

= Nikita Zotov =

Count Nikita Moiseevich Zotov (Russian : ?????? ?????????? ?????? , tr . Nikita Moiseevich Zotov ; IPA : [nʲɪˈkʲitʲa mʲoʲˈsʲeʲjvʲɪtʲɪtʲɪ ˈzotv]) (1644 ? December 1717) was a childhood tutor and lifelong friend of Russian Tsar Peter the Great . Historians disagree on the quality of Zotov 's tutoring . Robert K. Massie , for example , praises his efforts , but Lindsey Hughes criticizes the education that he gave to the future tsar .

Not much is known about Zotov 's life aside from his connection to Peter . Zotov left Moscow for a diplomatic mission to Crimea in 1680 and returned to Moscow before 1683 . He became part of the " Jolly Company " , a group of several dozen of Peter 's friends that eventually became The All @-@ Joking , All @-@ Drunken Synod of Fools and Jesters . Zotov was mockingly appointed " Prince @-@ Pope " of the Synod , and regularly led them in games and celebrations . He accompanied Peter on many important occasions , such as the Azov campaigns and the torture of the Streltsy after their uprising . Zotov held a number of state posts , including from 1701 a leading position in the Tsar 's personal secretariat . Three years before his death , Zotov married a woman 50 years his junior . He died in December 1717 of unknown causes .

= = Tutelage of Peter I = =

= = = Background = = =

Alexis I , Tsar of Russia , married twice in his lifetime , first to Maria Miloslavskaya and then to Natalia Naryshkina after Maria 's death . Peter I was born to Natalia Naryshkina on 30 May 1672 . After the death of Tsar Alexis on 8 February 1676 , Peter 's half @-@ brother and godfather Feodor , the " semi @-@ invalid eldest surviving son of Maria Miloslavskaya " , became the Tsar of Russia . Ivan Miloslavsky , Feodor 's uncle , returned to Moscow from virtual exile as Governor of Astrakhan to become Chief Minister . His family had not been in power for some time as a result of Tsar Alexis ' remarriage . As a result , Ivan Miloslavsky hated the Naryshkin family , which included Peter , Natalia Naryshkina , and Natalia 's foster father , Artamon Matveyev . When a new ruling family took over , the previous ruling family was usually banished to a ceremonial position somewhere far from Moscow . Instead , Ivan Miloslavsky tried to arrest the Naryshkins , but Feodor would only permit him to exile Artamon Matveyev . Feodor was fond of his half @-@ brother Peter and Peter 's mother , and both were allowed to remain in the Kremlin in private apartments .

Most 17th @-@ century Muscovites received little education , and there were low levels of literacy even among the nobility , education for whom typically consisted of a little reading , writing , and a small amount of history and geography . Religious scholars were usually the exception to this rule and were often also taught grammar , mathematics , and foreign languages . Two of Tsar Alexis ' children ? Feodor , and his sister Tsarevna Sophia ? received a thorough education from the religious scholars of Kiev , and could speak Latin and Polish .

At the age of three , in 1674 or 1675 , Peter received a primer from Tsar Alexis to help him learn the alphabet ; two years later , Tsar Feodor suggested to Peter 's mother that he begin his studies . Estimates of the exact year when Peter 's tutoring began range widely ; numerous authors refer to a starting date as early as 1677 , and as late as 1683 , though multiple references specifically identify 12 March 1677 as the beginning of Peter 's tutoring . Nikita Zotov , a former church clerk , or " Duma secretary " from the tax @-@ collection department of the governmental bureaucracy , was chosen to teach Peter to read and write .

= = = Appointment and instruction = = =

Zotov was not a religious scholar , but he knew the Bible well ? an important qualification for Tsaritsa Natalia . Although he did not expect it , he was well rewarded before he had even started his work , receiving from Feodor and the Tsaritsa , as well as Patriarch Joachim , gifts including a

set of apartments , two new sets of clothing , and 100 rubles . He was also raised to the rank of a minor nobleman . Zotov was deeply humbled and overwhelmed by the Tsaritsa 's request , and was enthralled at the prospect of teaching Peter . Zotov and Peter quickly became good friends , and Zotov remained close to Peter until the former 's death .

Peter 's first lesson began the morning after Zotov was appointed . After the books were sprinkled with holy water , Zotov began his instruction ; first in the alphabet , and then the Prayer Book . He taught the Bible , from which Peter learned long passages that he could still recite from memory forty years later . Zotov also taught his student to sing , and in his later years Peter often spontaneously accompanied choirs at church services . Although initially tasked only to teach reading and writing , Zotov found Peter to be intellectually curious , and interested in all that he could impart . Peter asked for lessons on Russian history , battles , and heroes . At Zotov 's request , the Tsaritsa ordered engravings of " foreign cities and palaces , sailing ships , weapons and historical events " to be brought from the Ordnance Office . Zotov placed them in the study room , along with a somewhat accurate globe for the time , to divert Peter when he became bored with his studies . Other informal " makeshift " tutors (foreign and domestic) and servants , were brought in for rowdy outdoor games with live ammunition . They were also to instruct Peter in other subjects such as royal and military history , blacksmithing , carpentry , joinery , printing , and , unusually for Russian nobility at the time , sailing and shipbuilding .

= = = Impact = = =

Zotov became one of Peter 's first friends , and the two remained close throughout Zotov 's life . Lindsey Hughes , a 20th @-@ century historian , has criticized Zotov for giving Peter an education that did not teach what a future tsar ought to know . Her contemporary , Robert K. Massie , has argued that the education was the best possible one for a curious boy like Peter , because it was unlikely that he would ever become tsar , as his half @-@ brother , Ivan V , was before him in the line of succession . According to Massie , although Zotov may have not taught Peter at the highest possible level , he delivered " the best education for a mind like Peter 's " , as it " stimulated [Peter 's] curiosity " and allowed him to become " in large part , a self @-@ taught man " . Zotov 's closeness to the Tsar later became a source of worry to others in government , many of whom ? including even the powerful Menshikov ? feared his influence .

In 1680 , Zotov embarked on a three @-@ year diplomatic mission to the Crimea ; sources disagree on whether this was before or after he tutored Peter . When Peter left the Kremlin to spend his childhood at Preobrazhenskoye , two years after Zotov 's departure , his memories of the tutors who had taught his siblings , Feodor and Sophia , were so negative that he cut himself off from traditional academic subjects for a time . He later resumed his studies under Afanassiy Nesterov and Zotov after the latter 's return from the Crimea . Although Peter sought to learn of nature and military matters rather than literature or theology , he nevertheless learned a great deal of the latter from his tutors . Zotov (and later his sons) later worked with Peter to translate books about fortification from a Western European language into Russian . Peter did not learn , or forgot , a great deal about mathematics , a subject that he had to learn properly in his late teens for use in siege warfare and fortification . In later years , Peter regretted his lack of a fuller education , and sought to give his daughters Anne and Elizabeth educations equivalent of any European princess .

= = Prince @-@ Pope of Drunken Synod = =

In 1692 , Peter , who by then was Tsar of Russia , organized himself and several dozen of his friends into The All @-@ Joking , All @-@ Drunken Synod of Fools and Jesters , a " synod " that parodied religion . Although he had a reputation for sobriety and fasting , Zotov was appointed the " Prince @-@ Pope " of the Synod because of that very fact . He was sometimes even referred to as Patriarch Bacchus . Peter forced him to participate in the parties even when Zotov claimed sickness and exhaustion .

However , Zotov soon grew to be a key participant in the mocking celebrations . After first drinking

to everyone 's health , he " blessed " the group with the Sign of the Cross , using two long Dutch pipes . On holidays , the games were played on the streets of Moscow , and at Christmas , the Jolly Company rode around the city singing on sleighs , with Zotov at their head , on a sleigh pulled by twelve bald men . Zotov wore a highly unusual costume ? his outfit was adorned with playing cards ; he wore a tin hat ; and he sat upon a barrel . During the first week of Lent , a procession of " penitents " followed Zotov through the city on donkeys , oxen , and sleighs pulled by goats , pigs , and bears .

= = High office = =

In 1695 and 1696 , Peter the Great mounted two campaigns against the Turkish garrison of Azov . Though the campaign in 1695 was ultimately unsuccessful , the 1696 one succeeded . The Russians surrounded the city with both men and ships and breached the wall , causing the Pasha of Azov to " surrender under honorable conditions " . The people of Moscow were amazed by the news of the surrender ; not since the reign of Peter 's father Alexis had a Russian army been victorious . Peter delayed his return home to allow Andrew Vinius , another member of the All @-@ Joking Company , time to set up a victory parade through the capital . The army returned home on 10 October , but instead of a traditional Orthodox reception , the army marched through an arch seemingly supported by Hercules and Mars . Contrary to the custom for a tsar , Peter did not ride at the head of the procession , but instead allowed it to be led by 18 horsemen leading carriages carrying Zotov and the war hero Fedor Golovin .

While on a tour of Europe in 1698 , Peter learned that the Streltsy had rebelled , and immediately rushed home from Vienna . After defeating the rebellious regiments , Peter angrily ordered the torture of those who had incited the Streltsy to rebel . For almost a month and a half , men from Peter 's Jolly Company , including Fyodor Romodanovsky , Boris Golitsyn , and Zotov , led the torture in secret .

In 1701 , Zotov was made the head of the Tsar 's newly created Privy Council , a committee akin to the defunct Duma . In 1710 , Peter made Zotov a count , and a year later when Peter set up the Governing Senate , he appointed Zotov to oversee the Senate .

= = Personal life = =

Nikita Zotov was twice married , and had three sons from his first marriage . One was Vasily Zotov (d . 1729) , who was educated outside of Russia and became the Revisor @-@ General of Ukazes (Inspector General of Decrees) in November 1715 . As Inspector General , it was Vasily 's job to preside over the Senate , enforce its decrees , and report absent senators to Peter . Vasily had little political power however , and so was unable to fulfill his role in opposition to the wishes of some of the most powerful men in the Russian empire . The second son was Ivan Zotov (1687 ? 1723) , who lived and studied in France , where he worked as a translator . The third son , Konon Zotov (1690 ? 30 December 1742) , studied in England , and served in various positions in the Russian Navy and in the Russian judicial system .

According to Robert K. Massie and Lindsey Hughes , Peter told Zotov in October 1713 that he intended to have him marry a second time , to Anna Pashkova , a widow 50 years Zotov 's junior , despite Zotov 's wish to spend his final years in a monastery . However , the Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary and Sergey Solovyov say that Zotov came up with the idea to marry Pashkova in 1714 , and that his plan to become a monk was merely a joke .

The wedding was described by Friedrich Christian Weber , the ambassador of Hanover , as " solemnized by the court in masks " . Guests were instructed to pre @-@ register in groups of three with their costumes so as not to look too similar to other guests . Witnesses described the event , which took place on 27 and 28 January 1715 , and which had been prepared for three months , as a " world turned upside @-@ down " . The Jolly Company dressed in ridiculous regalia , and many people behaved exactly opposite to the norm ; " invitations to the guests were delivered by stammerers , the bridesmen were cripples , the runners were fat men with gout , the priest was

allegedly one hundred years old " (and blind) . Hughes notes that the event may have been a " variation on the Western charivari or shaming ceremonies " , through which the Tsar could demonstrate how much power he had over his subjects ' lives . During the wedding , the Drunken Synod routinely sang carols in the streets of Moscow and demanded money , which became a New Year tax for the wealthy .

= = Death = =

Nikita Zotov died in December 1717 of unknown causes . Peter wasted no time in moving on , at least publicly ; he replaced Zotov as " Prince @-@ Pope " with Peter Buturlin by " electing " him on 28 December 1717 , and appointing him on 10 January 1718 . Peter even ordered that Zotov 's widow be married to Buturlin in the fall of 1721 . There was a disagreement between Konon Zotov and his stepmother over the division of Nikita Zotov 's estate ; Konon tried to declare Nikita 's second marriage illegitimate , to avoid having to give any money to his stepmother 's family .