

DAVID W. EDWARDS

Count Joseph Marie de Maistre and Russian Educational Policy, 1803–1828

During the quarter century from 1803 to 1828, the Russian imperial government followed an educational policy which ranged from practical to classical, democratic to class-oriented, progressive to conservative. The decrees, rescripts, and regulations may have been contradictory, but they are simply pieces of a puzzle which, in the end, provide the outline of a rather clear picture. This picture, as we shall see in more detail later, shows a movement, in the most elementary terms, from functional to classical, from open to restricted, from modern to traditional. In all respects, the law of 1828 opposed those of 1803 and 1804, but the line of march between the two points was straight and constant.

Another puzzle, however, is more difficult to solve: why did Russian educational policy follow this particular trend? Among the possible solutions to this question, the activities of Count Joseph Marie de Maistre deserve more study.¹ Maistre is remembered today as a theocratic political philosopher with an eloquent pen, but during his term in Russia (1803–17), as the diplomatic representative of the Sardinian king, he deeply involved himself in the internal questions facing the Russian government. Education particularly interested Maistre, and he turned his attention to this topic from June of 1810 until the end of the following year. During this eighteen-month period, he wrote four works dealing with the question of education in Russia, hoping to influence policy and bring about specific changes.² To discover if he succeeded, it is necessary to (1) describe the early educational reforms enacted by Alexander; (2) examine the personal contacts of Maistre; (3) summarize Maistre's writings on Russian affairs; and (4) evaluate the changes made in the educational system after

1. The best biography of Count de Maistre is Robert Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre: Étude sur la vie et sur la doctrine d'un matérialiste mystique* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1968). For accounts of Maistre in Russia, see Camille Latreille, "Joseph de Maistre et le tzar Alexander I^{er}," *La Revue hebdomadaire*, no. 33 (August 17, 1918), pp. 302–47; and especially M. Stepanov, "Zhofez de Mestr v Rossii," *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vols. 29–30 (1937), pp. 577–726. A rather doctrinaire account of Maistre in Russia with an emphasis upon foreign affairs is found in Dzhuzeppe Berti (Giuseppe Berti), *Rossia i ital'ianskie gosudarstva v period Risordzhimento* (Moscow, 1959), pp. 205–308. For many years, the best account of Maistre's activities in Russia was F. Vermale, "Joseph de Maistre émigré," *Société savoisienne d'histoire et archéologie: Mémoires et documents*, vol. 64 (Chambéry, 1927), pp. 63–229.

2. The four works on Russian education are found in Joseph de Maistre, *Oeuvres complètes*, 14 vols. (Lyons, 1884–86) (hereafter cited as *O.C.*). See *O.C.*, 8: *Cinq lettres sur l'éducation publique en Russie* (pp. 163–232), *Observations sur le Prospectus Disciplinarum ou Plan d'étude proposé pour le Séminaire de Newsky par le Professeur Fessler* (pp. 233–65, signed Philorusse), *Mémoire sur la liberté de l'enseignement public* (pp. 267–75, signed Philalexandre), and *Quatre chapitres sur la Russie* (pp. 277–360).

Maistre had expressed his views. Such an approach will provide a fuller understanding of the climate of opinion in which Russian educational policy was made; it will also clarify one facet of the remarkable career of Count Joseph Marie de Maistre.

Shortly after his accession to the throne, Alexander began the implementation of a policy designed to create a complete and unified educational system. In characteristic fashion, Alexander chose to work from the top down; the first element of the new structure, the Ministry of Public Instruction, appeared on September 8, 1802.³ The organization of a separate ministry for public (that is, secular) education corrected an omission which had existed under both Peter I and Catherine II, the two most active improvisators of eighteenth-century Russian educational policy. Neither of these rulers had established a unified system; Alexander at least provided a head.

During the next two years, 1803 and 1804, the emperor issued a series of decrees which completely reorganized Russia's secular educational system.⁴ These regulations created a carefully constructed scheme of education extending from the primary grades through the autonomous universities. The parish or parochial schools, established without government funding and using clerics as teachers, provided the foundation for the system.⁵ The district schools, to be located in every district town and having a two-year course, constituted the second level. Then came the gymnasia or provincial schools, planned for each provincial capital and offering a four-year term of study leading to the university. Although each school in the system was designed to prepare the student for the next stage, the concept of moving easily up the ladder was compromised by another goal set by the government: each school also provided a general and utilitarian education for every pupil. Many of those enrolled in the school system would not go on to the next level and, consequently, needed skills which could be put to immediate use. Thus, while some of the students desired the more theoretical and scholarly disciplines in preparation for the university, others required a more practical course of study. The twofold purpose of the system determined the curriculum. The parish schools taught reading, writing, arithmetic, religion and morals, and the basics of natural science, agriculture, and hygiene. The district schools also taught religion and added law, history and geography (both Russian and general), mathematics, physics, natural science, technology and local industry, and drawing. Latin and German were available for those students who planned to go on to the gymnasium. The ambitious curriculum of the gymnasium included mathematics, physics, technology and natural sciences, psychology, ethics, aesthetics, law, political economy, history,

3. *Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii*, 1st ser. (St. Petersburg, 1830), vol. 27, no. 20,406 (September 8, 1802), pp. 243–48 (hereafter cited as *PSZ*).

4. The relevant statutes are *PSZ*, vol. 27, no. 20,597 (January 26, 1803), pp. 437–42; no. 20,701 (April 4, 1803), pp. 526–30; no. 20,765 (May 18, 1803), pp. 610–20; no. 20,905 (August 23, 1803), pp. 848–58; vol. 38, no. 21,497 (November 5, 1804), pp. 569–70; no. 21,501 (November 5, 1804), pp. 626–47.

5. Originally, the parish schools taught the students for only one year, but on August 31, 1807, the term was increased to four years. See *PSZ*, vol. 29, no. 22,605, pp. 1250–59, especially p. 1252.

geography, statistics, Latin, German, French, and drawing.⁶ Despite the inclusion of Latin in the curriculum of both the district schools and the gymnasium, a student was not required to take this course. The emphasis was modern and utilitarian.⁷

Although each step of the educational ladder provided practical training, the universities best reflected Alexander's emphasis upon utilitarian goals. The new system of education was intended to train prospective state employees, thereby providing Russia with a more competent bureaucracy. Given the classless character of the educational structure, the emperor could envision the emergence of a "nobility of talent" which would fulfill the dreams of Peter the Great. Innumerable Speranskiis would rise from lowly origins, ascend the educational ladder, and assume positions of responsibility in the government. It was hoped that the universities, patterned after the autonomous German system and staffed with many German professors, would provide Russia with a bureaucracy as well-qualified as the one serving the Prussian king.⁸

Influenced by still other foreign models, particularly Polish and French, and the educational ideas of the Enlightenment, Alexander's reforms were the manifestations of an egalitarian and utilitarian educational philosophy.⁹ The concept of equal educational opportunity characterized each level of the system:

The parish schools are open to all children of all ranks regardless of their age or sex.

The district schools are open to all students who have finished the course of the parish schools or have received elementary education elsewhere, in the subjects of the parish school.

The gymnasias admit all students of all ranks, who have completed the course of the district school or have equivalent training in another institution or at home.¹⁰

6. The curriculum for the schools is found in *PSZ*, vol. 27, no. 20,597 (January 26, 1803), pp. 437-42 and vol. 28, no. 21,501 (November 5, 1804), pp. 626-47.

7. Even Latin may be considered as a utilitarian subject in the Russian system of this period. Inasmuch as many of the professors at the universities were foreigners and unable to lecture in Russian, Latin became, in many classrooms, the language of instruction.

8. See the excellent article by James T. Flynn, "The Universities, the Gentry, and the Russian Imperial Services, 1815-1828," *Canadian Slavic Studies*, 2, no. 4 (Winter 1968): 487-92; and Patrick L. Alston, *Education and the State in Tsarist Russia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 26-28.

9. A good survey of the Polish and French influences on the laws of 1803 and 1804 is found in Nicholas Hans, *History of Russian Educational Policy* (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1964), pp. 35-58. This study, originally published in 1931, is much superior to a later account: Nicholas Hans, *The Russian Tradition in Education* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 22-23. Summaries of Alexander's educational reforms are also found in William H. E. Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press, 1950), pp. 68-76. Also see Alston, *Education and the State*, pp. 26-29. Another educational innovation (outside the limits of the present study) to uplift the lower class was the Lancaster system of instruction. See Judith Cohen Zacek, "The Lancastrian School Movement in Russia," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 45 (July 1967): 343-67. Also see N. Tomashevskaiia, "Lankasterskie shkoly v Rossii," *Russkaia shkola*, March 1913, pp. 36-62.

10. *PSZ*, vol. 28, no. 20,501, articles 123 (p. 640), 90 (p. 637), and 14 (p. 627).

Academic proficiency alone was needed for enrolling in the university.¹¹ Students did not pay tuition, and poor gymnasium students could obtain books free of charge.¹²

The reforms, biased in favor of a classless educational system, evoked much hostility from the Russian nobility. Not only would the proposed system break their virtual monopoly in the state service by allowing talented commoners to compete on an equal basis, but the requirements of university matriculation and examinations could bar unqualified noblemen from the bureaucracy altogether. Relegated to their estates, the Russian nobility faced both social ostracism and financial ruin.¹³ The besieged noblemen did not fight alone, however, for allies were found among those with a more theoretical bent and an abhorrence of the ideals of the Enlightenment. Count Joseph Marie de Maistre was one such person. But Maistre, because he had arrived in St. Petersburg on May 1, 1803, when the educational reforms of Alexander were already making their way through the governmental machinery, did not begin thinking seriously about Russian education until Alexander began a second reform movement, this time in ecclesiastical education.

On November 29, 1807, the emperor created a commission of laymen and clergy and charged it with submitting a proposal for the reform of ecclesiastical education.¹⁴ Under the energetic leadership of Mikhail Speranskii, the commission presented a program to Alexander, who approved it on June 26, 1808.¹⁵ The church schools paralleled the public schools at all levels. The parish schools served as the foundation for the complete structure; the second stage—the district schools—had a two-year curriculum and led directly to the theological seminaries. The reformers planned one four-year seminary for each diocese, and the seminary thus became the counterpart of the gymnasium of the earlier reform. Four theological academies with four-year courses of study were at the apex of the system. Although the composition of the student body of the ecclesiastical schools remained clerical, the curriculum of the first three elements in the system was broadened to include more practical subjects, such as natural science and modern languages. The academies retained their professional emphasis.

The final element in Alexander's broad educational reform concerned the creation of a lycée at Tsarskoe Selo. This idea enjoyed widespread support, including that of the emperor, the bureaucrats, and those who approved of small schools for the aristocracy. The class distinctions cherished by the Russian nobility, who were profoundly challenged by the egalitarian reforms of 1803–4,

11. See the following statutes: *PSZ*, vol. 28, no. 21,498 (November 5, 1804), pp. 570–89 (especially pp. 581–82); no. 21,499 (November 5, 1804), pp. 589–607 (especially pp. 599–600); no. 21,500 (November 5, 1804), pp. 607–26 (especially p. 618).

12. *PSZ*, vol. 28, no. 21,501 (November 5, 1804), article 56, p. 633.

13. Flynn, "The Universities, the Gentry, and the Russian Imperial Services," pp. 487, 489–90, 492. See also Alexander Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture: A History to 1860* (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 1963), p. 223.

14. *Sviateishii Pravitel'stviushchii Sinod, Opis' dokumentov i del khraniashchikhsia v arkhive sviateishogo pravitel'stviushchego sinoda s ukazateliami k nei: Dela komissii dukhovnykh uchilishch 1808–1839 gg.* (St. Petersburg, 1910), pp. iii, 1–42.

15. *PSZ*, vol. 30, no. 23,122 (June 26, 1808), pp. 368–95.

might be partially salvaged by such an institution. Once again, Mikhail Speranskii provided the impetus, and on December 11, 1808, he read to Alexander the "Preliminary rules for a *special* lycée."¹⁶ When the doors of this influential school were opened in 1811,¹⁷ the stamp of the Enlightenment would be apparent with an emphasis on independent thinking rather than on rote learning.¹⁸

For Joseph de Maistre, Tilsit and its aftermath brought gloom and discouragement, not only because of the military and diplomatic victories of Napoleon and the consequent humiliations of the Sardinian king, but also because the ideas of the Enlightenment were ascendant in Russian domestic politics. Both secular and ecclesiastical educational systems had incorporated the concepts of the eighteenth century, and even the lycée at Tsarskoe Selo, serving the elite of society, was thoroughly colored by the ideas of the *philosophes*.

Joseph de Maistre's reputation had preceded him to the Russian capital. Upon his arrival, he was sought after because of his politics, his religion, and his brilliance. Although ambassadors from England and Austria welcomed Maistre as a comrade-in-arms against Napoleon, the warmest and most helpful diplomat was Serra-Capriola of Naples. Serra-Capriola's marriage to Princess Viazemskaiia gave him accessibility to the higher circles of the Russian nobility and his home thus became a popular meeting place for both Russians and foreigners who were united in their hatred of Napoleon.¹⁹ Maistre found easy entrance to many salons because of religion; his ardent defense of Roman Catholicism created for him an immediate and adoring audience. In these surroundings, Maistre was among friends and could speak his mind. Because of his wit, grace, and charm, he became a popular figure at other salons as well, but his influence and pleasure were greatest in the homes where Roman Catholicism was embraced.²⁰

Maistre enjoyed much better relations with the Jesuits in Russia than with the administrative hierarchy, centered in Belorussia. Metropolitan Stanislas Siestrzencewicz-Bohusz of Mogilev, the highest ranking Roman Catholic cleric in the empire, was jealous of Maistre's power, both in Russia and with the pope (whom the metropolitan accused of trying to encroach upon the powers of the bishops).²¹ Siestrzencewicz particularly opposed the growth in influence of

16. A. N. Iakhontov, *Istoricheskii ocherk imperatorskogo aleksandrovskogo (b. tsarskosel'skogo) litseia* (Paris, 1936), p. 8; and Marc Raeff, *Michael Speransky: Statesman of Imperial Russia, 1772-1839* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), p. 61 (emphasis in the original).

17. Iakhontov, *Istoricheskii ocherk*, p. 10. The decree establishing the lycée was signed a year earlier. See *PSZ*, vol. 31, no. 24,325 (August 12, 1810), pp. 310-23.

18. *PSZ*, vol. 31, no. 24,325, pp. 311-16, 321-23. Also see Raeff, *Michael Speransky*, p. 62, and Iakhontov, *Istoricheskii ocherk*, pp. 52-59. For a brief account of Speranskii's plans, see D. F. Kobeko, *Imperatorskii tsarskosel'skii litsei* (St. Petersburg, 1911), pp. 6-7.

19. Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," pp. 588-90, 599; and *O.C.*, 9:239-40.

20. See Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, pp. 296-308; this section is entitled "Maistre et ses paroissiennes." See also Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," pp. 596-98, 606-8; and *O.C.*, 12:419, 424. In many of these homes, the wife, but not the husband, converted to Roman Catholicism. The Rostopchin family is but one example.

21. See Adrien Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie: Leurs relations diplomatiques au XIX^e siècle, 1814-1847* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1922), p. 17.

the Jesuits under Emperor Paul. Although the Society had ceased its worldwide activities by order of Pope Clement XIV in 1773, it remained active in Russia, opening a school in St. Petersburg in 1800. Alexander's policy played the two factions in Roman Catholicism off against one another, but the Jesuits remained dominant in the capital. Maistre gave and received considerable support from the Jesuits, but he had a very negative assessment of Siestrzencewicz.²²

Maistre's diplomatic and religious connections led directly to very select and influential court, governmental, and intellectual circles. These groups were not mutually exclusive but made up a movement which might be generally described as "old Russian, anti-French," or, more precisely, as anti-Napoleon. Maistre came to know the leaders of these circles well, including Count N. A. Tolstói, his brother P. A. Tolstói,²³ Count A. K. Razumovskii,²⁴ Count V. P. Kochubei, Count A. S. Stroganov,²⁵ Prince A. N. Golitsyn,²⁶ Count N. N.

22. The complicated relationship within Roman Catholicism in Russia is discussed in the following works: M. J. Rouët de Journal, *Un collège Jésuites à Saint-Petersbourg, 1800–1816* (Paris, 1922), pp. 16–33; André Arvaldis Brumanis, *Aux origines de la hiérarchie latine en Russie: Mgr. Stanislas Siestrzencewicz-Bohusz premier archevêque-métropolitain de Mohilev (1731–1836)* (Louvain, 1968), pp. 242–64; Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie*, pp. 7–24; Donald W. Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China: Religious and Secular Thought in Modern Times*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 1:131–40; James H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), pp. 271–76; and Judith Cohen Zacek, "The Russian Bible Society and the Catholic Church," *Canadian Slavic Studies*, 5, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 35–50. For Maistre's close relationship with the Jesuits, see Rouët de Journal, *Un collège Jésuites*, pp. 135–60. Maistre's evaluation of Siestrzencewicz is found in *O.C.*, 8:509.

23. N. A. Tolstói served as grand marshal of the court, while his brother was the military governor of St. Petersburg (1803–5) and subsequently the Russian ambassador to Paris (1807–8). Both Tolstoïs were conservative and anti-Napoleon, and N. A. Tolstói vigorously opposed Alexander's "young friends." For a general discussion, see Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, pp. 291–92; and Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 590. Despite N. A. Tolstói's opposition to the group surrounding the throne, he and Alexander remained close: I. A. Bychkov, ed., "Aleksandr I i ego priblizhennnye do epokhi Speranskogo," *Russkaia starina*, 113, no. 2 (February 1903): 220. On N. A. Tolstói's role in the anti-Speranskii movement, see I. A. Bychkov, ed., "Deiateli i uchastniki v padenii Speranskogo," *Russkaia starina*, 109, no. 3 (March 1902): 496–97; and Ar. Fatéev, "La disgrâce d'un homme d'état (à l'occasion du centenaire de la mort de Speransky en 1839)," *Zapiski russkogo nauchno-issledovatel'skogo ob'edineniia v Prage*, 10, no. 72 (1940) (Old Series vol. 15), pp. 33–73.

24. Razumovskii, a friend and supporter of Saint-Martin, served as minister of public instruction from 1810 to 1816. Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 248. On Maistre's acquaintance, see *O.C.*, 11:493.

25. Both Kochubei and the son of Stroganov, Pavel, were among Alexander's close advisers during the early years of the reign, giving Maistre a narrow foothold in that quarter. See Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 590. The old Count Stroganov, however, remained ardently old Russian. In a letter describing the funeral of the count, Maistre told of a meal Stroganov had with Alexander during which the former boasted of the cathedral, Our Lady of Kazan', built by a Russian. He concluded: "Finally, Sire, we have no need of talented foreigners; we possess everything." The emperor responded, "That being the case, pass me the Madeira wine" (Joseph de Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique, 1811–1817*, ed. Albert Blanc, vol. 1 [Paris, 1860], p. 36).

26. Golitsyn, over-procurator of the Holy Synod and later minister of spiritual affairs and public instruction (1816–24), sought advice from Maistre and prompted him to express himself on Russia's domestic situation. Joseph de Maistre, *Les carnets du comte Joseph de Maistre. Livre journal, 1790–1817* (Paris, 1923), p. 193. On the relationship of Maistre and Golitsyn, see Vermale, "Joseph de Maistre émigré," pp. 166–67.

Golovin,²⁷ and Admiral P. V. Chichagov.²⁸ Politics united most of these men, but family and social ties drew them even closer. Many of these families also enrolled their children in the Jesuit school, the best educational institution in the capital. (Not only was the Jesuit school excellent, but it also had the advantage of enabling its students—children of the nobility—to escape the classless and utilitarian public school system.²⁹)

Maistre also cultivated friends in the intellectual circles of St. Petersburg. In 1811, the Sardinian minister began attending the meetings of the Lovers of the Russian Word, which had been organized that same year.³⁰ Although he knew nothing of the avowed topic under consideration—the Russian language—he hoped to find kindred spirits among those in attendance, and he succeeded in this goal, for the organization had become a center of opposition to France. Maistre became friends with Admiral A. S. Shishkov, future minister of public instruction, whose speech, “On Love of Country,” expressed one of the burning interests of the group.³¹

Beginning in 1811 and continuing into 1814, Maistre corresponded with Count S. S. Uvarov, the son-in-law of Count Razumovskii.³² Uvarov served as the curator of the St. Petersburg school district and president of the Academy of Sciences and would later become minister of public instruction. In 1810, Uvarov published the *Projet d'une Académie Asiatique*, which elicited a response from Maistre. No scholar, but a well-educated and practical politician, Uvarov recommended that Russia establish an Asian academy to enable the country to realize its potential in the East. Maistre, while not enthusiastic about the creation of yet another school, was deeply interested in the general views of this rising bureaucrat. He complimented Uvarov, noting that the latter had embarked on a “good road,” which meant a negative view of the eighteenth century and a return to “good, old principles.”³³ After an exchange of a number of letters, both the differences and similarities in the views of the two men became clear. For

27. Golovin was the host at one of the most active salons of Nevsky Prospect (Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, pp. 302–3). Maistre also resided for a time at the home of Golovin (*O.C.*, 11:416).

28. Chichagov, minister of the navy, appears to be the only close friend of Maistre who was not consistently hostile to both Napoleonic France and atheism. The two men disagreed over politics and religion, but retained great affection for one another (Stepanov, “Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii,” pp. 590–91).

29. Those attending the Jesuit school included children from the following families: Kochubei, Viazemskii, Tolstoi, Golitsyn, Stroganov (*ibid.*, p. 596). In a letter on September 10, 1810, Maistre discussed the support given the Jesuit institution by Count N. N. Golovin, Prince A. N. Golitsyn, Count A. K. Razumovskii, and Count F. V. Rostopchin (*O.C.*, 11:493). Many of these same families had members, particularly women, who had converted to Roman Catholicism. See Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, pp. 298–306; and Stepanov, “Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii,” pp. 606–8. Also see Berti, *Rossia i ital'ianskie gosudarstva*, pp. 254–55; and Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, p. 225.

30. *PSZ*, vol. 31, no. 24,698 (June 1811), pp. 771–76.

31. “Aleksandr Semenovich Shishkov i dve vsepoddanneishii ego zapiski,” *Russkaia starina*, 87, no. 9 (September 1896): 575. Stepanov, “Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii,” p. 598.

32. My comments on this relationship are based upon Stepanov, “Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii,” pp. 677–712, especially pp. 677–81. This article translates and reproduces the correspondence in Russian and contains an excellent introduction.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 680.

Maistre, truth antedated the eighteenth century. Uvarov, partly because of his German training, sought a compromise between religious tradition and the new philosophy. At the same time, both accepted an antirevolutionary, antimaterialist ideology and both were enemies of the Enlightenment.³⁴ Maistre and Uvarov both fought against the contemporary drift in Russian affairs and, although they advocated different methods, frequently arrived at the same point in their political recommendations.

The "old Russian, anti-French" party found a powerful leader in the Dowager Empress Maria Fedorovna, who presided over the only traditional "court" in Russia.³⁵ Throughout her life, the mother of Alexander favored classical as opposed to general education and did not believe that education was suitable for everyone.³⁶ The court of the dowager empress included the Tolstois, Golovin, and Golitsyn, as well as the Grand Duchess Catherine, Alexander's favorite sister.³⁷ Both Maria Fedorovna and Catherine Pavlovna had the ear of Alexander, and Maistre, who labored hard to affect the emperor's foreign and domestic policy, perhaps hoped to exploit these relationships. Maistre ingratiated himself by cleverly using for his own purposes the Russian practice of reading the contents of the diplomatic mail pouch. Realizing that the Russians intercepted his dispatches, Maistre took care to speak well of Alexander and the Russian government.³⁸

Of greater significance in the dealings between the Russian tsar and the Sardinian minister were the international situation of Russia and the religious feelings of Alexander. In the wildly fluctuating relations linking France and Russia, Alexander made political use of Maistre. When the two countries were enemies, the anti-Napoleonic Maistre enjoyed esteem; his family won favors and he became an adviser.³⁹ But during the four years after Tilsit, Maistre was in eclipse; pro-French sons of the Enlightenment, such as Speranskii, shone brightly. For a fleeting few months in 1811 and 1812, Maistre joined the inner circle of the tsar's counselors but he lost this privileged position with the advance of Napoleon and the loss of Catholic Poland.⁴⁰ The emperor's drift toward

34. *Ibid.*, p. 681.

35. Albert Vandal, ed., "La cour en Russie en 1807-1808: Notes sur la cour de Russie et Saint-Petersbourg, écrites en décembre 1807 par le général Savary," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, 4 (1890): 400.

36. A. A. Vasil'chikov, *Semeistvo Razumovskii*, 5 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1880-87), 2:69.

37. Vandal, "La cour en Russie," pp. 403-11; and Vermale, "Joseph de Maistre émigré," p. 165.

38. Indications that Maistre realized his correspondence was being read are found in *O.C.*, 10:24, 133, 254, 454; and 11:431-32. Two examples, among many, of Maistre's praise for Alexander will suffice: Alexander had a "just spirit, excellent heart, and elevated ideas" (October 22, 1804) (*O.C.*, 9:246); and Alexander was the "Godfrey of the new crusade" (August 29/September 10, 1805) (*O.C.*, 9:464).

39. The exchange of letters between Alexander and Maistre is found in *O.C.*, 1:xx-xxii; see also Maistre, *Carnets*, p. 167.

40. One of the most curious episodes in Maistre's career in Russia occurred in the spring of 1812, when he was chosen by Alexander to edit imperial papers and draft a manifesto announcing the restoration of Poland. See Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," pp. 602-3, 652. It appears that Alexander wished to gain the support of Catholic nobles in Poland in the imminent conflict with France. With the rapid advance of Napoleon, the scheme collapsed, and Maistre lost his favored position.

obscurantism further complicated the delicate relationship between the two men. As Alexander became more mystical, he also became less tolerant of Maistre's clear and firm religious convictions. In the autumn of 1816, Alexander protested Maistre's "zeal of proselytism, his language on the subject of the Jesuits, the usual tendency of his opinions, his partiality, and his determination against the liberal ideas of the century."⁴¹ The emperor's religious enthusiasm grew, and Roman Catholicism faced harsher conditions in Russia. Maistre was forced to use other men and other means to influence Russian policy.

Neither religious nor educational issues provided the starting point for Maistre's influence within the old Russian, anti-French party in Russia. Rather, the "constitutional scare" following the rise of Speranskii propelled Maistre to the front of the conservatives. In May of 1809, Maistre wrote and distributed in manuscript the *Essai sur le principe générateur des constitutions politiques*. From its very first ringing phrase, the *Essai* gave ideological support to the enemies of a Russian constitution:

One of the great errors of a century which professed them all was to believe that a political constitution could be written and created a priori, whereas reason and experience unite in proving that a constitution is a divine work and that precisely the most fundamental and essentially constitutional of a nation's laws could not be written.⁴²

Shortly after the appearance of Maistre's *Essai*, N. M. Karamzin published *Note on Old and New Russia*, which reinforced the attack upon Speranskii. Maistre and Karamzin became ideological allies—both decried the weakness in constitutional movements—and complemented one another's efforts. The *Essai* attacked constitutionalism in general, whereas the *Note* concentrated on only the Russian situation. These two works mark the emergence, during Alexander's reign, of a coherent theory of conservatism, based upon tradition and opposed to political reform.

The *Essai* also established Maistre in Russia as a man with strong political and social opinions, and the new minister of public instruction, Count A. K. Razumovskii, solicited the Sardinian's views on Russian education.⁴³ Maistre gladly complied and during June and July of 1810 sent five letters to the count. In the following eighteen months, Maistre added three more works which summarized his thoughts on politics as well as education.⁴⁴ The thrust of the reform movement caused Maistre disquiet, and he regarded the educational proposals as only one element in a development dangerous for Russia and, ultimately, for

41. Quoted in Latreille, "Joseph de Maistre," p. 341.

42. *O.C.*, 1:235; see also *O.C.*, 11:386–87. The essay was not published in St. Petersburg because, according to Maistre, he could count on only "150 buyers, of whom only six would read it, and only two would understand it" (*O.C.*, 12:475). Nonetheless, the work was later printed in the Russian capital (in 1814); the title page of this rare edition is reproduced in Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 641.

43. On Razumovskii's desire to know Maistre's views on education, see *O.C.*, 8:161.

44. See note 2 for the citations of Maistre's works. Inasmuch as the themes of Maistre are repeated throughout the four works, they have been taken as a whole; no attempt has been made to analyze each separately.

all of Europe. Members of the gentry had opposed the pedagogical reforms of Alexander I on practical grounds: the classless, utilitarian schools and the educational requirements for state service threatened both their superior social status and their financial security. But more theoretical arguments were required to give their protests the necessary respectability in the eyes of the emperor. Maistre labored to provide the abstract rationale.

In his writings on education in Russia, Maistre proposed to define the character of the Russian state and to determine its educational needs. Every viable state must have means of controlling the population and keeping order. But, according to Maistre, no nation can be ruled by the government alone. "No sovereign has enough strength to govern several million men unless he is aided by either religion or slavery. . . ." ⁴⁵ Before the advent of Christianity, slavery was the sole means of control, but with the historical development of Christian Europe, religion came to support the state. In the West, as the state eased its control over the serfs, they remained under the hand of the priests. But Russia differed from Europe and had been stunted in its development from barbarism to civilization by: (a) its ties to Constantinople; (b) the Tatar invasion; and (c) the great religious schism. Rome was the font of all civilization, and separation from the eternal city had caused the Russians to create a very different social and political structure. ⁴⁶ Because of these differences, the emperor was in no position to free the serfs. "Slavery exists in Russia because it is necessary there and because the emperor cannot rule without it." ⁴⁷ Thus, the political and social order of Russia rested upon two classes. The first class, the aristocrats by birth, was composed of civil and military officers and maintained complete control over the second class, the serfs. The result was a police state.

Maistre's general interpretation of Russia, most fully presented in *Quatre chapitres sur la Russie*, served as the starting point for the inquiry into the empire's educational needs. Although references to this question dotted his writings of 1810 and 1811, the first two letters of his *Cinq lettres sur l'éducation publique en Russie* best expressed his views. ⁴⁸ Maistre began with a statement characteristic of many conservative critiques of liberal reform movements: "man as an abstract being," found in both political and pedagogical theory, was a sophism which did not exist. Rather, each nation had the government it deserved, and the same held true for its educational system. Russia, therefore, must be examined to determine what schools were required, and both the government and the educational system must be in harmony with the people. ⁴⁹ With such an introduction, Maistre advised what Russia *did not* need before moving on to specific prescriptions. The history of education (particularly scientific education) since the Thirty Years' War had been a somber one and had brought many problems to Europe. Starting with the execution of Charles I of England and carried most notably by the Calvinists, a spirit had been at work under-

45. *O.C.*, 8:288.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–69, 284–85.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 163–89.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 163–64.

mining the institutions of monarchy and Christianity.⁵⁰ According to Voltaire (Maistre relished using his opponents to support his own viewpoints), “Books have done everything.”⁵¹ Russia was simply unprepared for the teachings of the Enlightenment, and Maistre predicted a revolution in Russia immediately after emancipation—an emancipation which apparently would give intellectual and religious freedom as well as political and economic freedom. If Russia followed this tendency, which had begun in the seventeenth century, there would arise as a consequence “some kind of university Pugachev.”⁵²

Maistre supported his contention that Russia was not prepared for universal education by quoting a Persian proverb: “Time is the father of miracles. It is the first minister of all sovereigns.”⁵³ The famous schools of western Europe—in Paris, London, or Florence—grew up independently of the state, and once they had achieved maturity and permanence, they received letters of patent from the state. Russia, following the example of Peter the Great, believed that educational institutions were plants which could be artificially grafted onto the body politic. The Russians argued that when a school was opened, the faculty hired and paid, all was finished. False, countered Maistre; nothing would be accomplished if the people were not prepared, and the school remained empty. The state should provide educational opportunities upon demand, but it did not owe and could not give training to those who did not want it. Only time would bring the demand to Russia.⁵⁴

The question of the teaching of science especially interested Maistre, and he asked rhetorically whether the empire was to be Roman or Greek.⁵⁵ With his prejudice in favor of Rome ever apparent, Maistre believed that science was not essential for national greatness. The first nation of the world would be that country which was happy with itself and feared by others. Russia could attain such a goal, but care must be taken. Literature, not the sciences, provided the appropriate path for Russian education. A scientific education was superfluous and even burdensome to military men (with the exception of specialists, such as men in the navy, artillery, and engineering, who require nothing very profound). All efforts to bring scientific learning to Russia would not only be useless but even dangerous, because it would extinguish the sense of national uniqueness. Russia would be forced to obtain foreign teachers, ignorant of their adopted country. Thus, it was essential that Russia know itself before allowing the universal teaching of science within its borders. “Science may be considered a conflagration which will necessarily embrace Russia, if Russia is combustible, and as much as it is combustible.”⁵⁶

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 297–98, 310–13. These views are found in Maistre’s more celebrated *Quatre chapitres sur la Russie*.

51. *O.C.*, 8:344.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 166–67, 169, 174, 307–8.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 298–300, 304–5. In Maistre’s symbolic shorthand, Greece represented the scientific, Rome the literary aspects of the ancient world. Such a generalization is, of course, most difficult to defend on either count.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–72, 187–89, 307 (emphasis in the original).

If science was the enemy, was there an ally for Russia? Maistre, again using one of his ideological opponents, Francis Bacon, contended that religion was a useful neutralizer of science. "In effect, morals are necessary to check the dangerous, very dangerous action of science. . . ."57 The moral-religious education advocated by Maistre rested upon the twin foundations of the teachings of the ancients and the upright character of the teachers.

While Maistre wrote in favor of a classical education, he directly attacked the educational reforms of Alexander. The Sardinian minister argued that it was impossible to comprehend all of the sciences or to combine literature and the sciences. Science was merely an ornament of society. If it was to be taught, only pure sciences, such as mathematics and physics, should be in the curriculum. Only after a grounding in Latin and logic should one be allowed to take up a more specific topic.⁵⁸ The Russian curriculum reforms included too many subjects, making it impossible for the student to master any and resulted in half-educated graduates. For this reason, Maistre urged Count A. K. Razumovskii, the minister of public instruction, to eliminate natural history, history, chemistry, astronomy, aesthetics, physics, epistemology and psychology, man and society, and Greek.⁵⁹ In a classical curriculum, the student understood a few subjects which encouraged thinking, speaking, and writing. Once the emperor made his choice between the two approaches, the matter of curriculum would be solved.⁶⁰

Another choice facing the emperor and the minister of public instruction concerned the selection of teachers and professors in the schools. Here, Maistre turned to the general question of staffing and, specifically, to the teachers at the Tsarskoe Selo Lycée and Professor Fessler of the Alexander Nevsky Seminary.⁶¹ Maistre noted that, according to the reforms, the moral character of the students underwent close scrutiny. Should not the professors, he asked, be examined as carefully? Such a consideration was vital in the Lycée, with its low student-teacher ratio and the resulting close contact between the two groups.⁶² A possible answer to the problem could be found in the traditional means of educating youth. All the nations of the world, wrote Maistre, and not just Christian nations, have entrusted the education of their children to priests. The celibacy of

57. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

58. See Maistre's description of the classical curriculum (*ibid.*, pp. 175–79).

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 182–85. The reasons for Maistre's recommendation that these subjects be eliminated are instructive: natural history—useless, an elementary dictionary is sufficient; history—should never be a subject in the curriculum or require a teacher, for no area of literature is more infected; chemistry—has no place in a general education program; astronomy—an almanac would suffice; physics, origins of the world—Genesis is enough; epistemology and psychology—simply an introduction to materialism; man and society—the student need only know: (a) God has created man for society, (b) society renders government necessary, and (c) obedience, faithfulness, and duty are owed by man to the state; Greek—useless and not enough time allowed for mastery.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 175, 179, 186–87, 300–303, 320.

61. Maistre questioned Fessler's qualifications as a teacher not only because of his dubious moral qualities and mysticism, but also because he mixed Platonism and Kantianism with Christianity. Maistre argued further that the course of study proposed at Alexander Nevsky Seminary was so broad "that Professor Fessler is either an angel or a charlatan" (see Maistre's *Observations sur le Prospectus Disciplinarum*, *ibid.*, pp. 233–65).

62. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

the priests raised the moral level of the school and enhanced the moral character of the graduates. Grief had befallen those European countries which had turned away from priests as educators. Germany and England had experienced grave difficulties because of the trend established by the Reformation, and now Napoleonic France had embarked upon the same mindless path.⁶³ Russia was clearly in a dilemma. Not only was the vast majority of its clergy not celibate, but the priesthood was separate from society and deprived of civil functions as well.⁶⁴ To realize Maistre's recommendations, the Russian government had but one place to turn—to the Roman Catholic Church and, more specifically, to the Society of Jesus.

The Jesuits and their proposed role in education constituted the contents of Maistre's fourth letter on the Russian public schools.⁶⁵ Maistre emphasized his support for the Jesuit cause only after a consideration of the social and political conditions of Russia, the reforms of Alexander, and the quality of instruction. Maistre argued that, paradoxically, the most powerful and faithful ally of the emperor in maintaining Russia's national religion was the Roman Catholic Church⁶⁶ and that the most positive potential force in Russian education was the Jesuit order. "Much is said of it, but little is known," wrote Maistre of the Jesuits, and in an attempt to shed light on their work, he cited testimonies to the Society's value in education.⁶⁷ The detractors of the Jesuits, led by the Calvinists, agreed that revolution in Europe (and especially in France) was impossible without the destruction of this order.⁶⁸

With credentials such as these, argued Maistre, the emperor should recognize that the Jesuits needed and deserved his encouragement. Alexander had the opportunity to fashion a mutually beneficial relationship with the Society of Jesus. While the *philosophe* in Catherine had denounced and attacked the Jesuits as enemies of the state, the despot in the empress had allowed the Society to continue to exist in Russia. Her successor, Paul, had given support to the Jesuits, who responded by establishing a school in St. Petersburg, serving both the government and the nobility. According to Maistre, only the revolutionaries would profit by the total dissolution of the order.⁶⁹ Nothing would be more advantageous for the emperor than to have as allies a group of men who were enemies of all that Russia feared. The Jesuits never violated the law of the land and

63. Ibid., pp. 165, 171, 190–93, 195–96, 270–71.

64. Ibid., p. 166. Maistre ignored the local priests' social and political function of keeping statistics on births, deaths, and marriages.

65. Ibid., pp. 198–222.

66. Ibid., p. 320.

67. Ibid., pp. 198–203. Included in the list are Bacon, Grotius, Henry IV, Richelieu, Descartes, Louis XIV, Saint-Simon, Condé, Frederick II, Catherine II, Paul I, Dumouriez, Lalande, François de Sales, and Fénelon. Once again, Maistre used ideological enemies as well as friends to substantiate his arguments.

68. Ibid., pp. 203–6.

69. Ibid., pp. 223–24. According to Brumanis, *Aux origines de la hierarchie latine en Russie*, p. 336, no proof exists that Metropolitan Siestrzencewicz also worked for the expulsion of the Jesuits from Russia. See Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie*, p. 122. For a summary of the policy of Catherine II and Paul, see Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, 1:131–36.

simply obeyed God, who existed in the person of the sovereign.⁷⁰ Such men, according to Maistre, could “serve to arrest the revolutionary spirit [in Russia] which enters at all doors, but above all through public education.”⁷¹

In Maistre’s dualistic mind, the enemies were as self-evident as the friends. The revolutionary spirit which threatened Russia was a type of “illuminationism.” This illuminationism had grafted modern philosophy onto Protestantism, or rather onto Calvinism and its thinly disguised Roman Catholic ally, Jansenism.⁷² Calvinism provided the bond between all Protestant sects, which possessed the common quality of protesting against all truth.⁷³ Supported by Jews, Protestants began by first discussing theology and then moving on to political issues. To question in politics was to contemplate revolt. The clearest means of impressing upon the Russian government the choice it had, he reasoned, was to juxtapose two sets of beliefs. The Protestants argued that all men were born free and equal. Sovereignty rested with the people, who had the right to resist the government. The Roman Catholics held that God was the author of all things, including sovereignty. God created man as a social being and therefore made sovereignty necessary; the rulers were God’s representatives. All governments, including the one in St. Petersburg, must not only choose between these conflicting statements on sovereignty, but must also promote the choice made. Maistre advised that the Russian government should do all in its power to stop progressive education (the embodiment of Calvinism and modern philosophy) at the border. Such action was needed because the people of Russia were not prepared for the assault of the revolutionary West.⁷⁴

But this invasion could be blunted and a counteroffensive mounted if the Roman Catholic Church, led by the Jesuits, enjoyed freedom in education. In his *Mémoire sur la liberté de l’enseignement public*, Maistre repeated his recommendation to give the Jesuits an academy at Polotsk with all the rights and privileges of a university.⁷⁵ “All monopoly is an evil,”⁷⁶ and Alexander should facilitate the open competition of ideas by granting the Society of Jesus freedom in education. Such an act would be a response to the needs of the Russian Empire and the *l’amour paternel* of Alexander.⁷⁷ For Maistre, the Jesuits exemplified his own values in education. He reasoned that because his training by the Jesuits had been enormously successful, Russia could also profit by permitting the order to teach.

70. *O.C.*, 8:215–17.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

72. Maistre divided illuminationism into three groups: (a) Freemasons, (b) Martinists and Pietists, and (c) Protestants. See part 4 of his *Quatre chapitres*, *ibid.*, pp. 325–45. The first two varieties of illuminationism were not overly dangerous to either the church or the state.

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 315–16. According to a woman friend of Maistre, the Protestant clergy had another bond, shared with the Russian priesthood: “The Russian and Protestant clergy are in accord on two great points of dogma: the love of women and the hatred of the Pope” (*ibid.*, pp. 314–15).

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 317–18, 333–36.

75. *Ibid.*, pp. 224–25, 267–68. On July 18, 1803, a Roman Catholic seminary under the control of Vilnius University had been established at Polotsk (*PSZ*, vol. 27, no. 20,853, pp. 782–83).

76. *O.C.*, 8:229.

77. *Ibid.*, pp. 273–74.

Through the wit, sarcasm, rhetoric, and overstatement of Maistre, there emerged an appeal for a number of fundamental changes in Russian education. First, a religious-moral education, not scientific instruction, was needed in Russia. Second, and related, a religious-moral education meant a classical, rather than a utilitarian, curriculum. Third, not all Russians needed an education, a recommendation particularly applicable to the serf population, which would only be made confused and dissatisfied by learning. Fourth, the Society of Jesus should enjoy freedom of education within the empire.⁷⁸ Through his personal contacts and published writings, Maistre bestowed these principles upon the Russia of Alexander I. Such ideas served the growing antireform movement in two separate but related ways. Maistre provided a respectable ideology for the status-conscious, financially threatened noblemen who opposed Speranskii's changes because of practical considerations of self-interest. At the same time, many of Maistre's recommendations were specific enough to prompt the Russian bureaucracy, including the ministers of public instruction, to introduce measures draining the reforms of their original spirit. The statutes of 1803 and 1804 were gradually modified until they were completely replaced in 1828. The statute which was promulgated in that year was largely an implementation of Maistre's recommendations.

The recommendations of Joseph de Maistre fell into two categories: immediate, practical changes in policy and a long-range, fundamental reappraisal of theory. Maistre himself did not divide the two but used contemporary problems in Russian education to develop his general educational, political, and social theses. Nonetheless, such a distinction can be useful in ascertaining Maistre's impact on Russian education.

Maistre's immediate concerns embraced three topics: Professor Fessler of the Alexander Nevsky Seminary; the curriculum of the Tsarskoe Selo Lycée; and the projected academy at Polotsk. Maistre had devoted a separate work to Fessler and hoped to prompt a reexamination of the professor and his methods. In December 1810, Maistre noted with satisfaction that Fessler had been "discarded."⁷⁹ This modest success was followed by another, this time concerning the curriculum of the Tsarskoe Selo Lycée. Alexander had created the Lycée in order to provide for the education of his younger brothers, Nicholas and Michael. After Speranskii had planted the seed, the actual work of implementation was turned over to others, such as the minister of public instruction, Count A. K. Razumovskii. The inexperienced minister sought guidance from his friend Maistre, who responded with *Cinq lettres sur l'éducation publique en Russie*.⁸⁰ Accepting Maistre's views, Razumovskii presented a report, followed by a letter, to the emperor, questioning the proposed curriculum of the Lycée. Following this exchange, a new curriculum, excluding Greek, natural history, archaeology, astronomy, and chemistry, was drawn up by I. I. Martynov and

78. Maistre discussed these and other points in his conclusion to *Quatre chapitres*, *ibid.*, pp. 355–60. He defined this part of the work as "Conservative maxims for Russia."

79. *O.C.*, 11: 521–23; and *Triomphe*, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 251.

80. *O.C.*, 8:161.

approved by Razumovskii.⁸¹ The Lycée then received approval in August 1810. Maistre's qualified success in this matter, supported by Razumovskii, marked the beginning of the rise to ascendancy of the anti-Speranskii forces.⁸²

Maistre also achieved success in the creation of an autonomous Jesuit academy at Polotsk, the third of his immediate objectives. The Belorussian nobility, although for different reasons, supported the idea of making the Polotsk Academy independent of the Ministry of Public Instruction and, in particular, Vilnius University. If Alexander approved the grant of autonomy to the Jesuit academy, which catered to the gentry, it would mean the failure of the earlier reforms. In addition to the support of the Belorussian nobility, Maistre enjoyed the assistance of the general of the Jesuit order, T. Brzozowski, who sent letters to Razumovskii and Prince A. N. Golitsyn, over-procurator of the Holy Synod. The second letter was forwarded to the emperor, and its recommendation for the creation of the Jesuit academy was approved by the Council of Ministers on November 1, 1811.⁸³ During this same time, Maistre presented the *Mémoire sur la liberté de l'enseignement public* to Golitsyn.⁸⁴ On November 3, 1811, Golitsyn read Maistre's *Mémoire* to Alexander,⁸⁵ who informed the author that: "You have caused me to read several things which have given me much pleasure."⁸⁶ The emperor, consequently, requested a fuller discussion of Russia's domestic situation by Maistre, who complied with *Quatre chapitres sur la Russie*.⁸⁷ Through the mediation of Razumovskii and Golitsyn, Brzozowski and Maistre had gained the attention of the emperor. On March 1, 1812, Alexander signed the *ukaz* creating the autonomous Jesuit Academy at Polotsk.⁸⁸ In a letter

81. Vasil'chikov, *Semeistvo Razumovskii*, 2:70–74. The deleted subjects were transferred to the Pedagogical Institute. According to this history of the Razumovskii family, the minister was completely under the influence of Maistre (*ibid.*, p. 103). The general curriculum in the Lycée included Russian language, rhetoric, physical sciences, and mathematics. Maistre did not realize his maximum goals concerning the curriculum of the Lycée, as the physical sciences were retained (see Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, pp. 227–28).

82. The fall of Speranskii has been a topic of considerable interest for historians. The bibliography in Raeff, *Michael Speransky*, pp. 202–3 is excellent. Maistre opposed the "innovator" and believed that part of Speranskii's problem came from being the son of a priest, "the lowest class of free men" (*O.C.*, 12:39–40).

83. Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," pp. 598–99; Henri Lutteroth, *La Russie et les Jésuites de 1772 à 1820* (Paris, 1845), p. 14; and *Zhurnal komiteta ministrov*, vol. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1891), pp. 257–58.

84. Maistre, *Carnets*, p. 193; and Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 254. The work is dated September 16/28, 1811 by Maistre (*O.C.*, 8:275). The author gave the piece to Golitsyn on October 6, 1811. Also see Maistre's discussion of the *Mémoire* in Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, pp. 33–45.

85. Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," pp. 599–600.

86. See letter to King Victor Emmanuel, dated February 2/14, 1812 (*O.C.*, 12:80–81). This letter is also included in Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, p. 49.

87. *O.C.*, 12:81; and Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, pp. 49–50. George Cogordan, *Joseph de Maistre* (Paris, 1894), p. 88, writes that *Quatre chapitres* "is the most ardent, the most complete, and, at the same time, the most biting diatribe which he could write against the modern spirit." Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 602, states that the two Russians most in agreement with the ideas expressed in this work were N. M. Karamzin and Admiral A. S. Shishkov.

88. *PSZ*, vol. 32, no. 25,019 (March 1, 1812), pp. 208–10. In a letter of June 22/July 3, 1812, Maistre noted the elevation of the Polotsk Seminary to an academy. In the same

to King Victor Emmanuel on February 2, 1812, Maistre described a causal chain linking the *Mémoire* and the Academy.⁸⁹ Maistre's direct influence had reached its zenith.

The imperial grant of educational autonomy (similar to that enjoyed by the universities) fulfilled a dream of Roman Catholicism in Russia. But the joy of the Jesuits and Maistre over the inauguration of the new academy was short-lived. A. I. Turgenev, an official in the Department of Foreign Confessions, considered the Academy to be the "beginning of the end" for the Jesuits.⁹⁰ Turgenev's prediction proved to be correct, for an *ukaz* of December 20, 1815 expelled the order from St. Petersburg, and another on March 13, 1820 banished the Society of Jesus from the entire country.⁹¹ The first decree, written by Admiral A. S. Shishkov, stated that the primary function of the Jesuits had become the conversion of souls, rather than the education of students. This charge was the basis for the expulsion.⁹² Maistre, as one of the most conspicuous Roman Catholics in St. Petersburg, was singled out as a leader in the efforts to convert Russians. N. M. Longinov, the secretary of the empress, wrote to Count S. R. Vorontsov: "The minister of Sardinia, Count de Maistre, more bigoted than the Jesuits, is accused of having contributed to this proselytism; it is indubitably he who has

letter, he mentioned the Russian retreat before the French, a development which rendered helpless Maistre's efforts for a pro-Russian, Roman Catholic Poland (Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, pp. 107–8).

89. Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, pp. 49–50.

90. Quoted in Lutteroth, *La Russie et les Jésuites*, p. 17. Also see Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 308; and Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 612. A description of the inauguration ceremony is found in Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, pp. 262–64. Cogordan, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 86, discussing the academy at Polotsk, writes: "Nothing shows more than this the extraordinary influence of Joseph de Maistre in St. Petersburg."

91. *PSZ*, vol. 33, no. 26,032 (December 20, 1815), pp. 408–9, and vol. 37, no. 28,198 (March 13, 1820), pp. 113–19. Maistre, in a letter dated December 24, 1815, discussed the expulsion of the Jesuits from St. Petersburg (*O.C.*, 13:205–15; see also Maistre, *Correspondance diplomatique*, vol. 1, pp. 156–61).

92. The issue of Russian converts to Roman Catholicism became a matter of personal vengeance for Prince Golitsyn, whose nephew confessed the Western faith on Christmas Day, 1814. Maistre clearly foresaw disaster (*O.C.*, 13:79–80, 384; see also Triomphe, *Joseph de Maistre*, p. 306; Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 608; and Brumanis, *Aux origines de la hierarchie latine en Russie*, p. 336). Turgenev argued that the wretched conditions of Roman Catholic students and peasants in Poland served as the reason for the expulsion (*O.C.*, 13:611–12). The expulsion of the Jesuits was the result of a much more complex chain of events than Shishkov's explanation revealed. The victory over Napoleon had resulted in a surge of national pride and a return to native values. See Alston, *Education and the State*, p. 29; and Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, p. 228. The rising pietism of Emperor Alexander, reflected most clearly in the establishment of the Bible Society (December 6, 1812) which was encouraged by Metropolitan Siestrzenczewicz but given only lukewarm cooperation by the Jesuits, was another reason for the expulsion. See Zacek, "The Russian Bible Society," pp. 35–50; Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, 1:144; Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie*, p. 122; Rouët de Journal, *Un collège Jésuites*, pp. 199–202; and Billington, *Icon and the Axe*, pp. 276–90. Perhaps the crucial factor was the reestablishment of the Jesuit order by Pius VII in 1814. See James T. Flynn, "The Role of the Jesuits in the Politics of Russian Education, 1801–1820," *Catholic Historical Review*, 56, no. 2 (July 1970): 249–51.

introduced them into our better houses. . . . It is unfortunate that he was not dispatched together with the Jesuits."⁹³ Although Maistre denied complicity in the conversions,⁹⁴ he realized that his position in Russia had been compromised. He asked the Sardinian government for his recall and, after lengthy delays, departed Russia on May 15, 1817.⁹⁵

With the expulsion of the Jesuits and the closing of the Polotsk Academy, it might be argued that Maistre's program of education in Russia was utterly destroyed. Nevertheless, as much as he cherished the Jesuit cause, it was not the major feature of Maistre's recommendations for Russia. The Jesuit order had never been an end in itself for Maistre; rather, the Jesuits were to serve as the means for achieving the educational goals desired by Maistre. Maistre's lasting influence resulted from the propagation of his ideas among the only "public" that counted in Alexander's Russia—the gentry, the members of the court, and the officers of the government. Maistre extended the boundaries of the conservative grouping and provided it with an alternative to the reforms of Speranskii.⁹⁶

Maistre's ideas found concrete expression in the enactments after 1811 which gradually dismantled the educational system created in 1803–4.⁹⁷ In 1811, Count S. S. Uvarov (the curator of the St. Petersburg school district and the frequent correspondent of Maistre), eliminated political economy, commerce, aesthetics, and philosophy from the curriculum of the St. Petersburg Gymnasium and introduced Russian language and religion. The classical bias adopted by this gymnasium soon spread to other schools.⁹⁸ Two years later, the Ministry

93. *Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova*, 40 vols. (Moscow, 1870–95), 23:358 and 372. Vasil'chikov, *Semeistvo Razumovskii*, 2:68, identifies Maistre as one of the most active "apostles of Latin propaganda."

94. Maistre profusely denied any part in Roman Catholic conversion efforts in Russia (*O.C.*, 13:212 and 384; and Maistre, *Carnets*, p. 200). His protestations are not convincing in light of two works published on this topic: "A une dame protestante, sur la maxime qu'un honnête homme ne change jamais de religion" and "A une dame russe sur la nature et les effets du schisme et sur l'unité catholique" (*O.C.*, 8:129–57). These letters, published posthumously in Maistre's collected works, were written in 1809 and 1810 and addressed to Princess Anna Ivanovna Tolstaia (née Bariatinskaia), the wife of Count Nikolai Tolstoi. See Rouët de Journal, *Un collège Jésuites*, p. 221, n. 1.

95. *O.C.*, 14:182; and Maistre, *Carnets*, p. 201. For an ardent defense of both the Jesuits and Maistre in this matter, see P. Bliard, "L'Empereur Alexandre, les Jésuites et Joseph de Maistre, d'après de documents inédits," *Études*, 130 (1912): 234–44. It is ironic that Maistre, who had helped to formulate an anti-Western ideology for the conservative group in Russia, fell, at least in part, because of that ideology.

96. Stepanov, "Zhozef de Mestr v Rossii," p. 615, touches upon the likelihood of Maistre having influence beyond immediate policy decisions. Other authors, such as Latreille and Triomphe, regard Maistre as influential only during certain periods—1811 to 1812—or in specific decisions—the Polotsk Academy. Latreille, "Joseph de Maistre," p. 344, concludes that Maistre was a complete failure in Russia. Berti, *Rossia i ital'ianskie gosudarstva*, p. 257, writes that Maistre's works served only as a stimulus to Alexander, who was already a reactionary.

97. For a general view of the "watering down" of the educational reforms of Alexander from 1811 to 1815, see Flynn, "The Universities, the Gentry, and the Russian Imperial Services," pp. 498–503.

98. A. Voronov, *Istoriko-statisticheskoe obozrenie uchebnykh zavedenii s. peterburgskogo uchebnogo okruga s 1715 po 1828 god vkluchitel'no* (St. Petersburg, 1849), pp. 128–29;

of Public Instruction, under Count Razumovskii, issued an order that only children of free classes were to be educated at state expense in the universities. At the same time, the Ministry ruled that attendance at a gymnasium required a certificate from the student indicating that he was a free member of society.⁹⁹ Although enrollment in a gymnasium or university by a serf was difficult at best before 1813, these two decisions made the acquisition of a higher education by members of the lower class all but impossible.

One of the changes brought about by Alexander's mysticism was the creation of the Ministry of Spiritual Affairs and Public Instruction on October 24, 1817.¹⁰⁰ This decree placed the governing body of the Russian Orthodox church, the Holy Synod, in control of all state supported education. Maistre, although no friend of either Orthodoxy or mysticism, could agree with the avowed purpose of the new Ministry, which was to make Christian piety the basis of true education.¹⁰¹ In 1819, the Ministry ordered all gymnasia, district schools, and parish schools to emphasize the catechism and other religious writings.¹⁰² From this year onward, religion increasingly became the weapon used to fight foreign and revolutionary influences in the universities. Golitsyn, now minister of spiritual affairs and public instruction, sent the reactionary M. L. Magnitskii to examine the situation at Kazan' University. The following year, 1820, Magnitskii became the curator of the Kazan' school district and issued "Instructions to the Director of Kazan' University."¹⁰³ The Instructions included the statement that the "aim of the government in the education of students consists of training true sons of the Orthodox church, faithful subjects of the ruler, good and useful citizens of the Fatherland."¹⁰⁴ The union of religion and education, preached to Russians by Maistre, had now become the official policy. Although the means of carrying out such a policy had been changed from a Roman Catholic order to a mystical or reactionary Orthodoxy, the purpose remained essentially unchanged.

In 1824, Alexander once again divided the offices of the church from those of education.¹⁰⁵ This was an administrative matter and did not fundamentally

Materialy dlia istorii i statistiki nashikh gimnazii (St. Petersburg, 1864), p. 13; *Sbornik raspriazhenii po ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1866), columns 184–86; and *Sbornik postanovlenii po ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1864), columns 663–64, 672–73, 681.

99. *Sbornik raspriazhenii*, vol. 1, column 223, nos. 95 and 96.

100. *PSZ*, vol. 34, no. 27,106 (October 24, 1817), pp. 814–34.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 814.

102. *Sbornik raspriazhenii*, vol. 1, columns 385–89.

103. *Sbornik postanovlenii*, vol. 1, columns 1199–1220.

104. *Ibid.*, column 1203. On the impact of Magnitskii, see Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture*, pp. 233–34; and Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage*, pp. 79–81. Also consult James T. Flynn, "Magnitskii's Purge of Kazan University: A Case Study in the Uses of Reaction in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *Journal of Modern History*, 43, no. 4 (December 1971): 598–614.

105. *PSZ*, vol. 39, no. 29,914 (May 15, 1824), p. 319. The reversion to the earlier form of church and school administration also signaled the political fall of the mystical Prince Golitsyn. Although he remained a close friend of the emperor, Golitsyn's direct involvement in government affairs came to an end. Golitsyn's vehicle for mixing religion and politics,

affect the attitude of the state toward education. Admiral A. S. Shishkov, Maistre's friend from the meetings of the Lovers of the Russian Word, became the minister of public instruction that same year. He echoed the sentiments of Magnitskii by stating that the goal of education was the development of "true sons of the church, faithful subjects, people devoted to God and Tsar."¹⁰⁶ In fulfilling its purpose, "national" education must defend youth from the infection of "false-wisdomed reason" and pride, which makes a youth think he is a wise old man and an old man believe he is a youth."¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, added Shishkov, "Learning is only useful when it is employed like salt and is taught according to the conditions of the people and their needs."¹⁰⁸ The philosophy of education espoused by Shishkov was essentially that of Joseph de Maistre.¹⁰⁹ Both men abhorred the ideals of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, particularly as reflected in education. Maistre in his writings and Shishkov in his policy statements favored an educational program in which the content would be classical and the spirit would be religious. Education should be national, rather than cosmopolitan, serving as a barrier to new ideas by preserving old ways.

With the accession of Nicholas I to the Russian throne, the pace quickened toward a new statute in education, as opposed to piecemeal modifications of Alexander's original educational reforms. On May 14, 1826, after less than six months as emperor, Nicholas created the "Committee for the Organization of the Schools," which he instructed to compose a new education law.¹¹⁰ Nicholas did not leave the Committee without broad hints on his own views of Russian schools. In a rescript on education from August 19, 1827, Nicholas wrote:

I have discovered, among other things, that often serfs from the countryside and the villages are educated in the gymnasia and other higher institutions of learning. This results in twofold harm: on the one hand, these young people, having received their elementary education from their landlords or careless parents, usually enter the schools with bad habits and infect their comrades in their classes; by this they prevent the more careful parents from sending their children to these institutions. On the other hand, the best of them, through diligence and success, become accustomed to a life, to a way of thinking and to notions, which are not compatible with their position. Unavoidable burdens become unbearable to them, and thus very often in their despondency they indulge in pernicious dreams of low passions.¹¹¹

the Bible Society, was also losing influence and would soon vanish in Russia. See Judith Cohen Zacek, "The Russian Bible Society and the Russian Orthodox Church," *Church History*, 35, no. 4 (December 1966): 431-33.

106. *Sbornik raspriazhenii*, vol. 1, column 535.

107. S. V. Rozhdestvenskii, ed., *Istoricheskii obzor deiatel'nosti ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia, 1802-1902* (St. Petersburg, 1902), p. 166.

108. *Ibid.*

109. For a discussion of Shishkov's program, see *Sbornik raspriazhenii*, vol. 1, column 535.

110. Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, pp. 179-80; and *PSZ*, 2nd ser., vol. 1, no. 338 (May 14, 1826).

111. *PSZ*, 2nd ser., vol. 2, no. 1308 (August 19, 1827), p. 676.

The emperor, therefore, called for instruction in the faith, the laws, and the morals which would enable students to pursue the tasks consistent with their position in life. The practical ramifications of the rescript, which had the force of law, limited entrance to the universities and gymnasia to the "free classes," leaving the district and parish schools alone open to the peasants. By selecting only pieces of his brother's policies, Nicholas carefully outlined one of the major features of his own statute on education. The gentry, given ideological support by Maistre and cautious hope by the wavering Alexander, had now found an unambiguous champion in Nicholas I.

On April 25, 1828, Admiral Shishkov, "due to old age and shattered health," left the Ministry of Public Instruction.¹¹² Nicholas named an eleven-year veteran of the Ministry to succeed Shishkov—Prince K. A. Liven. This choice must have puzzled many men in government, for although Liven was perhaps the most qualified man in the Ministry, he held moderate views and favored the continuation of the system established in 1803 and 1804.¹¹³ But Nicholas would find use for Liven's bureaucratic skills while overruling the minister's philosophy of education. Liven's primary attention focused upon enacting into law an educational statute which would make the hopes of Shishkov and Nicholas a reality. On June 2, 1826, Shishkov had remarked: "The parish schools, in our minds, ought to exist primarily for the peasant, petty bourgeoisie, and workers of the lower class. The district [schools] for merchants, and higher [schools] for officers' children and the nobility."¹¹⁴ The able Liven translated Shishkov's ideas into legal language, and on December 8, 1828, a new law was promulgated. This Law of the Gymnasia and Schools (*Ustav gimnazii i uchilishch*) broke the graduated chain of schools—from the parish to the university—which had theoretically existed under Alexander.¹¹⁵ The statute stated the restrictive theory without hesitation:

The general aim of an educational institution . . . consists of a moral education to furnish the youth with the means of acquiring that which each most needs according to his status.

The parish schools provide an elementary education for the people of the lowest classes.

The district schools are open to all classes, but are especially designed for merchants, artisans, and other residents of towns.

The establishment of Gubernia Gymnasia has a twofold purpose: to provide . . . an education for those young people who have no intention or are unable to continue study in the Universities; . . . [and] to provide the necessary preparation [for those entering the University].¹¹⁶

112. Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, p. 168. Shishkov apparently paid little attention to the official statement and lived for thirteen more years.

113. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–70.

114. A. Voronov, *Istoricheskoe-statisticheskoe obozrenie uchebnykh zavedenii s. peterburgskogo uchebnogo okruga s 1829 po 1853 god* (St. Petersburg, 1854), pp. 2–3.

115. *PSZ*, 2nd ser., vol. 3, no. 2502 (December 8, 1828), pp. 1097–1127.

116. *Ibid.*, pp. 1099, 1103, 1110.

The statute eliminated the following subjects from the curriculum of the district schools: civics, physics, technology, Latin and German (the latter two in order to prevent graduates from advancing to the gymnasium). The gymnasium placed more emphasis than before on Latin, Russian, and religion, and abandoned the teaching of natural science, psychology, law, political economy, commerce, and technology.¹¹⁷ A comparison of the statute of 1828 with those of 1803 and 1804 will reveal the profound differences. The schools under the Nicholaevan law were class-oriented, less practical, and more religious. The parish and district schools no longer funneled into the gymnasium, just as in Russia as a whole, the peasants did not rise into the nobility. This law crowned with success the campaigns of Maistre, Shishkov, and Nicholas to erase all traces of equality in education.

On March 21, 1833, Count S. S. Uvarov replaced Prince Liven as minister of public instruction and, during the next fifteen years, proceeded to "perfect" the law of 1828.¹¹⁸ Uvarov's tripartite formula, "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality," became not only the motto for his Ministry, but for the reign of Nicholas as well. The conception of using Russian education, based upon religion, in support of the state rather than as an abstract search for knowledge had been formulated by the minister from Sardinia and eagerly offered to influential Russian statesmen. Although the religious attitudes of Razumovskii, Golitsyn, Shishkov, Liven, and Uvarov¹¹⁹ varied from the mystical to the "official" brand of Orthodoxy, all, without exception, founded their programs upon religion. These men, supported ideologically by Maistre, presided over the destruction of the system established early in the reign of Alexander. The original program was first drained of its substance and then completely abolished in 1828. The spirit of the new law indicated the influence of Joseph de Maistre on Russian domestic policy. Maistre left Russia in 1817, but his views on education would be incorporated into the official Russian policy which lasted until the reforms of Alexander II.

117. *Ibid.*, pp. 1104–5, 1111.

118. Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, pp. 202–22.

119. These five men in turn held the office of minister of public instruction from 1810 to 1848. Of the five, only Liven remained outside Maistre's intellectual circle. Liven's brother, however, became a close friend of Maistre, who wrote in 1810: "The house of Count Liven . . . is one of those where I have been treated the best, both by him and his wife" (*O.C.*, 11:410).