, Catherine visited Narva, Pskov, Polotsk, Mogilev, Smolensk, and Novgorod along with experienced administrators, who made detailed reports at each stop. In Mogilev, Catherine met with Emperor Joseph II of the Austro-Hungarian and Holy Roman Empires. They shared strategic interests against the Ottoman Empire, and both sought to establish educational policy for a multinational empire. Catherine had set up the Commission on National Education in 1783, and was the first ruler to institute a plan for free general standardized education, for which she relied on a Serbian pedagogue, F. I. Jankovich de Mirjevo (1741–1814). He was a student of Johann Ignaz Felbiger (1724–88), who had shaped educational policies for Austro-Hungary and Prussia and was the author of the textbook Catherine chose, *The Duties of Man and Citizen* (1783), which was deliberately secular.

Reforms were instituted in the non-Russian borderlands in the mid-1780s, and included advice from the governors of Novgorod, Livland, and Finland, for Catherine recognized that the Baltic provinces had long had good local government. Nevertheless, following Catherine's policy of uniform laws and centralized

administration, Estonians and Livonians were forced to bargain away some rights in exchange for others, and Ukrainians and Cossacks were handled similarly, despite protestations. Questions about noble status and rights were finally resolved by decrees that cut the nobility in Little Russia, inflated by many dubious claims, by over half, while in Livonia, the power of the nobility was diluted by adding the Landsassen, who under Russia's Charter to the Nobility (1785) were nobles through military and civil service, to a nobility based solely on birth. Reforms eliminated the Livonian Landtag (diet)—where the nobility debated laws, regulations, and taxes—based on the argument that they could now appeal directly to the governor, governor-general, and the empress, a change that increased the government's power over the nobility. In exchange, nobles were allowed to keep land that had accrued to them but belonged to the state. Little Russia's Cossacks were regularized in military units and treated like other recruits. The peasants and serfs were most affected by the poll tax (or head tax) and census, which in Little Russia forced the mobile peasantry to live where they had registered in order to pay tax. Although the Baltic provinces had almost no free serfs, free peasants were now forced to register, live, and pay tax in one place. The Church in Little Russia was put under government administration and stripped of its lands and peasants, who became state peasants, and in the Baltic provinces Russian Orthodoxy was given precedence over Lutheranism. Thus, Catherine streamlined various administrative structures in her quest to integrate and control old and newly acquired territories.

In 1787, she went on her last major journey, a six-month tour to Ukraine and Crimea, which culminated in month-long visit and tour of Crimea with her ally, Emperor Joseph II of Austria, whom she and Field Marshal Prince Grigory Potemkin (1739–91) endeavored to impress with Russia's military might and their joint conquest of the Crimea. The phrase "Potemkin villages" arose among the French diplomats and guests, a snide comment that suggested that all the accomplishments Potemkin put on display were an illusion to impress Catherine and her entourage. As part of this theater of empire, Catherine had her portrait painted by Potemkin's serf Shibanov in her traveling costume: a red caftan with the orders of St. Andrew, St. George, and St. Vladimir and a ruffle at her neck, and a fur cap with a tassel hanging down from the cloth top. She managed to appear both matronly and military; this was one of her favorite portraits and many copies were made as gifts.¹⁷

The Baltic provinces, Little Russia, and the Crimea each presented very different challenges for Catherine's reforms, but in the eighteenth century, it was the differences between social estates rather than between nationalities and religions that proved most challenging to reconcile in a society based on the legal rights of estates. Potemkin, viceroy for all of southern Russia and Catherine's primary military architect for her southern strategy (and mostly like hermorganatic husband), was appointed governor-general of the newly created gubernii Azov and New Russia in 1775, and in 1785 of Yekaterinoslav and the district of Tauris (Crimea), and thus implemented Catherine's reforms in the Crimea. This led to an exodus of two thirds of the Crimean Tatars to Muslim lands by 1812, especially peasants, who fought attempts to take

away their rights and sometimes succeeded. Potemkin diluted their religious presence by adding Greeks, Jews, and Armenians, as Potemkin and Catherine followed a policy of religious tolerance. Using recruiters in Europe, Potemkin sought to colonize the newly vacant lands of the Crimea through various schemes with Russians, Swedes, Corsicans, Germans, and even English convicts. To solve the problem of different systems of nobility, Tatar nobles were given Russian ranks and put in positions of authority.

Language is the primary distinguishing feature between peoples, and the differences among languages would become increasingly important in the nationalist debates of the nineteenth century. In the 1780s, when the British discovery of Sanskrit made comparative linguistics fashionable, Catherine established a research project to assemble a comparative dictionary of all languages, to demonstrate to Europeans not only the linguistic riches of the Russian Empire, but also the ancient roots of Russian. With a list of 285 words in two hundred languages, the Russian Empire contributed over sixty languages. This international project coincided with the establishment of the Russian Academy and its publication of the first dictionary of Russian, which emphasized the Church Slavonic and etymological roots of Russian rather than its vernacular use, and thus did not include many foreign loan words that were an important feature of Russian as it changed rapidly in the eighteenth century to adapt to the stream of European influences. Here it departed from its model, the dictionary produced by the French Academy in 1699, which followed the actual usage of contemporary French by educated society and writers. The tensions between Catherine's international scientific dictionary and the Russian Academy's national dictionary portended the new nationalist tensions of the nineteenth century, when the Russian Empire would become "Russia."

NOTES

1. Richard Wortman, "Texts of Exploration and Russia's European Identity," in *Russia Engages the World, 1453–1825*, ed. Cynthia Hyla Whittaker with Edward Kasinec and Robert H. Davis, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 90–117.

2. The three main recent biographies of Catherine the Great in English are John T. Alexander, *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 80–81; Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great* (London: Phoenix Press, 2002), 361–69; and Simon Dixon, *Catherine the Great* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 145–46.

3. S. I. Ozhegov and N. Iu. Shvedova, *Tolkovyi slovar' russkogo iazyka* (Moscow: Russkii iazyk, 1989), 435.

4. V. I. Dal', *Tolkovyi slovar' zhivogo velikorusskogo iazyka* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo inostrannykh i natsional'nykh slovarei, 1955), 2:616.

5. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2006).

6. Catherine's secret instructions to A. A. Viazemskii, *Sbornik Imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva* (St. Petersburg, 1871), 7:348.

7. Alexander, *Catherine the Great*, 87–88.

8. Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, 150.

9. Alexander, *Catherine the Great*, 112–20; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 86–88.

10. Simon Dixon, *Catherine the Great* (New York: Longman, 2001), 42.

11. Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, 62.

12. *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (St. Petersburg: I. A. Efron, 1899; repr. Yaroslavl: Terra, 2001), 54:75, 55:473. In addition to 18 million Russians, there were approximately 7 million Ukrainians, 5 million Belarusians, and 2 million Poles. In addition, Finns, Tatars, Latvians, Jews, Lithuanians, and Estonians made up about a half million people, in addition to Chuvash, Moldavians, Germans, Swedes, Bashkirs, and others, including nomads. These peoples included Uniates, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and pagans. Catherine Evtuhov, David Goldfrank, Lindsey Hughes, and Richard Stites, *A History of Russia: Peoples, Legends, Events, Forces* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 282. For an extensive description, see "Rossiia: Rossiia v etnograficheskom otnoshenii," *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, 54:139–52.

13. In 1589, Henry IV issued the Edict of Nantes, giving Protestants equal rights in Catholic France to end the French Wars of Religion. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685 led to the exodus of Huguenots to neighboring Protestant lands. The daughter of a Huguenot refugee would be Catherine's French governess while growing up in Anhalt-Zerbst.

14. At the end of his life, Belisarius may have been blinded and forced to be a beggar by the Emperor Justinian I, a story Marmontel included and popularized.

15. Voltaire, *Voltaire's Correspondence*, ed. T. Besterman (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1961), 66:16–17.

16. Comte de Ségur, *Mémoires ou Souvenirs et anecdotes*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1826), 3:42–43.

17. Several portraits of Catherine, including a copy of Shibanov's portrait, are on view at Hillwood Museum, Washington D.C., which has the largest collection of Russian art in the United States.