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Introduction

The Russian Empire in the eighteenth century

A new European power

In the eighteenth century Russia was a newcomer to the familiar concert of European nations, an exciting or worrying outsider among the established powers. In 1703 Tsar Peter Alekseevich, Peter I, the Great, founded a new city, St Petersburg, at the eastern end of the Baltic Sea. Thereby, in the famous words of Russia's national poet Aleksandr Pushkin, he 'chopped a window through to Europe'.[1] Rus', medieval Muscovite Russia, unified only in the fifteenth century under Grand Prince Ivan III, had developed as a successor state of the Mongol ('Tatar') empire of Chinggis Khan, part of the political configuration of the steppe lands of Eastern Europe and Central Asia: it conducted relations with Lithuania and Baltic powers, but played little active part in broader European affairs.[2] In the sixteenth century Tsar Ivan IV, 'the Terrible', turned his attention to the west, and embarked on a campaign to seize control of Livonia, the eastern littoral of the Baltic. At the same time he welcomed foreign merchants – the English Muscovy Company, followed shortly by the Dutch – to engage in trade with Russia: their route lay through the new port of Archangel on the northerly ice-prone White Sea. However, the long Livonian War (1555–83) against the powerful Poles and Swedes ended in defeat for the Russians, and further warfare against Sweden and Poland culminated in the 1617 Treaty of Stolbovo and the 1618 Truce of Deulino, which shut Muscovy off from direct access to the Baltic for a century.

Peter's foundation of a new fortress, city and port on the western edge of the Muscovite state was therefore a statement of intent. It renewed

Ivan IV's westward advance (already initially re-begun under Peter's father) and announced new visions: the Tsar's intention to assert the might of his realm against long-standing opponents and make Russia a greater power; his love of the sea and wish to make Russia a maritime nation with a seaborne capacity similar to those of the western empires; and his desire to create a great Imperial residence which would rival the principal capitals of Europe – Paris, Vienna, Dresden, London. He had already attempted such a foundation on the Sea of Azov, by the Black Sea in the far south, on territory conquered from the Ottomans, looking south towards the Dardanelles and the Byzantine heritage of Russian Orthodoxy. But his 'Petropolis' at Azov was a costly failure which had to be abandoned in less than two decades.[3]

In 1700 Peter had declared war on Sweden, still the major regional Baltic power, and now founded his new European city on land taken from this enemy. The Great Northern War (1700–21) between Russia and Sweden reversed the results of the Livonian War: Sweden was crushed, the Polish state fell under Russian domination, and the internationally guaranteed Swedish-Russian Treaty of Nystadt (1721) confirmed Russia's status as the dominant Northern power. St Petersburg rapidly became the major Baltic port, replacing Archangel as Russia's gateway to western commerce. Officially declared the country's capital in 1713, it also became in time a significant Imperial residence, with architecture rivalling the great cities of Europe. Tsar Peter took the title of Emperor of All the Russias, the Great, Father of the Fatherland; the Tsardom of Muscovy became the Russian Empire.

The Great Northern War had begun for the Russians with humiliating defeat – they were routed by the Swedes at the battle of Narva in 1700. To achieve final victory over the superb Swedish army led by its brilliant commander, Charles XII, Peter had to mobilise and modernise all his resources. The years of his effective reign (1689–1725) have been described as 'the Petrine revolution'.[4] Change was pushed through across the board – not only military and naval organisation and economic innovation, but the structure of government and finances, the running of political and religious affairs, the material, social and personal culture of the Russian nobility, Muscovy's elite service class.

Peter's successors continued his westward turn, and during the eighteenth century Russia became an integral part of the European states system and the international network of alliances. The successes of its armies, its new navy and equally new diplomatic corps enabled continued territorial expansion. The development of its economy and opening up of its natural resources swelled its international trade. Britain became its chief partner and customer: it provided invaluable naval stores for the British marine establishment and indispensable raw materials for the British

industrial revolution; east coast ports like Hull prospered in the Baltic trade, in which Russia was now the principal exporter. 'Russian bar iron, hemp, flax, linen, timber and other products became crucial to Britain's domestic economy, its re-export trade, and its ability to maintain a merchant marine and navy capable of defending its overseas commitments.'[5]

Russia's international standing was transformed – although it took half a century for Peter's new Imperial claims and title to be diplomatically accepted. Where Muscovite rulers had sought their brides principally among the indigenous Russian nobility, Imperial spouses were sought, and increasingly found, among the aristocratic and reigning houses of Europe. Under Empress Catherine II (originally a German princess, ruled 1762–96), Russia finally became established as one of the great powers. As guarantor of the Prusso-Austrian Treaty of Teschen (1779), which ended the War of the Bavarian Succession, Catherine was the arbiter of European affairs; her Turkish wars confirmed the military decline of the once mighty Ottoman Empire; and her Armed Neutrality of 1780 prescribed the law of the sea to the great British navy. Under her grandson, Emperor Alexander I (ruled 1801–25), Russia confronted and destroyed the Grande Armée of Napoleon Bonaparte, conqueror of most of the rest of Europe and the greatest general of his day: in 1815 Russia became the premier European land power, as Britain was the first power at sea.

Peter the Great could reshape eighteenth-century Russia because his power as autocratic ruler was theoretically unlimited, and in practice depended only on the collaboration of a sufficient body of dependent servitors. The one thing that remained unchanged by the 'Petrine revolution' was the socio-political system, and with it the dynamics of Russian internal power. The diplomat F. C. Weber's well-known account of Petrine and post-Petrine Russia, *Das veränderte Russland* ('Russia transformed', 1721–40; English version *The Present State of Russia*), detailed an astonishing renewal, but a transformation built upon unconstrained monarchical authority, noble prerogative and the serf status of the majority peasant population. It was a polity in which persons were much more important than institutions.

Patronage and projects

In eighteenth-century Europe public and political life was very much dominated by patronage, the ability of great families and powerful individuals to command wealth, resources and appointments, and consequently to gain and hold the loyalty of clients. This was true of Georgian Britain and still more so of Imperial Russia. Peter the Great

introduced new political and administrative institutions, but failed to bring system, accountability and integrity to Russian public life: personal standing and connections remained decisive criteria.

The leading Russian aristocratic families were linked and divided by marriage and blood ties, by their ascendancy in different parts of the country, and by their relationships with the arenas of power: the Tsar's person and the Court, the armed forces and the civil service.[6] Protection and patronage were essential to the working of the polity. As Geoffrey Hosking observed in his perceptive study of the patronage phenomenon, state administration at all levels in Russia depended on officials who could largely act with impunity and were rarely called to answer for their actions: '[L]ocal officials exercised power over the whole range of functions, they constantly flouted laws and official instructions, and they implemented commands from above only in so far as they coincided with personal interest.' Consequently the ability to buy or obtain the protection of officials or of superiors, of a great lord or of the ruler, was critical for success or failure on both the local and the national stage; and the ruler and the government acquiesced in or made use of this system of relationships because the state lacked resources and capacity to operate in any other way.

At the upper levels of the social hierarchy, patronage existed in its purest form.

> Nobles placed in the top four ranks had easy access to the court, and the right of personal audience with the emperor. They were thus able to tap the greatest source of wealth and benefits within the empire …. Younger nobles, and those lower down the ranks, would look to them for jobs and material benefits, and for the opportunity to begin creating their own subordinate networks of clients.[7]

This situation was mirrored throughout the state service. Susanne Schattenberg's anthropological study of promotion practices in the Russian provinces in the early nineteenth century emphasises the critical importance of patronage relationships in all areas. According to Schattenberg, the patron–client network of personal loyalties both in everyday life and in practices of political power functioned on the basis of a mutually binding reciprocal system of gifting and receiving gifts. Those participating in the network were of course familiar with such abstract norms and concepts as law, legislation, *esprit de corps*, educational qualifications and professional competence, but none of these norms were constitutive notions for contemporary actors, who had their own clear sense of honour and of obligation within the network. Consequently,

Schattenberg concludes, they remain unhelpful for historiographical description and analysis, and it would be misleading now to describe these patron–client networks and practices in terms of 'incompetence', 'violations', 'corruption', 'arbitrary rule' or 'lawlessness'.[8] At the same time, the 'gift economy' left the population largely at the mercy of the network (one governor cautioned his subordinates: 'Take, but don't skin people' [*berite, no ne derite*]), and gave little incentive for efficient work unless demanded by the patron: not surprisingly, therefore, contemporary rulers and foreign observers could and did experience such behaviour as belonging in these categories. Thus, in the absence of strong state institutions and countervailing political powers, Russian social and political relations were especially dependent upon personal interactions. Samuel Bentham's warm relations with Catherine's favourite Prince Potëmkin and later with the influential Vorontsov family, and Jeremy Bentham's critical lack of an effective advocate in the higher ranks of Russian society, were typical reflections of this situation.

A related feature of the 'patronage society' was the phenomenon of the 'projector'. 'Projectors' might nowadays be called entrepreneurs or inventors, and their 'project' probably a start-up enterprise. A 'projector' in eighteenth-century terms was a person who had a good idea or bold plan for the development of society or for the advancement of their own and others' wealth; and such people necessarily looked for support, protection and investment, which were to be found especially among the great and the good of the ruling elite. The early modern period was a heyday for projectors across Europe. In a pamphlet, *An Essay upon Projects*, published in 1697 – the year of Peter the Great's famous and seminal Grand Embassy to western Europe – the author and publicist Daniel Defoe declared his own time to be the age of projects: 'Necessity, which is allow'd to be the Mother of Invention, has so violently agitated the Wits of men at this time, that it seems not at all improper, by way of distinction, to call it, *The Projecting Age*.' Projects, as Defoe described them, were ideas, plans and 'schemes' relating to public and economic affairs which claimed to further the public good: 'Projects of the nature I treat about, are doubtless in general of publick Advantage, as they tend to Improvement of Trade, and Employment of the Poor, and the Circulation and Increase of the publick Stock of the Kingdom.'[9]

The needs and policies of European states, especially of absolutist regimes, during the long-eighteenth-century Age of Enlightenment encouraged rational enquiry and planning by governments in order to produce a 'well-ordered state' in which all areas of human life functioned together harmoniously to the benefit of both ruler and subjects.[10] At the

same time, governmental expertise and agency were frequently insufficient to create and organise or to monitor new bodies and enterprises, or these could arise outside of government control: training which might produce qualified and acknowledged specialists was rare in many fields, due diligence and corroborative research and development were in short supply. State authorities and well-resourced individuals were therefore very ready to receive, and to give support to, individual thinkers and entrepreneurs who could convince them of the validity and value of new plans and concepts. Some were successful, others failed dismally. The early eighteenth century saw several notorious cases of beguiling but unsound projects which gained huge public interest before the bubble burst, causing great loss and distress. John Law's Mississippi Company and the Banque Générale (later Banque Royale) in France (1716–20) and the South Sea Company and accompanying Bubble (1720) in Britain are two famous examples – both were able to secure royal support for their projects – but such ventures on a lesser scale were commonplace across Europe. Consequently projectors often got a bad name. Samuel Johnson in his great *Dictionary* of 1755 gave two definitions of this social type: a neutral, general one, 'one who forms schemes and designs', and a pejorative one: 'one who forms wild impracticable schemes'. Jeremy Bentham in his *Defence of Usury*, written in Russia in 1787, undertook to make the case for honest and useful projectors against the condemnation of 'undertakers' which Adam Smith had expressed in the *Wealth of Nations*.[11] At the same time Samuel Bentham, in a letter drafted to William Pitt the Younger in 1787, described himself as a projector.[12]

The new Petrine Russian Empire was a fertile breeding ground for projects. In order to carry out his 'revolution' and achieve the transformation (or 'transfiguration'[13]) of his country, Peter I sought out and tried to inculcate best international practice. One of the first steps in this was his Grand Embassy of 1697–8, undertaken for diplomatic purposes but also providing the young Tsar with transformational experience of more advanced societies and economies. He looked abroad, primarily to the Protestant states of northern Europe – the Dutch Republic, Sweden, Britain, German lands – but also to France and the Italian states, for military and naval expertise, technical know-how, political theory, administrative techniques, governmental organisation, scholarship and law, skills in arts and architecture …. He was also very ready to recruit individual specialists who bore this knowledge. These might be established authorities in their field, technical specialists of proven experience and ability, or unknown but persuasive adventurers. Such recruitment was in any case common practice at the time: this was

a period across Europe of international movement and exchange of persons, ideas and expertise. The Swiss Leonhard Euler (1707–83), for example, one of the greatest mathematicians of his day, divided his adult career between the Academies of Sciences at Berlin and St Petersburg (both of them recently founded institutions). The British iron-master and cannon-founder Charles Gascoigne, long-time director of the great Scottish metallurgical works of Carron Company at Falkirk, found his way to a second career in Russia (1786–1806), but Britain's premier gun-making plant, the Royal Foundry at Woolwich, had shortly before been placed under foreign, Dutch, management.[14]

Peter and his successors on the Imperial Russian throne made the most of such possibilities. They sought out foreign specialists particularly in new areas of state activity, such as Peter's reorganised armed forces or his mining industry. Before the crash of John Law's French financial system, Peter I was eager to recruit him for Russia.[15] But the Russian rulers were also open to ideas and proposals presented by anyone, native or foreign, who could catch a receptive authoritative ear; and recent scholarship has emphasised that many Petrine reforms were driven less by the Tsar himself than by projectors working for him.[16] In Britain on his Grand Embassy, with the help of the British establishment Peter engaged Henry Farquharson, Liddel mathematical tutor at Marischal College, Aberdeen, to head a planned new Navigation School in Moscow; but on arrival in Moscow Farquharson was forgotten until Peter's 'fixer' and fund-raiser Aleksei Kurbatov involved himself in the setting up of the School. In 1716 Farquharson moved to St Petersburg as professor in a new Naval Academy, successor to his Navigation School, whose founder and first director was a plausible adventurer, the self-styled nobleman Baron de Saint-Hilaire, who had left a trail of events across Europe.[17]

Russia became an El Dorado for those seeking their fortune; a later eighteenth-century observer, August von Schlözer, who worked in Russia in the 1760s, observed of Catherine II that with her accession 'there began a golden age for the composers of projects'. Russians competed with foreigners: according to Schlözer, the greatest projector of the Catherinian age was Count I. I. Betskoi, Catherine's favourite expert on child-rearing and education, introducer of new schools and foundling homes.[18] During the eighteenth century Russian society, economy, armed forces, culture and science evolved rapidly, and both specialists and projectors played a considerable role. Medical doctors were almost all foreign, many of them Scottish. Foreign architects were prominent in the building of the new capital. The Imperial Russian navy became replete with British officers, Russian noble youth was taught by more and less

competent French and German teachers and tutors …. The country became host to considerable expatriate communities, from Britain, France, the Germanies, Italy, Switzerland and elsewhere.

The British expatriate community

This was the world which Samuel Bentham entered when he arrived in Russia in 1780, only 55 years after the death of Peter I. The British community in St Petersburg was almost as old as the capital itself. The heyday of the 'British Factory' there was the reign of Catherine II, when wealthy British merchants and other expatriates increasingly settled on the 'English Line', which ran along the south bank of the Great Neva river from what is now Senate Square. Later, under Alexander I, this street, which also housed the capital's Anglican church, was formally renamed the 'English Embankment' (*Angliiskaia naberezhnaia*), a name returned to it in 1994 in honour of the state visit of Queen Elizabeth II. Ironically, by the time of its renaming in the new (nineteenth) century it was already becoming increasingly Russian in character, as Russian nobles moving into the fashionable district steadily replaced the former British house-owners.

The dominant foreign cultural presence in eighteenth-century Russia was French – French language and literature and French fashions were the norm among the noble elite, and many French specialists (and economic migrants, political émigrés and adventurers) found careers in the Empire, even before the émigré wave which accompanied the French Revolution.[19] Germans were more numerous, well represented in trade and crafts and in the business community, and among academics and teachers.[20] The British were firstly merchants – successors of the pioneer Muscovy Company – but also professionals, tradesmen and specialists of all sorts. The British Factory in St Petersburg under Catherine II has been fully described by Anthony Cross;[21] much of what he illustrates still held good in the reign of the Empress's grandson. The British community had its own church, and successive chaplains to the British Factory were well received in St Petersburg society, to which they made contributions of their own. The 'English Inn' run by the Scotsman Joseph Fawell, besides providing accommodation for British (and other) travellers, offered what amounted to a travel agency and passport service. There was a subscription library, English shops, and several English coffee houses.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a period of considerable anglophilia in Russia, which expressed itself in a variety of fields and forms.[22] If French language and literary culture were dominant

in elite society, the 'English shops' capitalised on the vogue among the upper classes for material things produced in Britain. A huge range of items was imported from the British Isles: an English traveller even opined in 1800 that 'whatever [the Russians] possess useful or estimable comes to them from England. Books, maps, prints, furniture, clothing, hardware of all kinds, horses, carriages, hats, leather, medicine, almost every article of convenience, comfort or luxury, must be derived from England, or it is of no estimation.'[23] Horse-racing was increasingly popular among the nobility, and encouraged the importation of British horses, jockeys and stable staff.[24] The English landscape garden style became fashionable under Catherine, and her son Paul and his consort reproduced it at their palace of Pavlovsk, which on his assassination (1801) became the dower house of his widow Maria Fëdorovna; many nobles followed suit. The building of Pavlovsk was begun by Catherine's Scottish architect Charles Cameron, one of many British architects, designers and painters who made Russian careers or successful visits to Russia at the time.

British agriculture also enjoyed great popularity. The Benthams' friend and former chaplain to the Russian embassy in London A. A. Samborskii was a passionate and life-long advocate of English agricultural methods and with government support had sought to set up an agricultural school in Russia, which however did not materialise; another Russian friend, Admiral Nikolai Mordvinov, also a great admirer, had an English-style farm and a training school – equally unsuccessful – created at Nikolaev on the Black Sea where he was stationed. These ill successes reflected the difficulties facing Russian noble innovators in farming, with very different climatic and social conditions and the difficulty and expense of bringing new machinery and methods into a hidebound native setting.[25] Tsar Alexander I was himself convinced of the value of English farming methods, and had a farm established 'in Imitation of that of His Majesty the King of England', run by an Englishman.

When the Tsar wanted a specialist to drain marshland near St Petersburg, he turned again to England and in 1817 engaged the Quaker Daniel Wheeler, who with his family successfully brought 3,000 acres of swampland into cultivation.[26] Alexander's approach to the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) reflected his growing religious engagement; in 1812 he had had a conversion experience to a form of supradenominational mystical Christian piety, which would have a significant effect upon his later policies. As a result he was open to new ideas of ecumenism and philanthropy: he sponsored the Russian Bible Society (1813), to translate and distribute the Scriptures in Russia, and the Society for the Care of Prisons (1819), seeking prison improvement

and penal reform, both deriving from recent philanthropic initiatives by British evangelicals, including the contemporary work of Elizabeth Fry in Newgate Prison. The Quaker philanthropist William Allen, invited to Russia in 1818 by Alexander I after meeting him on his visit to England in 1814, was able to further the cause in Russia of William Lancaster's monitorial system of education: with the Tsar's approval, in 1819 a 'Free Society for the Foundation of Schools of Mutual Instruction' (*Vol'noe Obshchestvo Uchrezhdeniia Uchilishch Vzaimnogo Obucheniia*) was created, following the British and Foreign Schools Society in which Allen was a leading light.[27] In the period 1818–28 schools on the 'British' or Lancasterian monitorial model were set up across the Russian Empire. They were also used in the Russian navy and army, including in the occupation corps in post-Napoleonic France commanded by Samuel Bentham's friend Count M. S. Vorontsov: the Russian Lancasterian school at Maubeuge was visited in 1818 by Alexander, two of his brothers and the King of Prussia, who were all greatly impressed.[28] Allen was a friend of Jeremy Bentham, who also supported the Lancasterian system. In 1816 Bentham drew up detailed proposals for a 'Chrestomathic Day School', with an extensive curriculum, based essentially on Lancaster's 'New System of Instruction' and 'the Scholar-Teacher Principle' of employing suitably able pupils as unpaid teachers. Bentham thought that his project had international application: 'in doing what I have done, I consider myself as being at work not less for *Russia* and *Poland*, than for London'.[29]

British traditions in politics and law also excited Russian interest. Catherine had studied William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (4 vols, 1765–9) and had his first volume translated by Semën Desnitskii, Professor of Law at Moscow University during her reign; Desnitskii had sat at the feet of Adam Smith as a student at Glasgow University, and was a disciple.[30] During Alexander I's visit to London in 1814 the Tsar visited Parliament and expressed himself very positively about the British parliamentary system. One observer recorded Alexander's admiration 'for the English constitution, and particularly that part of it called the Opposition, which he thought a very fine institution', while another noted on the same subject: 'He said the Opposition was a glass in which Sovereigns should see themselves, and that when he got back he would organise an *Opposition in Russia.* This Tsar is certainly not wise.'[31] Despite Alexander's naivety in respect of the British system, he was at this time actively concerned with constitutional questions at home and abroad, a topic which engaged him throughout his reign. Perhaps it was this preoccupation which decided Oxford University in 1814 to present him (and the King of Prussia) with an honorary doctorate in civil law.[32]

The Tsar's triumphal progress through Britain did not, however, have much actual bearing on the process of law-making in Russia. The Russian legal tradition was fundamentally different from that in Britain:[33] it had been shaped by the country's Orthodox heritage and its political regime, which diverged sharply from those of Anglican, Catholic and Lutheran Europe. As part of the Orthodox Christian world, the Russian Empire lacked an established tradition of formal higher education and the long history and veneration of legal learning and Roman law that went with it in Western Christendom. In Orthodox tradition monasteries remained the strongholds of learning. When Peter I came to the throne Muscovy had many monasteries, but only one secular school, the Slavonic-Greek-Latin Academy chartered by Tsar Fëdor Alekseevich in 1682;[34] it had no university. Peter's new Academy of Sciences (1726) included an 'Academic University', but this never flourished; the first effective Russian university was the University of Moscow, founded in 1755, with three initial faculties of medicine, philosophy and law. The lack of educational facilities reflected the upper classes' traditional attitude to formal education: levels of education, and even literacy, were low among the service elite. A requirement of university education or its equivalent for senior civil service ranks was introduced only in 1809, after Alexander I's opening of several new universities. Judicial procedure was not supported by institutional structures or traditions, before 1755 there was no well-established legal profession nor formal legal training, and legal knowledge was largely confined to a small number of chancellery clerks.

Russian legal tradition was also fundamentally shaped by the nature of 'autocratic' government. The Muscovite ruler, although advised by his boyars, was the sole source of law: he both issued and sanctioned legislation, and stood above it. Law was declared in his name, but he could change or make exceptions to it as he chose and could issue whatever decrees seemed useful to him; Peter I borrowed extensively from foreign sources which reflected quite different social realities. Any attempt by a subject, in whatever capacity, to refer to precedent or to interpret laws (however inexact or poorly applicable they might be) was likely to be regarded as an infringement of the autocratic prerogative. Judges were officially expected simply to apply the laws as written. In this system the executive was pre-eminent, there was no division of powers, and the judicial function was not held in high regard. The practical implementation of the tsar's decrees and the governance of the country depended upon the Muscovite service classes, which from Peter I's time

were unified and identified as the Russian nobility. Provincial administration was weak, venal, ill-trained and equipped, and rarely held to account; as Susanne Schattenberg argued, it seldom thought in terms of integrity, duty or efficiency. Consequently local governors and officials could not or did not keep up with new legislation, and could disregard or abuse laws with relative impunity. Noble landowners had little interest in going against the local governor, or in obeying laws which did not suit them, while their very extensive manorial jurisdiction over their peasants meant that large parts of the population were essentially excluded from state law. The traditional role of the nobility had been military: they had formed the basis of the Muscovite army, and noble attitudes reflected this well into the nineteenth century. In the Imperial period military rank habitually enjoyed greater prestige than civilian rank, and many of those who held senior posts in the civilian Imperial administration, including as judges in the courts, had spent time and gained state rank in the armed forces, and lacked any specialist training. Eighteenth-century Russian courts, understaffed, underpaid, corrupt, run essentially by amateur noble judges and professional non-noble clerks, were notoriously slow, capricious and venal.

> In these circumstances, [Russian] law was not a complex of mutually binding rights and obligations, but took the form of command from above, reinforced by peer pressure. … But since the state lacked the power to enforce its commands to the letter, local officials could interpret them more or less at will. Hence the crying abuses of power which fill the pages of most memoirs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. To obtain redress against such abuses was virtually impossible. … As Catherine II complained, 'Justice is sold to the highest bidder, and no use is made of the laws except where they benefit the most powerful.'[35]

In 1783 Samuel Bentham, hopeful of finding private Russian land- and industry-owners whose plants he might profitably improve, came to realise the futility of contractual relations in Russia: 'the absolute impossibility of tying down by any contract … any person in a country where power and protection overrule justice, and where, however good the laws may be, there is not one but what means are to be found of evading it.'[36] Catherine continued her predecessors' attempts to make Russian law and administration more honest and effective, but with meagre results. Under her successors the situation did not improve greatly. Twenty years later, in 1803, Jeremy Bentham's collaborator Etienne Dumont wrote from

St Petersburg, commenting on the legal establishment, 'If you knew what an advocate – or a man of law – is here, you would blush for the honour of the profession! … And the judges! In England you could have no notion of the state of things.'[37] Only with the legal reforms of 1864 did Russia acquire a reasonably functional judicial system.

Russian laws themselves were also in need of revision. Medieval Russia had seen the production of several princely law codes, of which Russian Justice (*Russkaia Pravda*), dating from the twelfth century, was the most important, until replaced by the first Court Handbook (*Sudebnik*) of 1497: other Handbooks followed. Church and canon law was set out in the Book of the Helmsman (*Kormchaia Kniga*, thirteenth century and later), based on the Byzantine Nomocanon; stipulations laid out in the 'Book of One Hundred Chapters' (*Stoglav*) by a church council of 1551 fuelled religious dissent. The most important early modern civil code was the Assembly or Conciliar Code (*Sobornoe Ulozhenie*), drawn up in 1649 at the behest of Peter I's father Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich and ratified by a national gathering, an Assembly of the Land.[38] This was a distillation of previous law: it drew on earlier collections – the *Sudebnik* of 1550, the Lithuanian Statute of 1588, the Book of the Helmsman – as well as central government legal records, to which were added demands put forward by members of the Assembly. The 1649 Code was a major legal monument: most notably, it completed the process of enserfment of the landlords' peasants. It was also the first legal compendium whose reach extended over the whole empire, and the first printed in Russia; and it remained the basis of Russian law until 1830.

However, already by the reign of Peter I the Assembly Code was becoming inadequate, especially as Peter's radical reforms and numerous new edicts made its provisions increasingly out of date. The situation grew more difficult through the eighteenth century; access to the texts of laws was also problematic. By the time of Alexander's accession,

> Russia was for all practical purposes without a legal code. … Neither officials nor judges possessed authoritative legal texts to guide them in the execution of their duties – a deficiency which encouraged even further the tendencies towards the arbitrary use of power inherent in the Russian political system of the time. Imperial manifestoes, as well as instructions issued by the Senate and the Synod, administrative measures, tariff acts, criminal statutes of various reigns, and many other kinds of legislative and judiciary acts, often contradictory, were lumped together as 'law'. Even the Senate, the highest tribunal and official repository of laws, was

> frequently unable to determine which laws applied to a given situation, while the lower courts lacked the basic means of rendering justice. This … violated the basic canon of the monarchical ideal of the time, which held that true royal authority rested on law.[39]

Peter I was aware of the inadequacies of his country's legal system. He had some success in reforming church and military law, and was an avid collector of foreign legal documentation.[40] But larger improvement evaded him. He established a series of commissions (1700, 1714, 1720) intended to modernise and codify the civil and criminal law, a task which proved beyond their capacity. Peter's unsuccessful codification commissions were followed during the eighteenth century by six more, none of which succeeded in their task. Those of 1760 and 1767 involved representatives of different social classes, as had the Assembly of the Land in 1649. The 1760 Commission had a limited constituency, but for the famous 1767 Commission Catherine II summoned a nationally representative body (except for clergy and for servile peasants, a majority of the population). Catherine composed a manual of first principles to guide her Commission, largely based on ideas of leading foreign thinkers of the day, especially Montesquieu, but forming a political credo for the neophyte Empress, expressing her early views on the desirable forms of monarchy, government and society: *Instruction (Nakaz) Given to the Commission for the Composition of a Project of a New Law Code* (1767, English translation 1768).[41] Thus charged to draw up a law code from abstract principles, rather than elaborating existing law, the Commission became mired in protracted discussion and was prorogued in 1768 on the outbreak of Catherine's first war with Turkey (1768–74).[42] But it provided the Empress with valuable material for her own later legislative measures; and it was her efforts to reform the law which gained her the sobriquet 'the Great'. The Commission's secretariat continued in existence, paving the way for Emperor Paul's legislative commission of 1797, the ninth.[43] Legal reform was a burning issue for Paul's successor Alexander I on his accession in 1801; he reordered his father's legislative commission within three months of coming to the throne and his commission (the tenth) remained in place throughout his reign. It was the formation of this commission which excited the hopes of Jeremy Bentham.

The Bentham brothers

Jeremy and Samuel, utility, the Panopticon and Foucault

Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) was the eldest son of the prosperous lawyer Jeremiah Bentham. An infant prodigy, he went up to Oxford University at the age of 12 and duly qualified as a lawyer, being admitted to the bar in 1769.[44] He soon found, however, that English common law, based on precedent and judges' rulings, was opaque, abstruse, susceptible to reinterpretation by lawyers, and quite inaccessible to the common man and woman. His first publication was a critique of the magisterial work of William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765–9), the classic exposition and justification of English common law. Jeremy soon gave up legal practice and devoted the rest of his life to writing and theorising about law and law-making. In his search for a practical and moral philosophical principle on which to found a rational and coherent system of legislation he was guided particularly by the liberal theorists of the eighteenth-century continental Enlightenment, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Helvétius and Beccaria, and by British radicals such as Hume and Priestley. Helvétius was especially important: Bentham wrote to a correspondent, 'From [Helvétius] I learnt to look upon the tendency of any institution or pursuit to promote the happiness of society as the sole text and measure of its merit; and to regard the principle of utility as an oracle which if properly consulted would afford the only true solution that could be given to every question of right and wrong.'[45] People, he found, were motivated essentially by pleasure and pain, by pursuit of the pleasant and aversion to the hurtful. In terms of social goals to be sought by rulers and law-makers, this could be translated into the famous formulation of promoting 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' of a population; and priority should therefore be given to utility, the maximising of whatever was useful in pursuing these goals. The idea of utility became Bentham's guiding principle, informing the theory of 'utilitarianism' whose social and legal application he elaborated. Utilitarianism as a doctrine became better known after his death, when it was developed and widely popularised by his protégé and follower John Stuart Mill. The solution to the problems posed by English common law would be a rational, coherent and comprehensive law code based on these principles.

Bentham's political thinking was heavily influenced by contemporary liberal and radical thought, but also by the events of his lifetime. As Linda Colley has recently shown, the period after 1750 saw an ever-increasing and international assortment of codes, constitutions

and constitutional drafts, reflecting the political pressures and instabilities arising from war and revolution: Colley accords a significant place to Bentham in her book, but makes clear that he was only one of many would-be constitution drafters.[46]

Initially in his search for means to formulate law on philosophical principles Jeremy was impressed by the efforts of contemporary 'enlightened' monarchs, notably Catherine II of Russia. In 1789 he was momentarily enthusiastic about the libertarian potential of the French Revolution, but like so many others soon became alarmed at its excesses and their possible ill effects on British society. Accordingly he sought to consolidate the existing order; his espousal of the Panopticon (discussed below) perfectly matched this intention. Bentham initially thought that politicians were generally of good faith and would take steps for the common good as soon as they understood the necessity for them. During the 1790s, however, he became increasingly aware of the self-interest of the governing and ruling elites and the bad faith that accompanied it, what he came to call 'sinister interest' among the political and social establishment. This appears in his 'A picture of the Treasury' and writings on New South Wales of 1801–2, and was confirmed in 1803 when the government rejected his Panopticon project. From 1809 he was calling for radical political reform, including universal adult male suffrage, to ensure a 'democratic ascendancy'. His proposals fell on deaf ears, which drove him to more extreme positions. By the 1820s he had become a republican, admiring especially the legal institutions of the United States of America; he became too the leader of a new radical grouping, later known as 'philosophical radicals', gathered around the *Westminster Review*, which he founded in 1823. Bentham's attempts to participate in Russian law-making fell in the years 1802–5 and 1813–15, and their failure was a significant factor in the evolution of his ideas: the Russian experience became for him a model case of the right and wrong ways to draft a code and the ills of non-democratic government. His attachment to the philosophical basis for codification was fundamental throughout his life: even in his old age a provocative question about historical contexts of legislation could produce an explosion of scornful indignation, and an item in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* for 1830 provoked a vehement if overblown denunciation of 'the Anti-Codification, alias the Historical School of Jurisprudence'.[47]

Throughout his life Jeremy Bentham maintained an intimate relationship with his youngest brother Samuel, nine years his junior. Samuel Bentham (1757–1831) showed such a determined love for the nautical and technical that his father apprenticed him at the age of 14 in

the naval dockyards, but he was able to continue an academic education at the same time, and became a talented naval architect and engineer. He made a successful career as an entrepreneur and inventor in Russia (1780–91), and later (1796–1812) as Inspector-General of Naval Works and Navy Commissioner in the British Admiralty and Navy Board.[48] The brothers' early family life was difficult. Five other siblings died in infancy or childhood, and their mother herself died in 1759. Jeremiah Bentham was a demanding father, and when he remarried in 1766 neither brother warmed to their stepmother; Jeremy positively disliked her. These family relationships may help to explain the bond between the two brothers. Jeremy felt responsibility and almost fatherly affection for his remaining younger sibling and tried in frequent letters to influence his education and his thinking. Samuel responded readily, with engagement and gratitude. Jeremy instilled in him a rational and pragmatic manner of thought and an enthusiasm for innovation, change and reform. Both brothers sought to apply logic, blue-skies thinking and rational analysis to problems of contemporary life, whether ship-building and engineering or law, constitutions and penal reform: Jeremy later observed to a correspondent, 'To the objects of his pursuits [Samuel] bears much the same relation that I do. You will read me in his manner of stating and reasoning.'[49]

The ties between them were exceptionally strong. When at the age of 21 Samuel began to think of pursuing a career abroad, and hesitated between a move to distant India and one to more accessible Russia, Jeremy was deeply worried by the risks involved and desolate at the thought of long separation:

> To Russia we might go together: or if either of us prosper'd ever so little he might send for the other. If you go to India to stay we are separated very probably for ever: at any rate for the best part of our lives. O my Sam, my child, the only child I shall ever have, my only friend, my second self, could you bear to part with me? If you were sure of succeeding there, and of not succeeding anywhere else, I would consent to tear myself in two, and let you go to India, for the sake of yourself and of the world.[50]

The close relationship lasted throughout both men's lives, although Jeremy never married and devoted himself to jurisprudence and philosophy while Samuel became the father of a numerous family.[51] When Samuel went out to Russia in 1779, Jeremy did follow after, spending 22 months there in 1786–7; later, Samuel back in England helped Jeremy to develop designs and machinery for the Panopticon

project and Jeremy took a keen interest in Samuel's British career as Inspector-General of Naval Works, as well as developing a close avuncular relationship with Samuel's surviving son George.

In Russia Samuel prospered, in part because he became a favoured retainer of Prince Grigorii Potëmkin, favourite of Catherine II and the governor of much of southern Russia. Potëmkin gave Samuel charge of his enormous estate in south-west Russia, on the Dnieper at Krichëv, in what is now Belarus. It was here that Jeremy came to visit Samuel. The latter's brief was to prepare shipping on the river and to develop the estate economy; he had a large number of people under his direction, a score of expatriates (mostly British) and many local serf and soldier labourers. He had difficulty disciplining and directing this workforce, and to resolve the situation conceived of a new system of supervision, his subsequently famous Inspection House or Panopticon. This would be a circular building in which those to be supervised would be placed at the circumference. In the centre would be an inspection chamber, from which the inspector could see all that was happening all around. But those at the periphery would be unable to see into the inspection chamber; the inspector would be invisible and they could not know whether or not he was present, thus having to assume that they were under oversight at all times. Samuel received authorisation from Potëmkin to erect a building along these lines and the plans are preserved. But before they could be realised, Potëmkin sold the estate and Samuel was posted south to the naval base at Kherson on the Black Sea to work with the Russian Black Sea fleet at the start of Catherine II's second Turkish war (1787–92). The Krichëv Panopticon was never built.[52]

The exact source for Samuel's new concept has been clouded with uncertainty. Christian Welzbacher pointed out that the basic principle was a simple inversion of a long-established practice of 'optical centring', where students are grouped in a circle around their teacher and their object of study.[53] In much-quoted articles, Simon Werrett has suggested that Samuel derived his idea from its Russian context, the traditions of Catherinian absolutism and Russian Orthodoxy.[54] Werrett's articles have the merit of emphasising the Russian connection of the Panopticon concept; and they are vivid, thought-provoking and a *tour de force* of historical imagination. Werrett makes good use of the insights of Iurii Lotman and Stephen Baer into Russian noble culture. However, in relating these to the Benthams he provides no concrete evidence whatsoever for his thesis, arguing entirely from conjecture, inference and analogy. Moreover, he does not seriously enquire into the Benthams' attitudes to absolutism and Orthodoxy. Recent scholarship has returned to the more

plausible explanation that the Panopticon derived – as Jeremy himself suggested – from Samuel's memories of the Ecole Militaire in Paris, which he had visited in the 1770s.[55]

While Samuel was distracted by other Russian service demands, Jeremy took up the concept and cause of the Panopticon with enthusiasm. Prompted by news from England that transportation was about to start again, and by a competition in the *St James' Chronicle* calling for designs for a new house of correction in Middlesex, he wrote a pamphlet: *Panopticon: or, The inspection-house. Containing the idea of a new principle of construction applicable to any sort of establishment, in which persons of any description are to be kept under inspection* …. It was 'dashed off in high spirits' in rather general terms: Jeremy soon came to see it as merely an 'original rude sketch' and wrote two postscripts which significantly revised the proposal, finally published in 1791.[56] It came at a timely moment in the contemporary British debate on penal policy, the treatment of convicts and the new penal colony of Botany Bay. At this time the revolt of the American colonies had closed off America as a destination for British penal transportees, alternative prison hulks were inadequate, and the British authorities were embarrassed as to what to do with them: the opening of Australia and the creation there of a new penal colony was their solution. (Potëmkin, interested in populating his southern Russian viceroyalty, offered to take such British convicts off HM Government's hands and settle them on the Black Sea; but his plans were blocked by the Russian ambassador to the Court of St James, S. R. Vorontsov.[57]) Jeremy Bentham thought Botany Bay illegal, inefficient and immoral, and proposed a Panopticon prison instead.[58]

However, as the title of his *Panopticon* pamphlet suggests, and contrary to common belief, Jeremy saw the Panopticon principle as applicable to all situations of social disciplining, not only prisons, but other institutions such as workhouses, hospitals and schools. He conceived of it as an essentially benign social innovation, enabling for its inmates rehabilitation, education, social usefulness and ultimately freedom: in fact, in a famous passage he declared it a universal panacea, which could spread a 'new scene of things … over the face of civilized society … – morals reformed, health preserved, industry invigorated, instruction diffused, public burthens lightened, economy seated as it were upon a rock, the gordian knot of the poor-laws not cut but untied – all by a simple idea in architecture'.[59] Nevertheless, he focused his endeavours on its potential for penal purposes, and this laid the foundation for his long campaign (1791–1813) to build a Panopticon prison in Britain, and – on its failure – to obtain compensation. Initially

the government supported the project, but it was finally defeated by practical obstacles and political opposition.[60]

Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon vision, though never realised by him, has proved extraordinarily compelling: as one historian put it, 'When one thinks of nineteenth-century English prison reform, the first thought that usually comes to mind is Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon scheme.'[61] While the idea had significant influence on subsequent prison design, its most powerful modern incarnation has come in the critique of modern penal policy and modern society generally by libertarians and most famously in Michel Foucault's highly influential *Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison* (1975, translated in 1977 as *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison*).[62] Foucault's attack on the Enlightenment as paving the way for the tyrannies of modern Western life and the twentieth century used the Panopticon as a symbol of intended comprehensive state social control. Jeremy Bentham's project moved easily beyond practical prison reform into the utopian vision of social transformation which he had proclaimed in 1787–91: 'a new scene of things spread[ing] itself over the face of civilized society'. Foucault saw such 'panopticism' as the seed of an equally utopian but totalitarian attempt to cripple and mould the independent human spirit: he argued that 'the Panopticon presents us with a cruel, ingenious cage'.[63]

Foucault's thesis is powerful and suggestive, and has attracted great attention, encouraging the emergence of the new branch of social sciences, surveillance studies, whose origins reach back to the 1950s.[64] With regard to the Bentham Panopticon itself, however, Foucault's ideas were problematical; they attracted criticism, and Foucault himself later modified them.[65] Recent Foucault scholarship has been at pains to clarify, rebalance and explore new issues. New perspectives have sought to site Bentham's ideas more fully in their early-nineteenth-century context, where the dire possibilities of capitalist exploitation and totalitarian control were much less apparent.[66] Surveillance studies and their concerns will not be pursued further in the present study, which presents a factual historical account of the one Panopticon that either of the Benthams managed personally to build, in Russia.

The Benthams' relations with Russia before 1800

Empress Catherine II's legislative projects early caught the attention of the young Jeremy Bentham.[67] In 1768, through the agency of a former chaplain at the British embassy in St Petersburg, he met in London with the equally young Russian embassy official Mikhail Tatishchev, who had translated Catherine's *Instruction* into English, and with Mikhail's brother

Ivan.[68] The acquaintance with the Tatishchev brothers was the first of an increasing number of personal Russian contacts for both Bentham brothers; Jeremy became particularly close to the Russian embassy chaplain, A. A. Samborskii, and remained on good terms with Samborskii's long-serving successor Iakov I. Smirnov (in post 1781–1837).[69]

Such connections proved valuable when Samuel set off in 1779 on a tour of north European dockyards terminating in Catherine's Russia.[70] Having found no suitable means at home to achieve his naval ambitions, Samuel had thought of going to India to seek his fortune. Russia was a better alternative, especially as Catherine's policies seemed to offer opportunities not only to the naval engineer but also to his political-philosopher brother Jeremy, who hoped to assist the Empress in her legislative undertakings by presenting her with a Code of Laws for the Russian Empire. The project of a Russian code was actively pursued and discussed by the brothers over several years,[71] and would be revived during Jeremy's visit to Russia in 1786–7. Altogether, Russia appeared as a land of promise: Samuel, on the point of setting off in 1779, reminded Jeremy: 'I need not recall to you the feasts we have so often heated our imaginations with, when we have been contemplating the progress of improvement in that rising country.'[72]

The brothers cultivated all possible patronage, to good effect: Samuel was able to acquire a sheaf of letters of introduction. Among his supporters was William Petty, Earl of Shelburne, later Marquess of Lansdowne, a patron to both brothers: Jeremy made useful personal connections of his own among the Shelburne/Lansdowne circle, notably with the legal reformer Samuel Romilly. It was in this circle too, at Shelburne's country estate of Bowood in Wiltshire, that Jeremy first met his long-time collaborator, populariser and editor Pierre-Etienne-Louis Dumont (1759–1829), who served for a time as tutor to the earl's son. The significance of the Genevan Dumont in editing, publishing and popularising Jeremy Bentham's works cannot be overstated.[73]

It was Lord Howe, then First Lord of the Admiralty, who suggested a tour of northern ship-building facilities; Howe also provided Samuel with introductions to British diplomatic representatives on his route.[74] With his way so well prepared, Samuel Bentham was able to visit Dutch ports and others in Baltic countries, and met with a favourable reception in Russia, where his good looks, amiable manners and becoming modesty also won him golden opinions. He arrived in St Petersburg in March 1780. Befriended by the British ambassador, Sir James Harris, he was admitted to Court, and soon found a footing in St Petersburg society. He early established contact with Catherine's 'Scottish Admiral', Samuel Greig of Inverkeithing,

commander of the naval base at Kronshtadt, the port for St Petersburg: as he wrote, 'I got the confidence as well as the civilities of the Admiral.' He was also introduced to Catherine's favourite, Prince Grigorii Potëmkin.[75]

Initially he refused offers of a post in state service, wishing to preserve his independence of movement, and made a two-year tour into Siberia, inspecting mining and industry in search of development projects. Later, contemplating marriage and thinking of staying in Russia, he entered and made a successful career in the service, something much helped by the fluency he acquired in the Russian language. He worked for eight years first in St Petersburg, under the Procurator-General, then in the south and again in Siberia in the personal service of Potëmkin, Viceroy of southern Russia, rising to the Russian rank of brigadier-general. As we have seen, Potëmkin gave Samuel charge of his huge private estate of Krichëv, on the Dnieper, with a brief to develop its economy; Bentham managed the estate with mediocre success. There gathered around the new estate manager a growing colony of British expatriate workers and specialists. Many were recruited for Samuel in Britain by Jeremy, who visited his brother in Russia in 1786–7, partly in the hope of presenting the Empress with a law code. In the event, when Catherine passed through Krichëv in 1787 during her great Imperial progress through southern Russia, Jeremy's work was not yet completed or set out in suitable presentational format, and he deliberately avoided a meeting with her. But the visit was fruitful nevertheless. Through his Russian visit and study of Russian laws, Jeremy gained a rudimentary familiarity with the Russian language; he was able to elaborate materials which later became important elements of his system, and it was here, at the other end of Europe, that he drafted his *Defence of Usury* and his pamphlet on the Panopticon.[76]

The Panopticon, as we have seen, was the brainchild and invention of Samuel Bentham. Samuel also had many other inventions to his credit. In Krichëv he invented mechanical means of sawing construction timber, and designed at Potëmkin's command a special 'vermicular' rowing vessel, composed of multiple flexibly linked units, to convey freight and to transport the Empress and her party on the Dnieper.[77] In Siberia he had invented machines for working wood and devised a 'ship-carriage', an amphibious wheeled conveyance in which he travelled widely and was able to cross unfordable Siberian rivers, and which subsequently aroused interest for military purposes back in England.[78] Samuel was well aware that his position in Russia gave him exceptional advantages in pursuing his passion for rationally based invention: in a letter drafted to William Pitt the Younger in 1787 he declared that

> Inventions in the mechanical line, of which, such as they are, I have some stock, are my chief amusements here; and the opportunities, which my situation affords me, of carrying them into practice, form one of the principal ties which attach me to this country.

At the same time he offered Pitt his personal involvement, 'the zeal of the projector himself', as an earnest of his commitment, if Pitt should wish to adopt an invention in Britain.[79] Later Samuel would indeed devise important technical improvements for British naval dockyards, playing an outstanding part in laying the foundations of the modernised Admiralty infrastructure of the later nineteenth century; he also imagined more visionary innovations, such as mobile steam engines mounted on wheels and equipped with wooden boilers.[80]

In 1787, however, his plans to build a Panopticon were frustrated by Potëmkin's sale of the estate and his own summary posting to aid the war effort in Kherson, on the Black Sea. Here his inventive genius and technical skills were crucial in preparing the motley vessels at Russian disposal for battle against the Turks: small shallow-draught vessels ingeniously armed with heavy-calibre weapons did exceptional damage to Turkish galleys and to large Turkish warships struggling to manoeuvre in the confines of the Liman (the mouth of the Dnieper). Serving in Kherson under the base commander, his friend Rear-Admiral Nikolai Mordvinov, and at sea under the command of the Prince of Nassau-Siegen, Samuel so distinguished himself that he was awarded promotion with special seniority, the Order of St George, and an inscribed gold-hilted sword of honour. Using money acquired through the funding of privateering, Samuel was also able to join with Mordvinov in the purchase of an estate in the Crimea and become a landowner.

In 1791 Samuel took leave from the Russian service and returned home. He had apparently fully intended to return to Russia in due course; but events both at home and abroad ultimately convinced him otherwise. Back in England in 1791 he continued his practical activities in the field of mechanical engineering and machine development. A tour of British manufacturing centres suggested to him that the wood-working machines which he had begun to develop in Siberia and at Krichëv, and for which he took out a first British patent in 1791, would be of great value in Britain. In 1792 his father, Jeremiah Bentham senior, died; the brothers inherited significant resources. Jeremy moved into the family home at Queen's Square Place in London (now 102 Petty France, occupied by the Ministry of Justice) and made its outbuildings available to Samuel as workshops for his inventions. When Jeremy gained government interest

for his Panopticon prison scheme the same year, Samuel was called upon both to design the building and to prepare machinery for use in employing its prisoners. He extended his leave from Russia, and produced prototype machines, on which he took out patents in 1793.[81]

The machines at Queen's Square Place attracted great interest and many visitors, among them government ministers and Lords of the Admiralty, which led to favourable comment in Parliament. Jeremy described the scene at Queen's Square Place as a 'raree show'.[82] As a result, Samuel was able to make plausible representations to the Admiralty about improvements to British arsenals and dockyards, and the introduction of new machinery and steam power. His ideas chimed with existing concerns in Admiralty circles about the state of naval administration and technology.[83] The outbreak of war with France in 1793 brought additional urgency to British naval matters. Finally in 1795 Samuel was invited to address their Lordships of the Admiralty formally on the subject, and to visit naval dockyards. In 1795 he also received approval to build seven experimental vessels of his own design, incorporating many innovations.[84] At this point he still had formal leave from Russia until September 1796, although he had been removed from his Russian military command in 1792 or 1793. The outcome of his dealings with the Admiralty was so satisfactory that in 1795 the new post of Inspector-General of Naval Works was created for him, charged with improving the navy's dockyards.[85]

Consequently he finally gave up any intention of returning to Russia: thereby, in the words of his widow, biographer and champion Mary Sophia Bentham, he 'abandoned the emoluments, the gifts of lands, the honours that awaited him in a foreign country and devoted himself entirely to the service of his own', something for which, if we are to believe Mary, '[h]e has been much and repeatedly blamed by his friends …. Brigadier-General Bentham, though still retaining his foreign rank, may from this time be considered as exclusively in the English service and devoted to it heart and mind.'[86] Samuel's marriage to Mary Sophia, née Fordyce, in 1796, no doubt also helped to settle him in England, though she devoted herself to him and the family would later travel very easily abroad. Mary was a powerful personality in her own right, well able to participate in and support Samuel's endeavours. In 1820 Jeremy described Mary's mature relationship with her husband: 'the daughter of an eminent Scotch Physician, established in London, [she] is his Physician, his Secretary, and qualified and accustomed to second him in all his operations.'[87]

Samuel's years with the Admiralty and Navy Boards, 1796–1813, were difficult: his resolute efforts to promote necessary reform and modernisation met resistance from well-established conservatives, self-interested contractors, and craftsmen whose traditional way of life and work was threatened. Industrial innovations which he championed, his own or others' (Marc Brunel), transformed the dockyards, but were initially scorned by opponents as incompetent; the financial savings and other benefits claimed for them were dismissed as 'the sanguine but groundless expectations of a visionary projector'.[88]

The brothers' Russian contacts during the 1790s seem not to have been numerous, though some were with persons of high political standing, and Samuel made welcome any Russians who crossed his path. Connections with the embassy continued. In 1800 Jeremy became involved in negotiations to help the widow of a friend receive a Russian pension due to her husband, a success finally achieved through a direct approach to Tsar Paul. Samuel as Inspector-General of the British Navy could also patronise Russian students sent abroad to study naval matters: in 1805 for example he was given charge of three 'Russian Gentlemen', 'Ivanoff, Linlunoff and Goustomesoff', presented to the Admiralty by Ambassador Vorontsov.[89] Rumours circulated in Russia (as a correspondent later reported to Samuel after his appointment as Inspector-General) that 'you had received a very high position and live very well, and that if any Russian was in your vicinity, you tried to receive him hospitably'.[90] The opening of the new century and the beginning of the reign of a new emperor, Alexander I (ruled 1801–25), would mark the start of a new chapter in both the brothers' relations with Russia.

Russia under Alexander I: the Tsar and his servitors

In March 1801 the stiflingly despotic reign of Catherine II's heir and successor Emperor Paul I (ruled 1796–1801) had ended in a lethal coup d'état which brought to the throne his 23-year-old son, Grand Duke Alexander.[91] The inheritance of the new autocrat was complex. The international situation was difficult and evolving rapidly; the country needed firm guidance in facing urgent challenges: the French revolutionary upheaval, European war, the onset of European industrialisation. Meanwhile the Empire's administrative, judicial and military systems were creaking and confused after the arbitrary rule of Paul. Alexander was young, charming and of known liberal views, and the first few years of the reign, after Paul's depredations, were a

'honeymoon' period of high hopes and expectations among Russians sensitive to the country's problems: in his later poem 'Epistle to the censor' Aleksandr Pushkin immortalised these times in the winged phrase 'the splendid beginning of Alexander's days'.[92]

Alexander was also, however, inexperienced and hesitant, and initially relied upon a close coterie of radical and equally inexperienced 'young friends', some of whom are among the principal *dramatis personae* peopling the Benthams' stage in Russia. The 'young friends' were Count Viktor Kochubei,[93] the Polish Prince Adam Czartoryski,[94] Count Pavel Stroganov,[95] and Stroganov's cousin Nikolai Novosil'tsev (Novosil'tsov, Novossiltsov), who was in addition the Tsar's private secretary and personal assistant.[96] Alexander also retained a number of older officials and elder statesmen from Catherine's reign: G. R. Derzhavin, N. S. Mordvinov, D. Troshchinskii, A. R. Vorontsov, P. V. Zavadovskii – a former favourite and state secretary of Catherine II – and others.[97] The 'young friends' formed a so-called 'Unofficial' or 'Secret Committee' (*Neglasnyi Komitet*) which met regularly with Alexander in 1801 and 1802, before fading out in 1803. Most of Alexander's advisers, young and old, were acutely aware of the need for change, and one of the principal cultures and societies to which they looked for inspiration was Britain. Alexander himself (polyglot and English-speaking, having had an Englishwoman among his nurses, as did his brothers Nicholas and Michael) had received an idealistic education; he felt a strong aversion to the sort of arbitrary and despotic government which Paul had embodied, and he was in love with the idea of constitutions. At the beginning of his reign he held some very radical ideas which were checked by his friends and advisers.

All Alexander's 'young friends' had spent time in or visited Britain. Kochubei had worked at the Russian embassy in London; the Bentham brothers met Novosil'tsev and Czartoryski in England during the 1790s: Novosil'tsev lived there privately throughout Paul's reign, 1796–1801.[98] Admiral Count Nikolai Mordvinov had lived in England in 1774–7 on naval service and was married to an Englishwoman, Henrietta, née Cobley, orphaned daughter of the British consul in Leghorn; a great anglophile, he became a fervent admirer of Jeremy Bentham.[99] As we have seen, he became Samuel's base commander in Catherine II's second Turkish war and there existed between them a friendship of long standing, in which Jeremy later joined. Count Aleksandr Vorontsov, from a prominent family, briefly ambassador to London in the 1760s, was the brother of the equally anglophile and long-time Russian ambassador to the Court of St James (1785–1800, 1801–6), Count Semën Vorontsov, to whom Samuel Bentham in later years became very close. Semën raised

his family in England and retired there when he finally left the Imperial service (although despite decades of residence he never learnt more than a smattering of English). His daughter married the Earl of Pembroke. His son Mikhail, English by upbringing, returned to Imperial Russian service in 1801 and made an outstanding career, first as a commander in the Napoleonic wars, subsequently as Governor-General of New Russia and Viceroy of the Caucasian provinces. Mikhail Vorontsov, like his father, became a dear friend of Samuel Bentham.[100]

In 1802 the Russian Senate was reformed and most of the central government machinery reorganised into Ministries (to replace the Colleges set up by Peter the Great a century before). The ministerial reform, with subsequent necessary adjustments in the relations between centre and provinces, has been described as the defining administrative event of Alexander's reign.[101] The Emperor placed his close advisers in key executive ministerial positions, while also seeking to balance political interests. Foreign Affairs was given to Aleksandr Vorontsov as Chancellor, with Czartoryski as his deputy; Derzhavin took Justice, which incorporated the office of Procurator-General, the principal legal officer of the Empire, and soon after Novosil'tsev became Deputy Minister; Internal Affairs went to Kochubei, with Stroganov as deputy.

Admiral Mordvinov, previously head of the Naval College, was given the navy, with the younger Vice-Admiral Pavel Chichagov as his deputy. The latter enjoyed the particular regard of the Tsar, and although Mordvinov initially took some part in the deliberations of the Unofficial Committee, he was soon displaced at the Admiralty by Chichagov, who was in charge of the Ministry of Naval Forces until 1809, albeit initially with the rank of Deputy or Acting Minister. However, both men – both strongly anglophile, both married to English wives – would become fast friends with both Bentham brothers.[102] Mordvinov, after his retirement from the Ministry, went to Moscow and into private opposition to the government (Moscow was the traditional sulking-ground for dissidents and those out of favour); but in 1809 he re-entered service, in 1810 was given charge of the Department of State Economy in the newly created Council of State, and made a second distinguished civilian career in the higher echelons of the central administration, occupying senior posts in branches of the State Council. The Benthams remained in sporadic contact with him for many years. Mordvinov championed an aristocratic form of liberalism, and was famous for the legal opinions he gave on matters which came before him in the Council of State; he is also seen as Jeremy's most complete early disciple in Russia.[103]

Chichagov had lived in England in 1792–3 as a naval officer, where he became familiar with the British naval world. He was well known in Russia for his intelligence and his sometimes arrogant self-confidence. At the beginning of the new reign he was 'attached to the person of the Emperor' with a brief to improve Russia's naval establishment, a post reminiscent of Samuel Bentham's British office of Inspector-General of Naval Works. In 1802 a government Committee for the Improvement of the Fleet was created, which Chichagov chaired, part of a serious effort in the first years of the reign to upgrade Russia's armed forces. As Acting Minister of the Navy he was crucial, as we shall see, to Samuel's 1805–7 mission to St Petersburg; he and Samuel were apparently already acquainted, and became extremely close. Jeremy entered into direct contact with him in 1809; Chichagov also had a very close, more or less filial relationship with Semën Vorontsov: he addressed him in his letters as 'mon adorable père'.

Later, during the French retreat from Moscow in 1812, Chichagov commanded the army charged with preventing Napoleon from escaping across the river Berezina, and his failure to do so cast a permanent shadow over his career.[104] In 1814 he left Russia and came to Britain, where Jeremy Bentham encouraged and advised him in his attempts – finally successful – to compose an autobiographical justification of his actions.[105] George Bentham, Samuel's son, recalled a happy meeting between his father and Chichagov in London during the peace celebrations of 1815.[106] Chichagov had married an Englishwoman, Elizabeth Proby, whose father was the Commissioner of Chatham Dockyard; she died in childbirth in 1811, leaving him two daughters who were schooled in England. He wished to settle in Britain but decided for France on account of the irksome restrictions of successive Aliens Acts;[107] he took British citizenship in 1833, but died in Paris in 1849.

A central figure in the early years of Alexander's government until 1812 was the brilliant and exceptional civil servant Mikhail Speranskii.[108] By birth a non-noble priest's son, educated in a Church seminary, Speranskii became personal secretary to Prince Aleksei Kurakin, then entered government service in 1797 when his employer became Procurator-General under Paul I; he soon gained noble status and rose rapidly through the ranks. He was distinguished by his efficiency, his clear, quick mind and his skill with words. An early patron was A. A. Samborskii, former chaplain to the Russian embassy in London and friend of the Benthams. By 1801 Speranskii was well established as a senior civil servant, and he played an important role in government from the very beginning of the new reign: on the creation of the Ministries he was appointed to the new Ministry of

the Interior (Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, MVD), and became the extremely influential right-hand man of the Interior Minister, Kochubei. Speranskii had in fact been the official responsible for drafting the regulations of the new Ministries: his elegant style introduced a hitherto unknown grace and clarity into the crusty language of Russian officialdom. He was also concerned in another innovation: the new Ministries sought to reach out actively to the public and from 1804 until 1809 the MVD produced its own official monthly publication, the *St Petersburg Journal* (*Sanktpeterburgskii zhurnal*). This novel medium made public the most notable decrees and reports arising from Ministry work; its 'unofficial part' contained translations and works relating to law, politics and state administration. In 1806 Speranskii took over from the ailing Kochubei the duty of presenting MVD reports to the Emperor; the latter quickly appreciated his quality, and he became a State Secretary (*stats-sekretar'*) and the central figure in internal government affairs.[109]

From 1808 to 1812, and after 1821, Speranskii was the official in charge of Russian government work on the codification of law. From 1801 this was carried out by the Commission for the Compilation of Laws (*Komissiia sostavleniia zakonov*), the reincarnation of Paul's legislative commission, a government body initially answerable directly to the Emperor. For most of the reign, from 1803 until 1822, the civil servant most closely involved, and the moving spirit, in the Commission was its First Referendar and Secretary, the Baltic German Freiherr (later also Baron) Gustav Adolf von Rosenkampff (1764–1832).[110] Rosenkampff became a central figure in Jeremy Bentham's quest for engagement with the Russian codification process, and it is necessary to examine his position in some detail. A former student of law at Leipzig University, in 1780–2 Rosenkampff had worked as a translator in the archive of the Imperial College of Foreign Affairs; he then returned to his native Livonia, where between 1789 and 1802 he lived as an estate owner, filling elective and judicial posts in the largely self-governing province. (Later, while he was serving in St Petersburg, his brother's misfortunes led to the loss of the family estate.) He accompanied Tsar Paul as a representative of the Baltic German nobility during the Tsar's visit to Livonia in 1797, and received but rejected offers of a post in St Petersburg; in 1802, likewise *ex officio*, he escorted Alexander on the latter's way to Memel, thereby becoming familiar from afar with the Emperor's entourage, notably Novosil'tsev and Kochubei. In the summer of 1802 he visited St Petersburg on personal business and renewed acquaintance with a fellow Leipzig alumnus some years his senior, Senator O. P. Kozodavlev; he also met Derzhavin, soon to be Minister of Justice. At their suggestion he wrote an

article on legislation, entitled 'Some remarks on criminal and civil laws with reference to Russia', which was published the following year in the prominent journal *Vestnik Evropy* but meanwhile evidently soon became known in court circles.[111]

In October of the same year, 1802, Rosenkampff was summoned back to the Russian capital by Derzhavin. Here he also met Novosil'tsev, who knew of his article and received him kindly; Rosenkampff was very much impressed with Novosil'tsev, who returned the compliment, becoming one of Rosenkampff's lasting patrons. Derzhavin formally presented Rosenkampff to the Tsar, and he was given an appointment as civil servant for special assignments at the Ministry of Justice, independent of the Compilation Commission. He was allocated a handsome nominally lifetime annual salary of 2,000 roubles and a secretary, and shortly afterwards made a Court Counsellor (*nadvornyi sovetnik*, rank 7); his brief was to work on clarifying and classifying Russian legislation, and making it self-consistent, though according to his own account his immediate task was particularly to draft proposals for the transformation of the Governing Senate and a new statute for it. At this time he also became acquainted with Czartoryski, Stroganov and Kochubei, who received him favourably.

Rosenkampff was nonplussed by his new assignment to work on the Senate: this institution had only just been officially reconstituted, in September 1802, at the same time as the creation of the new Ministries. He nevertheless worked dedicatedly on this project during a home leave of four months back in Livonia (January–May 1803), where he resigned his previous post and prepared to move to St Petersburg while at the same time making arrangements to leave a door open for eventual return. A major feature of his new Senate proposals was the retention of Peter the Great's Imperial Colleges with their governing boards as the main organs of national administration under the Senate; but this was in direct contradiction with the new Ministries, set up on the French model, with a Minister embodying centralised authority and a supporting bureaucratic structure. As Rosenkampff soon discovered, Speranskii, the composer of the legislative texts introducing the Ministries, was a strong supporter of them. This clash of ideas over a major feature of state administration laid the foundations for a long mutual dislike between the two men.[112]

When Rosenkampff returned to St Petersburg in May 1803, he found that while the 'Young Friends' were prepared to discuss his proposals for the Senate, nothing could be concluded without the Tsar, whose attention was not immediately forthcoming. In July he finally received the grace of an extended individual audience with Alexander;

Rosenkampff noted down the conversation immediately afterwards, and gave a verbatim account in his memoirs. To his disappointment Alexander deferred any detailed consideration of the Senate plan he proffered, and then went on to the question 'What do you think about the emancipation of the peasants?' This was a quite different but equally important topic, and one in which momentous events had been taking place in Rosenkampff's native Livonia. Since the 1790s a group within the Livonian aristocracy led by *Landrat* Friedrich von Sivers had been agitating for improvement of peasant status, to some effect. Imperial laws of 1802 and 1804 limited serfdom there and increased Baltic peasants' rights; and in February 1803 Alexander had also signed into law a scheme allowing Russian landowners to emancipate their own peasants under limited conditions as 'free agriculturists'.[113] Rosenkampff had in fact himself been involved in relevant discussions at the 1796 Livonian Diet (*Landtag*) and had been the person charged with drawing up a compilation of materials for consideration by absent members of the nobility, which was put out in printed form.[114] Now Alexander said that Sivers had written to him on the subject of emancipation 'and sent me just recently a voluminous tome in German, which I haven't read yet'.

> With that His Majesty handed me a very well-bound large-format folio. Looking at the covering letter I saw at once that this booklet contained material for a Statute on the Livonian peasantry. I opened it and on the title page, printed in bold script, I read that I was the author of this Statute.

No doubt encouraged to find his work in the hands of the Tsar, Rosenkampff declared himself firmly in favour of gradual emancipation. Alexander did not demur, asking merely how it should be achieved and remarking that it would be a 'long road'. As Rosenkampff recorded, Alexander said that while trials could be made in the Baltic provinces, further progress on peasant emancipation generally must be considered in committee; and he added the declaration:

> I would wish in general to grant to the whole nation, to all my peoples, access to the enjoyment of citizens' rights as far as this is possible. This must be determined by a general code, a book of laws, which my predecessors, beginning with Peter I, promised the nation. That, it seems to me, is what should be our preoccupation before all else, because it will encompass everything else.[115]

In reply Rosenkampff explained his view. Rosenkampff stood for an historical-national approach to law-making. He was concerned that previous Russian legislation had lacked an underpinning in general guiding principles – *principia iuris*: these, he argued, must be clearly formulated before any major new legislative enactment, and they were to be derived from the best of the country's existing law, an approach alien to that of Catherine the Great's Legislative Commission and to Jeremy Bentham's concept of a philosophically based, universally applicable code.

> In order to compose what is called a code, it is essential first of all to begin from a study of the state of [the country's] active legislation in all the branches of state and private law, and to have this before one's eyes. … I understand by the term state law (*droit public*) the organisation of state authorities, the objects of their jurisdiction, the permission to access civil rights and even estate rights,

not all of which were clearly laid out either in existing law or in the projects of Peter I and Catherine II. He also warned the Tsar that Russia was ill prepared in this field:

> One must not overlook the fact that in France and Germany jurisprudence is a science which has been practised for centuries, so that clauses summarising different laws will be easily understood. … But I fear that in Russia such an abstract work would not be comprehensible. To make the code understandable, it is necessary to expound the sources themselves from which the clauses are derived ….[116]

According to Rosenkampff, Alexander approved of his arguments, promised his full support, and told Rosenkampff to start work on a plan to achieve these aims and to send it directly to him, so that he would be the first to see it. Rosenkampff was being asked to review and reform both the work and the composition of the Compilation Commission. The Senate plan with which he had taken so much trouble was ignored: Rosenkampff soon found that the 'Young Friends' were now all converted to the centralised ministerial principle. When Rosenkampff next saw Novosil'tsev, the latter also avoided any further discussion of the Senate project and talked only of the planned renewal of the Compilation Commission. 'In the name of His Majesty I entrust you with the composition of this plan because this, apparently, is his decided will. … The sovereign enquired of me about you and is apparently very well disposed towards you.'[117]

Rosenkampff devoted himself to the new assignment. In October 1803 the Commission for the Compilation of Laws was placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice;[118] Derzhavin was dismissed at the same time as Minister and replaced by P. V. Lopukhin. Together with Novosil'tsev, the Deputy Minister, Lopukhin was now in charge of the Commission.[119] Rosenkampff's plan was implemented, transforming the Commission, and he assumed the leading role in it. Rosenkampff remained a central figure in the Commission until his resignation from it in 1822.

One of Alexander's first measures was to restore good diplomatic relations with Britain, disrupted by Paul, with the signature of a pact of friendship in June 1801. He succeeded in concluding peace with France in late 1801, and in the first decade of his reign, even after war began again in 1805, he presided over an avalanche of domestic changes and reforms, not only reversing inappropriate and arbitrary measures taken by his father, but addressing major areas of central administration, military and naval organisation, legal reform, education, censorship, the peasant question, and others.

Initially, as had been the case with Peter I and Catherine II, the Tsar was more radical than his courtiers and advisers. At the same time, elite noble culture was changing. A significant feature of Russian society in Alexander's reign was what has been called the development of the private thinking individual among educated and elite nobles. The French Revolution had dramatically widened noble horizons; rising levels of elite education, while failing to provide qualified servitors in sufficient numbers for state purposes, led increasingly to independent thought among the higher nobility. Alexander's initial approach to government and society encouraged this trend. He positively invited congenial individuals and members of his entourage to make suggestions and to 'tell him the truth', and one of his early measures was to appoint Novosil'tsev to receive proposals concerning improvements to national life and the economy from anyone wishing to make one.[120] During his reign it became increasingly possible to form unofficial organisations devoted to social, cultural or literary ends.

The tragedy and triumph of 1812 strengthened patriotic feeling and awareness of social responsibility, which found expression both in growing self-confidence among conservative noble opinion, and in increasing desire for progressive reform among liberals. The Tsar himself became increasingly conservative after 1812, a trend which began to antagonise more liberal public opinion. His reign has been described as 'the critical period of the nobility's inner liberation from the state, the

"privatisation" of its members, and the beginning of their alienation from the establishment',[121] though this applied in fact only to a minority of nobles. The phenomenon of the *St Petersburg Journal*, the government reaching out to civil society, was part of a wider reflection of the new beginnings of Alexander's reign, responding also to a more receptive readership. Other government departments, too, produced their own journals – the *St Petersburg Journal* was preceded by the *Journal of the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment [Education]*, and others followed – and non-governmental journals also sprang up in the newly favourable social and official environment: in all, in 1801–10 84 new journals appeared in Russia.[122] Later, as Aleksandr Pushkin complained, such journals and other publications had much greater difficulty, suffering under a burdensome and pettifogging censorship; the later reign saw the polarisation of society and the development of noble secret societies with increasingly radical agendas.

Alexander's early wish to reform and modernise his government produced many initiatives but fewer fundamental changes; even during the wars of the Third Coalition new measures were attempted. Some sympathetic historians have called this 'the decade of transformations'. Other scholars have been more critical, emphasising superficiality or failure to deal decisively with major issues, and lack of firm intention and leadership on the part of the Tsar; for such observers, more unkindly, this was a 'decade of vacillations'. Alexander became notorious for changing his mind. The significance of the changes has been variously evaluated, as has Alexander's impenetrable character. Alexander's younger contemporary P. A. Viazemskii (1792–1878) some 40 years later famously called him 'the Sphinx who remained an enigma to the grave', adding: 'About him even today they dispute anew.' The nineteenth-century dissident Alexander Herzen called him 'Hamlet with a crown'; a recent account considered him a 'crowned utopian'.[123] Opinions on the Tsar's real policy intentions have been similarly varied; many modern historians take the view that he was fundamentally a 'conservative reformer', on the one hand concerned for good order, efficiency and social and legal justice, on the other consistent and determined in his desire to maintain his position as sole arbiter of state affairs.

The first decade of Alexander's reign gave great hopes to liberals that Russia's political life would develop beyond the corrupt authoritarianism which had been personified by Paul. Alexander's youth and personal unassuming affability, his own eagerness for change and wholesale rejection of the preceding political regime, seemed to guarantee innovation, the implementation in Russia of best practices from elsewhere

in Europe, and action on burning questions of the day. Nevertheless, sceptics were dubious even at the outset that the Russian leopard could change its spots: from his vantage point in London Semën Vorontsov warned his son Mikhail on the latter's return to Russia and Russian service in 1801 that the removal of Paul and Alexander's accession had not changed Russia fundamentally and that the Empire was very different from Britain and other countries:

> Although the new reign has made our compatriots happier than they were and, released from the worst sort of slavery, they imagine that they have become free, it is in fact far from the case that they are as free as one is in other countries (and these themselves do not know that true liberty founded on a unique constitution which Great Britain has the good fortune to possess, where men obey only the law, which is equal for all classes, and where men live in their full dignity).
>
> With us – ignorance, bad mores which are the consequence of this ignorance and also of the form of government which, by debasing people, deprives them of all elevation of soul and leads them to cupidity, to sensual pleasures and to the vilest baseness and adulation for anyone with power or who has favour with the sovereign. The country is too vast for a sovereign, even if he were another Peter the Great, to do everything himself in a government without a constitution, without established laws, without immovable and independent courts. He is obliged by the very nature of the government to rely on the management of a favourite minister, who thereby becomes a grand vizier …. The present state of the country is only a suspension of tyranny, and our compatriots are like the Roman slaves during the feast of Saturnalia, after which they fell back into their ordinary slavery.[124]

Others were more optimistic, and even after the Fatherland War of 1812–14 many continued to entertain hopes of internal change, although a more conservative trend was already in evidence in foreign policy with the politics of the Holy Alliance. The last years of Alexander's reign, however, especially after 1820, fully bore out Semën Vorontsov's prediction: they were a period of outright reaction both at home and abroad, under the aegis of the Tsar's favourite and first minister, the martinet Count Aleksei Arakcheev. Liberal disillusionment finally burst forth in the (inept and abortive) 'Decembrist' uprising of 1825, the first attempt to overturn the Imperial Russian political system by violent means.[125]

Notes

1 'v Evropu prorubil okno': Pushkin, *Mednyi Vsadnik* [The bronze horseman]. The Russian woodworking tool of choice was the axe. For a general overview of Russia's history see Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: A history*, or, more briefly, Bartlett, *A History of Russia*. The 'Introduction' to Wirtschafter, *From Victory to Peace: Russian diplomacy after Napoleon* provides an excellent and more detailed overview of early modern Russia. The book also offers a very positive view of Emperor Alexander I.

2 On early Russian relations with lands to her west, see Poe, *'A People Born to Slavery': Russia in early modern European ethnography*; Neumann, 'Russia's standing as a great power, 1492–1815'.

3 Jones, 'Why St Petersburg?'; Boeck, 'When Peter I was forced to settle for less: Coerced labor and resistance in a failed Russian colony (1695–1711)'.

4 Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*; Cracraft, *The Petrine Revolution in Russian Culture*. The standard modern work on Peter I is Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*.

5 Kaplan, 'Russian commerce and British industry: A case study in resource scarcity in the eighteenth century', 325–6. Developed further in Kaplan, *Russian Overseas Commerce with Great Britain during the Reign of Catherine II*; see also Plat [Plath], 'Vnutrenniaia ili vneshniaia kolonizatsiia? Tseli i sredstva torgovoi politiki Rossii v XVIII v.'.

6 LeDonne, *Ruling Russia: Politics and administration in the age of absolutism, 1762–1796*.

7 Hosking, 'Patronage and the Russian state', 308, 311. On patronage see further Joukovskaia-Lecerf, 'Hiérarchie et patronage: les relations de travail dans l'administration russe au XVIIIe siècle'.

8 Schattenberg, *Die korrupte Provinz? Russische Beamte im 19. Jahrhundert*; cf. Kaplunovsky, 'The Alexandrine Commission for the compilation of laws: In search for codifying models for the Russian empire', 188. See also Korchmina and Fediukin, 'Extralegal payments to state officials in Russia 1750s–1830s: Assessing the burden of corruption'.

9 [Defoe], *An Essay upon Projects*, 1, 10 . Further on projects see Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The development of a consumer society in early modern England*; Bartlett, 'Utopians and projectors in eighteenth-century Russia'; Novak, ed., *The Age of Projects*; Fediukin, '"Prozhektëry" kak administrativnye predprinimateli: stanovlenie rannemodernykh gosudarstvennykh institutov i individual'naia initsiativa'; Fedyukin, *The Enterprisers*.

10 Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State … 1600–1800*; Seppel and Tribe, eds, *Cameralism in Practice*; Nokkala and Miller, eds, *Cameralism and the Enlightenment*. See also Wakefield, *The Disordered Police State: German cameralism as science and practice*.

11 *Defence of Usury*, Letter XIII, 'To Dr Smith, on Projects in Arts & c.', republished in *Jeremy Bentham's Economic Writings*, 167–87; see further Pesciarelli, 'Smith, Bentham, and the development of contrasting ideas on entrepreneurship'; Crimmins, 'Political economy and projectors: Bentham's *Defence of Usury*'; Bartlett, 'Projects and peasants: Russia's eighteenth century'.

12 See p. 23.

13 Zitser, *The Transfigured Kingdom: Sacred parody and charismatic authority at the court of Peter the Great*; Zitser, 'Post-Soviet Peter: New histories of the late Muscovite and early imperial Russian court'; Zitser, 'The difference that Peter I made', in Dixon, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Russian History*.

14 See in general Baudin and Veselova, eds, *Louis Henri de Nicolay: un intellectuel strasbourgeois dans la Russie des Lumières*, 16–21.

15 Troickii, 'Le "Système" de John Law et ses continuateurs russes'; Stroev, *Les Aventuriers des Lumières*, 201–2.

16 Fediukin, '"Prozhektëry" kak administrativnye predprinimateli'; Fedjukin, 'Mechanismen der Reformen in Russland', in Möller et al., eds, *Deutschland – Russland*. Volume 1: *Das 18. Jahrhundert*, 75–82; Fedyukin, *The Enterprisers*, chaps 1–3.

17 Ryan, 'Navigation and the modernisation of Petrine Russia: Teachers, textbooks, terminology', in Bartlett and Hartley, eds, *Russia in the Age of the Enlightenment: Essays for Isabel de Madariaga* (hereafter *Madariaga*), 75–105; Fediukin, 'Rol' administrativnogo predprinimatel'stva v petrovskikh reformakh: Navigatskaia shkola i pozdnemoskovskie knizhniki'; Fediukin, ed., *Frantsuzskii avantiurist pri dvore Petra I: Pis'ma i bumagi barona de Sent-Hilera*; Fedyukin, *The Enterprisers*, chaps 1–3.

18 *August Ludwig Schlözers öffentliches und Privatleben, von ihm selbst beschrieben. Erstes Fragment*, 146.
19 Offord et al., eds, *French and Russian in Imperial Russia. Volume 2: Language attitudes and identity*; Rjeoutskii and Gouzevitch, eds, *Inostrannye spetsialisty v Rossii v epokhu Petra Velikogo* deals solely with French specialists.
20 Among a large literature see the German works of Erich Amburger and the multi-volume Russian series *Nemtsy v Rossii*.
21 Cross, *'By the Banks of the Neva': Chapters from the lives and careers of the British in eighteenth-century Russia*, chap. 1; Cross, 'The English Embankment'. On the British community in the nineteenth century: Mahnke-Devlin, *Britische Migration nach Russland im 19. Jahrhundert. Integration – Kultur – Alltagsleben*.
22 Cross, *Anglo-Russica: Aspects of cultural relations between Great Britain and Russia in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries*.
23 Quoted by Cross, *'By the Banks of the Neva'*, 17.
24 Cross, *'By the Banks of the Neva'*, 20, 42–3; Dixon, 'Horse-racing in nineteenth-century Russia'.
25 Cross, *'By the Banks of the Thames': Russians in eighteenth-century Britain*, chap. 3; Cross, *'By the Banks of the Neva'*, chap. 7. Advocates of the new agriculture often became butts of ridicule; a sensational polemic was caused in 1806 by an anonymous pamphlet, *Plug i sokha* (The iron plough and the wooden plough), written in fact by Fëdor Rostopchin, later Governor of Moscow during the 1812 French invasion. The conservative nationalist Rostopchin was a disillusioned former enthusiast, who now attacked English agriculture as alien and praised the traditional Russian wooden *sokha* and farming methods. He himself was attacked by the anglophile Princess Dashkova, a former collaborator of Catherine II, in her *Opinion on the Iron and the Wooden Plough*.
26 Wheeler, *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of the Late Daniel Wheeler*, 49–232; Scott, *Quakers in Russia*, chap. 4. As a reward to the family, Emperor Nicholas I gave the Society of Friends the land in which Wheeler's wife was buried. The Quaker burial ground at Shushari outside St Petersburg still exists.
27 Scott, *Quakers in Russia*, chap. 5; McMillin, 'Quakers in early nineteenth-century Russia'; Muckle, 'Alexander I and William Allen: A tour of Russian schools in 1819 and some missing reports'; Makl (Muckle), 'Shkoly "vzaimnogo obucheniia" v Rossii: Uil'iam Allen, tsar' Aleksandr i angliiskie sviazi'. See also Rosslyn, *Deeds, not Words: The origins of women's philanthropy in the Russian empire* and the sources quoted there.
28 Lancasterian schools were also set up in Siberia by Decembrist rebels exiled there after the revolt of 1825; the last such schools in Russia were closed in 1858. See Hollingsworth, 'Lancasterian schools in Russia'; Zacek, 'The Lancastrian school movement in Russia'; Hartley, *A Social History of the Russian Empire 1650–1825*, 135, 140; Orlov, *'Shkoly dlia vsekh'. Lankasterskaia sistema obucheniia v Rossii v pervoi chetverti XIX v. (1814–26 gg.)*.
29 Bentham, *The Correspondence of Jeremy Bentham* (hereafter *BC*), VIII, 446–7, 459–62; Bentham, J., *Chrestomathia: Being a collection of papers explanatory of the design of an institution, proposed to be set on foot, under the name of the Chrestomathic day school, or Chrestomathic school, for the extension of the new system of instruction to the higher branches of learning, for the use of the middling and higher ranks in life. By Jeremy Bentham Esq.*; Bentham, J., *Essai sur la nomenclature et la classification des principales branches d'art-et-science; ouvrage extrait du Chrestomathia de Jérémie Bentham*, i. Allen and Jeremy Bentham were two of the six main investors in Robert Owen's New Lanark Mills project.
30 Brown, 'Adam Smith's first Russian followers'; Brown, 'The father of Russian jurisprudence: The legal thought of S. E. Desnitskii'.
31 Hartley, '"It is the festival of the crown and sceptres": The diplomatic, commercial and domestic significance of the visit of Alexander I to England in 1814', 264–5, 268. The institution of a Loyal Opposition in Britain was relatively new.
32 Hartley, '"It is the festival"', 246.
33 Wortman, *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness*; Schmidt, *Sozialkontrolle in Moskau. Justiz, Kriminalität und Leibeigenschaft 1649–1785*; Borisova, 'The Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire: The phenomenon of autocratic legality'; Borisova and Burbank, 'Russia's legal trajectories'.
34 The influential Ukrainian Mohyla Academy in Kiev, modelled on Jesuit schools, was established in 1634 when Kiev was still under Polish rule.
35 Hosking, 'Patronage and the Russian state', 308.

36 BL Add. MS 33558, f. 98, quoted by Morriss, *Science, Utility and Maritime Power: Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779–91*, 107–8.
37 See p. 53.
38 For this and the early history of Russian law see Butler, *Russian Law and Legal Institutions*, chap. 3; Feldbrugge, *A History of Russian Law: From ancient times to the Council Code (Ulozhenie) of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich of 1649*.
39 Pipes, trans. and ed., *Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia: A translation and analysis*, 247. Pipes gives a succinct overview of the course of the Compilation Commission, pp. 247–53.
40 Butler, 'Peter the Great as a comparative lawyer'.
41 The latest edition of the *Instruction*: Catherine II, *Nakaz, dannyi Komissii o sochinenii proekta novogo Ulozheniia*, ed. Tomsinov, 2008; English version: Butler and Tomsinov, eds, *The Nakaz of Catherine the Great: Collected texts*, 2010.

The development of ideas of Natural Law in Russia, which will not be dealt with here, is addressed by Berest, *The Emergence of Russian Liberalism*; Artemyeva, 'From "natural law" to the idea of human rights in 18th-century Russia: Nobility and clergy'.
42 Sub-commissions worked on and produced drafts of some laws, which informed Catherine's later legislation: Omel'chenko, 'Die "Kommission zur Verfertigung des Entwurfs zu einem neuen Gesetzbuch"', 169–80. The 1767 Commission was Catherine's attempt to address the difficult state of Russian legislation and the problems of governing a huge and multi-ethnic empire; it also served to bolster her somewhat precarious political situation. The Commission offered the Empress the title of Great, Mother of the Fatherland: she refused, but 'the Great' stuck. See in general Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*; Dixon, *Catherine the Great*.
43 Latkin, *Zakonodatel'nye kommissii v Rossii v XVIII stoletie, istoriko-iuridicheskoe issledovanie*, vol. 1; Amburger, *Geschichte der Behördenorganisation Russlands von Peter dem Grossen bis 1917*, 80–1; Schmidt, *Sozialkontrolle in Moskau*, 213–24; Tomsinov, *Speranskii*, 389–90. Besides the three committees or commissions charged with this task in the reign of Peter I (1700, 1714, 1720), others followed in 1728, 1730, 1754, 1760, 1767, 1797, 1801.
44 Valuable accounts of Jeremy Bentham's life, work and thought to which I am indebted are Schofield, *Utility and Democracy: The political thought of Jeremy Bentham*; Schofield, *Bentham: A guide for the perplexed*. See also the excellent biographical articles by Rosen (Jeremy Bentham) and Pease-Watkin (Samuel Bentham) in *ODNB* and the collection of articles in Rosen, ed., *Jeremy Bentham*, 2007, reissued 2018. Portraits of both brothers can be found on the internet.
45 *BC* II, 99, no. 248, 1778 (draft to his 'good old friend' the Rev. John Forster at St Petersburg, recommending Samuel). Bentham added that at about the same time Beccaria's *On Crimes and Punishments* and Catherine II's *Instruction* 'gave me fresh incentives and afforded me further light'.
46 Colley, *The Gun, the Ship and the Pen*. Professor Colley's magisterial and wide-ranging account is, however, imperfectly informed on early modern Russia.
47 Colley, *The Gun, the Ship and the Pen*, 203–4; UCLSC, Bentham Papers, Box 83, ff. 156–60.
48 Several valuable but now dated works were produced by Samuel's widow, biographer and champion Mary Sophia Bentham, notably 'Memoir of the late Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Bentham, with an account of his inventions', in *Papers and Practical Illustrations of Public Works of Recent Construction both British and American*, 41–79 (hereafter Mary Bentham, 'Memoir'); *The Life of Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Bentham KSG, Formerly Inspector-General of Naval Works, Lately a Commissioner of His Majesty's Navy with the Distinct Duty of Civil Architect and Engineer of the Navy. By his widow M. S. Bentham* (hereafter Mary Bentham, *Life*). The most recent, and excellent, modern portrayals are by Morriss, *Science, Utility and Maritime Power: Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779–91* (hereafter Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*); Roger Morriss, *Science, Utility and British Naval Technology, 1793–1815: Samuel Bentham and the Royal Dockyards* (hereafter Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*).
49 *BC* X, 156, no. 2713, JB to J. Joaquin de Mora, 15–17 November 1820.
50 *BC* II, 222, no. 302, 20–2 January 1779.
51 Pease-Watkin, 'Jeremy and Samuel Bentham: The private and the public'.
52 Mary Bentham later suggested in passing that Samuel had constructed some part of a panoptical structure at Krichëv: 'such a central building as that which he had erected at Cricheff' (*Life*, 99); Jeremy, writing to his father in June 1787 from his lodgings at Zadobras near Krichëv, after Samuel had left, stated, on the contrary: 'The Inspection-House was not begun *here*; nor, as you see, is it likely to be': *BC* III, 553, no. 594.

The theatre historian A. S. Korndorf cites a statement that the Krichëv Panopticon concept was submitted to Catherine II, who did not respond; and he relates this, not very convincingly, to a 1790s theatre set design by the court stage designer Pietro Gonzaga which presents Hell, seen through a central viewing arch and in form very similar to the Colosseum in Rome: Korndorf, *Dvortsy khimery. Illiuzornaia arkhitektura i politicheskie alliuzii pridvornoi stseny*, 512–14.

53 Welzbacher, *The Radical Fool of Capitalism*, 12.

54 'Potemkin and the Panopticon: Samuel Bentham and the architecture of absolutism in eighteenth-century Russia'; 'The Panopticon in the garden: Samuel Bentham's inspection house and noble theatricality in eighteenth-century Russia'.

55 Steadman, 'Samuel Bentham's Panopticon', 28–9; Guízar, '"Make a hard push for it": The Benthams, Foucault, and the Panopticons' roots in the Paris École militaire'.

56 Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A study of the panopticon penitentiary*, 100, 104–5; Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon: or, The inspection-house. Containing the idea of a new principle of construction applicable to any sort of establishment, in which persons of any description are to be kept under inspection. And in particular to penitentiary-houses, prisons, houses* of *industry, work-houses, poor-houses, manufactories, mad-houses, hospitals, and schools. With a plan of management adapted to the principle. In a series of letters, written in the year 1787, from Crecheff in White Russia, to a friend in England*, 1791, reprinted in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, published under the superintendence of his executor, John Bowring*, 1843, reprinted 1962 (hereafter Bowring), IV; also in Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, ed. and intro. Božović.

57 Bartlett, *Human Capital: The settlement of foreigners in Russia, 1762–1804*, 128.

58 Arguments summarised in his *Panopticon versus New South Wales*, 1812.

59 Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 95.

60 The standard account is Semple, *Bentham's Prison*. For the wider background see also Lloyd and Burgoyne, 'The evolution of a transatlantic debate on penal reform, 1780–1830'.

61 Cooper, 'Jeremy Bentham, Elizabeth Fry, and English prison reform', 675.

62 Respectively Paris: Gallimard, 1975 and London: Allen Lane, 1977.

63 *Discipline and Punish*, 205: 'The Panopticon … must be understood as a generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men. No doubt Bentham presents it as a particular institution, closed in upon itself. Utopias, perfectly closed in upon themselves, are common enough. As opposed to the ruined prisons, littered with mechanisms of torture, to be seen in Piranesi's engravings, the Panopticon presents a cruel, ingenious cage.' *Surveiller et punir*, 207: 'Le Panopticon … doit être compris comme un modèle généralisable de fonctionnement; une manière de définir les rapports du pouvoir avec la vie quotidienne des hommes. Sans doute Bentham le présente comme une institution particulière, bien close sur elle-même. On a fait souvent une utopie de l'enfermement parfait. En face des prisons ruinées, grouillantes, et peuplées de supplices que gravait Piranèse, le Panopticon fait figure de cage cruelle et savante.'

64 See (for instance) *The Routledge Handbook of Surveillance Studies*, ed. Ball et al.; Horne and Maly, *The Inspection House: An impertinent field guide to modern surveillance*; Lyon, *The Culture of Surveillance*. The nightmare Orwellian potential of 'panopticism' is starkly portrayed in Kietzmann and Angell, 'Panopticon revisited'.

65 Janet Semple offered a straightforward rebuttal, Semple, 'Foucault and Bentham: A defence of panopticism', also in Rosen, ed., *Jeremy Bentham*. Laura Engelstein reflected on the limitations of Foucault's ideas as applied to Russia: Engelstein, 'Combined underdevelopment: Discipline and the law in imperial and Soviet Russia'. Alessandro Stanziani has placed Bentham's concerns in a wider (inter)national context of labour management and Poor Law provision: Stanziani, *Bondage: Labor and rights in Eurasia from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries*, chap. 2.

66 The French Bentham specialist Anne Brunon-Ernst and her colleagues go *Beyond Foucault: New perspectives on Bentham's Panopticon*, ed. Brunon-Ernst; they set themselves 'the difficult task of achieving a double rehabilitation: that of Bentham's political theory to Foucault readers, and that of Foucault's panopticism to Bentham scholars' (p. 5). Welzbacher, *The Radical Fool of Capitalism*, 'rescues the Panopticon from the misapprehensions of Foucault, Orwell and Lacan' (back cover).

67 The Benthams' earlier relations with Russia have received extensive but uneven historical coverage. Jeremy's story before and after 1800 was first told by Pypin, 'Russkie otnosheniia Bentama', trans. Renaud, 'Bentham's Russian relations'. This is an excellent pioneering study based on the 1843 Bowring edition of Bentham's works and published in 1869 with an eye to contemporary legal and other reform processes in Russia.

The story of Samuel and Jeremy Bentham's relations with Russia under Catherine II is told in English writings by: Anderson, 'Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779–91'; Christie, *The Benthams in Russia 1780–1791*; Cross, *'By the Banks of the Neva'*; Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*. See also the Russian references in O'Sullivan, 'The correspondence of Jeremy Bentham as a resource for the study of his life: Illustrated with a reconstruction of his early years (1748–1780) from his letters', also Cross, '"Russian Englishmen": Russians the Benthams met in England 1767–1820s', both in *Filosofskii Vek* 9, which also has brief coverage of Jeremy's relations with Alexander I.

Samuel's British career in the new century has been most recently studied by Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*. See also Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills*; Coad, *Support for the Fleet*.

68 Cross, *'By the Banks of the Thames'*, 30–1; Cross, '"Russian Englishmen"', 86–7.

69 On both see Cross, *'By the Banks of the Thames'*, 39–52; *BC* VII, 292, 308, 309, 367.

70 Mary Bentham, *Life*, 10; Morriss, *Science 1779–91*, 30. He left England on 24 August 1779.

71 Anderson, 'Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779–91', 158; Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*, 16–18.

72 Quoted by Anderson, 'Samuel Bentham in Russia, 1779–91', 158.

73 On Dumont see Selth, *Firm Heart and Capacious Mind: The life and friends of Etienne Dumont*, a fine and nuanced study which gives, however, a garbled summary of Jeremy Bentham's relations with Emperor Alexander I. See also Blamires, *The French Revolution and the Creation of Benthamism*; *ODNB* (online edn), 'Dumont, Pierre-Étienne-Louis [Étienne] (1759–1829)'.

74 Mary Bentham, 'Memoir', 43; Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*, 29.

75 Quotation concerning Greig: Mary Bentham, *Life*, 16. On Potëmkin and Krichëv see Sebag Montefiore, *Prince of Princes: The life of Potemkin*.

76 *BC* VII, 275.

77 Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*, 171–82. JB sent a long description of the vermicular to his father, *BC* III, 537, no. 591, 4/15 May 1787; plan of the vessel at RGAVMF, f. 327, op. 1, d. 4997; model in card at BL Add. MS 33554, f. 320.

78 Mary Bentham, *Life*, 82–3, 116; Morriss, *Science, 1779–91*, 182; Samuel Bentham, 'Sketch of a ship-carriage, constructed and used in Siberia', see Figure 3.1. Mary Bentham, 'Memoir', 44, 68, 79: Mary wrote that the amphibious carriage was 'also introduced into England about the year 1793 … [and] successfully tried on the river Thames; but like many of the General's other inventions, it was abandoned on his appointment to the Admiralty. The English baggage-waggon was remarkable as being, it is supposed, the first navigable vessel of which the hull was entirely of metal.' Jeremy wrote an enthusiastic recommendation of the ship-carriage to George III, but it is doubtful that it was ever sent: *BC* IV, 12, May 1791.

79 *BC* III, 535, no. 590, SB to Wm Pitt, late April 1787. This draft letter was docketed by the Benthams as written by Jeremy and not sent. The content only makes sense if the writer, or intended writer's voice, was Samuel. See further Bartlett, 'Samuel Bentham, inventor'.

80 Besides Morriss and Coad, see on the dockyards and on steam engines [M. S. Bentham], *Paper on the First Introduction of Steam Engines into Naval Arsenals; and Machinery set in Motion Thereby*, 6.

81 Mary Bentham, *Life*, chap. VI, 97–120; Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills*, 23; see also Coad, *Support for the Fleet*.

82 *Paper on the First Introduction of Steam Engines*, 2; Mary Bentham, *Life*, 100.

83 Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills*; Coad, *Support for the Fleet*; Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*.

84 *Paper on the First Introduction of Steam Engines* …, 23; Mary Bentham, *Life*, 106–14; Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*, chap. 4; Winfield, *British Warships in the Age of Sail 1793–1817,* 384–6.

85 Formal warrant dated 25 March 1796: Coad, *The Portsmouth Block Mills*, 23. The French had recently created a similar office; in 1801 the Russian government would make an analogous appointment. In 1795 Bentham voiced the idea of returning to Russia; the new post was created to keep him in British service: Mary Bentham, *Life*, 115; Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*, 24. Some years later, Marc Brunel's declaration that he would leave Britain to take up an offer in Russia was sufficient to make the British government obtain his release from debtors' prison by paying his debts.

86 Mary Bentham, *Life*, 102, 103. See also Christie, *The Benthams in Russia 1780–1791*, 255–6. In a letter written many years later, Samuel claimed that it was the death of Catherine II in [November!] 1796 which decided him to stay in Britain; but this may be regarded as justification in hindsight. BL Add. MS 33546, ff. 576–77v.

87 *BC* X, 166. Her father was Dr George Fordyce, FRS (1736–1802), noted physician and chemist.
88 *Paper on the First Introduction of Steam Engines*, 10. Here and elsewhere Mary Bentham is at pains to demonstrate SB's priority over, but benevolent patronage of, Marc Brunel. See JB's vivid and partisan account of his brother's difficulties, *BC* X, nos 2713 & 2714, and most recently Morriss, *Science, 1793–1815*.
89 Cross, '"Russian Englishmen"', 89; Mary Bentham, *Life*, 156; Bowring, X, 358; *BC* VI, 369–72, no. 1608, n.1; National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (hereafter NMM), ADM/Q/3323, 25 March 1805.
90 BL Add. MS 33544, ff. 171–72v, Matvei Loginov to SB.
91 See in general McGrew, *Paul I of Russia, 1754–1801*; Shil'der, *Imperator Aleksandr Pervyi: ego zhizn' i tsarstvovanie*; Hartley, *Alexander I*; Rey, *Alexander I: The tsar who defeated Napoleon*; O'Meara, *The Russian Nobility in the Age of Alexander I*. On foreign policy see most recently Wirtschafter, *From Victory to Peace*.
92 *'Dnei Aleksandrovykh prekrasnoe nachalo*': Pushkin, 'Poslanie tsensoru' ['Epistle to the censor'], 1822. Aleksandr Pushkin (1799–1837), Russia's national poet, a characteristic figure of Alexander's reign, contrasted the freedom of Alexander's early days with the pettifogging censorship of his later years. The censor is given words in the poem complaining of the changeability of taste: 'There's a fashion and a taste for everything: at one time, for instance / People here revered Rousseau, Voltaire, Bentham …'.
93 Viktor Pavlovich Kochubei (1768–1834), nephew of Catherine's Chancellor Bezborodko, held senior positions throughout Alexander's reign. See Cross, *'By the Banks of the Thames'*, 33–4. Entries for all the figures mentioned here can be found in the standard Russian biographical dictionary, *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'* (hereafter *RBS*).
94 Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861). After the Polish events of 1795, the young Czartoryski had been compelled to live in St Petersburg and enter Russian service to prevent the sequestration of his family's estates. He became very close to the Grand Duke Alexander, and was influential in Russian foreign policy in the first half of his reign. His allegiance to Russia was, however, always tempered by his hopes of restoring Poland. See Zawadski, *A Man of Honour: Adam Czartoryski as a statesman of Russia and Poland 1795–1831;* [Czartoryski], *Memoirs of Prince Adam Czartoryski and his Correspondence with Alexander I: With documents relative to the Prince's negotiations with Pitt, Fox, and Brougham, and an account of his conversations with Lord Palmerston and other English statesmen in 1832,* ed. Gielgud … (the Russian and French versions are used in this text).
95 Pavel Aleksandrovich Stroganov (1774–1817). See Nikolai Mikhailovich, *Graf Pavel Aleksandrovich Stroganov (1774–1817): Istoricheskoe issledovanie epokhi imperatora Aleksandra I*.
96 Nikolai Nikolaevich Novosil'tsev (1761–1838): see *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar' Brokgauz-Efron*, vol. XXI: Nibelungi–Neffer, 295.
97 Shil'der, *Imperator Aleksandr Pervyi*, II, 24–30.
98 Cross, '"Russian Englishmen"', 89. The older generation were largely part of the 'Senatorial party', standing for greater Senate powers.
99 In 1806 Mordvinov wrote to Samuel Bentham: 'I long to settle in England and, settling there, to make the acquaintance of your brother. He is, in my eyes, one of the four geniuses who have done, and will do most for the happiness of the human race – Bacon, Newton, Smith and Bentham: each the founder of a new science: each a creator' (Bowring, X, 419).
100 Semën Romanovich Vorontsov (1744–1832), Mikhail Semënovich Vorontsov (1782–1856). See, on S. R. Vorontsov, Vorontsov-Dashkov and Mikeshin, *S. R. Vorontsov. Biografiia*; on M. S. Vorontsov, Rhinelander, *Prince Michael Vorontsov: Viceroy to the tsar*; and, on the Vorontsov family at large, Kenney, 'The Vorontsov party in Russian politics'; V. N. Alekseev, *Grafy Vorontsovy i Vorontsovy-Dashkovy v istorii Rossii*.

M. S. Vorontsov is also widely known for his difficult relations with the young Aleksandr Pushkin during the latter's exile in the south (1823–4). Pushkin scandalously pursued Vorontsov's wife, and wrote a notorious epigram about him: 'Polumilord, polukupets/ Polumudrets, polunevezhda./Polupodlets, no est' nadezhda/Chto budet polnym nakonets.' (Half English lord and half a merchant/half a sage, half ignoramus./Half a scoundrel, but there's hope/He'll be a complete one in the end.) Cf. Rhinelander, *Prince Michael Vorontsov*, 75–6.
101 LeDonne, 'Administrative regionalization in the Russian empire 1802–26', 5; see further LeDonne, *The Grand Strategy of the Russian Empire, 1650–1831*; LeDonne, *Forging a Unitary State: Russia's management of the Eurasian space, 1650–1850*.

102 See in general Ikonnikov, *Graf N. S. Mordvinov*. A portrait, of which the original is in the Hermitage, may be found at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_admiral_N.S.Mordvinov_by_Alexander_Varnek,_1810s-1820s.jpg (accessed 2 April 2022).

103 On Mordvinov's appointment to and loss of the Naval Ministry see Ikonnikov, *Graf N. S. Mordvinov*, 64–8. On his economic and philosophical views see Aizenshtat, 'Ieremiia Bentam i Rossiia: Utilitarizm N. S. Mordvinova'; Zweynert, *Eine Geschichte des ökonomischen Denkens in Russland, 1805–1905*, 108–21; McCaffray, 'What should Russia be? Patriotism and political economy in the thought of N. S. Mordvinov'.

Dr Matthew Guthrie, a medical doctor long resident and medically active in Russia, and a commentator on the contemporary Russian scene, left an interesting observation on Mordvinov in manuscript notes preserved in a copy of his wife's travel diaries, which he edited and published in 1802: 'Shall we declare our opinion that the Admiral has been born a century too soon for his country, an Aristides is still an obnoxious man in Russia except to Alexander himself who would cherish such if left to himself. The ostracism will ever drive Mordvinoff from the head of every department, for live and let live is still the system and he who does not choose to observe that maxim will be opposed and chicaned by all under him. It is not so long since the same system existed in England and the Government thought it just to give an equivalent in money, that is to say higher salaries when they suppressed the ancient perquisites without which the Russian appointments will not furnish food and raiment.' Maria Guthrie, *A Tour, performed in the years 1795–6, through the Taurida, or Crimea, … and all the other countries on the north shore of the Euxine, ceded to Russia by the peace of Kainardgi and Jassy; by Mrs. Maria Guthrie …; Described in a series of letters to her husband, the editor, Matthew Guthrie …*, 1802, handwritten note facing p. 76 in the British Library copy Cup.407.b.30. The changes referred to in the British system were the work of Samuel Bentham.

104 Pavel Vasil'evich Chichagov (1767–1849). See Woods, *The Commissioner's Daughter: The story of Elizabeth Proby and Admiral Chichagov*, a very readable biography which, however, makes no mention of Chichagov's long-lasting friendship with the Bentham brothers; *Zapiski Pavla Vasil'evicha Chichagova, admirala i pervogo morskogo ministra*; Iulin, *Admiral P.V. Chichagov: istinnyi patriot Rossii*. A youthful-looking portrait (original in the Hermitage) and brief biography can be found at https://runivers.ru/doc/patriotic_war/participants/detail.php?ID=455777, accessed 2 April 2022. A contemporary British observer of Russian naval life commented: 'However severe the junior [Russian] officers abused the British, it must be confessed they never pretended to exalt the qualifications of their own [naval commanders], all with the single exception of Admiral Siniavin [Seniavin], [the others] being represented to my repeated enquiries as possessing little or no acquaintance with their profession. Among these was Admiral T— [Tchichagoff], who commanded a division of the army on the retreat of the French, where he did not retrieve in a military capacity that credit which he was believed to want in naval matters. He possesses however, great address, it is said, and what is of more consequence, powerful interest; but the people have not yet forgiven him the escape of Napoleon' ([Prior], *A Voyage to St Petersburg, in 1814, with Remarks on the Imperial Russian Navy*, 18).

105 See *BC* VIII, passim. First contact with JB: *BC* VIII, no. 2045, JB to Chichagov, 20–5 May 1809. See also Bowring, X, 486–7; BL Add. MS 33545, f. 228: Chichagov initially refused, then agreed reluctantly and under persuasion to bring his memoir-writing to dinner with JB, 1 June 1816.

106 *Autobiography, 1800–1834*, 12–15.

107 His rage at the restrictions imposed on him as a foreigner is eloquently expressed in *BC* VIII, 411, no. 2287, 15 August 1814.

108 Mikhail Mikhailovich Speranskii (1772–1839). Korf, *Zhizn' grafa Speranskogo*; Raeff, *Michael Speransky: Statesman of Imperial Russia, 1772–1839*; Speranskii, *Rukovodstvo k poznaniiu zakonov*; Zorin, *Kormia dvuglavogo orla*, chap. 6; Tomsinov, *Speranskii*. Speranskii also married an Englishwoman, Elizabeth Stephens, who, however, died of tuberculosis shortly after childbirth in 1799, leaving him a much-loved daughter: he never remarried.

109 Raeff, *Michael Speransky*, chaps 1, 3; Shil'der, *Imperator Aleksandr Pervyi*, II, 104–6; Orlovskii, *The Limits of Reform: The Ministry of Internal Affairs in Imperial Russia, 1802–1881*, 23–6. On the *Sanktpeterburgskii Zhurnal* and its contents see Pypin, 'Russkie otnosheniia Bentama', kn. 2, 812–15.

110 On Rosenkampff see Maikov, 'Baron Gustav Andreevich Rozenkampf', *Russkaia starina* (hereafter Maikov, 'Rozenkampf'); *RBS*, vol. Reitern–Rol'tsberg, 365–71 (entry authored by Maikov); Recke and Napiersky, *Allgemeines Schriftsteller- und Gelehrten-Lexikon der Provinzen*

Livland, Estland und Kurland, III, 565–6, V, 154; Maikov, 'Komissiia sostavleniia zakonov pri imperatorakh Pavle I i Aleksandre I', *Zhurnal Ministerstva Iustitsii* (hereafter Maikov, 'Komissiia'), here September, 286–91; Maikov, *Vtoroe otdelenie Sobstvennoi Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva Kantseliarii 1826–82*.

Makarov, 'Entwurf der Verfassungsgesetze des Russischen Reiches von 1804', chap. 1, offers an excellent if not perfectly accurate overview and summary of Rosenkampff's activity. See also Maikov, 'Iz zapisok N. S. Il'inskogo', 422–34. Il'inskii, a long-time employee of the Commission for the Compilation of Laws, is a valuable though not unbiased 'inside' source.

111 Maikov, 'Rozenkampf', 10, 145–6: Rosenkampff wrote that he became known to the Tsar through publication of his article, but it came out in print in January 1803, after his acceptance into service by the Tsar. Makarov, 'Entwurf der Verfassungsgesetze', 210–11.

112 Maikov, 'Rozenkampf', 10, 147–57, 175–7.

113 1*PSZ*, 462–3, no. 20620, 20 February 1803. See in general McCaffray, 'Confronting serfdom in the Age of Revolution: Projects for serf reform in the time of Alexander I'. A *Landrat* was a senior elected executive officer of the Baltic noble corporations (*Ritterschaften*).

114 [Rosenkampff], *Materialien zu Grundsäzzen zur Verbesserung des Zustandes der Bauern in der Rigaschen Statthalterschaft, mit Ausschluss des Arensburgschen Kreises. Entworfen auf dem Landtage im September-Monate des Jares 1796. Zur Berathschlagung für die abwesenden adeligen Gutsbesitzer auf den im December-Monat 1796 und im Januar-Monat 1797 zu haltenden Kreisversammlungen.* Dorpat: [M. G. Grenzius], 1796.

115 Maikov, 'Rozenkampf', 10, 168–74, 22 July 1803.

'Ландрат Сиверс мне писал об этом и прислал весьма недавно объемистый том на немецком языке, который я еще не прочел.' Его Величество дал мне при этом очень хорошо переплетенную тетрадь в большой лист. Просмотрев сопровождающее эту тетрадь письмо, я сейчас увидел, что эта тетрадь заключает в себе материалы для составления Положения о лифляндских крестьянах. Я раскрыл тетрадь и в оглавлении, напечатанном крупным шрифтом, прочел, что я автор этого Положения.

… Я желал бы вообще даровать участие всей нации, всем моим народам в пользовании правами граждан насколько это возможно. Это должно быть определено общим кодексом (книгою законов), который мои предшественники, начиная с Петра I, обещали нации. Вот, мне кажется, чем бы надлежало заняться прежде всего, потому что оно будет обнимать все остальное.

Baltic peasant legislation at this time: Tobien, *Die Agrargesetzgebung Livlands im 19. Jahrhundert*, I, 151–253; Pistohlkors, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Baltische Länder*, 323–3.

116 Maikov, 'Rozenkampf', 10, 170–2.

Чтобы составить то, что называется кодекс (code), необходимо прежде всего начать с изучения состояния действующего законодательства во всех его отраслях государственного и частного права, и иметь его перед глазами …. Я разумею под словом государственное право (droit public) организацию властей, предметы их ведомства, допущение к пользованию гражданскими правами и даже права сословий. …

Не должно также упускать из виду, что во Франции и Германии законоведение является наукой, которой занимаются веками. … Но я опасаюсь, что такой отвлеченный труд не будет понят в России. Чтобы сделать понятным кодекс, надо изложить самые источники, из которых извлечены его положения.

117 Maikov, 'Rozenkampf', 10, 175, 178.

Именем Его Величества поручаю я вам заняться составлением этого плана, потому что, повидимому, это решительная его воля …. Государь осведомился у меня о вас и, повидимому, очень к вам расположен.

118 1*PSZ* XXVII, 937, no. 20995; Amburger, *Behördenorganisation*, 81.

119 Rosenkampff was initially delighted and waxed lyrical over his good fortune in working under the wonderful new tsar and his enlightened ministers; disappointment followed later: Makarov, 'Entwurf der Verfassungsgesetze', 216 and note 51.

120 1*PSZ* XXVI, 738–9, no. 19965, 7 August 1801, 'Concerning the encouragement of those making inventions and discoveries tending to perfection of agriculture, commerce and business'. Novosil'tsev found himself engulfed by a cloud of projectors, something he evidently found more amusing than burdensome, but fully recognised as part of the Tsar's reforming agenda:

Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova (hereafter *AKV*) XXX, 296–7, Novosil'tsev to S. R. Vorontsov, 28 August 1801.

121 Quoted by O'Meara, *The Russian Nobility*, 242. See O'Meara, especially chap. 8, and Rosslyn, *Deeds, not Words*, chap. 1, on Russian noble and public opinion.

122 Offord et al., eds, *French and Russian in Imperial Russia. Volume 1: Language use among the Russian elite*, 85. In general on Russian journals at this time see *Svodnyii katalog serial'nykh izdaniii Rossii: 1801–1825*. Many journals were short-lived or ephemeral.

123 Viazemskii, https://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/Сфинкс,_не_разгаданный_до_гроба_(Вяземский) (September 1868; accessed 2 April 2022): 'Sphinx, undeciphered to the grave –/ Now too they argue about him anew./His love was a complaint of malice,/Yet his malice was warmed by love./A child of the [rational] eighteenth century,/He was a victim of his passions./ He despised individual humans/And humanity was the object of his love.'

Сфинкс, не разгаданный до гроба, –/О нём и ныне спорят вновь;/В любви его роптала злоба,/А в злобе теплилась любовь. /Дитя осьмнадцатого века,/Его страстей он жертвой был:/И презирал он человека,/И человечество любил. See also Heller and Niqueux, *Histoire de l'utopie en Russie*, 107–10. The most recent discussions are O'Meara, *The Russian Nobility*; Kaplunovsky et al., *The Enigmatic Tsar*; Wirtschafter, *From Victory to Peace*.

124 *AKV* XVII, 5–6, no. 5, S. R. Vorontsov to M. S. Vorontsov, 21 April/3 May 1801. The English translation in Rhinelander, *Prince Michael Vorontsov*, 10, omits the brackets.

Quoique le nouveau règne a rendu nos compatriotes plus heureux qu'ils n'étaient et que, sortis de l'esclavage le plus atroce, ils s'imaginent être devenus libres, il s'en faut bien qu'ils le soient comme on l'est dans les autres pays (qui ne connaissent non plus la vraie liberté fondée sur une constitution unique, que la Grande Bretagne a le bonheur de posséder, où les hommes n'obéissent qu'aux lois, qui sont égales pour toutes les classes et où l'homme est dans toute sa dignité).

Chez nous – l'ignorance, les mauvaises mœurs, suite de cette ignorance et de la forme du gouvernement qui, en avilissant les hommes, leur ôte toute élévation de l'âme, les porte à la cupidité, les plaisirs sensuels et à la plus vile bassesse et adulation envers tout homme puissant ou favori du souverain. Le pays est trop vaste pour qu'un souverain, fût-il un autre Pierre le Grand, puisse faire tout par lui-même dans un gouvernement sans constitution, sans lois fixes, sans tribunaux immuables et indépendants. Il est obligé par la nature même du gouvernement de se remettre à la direction d'un ministre favori, qui devient par là un grand-vezir …. L'état actuel du pays n'est qu'une suspension de tyrannie, et nos compatriotes sont comme les esclaves romains pendant les fêtes des Saturnales, après lesquelles ils retombaient dans leur esclavage ordinaire.

125 The Decembrists were idealised and idolised in Soviet historiography. A useful survey of post-Soviet writing is O'Meara, 'Recent Russian historiography on the Decembrists: From "liberation movement" to "public opinion"'.