The New Russian History

Series Editor: Donald J. Raleigh,
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

This new series makes examples of the finest work of the most eminent historians in Russia today available to English-language readers. Each volume has been specially prepared by the author with an international audience in mind, and each will be translated and introduced by an outstanding Western scholar in the same field. The next title in the series will be a sweeping study of nineteenth-century Russia by Nikolai A. Trutskii, the great historian of Russian populism, in a translation by American historian Deborah Hardy.

The Reforms of Peter the Great

Progress through Coercion in Russia

Evgenii V. Anisimov
Translated with an introduction by John T. Alexander

M.E. Sharpe
Armonk, New York
London, England
The Serf Economy

During the introduction of the state reforms of 1719–24 central offices were created to administer commerce and industry: the Mining and Manufactories College (in 1722 it was divided in two, the Mining and the Manufactories colleges), the Commerce College, and the Main Municipal Administration. Before this, Russia lacked similar institutions (the Ore-digging bureau of 1710–11, resurrected in 1715 in the form of the Ore Chancery, could not compare with the Mining College in either designation or scope or level of centralization).

These bureaucratic organizations became the regulatory institutions for the national economy, responsible for implementing the commercial-industrial policies of the Petrine autocracy based on mercantilism and protectionism. The creation of a centralized administrative system for commerce and industry signified a turning point in economic policymaking of the Petrine state.

Confident after 1717 of quickly winning the war with Sweden, Peter launched a fundamental change of commercial-industrial policy. The crux of the change was the introduction of diverse measures of stimulating commerce and private industrial entrepreneurship.

On 8 April 1719 Peter, “from favor for the merchanty of the Russian state, decreed that there should be only two state commodities: potash and weidash (and those for conservation of the forests), whereas the other goods which have been sold by the state are freed for trade among the populace.”

Thus were abolished after a decade and a half the state monopolies on the majority of goods that had been so burdensome and ruinous for the Russian merchanty; that is, freedom of trade was proclaimed. Implementation of the decree on freedom of trade and management of all commercial affairs was entrusted to the Commerce College, created that same year. It was occupied with so-called “commerce,” that is, protection of commercial shipping, management of customs duties, the juridical aspect of trade, and so forth.

The measures for stimulating private industrial entrepreneurship were incomparably more substantial and diverse. Their basis was laid by the celebrated “Mining Privilege” of 10 December 1719. It authorized all residents of the country whatever their social status to prospect for minerals and to establish works. To found a works one had to present samples of ore to the Mining College, which after ascertaining the location of the find would deed the tract of land to the future entrepreneur and give him a “privilege”—the requisite document for the works confirming his rights and responsibilities.

An important facet of the new mining legislation was that it did not acknowledge a right of possession to the land on which the minerals and ores had been found: “If the owner himself does not have the desire to build and will not have the desire to enter into comradeship with others, or cannot from his own deficiency, then he will be compelled to permit that others seek out and mine and process ores and minerals on his lands, so that God’s blessings under the earth not remain without use.” Although the “Mining Privilege” had introduced a change in several branches of owners’ rights to the land, the progressiveness of this norm of the “Mining Privilege” should not be exaggerated: in the Russia of that time everything belonging to the subject might at any moment be “appropriated by the master” and given to whomever he pleased. The landowner of Petrine times, whose father might be deprived of his estate without notice for failure to appear for muster, did not enjoy the security of a landed proprietor protected by law.

Another important initiative of the Petrine government was the practice of transferring state manufactories to private owners or, frequently, to whole companies especially created for the purpose.

The new owners received various favors from the state: an interest-free loan for several years, the right to add any entrepreneur to the company, customs-free sale of goods, and a high purchase price (in comparison to the usual) for the sale of goods to the state. To this it should also be added that the tariff confirmed in 1724 provided essential aid to entrepreneurs, facilitating the export abroad of native manufactories’ production and hindering the import of identical foreign goods (with the aid of high customs duties).

All these measures of stimulating commerce and private entrepreneurship suggest, it would seem, that at the end of the Northern War fundamental changes had come about in the autocracy’s economic policymaking and that a peculiar New Economic Policy (NEP) had arrived with its characteristic principles of greater economic freedom. But this illusion is quickly shattered when we look into the facts more closely.

As early as 18 January 1715 a decree had been issued defining the
policy for light industry (more specifically, woolen cloth). It declared:
"Woolen mills are not to be multiplied in one locality so as to cease
purchasing foreign uniforms in five years [as a decree of 1712 had
ordained], but so as to establish them in more than one locality and,
once they are established, to transfer them to trading people assembled
in a company, whether they wish it or are compelled to it, and to gain
money for the mill yearly with ease, in order that it be easier for them
to produce in this matter." This brief decree contains the crux of all
Petrine industrial policy of the last years. Previously, as at the start of
the Northern War, the main aim remained to supply the army and the
country with industrial goods. Now, however, a new path for resolving
this task had opened up for Peter—creating trading and industrial com-
panies. Since they had played such a positive role in the economic life
of the Western European countries, Russia ought to have them too.

Companies intrigued Peter not simply because of the broad possibili-
ties of organizing a venture that required the pooling of the capital of
several entrepreneurs, but also because they constituted a peculiar com-
mune the members of which, having poured their capital into a com-
mon pot, were linked by mutual interest and bore joint responsibility
before the state. The state was interested in organizing companies and
therefore included in the decree the phrase "whether they wish it or are
compelled to it." Coercion remained, as we shall see below, a constant
component of the Petrine "NEP."

It is important to note that the organizer and leader of the company
often turned out to be in service to the state and holding, like Demidov,
the rank of "commissar," could bring in others even against their will.
Refusal to enter into a company and to offer one's own capital, like
voluntary exit, could lead to serious complications. By a decree of 17
February 1723 company members might first be fined by the leadership
of the company, then put in prison under the Mining and Manufactu-
ries College, which exercised general oversight.

In the last decade of Peter's reign the transfer of manufactories to
companies and to private entrepreneurs became widespread, yet those
liable to transfer were in the first instance enterprises more profitable
for the fisc. In the official correspondence, profitability was set forth as
the reason for transferring manufactories into private hands.

 Stimulating private entrepreneurship and making "concessions" to
merchants and industrialists, the state had no intention to withdraw
from the economy. By the end of the Northern War a kind of new
edition of the previous policy emerged. If earlier the state's influence
on the economy had been one of compulsion through a system of
prohibitions, monopolies, customs duties, and taxes, and through the
direct participation of the fisc in trades and industries, now that the


crisis justifying this intervention no longer prevailed, the whole weight
of the burden was shifted onto the creation and activities of the bureau-
cratic machine of administrative control, which through codes, regula-
tions, "privileges," accounts, and checks could direct economic life via a
carefully devised network of peculiar stolits and canals in the direction
needed by the state. Special colleges were also created for the guidance
of this process.

It is important to note that in Sweden, whose state offices Peter
considered exemplary, similar colleges likewise exercised royal author-
ity as a whole on just these theoretical bases. Yet Russia's conditions
differed greatly from Sweden's not only in terms of scale, culture, and
the unusual intensity of industrial construction forced and financed by
the state, but above all in the special severity of the regimentation, the
ramified system of constraints, and the state's excessive oversight of its
subjects' commercial-industrial activities.

We have no grounds to think that in the last decade of his reign
Peter intended to loosen the tight administrative harness on the econ-
omy or, bluntly speaking, that he unwittingly facilitated the develop-
ment of capitalist forms and the means of production that had become
widespread in Western Europe. What had happened amounted to a
shift not of principles but of emphases in commercial-industrial policy.

Looking carefully into the conditions for transferring manufactories,
we discover that the companies did not exercise the rights of a capitalis-
tic owner. Implemented was merely a variant of a peculiar lease, the
conditions of which were clearly defined by the state, which had a right
to change them, up to reclaiming for the fisc the works granted and
even confiscating what had been built at the entrepreneurs' own "cost."
Thus, in the "privilege" of 1720 for the copper-smelting works founded
by Nikita Demidov "with his very own money" it was noted: "And there-
fore he, Demidov, is ordered to work and care for that copperworks,
and to see that his mining venture is pursued and expanded satisfac-
torily; assure him that the works will not be taken from him, and from his
wife and from his children and his heirs, so long as they operate the
works in good condition." As we have seen, the state guaranteed to the
entrepreneur ownership of his own works only for as long as the latter is
"in good condition," that is, so long as the necessary production will be
provided to the fisc without fail. Otherwise the enterprise could be
confiscated.

Timely fulfillment of state orders was the entrepreneur's main obli-
gation. Only the surplus above that which currently is called the "state
order" might he sell on the market. Thus, private entrepreneurship was
firmed yoked to the state’s cart by the system of state orders, which were primarily of military significance. On one hand, this of course protected the stability of sales by the manufacturers, who could be sure that the state would guarantee demand for their product, but on the other hand it discouraged technical and other kinds of innovation, and sharply under-cut the significance of competition as a prime mover of entrepreneurship. This is why later attempts to introduce innovations into primeval works proved to be in vain, for there was no interest in their expansion and development as long as there were stable orders and demand via the state. The numerous privileges for a portion of the entrepreneurs worked in the same direction, for they signaled a compulsory liquidation of competitors.

Oversight and control of native industry were entrusted, as noted, to the Mining and Manufactories College. The “Mining Privilege” defined the rights of the new college with uncustomary breadth. The college exercised obligatory control over the activities of ore prospectors, granted permission to build works, set the prices for production, held monopoly rights on purchase of the production of manufactories in amounts set by itself, and exercised general control over the production and supply of goods. All administrative and judicial authority over the entrepreneurs and the workers was also in the hands of the Mining College.

At first both heavy and light industry had been united under the college’s management. In 1722 a separation of the Mining and Manufactories colleges came about. In December 1723 the regulation of the Manufactories College was adopted, specifying that the new college’s authority vis-à-vis the manufacturers was just the same as that of Mining College over the mine owners. The Manufactories College was supposed to patronize entrepreneurship in light industry in every way. According to the lawgiver’s thinking, this would be achieved primarily via strict administration and control.

It was the right of the state to restrain the competition of entrepreneurs and to exercise oversight of the quality of the output produced, samples of which were periodically reviewed in the college. Furthermore, according to the regulation, the college was supposed to oversee production, to examine specialists, and later on “to institute a regulation for each manufactory.” In a country where the General Regulation—that king of all regulations—was already operating and where each college, office, and position had or, at least, was supposed to have its own articles or regulations defining distinctly and in detail the functions of each institution and the obligations of each official, it would have been strange if each manufactory, private or state, had not had its own regulation that enumerated what was supposed to go on there, for the good of the state. Concerning this last point, the Manufactories

The Surf Economy

College was supposed to busy itself in caring for the manufactories.

Thus, under Peter, industry was created in which the chief was a specialist. Bureaucrats-officials who knew which branch should be developed and which should be retarded, who determined how much of what would be produced and how much each arshin* of cloth and pud† of iron should cost, who possessed tremendous authority over the entrepreneur and the conditions of his labor, and who decided the fate of the entrepreneur’s business and prosperity.

The abolition in 1719 of the state monopoly on trade in traditional export goods expanded, no doubt, the opportunities of the Russian merchant, whereas the protectionist customs tariff adopted in 1724 provided them with substantial advantage, safeguarding them from the competition of foreign merchants. The regulation of the Commerce College of 1724, as already mentioned, reinforced the new situation that had arisen as a consequence of the decrees abolishing monopolies. But the positive provisions of the regulation were nullified by the points following that firmly regulated the flow of cargo and stipulated the kinds of goods that were to be delivered to the different port towns in accordance with the privileges created for Petersburg, and with those general political considerations that the government deemed more important than observation of the newly enunciated principles of free trade. Therefore, the regulation enjoined that goods from Pskov and its region should be hauled directly to Narva, whereas to Riga and to other places they are not to haul those goods that have been ordered to be hauled to Petersburg,” and so on. Obviously, the administrative determination of the ports of trade was a manifestation of the state’s command in the commercial sphere. In order to stimulate native commercial navigation and shipbuilding, the authorities categorically demanded that merchants desist from building vessels of the old style and ship their goods exclusively on expensive “new-model” vessels. These laws were extended even to the Pomor’e (northern maritime region), the population of which, for many centuries, navigated the northern seas. Violation of the prohibition on building ships of the old style threatened the Pomorians—who were born shipbuilders and sailors—with hard labor, as they were warned by the decree of 11 March 1719.

The state’s influence on the economy was not limited to the authorities’ direct intervention into commerce and industry. The socio-economic relations typical of Russian society as a whole permeated the manufactories, to a substantial degree deforming their features as potentially capitalist enterprises. The heart of the matter touches on the peculiarities of their use of the labor force.

*One arshin equals 28 inches.
†One pud equals 36 pounds.
The manufactories established at the beginning of the Petrine era had been provided with a labor force in a variety of ways. State enterprises and private owners used both a freely hired force and "assigned" peasants—the rural populace of the regions that as a rule adjoined the localities of the works' placement. The peasants, mainly those from state-taxed lands, worked off the state impost by laboring at the works. What did the "assigned" peasants do? As a rule, auxiliary work. In 1711 the Olonets peasants wrote in a petition: "...we work in all sorts of factory works, and cut wood in the forests and prepare charcoal, and dig ore, and smelt it, and haul without a break." On paper, such labors were not supposed to exceed the state taxes in money terms. The works' management or owner compensated for the peasants' missing tax payments by deliveries of their production to the fisc. It should be noted, however, that the practice of "assignment" had been widely extended from the first years of manufactories' existence even in the pre-Petrine period. But, as already noted in similar cases, the scale of such practices under Peter was different: it included general and extended enlistment from near and far of state, palace, monastery, and privately held peasants at the most diverse construction sites, canals, and production centers. The new capital, fortresses, canals, and roads—everything that would later be called the infrastructure—were created under Peter by the immense efforts and exhaustion of the country's peasant population. I am speaking here of the hundreds of thousands of peasants who had been driven from all corners of the country with the exception of Siberia, the population of which paid money compensation for the working off of taxes at construction sites in the European part of the country, although it was not exempted from construction levies in the Urals and in Siberia. The peasant who traveled hundreds of verstis to Taganrog or Vyborg, Petersburg or Voronezh, Brianšk or Revel in order to work off the many months of labor dues became the most typical figure of Russian life on the roads of the Petrine era.

If one speaks of the basic, permanent skilled contingent of workers of Petrine manufactories who labored there for years and who achieved a moderately high level of skill, these were generally hired workers. For an enterprise to accept workers "by hire" from the street at the start of the eighteenth century did not pose any special complications. The differentiation of the rural population, the system of tax assessment that took account of the household and not each specific person, and the multitude of legal ways to avoid assessment or service, not to mention pre-Petrine Russia's simply untaxed strata of the population and the absence of a firm national passport system for the recovery of fugitives—all this led to the fact that in the large towns along the major land and river routes, as well as in the country as a whole, a substantial stratum of so-called "free and itinerant persons" grew up to provide the basic reserve of the freely hired labor force.

But not only persons free according to the law belonged to the category of "the free and the itinerant." Among them were quite a few declassed elements—the "freebooters" so familiar to us from the rebellion of Steina Razin. "Thieving" along the big roads and rivers in summer, these "barebacks" settled down at the manufactories in winter. At the same time a substantial number of "the free and the itinerant" comprised peasants, including serfs who had fled from their lords and from state service, as well as peasant children who had lived from infancy at the works and had learned there the skills of weavers, blacksmiths, and so forth. In general, the law strictly prohibited the use at the works of the labor of fugitive soldiers, recruits, and landowners' serfs. In real life, however, these prescriptions were honored in the breach—fugitive peasants in great numbers turned up at the manufactories. Along with "the free" they also formed the basic contingent of a skilled work force at both state and private enterprises.

Criminals sentenced to hard labor also manned the manufactories. On 10 April 1722, for example, a special directive was adopted about banishing criminals along with their wives and children from the European part of the country to the silver mines of Dauria in eastern Siberia. The labor of convict women was used especially often in linen production. The sentence of "eternal banishment to the spinning court" is one of those most frequently encountered in cases involving women before the courts.

If, as noted earlier, problems of a free labor force had not arisen at the dawn of industrial construction, then at the start of the 1720s such a problem had not only arisen but had become acute. By this time important transformations of social character had taken place. These, together with the acutely accelerated struggle against fugitives and the recruiting levies for the army of 250,000, became the main cause of the shortage of free work hands. With the introduction of the census for the soul (capitation) tax, which encompassed the entire Russian population of the country, a massive removal of fugitive peasants ensued including those from manufactories where they had been hiding in the form of "the free and the itinerant"—a category proclaimed illegal after the soul census. This provoked the anxiety of the state offices interested in filling deliveries to the fisc. The number of complaints about the removal of peasants increased also from private entrepreneurs.

Just then two of Peter's decrees were published that had serious consequences for Russian industry and the country's economy. On 18
January 1721 Peter signed in the Senate a decree permitting manufacturers to buy enserfed peasants for their own works. The main motives of the government’s actions, which had decided to change the traditional ban on buying peasants for representatives of the nonnoble commercial-industrial class, were the belief that manufacturers benefit the state and a recognition of the need to encourage them.6

The significance of the decree cited is hard to overestimate—permission to buy villages with peasants for manufactories had irreversible consequences; it signaled a decisive step toward converting industrial enterprises, at which the capitalist mode had taken root, into enterprises of the serf economy, a variant of feudal property—a peculiar patrimonial manufactury.

The decree established a special variant of landowner’s property, “villages attached to works,” with a distinctively limited right of using the property only for industrial needs. Yet serfdom was the sole basis of limited as well as unlimited property in such villages, whether one speaks of the serf’s work on the lord’s land or at a forge in the lord’s works.

Peter's second decree, which should be considered in detail, appeared approximately a year later, on 15 March 1722, and is linked to the determination of the status of working people during the general census of the population in 1719-24. In enumerating the factory population the census takers confronted a problem: what to do with working people who did not belong to the owner of a manufactury? Almost all of them were subject to the workings of the laws on removing fugitives because, not being the manufacturer’s property, they either were the property of somebody else or had left the estates of monasteries, the palace administration, state peasant, or town communes.

The decree of 15 March 1722, which had been drafted with Peter’s direct participation, came into being as a consequence of the government’s efforts to find a way out of the situation that had arisen. The decree stipulated that the census takers should enumerate at the works all the working people “whatever districts and whosover people and peasants they are, and having counted them, if from those same districts . . . they be certified in registers submitted for souls of the male sex, whether they have been registered and if registered, do not assign them anew, and if they are not registered, then assign them to whichever villages and hamlets they will say, and place them in the assessment on par with the others.”7 Putting it differently, on one hand, the government, concerned to conserve the number of taxpayers, ordered that working people be entered in the soul-tax registers not at the enterprise where they worked and lived, but in those hamlets and villages from which they had gone off to the manufactury. On the other hand, the law, protecting the interests of industry, prohibited the removal of the worker-peasants from the works.

Thus the decree had the character of the judgment of Solomon whereby the fiscal needs of the state, which was interested in preserving the “taxed number” of assessed communes from which it collected the soil tax for the army, had been taken into account along with the proprietary interests of the landowners whose fugitives were obligated to pay dues, and also the interests of the manufacturers, who did not lose their precious work force. As often happened in Russia, however, the decree turned out to be good only on paper. The prescription of 15 March was not carried out—fugitive peasant-workers began to be taken from the works back to their previous owners. According to the materials that have come down to us, it is obvious that in the key issue the local authorities took the side of the landowners, the fugitives’ owners.

Here it is desirable to direct attention to a characteristic particular. Working people, regardless of their actual position and the duration of their employment, were covered by the norms and criteria of the law that had fixed the estate structure of medieval Russian society. The law did not contain any supplements that might have taken account of the newly emergent reality—the manufactories and their related social strata, entrepreneurs and workers. In the social structure (and hence in the law that reflected it) there was no place for the estate of working people. Labor at a factory was not viewed by Petrine lawmakers, who were living in an era of intensive industrial construction, as an activity that might permit the person so employed to achieve a special status, a special place in the estate structure of society distinct from that of a peasant or a townsmen.

Petrine lawmakers saw labor at an enterprise as one of the secondary occupations of the townsmen, peasant, or person of mixed rank. Although a distinction was made at a place of production between permanent masters—workers who had long since become professionals—and temporary workmen and peasants, legislation and legal practice did not admit the difference: working people were viewed as serfs of the manufactury’s owner, as his property. In fact, the lawmaker did not grasp the difference between entrepreneur-industrialists and the mercantile to which the former were often assigned.

This “blindness” of the law is especially evident in the work of the census takers, who conducted the census and who checked the number of souls present in each village, hamlet, town, and works. In enumerating the workers, the census takers overlooked the fact that the former had long since become skilled workers (possibly not in the first genera-
tion) separated from their estate, class, and social group. For everybody there was a single question: "From which ranks and which towns and districts are they?" and then in the registry the answers were set down: "from the peasants," "from the townsmen," "from the churchmen." That is, it was not the worker’s social origin in the current sense of the word that was noted, but direct membership in the milieu from which he had once come.

Putting it differently, the census taker noticed the worker but did not recognize him as a representative of a special social group, similar to how the people of antiquity saw the color orange, but perceived it not as orange, but as a variant of yellow or red. In our case the cause of social "Daltonism" (color blindness) lay in the fact that something new was perceived as a variant of the old.

The aforementioned decree of 28 May 1723 was a direct consequence of similar notions about a working man whereby the worker (if he was not the property of the manufacturer or had not been "assigned" to a works) could enter only two categories: as a furloughed peasant with a passport for temporary work at a factory, or as a fugitive in violation of the law and subject to immediate removal from the factory to his prior place of residence, where he had been registered with the other peasants in the assessment of the soul tax.

Now the significance of two decrees was becoming apparent: that of 18 January 1721 on the purchase of villages by manufacturers, and that of 15 March 1729 with clarifications of 1733 concerning the recovery of workers who were fugitive peasants. By these decrees Russia’s industry could not develop except via bondage. After these decrees the proportion of freely hired labor in Russian industry started to decline markedly. State industry started to change over almost entirely to the exploitation of "assigned" peasants and developed a special institution of "recruits"—peculiar lifelong "industrial soldiers" obligated to discharge their recruitment not in the army but at the foundry or workbench.

The expansion of bondage also facilitated the practice whereby peasants who did not belong to landowners but who were laboring at factories started to be bound to the tax assessment wherever they had been found by the census; that is, at the factories.

The skilled workers and masters living at the factories were free persons and had not at first been subject to the soul tax, although they had been enumerated during the census. Their position was still acknowledged to be abnormal in a society where there were no longer free persons and where each was subject to taxation or service; by a decree of 1736 all free working people were proclaimed to be bondmen of the manufactory owners—the so-called "eternally committed" work-

ers. In short, entire branches of industry started to use the labor of bondmen or of "assigned" peasants almost exclusively, with the exploitation of "assigned" peasants hardly differing in form from that of serfs. The entrepreneur could without supervision dispose of the labor of the "assigned" peasant, who found himself in temporary yet heavy and essentially bonded dependence. A similar picture obtained with other factory owners too. Thus, the woolen cloth industry in general did not countenance free labor: the state, interested in supplying the army with native woolens, did not spare villages for the manufacturers of this branch. An analogous situation prevailed also in the metallurgical industry of the Urals. The census of 1744-45 revealed that freely hired workers constituted only 1.7 percent of the general mass of workers. It is hardly worthwhile to dwell on the ruinous consequences of the victory of compulsory labor in industry, which in total largely determined the country’s economic backwardness compared with the economically developed countries of Europe. The use of bondage in the sphere of industry also deformed the formation of the Russian bourgeoisie that had just begun. As we know, in establishing manufactories, their owners received definite and substantial privileges. In particular, according to the "privileges," they were exempted from a series of imposts and from billeting. At the start of 1721, almost simultaneously with the decree about the purchase of villages for factories, a decree was issued whereby the first that shall found a works is freed of service" to which he was subject as a townsman, a privilege that was seen as conducive to "making them [manufactories] multiply without difficulty." This was quite an important privilege, for the entrepreneurs as well as the more substantial portion of the townsmen paid the lion’s share of town taxes and provided many services in fiscal affairs. Singling out the manufacturers in estate, judicial, and fiscal affairs provoked discontent among the townsmen as a whole. This was reflected in a "Report" of the Main Municipal Administration of 1722. The Main Municipal Administration asserted that many merchants had entered industrial companies only to avoid general town obligations, and that the company men should be subordinated to town officials in determining their share of the payments. Peter heeded the request of the Main Municipal Administration and ordained that entrepreneurs who had already mastered the trade and were earning a stable return from it "are to be under the jurisdiction of the municipal administration in civil services and imposts along with other citizens." This resolution was a step backward in the legal and fiscal formation of the social group of entrepreneurs. By taking entrepreneurs under the jurisdiction of the Main Municipal Administration (that was general for the urban community), the urban milieu
was mixed up and the growing bourgeoisie was artificially leveled with the great bulk of the medieval urban community.

Apart from legal obstacles there were also economic circumstances hindering the formation of the bourgeoisie class under Peter. These comprised not only the entrepreneurs' dependence and the state's command in the economic sphere discussed earlier, but also the fact that the state's very stimulation of industry primarily had the character of bondage. This facilitated the development of bondage in industry and the decline in the role and significance of freely hired labor, the potential use of which had already been constrained by the autocracy's social and "regime" policy-making.

Yet providing the manufacturers with the right to use a purchased labor force cost entrepreneurs dearly (in both the direct and metaphorical senses of the word). As a result there occurred a "killing" of capital that went not for the improvement and expansion of production, but for the purchase of land and peasants. Thus, in 1745 Akinfiy Demidov's twenty-two metalworks were valued at 400,000 rubles, whereas his estates and peasants were valued at 211,000 rubles. The Luganins' works cost 305,600 rubles, whereas the peasants and land cost 1.2 million rubles, that is, four times more.11

If we add to this that the furloughed peasant, who received a passport and went off in search of a livelihood, was exploited at the factory via the capitalistic mode so that later, having received the money, he paid feudal dues to his lord, it is clear that in the system of bonded industry there was no room for the development of capitalism (and consequently for the formation of the bourgeoisie).

Finally, in exploiting the system of bondage in industry, the state was interested in the stable delivery of industrial output, for which indeed the entrepreneurs were encouraged by money and bondsmen. Accordingly, the state looked quite benevolently on the request of manufacturers to introduce monopolies for the production of goods put out by this same manufacturer or for the purchase of needed raw materials. It is noteworthy that, in introducing such monopolies, the state saw their benefit in a purely fiscal capacity: the entrepreneur himself, the officials calculated, would be interested in ensuring that competitors not appear who might avoid fiscal payments.

The struggle against competitors with the aid of state decrees and "privileges" impeded the normal course of capitalist development in the country. Protected by "privileges" and provided with orders from the state, the entrepreneurs, as noted above, were not interested in perfecting production, for which it would have been necessary to invest large sums.

It is important to note that the deformation touched such an important sphere as consciousness. The manufacturer-entrepreneurs, "enraptured" in the general system of bondage, did not sense their social peculiarity, and a corporate class consciousness did not arise among them. At a time when, in the developed countries of Europe, the bourgeoisie not only was conscious of itself, but also had openly enunciated its pretensions to the authorities, to the nobility, and to the king, in Russia the trend was the reverse: manufacturers who received peasants strove to achieve a rise in their social status—to become noblemen. This tendency—the direct result of the development of bondage in industry—led to the fact that literally within one or two generations the representatives of the entrepreneurs had turned themselves into nobles completely dissolving into the privileged class. They had even forgotten the language of their own grandfathers and great-grandfathers who had originated from the peasantry and the urban community. The most striking example is the saga of barons Stroganov and Demidov.

And so, industrial construction under Peter led to two main results—the creation of a powerful economic base, so essential for a developing nation, and simultaneously the essential arrest of the country's capitalist development and movement along the path on which the other European peoples had been moving for a long time.
Producing the All-Russian Subject People

Building a new state structure was only part of the grandiose task that the great reformer of Russia had set out to accomplish. His field of vision encompassed not only the administrative structure, the economic policy, and military affairs, but also society itself—people and subjects. In the Petrine era society's structure underwent no less change than the structure of authority or the economy. Of course, we may speak about social changes as a consequence of the complex of reforms—military, tax, and so forth. In any event, the reformer did a great deal to transform the social structure itself and to realize the grandiose notion of "producing the all-Russian subject people."

As a result the social consequences of the transformations proved to be just as sweeping as in the economy, foreign policy, and other spheres. In fact the status of every social category was subjected to change.

Substantial changes came to the nobility's position. Indeed, the noble estate of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the form that has come down to us from literature, was formed or, better, organized by Peter. This is no exaggeration, for in pre-Petrine Russia there had existed a single estate of so-called service people that included both those who served "by descent," that is, by heredity, and those who served "by recruitment," that is, by muster on a voluntary basis.

The apex of the pyramid of service ranks was composed of the Boyar Council—the council ranks (boyars, cupbearers, lords in waiting, chamberlains, state councilors, state secretaries). Besides the council ranks, those serving "by descent" included table attendants, crown agents, Moscow court attendants, and town servitors (that is, those serving from the list of the capital and from provincial towns). Joining the service people "by recruitment" were other petty service ranks: cannoneers, town cossacks, stockade guards, and the like. Close to them were the scribes. Although a social abyss separated the council ranks and "the recruited," the service estate was still unitary; the distinction between those serving "by descent" and "by recruitment" had been eroded, a fact that permitted an occasional scribe to be elevated to the Boyar Council. Neither was the service estate separated by an impassable barrier from the taxed estates—peasants and townsmen from whose numbers the servitors were recruited. It is curious that Peter still preserved this practice in the country's borderlands.

The unity of the service estate of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been governed by the fact that for the duration of state service, wherever it was performed, the entire estate was provided with landholdings including those that were populated. In other words, unlike many other estate groups of Russian society, the service people enjoyed rights of land and serf holding, that is, the privileges that later on became a monopoly of the nobility.

The Petrine era destroyed once and for all the service estate. It broke into two categories: the greater part of those serving "by descent" were converted into noblemen (shliahkhetsoi); the smaller part (predominantly those less substantial serving in the south) as well as those serving "by recruitment" entered the estate of state peasants that Peter had artificially created.

Of course, preconditions for the estate's stratification had been maturing little by little. Here one ought to mention the autocracy's merger of boyars and nobles, which had leveled all subjects when the descendants of appanage princes no longer enjoyed any privileges and competed in service to the ruler and in seeking his favor. The tsar, however, might selectively elevate some and demean others regardless of family origin.

This tendency toward consolidation of the service estate elite also developed owing to changes in the nature of service itself and of the system of rewards. Until the end of the seventeenth century service had retained a well-known periodicity and peculiar "seasonality": the servitors were assembled for inspection with their armed servants ("on horse with servants and armament") in order to return later to their landholdings with a sense of relief and, sheathing the saber and hanging up the pistol, to live peacefully until the next inspection. From Petrine times, characterized by incessant wars, the service of all categories became standing, and the system of remuneration was changed. For service in the regular army a money salary was paid. The servitors' landholdings, however, ceased to be a form of payment for service, becoming non-transferable in fact. They merged increasingly with the other form of
landholding—the patrimony, that is, hereditary holdings. In 1714 both forms of landholding, conditional and hereditary, were declared thenceforth to be the uniform fixed property of the noble landowner.

For a long time the process of differentiating the servitors "by descent" from those "by recruitment" had also been under way. For the latter Peter's military reform played a fateful role. It ended the irregularity of the previous army. In place of the town cossacks, cannoniers, and so forth, regular garrison and field regiments appeared in which many of "the recruited" were assigned as rank-and-file soldiers. Part of "the recruited," however, lost their service and its corresponding privileges, were placed on par with the peasantry and the townsman, and, like them, were subject to obligatory service. Thus "the recruited" were reduced to the position of the taxed, that is, the lowest categories of the population.

Social polarization proceeded gradually, of course, and it had been predetermined from time immemorial by the distance that separated the Moscow boyar in principle from the Tambov town cossack, but still under Peter this process gained exceptionally rapid development. Peter imperiously intervened in its course, imparting the direction set by the reformer's ideas.

A huge role in changing the social estate's position was played by Peter's introduction of a new, distinctive criterion of service. That is, the principle of heredity was replaced by the principle of personal merit. In accordance with his own cardinal idea of service as the main obligation of his subjects and with his own conception of the autocratic monarch's role standing at the apex of the pyramid of ranks, Peter could not allow entry into the service hierarchy and movement along the ladder of ranks to be determined by a criterion such as heredity independent of the autocrat, instead of merit. In short, services to the tsar were not defined by laws but were dictated and changed by him at his own discretion.

Introducing the principle of personal merit greatly strengthened the autocracy's authority over the nobility. In place of the traditional estate of servitors "by descent" a military-bureaucratic corps of noblemen took shape; the obedient officer or official obligated to the ruler for everything displaced the previously wayward boyar or table attendant proud of the descent that had provided his social position.

At first much was done to halt the development and expansion of the old service estate. In 1695 appointments to table attendant and crown agent were ended, and in 1703 to court attendant. The roots that had fed the centuries-old servitors "by descent" were thereby torn out. At that time, too, appointments to boyar ranks were halted in practice. The Boyar Council, as noted earlier, although not abolished officially,

literally died out over ten or twelve years without an influx of new elders.

It should be stressed that Peter did this deliberately and that it constituted one of the typical, though at first glance unexpected, features of his policy. Along with a fundamental rupture of the old institutions the tsar-reformer also abolished them by not supporting the traditions that had nurtured them. Also noteworthy is Peter's unwillingness somehow "to knock together" the old system of ranks with the one he was creating on the basis of the Table of Ranks. In discussing the table the Senate tried to propose such a thing: "Inasmuch as several persons have remained in the old ranks, namely boyars, cup-bearers, lords in waiting, state councillors, table attendants and others, it is therefore proposed: shall His Tsarist Majesty deign to assign them ranks like the others for life?" Peter ignored the senators' proposal.¹

It should be added that many table attendants, crown agents, and other ranks of servitors "by descent" were taken into the regiments of the regular army, and not always as officers.

In the Petrine era the formation of the nobility proceeded not as a "rank" or a variant of the previous service estate, but as a unified corporation, a class-estate enjoying special privileges. At the same time Peter, though markedly favoring the nobility as a privileged estate, declined to loosen the harness or to remove the service obligations typical of the old estate of servitors. On the contrary, with the introduction of the regular army and the bureaucratization of administration these obligations became even more burdensome.

Noble status could have privileged significance only when its bearer served. The only nobleman worthy of respect, Peter suggested by his decrees, is one who serves. The 1712 decree to the Senate, which established an officer's superiority to the nonserving nobleman, is linked to Peter's views: "Tell all the nobility, that each nobleman in all instances (no matter what his family) is to respect and to yield first place to a senior officer and service, and this is designated only for officers, whereas for the nobility (who are not officers) it is designated only wherever they are sent."²

Peter worked out a system of converting simple noblemen into servitors, for the tsar really could not conceive of their life outside of service. The obligatory schooling of noble sons was a consequence, for without elementary education it was impossible to serve. Besides, as always Peter acted decisively. The decree of 20 January 1714 is unique in Russian history: the nobleman who has not acquired the basics of knowledge necessary for service is forbidden to marry: "Dispatch to all the gubernias several persons from the mathematical schools to instruct
noble sons, except the single homesteaders and those of bureau rank, in ciphering and geometry and establish such a punishment that he will not be free to marry until he is schooled."

Despite their parents' moans and groans noble adolescents were sent abroad at state expense (hence the term "pensioners" was applied to them) to be trained in diverse special skills. At home these functions were fulfilled by the Naval, Engineers, and Artillery academies to which noble adolescents were also assigned without any special regard for their own or their parents' wishes. Yet the most important school of the nobles was the Guards—the Preobrazhensky and Semenovsky regiments—where they were obliged to serve from a young age. Service as soldiers and sergeants, sometimes under the concerned and vigilant supervision of the tsar himself—colonel of the Preobrazhensky Regiment—was a harsh experience. Furthermore, Peter strove to bar entry into the officer corps to those nobles who had not mastered the rudiments of military service or had not passed through the school of the Guards. A special decree of 26 February 1714 governed this.

The autocracy needed not only soldiers and officers, but also officials for the institutions. The General Regulation had reinforced by legislative means the idea that the Russian nobility's civilian service was one of the most important forms of fulfilling one's obligations to the sovereign and the state. Therefore, a chapter was inserted into the General Regulation that envisaged the training of noble sons in chancery work.

Peter warned that just as service as a soldier was essential for the military, civil servants could not bypass the chancery and elevate themselves according to the Table of Ranks. From 1722 a special chancery post was inserted for sons of nobles, the chamber-junker, that was supposed to be fulfilled without fail.

In order that the pyramid of ranks would reproduce itself there existed in it (and in society as a whole) a clear subordination; the celebrated Table of Ranks—one of the important documents of Russian history—was created by Peter and his associates in 1722–24. It saw the light of day only after careful analysis of similar documents from the developed countries of Europe, documents that had been prepared in accordance with conditions in Russia. The Table introduced a new hierarchy of ranks (distinct from that of the previous service) that could be obtained by means of personal service, rising consecutively from rank to rank. All the ranks were divided into four categories: military (including infantry, Guards, and artillery), naval, state (civilian), and court (household). An important feature of the Table was that it established equivalents between the different categories. I shall give an example, citing the Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 4</th>
<th>Army</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td>Guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>major-general</td>
<td>colonel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all, there are fourteen graphs of "classes" in the Table broken down vertically into six sections. Accordingly, in order to become a major-general (4th class), a man who had served in the ranks needed to enter the 14th class—to become an ensign or aide-de-camp under a lieutenant-general or brigadier, then be promoted to sublieutenant (13th class), then a lieutenant (12th class), rise into the captain-lieutenants (10th class), then into the captains or aides-de-camp under a general-field marshal (9th class), and then into the majors (8th class) and subcolonels (7th class). Having received the next status of colonel or occupying the post of senior-quartermaster, the officer would appear in the 6th class, and the post of brigadier or general-quartermaster would confer the 5th class. Only after this could he count on becoming major-general (see the table above). With successful service the major-general could move up to lieutenant-general and thereby appear in the 3rd class, from where he could stretch out his hand to full general (2nd class), and perhaps to general-field marshal at the summit of the military ladder in the 1st class. Corresponding to the general-field marshal were the general-admiral and the chancellor in the naval and state hierarchies, respectively.

Particularly important was the civilian hierarchy according to which those serving in the colleges and chanceries could be moved up:

14th class—junker of a college or equal rank
13th class—protoclist of translator
12th class—financial official or secretary of aulic court
11th class—lacking for civil servants
10th class—secretary of college
9th class—collegiate councillor
8th class—collegiate assessor
7th class—senior secretary
6th class—procurator
5th class—vice president
4th class—college president
3rd class—general-procurator
2nd class—actual privy councillor
1st class—chancellor

A special provision of the Table stating that candidates from the higher categories of the nobility are not excused from beginning service from the bottom reinforced the principle of personal merit.

With special fulness and even proverbial power the principle of personal merit is expressed in Peter’s resolution on a point of the War College’s report from 11 November 1724 concerning the criteria of determining eminent nobility. The War College had inquired: “Inasmuch as it is impossible to know which is eminent nobility, therefore definition is required how to consider eminent nobility: according to number of households, from one hundred and higher or according to the regulation about ranks, up to which class.” To this Peter issued a resolution: “Eminent nobility is to be considered according to suitability.”

There is no doubt that the tsar invested merit and personal qualities in the concept of “suitability,” that is, criteria not linked to origin or, as the War College had proposed, with the number of households or the attainment in service of a specified class in the Table of Ranks.

Here we are treating a very important subject—the right to make a career according to the Table of Ranks for representatives of other estates. There were many persons descended from taxed groups, even serfs and slaves, both in the army and in the state machine, who had made careers under Peter. In principle the previous system of the service estate had permitted this to be done even earlier. Nevertheless, the difference lay in the fact that Peter had distinctly defined in law the conditions under which a nonoble could move up and become a nobleman. Climbing the ladder of ranks, he merged with the contingent of military and civil officials not as a foreign body but as a nobleman.

Peter’s approach to eminence as a distinction defined by a person’s personal merit and qualities did not touch the issue of democratizing the society’s elite, nor did it introduce “bourgeois” criteria for evaluating a person. He merely opened the possibility for “those suitable,” that is, capable and devoted to the sovereign’s service, and for those descended from the lower strata of society to improve their social status, and to become members of the privileged estate, the criteria for their evaluation being that same “suitability.” Objectively this should have reinforced the nobility and the entire system of authority, always in need of an influx of “fresh blood,” with capable descendants from the lower strata.

An analysis made by M.D. Rabinovich of the composition of the Russian army’s officer corps toward the end of the Northern War showed that those descended from nonnobles composed 13.9 percent of the total number of officers, with every fifth officer in the infantry a nonnoble by descent. This important political action strengthened the regime.

From several documentary testimonies, one sees that Peter envisioned nobles’ composing the entire governmental machine. By the decree of 31 January 1724 it was forbidden to assign nonnobles as secretaries of institutions so that they might not “emerge as assessors, councilors and higher.”

The Table of Ranks determined the future of descendants from the other estates. To receive nobility one was required to advance to the 8th class.

There cannot be any illusions in appraising the general position of the noble estate in the state. As a whole Petrine policy toward the nobility was extremely tough, essentially binding, for the noble-officials and the noble-officers enjoyed much less freedom in all senses than those who had served “by descent” in the seventeenth century.

In this regard a question arises: can one call this bureaucratized, regimented nobility that was obligated to study in order then to serve and to serve in unlimited military and civil service (even those discharged from service “for old age and for wounds” for which they had often been examined by the autocrat himself were assigned to garrisons or “whoever will be suited to whichever occupation”), the ruling class in the sense that we understand this, as applied to the times of Catherine the Great and Nicholas I?

It may be objected, to the contrary, that the nobles were the ruling class, for they enjoyed the right of owning lands settled by bondaged peasants whom they exploited. This is true, of course, but as applied to the Petrine era serf ownership was not the exclusive right of the noble class. Bondaged peasants and even slaves could be owned in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries by representatives of the service estate and the merchant. Only subsequently did the nobility succeed in gaining the monopoly right on owning settled lands.

This point requires consideration. We must look more closely into what we term the right of owning settled lands. Actually, in the Petrine era the formal reinforcement of the nobility’s landed property came about: temporary holdings, service estates, were merged with hereditary patrimonies into uniform landed property. This was achieved as a consequence of the decree of 23 March 1714—the celebrated decree con-
cerning entailment property and single inheritance. But in and of itself this decree addressed completely different aims. Its direct task consisted of establishing such "order" in landowning that would furnish the state with constant military and civilian servitors from the nobles, "driving them out" of the villages. This was accomplished by prohibiting the division of fixed property among sons according to the decree of 23 March 1714.6

Peter cited several motives for so brutal a measure. First, he expressed anxiety about the fate of eminent clans that had been dissolved as a result of the fragmentation of hereditary holdings. Second, the current order of inheritance was, in the tsar's opinion, inconvenient and even harmful to the state, for state revenues from petty fragmented holdings might decline.

It would be possible to set forth many counterarguments in the debate over Petrine "political economy," but it is pointless in several respects. One may state only this: Peter was consistent in defending state interests; he did not shrink from any measures to provide for them; sacrificing in the process the estate interests of separate groups of the population among which were those usually considered privileged.

Thus, on one hand, in reinforcing noble property via the unification of patrimonies and service estates the state introduced, on the other hand, the right of using this property in an even stricter framework than the use of landholding in the seventeenth-century system of service, making a fiction of the gains from merging the two forms of property.

All of this taken together puts in doubt the categorical assertion concerning the nobility as the ruling class. It may be said only about the privileged estate of the military and civil servants of the Russian autocracy, whose privileges existed only so long as they punctually fulfilled their service. Otherwise the privileges were converted into nothing—into dust.

It was impossible for a nobleman of the Petrine era to avoid service by legal means, and the illegal routes were interdicted by very harsh decrees, threatening nobles with public punishment and publication of the names of "no-shows" on special boards nailed to gallows. More terrifying than moral humiliation for the nobleman was the confiscation of holdings for refusal to serve. Decrees promised to give part of the holdings of the "no-show" to delators.

It is hard to imagine what the Russian nobility would have been if Peter's principles had been consistently implemented after his death. The actual emancipation of the nobility and the development of its noble corporate consciousness (in the European sense of the word) came about in large part from its "unbinding" in the decades from 1730

1770, when the law on entail was first abolished, the term of service was limited, and the celebrated manifesto of 1762 appeared, the name of which speaks for itself: "On granting liberty and freedom to the Russian nobility." As we have seen, the bases for such an emancipation were more than sufficient.

The disintegration of the service estate led not only to the formation of the nobility, but also to the appearance of so-called single home- steaders, who had remained beyond the bounds that separated the tsar's privileged servants from the unprivileged.

Many factors exerted powerful influence on the formation of the juridical status of the single homesteaders. As servitors of the sovereign, they were concentrated predominantly in the country's south, in borderland military-administrative sectors—the Sevsk and Belgorod militia units—and in their social and economic position they stood closer to the taxed strata, more precisely to the peasantry, than to those who served the center "by descent."

The single homesteaders are reminiscent of the poor hidalgos who served in the vanguard of the Reconquista, the reconquest of Spain from the Moors. Just like the hidalgos, they lived on a dangerous border, and were then called "borderlanders" (Ukrainians) who settled virgin lands at their own risk and expense, guarding the frontier and gradually moving ever farther southward.

Despite the extension to the single homesteaders of the norms of service-estate rights, they were distinguished from the servitors of the center by their mode of life: they lived like peasants; the number of their serfs was insignificant.

The process of consolidating the status of single homesteaders as a special estate group had been under way for a long time, but in the Petrine era, like many similar processes, it was abruptly strengthened. The creation of the regular army cut short, as noted above, the old service-estate system of defense that had involved the servitors of the southern borderlands. For the single homesteaders the most important consequence of the reforms was to deprive them of a series of privileges, and above all of the freedom from direct taxes. To be sure, during the seventeenth century the servitors of the south had fulfilled certain dues along with state service, yet in the Petrine era a qualitative change occurred: the single homesteaders were not included in the regular army, whereas their taxes and dues began to be viewed as compensation for freedom from military service. In sum, in 1710 the single homesteaders were subject to the household assessment along with peasants, including those that they owned.

The ultimate status and estate features of the single homesteaders
were still defined not as nobles but as peasants, in the course of implementing the Petrine tax reform—the introduction of the soul tax in 1719–24. Through the decrees on enumerating the population the government bluntly expressed its intention to include the single homesteaders in the soul-tax assessment.

Recognition of the single homesteaders as subject to the soul tax became the point of departure in defining the peculiarities of their juridical status, which in itself was quite a complex and confused problem. For the distinction between those serving "by descent" and those "by recruitment," on one hand, and the distinction between those serving "from the Moscow ranks" and those from the south, on the other hand, had been largely eroded: part of the Moscow ranks served according to the lists of the "borderland" Belgorod and Sevsk militia units, whereas part of those serving from these units had turned up through the force of various circumstances among the "Moscow ranks."

If at the higher rungs of the ladder of ranks the problem of specifying status was not particularly acute, then at the lower rungs—closer to "those recruited"—it was sharply exacerbated because here it concerned vitally important things: whether one was recognized as a nobleman and belonged to the privileged estate of the "well-born" or became a "base" peasant and taxpayer. In the Petrine era the question was posed precisely this way for the majority of single homesteaders.

The central authorities used tax reform to introduce a clear boundary between the nobility and the single homesteaders. Registry in the soul-tax assessment automatically freed one from appearing at noble musters, but in return it extended laws aimed at halting the flight of taxpayers and so forth to the single homesteaders, who were subject to assessment. In 1724 the Senate ruled that exemption from the soul-tax assessment could not be granted even by a charter from the Heraldmaster's Office confirming its owner's membership in the nobility, if such single-homesteader-noblemen "are already assigned to the regiments and the books are completed."

There was one more noteworthy factor in defining the juridical status of the single homesteaders as nonnobles who were close to peasants in position. In 1724 the inspector of Azov Gubernia, A. Miiakinin, wrote that "it is impossible to consider the single homesteaders as landowners, for although they may have as many household people [as nobles], but only the most paltry inasmuch as they are themselves husbandmen, they therefore are subject to the soul-tax assessment and are equal to their own people."

To put it differently, in the inspector's opinion the socioeconomic position of the single homesteaders was the reason for extending to them taxed status and assessment, and at the same time the assessment placed on the single homesteaders was the reason for equating them with the peasantry. It should also be noted that Peter's government, interested in preserving the contingents of irregular military forces on the dangerous southern frontiers and also in settling the southern borderlands, did not support the complete conversion of the single homesteaders into rank-and-file peasants. They retained the right of serf ownership and of purchase and sale of landed holdings; the central authorities obstructed the ensnarement of the single homesteaders—a trend that was increasing with the extension in the eighteenth century of large-scale feudal landholding to the black earth regions of the south.

The single homesteaders were not a special estate. They entered the estate of state peasants that was forming at just that time as a result of the Petrine social reforms.

The idea of forming a new estate category first arose in 1723 when Peter (according to a notation in a journal of the Senate) had said: "State peasants are deemed to be those who pay the fur tribute, sharecroppers, single homesteaders and others similar to that; Mordvinians, Cheremis, which will be explained in a decree." As we see, under the term "state peasants" the lawmaker understood the most diverse taxed population. The most substantial groups turned out to be the so-called black-plowing peasants of the Russian North, the so-called fur-tributary peasants (Russians and minorities) along the Volga, and likewise the familiar single homesteaders of the south. Besides them the newly formed estate took in the peasants of Siberia—the so-called cultivator peasants subject to labor dues in working "the sovereign's allotted fields," peasants who paid dues in money and kind, and "men of mixed ranks" who had settled in Siberian settlements from diverse categories: servitors, townsmen, churchmen, and so forth. The general number of state peasants was substantial—no less than 20 percent of the total number of taxpayers, that is, more than one million souls "of the male sex."

What united into one estate the coastal population of the White Sea region, the Tatars of Kazan Gubernia, the single homesteaders of the southern towns of Verkhii Lomov and Elets, and the Siberian cultivator peasants of Ilmisk?

The answer is obvious: Peter's actions in forming the state peasant estate bore a typical fiscal-police character. The foundation for "sewing" the patchwork quilt of the new estate stemmed from the circumstance that all these petty estate groups did not belong to anyone personally; that is, they did not find themselves in bonded dependence. Therefore, the state decided to unify all this motley aggregation of free peo-
people and convert them into a single estate controlled from above.

It is essential to recognize that in the Petrine period the autocracy’s policy in regard to those groups of the population that served and those that were free from service took on a pronounced tendency to constrain their rights and to narrow their opportunities of realizing the advantages that they had as people who were personally free of bondaged dependence.

The very unification of diverse groups of the population into a single estate of state peasants was in itself not only and not simply a tax measure as it was an important social measure. Its ultimate purpose was to establish stricter state supervision and constrain the juridical rights and opportunities of free people, of the whole nation. Of course, these constraints were not like those the landowner imposed on his own bondaged peasants; they had the character of public rights. Taking into account the general tendencies of the development of the autocracy’s strict social policy in the Petrine period, however, it is still necessary to recognize that the great reformer of Russia’s “fashioning” of a new estate of state peasants bound to the tax assessment and constrained in territorial and social movement was converting the categories involved into peculiar bondmen of the state, while their conversion into the bondaged serfs of any owner was accomplished in the eighteenth century simply by a stroke of the autocrat’s pen.

In the epoch preceding the Petrine era the autocrat’s authority as the supreme sovereign had been extended to the whole population, yet this supreme right was not treated as the right of the landowner to dispose of his peasants. As a result of profound socioeconomic processes under way in the country there was a sharp increase in dependence on the autocratic state at the expense of people who had once been personally free, and the monarch’s right in regard to state peasants in the post-Petrine epoch became exactly that kind, when it became common to “grant” state peasants—formally free subjects—to private owners.

The Petrine reforms brought important changes as well in the position of the great bulk of subjects, the peasants who were the property of secular and ecclesiastical feudal lords. Prior to the Petrine era the traditional division of the peasants of secular owners into “service-estate” and “patrimonial” had been retained according to the type of landed property. The peasants of the clergy were divided into church, episcopal, patriarchal, and monastery. With the introduction of the Petrine reforms this division lost its specific content because of the changes of a social and economic character that had occurred: from 1714 the difference between the service estate and the patrimony disappeared, after the church reform there were no longer any church or patriarchal peasants, the stables and palace peasants had been combined, and so on. In a word, in the new conditions intensive processes were under way merging the various strata of the medieval peasantry into the single class of modern times.

For the great bulk of the peasantry—those under landowners—serfdom, which had received juridical consolidation in the Law Code of 1649, had become an important leveling factor. The Law Code had inaugurated the beginning of not only the merger of the two basic varieties of peasants, those belonging to holders of service estates and patrimonies, but also the merger of peasants and bondmen, a category close in position to household slaves.

The institution of slavery had a thousand-year history and a well-developed law. Just after the juridical consolidation of serfdom an intensive process of merging bondaged peasants and slaves ensued, for serfdom had been strongly influenced by the norms of the older slave law. In other words, serfdom was approaching slavery in its worst manifestations: the peasant started to be seen as live property. Nonetheless, at the start of the Petrine era slaves differed essentially from bondaged peasants in that, working on the lord’s land and in his household, the majority were not subject to assessment and did not pay taxes. Furthermore, a substantial part of them, the so-called limited-contract slaves, had traditionally enjoyed the right of manumission upon the death of their lord. Custom required that the dying lord liberate his own slaves, thereby completing a pious deed.

Under Petre the process of bringing bondaged peasants and slaves together was sharply accelerated. A big role in this was played by the tax reform. By this means, slaves were included in the soul census, a fact explained by concerns about the concealment of taxable peasants in the guise of untaxed slaves. In the end, all slaves were equated in tax obligations with the peasantry no matter where they lived—whether in the lord’s townhouses or on rural holdings—or what their occupation, and thereby they automatically lost the right of manumission. Thus by a single stroke of the pen the thousand-year-old institution of slavery was abolished.9

Behind this stood not only Peter’s fiscal considerations. As a rule the tendency to enserf slaves to lords had also been typical of the preceding era, yet the Petrine epoch changed the situation fundamentally. The major change in the fate of slavery was the fact that the social base on which slavery had been founded as an estate and an institution had been destroyed. The sources for replenishing slavery were sharply limited. After the Law Code of 1649, which had prohibited taxable peas-
ants as well as servitors from entering into slavery, the sole source of slavery had become the so-called "free and itinerant." The Petrine regime with its strict system of social and administrative control cut off this last legal source of replenishing slavery.

First, a universal and consistent struggle commenced against fugitives and likewise against all of "the free and itinerant," who were placed outside the law and pursued as fugitives.

Second, having launched the Northern War, Peter saw slaves as a source for replenishing the army with live bodies. One may definitely assert that prior to the start of recruiting levies from the peasantry in 1705 Peter's young regular army had been created mainly out of slaves, who had been the majority among "the free" and "the recruited." Both the measures mentioned, and also the campaign against fugitives and "the itinerant," drastically undercut and eroded the milieu that had fed the institution of slavery.

The beginning of the enumeration and census of souls of the male sex was accompanied, as already mentioned, by the wholesale registration of slaves. Furthermore, the census takers made a count of freedmen, who were obligated promptly to seek out for themselves a place for registry in the tax assessment, because the position of a nontaxable subject outside service was untenable. In practice this signified that the majority of freedmen had to register with landowners in the tax assessment, and documents of enserfment were drawn up for them, making them serfs.

Here it is essential to note a peculiar paradox that emerged from the growth of serfdom. The Law Code of 1649, which stipulated the basic condition of limited-contract slavery—a deed of servitude "for the life of the lord"—had asserted at the same time the hereditary eternal dependence of the bonded peasant on the landowner. By this very provision "legal scissors" were created in favor of the limited-contract slave, for he had the right of freedom by law that the bonded peasant no longer had. To remove these "scissors," to abolish the slave's traditional but in the conditions of serfdom anachronistic right to freedom even on a limited scale, became the social aim of the tax reform whereby slaves were bound to landowners. Accordingly, slavery as an estate was liquidated the very same way.

So we see that by extending the soul tax to domestics, the majority of whom were just slaves, they became equal to bonded peasants in every respect: they were forbidden to enter the army under the pretext that those left behind in the assessment would decline from the extra payments for them; in case slaves ran away, fines were imposed on those who harbored them for the years spent in flight ("spent years").

It appears that this action had far-reaching consequences in the history of the Russian peasantry. Slaves worked not only in the lord's household as stablehands, cattle drivers, gardeners, cooks, and artisans, constituting his so-called menials. Data for several districts indicate that the greater part of the so-called skilled and household people (more than 70 percent) were slaves; they did not have their own economy or plot of land like the peasants who worked exclusively in the lord's fields; and they lived in special "people's" and "servant" quarters, receiving at the same time the so-called "monthly"—food calculated for a month. The functioning of the institution of slavery constantly provided the lord's economy with a work force, and, it seems, the share of the slaves' labor in the economy of landowners was substantial. With the abolition of the institution of slavery the burden of work for labor dues was shifted to the shoulders of the peasants proper. This, apparently, is linked to the marked increase of the bonded peasants' work for labor dues, the level of which, according to the data of Yu.A. Tikhonov, was approaching the limit of the physical possibility of exploiting a person.¹⁰

Peter had long had intentions of instituting order, as he conceived it, not only in the village but in the towns. However, the burdensome dues imposed on the urban communities in wartime had become the cause of the flight of townspeople from the communes or crossing into "other ranks" (peasants, servitors, churchmen, drovers). At the same time departure did not mean leaving the town or even changing occupation: in becoming a drover or somebody else's slave, a townsman was no longer subject to the urban commune. Such a well-known phrase, oft-repeated in the literature, from the regulation of the Main Municipal Administration, "so that the all-Russian merchant, like a tumbledown house, be assembled again," was understood by contemporaries as a directive about returning taxpayers to the urban community who (as noted further in the regulation), "not wishing to serve with the townspeople and pay dues, left the communities and somehow and some way entered into various ranks, both into the peasantry and into the indentured, and supposedly were given away for debts."¹¹

But it would be incorrect to think that "assembling the tumbledown house of the merchantry" was Peter's end in itself. His thinking went further: he posed the task of rebuilding this house from the ground up in the new European manner. Peter decided to unify the social structure of the town, bringing in European institutions: urban councils, artisan corporations, guilds. All these institutions, which had deep roots in the growth of the western European town over many centuries, were brought into the Russian setting coercively, by administrative fiat. Without exaggerating, one may state that one fine morning the townspeople of all Russian
towns awakened as members of guilds and artisan corporations.

This was done according to the regulation of the Main Municipal Administration adopted on 16 January 1721. To Peter's way of thinking everything was quite simple; it would not be difficult to implement the regulation's standards. Possibly, therefore, the assignment of the townspeople to guilds was carried out concurrently with their subscription to the soul-tax assessment. When it came to determining the number of taxpayers from the urban population (and it amounted not to 74 kopecks as it was for the peasants but 1 ruble 20 kopecks), the census takers did not start assessing a special levy on "base people" who were officially considered outside the urban commune; but out of concern for the optimal "taxed number" in each town, they started to include them in the general assessment for all townspeople. Nobody even thought about following the standard of the regulation of 1721. As a result, strange merchants appeared in the towns who were written into the census "rolls" like the "merchant" Nikita Popov, a former clerk who was registered in the Tver urban commune: "I, Nikita, have the trade of common work," that is, unskilled labor.

Moreover, it is known that in pursuit of fulfilling the peculiar "plan" of scraping together the "taxed number," the census takers did not scruple to enroll in the merchanty beggars, "the free and itinerant," even serfs; the townspeople of Tver wrote in protest that in the assessment of the urban commune "our serf workers" and domestics had been included.

The beneficent principle laid down in the regulation proved to be the purest fiction, remote from the actual problems of the townspeople, a far-fetched and ruinous undertaking for the more substantial part of the urban commune. The point is that the enrollment of indigent members in the guilds increased the total tax from a given town. At the same time the old principle of intratown apportionment was preserved; at the basis of which lay the rule of determining the size of the tax from each member of the commune according to his "property and wealth," that is, his prosperity, regardless of the soul tax imposed on him. As a result, the burden of payments fell on the most substantial residents of the towns, who were obligated to pay for beggars and the indigent. In this way the town reform, though it led to the formal "assembling of the house of the merchanty" and imposing the soul tax on town residents, yielded no new impulses for the town's development. On the contrary, it hobbled the process of forming capitalistic relations in a place where they might have been developed.

Proceeding from the idea of preserving the old order, the government also delved into the question of the so-called "trading peasants" who lived in towns and who involved landowners' and state peasants in their affairs. If the peasants had settled in the towns before the start of the reform and had been brought into the urban assessment, they were simply registered in the soul-tax assessment as townsmen; a different fate awaited peasants living in town and not registered in the urban commune. All of them were subject to immediate expulsion to the villages. After removal such a peasant was assigned to the assessment there in the village, and then, having received a passport, he could return to the urban commune.

Establishing such an order had been Peter's intention, as expressed in the decree of 13 April 1722. Its crux was that the "trading peasant" might freely enroll in the urban commune by fulfilling two conditions: first, he and his posterity preserved eternally and inviolably dependence on his lord, to whom he was obligated to pay dues; second, in order to get into the urban commune, he was supposed to have trades valued at not less than 500 rubles—an enormous sum for that time.

By legalizing the practice of the rural population's migration into urban communities in this way, Peter's decree set in an extremely strict framework that was in fact a hindrance, for the establishment of a high qualification for enrollment in the urban commune permitted only a small number of peasants to settle into it. In the urban commune itself the peasant was not a full-fledged member and was obligated to pay high taxes on the sums declared. The law gave the peasant the opportunity to engage in trade and to establish himself in the town, but at the same time it guaranteed the lord's authority over him. It was as if the chain had been lengthened that constrained without rights the serf who intended to leave the village and fend for himself. In this case one may assert that the Petrine reform reinforced and intensified the old social structures—as before, he who entered the town's territory did not become free.

Furthermore, the Petrine reform intensified and unified three constraints for the subjects: on movement about the country, on the freedom to choose an occupation, and on social mobility—on movement from one "rank" to another.

On one hand, all of these constraints were governed by traditional estate principles that directed the state's efforts not only to the crude suppression of social movements, but also to the observance of social stability hallowed by tradition and the law, and the "rightfulness" of moving from one estate group to another. In preserving a monopoly of estate occupations and the corresponding specific social status of each estate, people saw the basis of the legal order, justice, and prosperity for society and state, whereas violations were seen as causing innumerable calamities. The economic growth of the Petrine era, for all its lopsidedness, led to certain shifts in social structure, and this was considered dangerous.
Reforming the Clerical Rank

In its consequences the reform of the church administration was one of the most important Petrine reforms. It should be noted that the tsar had been considering it for a long time. A turning point in the new policy toward the church had occurred after the death of Patriarch Adrian in October 1700. Among the letters informing Peter about it was one of 25 October from Alexei Kurbatov, a well-known "profit maker" or voluntary inventor of various requisitions and taxes from the populace. In his opinion the patriarchal system of administering the church had become ineffective, so in selecting the new patriarch "it will be proper to wait until such time as you yourself may wish to review your autocracy in this regard."

Peter fully exploited Kurbatov’s advice and others like it: he made no move to select a patriarch, but instead on 16 December 1700 appointed Stefan Yavorsky, metropolitan of Riazan and Murom, as the so-called " overseer" of the patriarchal see. On 24 January 1701 the Monastery Bureau, which had been closed in the 1570s, was restored under the supervision of boyar Ivan Musin-Pushkin, a nonclerical figure who received full authority over the church’s land and financial affairs. The same move placed its riches under the state’s control and they started to be used for the needs of the army, the navy, and foreign policy.

Stefan Yavorsky’s influence steadily declined over the years, and first place in the informal church hierarchy was assumed by Feo fan Prokopovich, who had become archbishop of Pskov in 1718. An exceptionally well educated and talented man, Feofan was an utterly unscrupulous statesman who displayed true enthusiasm in every matter, even unseemly ones, that the tsar delegated to him. A profound knowledge of church and secular history, together with a brilliant mastery of dialectics and logic, enabled Feofan to justify forthrightly the necessity of a fundamental restructuring of the Russian Orthodox church on principles of collegiality and full subordination to secular authority. Taking part in the compilation of the reform’s main document, the
Spiritual Regulation of 1721, Feofan presented the church reform as the pious act of a God-fearing monarch concerned exclusively with fulfilling his own Christian duty.

Among the many cares derived from the obligation of our God-given authority concerning the reform of our people and of other states subject to us, we have given consideration also to the clerical rank. Perceiving in it much disorder and great deficiency in its affairs, we have experienced in our conscience no idle fear that we appear ungrateful to the All-High if, having received from Him so much good success in reforming not only the military rank but likewise the civil rank, we should neglect the reform also of the clerical rank. And when He, the impartial Judge, asks from us, and from our necronymy concerning this great commission entrusted to us by Him, let us not be without reply.6

Needless to say, after everything that Peter did to the Russian church in “reforming the clerical rank,” he would have had much to answer for in the other world. But the true purposes of the transformations were different all the same: the princely system of administering the Orthodox church with its elements of autonomy had become archaic and undesirable for the autocratic regime that which created a bureaucratic machine for servicing the requirements of its authority. Therefore in the course of introducing the state reforms the patriarchal administration was destroyed.

The Spiritual Regulation stated forthrightly the unacceptability of any independent force that might oppose the autocracy and lead astray “simple hearts.” The advantages of collegial administration were obvious to the compilers of the Spiritual Regulation, for “the fatherland need have no fear of revolts and disturbances from a conciliar administration such as proceed from a single, independent ecclesiastical administration. For the common people do not understand how the spiritual authority is distinguishable from the autocratic; but marveling at the dignity and glory of the Highest Pastor [i.e., the patriarch], they imagine that such an administrator is a second Sovereign, a power equal to that of the Autocrat, or even greater than he, and that the pastoral office is another, and a better, sovereign authority. Thus have the people, on their own, become accustomed to think.”

This citation palpably sounds echoes of the struggle that had flared up in the mid-seventeenth century between Tsar Aleksei and Patriarch Nikon, who had raised the prestige of the patriarch’s authority extraordinarily high. However, why was it necessary for the compilers of the Spiritual Regulation, the theorists of the church reform, to recall events more than a half-century old? I think it was because the patriarchal church in unaltered form (with a powerful personality on the patriarchal throne) might have become the single moral force able to resist the tsar-reformer and win widespread support from “simple hearts” dissatisfied with Peterine policies.

The establishment of the collegial system of administering the church was directed against just such a threat, for “an administrative college is under the sovereign monarch and has been established by the monarch,” and likewise because “the very name president is not lofty, for it does not mean anything more than chairman; thus, neither he nor anyone else can think pretentiously of him. And when the people see that this conciliar administration has been established by the monarch’s decree and the Senate’s resolution, then they will remain all the more meek, and will largely abandon the hope of obtaining aid for their riots from the clergy.”

And so we see that unity of the people and the church was what Peter’s autocracy feared!

The publication of the Spiritual Regulation in January 1721 begins the almost two-hundred-year history of the synodal administration of the Russian Orthodox church. The Spiritual College created by the regulation was soon renamed the Most Holy All-Ruling Synod and was officially made equal in rights to the Senate. Stefan Yavorsky became the president, Feodosy Yanovsky and Feofan Prokopovich the vice presidents. According to the decree of 11 May 1722 a special secular (more precisely military) official was appointed to oversee affairs and discipline in the Synod. The senior procurator was placed in charge of a special staff of church fiscals, whose functions were analogous to those of the secular fiscals. So that the two would not be confused, the church fiscals were given the fearsome name of inquisitors. They were subordinated to provincial inquisitors and, even higher, archinquisitors.

Ultimately the creation of the Synod, a state institution whose servants might receive a salary in case of necessity, signified that the tsar was superior to the church’s authority and had thereby become the head of the church. The emerging situation is clearly reflected in one of Narov’s anecdotes:

His Imperial Majesty, attending a meeting of archbishops and observing the increased desire of several for the selection of a patriarch, which had been proposed by the clergy more than once, pulled out of his pocket with one hand the Spiritual Regulation prepared for such an instance and dispatching it, told them threateningly: “You ask for a patriarch, here is a spiritual patriarch for you, and to those who think
otherwise (he unsheathed a dirk with his other hand and struck the table with it) here's a steel patriarch for you!" Then he stood up and left. After that the proposal to select a patriarch was abandoned and the Most Holy Synod was established. In agreement with Peter the Great's intention to establish a Spiritual College were Stefan Vavory and Feofan Prokopovich who had been helping His Majesty in writing the Regulation. Peter designated the former chairman of the Synod and the latter he made vice-president, whereas he himself became head of the church of his own state and once, recounting the disputes of Patriarch Nikon with the tsar, his parent Aleksei Mikhailovich, he said: "It's time to constrain the authority not proper to the old man [i.e., the patriarch]; God willing, it is for me to reform the laity and the clergy, for them I am both master and patriarch." 4

Creating the Synod and abolishing the patriarchate were the most striking but not the only evidence of the Russian Orthodox church's conversion into a state institution and its servitors into servants of that institution.

The Synod was introduced along with a reorganization of the church's internal social structure: unification of the hierarchy of church ranks, establishment of personnel rosters of church servitors, and a purge of undesirable and accidental persons from their ranks.

A noteworthy peculiarity of the church reform was that it was implemented in unison with the tax reform, and the census of souls that composed the basis of the latter was used for the enumeration and classification of churchmen. As an object of the census churchmen are first mentioned in a decree of 5 January 1720, when Peter, upset over the concealment of souls, ordained that the census "rolls" include "churchmen, except priests and deacons, for whom a special roster should be submitted and who are to be allowed a term of a half-year."

Thus, although at this stage churchmen had not been included in the soul-tax registry, their lowest strata—church servants—were enumerated separately from priests and deacons. The sense of this division became evident on 5 July 1721, when the Senate directed "children of archpriests, priests, and deacons and other church servants . . . to be subject to tax collection along with other souls." Thus there were the majority of churchmen suddenly converted into taxpayers. 5

Such an unprecedented decision could not fail to provoke the clergy's discontent. The Synod was compelled to appeal to the Senate to exempt churchmen from the soul-tax registry, citing the fact that "servants are holy to the church, and besides many are indigent and live in great need." Furthermore, the Synod considered that "placing" the sons of priests and deacons in the soul-tax registry would lead to staffing difficulties, for as a rule the sons of clergy inherited their fathers' positions, which would be impossible with the extension of the soul tax to include them.

Peter took this circumstance into consideration: the instructions to the census takers of 5 February 1722 indicated that the soul tax should not extend to priests or deacons or their sons "who actually serve at churches," whereas in the absence of such offspring "two persons from the other church servants [could be assigned] to each church." Thus in Peter's thinking a reserve would be ensured to fill vacancies at churches with nontaxable persons.

For the estate of church servants such a government directive unfolded a real drama: church servants and sextons living at churches on the lands of nobles turned out to be in the soul-tax assessment along with the lords' peasants and automatically became serfs, for the law stipulated "to register in the soul-tax collection [those] on the patrimonial lands of that village, and whoseover owns the village owns them too."

That same year of 1722 the personnel rosters of church servants were set at one priest for every 100–150 parish households; all "the superfluous" were subject to taxation. Part of them succeeded in obtaining vacancies among the "budgeted" church servants, and some managed to remain in the parishes where they lived while being registered in the tax assessment, but many turned out to be in the assessment on noble lands. As the decree had foreseen, this led to the enfeeblement of such former churchmen. Thus there was established a direct link between their inclusion in the soul-tax assessment and their recognition as serfs.

To be "placed" in the assessment forever closed to the churchmen any return to the estate from which they had been excluded. A decree of 20 May 1724 finally made the churchmen placed in the assessment of the soul tax equal with taxable peasants in that the fine for harboring a fugitive former churchman was set at the same amount as the fine for a fugitive peasant. 6

In such fashion the estate of churchmen had been divided into two parts. One of them, consisting primarily of priests, deacons, and other representatives of the clerical elite, was recognized as nontaxable, that is, privileged; the other part—church servants, unbudgeted priests and deacons, and their sons—merged with the taxable estates and lost the privileges of church servants.

"Imposition of order" in "the clerical rank" did not end there, however. During the reform the estate of so-called episcopal junior boyars was abolished, a special service "rank" in the church hierarchy that had rendered personal service to the patriarch and other church hierarchs. With the culmination of the process of forming the nobility as a special
privileged estate, the episcopal junior boyars were included in the nobility with one condition set forth by Peter: only those were to be considered noblemen whose grandfathers had served as episcopal junior boyars. Thus were screened out "free persons" attached to the patriarchal household and, naturally, they were subjected to the soul-tax assessment along with other nobles.

With the same decisiveness and harshness the state assumed responsibility for the expansion of Christianity (Orthodoxy) among other denominations and pagans who constituted a substantial part of the population of the state's borders. Peter was wholly dissatisfied with the long and patient work of Orthodox missionaries; he set his hopes on decisive, rapid, and radical measures with administrative pressure and force applied to whole layers of society, settlements, tribes, and peoples. Thus on 3 November 1713 a personal tsarist decree was issued that stipulated: "In Kazan and Azov gubernias Bessermen of the Mohammedan faith are to be baptized in a half year at most."

In order to encourage persons of other denominations and pagans to convert to Orthodoxy, the newly baptized were given tax privileges, they were rewarded with lands and peasants, and they were even freed from criminal punishments, including death for murders and other grave crimes. If the Synod had drafted a plan for baptism of the population, it probably would have been promptly overfulfilled owing to such measures.

Thanks to the Petrine reform the powerful church organization became the champion of a secular, or more precisely, autocratic ideology. The church pulpit became a tribune for propagandizing the autocracy's initiatives in the form of special sermons "for the occasion" (Feofan Prokopovich was especially masterful in composing them), and also simply for the announcement of decrees which were read to parishioners before the start of the service "so that nobody excuse himself through ignorance." From the pulpit were proclaimed anathema—church condemnation of political criminals and everything unacceptable to the authorities or the autocrat. If the church anathema to Mazepa is explained by the fact of his political betrayal of Peter, then a certain Major Stepan Glebov earned anathema solely for cohabitation with Peter's former wife, Eudokia Lopukhina, who had been confined to a monastery.

The extraordinary tsar-reformer may actually have seemed the Antichrist to many of the faithful, for he imperiously changed church traditions and dogmas that had taken shape over centuries. Thus in 1721, in order to retain skilled Swedish mining masters in the Urals, he permitted Lutherans to marry the Orthodox; that same year during the celebration of the peace of Nystadt a seven-day ringing of bells, unusual for...
year. And if somebody does not make confession during the year, lists of their names are to be submitted by clerical fathers and parish priests to archbishops in the towns and to judges of spiritual affairs, and in the districts to priestly elders and local councilors, and the governors and local councilors are to impose fines on these people, three times as much as their income, and then institute confession for them."

Church attendance and confession were thereby converted into obligations of parishioners, the fulfillment of which was strictly supervised and documented. The priest who refused to inform on his parishioners was subject first to fines, and then "for that will be deprived of priesthood." 

Especially meaningful and harsh was the Synod's directive of 17 May 1722 violating the secrecy of church confession, one of the sacraments along with those of marriage, communion, and baptism.

According to the decree of 17 May,

If during confession someone discloses to his clerical father an unfulfilled but still intended criminal act, especially treason or riot against the master or the state, or an evil design against the honor or health of the master and the family of His Majesty, and disclosing such an evil intention shows that he does not repent of it but indeed justifies his intention and does not forsake it... then the confessor must not only not give him absolution and remission of his openly confessed sins (for it is not a true confession if someone does not repent of all of his sins), but must promptly report him at the prescribed places pursuant to the personal decree of H.I.M. promulgated on 28 April of the present year 1722 in virtue of which, for words reflecting on the high honor of H.I.M. and prejudicial to the state, such villains are commanded to be apprehended with all dispatch and brought to the designated places.

In other words, for the priest hearing a parishioner's confession the guiding light must be the everyday law against enemies of the state, not the standards of Christian teaching that prescribe upholding the secrecy of confession.

It is noteworthy that the priest was supposed to not only inform on his parishioner but even go all the way as a delator: "proceed without delay to the designated place and there, where such crimes are investigated, declare everything he had heard about his evil intention explicitly, without hesitation, and concealing nothing."

Every priest, similar to a soldier or an official, swore an oath always to be ready for state service: "Whenever some secret matter, or a matter of any kind, arises that pertains to the service or to the benefit of His Imperial Majesty, which I shall be ordered to keep secret, then I will keep it in complete secrecy, and not disclose it to anyone for whom it is not necessary to know about it and to whom it is not directed that it be revealed." 

An astonishing oath! As if it were designated not for a pastor of God but for a secret operative of the office of political investigations. Indeed, a secret operative was just what the Russian Orthodox priest was supposed to be according to the letter and spirit of the Petrine decrees.

A special page in the history of the Russian Orthodox church ought to be devoted to Peter's attitude to monasticism. As we know, Peter did not hide his hatred and scorn for monks. "Parasites," "hypocrites," "bigots"—this is a partial list of the softest epithets the tsar used for them.

There were many reasons behind the Orthodox monarch's curtness and harshness. In the monastic milieu he had encountered the most serious opposition to his own initiatives; here lurked the most determined real and potential foes.

In 1701 monks had been forbidden to have paper and ink in their cells or to write anything. This had been done in order to halt the writing and even more the propagation of the numerous manuscript compositions aimed against Peter and his reforms. The significance of such compositions for counterpropaganda should not be discounted: their authors—representatives of the clergy and monks—were as a rule educated and talented persons, gifted in wielding the pen. An example may be cited in Avraamy, the abbot of the suburban Moscow Andrejson Monastery and author of a celebrated "Epistle" containing sharp criticism of Peter's regime.

Knowing of numerous examples of violations of monastic communal life by the residents of monasteries, Peter saw them as proof of the uselessness and harmfulness of the contemporary monastic mode of life.

It is indisputable that by the start of the eighteenth century a crisis had arisen in monasticism as a socioreligious phenomenon. Besides other reasons for this crisis not cited here, it had arisen ultimately from the triumph at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of the "Josephite" trend in theology over the so-called "Nonpossessors," whose representatives had preached ideas of an ascetic, eremitic existence as God's servants, manual labor, and poverty. The triumph of the concepts of the "Josephites"—supporters and disciples of Joseph of Volokolamsk—had facilitated the church's progress on the path of enrichment, converting monasteries into very wealthy landowners and later serf owners, which led to the growth of the church's dependence on riches and thereby on the state, which, of course, was reflected in the morals of monastery residents.
By the way, one should not get too carried away with the image of the monkish glutton so widespread in the propaganda of Petrine and later times. The people in cassocks were diverse, and Peter must have known that. Perhaps the true reason for Peter's hatred of monasticism stemmed not so much from the image of sybaritic monks as in the ideal to which the ascetics aspired and owing to which they were independent of the authority personified in the mighty but earthly lord Peter. Intolerant toward all heterodoxy, even to passive resistance, the tsar could not countenance in his realm people preaching other values and another mode of life than those that he himself preached and that he considered best for Russia.

It should be mentioned that he had done a great deal to inculcate his own ideals in the life of monasteries, or rather to place them under state supervision and to compel the estate of monks to work for themselves.

It began, as one may easily surmise, knowing the previous history of "producing the all-Russian subject people," with a census of the monasteries and the binding of monks to them.

The next step was to limit the monks' subsistence. Peter stipulated that for each monk, subsistence be set at 10 rubles and 10 quarters of grain per person annually. All the rest went to the state budget, as it would be termed nowadays, via the system of the Monastery Bureau, which funded the monasteries' expenses. These limitations were a natural continuation of the secularization of monastery lands that had been introduced with the formation in 1701 of the Monastery Bureau. Although part of the patrimonies was subsequently returned to the monasteries, the great bulk of their revenues went to the state.

The encroachment on monasticism continued throughout Peter's reign. On 28 January 1723 Peter transmitted to the Synod via the senior procurator an order to launch a new census of monks and to ban new novices. At the same time it was stipulated to report monthly "how many of the present number of monks and nuns will be leaving . . . and in these vacant places to assign retired soldiers." On 3 March 1725 an exception was made only for widowered priests.

It must be supposed that Peter's thinking in banning the tonsure of monks tended to convert the monasteries into poorhouses for retired soldiers, whose number was growing with each year of the regular army's existence. Indeed, Peter had long since embarked on the path of converting monasteries into poorhouses and had consistently followed it, considering that this comprised the monks' service to the state. The most consistent notions concerning the earthly duties of monks were expressed by Peter's personal decree to the Synod of 31 January 1724.

The decree forthrightly calls monks parasites: "The present life of monks is a form of diarrhea from the other laws and much evil comes from it, inasmuch as the greater part are essentially parasites. . . . What is the profit to society from this? Truly only the old proverb: neither for God nor for people, inasmuch as the greater part flee from duties and from laziness, so as to eat bread for free." The sole means for reforming such an outrageous situation, when part of his subjects flee from their obligations to the state, is in Peter's view "to serve outright beggars, the very old and the very young."

For this Peter stipulated that the complements of monasteries be set proceeding from the number of retired soldiers and "other outright beggars" assigned to them, for whom hospitals and poorhouses were established at the monasteries. The number of monks was supposed to be in the following proportions: one monk for two to four of the retired or beggars, "considering those with worse illnesses should have more servants, whereas those with lesser afflictions and the old should have fewer servants, or as will be regarded as best from the example of the Regulation about Hospitals, in age no younger than 30 years." The rest of the monks who remained "beyond the number in service" were supposed to receive land from the monastery "so that they produce bread for themselves" and provide a constant contingent for replacement of the natural decrease of monks in the monasteries. For nuns in the same situation, however, it was stipulated "to feed themselves by handicrafts instead of cultivation: namely, spinning at manufactury shops." Monks were forbidden thenceforth to live in cells; space for them was to be allotted only in special storerooms "in those same hospitals." All monks were subject to constant and vigilant supervision by both spiritual and secular superiors.12

Apparently Peter did not succeed in completely realizing his plans for restructuring monastic life; he died too soon, but the attempt to put the monasteries and their inmates in the service of the state is typical of him. The regulated state had no place for a single person uninvolved in some kind of service rank or assigned to a taxable community or at least to a poorhouse.

Integrating the church into the state system was deliberate and affected not only the administration of the church itself but also worship and religious doctrine. The faith, as historian P.V. Verkhovsky wrote, "was made into a means of testing political reliability and effecting state purposes."13

This thoroughly affected the methods of resolving the long-standing problem of dissent, which had rent Russian society after the reforms of Patriarch Nikon. From Petrine times the struggle against the schismat-
ics—the main opponents of the official church—turned into a police action regularly implemented by the state itself. At the start a strict head count of schismatics, both men and women, was established. A double soul tax was levied on all of them; in this the government saw an important means to counter the schism. According to a decree of 14 March 1720, all schismatics were given a choice: either recognize the official church or pay a double tax. In both cases the schismatics were supposed to appear at a special Bureau of Church Affairs and report themselves and their offspring.

Special details distinguished the Synod’s decree of 15 May 1722 that closed all possible loopholes for schismatics attempting to circumvent the legislation against preaching the schismatic religious doctrine. All schismatic manuscript books were subject to immediate surrender; another decree (of 13 October 1724) warned that “nobody dare to keep such doubtful and suspicious books and notebooks about the schism, neither secretly nor openly in any form under threat of severe punishment.”

Adherence to the schism was looked upon as an admission of legal and civic disability. Schismatics were ordered “not to be superiors in any affairs but only to be subordinates, and likewise in testifying not to accept them except among themselves and then on occasion.”

The decree issued at the start of the eighteenth century concerning special clothing for the schismatics was repeatedly confirmed, while among all of the “great beards” who paid the tax for wearing a beard the schismatics were supposed to be distinguished by a special sign on the clothing—a patch. In the dictionary of Vladimir Dal’ we read: “Patch . . . a scrap of red cloth with a yellow stripe that the schismatics wore under Peter the Great.” Undoubtedly the purpose of this decree was to single out the schismatics by a special mark on the clothing, subject them to public humiliation, and make them objects of universal surveillance. At the same time the law forbade them to wear red clothing, so that the patches not blend in with it. By a decree of 6 April 1722 officials were forbidden to accept petitions from schismatics “not in that clothing.” Denunciation of violators of this law was likewise encouraged: “Also whoever catches sight of someone with a beard without such clothing, they should be brought under guard before the commandants or provincial governors and the fine imposed on them there, half of which goes to the treasury and the other half to the captor, and furthermore his clothes.” In 1724 special removable “annual” brass marks sewn on the clothes were introduced. The wives of schismatics were ordered to wear “cloaklike clothing and have horns.”

All these unprecedented measures in their systematic application, strictness, brutality, and humiliation led the schismatics to flee to remote places, and to numerous “incinerations,” the self-immolation of whole communities—the sole form of the schismatics’ protest against the coercion over conscience and person.

Concerned about the “regular” fulfillment of the duties of subject-patriotishers, Peter’s “regulated” state opposed every kind of self-directed activity, every kind of manifestation of unregulated religious initiatives and spiritual feats uncontrolled by the official church. Noteworthy in this regard is the Synod’s decree of 16 July 1722 that the compilers of the Complete Collection of Laws, where it was published, called the decree “on the invalidity of willful suffering incurred through illegal acts.”

The basis for this strange, to say the least, decree was the notorious affair of the schismatic disciple Varlaam Levin, who had addressed a crowd at Penza in 1722 with a summons to oppose the tsar-Antichrist. The case was extraordinary in that Levin had knowingly undergone suffering and death for an idea and, interrogated by senators under torture “on the wheel,” had declared “that the people have hearkened to him and presently he stands on his previous opinion and wishes to die and had wished by his own will to suffer and to die.”

We must surmise that the courage of a man under torture who chose for himself the path of torment and death made an impression on the Senate and forced the authorities to address the people with a decree condemning “those who from ignorance and madness, or from their own extreme malice, willfully desire evil as the main foes to themselves and are deprived of health and life in vain, attracted by the name of suffering and beguiled by those most bitter torments and death for themselves.” This was the greatest mistake, the compilers of the decree considered, for “not every kind of suffering, but only suffering that is legitimate, that is for known truth, for dogmas of eternal truth, for God’s infallible law, is useful and pious.” There was no place for legitimate suffering in Russia, however, because “there has never been any reason to apprehend such truth from persecution in the Russian Orthodox state, inasmuch as this cannot be.”

To put it differently, there were no conditions for spiritual feats in the Russia of the pious Orthodox tsar because there were no reasons compelling anyone to undergo torment and death for an idea.

Furthermore, the authorities expressed distrust of such exalted self-directed activity; without a corresponding higher summons equated to a superior’s order it is impossible to act, “the more so as we must not dare to undertake such a feat by ourselves without God’s own inspiration, just as a warrior does not dare to enter battle without his superior’s order.” There must be discipline and order in everything, whereas tricks like Levin’s are harmful and dangerous, and such
"The police is the soul of the citizenry"

The great reformer of Russia dreamed, as we recall, of reforming his subjects' mores with the aid of perfect "training" legislation and an ideal state structure so that each would acknowledge, without sparing his life, the need of service to the state, that is to say, to the master, for the sake of attaining the mythical "common good." The panacea for all calamities and misfortunes that befell his subjects en route to the radiant future Peter saw in the creation of one more state mechanism, conceived as something all-encompassing and all-pervasive. The role of such a system, pervading all of the gigantic building of Russian statehood, ought to be played, to Peter's way of thinking, by the police. It is crucially important that the police be understood not simply as an institution, but also as a system of relationships, a mode of universal thinking in which the cult of state authority was taken to the limit.

The chapter "On Police Affairs" in the Regulation of the Main Municipal Administration of 1724 is "The Song of Songs" of the police as a culture:

... the police has its own special standing, namely: it facilitates rights and justice, begets good order and morality, gives everyone security from brigands, thieves, ravishers, deceivers and the like, drives out disorderly and useless modes of life, compels each to labor and to honest industry, makes a good inspector, a careful and kind servant, lays out towns and the streets in them, hinders inflation and delivers sufficiency in everything required for human life, guards against all illnesses that occur, brings about cleanliness on the streets and in houses, prohibits excess in domestic expenditures and all public vices, cares for beggars, the poor, the sick, the crippled and other needy, defends widows, orphans, and strangers according to God's commandments, trains the young in sensible cleanliness and honest
knowledge; in short over all these the police is the soul of the citizenry in all good order and the fundamental support of human security and comfort.  

Behind each of these clauses is a string of specific measures of the authorities, but we shall speak of that later. Let's try to understand how Peter arrived at the idea of a state inspired by the police.

The urge to implement state surveillance over the private life of each person—to enter his house and family and to monitor his mode of life, everyday routine, and mores, even his external appearance—appeared quite early, at the very beginning of the eighteenth century. As has already been said, the idea of extending "regularity" (the concept that reflected the urge to uniformity and unification on the basis of western European principles about the sphere of public life), had been derived from the idea of "regularity" as the main means of achieving success in war, victory over the external foe. Victory over the domestic foe—the opponents of the reforms—was achieved not only by harsh punitive measures (the executioner's block, the galleys, Siberia, etc.), but also by expunging that which had been so hateful to Peter from youth—"the old"—a concept opposed to "regularity" and firmly linked to the beard, long sleeves, the apparent chaos of Russian town building, superstitions, and customs based on tradition. This victory was achieved (by analogy with the military) through the willful, forcible inculcation of "regularity" everywhere into the subjects' everyday life. As in a war, Peter's decrees about transforming everyday life, customs, and dress sound like orders, curt and harsh. These decrees were to be executed without thinking about their sense and ultimate aim.

The last year of the seventeenth century—1700—opened with a decree of 4 January with the following content: "Boars and lords-in-waiting and state counselors and privy counselors, table attendants and crown agents, and Moscow servitors, and state secretaries and court attendants and all servitors and bureau ranks, and trading people and boyar people in Moscow and the towns are to wear Hungarian dress and cafians: long on the outside to the midriff, and shorter underneath than outside in the same fashion, and he who succeeds in making this clothing to wear it till Epiphany of the present year 1700, whereas he who does not succeed in making it, is then to make and wear it, ceasing with shrove tide this year." Apparently at that time, too, the decree came out about shaving beards directed to the cited categories of the population. A second decree appeared on 16 January 1705. It stipulated that all servitors, merchants, and townsmen "henceforth from this the great master's decree are to shave beards and mustaches. And if someone will not wish to shave beards and mustaches, and will wish to go about in beards and mustaches, these are to be taxed "at rates from 30 to 100 rubles." Peasants, however, were to pay "two kopecks" upon entering town. Those who paid the tax were issued a special mark.  

In the history of Petroleum times it may be difficult to find better known decrees. They have long since become the symbol of the radical nature of the changes implemented by the great transformer and the focus on bringing Russia into western European culture and its way of life.

Peter had begun the shaving of beards and changing of clothing immediately after returning from abroad at the end of August 1698, with the beards of the closest boyars coming under the clippers in the first instance; they were the first also to be ordered to appear at court in clothing of European cut. The example of wearing "new style" women's clothing was dictated to the tsar's closest female relatives—his sisters. There is no doubt that this action, unexpected by all, had been done not only for "the glory and beauty of the state and the military administration," as was written in the August decree (of 1701), but primarily as a conscious counterposing of the new, the contemporary, the comfortable, and the desirable versus the old, the archaic, the uncomfortable, and the despised closely associated with the Moscow of the bearded stroll's, boyars, foes, and ill-wishers. Here Peter's typical demonstrativeness and impossibly were revealed, the desire to compel people to do what he and only he considered best.

Of course, we may laugh at the disgraced boyars—the old people standing humbly before the tsar with shaven chins in short, tight clothes. But looking at the print in which a man is depicted standing on his knees in the mud while a soldier with sheep shears shreds the skirt of a "prohibited" cafian, we may also sympathize with Petroleum contemporaries. Imagine for a second that you have just come out of the subway when you are forced to your knees in the mud in order to cut off your new winter coat even with the ground.

Apparently, for a long time it was possible to support the new fashions and manners only by force. Decrees were repeatedly issued threatening violators of the dress code with diverse punishments including exile to hard labor, but it was not easy for people to get used to the new dress and to the new look, which had been so radically altered in one day.

Some—especially schismatics—did not hide their dismay, for the traditional dress was directly associated with piety. Others, on the contrary, concealed themselves and bided their time, but on coming home hastened to don the hated clothes and to do what had been customary and comfortable since youth, and sometimes they even risked appearing in public in the old clothes. It is noteworthy that the princes Dolgoruky, the leaders of the oligarchs exiled to Berezov in 1730, took with them to Siberia their
beloved one-piece caftans, padded coats, and other old-fashioned clothes, which, apparently, they had worn at home throughout the Petrine era.

Finally, still others (and these were the majority, especially among youth) became accustomed to the new clothing and customs introduced by Peter through decrees, triumphant ceremonies, and entertainments. Journeys abroad, interaction with numerous foreigners, and training the young in European manners all left their mark—within two decades the cloaks, beards, and padded coats of their fathers seemed ridiculous to many nobles.

The state did not stop at regulating its subjects’ hairstyles and form of dress. It briskly crossed the threshold of the private house, demanding not only that the ceiling be plastered (there are corresponding decrees), but also that people live “regularly.” Hardly had they been born into the world than they were inscribed in specially established parish registers at churches; in time they were assigned to school, to a regiment, to a chancery, and to the soul-tax assessment. When they died, they were to be buried in coffins of the stipulated type.

From 1705 a monopoly had been introduced on the sale of oak coffins, and a deceased person brought to the cemetery in an oak coffin or one made of pine logs would have to be transferred to a prescribed one made of planks; the priests were most strictly forbidden to bury in unprescribed coffins.

If the prescription about coffins may be explained by concerns to conserve the forests, then the strange decree of 12 April 1722 concerning gravestones at cemeteries, which were to be arranged, “dug in, and set in the earth with such moderation so that they lie even with the position of the place,” is explicable only by Peter’s typical striving for “regularity,” without which “those stones that have been placed untidily and unsuitably confer ugliness on the holy churches, and make obstruction for processions that take place around those churches.”

In accordance with the new life-style the state actively introduced new, often uncommon stereotypes of behavior for a Russian person. This was achieved through legislation and the personal example set by the tsar himself and his entourage. A real aid for a nobleman entering the new life came from the celebrated Honest Mirror of Youth, or a Testimony to Social Intercourse Collected from Various Authors (1717). This work by an unknown author created a new stereotype of a secular person’s behavior, depicting a highly positive image of a young man who avoids bad company, extravagance, miserliness, drunkenness, malice, gossip, and coarseness. He is supposed to be “bold, industrious and steadfast like a pendulum clock” and “respectful and polite in both word and deed, not easily insolent and not pugnacious.”

Reading in the Mirror about what is forbidden we see that in real life crude manners reigned. An adolescent of Petrine times was advised at table not “to pick your nose or roll your eyes,” to blow the nose “like a trumpeter trumpets,” “not to blow on the soup so that it splatters everywhere,” not to put his hands on the plate and feet everywhere; “do not squirm, and likewise do not pick your teeth with a knife,” and he was enjoined: “when eating do not chomp like a pig, and do not scratch your head.” But at the same time one should not conclude from the Mirror that it exemplifies the particular coarseness of Russian life. The Mirror also includes quite a few recommendations that would not be amiss for people to know today. It is curious that I.V. Saverkina in her study of the Mirror has discovered much overlap in the advice to the young man given by the author of the Mirror and Lord Chesterfield in his Letters to His Son, which appeared twenty years later (plagiarism has been ruled out). Here is the vivid image of the English young booby hardly distinguishable from his Russian brother in arms:

When an awkward fellow first comes into a room, it is highly probable that his sword gets between his legs, and throws him down, or makes him stumble at least; when he has recovered this accident, he goes and places himself in the very place of the whole room where he should not; there he soon lets his hat fall down; and, taking it up again, throws down his cane; in recovering his cane, his hat falls a second time; so that he is a quarter of an hour before he is in order again. If he drinks tea or coffee, he certainly scalds his mouth, and lets either the cup or the saucer fall, and spills the tea or coffee on his breeches. At dinner, his awkwardness distinguishes itself particularly, as he has more to do: there he holds his knife, fork, and spoon differently from other people; eats with his knife to the great danger of his mouth, picks his teeth with his fork, and puts the spoon, which has been in his throat twenty times, into the dishes again. If he is to carve, he can never hit the joint; but, in his vain efforts to cut through the bone, scatters the sauce in everybody’s face. He generally daubs himself with soup and grease, though his napkin is commonly stuck through a button-hole, and tickles his chin. When he drinks, he infuriably coughs in his glass, and besprinkles the company. Besides all this, he has strange tricks and gestures: such as sniffing up his nose, making faces, putting his fingers in his nose, or blowing it and looking afterwards in his handkerchief, so as to make the company sick. His hands are troublesome to him, when he has not something in them, and he does not know where to put them; but they are in perpetual motion between his bosom and his breeches: he does not wear his clothes, and in short does nothing, like other people.
Of course, along with a series of general ethical prescriptions the *Mirror* brought into Russian society much typically Russian and which related specifically to Petrine times. The state wished to see not simply a well-bred man who had received an education and conducted himself properly in society, but above all a subject and a servitor. One's early years is preparation for service, and happiness is a consequence of assiduous service: "he who serves, so too is he paid, because he obtains happiness for himself." In the *Mirror* the requirement is stressed that the adolescent be "diligent in all services" and serve "with eagerness and care," displaying in the process special respect for superiors. It is noteworthy that the *Mirror* offers a notion of noble honor, but categorically demands that it be defended not by the sword but by lawsuits in the courts, for the nobleman ought to shed blood only in defending the Fatherland and the ruler.

Quite unexpected for us are the sections devoted to the behavior of the women. A persistently stereotyped notion has arisen about the behavior of the pre-Petrine woman and according to the model of the Moscovite *Household Manual*—locked away in the women’s quarters, meek, an often forgotten MISTRESS GLOOM shrinking from the glances of outsiders. Only under Peter does she come out in public, for he was the real architect of women’s society in Russia. But the *Mirror*’s advice is aimed not at emancipating women but at inspiring them with greater modesty, meekness, temperance, and silence.

In the section “A Maiden's Chastity” the girl who has come out into the world is summoned, first of all, to modesty of behavior. She ought to rush away from the table if "there should happen to sit down beside her a coarse ignoramus who does not sit calmly with his feet;" she should not rejoice but "be vexed when somebody wishes to tempt her"; when she hears immodest conversation the maiden must not laugh and "thus encourage that," but act "as if she does not understand." To the contrary, “the irregular maiden laughs and converses with everybody, dashes about disreputable places and streets baring her breasts, sits down with other young people and men, rubs elbows and does not sit quietly, but sings dissonant songs, makes merry and gets drunk, hops on the tables and benches, lets herself be dragged into all corners and courted like a carcass, for where there is no shame humility will not appear.”

One must suppose that the changes of everyday life and manners that arrived with Peter proved to be quite to the taste of yesterday’s female recluse, so that for the following generation of Petrine maidens it became a beneficient cause of women’s emancipation to introduce some constraints.

"The police is the soul of the citizenry"

Also introduced under Peter was a new form of entertainment—assemblies—which, it is true, hardly resembled the pastime of freely assembled people, but remind one of a peculiar secular service. It is no accident that the decree about creating assemblies was announced by the senior master of police on 26 November 1718 and began by explaining to the public: "Assemblies is a French word which cannot be expressed in Russian by one word, but to speak in detail: a free assembly or gathering in a house not only for amusement, but also for business, for one may see each other there and talk over every need, and also hear what is going on somewhere else, and at the same time amuse oneself. And in what manner these assemblies are to be arranged, this is defined below this point until it will become a custom." Notwithstanding that it was permitted at assemblies "freely to sit, to walk, and to play," at the same time it was strictly forbidden that "anybody accost or insult another, or dare to make a ceremony of standing up and accompanying and so forth under pain of the Great Eagle" (that is, the obligatory drinking from a huge goblet after which a person fell down dead drunk). As we see, teaching people to conduct themselves without constraint in Russia was possible only by force. Furthermore, the general-policemaster made a count of the guests at assemblies, so that their attendance was, apparently, obligatory.

In speaking about the numerous changes in people’s lives during the Petrine era, it should not be forgotten that these were not merely changes in everyday life, manners, dress, and architecture. All these were manifestations of cultural reform. Its crux, as we know, involved a shift of the language of culture when its definite orientation gave way to the Western prototypes recognized as the best. Through this reform the foundations were laid of a new infrastructure on which a new culture could be developed.

A fundamental reorganization and expansion of the system of education took place: general and special primary schools appeared along with higher educational establishments, the dispatch of young men for training abroad was practiced on a large scale, and foreign specialists were invited who attracted Russian students. Furthermore, in the Petrine era the preconditions were laid for the development of science: the Academy of Sciences was created, the first libraries and museums functioned, and expeditions with scientific aims were dispatched to remote regions of the country.

One should not forget about the substantial expansion of the channels of information. Gazettes appeared along with much translated and original literature—all this, in concert with journeys abroad, facilitated the burgeoning stream of information about practically all aspects of
the European scene of the time. It is important to underscore that art developed vigorously and in spheres that previously had been weakly developed in Russia. The artistic style of the baroque then dominant in Europe firmly established itself in Russia from the first years of Peter's reign, dictating the hierarchy of aesthetic values, defining fashions, and forming tastes.

For the new culture, openness and the secular were typically in opposition to the earlier, albeit rapidly eroding, confessional insularity of medieval Orthodox culture.

The scholarly literature has justly noted that Peter's cultural reform had been in large part prepared by preceding developments whose manifest features became basic for the culture of the Petrine era. This concerns the development of the baroque in the literature and art of the second half of the seventeenth century when the personal principle started to come to the forefront, when the value of man was acknowledged as such, particularly the practical, active man. The specialization of all forms of creativity was reinforced, and a gradual general secularization of culture occurred. The Petrine reforms "had been prepared not only by separate phenomena of the seventeenth century. They were a logical result of the entire growth of Russian culture that had begun a transition from the medieval type of culture to the culture of the modern era."

Peter's role is great in this regard. Commenting on it, D.S. Likhachev essentially supports Prince Mikhail Shcherbatov, who reckoned that without Peter, Russian society would have lagged behind in its growth by two hundred years: "Without outstanding historical personalities the historical processes would not have changed their direction, but would have been strongly retarded; at the same time the transition of Russian culture from the medieval type to the kind of culture of the modern era would also have been retarded."

Certainly state personalities, or more precisely the personification of the state in them, exerted immense influence on Russian culture of modern, and indeed of contemporary, times. The state, with Peter at its head, transferred onto Russian soil many western European institutions of culture, financing and stimulating those spheres that seemed to be the most important and necessary at the time. In the conditions of Russia at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the state's organizing role in culture was largely unavoidable and essential. For in the absence of sources of financing culture, of trained personnel, and of concepts of the universe with a tradition of regarding science as an autonomous value, any other way to assimilate the new ideas of the developed European culture of the Enlightenment era might have dragged things out interminably, condemning Russia to backwardness in the comprehension of general human values.

At the same time, in patronizing culture and fulfilling the role of Maecenas, the state imperiously dictated its conditions and soaked it for ages in that ineradicable bureaucratic spirit that made the work of the writer, the artist, and the actor just another form of service guaranteed by a salary. Therefore, the outstanding figures of eighteenth-century culture toiled in the ranks of various "commands" and "chanceries," and entered the Academy of Sciences and Arts, whereas those not slotted into these systems felt insulted, like Aleksandr Sumarokov, the poet of the mid-eighteenth century who craved membership in the Academy of Sciences more than eternal posthumous fame as the first Russian poet. Peter's reforms led to the transformed culture's becoming distinctly state related and fulfilling, like the other reformed structures of the time, definite state functions in serving the needs of the autocrat's authority. It is natural that through the complex of cultural values and stereotypes the state exerted a powerful influence on the real life of people, whose habits and style of life were leveled, unified, and subordinated to the state principle. Of course, this unification pervaded by the police spirit manifested itself most distinctively of all in the towns, especially in Petersburg. It was in Petersburg that the Policemaster Chancery was first created, which should be considered the first functional police office. The general-policemaster was placed at its head. Among the chancery's duties were "to beget good order" and "to drive away disorderly living."

Deciphering these general principles indicates that police duties were quite broad. Building codes, fire safety, cleanliness on the streets, regulation of trade—this is far from a full list of the duties of the Policemaster Chancery. The chief one was looking after the residents. For this the chancery organized nightly patrols of townsmen united into tens, demihundreds, and hundreds and strictly ensured that "at night at unspecified hours nobody venture out, except eminent persons, and fires be extinguished, and no drink or goods be sold," in order that all speedily fight fires in accordance with special regulations and so forth. After Petersburg a Policemaster Chancery was organized in Moscow and then in other towns too.

Yet the policemaster chanceries would have been manifestly important in the role of "the fundamental support of human security and comfort" in the whole huge country. The army, stationed in all the gubernias and districts, might have become a force that could have instituted order in the state. It had become the first in the history of Russia to fulfill police functions on the local level. This stemmed natu-
rally from that important social role that Peter had given the army in the new system of administration after the war. Of course, it would be an exaggeration to assert that the army was stationed in the districts especially to implement police oversight, but we shall not twist the truth if we say that this purpose loomed large among the calculations of the tsar-reformer, who at the end of the Northern War pondered how to quarter the army most rationally.

A precondition of the creation of a general state system of police oversight and at the same time an essential condition of its wholesale introduction stemmed from the tax reform of 1719–24. The state was interested in seeing to it that the population punctually paid the soul tax. But the army was even more interested inasmuch as the soul levy went directly for its maintenance.

The colonel’s duties specified by special laws, the “Schedule of Payments” and the “Instructions for the Colonel,” included looking after the completeness and speed of the land commissars in collecting soul-tax monies; he likewise looked after the correct distribution and disbursement of the money collected in the district for the needs of his own regiment.

But Peter did not stop with turning over to the army functions typical of civilian financial offices. The colonel’s fiscal duties were only one of the aspects of his main duty—“to oversee the rural police,” or speaking more bluntly, to fulfill police functions. The “Schedule” and the “Instructions for the Colonel” devote special attention to the military’s police functions in the districts.

The colonel was recognized as the head of the rural police in the district. He was obligated to oversee the nature of the mutual relations of army and populace, preventing potential violaions and abuses.

Another important police function of the army was the suppression by arms of any “brigandage,” including cases of resistance of bonded peasants to lords and local authorities. The “Schedule” stipulated the regimental commander’s strict responsibility for overseeing that in “his” and neighboring districts there were no brigands, and likewise the populace’s responsibility under threat of “severe punishment” and banishment “to perpetual hard labor” to report to the colonel, who was obligated, also under threat of severe punishment, to catch such brigands and immediately.

Gradually a whole police system was created at the basis of which lay principles of constant surveillance over the population and diverse constraints that applied not only to serfs but to all subjects. As the social constraints have already been discussed, here we shall review the constraints on movement about the country.

“The police is the soul of the citizenry”

The “Schedule,” and also the special decree “On the colonel’s duties in overseeing the rural police in the districts,” mostly prescribed a struggle against fugitive peasants. In the “Schedule,” where there was a separate paragraph “On restraining peasants from flight,” the colonel’s duties were formulated this way: “The colonel and the officers are ordered to see to it that from the peasants who have been assigned to the regiment nobody flies, and if they learn that some are preparing for flight, to restrain them from it. Go in pursuit and catch those who flee. And order both those caught and those restrained to be punished by their lords.”

An important peculiarity of the norms of the “Schedule” and the decree was that they devoted less attention to capturing and returning fugitives than to nipping flight in the bud. This could have been achieved only by careful, vigilant surveillance of the population, and “prophylaxis” by encouraging denunciations of intended flight. At the same time it was most strictly forbidden to accept fugitive peasants in districts where they had not been registered for the payment of the soul tax.

The state’s police functions in the social sphere were manifested with particular clarity in resolving the question of the so-called “free and itinerant.” As we know, the legislation of the seventeenth century had recognized the existence of “the free and the itinerant” who, according to the Law Code of 1649, were those deemed to be outside the three social statuses that partly overlapped each other (the servitors, the bonded, and the taxed). The Law Code stated that “free people” are those who are “not sons of fathers in service, and who are not in the ruler’s service or the tax assessment anywhere, and who are not slaves of landlords, peasants or landless peasants under anyone.” The presence of “free and itinerant” people, from whose ranks servitors, slaves, and workers were recruited, constituted a characteristic peculiarity of Russian medieval society that had become unthinkable with the construction of the Petrine “regulated” state.

It is noteworthy that in discussions in the Chamber for drafting the Law Code of 1700 concerning an article about accepting “free” people into the peasantry and landless peasants it was decided: “This article is set aside... because after the first Law Code (of 1649) there is nobody free except for churchmen.” After the church and tax reforms this could not be said even about churchmen, for in introducing the reforms Peter had carefully provided that nobody “got out” of service or the tax assessment or some occupation. The whole thrust of legislation and practice was to end once and forever all estate and social uncertainty, escape from tax liability, and avoidance of service. If according to the Petrine decree of 1722 each nun was supposed to learn spinning or handicrafts
"two or three times per month from the time of receiving this decree without shirking," and according to another decree all village and town idiots as well as "the blind, and the badly crippled and the senile" were supposed to pay the soul tax (although, as indicated in the decree, "of course they have no occupation or support"), then it is understandable that the fate of "the free and the itinerant" was predetermined.

There was no place for the category of "the free" in the Petrine state's estate structure. They simply began to be equated with fugitives and criminal elements and to be persecuted accordingly. The principle of this policy was realized with special consistency during the tax reform. All subjects were supposed to be included either in service or in the tax assessment, and whoever was unfit for service or for paying taxes was assigned to a poorhouse "only so that ... there be none without occupation and in idleness." So it was written in a decree about certifying petty servants. This principle operated as applied to other estates too. Thus, a decree reviewing the staffs of scribes throughout the country noted that servants not attached to the chancery staffs would be subject to the assessment and choose an occupation, "only so that none remain unassessed and sunk in idleness." Those unfit for service and retired soldiers were also admonished "that none of them be in idleness, but assigned to other services or to someone in domestic service." In like fashion the fate of "unbudgeted" churchmen and former slaves was decided.11

The measures in the struggle with "the free" were extended to the indigent too. On 6 April 1722 Peter "was pleased to order that the indigent in all localities be caught, and whoever will keep them or to whom they will turn, those shall be fined."

Therefore, other decrees also designated massive roundups of "holy fools," "idiots," "orphans and the poor," and beggars and similar vagabonds. For example, in January 1724 Lieutenant Timofeev, who was conducting the census in Nizhny Novgorod, reported to his superiors that he had seized from the Nizhny Novgorod pothouse (i.e., from a tavern) "naked men, who testified under interrogation that they had not been registered in any census registers anywhere," and they were dispatched "to former residences" for assignment to the assessment or to a poorhouse. The matter involved prodigal drunkards who had drunk up everything and had been living in taverns till warm weather; they were fortunate the latter had not been closed.12

Lieutenant Timofeev operated according to government resolutions about liquidating beggary and vagabondage. On 3 June 1724 a decree was prepared about a grandiose police action to enumerate and to register beggars throughout the country. It was proposed to conduct the action in one day—1 October—all at once in all localities, "where there are old, sick, and crippled beggars andorphans, both of the male and of the female sex, who were in poorhouses and hospitals and furthermore those who appear sick and crippled and who cannot feed themselves by work, and who are not assigned to anyone, and have not been placed in the soul-tax assessment." So that this action did not become known to the common people beforehand, it was categorically prohibited to open the envelope with the decree to the governors and the district officials before 1 October, and upon opening "all should begin enumerating at once the same day as soon as they unseal it."13

The state, as we see, successfully executed the prescription of the Main Municipal Administration's regulation: "the police . . . care for beggars, the poor, the sick, the crippled and other indigents; defend widows, orphans and strangers according to God's commandments."

As a whole "the free and the itinerant" were viewed as an alien body in the social organism that posed a social menace. In certifying churchmen the census takers were required "to watch out in every way that from these itinerant there be no forgery . . . Because from those that wander about without service one cannot hope for state benefit, but only an increase of theft."14 This also cited the main reason for arranging the "sorting out of the common folk" under Peter—to apply to each person the criteria of state benefit and to evaluate a person accordingly, changing his status if need be.

The struggle with "the free and the itinerant" became part of a whole system of combating fugitives. It is natural that this struggle entailed bygone traditions from the pre-Petrine period. But again we cannot overlook the many quantitative and qualitative changes that occurred in connection with the reforms. The crux of the changes was not only the reinforcement of practical measures in the fight against fugitives, but a change in the lawgiver's approach to evaluating this widespread social phenomenon, when "flight began to be seen in general as an sanctioned departure by all who find themselves in the assessment or bonded dependence."15

Such an expansive interpretation of flight reflected a new direction of policy that had become dominant during the formation of Peter's "regulated" state, or more precisely from the start of the tax reform, the soul-tax enumeration and census, which were used, as we saw earlier, for the "imposition" of a new social order in the country and which were included in the struggle against fugitives.

Here we shall single out the most important factor. At the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the struggle against fugitives had been waged with the aid of special detachments of "searchers" dis-
patched to the places fugitives had settled (remember how the Bulavin rebellion began) and which, upon arrival in the designated region, apprehended fugitives, primarily bondaged peasants, and returned them to their former places of residence. Occasionally the owners of fugitive peasants were themselves compelled to take up the search and, upon finding them, to petition the authorities to assist in returning the fugitives. During the Northern War the government could not give the matter much attention. Furthermore, the demand for working hands at works, at construction sites, and in the armed forces had led the authorities to wink at fugitives.

The policy changes of Peter's government appear all the more striking beginning in 1721, when a series of laws intensified the struggle against fugitives as compared with the preceding period. Especially important is the law of 1 February 1721, which had been drafted with the tsar's active participation. It established a definite term for the return of all fugitives—a year and a half from the moment of the decree's publication. The contingent of those considered fugitives was abruptly expanded—added were the sons-in-law of fugitives, even if they had never fled anywhere themselves and lived separately from their fathers-in-law. This norm, by the way, had been unknown to the law of the seventeenth century. The decree doubled the fine for failure to return fugitives on time and introduced corporal punishments and banishment to the galleys for elders and stewards guilty of hiding fugitives.

Even more severe punishments awaited landowners who risked taking in fugitives after publication of the decree. Striving by cruel measures to create unbearable conditions for harboring fugitives, the law encouraged stewards and elders to denounce their lords if they compelled their own people to accept fugitives in hamlets. Denunciation might lead to all hamlets of such a lord being confiscated "irrevocably, whereas the delators for their true denunciation are to be made a reward, namely freedom from and a quarter share in those confiscated hamlets." Thus, by informing "where proper" on one's lord, one might not only receive freedom, but also become a landowner.16

The decree of 1 February 1721 and the supplement of 6 April 1722 became the juridical basis for the start of an unprecedented campaign of catching and returning fugitives. The military census takers, who were then implementing the census of male souls for "placing" them in the assessment of the soul tax, were preoccupied with this. All fugitives were obligated to be dispatched to their former places of residence and to be registered in the tax rolls. A remarkable peculiarity of the new, large-scale action, which employed the army throughout the country, was that the return of fugitives was implemented by means of those harboring them, who were obligated to present the receipt of the fugitive's owner concerning his exact delivery to the right address, and also that all fugitives were interrogated beforehand, often under torture, in the military chanceries that certified taxable souls.

The care exhibited by the census takers in certifying each estate and district, interrogations, face-to-face confrontations and torture at the first suspicion of submitting false testimony, threats of huge fines for harboring fugitives, apprehensions of denunciation, confiscations of property—all this overheated the situation in the localities and made it unbearable both for the fugitives themselves and for those who harbored them. Therefore in 1722–25 the chanceries that were certifying souls were literally swamped by cases of fugitives who had been brought in by the thousands by those harboring them. Fugitives voluntarily "presenting themselves" to the chanceries became widespread. Those who had been harboring fugitives—frightened by the decry and the red tape in settling cases of flight and not wishing to be burdened by the return of those living with them—simply "expelled" the fugitives from the property, leaving them on their own.

Among those turning themselves in to the authorities were quite a few peasants with families. Why did they come to the chanceries in person? The problem of fugitives should not be oversimplified. Not every peasant, often burdened by a family, was able to flee to the Don or abroad. Not everyone even wished to flee, although the flood of fugitives to Poland rose sharply just at this time. As we know, a huge number of fugitives settled in the country's interior regions on palace, church, nobles, and state lands. Here the fugitives established themselves with families and kin, built houses, and entered the assessment "in equality" with the local peasants—in short, they "grew into" the new places. The new laws struck most painfully not at vagabonds wandering from place to place, but at those peasants who had fulfilled, despite the law, their human right to choose a place of residence on earth and who aspired to live "freely without any state imposts and masters' dues." For thousands and tens of thousands of such peasants, return to a former owner or expulsion was a real calamity.

It was a calamity for the country as well. Even the census takers saw that. One of them, F. Chekin, reported that it was altogether senseless to return fugitive state peasants from state lands to their former places of residence because "in the former places from which they have departed, there are no households and no shelter and it will be impossible for them soon to establish household buildings and cultivated fields." In 1723 it was decided not to return state and palace peasants that had migrated to other state and palace lands. No consideration was given to
landlords' peasants. The authorities pursued especially strictly their return to their previous owners according to the letter of the law. To be sure, in 1725 one "indulgence" was allowed. Peter ordered that serfs living on palace lands not be returned if they had settled in whole villages or they composed no less than a third of the population. In this case the peasants were not freed from the landowner, but on the contrary the landowner received ownership over such a village along with the lands settled by the fugitive peasants. No doubt the tsar's decision in defending the existing social order could only be welcomed by landowners who thereby received new possessions.

Of course, not all peasants obediently went to the chancery. In the census takers' reports one finds that the peasants, "being fearful, a day or two afterward fled nobody knows where", hamlets proved to be "empty because of the flight of the peasants to parts unknown"; and "the peasants fled from them en route nobody knows whereeto."

Many went off to the Don. In discovering empty villages, the census taker of Azov Gubernia, A. Miakinin, surprised that the peasants had fled to the Don, for "besides the Don there is nowhere to go, for there is no such freedom anywhere in the all-Russian state except in those localities." A curious admission! Many other sources confirm Miakinin's observation.

The growth of flight abroad, primarily to Poland, was a consequence of the massive police effort. In 1724 the Senate got word that the border guards could not contain the fugitives and that at the checkpoints "come fugitives assembled in large numbers who do battle with firearms and cudgels against the dragoons as if they were enemies." The Senate directed the War College to reinforce the border cordons with army units and, "if any fugitives try to force their way through, then such miscreants are to be shot at with firearms." Once, the Senate discussed the problem of deploying the whole army along the border in order to create a powerful covering detachment in the path of the peasants leaving for Poland.

The grandiose nationwide search for fugitives was no caprice of Peter's. It was a considered action that had been calculated along with others already mentioned earlier to lay down the bases of a social order corresponding to the general conception of the police state. The laws about fugitives implemented while enumerating the current population and placing it in the tax assessment were not temporary. They created the juridical basis for the struggle against all forms of unsanctioned movement around the country. The law about pursuing fugitives, or to put it differently, the ban on abandoning one's place of residence, which had also become the place of paying the soul tax, was extended beyond landlords' peasants to all of the population that had been included in the soul-tax assessment.

There can be no doubt that the laws on fugitives reinforced police surveillance of the country's population. The aforementioned decree of 6 April 1722 stipulated the return of all fugitives and payment of a fine for the years spent as fugitives—the so-called "residence"—except for those peasants who "are released to work as shepherds or in other work for hire, and not by flight." Further it was noted: "And henceforth by this decree landowners and clergymen and stewards and elders are to provide letters signed by their own hand to whomsoever is released for some work or simply for work whereby he might feed himself, to write it down precisely so that he not go about begging inasmuch as there is a decree about beggars and the crippled, whereas the healthy when caught are ordered to be sent to convict labor with punishment, for among those with such letters there have been many thieves, if not all of them, and do not accept anyone without such letters according to previous decrees." The words "for some work . . . " to the end the decree were written by Peter himself and epitomize his distinctively strict thinking.

Peter's idea about passports—documents without which a person could not leave his place—was consistently brought into the aforementioned "Schedule" of 1724 defining the army's relations with the populace. It must be repeated that, as in many other cases, passports were not Peter's invention. Even in the seventeenth century the practice had existed of providing peasants who went away to work with special "subsistence tokens." Neither in the seventeenth century nor in the course of the Northern War had there existed the strict passport regime that appeared after the introduction of the laws about fugitives and with the start of billeting the army. The introduction of the soul-tax levy, which had been built on an enumeration of the country's entire male population, served as its basis, whereas reinforcing the general principles of police order in the country made the strict passport regime a reality.

On the eve of introducing passports the tsar was given a project whose author is not known. He welcomed the tax reform and believed the introduction of the soul tax should be used to strengthen surveillance over the population via a system of passes and passports. In the opinion of the project's author, it was impossible in general to allow movement around the country to all who desired it. Passports, which the projector named "patents with a coat of arms," need not be given out to more than a quarter of the population enumerated by the census. A landowner's trusted people would receive from the local rural councillor a set number of "patent"-passes for a given estate and
The police is the soul of the citizenry*

sent such a letter, it is not to be believed, and both at the checkpoints and at lodgings they are to be caught, and sent back under convoy to the former places and lords. There were quite a few other petty bureaucratic hooks and crooks that might be used to hinder the freedom of leaving for work elsewhere. Furthermore, while working, the forlorned peasant was forbidden to marry.22

The introduction of passports in 1724–25 resulted in the authorities' ability to control the population's movements, limiting them by temporal and spatial frameworks, which was almost immediately reflected in the economy. It has already been mentioned that many entrepreneurs at the beginning of the 1720s started to experience difficulties with the hired labor force that were also linked largely to the introduction of the passport regime.

Naturally, wherever something becomes more stringent, people strive to find an illegal outlet, to deceive. One of the methods to circumvent the law immediately became the fashioning of false passports. To prevent this the authorities introduced printed passports. They were supposed to be given out not by the rural commissaries but by the district and gubernia administrations. All of a sudden a new problem arose. As local officials wrote the Senate: "If a district is extensive, for example, Moscow, Novgorod, and Nizhny Novgorod or many others like them, one from such a district is not free to hire himself out in another district or to go to work without having received a passport from the district, but must go one hundred or two hundred versts to the provincial governor in town, and will have expended his last on the road before he has obtained work to pay the dues."23

In other words, in order to go off to work at a distance of forty versts, one had to trek two hundred for a passport! Another Russian characteristic, red tape, is well known to us when for weeks peasant-petitioners "drag themselves around town for passports."

Execution and discipline—that is what was most required of all subjects. Quite a few methods and institutions enabled the authorities to supervise execution of that which had been ordered. As noted above, the police was not merely an institution or an office, but presumed a special social conduct, a special way of thinking. It is logical that under Peter we encounter the full-blown institution of denunciation, an authentic culture of denunciations.

To be sure, denunciation did not arise with Peter. Researchers date the appearance of legal norms for denunciations ("delations") to the time of the rise of Muscovy, when the grand princes, striving to bind to themselves newly arrived servitors, included in the "corroborating charters" (deeds sealed by oath) clauses not simply about the vassal's fidelity

*In the beginning this was not specifically the police, but just the "guard"; because we have now a Württemberg Police Force, from the "polizei" (police) of the Ancients.
to his new suzerain, but also his obligation to denounce plots against
the latter: "... where I learn or hear of any miscreant against my own
master it is for me to tell my own master the grand prince without any
cunning according to this corroborating charter."

Similar treaties of personal service were later replaced by public-legal
records of service fidelity, which also included clauses about "delation."
The Law Code of 1649 included the already traditional norm concern-
ing denunciation, supplementing it with a norm on punishment for
failure to denounce.

A peculiarity of the law on failure to denounce was that the duty of
political denunciation also lay on all of the traitor’s relatives. This alone
made voluntary departure abroad fearsome too—relatives became hos-
tages and were considered participants in the flight of the accused,
which was equated with state treason.

Grigory Kotoshikhin, a scribe of the times of Aleksei Mikhailovich
who fled abroad, wrote in his work about Russia that a fugitive’s rela-
tives were tortured with such questions: “why did he send to another
state, is he not inciting some fighting people against Muscovy wishing to
take over the state, or for some other malevolent plot and at whose
direction?” As we know, the investigators had many methods of “get-
ting to the bottom” of treason cases.

Another noteworthy feature of the law about “delation”-denuncia-
tion was that it extended exclusively to political (state) crimes, among
which figured “assembly and conspiracy or any other evil intent” against
the tsar, attempts against his health, and treason.

Right here an essential distinction is drawn between the traditions of
old Russian law and the law of the Petrine era. First of all, Peter
abruptly extended the framework of crimes considered state crimes and
subject to laws on denunciation and failure to denounce. Beyond the
aforementioned traditional state crimes (intent against the sovereign’s
health, riot and rebellion, treason) their number was expanded to in-
clude “spoliation of His Tsarist Majesty’s fisc,” that is, embezzlement of
state property.

In 1723 Peter drafted a decree about dividing all crimes into “state”
and “private” ones. Such a division should have become the basis of the
new law code that was being drafted after 1719. Included among the
number of state crimes were all crimes of malfeasance; hence the crimi-
nal official, “as a violator of state laws and his own duty,” was subject to
capital punishment. Peter’s explanations on this account have already
been reviewed: official crimes ruin the state worse than treason does.

Besides malfeasance, state crimes also encompassed quite a few oth-
ers that the subjects were obligated to denounce as state treason or
investigation in the seventeenth century. In a special decree of 23 October 1719 encouraging delators to denounce “violators of decrees and the prescribed laws and pillagers of the people,” it was underscored: “... whoever learns about such criminals should come forward without any apprehension and report it to us ourselves, only so long as he reports the truth. And whoever will report truly on such a miscreant, then for such service he will be given his wealth both movable and immovable. And, if he is deserving, rank as well. Permission is hereby given to people of every rank from the most eminent even to the cultivators.”

Third, state offices were ordered to treat denunciations very carefully and to assist delators. The newly formed courts of appeal were directed to accept for processing cases not only from denunciations by fiscals, but “even from someone who is not a fiscal and reports on somebody.”

The principle of denunciation from anyone was repeatedly confirmed, “from the most eminent even to the cultivators.” Through denunciation anyone—bondaged peasant, slave, relative, neighbor, and so forth—could reckon on snatching a large sum to improve his own position substantially.

Fourth, the institution of fiscality in the narrow (state) and broad (public) sense created an atmosphere of impunity for false denunciations. Although formally a false denunciation was prosecuted by law, the law did not relate to the fiscals or to their voluntary assistants who made mistakes.

It should not be thought that denunciation was the delator’s voluntary doing. As had been the case in the preceding epoch, failure to denounce remained one of the gravest crimes.

Everybody was obligated under threat of punishment to report about a completed or a contemplated crime. This was demonstrated quite clearly in the legislation cited earlier concerning priests’ violation of the secrecy of confession. The priest who did not report a parishioner could be subjected to capital punishment. It appears that such a law became the apogee of the culture of denunciation, no longer leaving a single secret corner in a person’s life or soul.

The roots of the institution of denunciation and fiscality therefore reached back to the period preceding Peter, but under him sprouted extraordinarily luxuriant growth. This blossoming of denunciation was justified morally inasmuch as all means were permitted within the framework of the “regulated” state if the purpose was the good of all subjects and the populace.

The reader might have certain associations with the culture of denunciation that flourished after 1917, when the slogan hurled by Stalin’s People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs—“Every citizen is a collaborator of the NKVD”—did not seem so fantastic. One also recalls the fact that only recently has the review of anonymous letters been abolished, and that in current criminal legislation responsibility is envisaged for failure to report about thirty-one forms of crime, that figure including some not regarded as grave. Current jurists consider that there can be no discrepancy between law and morality and that denunciation, firmly associated with immoral conduct, ought to be excluded from legislation.

The creation of a statewide police system and the introduction of new principles of social interaction are most distinctively expressed in the phenomenon of Petersburg, the city conceived as the “regular” capital of the “regular” state, as an exemplary city. It is really no accident that the type of building in Petersburg and its architecture were later copied in the building of more than two hundred provincial towns of eighteenth-century Russia.

Petersburg was not thought of as the capital at first. A city-fortress on the first ebb of conquered land, Petersburg defended the tsar’s new possessions. But over the years the tsar devoted more and more attention to it. He linked it not merely to his own successes in war—Petersburg was becoming a notion, a symbol of everything new that had gone into the concept of the reforms. Peter built his own city like a ship, laying its keel upon principles of town building and architecture new to Russia. Seizing land from the enemy and marshes for his own town that contrasted markedly from the old capital, he loved it the same way that he hated Moscow, which vexed him by its architecture, people, and customs, and which teemed with unpleasant and terrifying memories. There was none of that here, in a land of new buildings, full of the freedom of creativity, which did not limit the tsar in any way. Just as a father is enthralled by the insignificant successes of his own child that are invisible to the world, so Peter was moved by the streets bordered by puny little trees that grew in the Summer Garden. “Paradise”—that’s the term the tsar often used in letters referring to his own city, feasting his eyes on its creation, “like a child that is growing into beauty.”

For Peter it was natural to identify ideas of the new with the ideas of the regular, as new ideas were brought into a system via different principles than before. Dreams of a world of regularity were supposed to be embodied on the banks of the Neva. Therefore the tsar devoted great attention to regulating the construction of Petersburg and the life of its residents. This regulation was detailed and intrusive.

As we know, at first the city was built spontaneously; primary attention was devoted to defense and to constructing its citadels. But during
the decade from 1710 onward construction took on a planned character, with the most consistently new principles starting to be implemented on Vasil'evsky Island. Here, according to Peter's concept, was to be the city's center, built the way that all of Petersburg and all other cities would be built.

On Vasil'evsky Island completely planned buildings according to the approved projects of "exemplary" type houses were first erected.

A decree strictly enjoined all landowners to build only on Vasil'evsky Island, and to build masonry buildings of a size corresponding to the number of households in the lords' possessions. Those reluctant to settle on the subsequently celebrated island risked a lot: "And if someone even after this announcement will not take these places and build their houses according to the decree: those will be severely punished according to His Tsarist Majesty's decree as indemnifiers of the decree."28

But those who began building were also supposed to fulfill strictly all standards of building "according to architecture," that is, according to the plan. Otherwise everything could be razed. In 1721 it was ordered to build stone houses not only in a line but also compactly in the form of peculiar barracks. Peter considered that by this means one might economize on a great deal of scarce stone.

Let's look at one more decree. In the spring of 1718, many substantial residents of Petersburg "for the novelty of this place people of various ranks are given at no cost fully equipped sailing and oared craft, with orders that each will own them forever." All the owners of small craft were obliged every Sunday at a special signal to proceed to a designated place and to engage in exercises under sail. It was strictly ordered beforehand that those who failed to appear for these review-excursions more than twice per month would be fined, as would those who went home from the "exercises" without permission.

Both decrees are quite remarkable and even somehow linked together, although one concerned the necessary conservation of building materials, whereas the other instructed the city's residents in the use of sailing and oared river craft. But this did not exhaust the decrees' meaning. They contain the realization of the reformer's great dream. As if looking at his city through the years, the tsar saw its compact uniform buildings similar to those of western European cities. Before Peter's thoughtful gaze arose the multicolored façades of the houses of his beloved Amsterdam standing in a solid wall and reflected in the still waters of the canals on which stylishly dressed residents play every Sunday on yachts and small boats to the sounds of music. Indeed it is no accident that Peter had ordained: "All canals and the streets on both sides of them are to be in breadth as against the Herengracht in Amsterdam."29

"The police is the soul of the citizenry"

Probably this was the way that Peter wished to see his "New Amsterdam," in the name of which he built, rebuilt, razed, compelled, and expedited. But Petersburg was not Amsterdam, and its inhabitants had almost all been sent there from the depths of Russia by the tsar's decree (if not exiled, for under Peter it is well known that Petersburg was a place of hard labor for criminals). Not all Petersburgers were fated to be immediately inspired by the tsar's dreams and sympathies, and to many it probably seemed very strange to build one's house up against a neighbor's house on the huge marshy desert of Vasil'evsky Island, built in a style so unlike that of the traditional Russian dwellings in which their forefathers had been born. Equally strange, accustomed as they were to the chaotic and in itself convenient building of Russian towns, would have seemed houses built in one line along the canals then feverishly under construction and the channels of which, because of the irregular waters, quickly turned into foul-smelling swamps.

Therefore, the plethora of Peter's wrathful decrees stigmatizing the disobedient seems natural.

By decrees "under heavy fine" were laid down the dimensions of chimneys, the form of roofs, the placement of fences and stables on the lot, the building material and its coloring, the width of bridges, the order of digging ponds and their dimensions, the installation of "castrion balusters with iron poles," turnstiles served by sentries from the townspeople, who may have a bathhouse and who may not, the depth of piling, the order of pasturing livestock, and many other requirements.

At the same time it is important to note that Peter's numerous decrees regulating the life of Petersburg give hardly any reasons why the residents' life must be this way and not some other. It must not be forgotten that explicit justification of the prescribed was characteristic of Peter's "training" legislation as a whole. Here, however, in a sphere so directly affecting every person we find none.

We shall begin with the fact that the removal of the capital to the banks of the Neva is not explained at all. Furthermore, it is not known which year the Petersburg period of history began. One may provisionally consider it to be 1713, when the court and the higher government institutions transferred to Petersburg. The wholesale resettlement of nobles, merchants, and craftsmen to the new city was not explained in any way. No reason was given for shifting the center of the city to Vasil'evsky Island. The year 1724 began with a decree about completing the transfer of all nobles who had been building houses in other regions of the city in the course of 1725. "And if anyone's house will not be finished in 1726," the tsar-transformer threatened, "from such violators is to be taken by decree half of their hamlets irrevocably, actually it
will be for brick and plaster, and reports are to be given to the Policemaster Chancery so as to certify that it is true." Concurrently those "who in 1725 do not more" were forewarned, "and from them all their houses will be torn down, but they too, the householders, will themselves be sent forcibly to live on Vasil'evsky Island in rude huts." 30

Imagine yourself for a minute, reader, in the place of a person obediently fulfilling the ruler's will who moved to the marshy "Paradise." With much labor and huge expense he built a house "according to architecture" somewhere on the city's Moscow or Petersburg side. Whether every stone had to be hauled over dozens of versts. He settled into it and turned over a new leaf, adapting to the new conditions that were similar to exile, when suddenly they read him a decree about resettling on Vasil'evsky Island, according to the ruler's will. And similar decrees, like snow on the head, often fell on the inhabitants of the new and also of the old capital and of the country's other towns.

With unbelievable effort the city was created. It was not like Russia's other cities; it was not just regular, but even military. The military element often came to the forefront. The assertion of historian V.V. Lapin does not seem especially exaggerated that in the Russia of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was not the army that was under the state, but the state that was under the army, that the capital of the Russian Empire would look like a desert if the buildings, fortifications, and monuments linked in one way or another with the army, military affairs, and the successes of Russian arms had suddenly been withdrawn from it.

In fact, let's look around: the Peter and Paul Fortress and the Admiralty, the General Staff and the Staff of the Guards corps, the Field of Mars and the War-Campaign Chancery, the Alexandreine and Roslavl columns, the Rumiantsev Obelisk, the barracks of the Horse Guards, the Pavlovsk and many other regiments, the first, second, and third Naval Cadet Corps, the Military-Medical Academy and the Hospital of the Finland regiment, New Holland, the Arsenal, the Guardhouse on Haymarket Square, the monuments to Suworov, Kutuzov, and Barclay de Tolly, the St. Nicholas of the Sea, Preobrazhensky, and Izmailovsky cathedrals—all these are only the more costly of Petersburg's hundreds of monuments as the empire's military capital.

"Regularity" and the military element set into the idea of Peter's city, it might seem, ought to have conferred the weight of the barracks, the despondency of the dusty parade ground, and the tedium of endless monotonous lines. But this did not happen. Built on a marsh by a wave of the tsarist hand, it bore the stamp of illusion, the lightness of a phantom, a mirage, the Northern Lights that had visited the city earlier.

"The police is the soul of the citizenry" 31

Almost at once, however, this gave birth to the somber, phantomlike folklore that stems, in the words of Aleksei Tolstoi, from that same Petrine clerk who glimpsed a nightmare on a dark staircase and called out in a tavern: "Petersburg is to be empty!"

"Since then, probably, it has been believed that Petersburg is unclean. At one time witnesses saw how the Devil drove along a street of Vasil'evsky Island in a cab. Another time at midnight amid a storm and high water the bronze emperor tore himself away from the granite boulder and galloped through the streets. And once a privy councilor passing by in a carriage was accosted by a corpse—a dead official—who pressed his face to the glass."

Also important is another factor in the history of Petersburg—the "regular" city. The people and their life, memories, and feelings enlivened the layout of the Petrine plans and made the city alive, memorable, many-sided. The despondent lines stretching from water to water became lifelines.

Oh, you lines!
In you has remained the memory of Petrine Petersburg.
The parallel lines were once laid out by Peter. And some of them came to be enclosed with granite, others with low fences of stone, still others with fences of wood. Peter's line turned into the line of a later age: the rounded one of Catherine, the regular ranks of colonnades.

Left among the colossi were small Petrine houses: here a timbered one, there a green one, there a blue, single-storied one, with the bright red sign "Dinners Served." Sundry odors hit you right in the nose: the smell of sea salt, of herring, of hawser, of leather jacket and of pipe, and nautical tarpaulin.

Oh, lines!
How they have changed: how grim days have changed them!

One poet (Andrei Belyi) is echoed by another (Joseph Brodsky):

Neither country nor graveyard
Do I wish to choose.
To Vasil'evsky Island
I shall come to die.
Thy dark-blue façade
I shall not find in the dark.
Between faded lines
I shall fall on the aspault..."