

The Epoch of Aleksandr Radishchev's "Journey from Petersburg to Moscow"

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Abstract

Aleksandr Radishchev's *〈Journey from Petersburg to Moscow〉* (1790) has created a number of "myths". And one of the most famous and influential among them in modern Russia and USSR is that Radishchev's work had provided the grand for Russian revolutionary ideas to take root, and declared the beginning of Russian Revolution.

But now these "myths" must be repudiated completely, and in order to rethink Radishchev's work, its actuality and significance in the present age, it is necessary to reinterpret the text in terms of the socio-cultural conditions of his epoch. The aim of this paper is to analyze the text of Radishchev's work from the viewpoint of cultural history, in other words, to "disperse" this work into Radishchev's epoch. To put it in a more concrete way, to reconstruct the spirit of his age, we will consider the cultural-historical meaning of journey itself, the "discovery of the country" and country estate (in Russian, *usad'ba*) culture, the memoir and travels as a form of genre, and, finally, Radishchev's epoch as a transition period to Pushkin's time.