



ISSN: 2158-7051

INTERNATIONAL  
JOURNAL OF  
RUSSIAN STUDIES

ISSUE NO. 2 ( 2013/2 )

## MOSCOW: MORE THAN A CAPITAL – THE CENTRAL PLACE OF MOSCOW IN RUSSIAN CULTURAL HISTORY

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### Summary

This paper argues that Moscow has played a unique and defining role in Russian cultural history and became the source of inspiration for the creation of the greatest examples of works in various fields of Russian art. Temporarily becoming the capital of Russia and the centre of the court, St Petersburg no doubt played an important role in the process of the introduction of Western arts in Russia. During that period there was a decline in Moscow's place in Russian cultural life; however, the Westernisation process eventually resulted in the creation of a new sort of synthesis in the arts, which comprised the interpretation of Western arts with Russian traditional patterns and motives. This trend finally led to the consolidation of Moscow's central place in Russian cultural life as Moscow, being the symbol of the Russian soul, became the main inspiration in the works of Russian artists. The paper tries to give the reader a brief picture of how Moscow attained its central place in Russian cultural life. Thus, in an attempt to explore the role that Moscow has played in the development of Russian cultural heritage, the paper takes a brief look into history to identify specific contributions of the city in various fields of art. Finally, based on concrete examples from Russian cultural history, the paper tries to confirm the central place of Moscow in Russian cultural life by attempting to correct the frequently made mistake of referring to St Petersburg as the “cultural capital” of Russia.

**Key Words:** Moscow, Russian cultural heritage, St Petersburg, Russian classical music, Russian theatrical art, Petrine Revolution, Westernisation, Russian traditional art patterns.

## Introduction

Moscow has passed through glorious and turbulent times since its foundation. It has acquired many different descriptive titles over the centuries: Holy Moscow, or the Third Rome, for its status as a major centre of the Orthodox Church; Moscow of the Taverns, where people gathered to drink and eat together; and later Calico Moscow, for the dominance of the textile trade. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was often described as a “big village” as peasant migrants moved into the city, and during the Soviet period, the name of Moscow became synonymous with communist ideology as the centre of the Third International.<sup>[1]</sup>

St Petersburg is often referred to as the cultural capital of Russia. This definition might, to some extent, be considered just for a certain period. Petersburg was intentionally planned and built by Peter the Great (1672-1725) as the window of Russia to the West. The city became a centre of “European Culture,” which was enforced for the Russian nobility and not shared or imitated by ordinary Russians. Moscow, however, retained its unique place as the “heart of Russia,” the focus of the Russian spirit and the symbol of Russian statehood. It was simply the centre of “Russian culture.”

Russia’s greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, underlined the central place of Moscow in Russian culture by pointing out the bond between Moscow and “Russian hearts” in his unforgettable novel in verse *Евгений Онегин* – *Eugene Onegin* (1823-1831):

Как часто в горестной разлуке, В моей блуждающей судьбе, Москва, я думал о тебе! Москва...как много в этом звуке Для сердца русского слилось! Как много в нем отозвалось! <sup>[2]</sup>	How often in my exile grieving In my wandering fate, O Moscow, have I thought of you! Moscow. How much there is in this sound That Russian hearts are heaving How much echoes in it!
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In the nineteenth century the great Russian historian Nikolai Karamzin wrote: “To visit Moscow means to know Russia.”<sup>[3]</sup> In his twelve-volume *История государства Российского - History of the Russian State*, Karamzin drew attention to the central place of Moscow in Russian statehood.<sup>[4]</sup> Pushkin wrote that Karamzin’s *History* was an absolute revelation: “You would have said that Karamzin discovered ancient Russia as Columbus discovered America.”<sup>[5]</sup>

The city of Moscow is often spoken of as if it were a woman, specifically a mother, and as a centre of family life. Tolstoy famously described this phenomenon in *War and Peace*:<sup>[6]</sup>

*Every Russian looking at Moscow feels her to be a mother; every foreigner who sees her, even if ignorant of her significance as the mother city, must feel her feminine character...<sup>[7]</sup>*

Before the Battle of Borodino Napoleon Bonaparte is believed to say: “If I take Kiev, I will

take Russia's legs, if I take Saint Petersburg, I'll take its head. But if I take Moscow, I'll take its heart.”

Robert W. Thurston argued that an early cultural rivalry existed between the two capitals of Russia, reaching back to the foundation of St Petersburg in the early eighteenth century. In the eyes of the Muscovites, their city was the heart of Russia; Petersburg was Western, almost an alien growth on the native soil. Moscow had risen to defeat the Mongols, and Moscow had suffered destruction at Napoleon's hands while St Petersburg remained untouched. All this pride deepened the Muscovites' sense of being true Russians. P. P. Riabushinskii's newspaper *Utro Rossii* summed up these feelings in early 1912 while discussing an English delegation's visit. The editorial title was “Welcome to Russia!” It began:

*On the way to Russia stands Petersburg. Our guests from England have been detained for several days in that entryway and only today come to us in Moscow, entering Russia. Welcome to Moscow-to Russia!*<sup>[8]</sup>

Despite achieving his literary fame in St Petersburg, Nikolai Gogol also shared the view that Moscow symbolised everything about being a Russian. Making a comparison between St Petersburg and Moscow, he wrote:

*Petersburg is an accurate, punctual kind of person, a perfect German, and he looks at everything in a calculated way. Before he gives a party, he will look into his accounts. Moscow is a Russian nobleman, and if he is going to have a good time, he'll go all the way until he drops, and he won't worry about how much he's got in his pockets. Moscow does not like halfway measures... Petersburg likes to tease Moscow for his awkwardness and lack of taste. Moscow reproaches Petersburg because he doesn't know how to speak Russian... Russia needs Moscow, Petersburg needs Russia.*<sup>[9]</sup>

“Moscow may be wild and dissolute,” wrote Filipp Filippovich Vigel, “but there is no point in trying to change it. For there is a part of Moscow in us all, and no Russian can expunge Moscow.”<sup>[10]</sup>

The first reference to “the village of Moscow” was made in a Russian manuscript of 1147. In 1156, Prince Yuri Vladimirovich Dolgoruky<sup>[11]</sup> erected timber walls on the present-day site of the Kremlin. He is regarded as the founder of the city of Moscow.<sup>[12]</sup> His monument, which is located near Tverskaja Street today, is among the most visited touristic attractions. At the time of the foundation of Moscow, Kiev was the capital of Christian Rus'. The Mongol occupation of the next two centuries crushed the Kievan states, leaving Moscow's princes to consolidate their wealth and power by collaborating with the khans. Moscow's rise was symbolised by the building of Kremlin, which took shape in the fourteenth century. Eventually, as the khanates weakened, Moscow led the nation's liberation, starting with the battle of Kulikovo Field against the Golden Horde in 1380 and ending the defeat of the khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan in the 1550s, when it emerged as the capital of Russia's cultural life.<sup>[13]</sup>

Moscow's large-scale growth of manufacturing during the seventeenth century, which necessitated an outlet to the sea, was instrumental in the decision of Peter the Great to build St

Petersburg on the Baltic. The capital was transferred to St Petersburg in 1712. Deprived of its status as capital, Moscow, however, did not lose its spiritual, economic and cultural significance.<sup>[14]</sup> For centuries it served as a “treasure house” able to preserve national cultural tradition. All the Russian tsars and emperors were crowned there in Russia’s main cathedral, the ancient Dormition Cathedral, and both Peter the Great and Catherine the Great came to Moscow to celebrate their military victories. In 1812 the city was a sacrifice on the altar of war, yet participated in the inglorious demise of Napoleon’s great army.<sup>[15]</sup>

The process of rapid industrialisation and the formation of the labour class in the second half of the nineteenth century helped the communistic ideas of Karl Marx to spread among the working classes and intelligentsia in Moscow. The Krasnaya Presnya rebellion of 1905 and July strikes of 1914 were the important milestones in the revolutionary process, which was finalised by the “Great October Revolution” of 1917. In 1918 the Soviet government, headed by Vladimir Lenin, transferred the capital back to Moscow and fostered spectacular economic growth in the city.

Following its reinstatement as the capital of the Soviet Union, there was a sharp transformation in the cultural life of Moscow. As Orlando Figes pointed out, after 1917 Moscow superseded Petersburg. It became the Soviet capital, the cultural centre of the state, a city of modernity and a model of the new industrial society the Bolsheviks wanted to build. Stalin’s Moscow was recast as an imperial city – a Soviet Petersburg.<sup>[16]</sup>

Moscow’s central place in politics, economy and cultural life was strengthened by the Soviet leadership during the years of communism. Moscow today may appear as the test case of merciless capitalism with its casinos, slot machines, billboards, expensive restaurants, strip clubs and unbearable traffic jams. But one thing has never been changed: its unique place at the centre of the hearts of Russians. This paper will try to identify the factors that strengthened Moscow’s place as the centre of Russian cultural life.

### **The Kremlin: Heart of Moscow - Heart of Russia**

The word “кремль – Kremlin” simply means a fortress in the Russian language. Yet rather like the word “Совет – Soviet,” with its innocuous meaning of a council, the Moscow Kremlin has outgrown its dictionary definition. Every ancient Russian city had its own kremlin, but none has acquired the symbolic significance that Moscow’s Kremlin commands. The Moscow Kremlin has acted over the centuries as a fortress, a religious centre and the focus of Russian political power, and hence the very name has come, over time, to stand for much more than a purely geographical landmark.<sup>[17]</sup>

The early period of the history of Moscow is inseparable from that of the Kremlin since both of them are considered to have been founded in 1147, the year when Moscow was first mentioned in the chronicles. However, the Russian historian and archaeologist Ivan Zabelin<sup>[18]</sup> (1820-1908) believed that there were settlements in the Kremlin much earlier than that date. His hypothesis has, in fact, been endorsed by archaeological evidence discovered in that area dating from the third to mid-second millennium B.C.

Erected initially as a military fortress, the Kremlin became a religious centre in the years to come. The Russians had adopted Orthodoxy in 988 during the rule of Grand Prince Vladimir of Kiev. Under Ivan III<sup>[19]</sup> (1462-1505) Muscovy started to dominate the surrounding Russian lands. Ivan chose to marry the niece of the Byzantine Emperor, Sophia or Zoe Paleologue, in 1472, a connection that would provide the foundation of Moscow's claim to be the "Third Rome" after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. Ivan the Great made it his business to identify Moscow as the heir to Byzantium and the centre of the Orthodox Christian world, and it is most probably at this time that the Byzantine double-headed eagle was adopted as an emblem by the rulers of the city.<sup>[20]</sup> It was from this point on that the idea developed of Moscow as having a sacred mission to lead the Christian world: "for two Romes have fallen, the third stands and there will be no fourth."<sup>[21]</sup>

After consolidating his power at home and abroad, Ivan III initiated an ambitious plan to expand the Kremlin. In thirty-four years, from 1474 to 1508, Ivan, by the help of a team of Italian architects – Antonio Fryazin, Alevisio Novi, Marco Ruffo, Pietro Solario and Aristotle Fiorovanti – renewed the whole Kremlin, enlarging its territories by two-thirds. Since that time, the Kremlin, more or less, has remained the same.

Nineteen towers were added to the walls of the Kremlin in the 1490s, all of which are different in design. "Спасская башня - Saviour Tower" has become one of the best-known symbols of the Kremlin. Built in 1491 by Pietro Solari, it celebrated its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the year 1991. In the 1650s, a double-headed eagle was mounted on the top of this main tower of the Kremlin. Its famous clock was installed by the Scottish clock-maker Christopher Galloway in 1625.<sup>[22]</sup> Saviour Tower was the main entrance to the Kremlin and is still the most favoured one for official ceremonies.

Of the three cathedrals grouped together in Cathedral Square inside the Kremlin, the most important is "Успенский Собор - the Cathedral of the Dormition," where, until 1917, the highest state ceremonies took place, including coronations of the tsars.<sup>[23]</sup> Coronations continued to be held there even after the capital of Russia was moved from Moscow to St Petersburg. Its Italian architect, Aristotle Fioravanti, travelled around the ancient cities of Novgorod, Suzdal and Vladimir in 1476-1477 to study traditional Russian church design.<sup>[24]</sup> Fioravanti took the Cathedral of the Assumption in Vladimir as a model but his "Italian touch" created a marvellously integrated majestic building with a sense of light and space that was unusual for Russian churches of the period.

"Благовещенский собор - the Cathedral of the Annunciation" stands in the southern part of Cathedral Square on the edge of Borovistky Hill. It was built in 1484-1489 by master builders from Pskov and was re-built in 1547 in the reign of Ivan the Terrible. "Архангельский собор - the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael" is the third of the Kremlin cathedrals standing in the south-east part of the square. Built from 1505 to 1508 by Italian architect Alevisio Novi, the Cathedral of the Archangel Michael was used as the burial place of almost all Muscovite monarchs from the time of Ivan Kalita until the capital was moved to St Petersburg. The graves of Dmitry Donskoi, Ivan the Great, Ivan the Terrible and his sons, Michail Romanov and many others can be seen here.

"Церковь Ризоположения - the Church of Deposition of the Robe" and "Грановитая

Палата - the Palace of the Facets” are among other buildings of the Kremlin which reflect Russian cultural heritage accumulated through centuries-old traditions and customs.

### Red Square

No place better represents Russia than Red Square (Krasnaya Ploshchad). Its name comes from the word “krasnyi,” which once meant “beautiful” and has only come to mean “red” in contemporary Russian language. The name became official in the middle of the seventeenth century – previously it had been Trinity Square.<sup>[25]</sup> There is also another myth that it was named “red” because of the bloody executions which were publicly held in this square. The first False Dmitry was executed here. In 1606 the rebel Cossack leader Stenka Razin was beheaded and quartered on Red Square. In 1698, Peter the Great ordered the execution of the rebellious “Streltsy” (Стрельцы - shooters).<sup>[26]</sup> Vasily Surikov’s painting *On the Morning of the Execution of the Streltsy* (1881) immortalised this bloody scene. Today it is possible to see the painting in Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

“Воскресенские ворота - Resurrection Gate” (also known as “Иверские ворота - Iberian Gate”) is the only existing gate in the Kitai-gorod wall. It connects the north-western end of Red Square with Manege Square and gives its name to nearby Voskresenskaya Square<sup>[27]</sup> (Resurrection Square). Everyone took their hats off as they passed through the gates. It was customary for Tsars to pray at the shrine of the chapel in front of the gate before they entered the Kremlin. In *War and Peace*, Pierre Bezukhov, driving through Moscow on his return to St Petersburg, noticed “the Iberian shrine with innumerable tapers burning before the golden settings of the icons,” and the twentieth-century poet Marina Tsvetaeva wrote of the Iverskaya’s “small door where people pour into crowds,” leading into “the chapels of stars, the refuge from evil where the floor is polished by kisses.” A 1916 painting by Aristakh Lentulov depicting crowds of people approaching the chapel hangs in Tretyakov Gallery.<sup>[28]</sup>

Entering Red Square through the Resurrection Gate, you can see the Kazan Cathedral<sup>[29]</sup> on your left. The amazing State History Museum is located in the north end of the square. The enormous, elaborate facade occupying the east side of the square is the State Department Store, better known as GUM.<sup>[30]</sup> The mighty towers of the Kremlin dominate the west side of the square. Lenin’s Mausoleum, which is located near the centre of the Square, is still open to visitors.

At the far end of Red Square, the colourful confusion of onion domes and tent peaks is the Cathedral of St Basil the Blessed, the 16th-century church that is probably Moscow’s most recognisable sight. The original name of the church is the Intercession of the Virgin Cathedral, named for the feast day on which the army of Ivan IV the Terrible captured the city of Kazan in 1552. One chapel was built over the grave of Vasily (Basil) the Blessed, whose name has stuck to the whole church. According to legend, the two architects who built the cathedral, Barma and Postnik, were blinded by Ivan so that they could not re-create the masterpiece elsewhere.

Dmitry Shvidkovsky argues that St Basil’s “is like no other Russian building. Nothing similar can be found in the entire millennium of Byzantine tradition from the fifth to fifteenth century... a strangeness that astonishes by its unexpectedness, complexity and dazzling interleaving of the

manifold details of its design.”<sup>[31]</sup> According to Shvidkovsky, the cathedral predicted the climax of Russian national architecture in the seventeenth century.

St Basil’s came under threat on a number of occasions, the first being in 1812 when Napoleon ordered its destruction. Fortunately, his orders were not carried out. It was also damaged in the days following the October Revolution. It was closed to worshippers in 1929 and was removed from the list of protected buildings in 1933. Despite the arguments for its demolition as a part of Stalin’s reconstruction plans of Moscow, it survived to this day.

The statute standing in front of St Basil’s is of Kuzma Minin and Dmitry Pozharsky, the butcher from Nizhny Novgorod and the Muscovite Prince who played the leading role in ending the twenty-three months of Polish-Lithuanian military occupation of Moscow and driving the Poles out of Russia in 1612. The statute was commissioned in advance to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event; little did the commissioners know, however, that the anniversary year would itself be marked by a second patriotic war and a further occupation of the city, this time by the French. It was finally erected in 1818; the inscription on the base reads: “To citizen Minin and Price Pozharsky from a Grateful RUSSIA 1818.”<sup>[32]</sup>

“Александровский сад – the Alexander Gardens” is one of the most popular sites in Moscow as a part of Red Square. It was one of the first urban public parks in Moscow, built in the 1820s in the reign of Alexander I. Here is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the eternal flame where newly married couples lay flowers on their wedding day as a tribute to their grandparents who sacrificed their lives in the defence of their motherland in the Second World War.

As explained above, Red Square has a deeper meaning than just a “square” for the Russians. One can witness thousands of years of history walking the brick road of this plaza, where the glorious past of a great empire and the symbols of Russian culture and art are immortalised for the coming generations. For the Russians, it is considered as a symbol of “Russianness,” a source of pride and self-respect.

### **Moscow – The City of Literature**

It is usually St Petersburg that is considered as the centre of literature in Russia. There was no doubt a decline in the status of Moscow after the capital and the court were moved to St Petersburg. Western influence on literature in St Petersburg was obvious, whereas the Slavophiles idealised Moscow, whose way of life was more provincial and was closer to the cultural values of the Russian people. For them, the customs, traditions and cultural heritage of the old Rus’ were embodied in Moscow, reflecting the real Russian character.

The liberation of the nobles from obligatory state service in 1762 opened the door to Europe for the curious Russian gentry. Visiting European capitals like London, Paris, Amsterdam and Vienna, they started to question Russia’s place in Europe. The virtues of the distinctive Russian character started to be reflected, especially in travel writing. Dostoevsky used the terms “corrupt, materialist and egoistical” to describe Europe.<sup>[33]</sup> This lexicon started to be frequently seen in the works of Russian writers, the Slavophiles being the foremost among them. For Dostoevsky, it was

Russia's messianic mission and destiny to save the fallen West.

In the eyes of these writers, St Petersburg, as the symbol of European Russia, was a centre of corruption, foreign artifice, alien conventions and pretension. They idealised Moscow as the symbol of real Russian character and soul, uncorrupted by civilisation or artificial European influences. Especially in the national narrative of the nineteenth century, the old romantic ideal of native soil placed Moscow at the centre of the image of "pure Russia with real Russian virtues." In sum, Moscow, in a sense, became the antithesis of St Petersburg in the Russian literature.

Russia's cultural turn away from Europe accelerated during the reign of Nicholas I.<sup>[34]</sup> The Tsar and his ideologists felt sympathy for the Slavophile doctrine, which associated Russia with the eastern traditions of Byzantium. This departure of Russia from the European tradition led to the re-emergence of Moscow as the "genuine capital" of Russia. The conscious rejection of Europeanisation and return to the ancient native traditions was soon mythologised as a national renaissance in Russian cultural life, repercussions of which were soon seen in Russian literature.

Moscow's central place in Russian cultural history was strengthened after the Bolshevik Revolution with its status returned as the capital of Russia. According to Katerina Clark, culture was important to the new Soviet political hierarchy because it played a central role in articulating the new belief system. The Soviet state claimed to have dispensed with religion, and hence culture replaced many of religion's former functions. In fulfilling culture's sacral function, literature played the central role. Literature was elevated to enjoy a special status because it represented the most eloquent and elaborated version of the written word. As literature emerged as *primus inter pares* in every sphere of arts, there was a campaign for so-called literaturisation.<sup>[35]</sup>

### **Moscow – Cradle of Legendary Writers**

There are only a few cities in the world where so many writers are memorialised in statute form as in Moscow. Being the home of many legendary writers, Moscow has paid its tribute to them by immortalising them in statuary. Walking around Moscow, you are amazed by the number of statutes, busts and plaques dedicated to these famous names. It gives one a unique pleasure to walk the streets and pavements where these legendary people have left their footprints. This paper will try to reflect some of the stories of these most famous Muscovite writers as well as some of those others who had significant connections with the city.

#### **Alexander Pushkin**

Pushkin is considered by many as the greatest poet of Russia and the founder of Russian literature. He occupies a special place in the hearts of many Russians. Pushkin spent much of his life in St Petersburg. However, Moscow also occupied an important place in Pushkin's life. He was born in Moscow, passed his childhood there and got married in that city. Today, it is possible to see his imprint scattered around Moscow.

His statute<sup>[36]</sup> on Pushkin Square is not only a popular site for the tourists, but also a rendezvous spot in the summer months, especially for young Muscovites. Another statute of Pushkin



and his wife, Natalya Goncharova, stands on the famous Arbat Street. The house where Pushkin was born in 1799 (Бауманская Улица 40) no longer exists but it is possible to see his bust at the site. In 1811 Pushkin's family moved to St Petersburg, where he completed his education. After his marriage, Pushkin and his wife started to live in Moscow, in a two-storey building on Arbat Street, which houses a Pushkin museum now. The medicine chest that was used by the doctor who treated his fatal injuries, his own charming line drawings, his death mask and the pen with which he wrote his last poem are perhaps the most interesting items to see in the museum.

### Nikolai Gogol

Gogol is often perceived as a writer of St Petersburg. That is to some extent true since he achieved his fame there with St Petersburg stories full of criticism of the city and its inhabitants. Gogol was born in the Ukrainian Cossack village of Sorochyntsi, in the Poltava Governorate of the Russian Empire, present-day Ukraine. He spent most of his adult life in St Petersburg. Yet he spent his last winter in Moscow, where he died on 21 February 1852, and was buried there in the cemetery of the Danilovsky Monastery. In 1931 his remains were moved to the Novodevichy cemetery and a bust of the writer stands there.

The writer's statute was erected in 1909 on Prechistensky Boulevard, which is now called Gogolevsky Boulevard. The opening ceremony was held on 26 April 1909, in the year of the writer's centennial. Sculptor Nikolai Andreev's masterpiece perfectly reflected the mood of the writer in his last years – sick, lonely and mournful, but still dignified. The monument stood safely until 1951 when it was carried over to the territory of the Donskoi Monastery. In 1959 it was displaced to Nikitsky Boulevard (Никитский бульвар), in the yard close to house No. 7. Gogol moved into that two-storey Moscow mansion in the winter of 1848. He spent four years of his life there until his death. It was in this house that he wrote the second volume of his novel *Dead Souls*. Now the house is used by the Gogol Municipal Library, and his two-roomed flat has been made into a memorial museum.

There are two statutes of Gogol in Moscow, with completely different characters. The second statute of Gogol, made by sculptor Nikolai Tomsky, was erected in 1952 on Gogolevsky Boulevard. There is a story that Stalin ordered the erection of a new statue because he disliked the mournful look of the original statue. Thus, the “new Gogol” stands with a slight smile.

### Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Dostoevsky is often associated with St Petersburg. However, his dislike of that city is obviously visible in *Crime and Punishment*. Belonging to the Slavophile camp, Dostoevsky idealised Moscow as the city with true Russian spirit. Dostoevsky was actually born in Moscow (1821) and lived there with his family until 1838, when he went to St Petersburg to study at the Engineering College. Despite living in St Petersburg, Dostoevsky's visits to his native city were very frequent. The family's Moscow flat on the grounds of Mariinsky Hospital has been re-created according to descriptions written by Fyodor's brother. Visitors can see the family's library, toys and many other personal items, including Fyodor's quill pen and an original autograph.

A statute of the great writer stands in front of the Mariinsky Hospital, created in 1919 by

sculptor Sergey Merkurov. The statute was initially erected on Tsvetnoy Boulevard (Цветной бульвар) and was later moved back to its original place, where it can be seen today. In 1997, the city of Moscow honoured the writer with a new and bigger statute in a very prominent and central position in front of the building of the Russian State Library. The statute was created by sculptor Alexander Rukavishnikov. The library itself was also renamed the Dostoevsky Library in his honour at the same time.

The writer's name has been given to a Moscow metro station that was opened in June 2010. The murals in the metro station, despite being criticised by some Muscovites for being depressive, depict scenes from some of Dostoevsky's best-known novels.

### Lev Tolstoy

Tolstoy was born in Yasnaya Polyana, the family estate in the Tula region of Russia. He spent a few years living in Moscow during his childhood. In 1851, he went to the Caucasus and joined the army. It was about this time that he started writing. Leaving the army in 1856, Tolstoy again spent some time living in Moscow and it was there, in September 1862, that he married Sofiya (Sonya) Behrs.<sup>[37]</sup> Their marriage took place in the Church of Nativity of the Virgin in the Kremlin, situated within the Terem Palace. Tolstoy gave up his former aristocratic lifestyle and adopted a simple farming life, staying at his estate in Yasnaya Polyana for the following two decades. Nevertheless, his regular visits to Moscow continued, intensifying during his work on the manuscript of *War and Peace*.

Tolstoy bought an estate in Khamovniki (Хамовники)<sup>[38]</sup> in 1882 and the family spent most of their winters there for the next twenty years. In 1901, Tolstoy returned to Yasnaya Polyana permanently. Today, there are touristic tours from Moscow to this house, where it is possible to see Tolstoy's famous desk at which he wrote some of his masterpieces. This desk is also depicted in the famous painting of Tolstoy by the painter Nikolai Ge that is being exhibited in Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

A statute of the writer can be found at the eastern end of the wooden park of Maiden's Field, the triangular piece of open space that borders Boslhaya Pirogovskaya ulitsa at the top of ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. It was here that Pierre Bezukhov was held by his French captors in *War and Peace* and that he was forced to watch his fellow prisoners being shot.<sup>[39]</sup> Tolstoy died in the small town of Astapovo in 1910 and was buried at Yasnaya Polyana without an Orthodox funeral.

### Mikhail Lermontov

Mikhail Yur'yevich Lermontov, "the poet of the Caucasus," is considered as one of the greatest figures of Russian Romanticism. Lermontov had his roots in Moscow, even though he spent most of his life outside the city. He was born there, in October 1814, studied at the university and returned between periods of exile.

Lermontov came into the public eye in 1837 when, on the occasion of Alexander Pushkin's death in a duel, he wrote a poem called *On the Death of the Poet*. As a tragic coincidence, Lermontov's fate was similar to Pushkin's. He was killed in a duel in 1841 just like his hero,

Pushkin, four years earlier.

The city of Moscow paid its tribute to the great poet with a statue that was erected on 4 June 1965 in a park on Lermontovskaya Square (Лермонтовская площадь) outside the Krasniye Vorota metro station. The monument was built near the site of the house where Lermontov was born 150 years earlier. The lines from his famous *Sashka* are inscribed behind the statue of the poet:

Москва, Москва! . . люблю тебя как сын,  
Как русский, — сильно, пламенно и нежно.<sup>[40]</sup>

Moscow, Moscow, I love you like a son,  
Like a Russian – strongly, fierily, tenderly.

The pink house at No. 2 on ulitsa Malaya Molchanovka is the house where Lermontov lived with his grandmother during his Moscow years. Today it is the Lermontov House Museum, which contains some of his early writings, sketches and original furniture.

### Vladimir Mayakovsky

Mayakovsky was born in a small village in Georgia in 1893 and moved to Moscow as a child. He worked for the Bolsheviks during the civil war, designing propaganda posters and reading his work at the Poets' Café on Tverskaya ulitsa. He was proclaimed to be “the best, most talented poet of the Soviet epoch” by Stalin and he became a cultural icon of the Soviet regime. His works were reprinted and taught in Soviet schools.

Mayakovsky shot himself in 1930, leaving a poetic suicide note behind. Moscow paid its tribute to the futurist poet with a range of memorials dedicated to him. His statue stands in Triumfalnaya ploshchad (formerly Mayakovskaya ploshchad), erected in 1958. The metro station on the square still bears the name of the poet.

Mayakovsky moved frequently within Moscow, living at different times in the Presnya district around Chistye Prudy near Taganka, in Sokolniki and most famously at 3 Lubyansky proezd, just around the corner from the Lubyanka, which is now the Mayakovsky Museum.<sup>[41]</sup> Mayakovsky's grave is in the Novodevichy cemetery. There are regular celebrations held here on the poet's birthday, 19 July, by officials from the Mayakovsky Museum.

### Maxim Gorky

Gorky was born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1868 and became an orphan at the age of eleven. He was brought up by his grandmother. His real name was Alexei Maximovich Peshkov, but he began using the pseudonym Gorky (literally “bitter”) in 1892. The name reflected his determination to speak the bitter truth. By 1899, he was openly associating with the emerging Marxist social-democratic movement. He publicly opposed the Tsarist regime and was arrested many times. Gorky became Lenin's friend after they met in 1902. He was in Moscow during the uprising of December 1905.

In 1906, the Bolsheviks sent him on a fund-raising trip to the United States, where he wrote his famous novel of revolutionary conversion and struggle, *Mamь - The Mother*. From 1906 to 1913, Gorky lived on the island of Capri. An amnesty granted for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Romanov dynasty allowed Gorky to return to Russia in 1913, where he witnessed both the February and October Revolutions. In 1921, Gorky returned to Italy on health grounds: he had tuberculosis.

Gorky's definitive return from Fascist Italy in 1932 was a major propaganda victory for the Soviets. He was decorated with the Order of Lenin and given a mansion on Malaya Nikitskaya (the Ryabushinsky Mansion) in Moscow and a dacha in the suburbs. The mansion today houses the Gorky Museum. One of the central Moscow streets, Tverskaya, was renamed in his honour, as was the city of his birth. The largest fixed-wing aircraft in the world in the mid-1930s, the Tupolev ANT-20, was named "Maxim Gorky" in his honour.

With the increase of Stalinist repression, Gorky was placed under unannounced house arrest in his house near Moscow. The sudden death of Gorky's son, Maxim Peshkov, in May 1934 was followed by the death of Maxim Gorky himself in June 1936. The question of whether he was poisoned by the authorities is one that has never been fully resolved.<sup>[42]</sup> He was buried in the Kremlin Wall near Soviet leaders. In the final Moscow show trial in 1938, two of the defendants were accused of his murder. Stalin and Molotov were among those who carried Gorky's coffin during the funeral.

#### Boris Pasternak

Pasternak was born in 1890 in a Moscow house situated on Oruzheiny pereulok near the intersection with Karetnyi Ryad. He spent his childhood in another apartment in an attractive district on Myasnitskaya ulitsa near the Chistye Prudy metro station. Tolstoy and Scriabin were close friends of the wealthy Pasternak family. Inspired by Scriabin, Pasternak aspired first to be a musician and became a student at the Moscow Conservatory. In 1910 he abruptly left for the German University of Marburg.

Pasternak welcomed the February Revolution but soon became doubtful about the Bolshevik takeover due to the following Red Terror. He moved to Berlin in 1922 but soon returned to Moscow in 1923. In 1932 he was given a small flat in the Herzen House on Tverskoi Boulevard and in 1937 he acquired two rooms in a house built by the Union of Soviet Writers at 17 Lavrushinsky pereulok.<sup>[43]</sup> Stalin was an admirer of Pasternak's work but never agreed to the personal meeting that Pasternak requested.

Pasternak submitted his masterpiece *Doctor Zhivago* to the literary journal *Novyi Mir*, which refused to publish the novel. The manuscript was smuggled into Italy, where it was published in 1957. *Doctor Zhivago* became an instant sensation throughout the non-Communist world upon its release. On 23 October 1958, Boris Pasternak was announced as the winner of the Nobel Prize. The tribute created a major reaction in the Soviet Union. On 31 October 1958, Pasternak was expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers. He reluctantly declined the Nobel Prize due to the increasing pressure.

He died not long after this event in 1960, and he was buried at Peredelkino. *Doctor Zhivago* circulated in underground editions among dissident intellectuals during the late Soviet period but was not published in Russia until the *glasnost* era of the late 1980s.<sup>[44]</sup> Pasternak's son Yevgeny eventually accepted the Nobel Prize was on his behalf some thirty years later.

### Mikhail Bulgakov

Bulgakov was born in Kiev in 1891. After graduating from the medical faculty of Kiev University, Bulgakov started serving as a surgeon. In 1921 Bulgakov moved to Moscow and settled near Patriarch's Ponds, close to the Mayakovskaya metro station on Bolshaya Sadovaya ulitsa, No. 10. The 1920s witnessed the publication of several of his works, including *The White Guard*, set in Kiev during the Civil War, *The Heart of a Dog*, set in an old district inhabited by gentry and intelligentsia around the Kropotkinskaya metro, and a number of plays.<sup>[45]</sup>

Bulgakov is probably best known for his extraordinary novel *The Master and Margarita*, about the devil's visit to Moscow, which was published twenty-six years after his death. The story opens with two figures sitting on a bench at Patriarch's Ponds, an attractive open space inside the Garden Ring on Malaya Bronnaya ulitsa. It is here that the poet Ivan Bezdomnyi and the literary agent Mikhail Berlioz meet the mysterious Professor Woland, who predicts Berlioz's imminent demise under the wheels of a tram. From there, a short walk up the Garden Ring towards Triumfalnaya ploshchad takes you to the five-storey grey apartment building where Bulgakov lived during the early 1920s. Flat 50 at Bolshaya Sadovaya was to become the model for Berlioz's flat, which Woland and his associates take over in the novel, and where Margarita acts as hostess for Satan's ball. The building became a communal house after the Revolution, where Bulgakov and his first wife Tasya managed to acquire a room.<sup>[46]</sup>

Bulgakov's old flat, and the attic of the apartment building in which parts of *The Master and Margarita* are set, have since the 1980s become a gathering spot for Bulgakov's fans. Since 2007 the flat has been operated as the Bulgakov Museum. It contains personal belongings, photos, and exhibitions related to Bulgakov's life and his different works. Various poetic and literary events are often held in the flat.

### Marina Tsvetaeva

Marina Tsvetaeva was born in 1892 in Moscow in an intellectual and relatively wealthy family. Her father was a professor of fine art at the University of Moscow and later founded the Alexander III Museum, which is now known as the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Tsvetaeva's mother was a concert pianist. The tragedies in Tsvetaeva's life started in 1906 when she lost her mother. After spending some time in Switzerland and Germany, she returned to Russia in 1911, where she married Sergei Efron.

The couple moved to an apartment on Borislebovsky pereulok, which is preserved as a museum. After the 1917 Revolution, Efron joined the White Army, and Marina returned to Moscow, where she was trapped during the terrible famine years. In 1919, she placed both of her daughters in a state orphanage, with the hope that they would be better fed there. Her younger daughter Irina died there of starvation in 1920. The child's death caused Tsvetaeva great grief and regret. Efron,

who fought against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War, had to leave for Prague after the defeat of the White Army. Tsvetaeva and Alya joined him there and they stayed away from their homeland for 17 long years. Abandoning his former opposition to the Soviet government, Efron agreed to work for the secret police. In 1937 both Efron and Alya returned to Moscow. Tsvetaeva joined them in 1939, together with her son Georgy.

Alya and Efron were soon accused of espionage and arrested. Alya was sentenced to 15 years of hard labour and Efron was shot in the Lubyanka. Tsvetaeva could not endure the grief and pain and hanged herself in 1941; she was buried in an unmarked grave. Her son also lost his life in combat in 1944.

The writers mentioned in this paper are the most influential and important Moscow names, whose fame has reached every corner of the world. However, there are other important writers, such as Anton Chekhov, Andrei Belyi, Alexander Blok, Sergei Yesenin or Osip Mandelstam, who have also made great contributions to Moscow's cultural life with their plentiful literary work consolidating its central role in Russian cultural history.

### **Moscow – The City of Theatres**

Moscow has always been the centre of theatrical art in Russia. Today, there are over 500 theatres in the country, and 150 of them are in Moscow. The city offers the best stages and the best performances of the country. The first theatres appeared in Russia as pagan shows. Church theatre performing Biblical stories appeared as an alternative to the pagan theatre in the sixteenth century. Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich is considered to be founder of the first Russian theatre; in 1672, he opened a theatre at the court in Moscow. In 1702 Peter the First ordered the building of a public theatre on Red Square. In the nineteenth century, the place of Moscow as the centre of theatrical life was strengthened with the foundation of the Maly (Small) Theatre in 1824 and the Bolshoi (Big) Theatre in 1825.

The Bolshoi Theatre was built on the site of Petrovsky Theatre, which was built in 1780 by an English entrepreneur named Michael Maddox. The current theatre was built on Theatre Square between 1821 and 1824 by architect Andrei Mikhailov (who had also built the nearby Maly Theatre in 1824) and it opened on 18 January 1825 as the Bolshoi Petrovsky Theatre. The building is one of the best examples of Russian architecture and the largest theatre structure in Europe. The Bolshoi Theatre rapidly gained an international reputation for opera and ballet. Tchaikovsky's ballets and operas were performed there and Rachmaninov worked as a conductor. Such names as Fyodor Chaliapin, Antonina Nezhdanova, Yekaterina Geltser, Sergei Lemeshev, Ivan Kozlovsky, Leonid Sobinov and the ballet dancers Galina Ulanova, Marina Semeneva and Olga Lepeshinskaya all performed here.<sup>[47]</sup>

The Maly Theatre is agreed to have been established in 1824, when the Imperial Theatre Company moved to the yellow building standing in Teatralnaya ploshchad. The centennial of the Maly was celebrated in 1924, and the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1999. However, the official bicentennial was moved to 2006, based on the establishment of the Imperial Moscow Theatre in 1806. Alexander Ostrovsky's name became closely associated with the Maly Theatre, and he is considered to be the

leading playwright of nineteenth century Russia. Alexander Griboedov was another leading figure whose works were often performed at the theatre. Griboedov's statue can be seen on Chistoprudy Boulevard. Famous actors of the Maly Theatre included Mikhail Shchepkin, Pavel Mochalov, Maria Yermolova and Konstantin Stanislavsky.

The decision to lift the imperial monopoly on theatres in 1812 made a big impact in theatre world of Moscow and private theatres started to flourish rapidly. The first example was the Korsh Theatre, which was established on Petrovsky pereulok. The Korsh Theatre moved into a new building on Kamergensky pereulok in 1885, which later became the home of the Moscow Art Theatre.<sup>[48]</sup> Another private theatre was the Fantastic Theatre, set up by Mikhail Lentovsky during the 1880s. That theatre eventually went bankrupt.

The Private Opera was a company established in 1885 by famous Russian industrialist Savva Mamontov. The Private Opera made a great contribution to the cultural life of Moscow. Sergei Rachmaninov joined the opera as a conductor in 1897. It was also Mamontov who presented Fyodor Chaliapin to Moscow's audiences in 1896. Chaliapin was perhaps the most talented bass singer of his time. His major break onto the Moscow stage was with the role of Ivan the Terrible in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Maid of Pskov*.

The Moscow Art Theatre (Московский художественный академический театр, МХАТ) was founded in 1898 by Constantin Stanislavski, together with the playwright and director Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko. The Art Theatre achieved its fame by staging Anton Chekhov's four major works, beginning with its production of *The Seagull* in 1898. This production was so successful that the theatre adopted the seagull as its emblem. The theatre continued to stage plays after the October Revolution of 1917 and was one of the foremost state-supported theatres of the Soviet Union. The theatre was officially renamed the Gorky Moscow Art Theatre in 1932. In 1987, the theatre split into two entirely different organisations: the Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre, which remained in the old theatre on Kamergensky pereulok, and the Gorky Moscow Art Theatre. The Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre is now located on Tverskoi Boulevard.

The Taganka Theatre was founded in 1964 by Yuri Lyubimov in the Brezhnev era. Being located on Taganka Square, the theatre became popular among Moscow audiences, with Vladimir Vysotsky and Alla Demidova as the leading actors. The theatre staged a very successful interpretation of Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*. The repertoire chosen by Lyubimov created tensions with Soviet authorities, who banned many of Lyubimov's productions. The director was finally stripped of his Soviet citizenship and exiled to the West in 1984. The theatre struggled with growing instability and difficulties in the post-communist period; however, it retained its important place in the theatrical life of Moscow.

The turn of the 20th century marked the burst of theatrical activities and searching for new styles. Today, the Russian theatre enjoys freedom of creativity and there is a range of so-called easy genre theatres in Moscow: puppet theatre, music theatre, operetta, etc. New experimental theatrical studios looking for new art fringes appear now and again.

### **Moscow – The City of Music**

Russia is perhaps one of the leading countries of the world with the richest traditions in the art of music. Russian composers have made great contributions to the musical heritage of the world with numerous pieces of art. A vital milestone in the Russian history of music is the development of “Rus,” a distinctive musical culture of the medieval period that dates back to the eleventh century. During the period of Muscovy, a distinct line was formed between the sacred music of the Orthodox Church and that of secular music used for entertainment.

In the eighteenth century, Peter the Great introduced western music fashions to Russia. During the subsequent reign of Empresses Elisabeth and Catherine, the Russian imperial court attracted many prominent musicians, many from Italy. This was the period in which the superiority of Petersburg over Moscow was felt as a result of the active involvement of the court in the field of classical music.

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of many outstanding romantic and classical composers and the development of a wide variety of music styles. The first great Russian composer to exploit native Russian music traditions in the realm of secular music was Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857), who composed the early Russian-language operas *Ivan Susanin* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. These operas gained fame for relying on distinctively Russian tunes and themes and for being in the vernacular.

Russian folk music became the primary source for the younger generation of composers. A group that called itself “The Mighty Five,” headed by Balakirev (1837-1910) and including Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), Mussorgsky (1839-81), Borodin (1833-87) and César Cui (1835-1918), proclaimed its purpose to compose and popularise Russian national traditions in classical music. This period also saw the foundation of the Russian Musical Society (RMS) in 1859, led by composer-pianists Anton (1829-94) and Nikolay (1835-81) Rubinstein. The Mighty Five was often presented as the RMS’s rival, with the Five embracing their Russian national identity and the RMS being musically more conservative. However, the RMS founded Russia’s first conservatories in St Petersburg and in Moscow: the former trained the great Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, best known for ballets like *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*.

The Moscow Conservatory is perhaps one of the most favourite places to visit for the lovers of Russian classical music. A statue of Pyotr Tchaikovsky stands in front of the main entrance of the yellow building on Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa. It was co-founded in 1866 as the Moscow Imperial Conservatory by Nikolai Rubinstein (brother of the famous Russian pianist and composer Anton Rubinstein, who founded the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1862) and Prince Nikolai Petrovitch Troubetzkoy.

Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) arrived in Moscow in 1866 to teach theory and harmony at the Moscow Conservatory, a post he held until approximately 1878. In 1940, the conservatory was re-named as the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory and it still bears this name. Tchaikovsky introduced his most famous works, the opera *Eugene Onegin* and *Swan Lake*, when he was working at the Moscow Conservatory. Another building which carries the name of the composer is the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, located on Triumfalnaya Square near the Mayakovskaya metro station. The former Novinsky Boulevard was also named as ulitsa Chaikovskogo in his honour. The International Tchaikovsky Competition, which is held every four years in Moscow, has perhaps one



of the most prestigious musical awards in the field of classical music.

If Tchaikovsky is the best-known Russian composer outside of Russia, the most famous successor in his style is Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943), who studied at the Moscow Conservatory. Rachmaninoff moved to Moscow in 1885 at the age of twelve and entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1888. Rachmaninoff gave some of the greatest examples of his work during his Moscow years. The Russian Orthodox Church and Moscow inspired him greatly in his coral symphony *The Bells*. He said: “If I have been at all successful in making bells vibrate with human emotion in my works, it is largely due to the fact that most of my life was lived amid vibrations of the bells of Moscow.” His *Vespers*, written in 1915 for an unaccompanied choir, used traditional Russian plainchant as its inspiration.<sup>[49]</sup> Following the October Revolution, Rachmaninoff left Russia in November 1917, spending the rest of his life abroad. Rachmaninoff never returned to Russia, but Moscow honoured him with a statute that stands on Strasnoi Boulevard at the top of ulitsa Petrovka. A concert hall was also named the Rachmaninoff Hall, which is located near the Moscow Conservatory.

Another well-known Russian composer, Alexander Scriabin, was born in Moscow in 1871 and studied at the Moscow Conservatory. Having small hands for a pianist, he damaged his right hand while practicing. His doctor said he would never recover, and he wrote his first large-scale masterpiece, his Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor, as a “cry against God, against fate.” Scriabin was one of the most innovative and most controversial of early modern composers who had a major impact on the music world over time, and he influenced composers like Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky. Moscow paid its tribute to the composer with a memorial plaque erected outside the house where Scriabin spent the last three years of his life before his untimely death in 1915. The two-storey mansion situated at 11 Bolshoi Nikolopeskovsky pereulok today houses the A.N. Scriabin Memorial Museum. It was here that he wrote musical masterpieces: the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Sonatas; Two Dances, “Garlands” and “the Dark Flame”, Composition 73; and Five Preludes, Composition 74. Each year the museum hosts a competition to award scholarships to young musicians.

Sergei Prokofiev, who was born in Ukraine in 1891, is regarded as one of the major composers of the 20th century. Prokofiev was not a Muscovite by birth, but he lived in Moscow for a significant period. After studying at the St Petersburg Conservatory, he left Russia shortly after the Revolution. In 1936 he returned to Moscow and was given a luxury apartment on Zemlyanoi Val. Prokofiev composed his best-known works in his Moscow years: the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and *Peter and the Wolf*. Collaborating with the famous film director Sergei Eisenstein, Prokofiev wrote the music for the films *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) and *Ivan the Terrible* (1943). Prokofiev died on 5 March 1953, exactly the same day as Stalin, and was buried in the Novodevichy cemetery. Moscow honoured the great composer with a museum that was unveiled on 1 June 1966 on Tokmakov pereulok near the Baumanskaya metro station. The municipal Children’s Musical School No: 1 was also given the composer’s name. In May 1991, in commemoration of Prokofiev’s centenary, a monument to the composer was placed in front of the school building. In 2011, a high-profile festival was held in Moscow devoted to the 120<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the composer. In May 2011 the Sergei Prokofiev Museum in Moscow opened the “Sergei Prokofiev: Life’s Pages” exhibition, in which Prokofiev’s memorial piano could be seen.

Another great name in Russian classical music, Dmitry Shostakovich, was born in St Petersburg in 1906. Growing up in that city, Shostakovich is rightly considered as a Leningrader, but he composed some of his most famous works during his years in Moscow. Shostakovich and his family were evacuated from Leningrad in 1941, when the Nazis encircled the city. Shostakovich settled in the city of Kuibyshev, where he wrote his Seventh Symphony, the *Leningrad Symphony*. He came to Moscow in 1943 following the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad and started to teach at the Moscow Conservatory. His family lived in an apartment on Myasnitskaya ulitsa until 1943 and then moved to a larger apartment on Kutuzovsky prospect. The 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Symphonies as well as Eighth String Quartet came during his Moscow years. In 1954, Shostakovich wrote the Festive Overture, Opus 96, which was used as the theme music for the 1980 Summer Olympics. Shostakovich became the subject of the criticism and restrictions of the Soviet regime. In 1962 the composer moved to an apartment on Briusov pereulok, where he composed his 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Symphonies. Shostakovich died in 1975 in Moscow and was buried in the Novodevichy cemetery.

### **Conclusion – Moscow: The Centre of Russian Cultural Heritage**

Russia is perhaps one of the leading countries in the world that have made great contributions to the world's cultural heritage with numerous works of art ranging from literature to classical music and from poetry to ballet. Today, many people visit Russia not only for the purposes of tourism or sight-seeing but also for witnessing its great cultural heritage. Moscow, offering great choices with its countless theatres, beautiful concert halls, ballets, operas and classical music concerts, has always been at the very centre of the attention of art lovers. It is not a surprise that the majority of the spectators at the Bolshoi Theatre are foreigners who feel themselves lucky for getting the opportunity to watch a ballet or opera in a hall where once Tsars took their seats and where some of the greatest Russian soloists or ballerinas have performed.

Today Russia is a major destination for Turkish tourists with the decision of the Russian authorities to abolish the visa requirement. With the increase in the number of tourists, the variety of the campaigns offered by the tour agencies are expanding, Moscow and St Petersburg being the most popular among them. In the brochures printed by the tour agencies and in audio-visual advertisements we frequently witness that St Petersburg is referred to as being the “cultural capital” of Russia. This reference might have been partially true for a certain period, but taking a closer look into Russian cultural history, one can easily acknowledge the fact that this definition is far from being accurate.

The foundation of St Petersburg and the enforced process of Westernisation caused by the Petrine Revolution in Russian culture temporarily suspended Moscow's central place. During the reign of Peter, the upper classes of St Petersburg were forced to imitate the European way of life, while Moscow remained the symbol of real Russian character and soul. Ironically, the enforced Westernisation process in Russian culture eventually resulted in the strengthening of Russian traditional patterns in all sorts of art from painting to classical music, from ballet to theatrical art, as Russian artists started creating works based on a new interpretation of Western classical arts with the colours of Russian folk traditions.

This “Russianisation process” in all fields of art enabled Moscow to consolidate its central

place in Russian cultural life. The interpretation of Western arts with Russian traditional patterns led to the creation of the most unique and precious masterpieces gifted by Russian artists to the cultural heritage of the world. The place of Moscow as the centre of Russian cultural life was further strengthened and confirmed after the October Revolution as the city became the capital of the USSR. During this period, Soviet artists made major contributions to Russian cultural life with great works in all fields of the arts.

As Alexander Pushkin, Nikolai Karamzin, Lev Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Nikolai Gogol all rightly mentioned in their works, Moscow is not only the political capital of Russia, but the capital of art and the capital of Russian culture. It is simply the heart of Russia.

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<sup>[1]</sup>Caroline Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2006, Introduction, p.xvii

<sup>[2]</sup>Александр Сергеевич Пушкин, А.С.Пушкин, Евгений Онегин, Роман В Стихах - Собрание сочинений в 10 томах, Том четвертый . Поэмы, Сказки, Электронная публикация — РВБ, Версия 2.2 от 30 января 2002 г, No:836 <http://www.rvb.ru/pushkin/01text/04onegin/01onegin/0836.htm>

<sup>[3]</sup>Татьяна Вишневецкая, Альбум Москва, Издательство Яркий город, Санкт-Петербург, 2006, p.3

<sup>[4]</sup>See details in Н. М. Карамзин, *История государства Российского*, Репринтное воспроизведение издания пятого, выпущенного в трех книгах с приложением «Ключа» П. М. Строева Москва, 1988, <http://www.rvb.ru/18vek/karamzin/4igr/toc.htm>

<sup>[5]</sup>Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Marxism*, Stanford University Press, California, 1979, p.57

<sup>[6]</sup>Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History*, p.xxi

<sup>[7]</sup>Лев Николаевич Толстой, *Война и мир*, 1867, [http://az.lib.ru/t/tolstoj\\_lew\\_nikolaewich/text\\_0040.shtml](http://az.lib.ru/t/tolstoj_lew_nikolaewich/text_0040.shtml)

<sup>[8]</sup>Robert W. Thurston, *Liberal City, Conservative State: Moscow and Russia's Urban Crisis, 1906-1914*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1987, p.74

<sup>[9]</sup>Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, New York, 2002, p.157

<sup>[10]</sup>Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, p.162

<sup>[11]</sup>The name “Dolgoruky – long-armed” derived from his reputation as a ruthless person. His statute was commissioned by another ruthless dictator, Josef Stalin, to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Moscow. Finally the statute was unveiled on Tverskaya Square in 1954 after the

dictator's death. Today, it is still one of the most popular touristic sites in Moscow.

[12]Иван Забелин, Основание Города и Боярские Кучки 1153 год., в Марина Федотова, Кирил Королев, Москва- История Города От Участников и Очевидцев, Автобиография, Москва 2010, p.24

[13]Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, p.151

[14]Вишневская, Альбом Москва, p.3

[15]T. Geidor and I. Kharitonova, Moscow, Amarant Publishers, Moscow, 2005, p.4

[16]Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, p.215

[17]Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History*, p.1

[18]Ivan Yegorovich Zabelin (29 September 1820, Tver – 13 January 1908, Moscow) was a Russian historian and archaeologist with a Slavophile bent who helped establish the National History Museum on Red Square and presided over this institution until 1906. He was the foremost authority on the history of the city of Moscow and a key figure in the nineteenth-century Russian Romantic Nationalism.

[19]Known as “Ivan the Great” or “The Grand Prince of all Rus” (Великий князь всея Руси). He is also sometimes referred to as the “gatherer of the Russian lands” as he tripled the territory of his state.

[20]Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History*, p.7

[21]The theory of Moscow as the Third Rome was formulated apparently sometime in the 1530s by the monk Filofei (Philotheus). Filofei articulated his theory in one terse sentence: “Dva Rima padosha, a tretii stoit, a chetvertom ne byti”: “Two Romes have fallen, their third stands, and a fourth will not be.” Implicit in it was the belief that Russia was destined to rule the world and that the Russian tsar was the ruler of all humanity. The responsibility of preserving the world's cultural heritage was now on the shoulders of Muscovy. Even in the nineteenth century, this religious mission remained one of the main springs of Pan-Slavist thinking.

[22]See details in Nonna Vladimirskaya and Rimma Kostikova, *Art and History of The Kremlin of Moscow*, Moscow, 2000, p.10-12

[23]Kathleen Berton Murrell, *Moscow: An Illustrated History*, New York, 2003, p.31

[24]Brooke, *Moscow: A Cultural History*, p.9

[25]Г.В.Носовский, А.Т.Фоменко, *Москва в Свете Новой Хронологии*, Москва, 2010, p.138

[26]Streltsy (Стрельцы – shooters) were the units of Russian guardsmen from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries, armed with firearms. The first Streltsy units were created by Ivan the

Terrible sometime between 1545 and 1550. The Streltsy of Moscow guarded the Kremlin, performed general guard duty and participated in military operations. They also carried out general police and fire-brigade functions in Moscow. The Streltsy became something of a “praetorian element” in Muscovite politics in the late seventeenth century. In 1682 they attempted to prevent Peter the Great from coming to the throne in favor of his half-brother, Ivan. After the fall of Sophia Alekseyevna in 1689, the government of Peter the Great engaged in a process of gradual limitation of Streltsy military and political influence. The Streltsy revolted while Peter was in Europe. Peter, following his return, crushed the Streltsy with savage reprisals, including public executions and torture.

[27]In 1918, the square was named Revolution Square (Площадь Революции - Ploshchad Revolyutsii) after the October Revolution

[28]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.36

[29]The Kazan Cathedral was built to commemorate the victory over the Poles in 1612. Demolished in 1936, the Cathedral was reconstructed in the post-communist era by Oleg Zhurin in 1993.

[30]The present-day GUM shopping centre was completed in 1893 by Alexander Pomerantsev.

[31]Dmitry Shvidkovsky, Russian Architecture and the West, Yale University Press, 2007, p.126

[32]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.40

[33]Федор Михайлович Достоевский, Зимние заметки о летних впечатлениях, 1863, [http://az.lib.ru/d/dostoewskij\\_f\\_m/text\\_0040.shtml](http://az.lib.ru/d/dostoewskij_f_m/text_0040.shtml)

[34]Н.К. Шильдер, Александр - Его жизнь и царствование Иллюстрированная История Москва, 2010.

[35]Katerina Clark, Moscow, the Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of the Soviet Culture, Harvard University Press, London, 2011, p.82-83

[36]The statue of Pushkin was unveiled in 1880 on Tverskoi Boulevard and was moved in 1950 to its present position.

[37]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.121

[38]Khamovniki is a district of the Central Administrative Okrug of the city of Moscow. The district extends from Bolshoy Kamenny Bridge into the Luzhniki bend of the Moskva River; the northern boundary with the Arbat District follows Znamenka Street, Gogolevsky Boulevard, Sivtsev Vrazhek and Borodinsky Bridge. The district contains the Pushkin Museum, the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, Devichye Pole medical campus, Novodevichy Convent and memorial cemetery, and Luzhniki Stadium. The stretch of Khamovniki between the Boulevard Ring and the Garden Ring, known as the Golden Mile, is downtown Moscow’s most expensive housing area. The central part of Khamovniki is dominated by the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, a 2000 replica of a nineteenth-century cathedral by Konstantin Thon, which was destroyed in 1931.

[39]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.122

[40]Миха́йл Ю́рьевич Ле́рмонтов, САШКА : Нравственная поэма, Г Л А В А I, 7 <http://feb-web.ru/feb/lermont/texts/lerm06/vol04/le4-041-.htm>

[41]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.125

[42]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.132

[43]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.134

[44]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.136

[45]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.137

[46]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.136

[47]Geidor and Kharitonova, Moscow, p.53

[48]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.152

[49]Brooke, Moscow: A Cultural History, p.169

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