

Samovars in the Snow

The Rise of a Distinctively Russian
Tea Culture

Research Question

When and how did tea become an integral part of Russian culture?

Sources

- Memoirs
- Cookbooks
- Domestic encyclopedias
- European travelogues
- *Russkii Arkhiv*
- Literary works

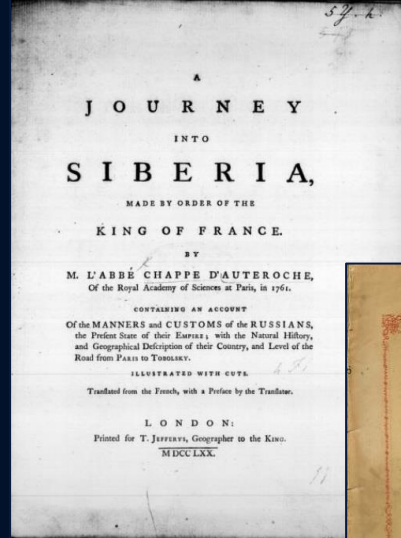


Fig. 1. French travelogue.

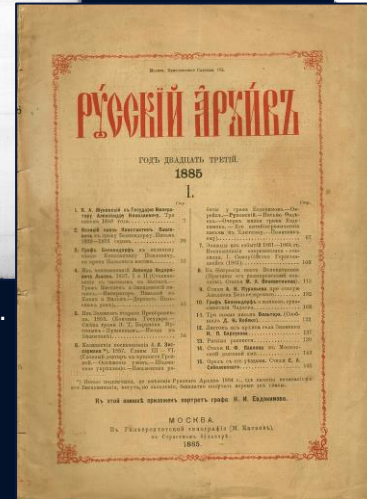


Fig. 2. *Russkii Arkhiv*.

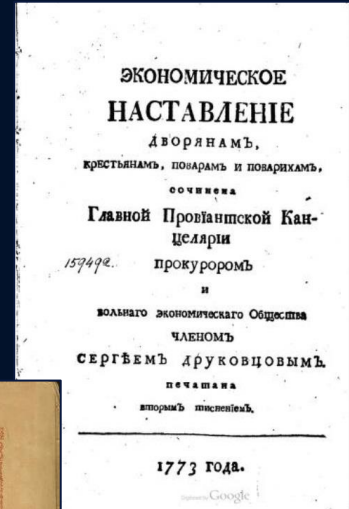


Fig. 3. *Economical Instructions to Nobles, Peasants, Cooks [...]*.

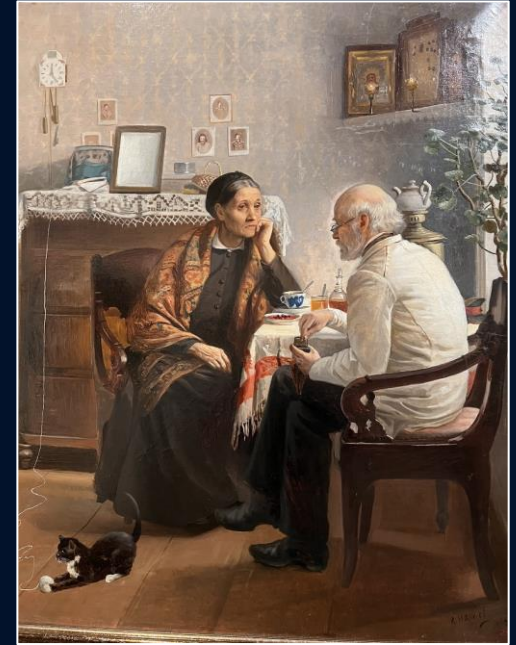
The Rise of Tea



Tea was introduced to the court of Mikhail Romanov during the 17th century. (Fig. 4. Michael I of Russia.)



During the 18th century, Russian monarchs and nobility embraced tea-drinking. (Fig. 5. Catherine II of Russia.)



By the mid-19th century, Russians of every social level adopted tea as an essential element of daily life. (Fig. 6. *Old Friend*, 1889.)

Initial Resistance to Tea

- Russian diplomats (1650s):
 - Tea “unknown” and “superfluous”
- Orthodox fast days
- Health concerns
 - *Economical Instructions to Nobles, Peasants, Cooks, and Female Cooks* (1773)



Fig. 7. *Russian Tea Party*, 1896.

The 19th-Century Tea Experience

- Milk
- Lemon
- Sweeteners
- Teacups & tea glasses
- *K chaiu* – tea treats



Fig. 8. Family portrait by Timofey Myagkov, 1844.

The *Samovar*

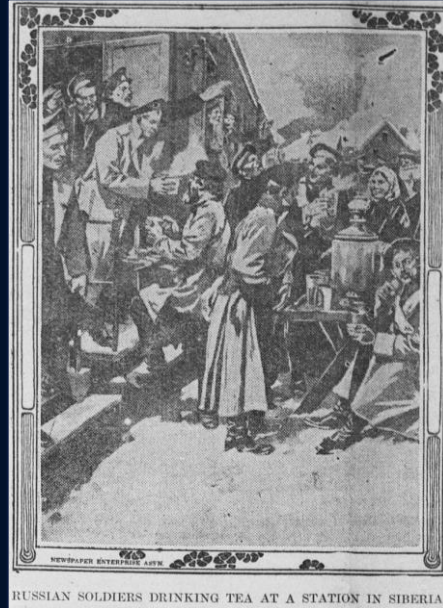
- Origins
- *Zavarka & kipitok*
 - Tea concentrate and hot water
- Tea-pouring etiquette



Fig. 9. Samovar.

Tea as a Russian Necessity

- Students
- Soldiers
 - Decembrists
- Merchants
- Travelers



RUSSIAN SOLDIERS DRINKING TEA AT A STATION IN SIBERIA.

Fig. 10. Soldiers drinking tea during the Russo-Japanese War.



Fig. 11. Emperor Nicholas I on a Winter Outing, 1853.



Fig. 12. Moscow Tavern, 1916.

Tea and Russian Literature

- Aleksandr Pushkin – *Eugene Onegin* (1826 – 1832)
- Leo Tolstoy – *War and Peace* (1869)



Fig. 13. Drinking tea in *Eugene Onegin*.

“‘Twas dusk! Upon the table bright
Shrill sang the samovar at eve,
The china teapot too ye might
In clouds of steam above perceive.”

- *Eugene Onegin*

Conclusion

Image Citations

Fig 1. Screenshot of title page. *A Journey Into Siberia Made by Order of the King of France* (1770) by Jean-Baptiste Chappe d' Auteroche, https://archive.org/details/bim_eighteenth-century_voyage-en-siberie-engl_chappe-d-auteroche-jea_1770/mode/1up.

Fig. 2. Scan by Triumphato, cover of the journal "Russkii Arkhiv" (1885), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%D0%A0%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9%D0%90%D1%80%D1%85%D0%B8%D0%B2.jpg>.

Fig. 3. Screenshot of title page. *Ėkonomicheskoe Nastavlenĭe Dvorĭanam", Krestĭanam", Povram" i Povariham"* (1773) by Sergeĭ Drukovĭsev, <https://archive.org/details/druk-03/page/n3/mode/1up>.

Fig. 4. Painting by Johann Heinrich Wedekind. Michael I of Russia, the first tsar of the Romanov-Dynasty (1613 – 1645), 1728, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Michael-I-Romanov-Wedekind_\(cropped\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Michael-I-Romanov-Wedekind_(cropped).jpg).

Fig. 5. Painting by Alexander Roslin, *Portrait of Catherine II of Russia (1729 – 1796)*, 1780s, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catherine_II_after_Roslin_Rokotov_\(1780s_Kunsthistorisches_Museum\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catherine_II_after_Roslin_Rokotov_(1780s_Kunsthistorisches_Museum).jpg).

Fig. 6. Painting by Aleksei Avvakumovich Naumov, *Old Friend*, 1889, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Old_friend_Artist_A.A._Naumov_1889.jpg.

Fig. 7. Painting by Aleksei Avvakumovich Naumov. *Russian Tea Party*, 1896, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tea_party_Artist_A.A._Naumov.jpg.

Fig. 8. Painting by Timofey Myagkov. Family portrait, 1844, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Family_portrait_by_T.Myagkov.jpg.

Fig. 9. Photograph by Ji-Elle. Samovar au musée de l'architecture en bois à Souzdal (Oblast de Vladimir, Russie), 2018, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Souzdal-Samovar_au_mus%C3%A9_de_l%27architecture_en_bois.jpg.

Fig. 10. Unknown author. Soldiers of the Imperial Russian Army drinking tea at a station on the Trans-Siberian Railway, while en route to fight in the Russo-Japanese War. *The Tacoma Times*, 1904. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Russian_soldiers_drinking_tea_at_a_station_in_Siberia_\(1904\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Russian_soldiers_drinking_tea_at_a_station_in_Siberia_(1904).jpg).

Fig. 11. Painting by Nikolai Sverchkov. *Emperor Nicholas I on a Winter Outing*. 1853, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nicholas_I_riding_by_Nikolai_Sverchkov_\(1853\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nicholas_I_riding_by_Nikolai_Sverchkov_(1853).jpg).

Fig. 12. Painting by Moris Kustodiev. *Moscow Tavern*. 1916, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Moscow_Tavern_\(Kustodiev\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Moscow_Tavern_(Kustodiev).jpg).

Fig. 13. Painting by E. Samokish-Sudkovskaya. Illustrations for A. Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. 1908. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eugene_Onegin_\(Samokish-Sudkovskaya\)_10.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eugene_Onegin_(Samokish-Sudkovskaya)_10.jpg).

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