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Taking History by the Wig: Peter the Great and Russia's Cultural and Historical Diversity in Alexander Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter*

Maksim Klymentiev

Pushkin and His Last Muse – Clio

Alexander Pushkin's infatuation with history – both in its national and ancestral aspects – is well known to researchers. Numerous studies have been devoted to detailed analyses and interpretations of the poet's continuous engagement with the past that marked the last decade of his life.[1] However, practically none of them has treated in detail the question of why Pushkin chose to deal with certain concrete periods of Russian history – those of Peter the Great and the Pugachev uprising – rather than treat the national past in a more all-encompassing way characteristic of such nineteenth-century bourgeois historians as Michelet and Guizot. In this study, I attempt to answer this question by looking at Pushkin's short novel *The Captain's Daughter* (1836) and the vision of history that it entails from an angle that does not view – in contrast to some recent studies on the subject[2] – the nature of the later Pushkin's attitude towards history as that of the modern historiographer. Instead, following Frank Ankersmit's definition of historiography "as a cultural phenomenon that forms in its turn our views of politics, science, etc.,"[3] I rather see Pushkin as a historian of culture who was primarily interested in the periods of Russian history that were marked by major shifts in the country's cultural affiliations. In my opinion, many previous studies of the novel that concentrated on its intertextual dimension and structural interplay tended to pay insufficient attention to Pushkin's active explorations of the cultural context of both Pugachev's epoch and his own time without which the novel would probably never have been written in its present form. In fact, it appears that Pushkin's remarkable closeness to the center of Russia's political power in the 1830s (the court) and the

1 See: B. V. Tomashevskii, "Istorism Pushkina," *Uch. zap. LGU*, No. 173. Seriia filol. nauk 20 (1954), pp. 41–85; D. Blagoi, *Sotsiologiia tvorchestva Pushkina* (Moscow: Mir, 1931); I. M. Toibin, "Voprosy istorizma i khudozhestvennaia sistema Pushkina 1830-kh godov," in M. P. Alekseev, D. D. Blagoi, B. P. Gorodetskii, N. V. Izmailov, B. S. Meilakh, Y. G. Oksman, eds., *Pushkin: Issledovaniia i materialy*, Vol. 6 (Leningrad: Nauka, 1969); B. B. Kafengauz, "Pushkin o Petre I," *Istoriia SSSR* 3 (1961), pp. 150–160; G. P. Makogonenko, *Tvorchestvo A. S. Pushkina v 1830-e gody* (Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1974).

2 See, for example: Svetlana Evdokimova, *Pushkin's Historical Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). pp. 9–12.

3 Frank Ankersmit, "Historiography and Postmodernism," *History and Theory* 28:2 (1989), p. 139.

highly classified information on Russian (political and cultural) history hidden in the state archives enabled him to identify for himself and eventually to represent in his last novel what the New Historicists call "the sites of struggle" where Russia's cultural forces both of his own time and that of Pugachev could erupt and manifest themselves.[4] Therefore, I argue that the New Historicist notion of a "cultural poetics" can prove useful in analyzing the complex interplay of culture and history in *The Captain's Daughter* helping one identify "the key images – and the values, beliefs, practices and social structures that those images point toward – of a particular cultural moment."[5]

When Nikolai Karamzin's *The History of the Russian State* produced its bombshell effect on the cultural self-awareness of its Westernized readership, it suddenly brought to light the age-old currents of the pre-Petrine history and culture lurking beneath the thin layer of Westernized reality in which the Russian political and cultural elite lived in the 1820s. *The History* lent significant weight to the Romanticist attack on the universalizing ideals of the Enlightenment in terms of which the pre-Petrine period of Russian history was a time of utter darkness and barbarism. The work also opened up a space for different interpretations of modern Russian culture[6] making palpable, for the first time since Peter the Great, its arguably most fundamental problematic – Russians' ultimate uncertainty about their true cultural affiliation with either the West or the East, Europe or Asia.[7]

Pushkin was certainly not immune to this new cultural challenge, as can be seen in his works dealing with the Russian past: *Boris Godunov*, *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great, Poltava*, and *The Captain's Daughter*. In fact, his interest in the history of the 1830s went as far as to constitute an occupation of its own culminating in his acceptance of the uncertain, if influential, position of a court historian at the court of Nicholas I. It is at this point that Pushkin came to realize one important political aspect of the above-mentioned Russian cultural dilemma – namely, that the extent of Western influence on Russia, at least since the end of the Ryurik dynasty, had always been mediated by the monarchy.[8]

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4 Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 2–19.

5 Vincent Leitch, William Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, and Jeffrey Williams, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (New York: W. W. Norton:, 2001), p. 2250.

6 Andrew Wachtel, *An Obsession with History: Russian Writers Confront the Past* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 4–7.

7 This can be seen in the case of Karamzin himself, who, having once been the staunchest westernizer of the Russian letters, had by the end of his life acquired a very critical attitude toward Peter's political and cultural sweep-up of Russia. This was especially evident in his "Notes on The Old and New Russian History" much admired by Pushkin who discovered it for himself precisely during his work on *Captain's Daughter.*

8 Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 9–11.

Responding in 1836 to Chaadaev's scathing critique of contemporary Russia, Pushkin stated quite clearly this capacity of the center of Russian political power to "administer" its country through the imposition of cultural barriers and balances: "I must add...that our government is still the only European in Russia."[9]

At the same time, Pushkin's rising interest in his family's past resulted in an increased awareness of his own aristocratic roots and affiliations in society and literature as opposed to the emerging Russian mass culture dominated by the likes of Bulgarin and Grech.[10] It is this double emphasis, on both the cultural and the personal, or ancestral, which informs Pushkin's notion of history in *The Captain's Daughter*. For Pushkin, this new situation involved looking into his ancestral past for answers bearing on the general nature of modern Russian history and, conversely, approaching the latter's events from the conspicuously personal perspective of his later years.

By referring earlier to Pushkin as a historian of culture, I wanted to stress that not only did he tend to conceive of Russian history mostly through its cultural manifestations but that he also, as a self-conscious member of the nobility, always had difficulties in treating history in the "detached" and "impersonal" way of later bourgeois historians. Therefore, the recent tendency to "modernize," or "democratize," the poet's attitude toward history[11] is bound to be problematic. This will be the case as long as one disregards the special kind of continuity present in history for the members of the aristocracy who, until the advent of modernity, viewed themselves and their ancestry as history's main agents. For Pushkin, Russian national history simply had to have its "subhistory" where the actions of his ancestors could be reflected, and this second, familial, kind of history must have been just as instrumental in his specific historical "selectivity" as the cultural appeal of his chosen periods of Russia's past.[12] This is also why it was so important for Pushkin to use in *The Captain's Daughter* the narrator-"eyewitness" of noble birth who claimed to be in the very midst of real historical events.

Two Different Stories about One Event

No discussion of Pushkin's writings on Pugachev can proceed without establishing some relationship between the markedly different approaches

9 Aleksandr Pushkin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii (PSS)*, Vol. 8–10 (Moscow: Khudlit, 1962): *PSS* 10, p. 363. Chaadaev's criticism marked the point after which the Russian monarchy had completely stifled the influx of Western political ideas into Russia – something which it had been encouraging since Peter – in order to counter the inherently democratizing and egalitarian consequences of the European Enlightenment.

10 William Mills III Todd, *Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin: Ideology, Institutions, and Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 100.

11 Evdokimova, *Pushkin's Historical Imagination*, pp. 2–6.

12 *PSS* 9, p. 137.

to history found in *The History of Pugachev* (1834) and *The Captain's Daughter.* While the former is characterized by its dry and generally unsympathetic portrayal of the rebellion, the latter reflects a much broader and more favorable stance by Pushkin toward the insurrection and its charismatic leader. The critics usually make two basic claims in this respect stating either that Pushkin's conception of the rebellion was uniform in both works,[13] or arguing that, conversely, all his historical narratives "offer...self-sufficient and discrete glimpses into...historical reality."[14] What is omitted in both of these positions are two important factors in Pushkin's life of the 1830s – the flow of time and the flow of money. The two Pugachev narratives have always been treated by critics synchronically as it were, that is, as written, according to Evdokimova, "almost simultaneously."[15] However, two and a half rather tempestuous years had elapsed between the time of *The History*'s completion and the writing of *The Captain's Daughter*. These years were filled for Pushkin with intense research and archival work, but, importantly, during this time, he was able to gain exclusive access to a plethora of previously unavailable materials for both his Pugachev narrative and the unfinished "History of Peter" (the bulk of which was researched and written in 1835). Most of this new information, including the Pugachev files from the Foreign Ministry's archive as well as many new materials sent to him by *The History*'s readers, eventually grew enough to compose, according to Pushkin, "the third Pugachev volume."[16] The novel's text acknowledges this process through the publisher's remark that the manuscript came from "Grinev's grandson who learned that we studied the time of his grandfather."[17]

Apparently, it is during this time that Pushkin's most mature views on Russian history finally formed, and *The Captain's Daughter* was written at least partially to represent them. This can be seen in the change in Pushkin's appreciation for both Pugachev (who had developed from the initially derogatory figure of Emel'ka and Denis Davydov's "likhoi ur'adnik" into a character of almost epic and even quasi-royal stature in the novel) and Peter (whose *History* Pushkin was so enthusiastic about in the early 1830s but whose life had eventually revealed to the poet so many dreadful details that he had practically lost the desire to continue the project by 1836).[18] Michail Gillelson, in his study of the genesis of *The Captain's Daughter*, established that the major plot lines and relationships among the characters marking the transition from the novel's "Basharin" variant to its final "Grinev" version could only take place

13 Wachtel, *An Obsession with History*, p. 37.

14 Evdokimova, *Pushkin's Historical Imagination*, p. 18.

15 Ibid., p. 22.

16 *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina. 1832–1837*, Vol. 4 (Moscow: Slovo, 1999), p. 418; Vikentii V. Veresaev, *Pushkin v zhizni, 1867-1945* (Moscow: Firma Art, 1992), p. 99.

17 Alexander Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, Vol. 7 (Norfolk: Milner and Company, 1999), p. 175.

18 *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, p. 442.

in the summer of 1836. The decision to drastically rework the earlier version of the novel (completed between the second half of 1835 and the first half of 1836) appears to have directly resulted from Pushkin's intensified research on Peter as well as from his work with Pugachev's investigation files in Moscow in May of 1836. Only these files, previously unavailable to him and containing enough data to "bury" him in the archive for "six months,"[19] gave Pushkin a rare and long-wanted insight into the minds and true motivations of the rebels. This can also explain why the "omitted chapter" was taken out of the novel's final version, as its presence would simplify and dilute the cultural thrust of the work that had been abruptly affected by Pushkin's access to the new documents on the rebellion.

Therefore, underestimating the pace at which Pushkin was acquiring and reevaluating historical data during the very last years and even months of his life can limit any conception of his engagement with history. The difference in his approaches to the Pugachev rebellion as manifest in *The History* and *The Captain's Daughter* may be not so much the result of genre pressures on Pushkin than that of the natural development of the later Pushkin's rapidly expanding understanding of Russian history.

Another side of the issue was financial. It is no secret that, after Pushkin entered service at court, his position as a salaried official and court historian had started resembling that of Karamzin in the 1800s. In fact, during his archival research on the rebellion as well as during his 1833 trip to Orenburg, Pushkin was officially considered an employee of the state, in addition receiving a twenty thousand-ruble loan from the court for the publication of the work (which he never paid back, apparently, because *The History* did not sell well). If one compares this with the way *The Captain's Daughter* was put out in 1836 (written privately and published anonymously, at the author's own expense, after passing regular censorship), one can see that the two works were written, as the French theorist Pierre Bourdieu would put it, from two markedly different positions within the "literary field." In addition, since *The History of Pugachev* was very much a financial failure for Pushkin, a successful novel on the topic (already well-researched and popularized with the use of state funds) could work well to revitalize readers' interest in buying its academic "prequel," to which, in fact, they were obliquely prompted by several passages in the novel. Underestimating these considerations, so important for the financially deprived Pushkin of the 1830s, can lead one to a rather inadequate assessment of the relationship between the two Pugachev narratives.

Peter's Reforms through the Eyes of Culture

Peter the Great's efforts to Westernize Russia were undoubtedly the guiding reason for Pushkin's interest in the history of the 1830s. Apart from the

19 See the letter to his wife of May 14–16, 1836: *PSS* 10, p. 383.

numerous treatments of the topic in his fiction, notebooks, and letters of the time, the main historical project on which Pushkin was working intermittently for the last five years of his life was the unfinished "History of Peter." What remains of this project clearly shows that Pushkin, being a man of letters rather than a "professional" historian, was more interested in the cultural rather than political aspects of Peter's reforms, which is also evident in his close interest in descriptions of pre-Petrine culture by foreigners.

Summarizing in Peter's "History" how the czar's activities met with the most violent opposition by his subjects, Pushkin mentions mainly those that had the deepest cultural impact on the old Muscovite way of life: the czar's abolition of the ancient Muscovite script, dress code, and court rituals; the elimination of the predominantly Old-believer Streltsy; and the introduction of Western weaponry, military customs, and conscription as well as sending boyars' sons abroad to study modern sciences and crafts, which was considered by many as "unworthy of their noble status."[20] Pushkin also lists there such culturally important acts as the czar's foundation of the new capital, his profanation of the Orthodox religion, "beard shaving,...the introduction of German customs, and favoritism of foreigners."[21] All the above as well as the destruction of the czarevitch "adored by the people who saw him as a future restorer of the old ways" is given by Pushkin as the main "causes of riots and bloodshed."[22] Rather than analyzing the pragmatic or economic interests of society's different groups, Pushkin repeatedly stresses throughout the text the cultural repercussions of Westernization on the old Muscovite society: "The elders grumbled about sending young men abroad saying that the czar, by taking them away from the Orthodoxy, was converting them to foreign heresies. The wives of those sent overseas wore mourning dresses...The people thought Peter was the Antichrist."[23] This view was strengthened by Peter's adoption of the new calendar in 1700 described by Pushkin in the following way: "The people, however, grumbled. They wondered how a czar could change the sun's movement and, believing that God created the Earth in September, stuck to their original chronology."[24]

Therefore, by famously calling Peter a "revolutionary," Pushkin probably had in mind Peter's cultural revolution that he offers in "The History of Peter" as the primary cause of both the general population's opposition and most of the Streltsy's mutinies.[25] Pushkin's interest in the cultural cause of the Streltsy

20 *PSS* 8, p. 10.

21 *PSS* 8, p. 11.

22 *PSS* 8, p. 11.

23 *PSS* 8, p. 12.

24 *PSS* 8, p. 71.

25 "Peter's intention [to send boyars' sons abroad, M. K.] became known to his subjects causing general horror and indignation. The clergy saw communication with heretics as a sin forbidden by the Holy Scriptures. People listened to this and lashed out at foreigners thinking that they were corrupting the young czar." *PSS* 8, p. 42.

dates back to beginning of his interest in Peter himself and is manifested in the introduction of Valerian, a son of an executed Streltsy leader, into the plot of *The Blackamoor*. After years of historical research in the 1830s, Pushkin could not help seeing that the primary reason for all Streltsy rebellions against Peter was their rejection of the new cultural order being established in the country.[26] The last 1698 mutiny of the Streltsy (who asked the Don Cossacks to be their allies) is also described in Pushkin's *History* as Muscovites' violent reaction to the threat of foreign cultural influence:

> The mutineers, after offering a public prayer and consecrating water, advanced toward the troops. Priests walked ahead carrying icons and crosses and cheering up the mutineers. The generals initially wanted to frighten them and opened cannon fire over their heads. The priests then declared that the rebels, as the true Orthodox believers, were protected by God himself against the heretic weaponry, and the Streltsy, having crossed themselves,... rushed into battle. They were met with grapeshot, and they wavered... Peter launched an investigation. The mutineers confessed that they intended to set Moscow on fire and destroy the Germans.[27]

Reading the above description, one is struck by how closely it resembles the numerous accounts of European colonization in Africa, India, and the Americas. The crucial difference for Pushkin, however, was that in Russia, this colonization was a self-inflicted one in which the borrowed supremacy of foreign weaponry and industrial expertise (themselves the products of another civilization) – was used by one side to crush the internal cultural opposition of the other.[28]

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26 On the strel'tsy's attitude toward Nikon's church reforms and westernization, see *PSS* 8, p. 32; Sergei Zenkovsky, *Russia's Old Believers* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970), p. 407. The following account (by a Jesuit living in Moscow in early 1700s) spells out well the cultural nature of the streltsy rebellions: "The very first intention of strel'tsy was to destroy completely the Germans and their district...elimination always threatens this nation here, and us together with it, if (God forbid!) His Highness Czar Peter dies" (Ibid., p. 414). Importantly, Peter started systematic implementation of his cultural reforms (such as shaving the boyards' beards and traditional garments, etc.) on the very same day when he personally executed the last strel'tsy (Ibid., pp. 414–415).

27 *PSS* 8, pp. 60–61. The History's description of the 1708 strel'tsy mutiny in Astrakhan' led by the Old Believer Bulavin – a continuation of the 1698 rebellion in Moscow – also offers a telling account of the stretsy's cultural opposition to Peter: "The cause for the rebellion was stretsy's certainty that the Orthodox religion was going to be eliminated by beard shaving and the obligatory wearing of the German dress. They intended to march on Moscow, waste it, kill all high-ranking officials, Germans, officers, and soldiers – in this way revenging the 1698 executions – and petition the czar to stick *to the old belief*" (*PSS* 8, p. 116).

28 Even if foreign weaponry was used by Muscovites to colonize Siberia before Peter, their use of such weapons was still very derivative resembling the Ottoman empire's handling of the military and technological innovations which the Turks acquired from the West but could not develop on their own.

Catherine as Another "Great" of Russian Cultural History

During his research into Peter's life, Pushkin could not but realize that the "bombshell" effect of Karamzin's *History* on the Russian cultural elite of the 1820s was in fact "fused" a century earlier by Peter himself and the eventual, if ambiguous, success of his reforms in Westernizing the higher strata of Russian society.[29] However, in Pushkin's view, one "great" Westernizer would not be enough to consolidate a cultural revolution and spread it throughout Russia.[30] His interest in the life of another "great" of modern Russian history – Catherine II – reflected his conviction that she was that second major Westernizer under whose rule the broadest Russian masses and their way of life came finally to be directly affected by Peter's cultural revolution: "One thing is to organize a revolution, and another is to secure its results. Until Catherine...[the Russian monarchs]...were just trying to prolong Peter's revolution – instead of consolidating it."[31] Indeed, Pushkin knew well that Catherine fully acknowledged her ideological ascendancy from Peter not only by erecting a famous monument to him but also by saying that "one does not have to invent any reforms for Russia – they are all in the drafts of Peter's ukazy."[32] Pushkin, however, did not write Catherine's history. Instead, he wrote *The History of Pugachev*, which suggests that the two periods of Russian history – Peter's cultural revolution and the Pugachev rebellion some seventy years later – were intimately connected for him.[33]

29 This ambiguity stemmed from the fact that Peter and Catherine, in their wholesale adoption of the culture of the Enlightenment, did not envision its inherently proto-democratic consequences. Therefore, when these consequences became, especially after the French Revolution, difficult to ignore, the Russian monarchy, beginning with Nicolas I, had to make an abrupt cultural turn inwards (the famous principle of "Orthodoxy, autocracy, narodnost") and to draw on Russia's indigenous cultural forces by engaging in the reconstruction of the Russian national past. By resisting further western influences, the nineteen century Russian monarchy took the path that would eventually bring it into the rapport with the sectarian Rasputin, Pugachev's most celebrated heir to date. In fact, in 1901, Vladimir Korolenko, writing about the Ural Cossacks' current attitudes toward Pugachev already had the audacity to say something that proves well the point above: "In general, the Pugachev rebellion seems to me in its psychological nature as one of the most loyalist movements of the Russian people" [http://az.lib.ru/k/korolenko_w_g/text_0770.shtml]. Another thing that Catherine most probably could never imagine lies in the fact that, just fifteen years after her death, Cossacks would start exclusively comprising the official bodyguard squad of the Russian monarchs.

30 Aleksandr Pushkin, *Dnevniki i avtobiograficheskaia proza* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1989), p. 84.

31 *PSS* 10, p. 363.

32 *PSS* 10, p. 289.

33 This can be seen, for example, in how closely the earlier description of the streltsy riots resembles the way in which Pushkin documents the 1771 Cossacks' riot in *The History of Pugachev*: "It became known [to the Cossacks, M. K.] that the government planned to form hussar squadrons out of them and...shave their beards...They assembled in the square and

William M. Todd, analyzing the novel's narrative structure, mentioned that the narrator's perspective "illuminates the conflict as one between the culture and government of the Westernized gentry (Catherine's state) and the culture and government of the un-Westernized, Cossack Old Believers (Pugachev's state)."[34] It seems that, after years of intensive research on Peter, Pushkin came to articulate one important connection between the two major areas of his historical interest: namely, that the Pugachev rebellion with its strong conservative thrust and affiliations with the Old Belief was the last attempt by forces still loyal to the old values of the Muscovite culture to counter, and possibly to reverse, the profound effect of Peter's cultural revolution.[35] It comes as no surprise, since the rebellion took place in the eastern, and last to be Westernized, part of Russia, where for centuries generations of dissenters, with many surviving Streltsy among them,[36] had been exiled by, or were fleeing from, the central government. The vast majority of the local Cossacks, who, according to Pushkin, regarded the Streltsy as their ancestors and shared their military structure and hatred of the Western-style "regular" army founded by Peter,[37] were strongly affiliated with the Old Believers who started moving east in the

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took out icons from the church...General Traubenberg went out against the rioters with troops and guns...The Cossacks rushed toward the guns. A battle followed" (*PSS* 8, p. 80).

34 Victor Terras, ed., *Handbook of Russian Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 360.

35 Incidentally, Pushkin started writing *The Bronze Horseman* immediately after his arrival to Boldino from his 1833 Orenburg trip.

36 *PSS* 8, pp. 28, 61.

37 *PSS* 8, p. 64. One of the Cossacks' leaders, T. M'asnikov, said of Pugachev during the trial that "we wanted to make him our leader who would restore our rituals and customs, suppressed and almost fallen, which the government has long been trying to change by establishing for [us] some new military order – which [we] never wanted to accept" (Vladimir Mavrodin, ed., *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia,* Vol. II (Leningrad: Leningrad University Press, 1966 p. 416)). One more important cultural causes for the rebellion was the Cossacks' deep animosity toward the "regular," conscription-based, army built by Peter who relinquished, in 1714, the medieval custom according to which the czar's suzerains had to bring to war their own military personnel. It was also Peter who, in 1721, deprived the country's Cossacks of their semi-autonomous self-rule and placed all their troops within the jurisdiction of the Military Kollegia that was run, like most of the eighteenth century Russian army, by foreign commanders (like the general Traubenberg killed by the Yaik Cossacks during their 1771 rebellion). In *The History of Pugachev*, Pushkin quotes the rebel as saying angrily the following about his last battle with colonel Michelsohn, his main military adversary during much of the rebellion: "This German would have never defeated me, were it not for that damn Chumakov" (Vladimir Mavrodin, ed., *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III (Leningrad: Leningrad University Press, 1970), p. 444). Chumakov was the rebels' artillery commander who deserted during the battle's most decisive moment and who was later instrumental in delivering Pugachev to the authorities. *Captain's Daughter* features him as "the young stately Cossack" at the rebels' feast who is asked by Pugachev to start the gallows song and whose offer of a glass of vodka is significantly rejected by Grinev (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 102).

late seventeenth century escaping persecution by the authorities. Thus, the center of cultural dissent against the increasing Westernization during Catherine's reign had moved closer to the country's loose eastern borders, which in pre-Petrine Russia were never as hermetic as those with the west.[38]

In the wake of the Enlightenment, Catherine's government had also started by the 1760s massive industrialization in many of the country's areas that would later become the main bases of support for Pugachev. In the Urals, it built numerous factories run by foreigners where recent resettled peasants performed the technological tasks that lay totally outside their traditional cultural and religious mindset. Not surprisingly, during the rebellion, most of these factories and their foreign management were destroyed by their pugnacious staff. Factory peasants supported the rebellion so wholeheartedly because Pugachev promised them not only the destruction of their alien cultural and working environment, but also a full return to their traditional pre-Petrine ways of living.[39]

Pugachev and the Old Belief

The current view of the rebellion's ideology is still under the influence of Soviet historiography that treated it as an early outbreak of the peasant masses' class consciousness. Today, however, this explanation has to be reconsidered, since it is difficult to reconcile it with the fact that the rebels never intended to abolish the traditional power hierarchies. For them, Pugachev was not so much a "muzhik" czar but a culturally acceptable "czar"[40] whose actions were seen by the masses as divinely inspired (and thus exempt from being evaluated in any rational or ethical terms) and who was greeted almost everywhere with the pre-Petrine rituals traditionally reserved for the Muscovite royalty: church bell ringing, processions with icons and crosses, mass kneeling and

38 Sending malcontents to Siberia constituted a technology of punishment by which Muscovite rulers got rid of their most dangerous subjects, while preserving their continuing push to the East. However, this situation began to change with the formation of the Empire, when Siberia became needed for a more specific and modern purpose – for exiling malcontents there with the aim of their punishment rather than banishment.

39 According to the Orenburg Secret commission report, the factory peasants "were most loyal to the pretender, because he promised them...to eliminate all factories which they hated" (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. II, p. 427). For a detailed overview of peasants' attitude toward factories, see: Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 88, n. 79.

40 Yury Lotman's view that "each of the two worlds represented by Pushkin has its own particular ways of everyday life, its own poetry, and its own aesthetic ideals" (Yurii Lotman, "Ideinaia struktura 'Kapitanskoi Dochki'," in Yurii Lotman, *Izbrannye Stat'i*, Vol. 2 (Tallinn: Aleksandra, 1992), p. 215) seems to agree well with my argument. However, Lotman insists on the "social" (Ibid., p. 219) nature of the divide between the supporters of Catherine and Pugachev, while I maintain that the divide was primarily a cultural and civilizational one.

hand kissing as well as bread-and-salt offering. The pre-1917 historiography better acknowledged the anti-Western cultural thrust of the rebellion and its close connection to the Old Belief,[41] which, in its turn, played an important role in the wave of impostors sweeping through Russia in the 1760–70s. Pushkin, in *The History of Pugachev*, did not fail to call the Don and Yaik Cossacks "Old Believers through and through"[42] and, repeating the label of the government manifestos, referred to Pugachev as a "schismatic." Pushkin also knew that the rebels had their own military banners featuring the Old Believers' crosses[43] and he mentioned them in the episode of Grinev's departure for Orenburg.[44]

At first glance, Pugachev's association with the Old Believers (going back to 1764 when he served in the government troops sent to Poland to deal with the local Old Believers) makes him look similar to the leaders of the peasant and spiritual revolts in medieval Europe so convincingly described by Norman Cohn.[45] This similarity includes Pugachev's assumption of a royal identity after years of "penitential" wandering (as was the case with the pseudo-Baldwin and Frederick II) as well as his overt religious inspiration and even the quasi-genetic "sovereign marks" on his body interpreted by his followers as divine signs (mentioned by a Cossack as "the czar's signs" in *The Captain's Daughter*). However, intercultural conflicts were rarely an issue for medieval European peasants and paupers whose main grievances Cohn traces to their economic predicaments and intraconfessional tensions. The origin of their dissent clearly lay within the internal developments of their own cultures and societies. In contrast, Pugachev's rebellion was driven mostly by cultural causes and strived to regain a past that was quickly disappearing under the "external" pressure of Westernization brought to Russia by Peter.[46]

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41 Nicholas Dubrovin, *Pugachev i ego soobshchniki*, Vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg: Skorokhodov, 1884), p. 35.

42 *PSS* 8, p. 64.

43 Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. II, pp. 475–477.

44 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 107. Some Soviet and Western researchers insinuated this connection as well (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 349; Zen'kovsky, *Russia's Old Believers*, p. 20). It is important to note that Pugachev tried to pass for Peter III – the Russian czar who, during his short term in power, lifted most of the laws designed to persecute Old Believers.

45 Norman Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Pimpleo, 1993), pp. 3–18.

46 Modern scholarship considers Peter's reforms as the decisive stage in the process of Russia's gradual self-westernization that started with the Romanovs-sponsored church reform of 1666–1667 and the ensuing great religious Schism (Pricsilla Hunt's entry in Victor Terras, ed., *Handbook of Russian Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985) p. 277). Pushkin's knowledge of the Schism was extensive judging by the numerous references to it found in *The History of Peter*. Even though the Schism's cultural significance had not been given its full value until *The Life of Avvakum* was published in 1861, *The History of Peter* reflected well the main tenets of the Old Believers's doctrine – the final end of the world, the Anti-Christ's rule, and the benefits of life in the wilderness. Old Believers considered Nikon's reforms as the beginning of the reign of the Anti-Christ who appeared to them

It has also been established that the two other major rebellions in Russia's east – the one led by Razin, a long-time subject of Pushkin's interest and reportedly a two-time pilgrim to Solovetskii Monastery (the last stronghold of Old Belief in Russia), and the one headed by the Old Believer Bulavin – had much of their origin in the schism.[47] Importantly, the entry in Pushkin's diary for October 6, 1834 explicitly relates the rebellions by Razin and Pugachev to each other and to Peter the Great's reforms: "While in prison, Pugachev...said: 'When Peter the Great heard, during his Persian campaign, that Sten'ka Razin's grave was nearby, he went there and ordered the place be dug up so that he could see at least his bones.' The tale is remarkable, especially because it is told by Pugachev."[48]

Apart from a plethora of documents related to the rebellion, Pushkin had at his disposal at least fourteen of Pugachev's manifestos[49] where the rebels, inspired by the Old Belief, declared that they wanted to take "the four-ended crosses, like those on Protestant churches, down from the Russian churches and replace them with real crosses made in the way the Holy Scripture says."[50] He also knew that, whenever the rebels captured a town, they immediately destroyed all state-issued documents, acting consistently with the Old Believ-

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in the person of Peter the Great. Their self-imposed regulations prohibited, among other things, handling printed documents and paper money as well as responding to questioning by the authorities and even walking on paved roads. Since what they took for the signs of the End of Days were such major concerns of the post-Petrine Russian governments as circulation of printed knowledge, establishment of the procedures for personal identification, keeping track of population, road construction, etc., Pushkin could not but consider the Old Belief as the integral part of the country's general opposition to the Romanovs'–sponsored drive for self–westernization.

47 Paul Avrich, *Russian Rebels* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 40; Zen'kovsky, *Russia's Old Believers*, p. 419. *The History of Peter* specifies that Bulavin "released a seditious manifesto and ... said that he was going to Moscow and Poland to eliminate boyars and Germans" (*PSS* 8, p. 151). Also see Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, p. 37. More recently, the Russian historian Eugene Anisimov went on to "pacify" the Old Believers by stating that they "never really threatened the authority of the Russian czars. No single event has been known when their elders planned to take the lives of the hated czars and the Church hierarchs...The resistance of the Old Believers was almost always passive" [Sited on www.starover.religare.ru/article7180.html]. This denial of the verified historical data seems to be dubious, since it has been amply acknowledged that at least two of the streltsy mutinies in the 1680s were directly inspired by the Old Belief (*The History of Peter* gives a vivid account of how the young Peter was almost killed in one of them). To give another example – the fully armed government troops had to lay a 7-year (sic!) siege to the famous Solovki monastery in order to quell atrociously the "passive" resistance of the monks-schismatics (For an illuminating account of the general population's often violent resistance to Nikon's reforms, see Georg Michels, *At War with the Church* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 23–46).

48 *PSS* 11, p. 430.

49 Redginald Ovchinnkov, *Pushkin v rabote nad arkhivnymi dokumentami* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1969), p. 20.

50 Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 350.

ers' attitude to the official printed word.[51] One of the rebel leaders, Maksim Shigaev, stated that Pugachev "often said that if God lets him rule the country, he would order everyone to follow the Old Belief and forbid beard shaving and the wearing of wigs and German dress."[52] It was known to Pushkin that Shigaev and Perfiliev, Pugachev's closest associates, were fanatical Old Believers who refused to accept sacraments from a Nikonian priest before their execution in Moscow. Apart from the important fact that it was Perfiliev who was featured as one of the main characters in the novel's first drafts, Pushkin posed an explicit question in his notes on the rebellion: "Who were the real leaders behind Emel'ka? – Shigaev? Perfiliev?" This reflects his awareness of the major role that the Old Belief played in the rebellion.[53]

Obviously, Pushkin could see that the rebels considered the Empire's civil and military officials as heretics,[54] especially those who were Germans

51 Interestingly, the origin of the popular lubok featured in *Captain's Daughter*, where the mice representing Peter's heirs bury the cat who stands for Peter, was attributed to the Old believers' circles (Dmitrii Rovinskii, *Russkie narodnye kartinki*, Vol. 5 (Saint Petersburg, 1881), pp. 155–158). Moreover, the name of the mouse leading the burial was known in Pushkin's time as *Emel'ka grobyliak/mogiliak*, or *Emelya the undertaker* (M. A. Alekseeva, "Graviura na derive 'Myshi kota na pogost volokut': pamiatnik russkogo narodnogo tvorchestva kontsa XVII–XVIII v." *XVIII vek*, No. 16, (Leningrad, 1983), pp. 45–79). Thus, its presence on the wall in Captain Mironov's house is, in contrast to M. Gillelson's opinion (M. I. Gillelson, I. B. Mushina, *Povest' A. S. Pushkin "Kapitanskaia dochka": kommentarii* (Leningrad: Prosveshchenie, 1977), p. 102), hardly accidental suggesting the nature of the future troubles (Emelyan Pugachev as the would-be undertaker of Peter's legacy in Russia) for the commandant's family.

52 Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 350. Mavrodin also quotes the nobleman G. Afanasiev, captured by the rebels in 1773, as stating that "The Cossacks, after cutting everybody's hair in their own style, demanded that all should cross themselves with two fingers, otherwise...Pugachev will order to cut their fingers off" (Ibid., p. 357).

53 It is difficult to say whether Pugachev was actually an Old Believer, but he was known to have many contacts with them (Yurii Limonov, *Pugachev i Pugachevtsy* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1974), pp. 14–16), and he was consistently called a "schismatic" by the governmental manifestos (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 77). In fact, *The History of Pugachev* contains an important piece of evidence supporting this claim. It is provided by Pugachev's wife who, in a detailed description of her husband, says that he "practiced the true Orthodox faith...crossing himself with the *two* [the emphasis is mine, M. K.] last fingers" (*PSS* 8, p. 218). During his trial, Pugachev initially credited Old Believers as his major inspirers. After arresting several hundreds of them, however, the government declared that they were not implicated in the rebellion, although there are signs that it was done out of the fear of giving the unneeded publicity to the Old Belief.

54 Cf. the multiple use of this word in the rebels' official oaths (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. II, p. 461). Importantly, the rebel's negative attitude toward the post-Petrine nobility was based not on the class divisions but rather on their awareness that the latter had already begun to adopt the foreign cultural values incompatible with the nature of the old Muscovite culture. As a matter of fact, all Russian noblemen, after Peter's 1717 reform of rank system, had become the empire's officials possessing their titles solely on the basis of their place within the new system of rank. "The History of Peter"

(including Catherine herself). It must have been highly humiliating for them as the cultural descendants of Muscovite civilization to have a German as their divinely ordained ruler.[55] Pushkin was the first publisher of a remarkable document produced by Pugachev's scriveners who called Orenburg's German governor Reinsdorp "Satan's grandson and the Devil's son"[56] – terms quite usual for foreigners in pre-Petrine Russia. Pushkin called such documents "a remarkable example of folk eloquence"[57] utilizing them repeatedly in *The Captain's Daughter*.

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reflects Pushkin's acute interest to Peter's rank reform and its consequences for Russian nobility: "Lefort...dressed the boy soldiers (poteshny) regiment in the Dutch dress. Peter served there as a drummer and for his successes was made a sergeant. That is how an important revolution was started by him: the elimination of nobility and the introduction of rank system to be implemented later" (*PSS* 8, p. 23). After 1717, every member of hereditary Russian nobility had to occupy a certain rank serving the empire in the state or military service. To be useful within this new hierarchy, Russian noblemen had to receive western education thus being "registered" in the new post-Petrine cultural reality. This is why one of Pugachev's manifestoes refers to them in exactly this capacity of cultural traitors: "especially, [we condemn] the evil noblemen who stuck to their titles, rank, and noble status...and who opposed our rule" (Redginald Ovchinnikov, ed., *Dokumenty stavki Pugacheva* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), pp. 49, 75). Another manifesto explicitly uses the word "registered" speaking about nobility's cultural treason and reiterating the major points of the rebels' anti-Petrine stance: "The traditional Christian law of our ancient saintly fathers has been completely desecrated and violated by the *registered* villainous noblemen, and instead, by their obnoxious design, they introduced into Russia the alien laws and the most ungodly beard-shaving, after the German customs" (Ibid., pp. 50–51). However, the captured noblemen were almost always given the chance to "convert" to the traditional pre-Petrine cultural order – "Pugachev and his associates initially wanted to ally with nobility but their purposes were too conflicting"(PSS 9, p. 375) – which runs counter to the Soviet interpretation of the rebellion as a clash of two mutually exclusive social universes.

55 Of course, the rebels were bound by their strategy of imposture to walk a fine line between catering to the anti-western sensibilities of their supporters and authenticating, at least superficially, the legitimacy of their claims for the already westernized throne. For example, they established, in November of 1773, "The State Military Kollegia" which, however, was largely made up of members holding such markedly pre-Petrine posts as *dumnyi diak* and *povytchik*. This tactical constraint, however, had never made them cross the cultural divide that they were enunciating, with even the top rebels never shaving their beards or wearing wigs or western clothing.

56 Ovchinnikov, *Dokumenty stavki Pugacheva*, p. 62. One can also mention here the astronomer Lovitz who, as Pushkin writes in *The History*, was hanged by Pugachev so that he "could be closer to the stars." The latter were studied by the scientist according to the new Copernicus model of the universe which came to Russia only with Peter (the ceiling of the dinner hall in the Kremlin palace of Russian czars famously featured a map of the universe according to Ptolemy) and which the conservative rebels would never accept.

57 Vladimir Mavrodin, *Class Struggle and Social-Political Thought in 18th-Century Russia* (Leningrad: Leningrad University Press, 1975), p. 79.

History as Culture in *The Captain's Daughter*

One can see that the above historical background was fully accessible to Pushkin, a major Pugachev historian by the 1830s (who was separated by just fifty years from the event and able to interview its living witnesses and participants), to enable him to perceive the real – that is, the cultural – thrust of the rebellion. However, it is exactly this cultural background that disappears when *The Captain's Daughter* is analyzed only as a self-sufficient textual entity or in terms of its relationship to other literary works of the time. As a result, the mostly illiterate masses who blindly supported Pugachev's cause and whose own textual output was very limited or often "imprisoned" in that of their enemies' were simply not heard. However, Pushkin's last novel can be shown as reverberating with their voices and actions introduced there as a part of the important aggregate of meanings problematizing Russia's purported cultural identity after more than one hundred years of Westernization. If one stops seeing *The Captain's Daughter* as a textual phenomenon only and moves instead to ground the novel in its cultural context, it will be possible to see how the struggle between the two mutually alien cultural discourses of the enlightened state and the anti-Petrine rebels penetrates the entirety of the novel's organization, from its plot to the cultural and ideological affiliations, codes of behavior, language, and lifestyles of its characters.

The main character's education is very indicative in this respect, since he, growing up at the peak of the Enlightenment vogue in Russia, never manages, unlike most nobles of his time, to gain any substantial education, or discipline, from his French mentor. This first major encounter of the average Russian nobility with French culture is given in *The Captain's Daughter* specific and extensive treatment. Until he is twelve, Grinev receives a typically pre-Petrine kind of education for a member of the Russian hereditary nobility[58] learning from his native tutor Savel'ich how to read Russian and judge hounds. It is no surprise that when Beaupret arrives, it is Savel'ich who stands out as the main defender of the traditional ways and is the first to condemn the "corrupting" cultural impact of foreign education. Having taught Petr everything he knew, he dislikes the Frenchman not out of the fear of competition but purely out of his native distrust of alien cultural values. Given the fact that the young Grinev's mindset is shown as basically shaped by Savel'ich, the latter's role in the novel appears to be much more complex and less technical than is usually thought.

Introducing Beaupret, Pushkin ridicules the Frenchman's habits (laziness, drinking, and lewdness) that by the 1830s had become for some the distinctive features of the Russian aristocracy itself. However, Petr displays a natural re-

58 Famously ridiculed by Fonvizin in *Nedorosl'* (1781) but treated in a substantially less critical way by Pushkin who knew well that the word *nedorosl'* did not have any negative cultural connotations before Peter.

sistance to Western education and, in his turn, starts teaching Russian to Beaupret whose task was to educate him in "French, German, and all the sciences"[59] – the same basic curriculum of the first Russian students sent abroad by Peter some seventy years earlier. By constantly highlighting the Frenchman's low standing in Grinev's household, Pushkin makes his point clear: unlike the native slave Savel'ich, the former hairdresser from the West can hardly teach an authentic Russian noble anything good or useful. It is no surprise that, when Beaupret is driven out, the first to celebrate this event is precisely Savel'ich.

The Young Grinev's Entrance into the Empire

While growing up, Grinev still lives in a pre-Petrine kind of time. However, this paradisiacal existence is cut short by the intrusion of "official" post-Petrine times when his father stumbles upon a court calendar, with his son's imperial status "hibernating" therein since his birth. By reading the calendar so agitatedly, the elder Grinev enters this busy flow of the new time in which hereditary noblemen like him were gradually marginalized as a consequence of Peter's rank reform. It is at this moment that he decides to "activate" his son's status in this new time[60] and to insist – as the family's main, if inefficient, Westernizer – on sending his son to the eastern frontiers of the country's continuing Westernization.

Beaupret's overtly negative qualities find their further incarnation in the corrupting influence of the hussar Zurin, Grinev's next "teacher" of foreign values (hussars were unknown in Muscovy), who is on a mission to enlist recruits – another major Westernizing practice in post-Petrine Russia.[61] Zurin, by conning Grinev into playing the foreign game of billiards (as opposed to Savel'ich's innocent native *orekhi*) and introducing him to the foreign institution of the brothel and the beverage of punch (whose debilitating effects only the Russian *nastoika* can cure, according to Savel'ich), strips Grinev of one hun-

59 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 26.

60 After his son is stripped of nobility, the Calendar understandably stops producing its effects on the elder Grinev. It is important that some of Pugachev's manifestos, including those in Pushkin's possession, were dated with the use of the pre-Petrine calendar that counted years from the Day of Creation – yet another sign of the anti-Petrine nature of the rebellion.

61 Recruitment was yet another important consequence of Peter's reforms that, according to Pushkin's "Journey from Moscow to Petersburg" (*PSS* 11, p. 260), was as devastating for the Russian folk as the rank reform for the Russian nobility. Pugachev's promise that he "grants [his subjects] the ancient cross and prayer as well as their heads and beards... and will demand no recruits" (Ovchinnikov, *Dokumenty stavki Pugacheva,* p. 75) – was especially appealing to Russian peasants, since, apart from tearing recruits away from their families and native cultural and social context, recruiting also involved obligatory beard shaving. Pushkin was well aware of the practice's cultural implications as is evident in the passage on the heresy of beard shaving in "The History of Peter" (*PSS* 8, pp. 14–15).

dred of his native rubles, which ends Grinev's day "as *dissolutely* [the same word as used to describe Beaupret] as it had started."[62] Predictably, the event does not fail to receive cultural condemnation by Savel'ich, who connects it precisely to the foreign influence of Grinev's former French mentor by repeatedly, and in a remarkably pre-Petrine style, calling the latter a "dog's son" and "basurman."[63] However, Grinev insists on paying his debt as a nobleman (and, for the first time, the serf Savel'ich and his advice cannot be of help to him here) for whom honor has the ultimate value and for whom going back on his word is a glaring violation of the age-old code of the aristocrat. Therefore, Grinev has to remind Savel'ich (who, as a serf, cannot fully understand the importance of keeping one's word) of his lowly status: "I am your master, and you are my servant."[64]

In general, leaving the largely un-Westernized world of his father's estate, Grinev finds himself in post-Petrine Russia and is shown by Pushkin to rely there on his inborn (that is, aristocratic) rather than his acquired qualities.[65] It is easy to see at work here one of Pushkin's major concerns of the 1830s – the decline of the pre-Petrine hereditary nobility brought about by the emergence and blossoming of Peter-sponsored "meritocracy" whose members, in Pushkin's view, often succeeded in occupying the highest positions in society through their outright servility and mimicry, so demeaning for real aristocrats.[66] In Catherine's Russia, such mimicry involved both Russians eagerly copying foreign ways and foreigners trying, often unsuccessfully, to master the Russian language and customs. One such foreigner featured in the novel is Orenburg's German governor who greets Grinev in his broken Russian, has no sense of Russian idioms, constantly smokes tobacco ("the devil's weed" in

62 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 32.

63 The western-styled debauchery of the young Grinev is consciously contrasted in the novel to the way in which Savel'ich spends the same day performing traditional rounds of the pre-Petrine Russian etiquette.

64 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 32.

65 I. M. Toibin acknowledges Pushkin's anti-Enlightenment stance in the novel and in his general conflict with the raznochntsy literature of the 1830s but he attributes it to a teleologically understood Marxist vision of "the human beauty" on its way of discovering "the perspective of the future" (Toibin, "Voprosy istorizma," p. 43). However, I argue that the later Pushkin mounted his critique of Enlightenment from the position of aristocratic conservatism rather than from that of an endorser of the "bright future."

66 According to M. Gillelson, "Pushkin thought that Russian nobility had split into two groups: the older independent nobility with firm moral standards and the new eighteenth century nobility which came to power during the stormy epoch of dethronements and favoritism. All Pushkin's sympathies were with the old-time noble families who escaped, as the poet believed, the corrupting influence of court life staying loyal to the old traditions and ways of life" (Gillelson, *Povest' A. S. Pushkin "Kapitanskaia dochka,"* p. 161). Gillelson also notes that Pushkin argued for the return of primogeniture, a markedly medieval practice which gave nobility's elder children exclusive right to inherit the status and wealth of their parents (p. 171).

the parlance of the Old Believers and Muscovy) and subjects – in marked contrast to Pugachev's almost excessive welcome – his guests to the scarce German hospitality.

Because Grinev is assigned to one of the most un-Westernized parts of Russia, the initial description of the fort given through the eyes of both Grinev and a local coachman is very indicative of the cultural gap between their conceptions of reality. When Grinev asks the coachman about the fort and is shown a little village instead, the difference in their notions of a "fort" is purely cultural. Apparently, the coachman considers the little village a fort (just as Pugachev's golden-foiled *izba* is considered by his supporters "a palace") since it hosts a culturally alien "commandant" and the "regular" troops – so different in their appearance and ways from the un-Westernized local populace.

The Fortress as Catherine's State in a Nutshell

The fort's garrison showcases perfectly well – even if ironically so – the feminized rule of Catherine over Russia. The commandant's wife bosses her husband's men around in a way quite unimaginable in male-dominated Muscovy. The kind of justice she dispenses to her *detushki* – "sort out the matter... then punish them both"[67] – is very much like the justice of Catherine's state that later indiscriminately punishes both Shvabrin and Grinev, and, just like the Enlightenment-minded Catherine, the commandant's wife cannot stand torture. Her Catherine-like status in the garrison is further insinuated by Shvabrin's rumors about her illicit affair with Ivan Ignat'ich.[68] What seems to be at issue here is yet another aspect of Peter's reforms (and another major concern of the later Pushkin) – the drastic change in the role traditionally played by women in Russia before Peter. While in Muscovy, with the semidivine standing of its czars, it was impossible for women not only to be the country's supreme rulers but even participate openly in public and political life, the nature of royal power in eighteenth-century Russia, represented by more female monarchs than the male ones, must have been culturally astonishing for the majority of its un-Westernized population.[69] It then comes as no surprise that Pugachev

67 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 50.

68 This allegation is taken seriously by Michael Finke who argues that the novel suggests that any wife will transform a man into a henpecked and cuckolded husband (Michael Finke, "Figures for History in Kapitanskaia Dochka and Poets as Historical Figures in Istoriia Pugacheva," *Pushkin Journal* 1:2 (1993), p. 173). Given the fact, that Captain Mironov habitually addresses Catherine as "matushka" and soldiers as "detushki," it is no surprise that the empress ends up as the proxy mother for his daughter which makes the novel a site of struggle between two proxy parenthoods – Pugachev's and Catherine's.

69 Pushkin was well aware of the gender factor for the rebels as he recorded their address to soldiers: "You, fools! Enough of serving a woman – it is time to come to your senses and to serve the czar!" (PSS 9, p. 76). Pugachev's anti-western rebels posed the gender question quite radically as can seen in the "password" question asked by their patrols – "Who do you serve – gosudar' or gosudaryn'a?" (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Rus-*

planned, after ascending to the throne, to do what most Muscovite czars did when dealing with their unruly or unwanted royal women – send them to a nunnery.

The garrison Grinev serves in is the most distant outpost of the country's Westernization and, as such, it is bound to share some common features with the world around it. The rather crippled Westernization of Russia's eastern parts can be seen in the mindset of the Empire's crippled soldiers the oddness of whose European wigs and uniform in the Asian steppe is specifically mentioned by the narrator, just as is their manner of crossing themselves before performing the abstract (that is, foreign) task of telling the right from the left.[70]

In marked contrast to the "natural" nobleman Grinev, the new Westernized imperial nobility is represented in the garrison by Shvabrin, Grinev's next and last "teacher," whose polished manners and fluent French initially produce such an impression on Grinev that he starts understanding the language that he never learned from Beaupret. Shvabrin's markedly non-Russian name, apart from its janitorial connotations, is indicative here of the later Pushkin's view of the new post-Petrine meritocracy (the swab may well have been among the several hundred Western tools and utensils brought to Muscovy after Peter's first journey to Europe) as often comprising foreigners of lowly origin and dubious moral qualities.

The cultural incompatibility between the native Cossacks and the imperial garrison is radicalized by the news of the rebellion, immediately dividing the fort's population along this cultural line. As the military machine built by Peter is being put into order, the commandant's speech also starts sounding like so many of the czar's "dubious" edicts quoted by Pushkin in "The History of Peter": "The women in the fort have taken up the habit of burning straw in the stoves, which might cause some accidents, and so I gave strict orders that in the future they should burn not straw, but twigs and fallen branches."[71] The

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sia. Vol. III, p. 40). In the novel, this conflict is articulated in "canine" terms by Pugachev addresses Khlopusha and Beloborodov by saying: "enough of your quarrels. There'd be no harm in it if all the Orenburg *hounds* dangled from the same transom, but we'll come to a bad end if our own *studs* (italics are mine, M. K.) start snapping and snarling at one another" (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 130). According to Gillelson, in the eighteenth century Russia, "people explained all kinds of social problems and disorders by the fact that the country was ruled by women" (Gillelson, *Povest' A. S. Pushkin "Kapitanskaia dochka*," p. 126). Perhaps, by making Grinev's mother "collaborate" with the bearded mujik in his dream, Pushkin suggests that women are treacherous when it comes to allegiances and powersharing, with the primal example of Catherine herself who conspired to kill her own husband.

70 This episode also suggests the cultural nature of the soldier bodies' native resistance to the recently borrowed western mechanisms of disciplining the human body with the aim of making it more docile and useful (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Random House, 1977), pp. 135–156).

71 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 80.

Cossacks react to this by breaking all contact with the imperial military and social system: "[The Cossacks] gathered in groups in every street and talked in low voices, but dispersed as soon as they saw a dragoon or a garrison soldier."[72] When their sergeant is arrested and they are assigned a new superior, their dissent is very much cultural, since they, as descendants of Muscovite culture, must have deep contempt for the new system that ranks people exclusively according to their usefulness.

Culture at the Root of the War

However, it is only after the rebels take over the fort that the major features of the intercultural divide become fully visible. The soldiers' Western-style wigs and uniforms, as a visual consequence of Peter's reforms, are culturally unacceptable to the pro-Muscovite rebels,[73] and the former are immediately "un-Westernized" by being obliged to take the Cossack form haircut and dress before they can proceed to the ancient Muscovite ritual of kneeling and kissing the sovereign's hand.[74] The characters' overall visual appearance, as a direct sign of their cultural affiliation, quickly assumes an important role in the narrative. For example, the commandant's last words to his wife reveal his awareness of the rebellion's cultural nature and show his concern about the danger of their daughter wearing Western dress: "If there's time, dress Masha in a sarafan,"[75] which serves her as a kind of space-suit (which she wears until her last day in the rebels' captivity) eventually protecting her from Pugachev's un-Westernizing gaze.

Pugachev's first appearance in the novel is presented as totally un-Westernized – he has a black beard, his hair is cut in the "pudding basin" Cossack fashion, and his dress is also markedly non-Western. He even possesses an "amazingly keen" sense of smell (enabling him to locate the inn during the snowstorm) – a sense whose cognitive potential declined sharply in the European perceptual paradigm after the Enlightenment.[76] In its turn, Grinev's

72 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 81. When the news of the rebellion reaches the fort, the fort officers also begin to treat the Cossacks, in the person of their sergeant, as different from themselves (Ibid., p. 81).

73 In the pre-Petrine Russia, icons depicted devils as having western clothing and haircuts. As Pushkin knew from his research, in Pugachev's army, the imprisoned imperial soldiers were kept separately from the rest of the troops.

74 The ritual, according to "The History of Peter," was personally banned by the czar and later much abhorred by Catherine.

75 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 92.

76 See Alain Corbin, *The Fragrant and the Foul* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1986). The above decline coincided with the advancement of the role of vision, and it is not surprising that the two staunchest supporters of Catherine in the novel, the Orenburg governor and captain Mironov, wear reading glasses – something that was surely not encouraged among Pugachev's supporters.

un-Westernized childhood stands him in good stead when he thanks Pugachev with his quintessentially Russian white hareskin *tulup* – the exact kind of clothing that the latter needs to "hide from his enemies" in the snow-covered steppe.[77] At the inn, Pugachev is offered tea by Grinev, and – in contrast to the inveterate tea-drinkers comprising the Orenburg military counsel – rejects it on purely cultural grounds: "He took a sip and made a wry face. 'Your Honor, be so kind as to order me a glass of vodka: we Cossacks don't drink tea.'"[78]

Pugachev, in his new capacity of the Russian czar, displays dress and comportment that are quintessentially pre-Petrine and premodern enacting the glorious presence of a medieval sovereign (for example, he throws coins into the crowd): "He was wearing a red Cossack caftan edged with galloons. His tall sable hat with golden tassels (Western-style metal crowns were unknown in Muscovy) was pulled right down to his flashing eyes."[79] Similar terms are used to show Pugachev in his golden Berda "palace": "Pugachev, dressed in a red caftan and a tall hat, sat under the icons" – in a sharp contrast to Catherine who is shown sitting alone in her half-empty Petersburg residence "busy with her toilette." The cultural anticipations of Pugachev's supporters as to their leader's cultural qualities (extending to his medieval obligation to personally lead his army into battle – as he does during the assault at the fort) can be clearly seen in the views of the Cossack who escorts Grinev to Pugachev and who uses the most native institutions of hearty eating and bath taking to emphasize his sovereign's cultural authenticity.

The change in Shvabrin is unmistakably registered by the narrator through the same culturally based categories of visual appearance: "To my indescribable astonishment, I beheld among the rebel leaders Shvabrin, his hair cropped close around the crown after the Cossack fashion, and wearing a Cossack caftan."[80] When Grinev sees Shvabrin during his rescue of Masha, the latter's culturally important appearance is underscored again: "Shvabrin met the pretender on the porch. He was dressed like a Cossack and had grown a beard."[81] It is very important that Shvabrin never shaves his beard thereafter, and, when Grinev meets him during the investigation, he still has a "long disheveled beard," by which Pushkin stigmatizes his guilt of not being authen-

77 Interestingly, "The History of Pugachev" describes the rebel as wearing a similar white tulup to his 1775 execution in Moscow (*PSS* 9, p. 79).

78 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 62. In the 1830s, Pushkin was known to oppose the tipping (*davat' na chai*) of common folk on the grounds that tea was not a Russian beverage, and therefore such tips should be rather given to them in order to be spent on the native Russian vodka.

79 Pushkin 1999, 93. According to Viktor Shklovskii, "all epigraphs relating to Pugachev are taken from the verses whose previous or subsequent line contains the phrase 'Russian czar'" (Viktor Shklovskii, *Zametki o proze russkikh klassikov* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1955), p. 74).

80 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 94.

81 Ibid., p. 137.

tic.[82] Given the context provided above, one may say that Pushkin pays no less attention to the way his characters are dressed and cut their hair than the rebels themselves would. Pushkin was well aware that the rebels' equal reverence toward the bearded God Almighty on the icons and the traditionally similar look of the Muscovite czars provided the main ideological basis for their insistence on not shaving their beards.[83] However, this visual link between the human and the divine was broken by Peter's cultural revolution, which made possible accession to the throne of those who could not have beards by definition, that is, of women.[84]

Pushkin knew well from his research that the local clergy provided substantial support for the rebels and that in almost every captured town, Pugachev was greeted with the traditional religious rituals usually reserved for the Muscovite royalty such as bell ringing, processions with icons and crosses, mass kneeling, hand kissing, and the offering of bread and salt. As a result, the novel features many details concerning the clergy's participation in the rebellion. For example, in the episode of the rebels' break into the fort, the narrator suddenly describes it not as the earlier village of "a few huts" but as one of the many populous cities that greeted Pugachev so enthusiastically upon his arrival: "The residents left their houses with bread and salt. Church bells rung out... The people thronged to the square."[85]

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82 On their way to freedom, Grinev and Masha meet a "bearded commandant" (whose glaringly oxymoronic appearance is twice underlined by the narrator [Ibid., p. 145]) loyal to Pugachev before they are stopped by a "*mustached* [italics are mine, M. K.] cavalry sergeant" (Ibid., p. 145) whose way of cutting his facial hair clearly shows his allegiance to the pro-western government and its mustached "engineer" – Peter the Great.

83 This is well illustrated by the fact that the government officials paid as much attention to the visual appearance of their adversaries, which can be seen, for example, in the intention of the local commandant G. Mavrin to insult the captured Pugachev: "I will try my soldier skills when the *bearded czar* [italics are mine, M. K.] is here; oh, I really do want to snatch Emel'ka by the beard!" (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 405). In addition, the rebels were known to have a military decoration called "Black Beards" (E. Indova, ed., *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973), p. 204) and Pushkin did not hesitate to show Beloborodov wearing it in the novel (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 127).

84 It is this gender conflict that seems to underlie the much-discussed Grinev dream in which he is summoned back home to see his dying father but instead finds on his death bed a smiling *muzhik* who goes into a frenzy after Petr refuses to accept his blessings. Grinev's refusal to acknowledge the "proxy" father is clearly based on his recent oath of allegiance to the Mother-Empress, and the fact that the narrator calls the dream "prophetic" finds its explanation further in the novel with Pugachev's offer of such proxy fatherhood for Grinev and Masha's wedding. (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 140) However, in the end, it is Catherine who comes to serve as a proxy mother for the parentless Masha.

85 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 92.

Father Gerasim, the fort priest, is shown as playing an indispensable role in the ritual of imperial soldiers' cultural "conversion" to Pugachev's cause,[86] although his direct participation seems to be retrospectively downplayed by the aged narrator: "Father Gerasim, pale and trembling, stood by the porch with a cross in his hands and *appeared* [the italics are mine, M. K.] to be silently imploring him to spare the lives of the victims who were to be brought before him."[87] His presence at the officers' execution was necessary for the rebels whose premodern mindset made priests indispensable for all rituals dealing with life or death. Moreover, Pugachev's announcement that he will stay and dine at the priest's house is an important sign of the rebels' confidence in the clergy's support for their cause. Because of the commandant family's stubborn association with the new cultural order, their bodies are apparently not given the proper religious rituals after their death, and their graves are later described as located outside the church lot.[88] Indeed, the very form of Pugachev's order to execute Vasilisa Egorovna – "Destroy the old witch!"[89] – reflects the fact that rebels' attitude toward the Empire's officialdom was similar to that toward heretics.[90]

In one of his most intimate conversations with Grinev,[91] Pugachev confides to him his plans to march into Moscow and ascend to the throne there. The fact that he is shown as intending to rule Russia from Moscow rather than from Peter's new capital underscores the important cultural significance of the

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86 In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the local clergy in Russia's East were only loosely controlled by the central church authorities. Recruited almost exclusively from the local population, they were bound to represent the cultural and religious expectations of their flock, as they amply did during the Razin and Bulavin rebellions (Avrich, *Russian Rebels*, p. 40).

87 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, pp. 93–94. The priest is also shown to rebuke his wife (who earlier leaked the news of the rebellion to the fort's population) when she gets too critical of the rebels' cruelty (Ibid., 94). The reason why they save Masha may lie in the fact that her room had icons rather than the lubki that belonged to her parents.

88 Ibid., p. 141.

89 Ibid., p. 93.

90 Pushkin knew from his research that the rebels were very consistent in eliminating not only the empire officials but also their families. This indicates that the rebels perceived them as members of a new cultural order who should be stopped from transmitting their newly acquired hereditary status to their posterity and whose extermination would help the rebels to regain the disappearing cultural reality of the pre-Petrine Russia.

91 When Pugachev expresses his anti-Western attitude by asking Grinev: "What do you think: could the Prussian King stand up to me?" (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 133). It is important that he pronounces the king's name not as "Frederick II" but as "Fedor Fedorovich," which is exactly how sovereigns were named in Muscovy, where no czars before Peter I ever had the number-based names. One of the alive supporters of Pugachev interviewed by Pushkin in 1834 responded in the following way to Pushkin use of Pugachev's last name: "It is for you he is Pugachev but for me he was the great czar Petr Fedorovich" (*PSS* 9, p. 373).

"porfironosnaya vdova" to the anti-Western rebels – as opposed to Catherine who "had an aversion to Moscow" and, like Peter, saw it as "a seat of aristocratic sloth...and a stronghold of fanaticism."[92] According to *The History of Pugachev,* when the rebellion broke out, "the abundant Moscow mob...eagerly awaited Pugachev's arrival."[93] The fact that Pugachev and his associates were executed in Moscow – rather than Petersburg – not only showcases the final goal of their aspirations to bring back the "Third Rome" to their old capital, but also demonstrates the victors' awareness of this.

Two Systems of Justice in the Novel

Working with historical and legal documents from the Russian past, Pushkin developed a deep knowledge of legal proceedings in Muscovy and especially of the use of torture as an integral part of them.[94] Although the use of it by Captain Mironov is indicated in the novel, its mild form (whipping) suggests the general tendency of eschewing torture on the part of the Enlightenment-minded government of Catherine (who famously was one of the first European sovereigns to officially renounce the practice) as eloquently voiced by old Grinev. In contrast, the anti-Western rebels never questioned the implausibility of the practice, and, in the novel, Beloborodov is quick to suggest using it on Grinev: "Wouldn't you like to have him taken down to the chancery [Pushkin uses here a remarkably pre-Petrine word, *prikaznya*, M. K.] and get a good fire going in the furnace?"[95]

All this suggests yet another important aspect of the cultural divide shown through two different kinds of justice at work in the novel. One is represented by the medieval sovereign-like presence of Pugachev whose figure, according to Michel Foucault's famous model, is both the direct source of such justice and its divinely inspired instrument. Any crime within the sovereign's domain is considered as challenging him/her personally, and the novel enacts this principle in Pugachev's violent reaction to Grinev's allegations of Shvabrin's wrongdoings: "Pugachev gave me a scathing look: 'Who of my people dares to abuse

92 John Aleksander, *Autocratic Politics in a National Crisis* (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1969), pp. 224–225. The historical documents in Pushkin's possession unmistakably stated Pugachev's plans: "I will march to Kazan', and from there – on Moscow...Give us some time, and we will get them [i. e., the empire's leadership and foreigners, M. K.] there, in Petersburg" (see Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia,* Vol. II, pp. 121, 429; Limonov, *Pugachev i Pugachevtsy*, p. 33). Saint Petersburg and Orenburg were the two cities most hated by the rebels, since they both had non-Russian names and were designed from the scratch according to the utilitarian logic of Enlightenment.

93 *PSS* 8, p. 45.

94 One of Pushkin's main sources was a seventeenth century memoir by the Dutchman Jean Struys who described in detail the practice and Muscovites' cultural acceptance of it (*Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, p. 143).

95 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 128.

an orphan? Be he a Solomon, he will not avoid my judgment!'."[96] The human body in this system of justice is the main site on which "the spectacle of punishment" is played out as a part of a policy of terror and edification through which the sovereign power operated since antiquity and which, according to Michel Foucault, "established the reality of what one punished."[97]

Another type of justice operating in the novel is the one eulogized by the old Grinev and used by the depersonalized legal system of Catherine's pro-Enlightenment state. This type does not rely on the sovereign's display of power, instead turning for self-justification to the rational procedures and universalistic notions of the humanist West and relocating the crime's reality and the consequences of its punishment from the body to the perpetrator's soul. This kind of justice eliminates torture as can be seen, according to *The History of Pugachev*, in Catherine's decision to be "merciful" toward Pugachev by quickening his public execution in Moscow (in fact, the last such execution to be conducted there).

Pugachev's model of justice, with its emphasis on torture and capital punishment, is consistently shown by Pushkin to be markedly medieval and pre-Petrine. Its proceedings are not governed by the depersonalized rationalist procedures of the West used by the imperial officials in Grinev's investigation but rather by direct access to its source – the sovereign's personal presence and his/her quasi-divine will. They also include torture as a means of personalizing – through pain that is never abstract but always specific and personal – the truth of a crime in an age when reliable personal identification did not exist. In fact, the older system turns out to work better for Grinev who can be saved by appealing directly to its source in the person of Pugachev and whose later "automatic" punishment by the government is generated exactly by the Empire's depersonalized justice. Perhaps, by juxtaposing the two systems of justice, Pushkin implies that, despite the old Grinev's eloquent ruminations to the contrary, should torture be used to prove Grinev's innocence before the Secret Commission, it could work better for establishing the truth than the justice that operates through abstract reasoning and thus cannot deal with such nonrational, but so valid for Grinev's social class, notions as honor.[98]

96 Ibid., p. 136.

97 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 56. *The History of Pugachev* gives two examples of how this principle worked during the rebellion. One involved the skinning of the corpulent Colonel Elagin and another was Captain Kalmykov's death from a stake inserted in his throat, with both of the executions re-establishing the nature of their purported crimes, i. e., the colonel's greediness and the captain's blasphemy (*PSS* 8, p. 110).

98 Pugachev himself experienced the effectiveness of the new system of justice, when he, whom one would expect to stand firm like his predecessor Razin, had shown, according to *The History of Pugachev*, "an unexpected weakness" during his basically torture-free trial. Pushkin quotes Catherine's letter to Voltaire of Jan. 30, 1775, who was very keen to follow the details of the rebellion: "Pugachev, about whom you asked me...had lived like a thief, and he ended his life like a coward. He turned out to be so shy and weak in prison that we had to prepare him for hearing his sentence so that he would not die immediately out of fear" (*PSS* 9, p. 147).

The Importance of Honor in *The Captain's Daughter*

One can argue that the notion of honor, so important to Grinev and equally to Pushkin, seems to be imported from the West, which would contradict the logic of the above argument. However, honor was as characteristic of the Russian medieval nobility as it was of the Western aristocracy, being a common feature of their social and cultural integrity and self-identification. Its importance in the novel comes from the later Pushkin's consistent implication, both in fiction and nonfiction, that the notion of honor is *transcultural* and can only be relevant to the authentic old aristocracy whose waning influence and wealth in post-Petrine Russia were being destroyed by the new cultural values imported from the egalitarian West. In fact, the novel features numerous instances of how characters not belonging to Grinev's class prove to be totally ignorant of its code of honor. For example, Savel'ich implores Grinev not to pay his card debt to Zurin, but Grinev refuses to give in specifically by stressing his aristocratic status: "I am your master, and you are my servant."[99] Ivan Ignat'ich, as an officer of low station, has no qualms about reneging on his promise to Grinev not to disclose the latter's planned duel and is even proud of his behavior.[100]

In contrast, Grinev's father begins his farewell instructions to his son by highlighting the importance of keeping one's word (importantly, not specifying who the oath's addressee is): "Serve the person you swore to,"[101] which his son successfully does throughout the novel. In Pushkin's view, even the danger of death cannot excuse the aristocrat from losing his/her honor ("Death is not terrible!" exclaims the elder Grinev), since this act would spoil the reputation of all his/her ancestors – which reflects the fact that the aristocracy was always more preoccupied with the "quality" of its ascendants rather than, as the bourgeoisie, with that of its descendants.

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99 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 33.

100 While the failure to understand the duel by the serf Savel'ich clearly stems from his pre-Petrine mindset – "it's that accursed mounseer who's to blame: twas him taught you how to poke others with iron skewers and stamp your foot" (Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 72), both the commandant and his deputy reject the duel by referring exactly to the new Enlightenment-based laws, introduced personally by Peter (Yurii Lotman,. *Besedy o russkoi kul'ture* (St. Petersburg: Iskusstvo, 1994), p. 165). This is not surprising, since the duel as a social and cultural phenomenon was a direct borrowing from the West, with no existing analogues of it in the pre-Petrine Russia. And whereas the notion of honor can be considered as "transculturally" aristocratic, the use of the duel was initially limited to the European chivalric tradition, with Russian nobility having its own cultural mechanisms for "enforcing" honor, such as, for example, mestnichestvo. Ironically enough, some of the western aristocracy's habits and rituals, already waning in the enlightened Europe, started to be eagerly adopted by the westernized Russian aristocracy in the second half of the eighteenth century (Ibid., pp. 165–166).

101 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 31.

Another telling example of the importance of honor in the novel can be seen in Grinev's refusal, despite the obvious practical advantages of doing otherwise, to implicate his fiancée's name in the rationalist procedures of the governmental investigation. He declines to do so because this would necessarily put her honor on the same standing as that of the wrongdoers (the principle of modern justice of presumption of innocence automatically implies that everyone may be equally under suspicion). For Pushkin, the premodern aristocratic value of honor was an important factor in the lives of both the authentic Russian and European nobility alike (with Shvabrin definitely implied as belonging to neither). Due to its nonrational and class-based nature, the value of honor as a viable social practice and an instrument of the nobility's self-identification declined sharply after the Enlightenment.

The Novel's Cultural Rift on the Level of Language

The above-mentioned cultural rift between the notions of reality advocated by the pro-Enlightenment government and the anti-Western rebels can also be fruitfully compared by looking at the use of language by the novel's characters. It is no surprise, for example, that Pugachev's command of Russian is shown as superior, since he, who represents the power and appeal of natively Russian cultural values, can freely switch among at least three of the registers of speech. The first is the language in which the Russian folk addressed their masters; the second is the manner in which they spoke to each other; and the third is the stylized speech of the "Russian czar," which the narrator tellingly describes as "a crude but forceful language bound to make a dangerous impression on the minds of simple [that is, un-Westernized, M. K.] people."[102] When Pugachev adopts the second variety in his conversation with the inn-keeper, Grinev can understand nothing in these Russian folk's version of their masters' French, while the culturally native Savel'ich is immediately put on the alert.[103] Savel'ich himself, whose cultural preferences are conservative and anti-Western, consistently uses such pre-Petrine words as "kholop," "boyar," and "rab" (famously forbidden to be used in Russia by Catherine) as well as "dog's son," which he, just like the rebels would, readily applies to Beaupret. He is later able to save his master's life precisely because he can use the language and cultural instruments of the pre-Petrine epoch by addressing Pugachev as "our father" in the only possible format of the Muscovite *chelobitnaia*, which was officially abolished by Peter in 1718.[104]

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102 Ibid., p. 82.

103 Ibid., p. 41.

104 *PSS* 8, p. 320. One may ask why Savel'ich refuses to share the rebellion's evident cultural appeal. The answer is purely logistical – Savel'ich had personally seen Pugachev's metamorphosis from a vagabond into a self-proclaimed Russian czar and so, being the impossibly ideal Russian servant (who never drinks or steals from his master), he finds no reason to believe the pretender. However, it is significant that, the novel's "omitted" chapter fea-

In a sharp contrast to Pugachev (and, to a lesser degree, to Grinev who has at least some knowledge of Russian idioms), Orenburg's German governor speaks in heavily broken Russian and is totally unable to understand its figurative dimension – except by logical inference (this is how he arrives at the correct meaning of *ezhovye rukavitsy* in the elder Grinev's letter) for which Marina Tsvetaeva aptly called him a "spring-driven" one. His speech is full of grammatical constructions alien to Russian,[105] and his consciousness, operating through rationalist thinking and eschewing the notions of honor and personal responsibility, is a world apart from both the irrationality of the people's support for Pugachev[106] and the illogicality of the young Grinev's aristocratic passions. After being implored by the latter to send troops in order to save Masha's honor, the general refuses precisely because it is not rational to spend many soldier lives for the honor of one aristocrat. Instead, he offers Grinev to let her marry Shvabrin as her best way to survive in the given situation – thus perfectly exemplifying the servility and adaptable ethics of the post-Petrine meritocracy.

The speech of the novel's narrator is remarkable in that it is not uniform throughout the text. Except for several digressions by the old Grinev, it is difficult to say to what extent the narration could have been affected by the retrospective view of the author of the notes. It is clear, however, that the perspectives of the young Grinev and his older narrative incarnation reveal significant ideological differences. This can be seen in the fact that the latter is shown as having long made his cultural choice for the government's Western values, while the former appears to be able, due to his un-Westernized upbringing and receptive age, if not to share some of the rebellion's cultural premises, then at least to perceive, and be affected by, them.[107] For example, Pugachev is consistently referred to by the narrator as a "pretender," a "thief," etc., which seems to be a retrospective "contamination" of the young Grinev's point of view. It is important that, in his direct speech (relatively "freer" from the temporal distortions of the retrospective narrative logic of the memoir), the latter never refers to Pugachev using these terms, preferring instead to avoid naming him at all,

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tures Grinev's second projected servant Van'ka who joins the rebellion and is eventually executed in its wake.

105 According to *The History of Pugachev,* the rebel's edicts were "remarkable, even if half-literate, examples of folk eloquence which was especially effective, since Reinsdorp's announcements, or *publikatsii*, were written torpidly...with verbs at the ends of the periods" (*PSS* 8, p. 371).

106 To cite the colonel Mikhelson's journal, available to Pushkin: "It is impossible to imagine with what devotion the blinded people cling to Pugachev" (Indova, *The Peasant War*, p. 212).

107 I agree with Michael Finke that one of the novel's central themes is that of contradictory allegiances because of which Grinev is torn apart between his rather formal allegiance to the empire and the rebellion's cultural appeal translated into the personal appeal of its leader (Finke, "Figures for History," p. 173).

as for example in his last conversation with the rebel: "Listen...I don't know what to call you, and I don't want to know."[108]

The Print and the Hand – the Function of the Written Word in the Novel

Speaking of how the written word operates in the novel, Caryl Emerson suggests that it functions as "the letter versus the eye – the written word versus the spoken word, absence versus presence."[109] She argues that the illiterate Pugachev was destined to be defeated by the Westernized world of Catherine II, "a better organized and more rigidly structured world, a world ruled by documents and not private conversations."[110] In fact, it would perhaps be more fruitful to speak about how the *printed* word functions in the novel versus the *written* word, since documents produced by rebels circulate freely in the novel (for example, Pugachev's manifesto, his letter to the commandant, and even Grinev's safe conduct authenticated by the idiosyncrasy of the rebel's handwriting). However, they could not be printed by definition, since the old Muscovite version of reality advocated by the rebels did not encourage technological developments, especially those that attempted to "counterfeit" the sacredness of the handwritten word by its standardized multiplication. In fact, one of the government's strategies in the ideological war with the rebels was the request for the population to consider all handwritten "governmental" documentation as inauthentic and issued from the rebel camp. The court calendar read by the elder Grinev is another example of the government's reliance on the technological and discursive supremacy of the printed word just as are the "papers" that Zurin receives on Grinev before his arrest. "The Gutenberg planet," as Marshall McLuhan aptly called post-1440 Western civilization, was clearly not meant to be appreciated by the direct cultural heirs of the Muscovite

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108 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 134. When Grinev is sent a hourse and a coat by Pugachev, he expresses his gratitude by using this peculiar formula: "say thanks to the person who sent you," in this way avoiding calling Pugachev either "our father" (as the rebels would) or "the thief" (as the authorities would). In fact, the importance of naming in the novel is very high deserving a separate study. For example, Pugachev never, even in front of his supporters, fails to call Grinev "your highness" (*vashe blagorodie*) in the novel, the reason for which is again the high value attributed to honor by Pushkin as an aristocrat. Another example of this can be seen in how seriously Grinev is offended by the way in which his father's letter refers to Masha – "*devitsa Maria doch Mironova*" – which is in fact a reminder to his son that the Mironovs' nobility is new and therefore much lower in its status than the Grinevs'. These concerns belonging to a social class long gone, just like those of the medieval Russian peasantry, are difficult to see today, although they were still very valid in the nineteenth century to be incorporated in Pushkin's last work.

109 Caryl Emerson, "Grinev's Dream: The Captain's Daughter and a Father's Blessing," *Slavic Review* 40:1 (1981), p. 72.

110 Ibid.

religious zealots who, in the March of 1564, ransacked the shop of the Russian bookprinting pioneer Ivan Fedorov.[111]

Grinev and Shvabrin as No Simple Enemies

Caryl Emerson also describes Grinev and Shvabrin as being somewhat each other's doubles, one of whom (Shvabrin) incarnates the suppressed desires of another (Grinev). It is possible, however, to view the two characters' relationship from another, perhaps more private and attenuated, perspective. It is clear that the estate-educated Grinev (whose poetic mentor was Sumarokov, the first Russian aristocrat to become a professional man of letters) is a member of the old pre-Petrine hereditary nobility, as he declares to Pugachev: "I am a born nobleman."[112] As was mentioned earlier, the sense of honor is agonizingly important for him, having an almost "genetic" status, which enables him to violate none of his father's commandments[113]: he serves the sovereign to whom he swore; he does not curry favor with the authorities, as his trial shows; and, most importantly, by not caring too much about his old clothing (the hareskin coat given to Pugachev), he manages to preserve his honor from a young age.

In contrast, the dark and foreign-looking Shvabrin (whose literary teacher was the low-born but foreign-educated Trediakovskii[114]) came to the fort from the Westernized Petersburg, the city of the now-dominant post-Petrine nobility (who acquired their status in a "bourgeois" way – through obsequious service to the new cultural order). By making Shvabrin (whose origin and "spoken" last name are clearly non-Russian and whose nobility is markedly post-Petrine) the ultimate villain, Pushkin states very unambiguously that the people who broke into the post-Petrine Russian elite by cringing and shamelessly climbing the rank ladder had no inherent moral values such as honor and could do well serving just any order. Therefore, Grinev's indignation at Shvabrin's kneeling before the "lowly" Pugachev is quite predictable: "I was disgusted to see a nobleman groveling at the feet of a fugitive Cossack."[115] One may safely say that the cultural distrust in the Western egalitarian values brought to Russia by Peter was attributed by Pushkin not only to the common people but also to the culturally native Russian aristocracy. This reveals that he also shared this senti-

111 Even Catherine's handwritten letter exonerating Grinev serves as just a bow to the traditions of Grinev's old aristocratic family, since, according to the new order of things, the exoneration could not be valid without the accompanying printed edict "clearing" his status within the empire's juridical system. In fact, this is why Masha, who procured Grinev's freedom, says to Catherine that she came "for mercy, not justice."

112 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 104.

113 Ibid., p. 29.

114 See Irina Reyfman, *Vasilii Trediakovsky: The Fool of the "New" Russian Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

115 Pushkin, *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*, p. 139.

ment as a member of the old pre-Petrine Russian nobility that had been steadily losing its wealth and influence ever since the Empire's establishment.[116]

It is also possible to see what can be called the private consequences of Pushkin's aristocratic affiliations finding their way into *The Captain's Daughter*. For example, Emerson notes *in passim* that Shvabrin "in his final incarnation bears a striking physical resemblance to Pushkin himself."[117] In fact, not only can the two novel's characters be compared with each other according to the differences in their social and cultural origins, but these very differences can be fruitfully used in relating them to what we know about their author. It is well known that Pushkin's nobility from his father's side was – like Grinev's – old, hereditary, and having its origin in the Old Believer Streltsy gentry.[118]

On the other hand, his mother came from the family of Abram Petrovich Hannibal, Peter's blackamoor who made his career through loyal service to the Empire and whose nobility, just like Shvabrin's, was by all standards new. Therefore, Pushkin's own problematic origin and status within the authentic Russian aristocracy had exactly the same nature as the split between Shvabrin and Grinev who can thus be said to represent socially, culturally, and ethnically the differing and conflicting realms in their author's self-identification. This can be seen even in the autobiographical emphases assigned to each character: Grinev's father is shown to be quite hard on the "rascal" Beaupret in his household, behaving very much like Pushkin's own grandfather Leo who, according to the poet, "very *feudally* [the italics are mine, M. K.] hanged a French teacher."[119] However, it is precisely Shvabrin who was chosen for the role of Masha's abuser, despite the fact that Pushkin's male ancestors on both sides behaved despotically toward their women.[120]

Pushkin and His Problematic Nobility

The above split within Pushkin's cultural and social self-identification may also provide a new perspective on the much-discussed relationship between the narrative stances of *The History of Pugachev* and *The Captain's Daughter*. If one

116 Criticizing modernity's penchant for constant development and change, Pushkin wrote in 1831 that "stability is the first condition of social well-being. But how can stability be reconciled with endless advancement?" (*PSS* 12, p. 483).

117 Emerson, "Grinev's Dream," p. 67.

118 Some of whom were even executed by Peter (S. B. Veselovskii, *Rod i predki A. S. Pushkina* (Moscow: Vasanta, 1995), p. 40). It is also important that Grinev's ancestor Artemy Volynskii, who was Pushkin's ancestor, too (which makes the Grinevs the poet's relatives), and whose integrity in the face of death is eulogized by the elder Grinev, was put to death in the 1740s for insisting that only Russians should have access to the governmental offices in Russia – the sentiment known to be shared by the later Pushkin (Gillelson, *Povest' A. S. Pushkin "Kapitanskaia dochka,"* p. 163).

119 Pushkin, *Dnevniki*, p. 175.

120 Veselovskii, *Rod i predki A. S. Pushkina*, p. 26.

accepts the aristocrat Pushkin's problematic relationship with modernity,[121] it would perhaps become possible to restate in cultural and class terms Marina Tsvetaeva's famous dictum that the former work was written by a prose writer, while the latter, by a poet. Instead, one can say that *The Captain's Daughter* was produced by an independent artist and a member of the old pre-Petrine aristocracy nobility (the type that Pushkin rendered in Charskii) who could only have a personal and private relationship with the national history, while *The History of Pugachev* was shaped by a salaried governmental official and a ranked member of the new nobility whose detachment from the events narrated was achieved by eschewing personal investment/involvement in them.

Given the above context, it becomes obvious that, by writing *The Captain's Daughter*, Pushkin wanted to visualize a Russian nobleman like himself divided by a cultural gap from his people that neither he nor they could bridge anymore.[122] This character had to undergo a test of his moral and cultural "strength"[123] in the anti-Petrine "solution" to the Pugachev rebellion in order to purge in the process what was native and innate in him of the alien and acquired.[124] As a result, this "chemical" experiment yielded the differing and mutually conflicting "substances" of Grinev and Shvabrin.

It is also obvious that the later Pushkin's approach to history had a general tendency to problematize the legacy of Peter's cultural revolution. This

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121 Suggested by Gillelson who ascribes to the poet "a skeptical attitude towards modernity resulting from his...refusal to accept the West's bourgeois order and the social transformations signaling that the spirit of bourgeois entrepreneurship had started making ever deeper inroads into Russia" (Gillelson, *Povest' A. S. Pushkin "Kapitanskaia dochka*," p. 12).

122 By arguing this, I specifically oppose Yuri Lotman's statement (now canonic in the Pushkin studies) that "Grinev is not Pushkin's mouthpiece" (Lotman, "Ideinaia struktura 'Kapitanskoi Dochki'," p. 20). Although not maintaining that Grinev represents Pushkin's total artistic self-investment, I argue that Grinev enacts so many cultural, social, and personal preoccupations of his author that he may be safely called the later Pushkin's "mouthpiece."

123 N. N. Petrunina, "K tvorcheskoi istorii 'Kapitanskoi dochki'," *Russkaia literatura* 2 (1970), p. 95.

124 This underlies Pushkin's acute interest to the fate of the "new" nobleman Mikhail Shvanovich who was caught in between the two mutually exclusive cultural visions of the world. Taken prisoner at the beginning of the rebellion, he actively collaborated with the rebels translating their manifestos to the government into French and German, and overseeing the "converted" soldiers who were kept separately from the rest of Pugachev's army. (Mavrodin, *The Peasant War of 1773–1775 in Russia*, Vol. III, p. 447) The first draft of the novel had Shvanovich as its main character but Pushkin possibly felt that, unlike Grinev, Shvanovich (representing only the western values and also reproachable for military treason) could not fully reflect the historical and cultural nature of the rebellion. Perhaps, the initial idea to use Schvanovich in the novel, much indebted to Scott's "Waverly" cycle (see Melissa Frazier's "*Kapitanskaia dochka* and the Creativity of Borrowing," *Slavic and East European Journal* 37:4 (1993), pp. 472–489), could occur to Pushkin because of the etymological connotations of the officer's last name which, strikingly, derives from the German verb *schwanken*, or "waver."

can be seen at work in different ways in his works of the time such as *Ezersky*, *My Genealogy*, *The Bronze Horseman*, etc., for which Nikolai Gogol, one of the poet's closest friends at the time, described him as becoming "imbued with everything Russian then."[125] In this respect, the later Pushkin can be said to have paved the way for the attitude toward the Russian past voiced soon after his death by the first, also aristocratic, generation of Slavophiles who, despite the Western origins of most of their ideas, could, like Pushkin, "connect" to the pre-Petrine national past through their family histories and genealogical trees. It is exactly because of this special historical continuity that the critic Nikolai Strakhov later called *The Captain's Daughter* not a historical novel, and not even a historical chronicle, but precisely "a family chronicle."[126]

A Need for Change in Today's Perception of Pushkin

Pushkin's connection to the incipient Slavophile tradition indicated above runs against the image of Pushkin as the ultimate locus of intercultural aesthetic influences traditionally advanced by the scholars of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. While this view may be true for the early poetic output of Pushkin, his post-1825 works, and especially his prose of the 1830s, reveal a different tendency – that of focusing on, and problematizing, the relevance of what he considered to be authentically Russian culture and history. In general, semiotics and structuralism cannot conceptually put the notion of genesis before that of structure, which proves to be disadvantageous in studying the later Pushkin for whose preoccupation with history the highly aristocratic notion of origin was of paramount importance. The linguistic model imposed by structuralism and semiotics on all modes of knowledge and thought simply forbids conceiving of change that is not internal or system related, just as the near-perfect predictability of language transformation on the synchronic level fails when one conceives of historical mutations in language. Envisioned to counter nineteenth-century historicism with its teleologically conceived search for origins, structural thought tends to "freeze" the flow of time and, with it, the singularity of the phenomena under study. This severely impedes structuralism's understanding of culture, since cultures, if anything, are the primary products of the passage of time. In contrast, the New Historicist notion of a "cultural poetics," to which the present study is indebted and which advances the importance of the literary work's embedment in the context of the institutions, practices, and beliefs of its host culture, allows one to grasp better the relationship between the literary text and the ways it evolves through time.

Another important consequence of structuralism's theoretical stance is that it takes the interpretation of history at face value tending to ignore the

125 Nikolai Gogol, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 8 (Moscow and Leningrad: ANSSSR, 1937–52), p. 439.

126 Cited in Emerson, "Grinev's Dream," p. 61.

complex nature of historic change and the challenges of its continuous irruption in the present that makes the Tartu-Moscow School's overall conception of history overtly inadequate for studying Pushkin's understanding of it. This can be seen, for example, in the school's perspective, as summarized below by Yury Lotman himself, on one of the major issues constituting the later Pushkin's intense interest in history, namely, on the nature of Peter the Great's reforms and their consequences for Russian culture:

> Peter's reform, despite all its excesses...had fulfilled its national tasks by creating the kind of state that enabled Russia to exist for two hundred years among Europe's leading countries as well as by engendering one of the most distinctive cultures in the history of human civilization. And, while the modern critics of Peter sometimes declare that the fate of Russia would have been better without this kind of state, there will be hardly anyone who would want to imagine Russian history without Pushkin and Dostoyevskii, Tolstoi, and Tiutchev, without Moscow University and the Tsarskoe Selo Gymnasium.[127]

This perspective often implies that all post-Petrine reassessments of the Old Muscovite culture have been irredeemably tainted by the failure of the Slavophile enterprise that tried to conceive of its object's original nature by borrowing Western models of Romantic sensibility. However, this view, itself being an ideological and theoretical product of the European Enlightenment,[128] gravely underestimates the nature of the cultural shock given by the latter to the Old Muscovite civilization that, for many centuries, had conceived of itself negatively, by opposing itself to the rest of the world. In doing so, the perspective of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School cannot incorporate into its analyses the important element of otherness belonging to its object, just as it disregards – like all trends in structuralism – the historical dimension in the transformations of power and knowledge. This results in an epistemological loophole where any reconstruction of the object under analysis is corrupted by the intrusion of the ideological premises already latently but powerfully inherent in the analysis. Walter Benjamin described precisely this kind of thinking in his "Theses on the Philosophy of History," one of the most influential texts in today's post-colonial studies:

> All the rulers are the heirs of those who conquered before them. Hence, empathy with the victor invariably benefits the rulers... Whoever has emerged victorious participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate. According to the traditional practice, the spoils are carried along in the procession. They are called cultural treasures, and the historical materialist views them with cautious

127 Lotman, *Besedy o russkoi kul'ture*, p. 19.

128 The insistence of the Enlightenment thinkers like Helvetius on the nature of man as a coreless and composite structure fully formed by one's environment (cf. Radischev's notion of man as "the chameleon of circumstances" [Alexander Radishchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 1 (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1938), p. 200]) correlates well with structuralism's major principle of "the death of the subject."

> detachment. For, without exception, the cultural treasures he surveys have origins that he cannot contemplate without horror. They owe their existence not only to the efforts of the great minds and talents who have created them, but also to the anonymous toil of their contemporaries. There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism also taints the manner in which it is transmitted from one owner to another. The historical materialist therefore dissociates himself from it as far as possible. He regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.[129]

In this respect, Lotman's strategy of mentioning the names of Russian classical writers or cultural institutions simply turns into a self-validating attempt to justify the barbarism of one culture's victory over another, a barbarism much starker since it occurred within one country and civilization.

This study has tried to do exactly what Benjamin suggested: to brush Russian history, as it is treated by the later Pushkin, against the thirty-year "structural" grain given to it by the Tartu Semiotic School as well as to provide the cultural context within which the narrative of Pushkin's last major work continuously erupts with Russia's problematic past and its cultural, social, and political contingencies.

Pushkin as an Element of Otherness in Modern Russian Culture

The Berda peasants, who were described by Pushkin as vividly remembering Pugachev and who took the poet for the Anti-Christ in 1834,[130] made up at the time a large segment of Russia's population who still had to be Westernized in order to even understand the notion of a "national poet." Their presence, however, was very real not only for Pushkin but also for the Slavophiles who tried, if inadequately, to account for the quickly disappearing traces of pre-Petrine Russian culture. And if Peter's cultural revolution is now viewed as a successful attempt at self-colonization after the model of the Enlightenment, then the aristocratic Slavophile enterprise, with its reliance on borrowed Western ideas, can also perhaps be thought of as an inadvertent victim of the cultural victors since the aristocracy and its culture were trampled by them just as mercilessly as those of the medieval peasantry[131] represented today by the profuse voices of the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School.

It is possible to say, however, that there seems to be yet another, even more personal, side of the issue for Pushkin in writing *The Captain's Daughter*. His notes and letters from the 1830s reveal deep concern over the problematics of his current social status and ethnic origins. His essay "On the Literary Aristocracy" represents a deliberate attempt to defend himself, as a member of the

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129 Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*. Trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 256–257.

130 Leonid Maikov, *Pushkin. Biograficheskie materially* (Saint Petersburg, 1899), pp. 427–429.

131 Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (London: Blackwell, 1983), pp. 68–69.

old hereditary nobility, from the growing influence of the new and quasi-bourgeois post-Petrine meritocracy and its attacks (led by Polevoi) on aristocratic men of letters. It is well known that Pushkin wrote the essay after Bulgarin's newspaper piece that insinuated that his African ancestry comes from a low-born black boy purchased for a bottle of rum to which Pushkin replied by writing his autobiography containing a detailed account of his origins.

It also seems that Pushkin's exotic ethnic standing in Russia – quite an asset during his careless and sensual youth – transformed into something of a stigma in his late years. All this led Pushkin to realize more acutely that not only the cultural gap between his Westernized class and the people but also that his own ethnically and culturally problematic standing in fact resulted from a more fundamental problem – that of the cultural continuity of Russian history cut across by Peter the Great's reforms. This explains well his personal fascination with, and simultaneous aversion to, the czar[132] who, so to say, "genetically engineered" Pushkin by bringing about the decline of one half of Pushkin's ancestry, while creating, virtually out of nothing, its other half.[133] Strikingly, all this made Pugachev, perhaps ironically so, Pushkin's own metaphorical relative, as the person whom the rebel impersonated (Peter III) was the grandson of Peter the Great, the proxy father of Pushkin's famous African ancestor. And, perhaps, it is the very oddness of this historically lingering proxy fatherhood that was translated by Pushkin into the oddness of Grinev's dream and Pugachev's ambiguous role in it.

It seems likely that, by the end of his life, Pushkin had found himself at the crossroads of many artistic, cultural, and ethnic influences, at the point where three civilizations – Russian, European, and African – had unexpectedly came into contact.[134] Therefore, it should be acknowledged that if, due to the uniqueness of his standing in the Russian literature of his time, Pushkin could be Russia's best intercultural amalgamator, then this very uniqueness also made him perceive much more acutely the various cultural divisions running

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132 See Kafengauz, "Pushkin o Petre I," pp. 151–158. Like many Soviet researchers, Kafengauz provides a good summary of Pushkin's treatment of Peter the Great. However, the scholar is not very persuasive when he maintains that, in "The Bronze Horseman," Pushkin polemicized with Karamzin's rather critical attitude to Peter's reforms (see note 7 above). This position prompts Kafengauz to maintain that Peter's legacy leads to the death of Evgeny and, in his person, symbolizes the reforms' toil on the simple people's masses. He forgets, however, that Evgeny's high aristocratic origin and his death's may bear significance as the token of the disappearance of his class.

133 Perhaps, Pushkin's "Monument" can be seen as his attempt to leave after himself a legacy that would be built on other principles and expressed in other forms than those embodied in Peter's famous statue featured in "The Bronze Horseman."

134 The kind of contact visualized in *Egyptian Nights* in the interaction between the native Russian aristocrat Charskii and the dark foreign improvisatore of low origin. See Catharine Nepomnyashchy's recent collection *Under the Sky of My Africa* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2006).

through the Russian culture of his time. By the end of his life, he must have felt himself hostage to these divisions that eventually helped him to render the arguably main problem of Russian culture – the question of its true cultural affiliation – in the deeply personal terms of his own dilemmas and obsessions. It is this Pushkin's successful attempt at recognizing his own otherness – something that one is not – that makes *The Captain's Daughter* so indispensable to Russians' modern conception of themselves and of their ultimate man of letters who stopped being the Anti-Christ for us because we are no longer Berda peasants. And we may thank him for that since, if it is true that the real border between Europe and Asia runs today not through the Urals but through every Russian heart, then all that it takes to make this divide palpable is to render it in a novel that this heart (and not just the skin) would love.