



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The Crown Jewels of Russia

BY GEORGE FREDERICK KUNZ, PH.D., SC.D., A.M.

RUSSIA the Magnificent, Russia the Land of the Czars, Russia the land of imperial luxury and peasant poverty, Russia, more advanced artistically in many ways than England in the sixteenth century, the land in which the Imperial Court encouraged the artist, and more especially the artisan, in the creation of the richest and most regal productions the world has ever seen—whether the ruler was a man of iron and blood, as Ivan the Terrible, or the weakest of his line, as the late Czar, Nicholas II, there encouragement was ever given to the highest class of art production.

The treasures of the Oruzhenaya Palata were shown to me on April 1, 1891, by the governor of the Palace, the late General Filamonov, who broke the seals of all the cases containing the crowns, giving me the greatest freedom to examine everything most minutely, and stated at the time that he was personally responsible for these treasures until the Prime Minister again sealed the cases.

The Winter Palace treasures, the Orlov diamond, the red diamond of the Emperor Paul, the great pearls and other magnificent jewels were shown to me by the courtesy of the Imperial Chamberlain, Prince Putjatzin on January 15, 1891, the guard being commanded by Colonel Gernet. Scarcely two months later the Prince was bombed to death.

By what intimate ties the Russian empire in its growth was bound to the old Eastern Empire, is illustrated by the fact that the earliest Russian crowns were either made in Con-

stantinople or executed by Greek artificers in Russian territory. It is true, however, that in the crowns made by them the influence of purely Oriental ideas is strongly manifest and gives forms peculiarly characteristic of Russia. In Hungary also, the earliest crown, that one later known as the "Crown of St. Stephen," last worn by the Emperor Carl I, when he was crowned King of Hungary at Budapest in 1916, was (in part at least) made in Constantinople, whence it was sent in A. D. 1072 by the Emperor Michael Gorcas to Geisa, the first of Hungary's dukes. Above the band are four portraits in enamel. The largest represents the Savior, the others depict Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Emperor Gorcas, the donor of the crown, and Geisa himself, who is styled in the accompanying inscription "King of the Turks." An uncut sapphire of large size was inserted in the band, below the enamel of Christ, and along the band are set, at intervals, four other sapphires, while above the Christ enamel is an amethyst and other precious stones and rows of fine pearls complete the enrichment of this historic crown.

Notable among the royal and imperial crowns preserved in the Oruzhenaya Palata of the Kremlin, Moscow, was that commonly called the "Crown of Kazan," because it was given by Ivan IV, "The Terrible," to Ediger, King of Kazan, in 1553, when, after the conquest of the country and the baptism of its Khan (formerly a pagan—he was baptized Simon), the Russian victor



PORTRAIT OF CATHERINE II IN HER ROBES OF STATE ADORNED WITH THE IMPERIAL JEWELS

bestowed upon him the title of Czar, possibly as a small compensation for the loss of his independence. This gold crown, in spite of the fact that its general decoration, and especially the delicately wrought arabesques in *niello* with which it is adorned, testify to the influence of Persian art, is believed to have been produced by a Russian goldsmith of the sixteenth century. The form is that of a tiara, and it is decorated with Persian



PORTRAIT OF COUNT GRIGORI ORLOV WHO PRESENTED THE FAMOUS DIAMOND BEARING HIS NAME TO CATHERINE II OF RUSSIA IN 1775

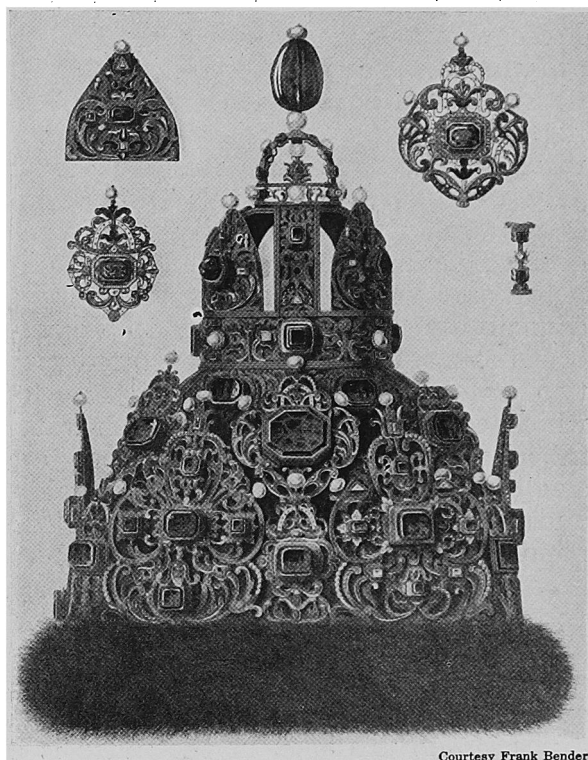
turquoises, which however, have changed somewhat in color in the course of time, and with pierced spinels. The writer when he examined the precious stone decoration carefully in Moscow in 1891, recognized that the large stone at the apex is not a topaz, as it has generally been described, but a yellow sapphire, of light hue and rather inferior quality. Around the base of this crown or cap runs a border of the richest sable fur.

The crown of Michael Feodorovich, called the "Astrakhan Cap," is perhaps the richest in the collection. Surmounting the splendidly jewelled arch is an immense, pierced topaz, above and below which is a pearl. It also bears a flat, pierced sapphire, an octagonally cut sapphire of a pale blue color, and numerous other smaller ones, as well as many spinels; there is also a square-cut emerald, of fair quality, from Muzo, Colombia. The tiara, or cap, of Peter the Great which the Russians call the "Diamond Cap" is studded with diamonds. At the top, beneath a diamond cross is a large spinel, which is however almost opaque; rising from the sable bordering at the base of the cap, are several large but very light colored emeralds and three large spinels, all pierced and mounted on stem-like shafts of gold.

The imperial insignia in the treasury comprise five splendid sceptres, those of

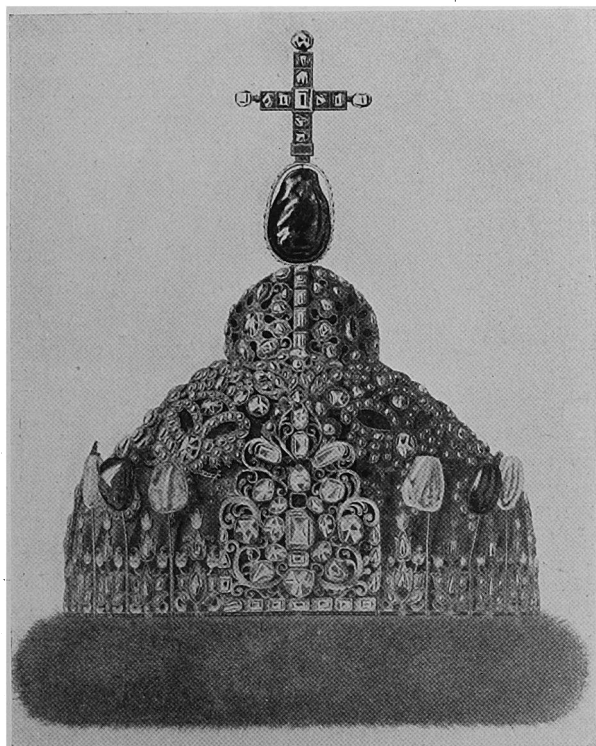
Czar Michael Feodorovich, of Czar Alexis and of Peter the Great, besides the sceptre of the last king of Poland, Stanislas Augustus (1764-1795), and that of George XI, Prince of Georgia. The sceptre of Michael Feodorovich is extremely ornate, its decoration consisting of rich designs in enamel and an abundance of precious stones; it is surmounted by eagles. The Polish sceptre is remarkable in that it is of

lapis lazuli, with an elaborate gold mounting, while the Georgian sceptre is of gold with green enameling. An interesting element of the insignia worn at Russian coronations is an imperial shield, made of leather covered with crimson-hued velvet and is closely studded with medallions, of various designs, richly executed in beautiful enamel and gems of fine quality.



Courtesy Frank Bender

TIARA OF THE CZAR MICHAEL FEODOROVICH (1613-1645) CALLED THE ASTRAKHAN CAP. IN THE ORUZHENAYA PALATA, KREMLIN, MOSCOW



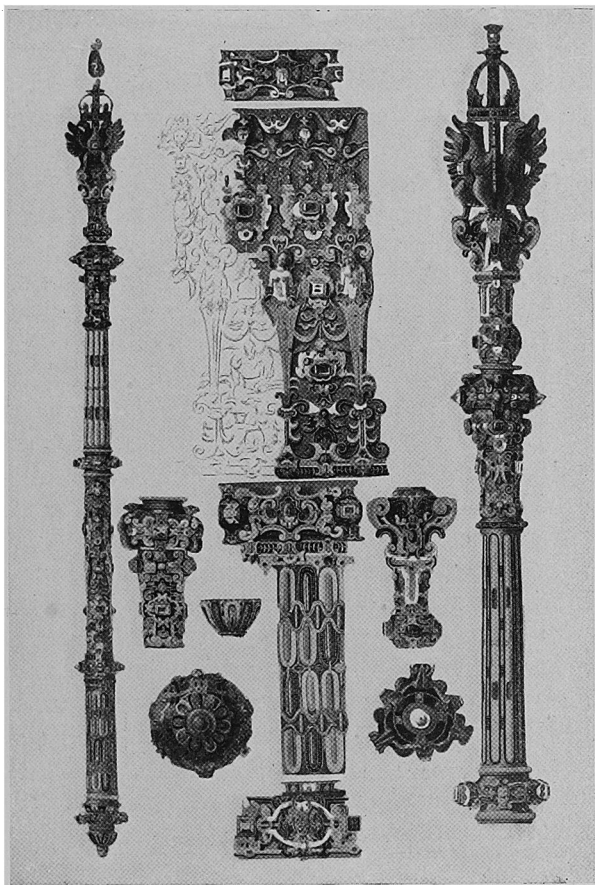
Courtesy Frank Bender

TIARA OF PETER THE GREAT, CALLED THE DIAMOND CAP. IN THE ORUZHENAYA PALATA, KREMLIN, MOSCOW

In the treasury of the Patriarchs in Moscow, was preserved a most elaborately be-pearled mitre given in 1653 by Czar Alexei Michailovich and the Czaritza Illiinuchna to Patriarch Nikon, the tenth of the line. He was chosen on July 25, 1652, to fill this high office, endowed at that time with the primacy of the Russian Church, but fell into disfavor and was deposed in 1666, by a council especially convened to dispose of his case. This mitre is decorated with two broad arches of pearls, many of which came from European fresh-water fisheries; interspersed with them are small rubies, sapphires, a few emeralds, and a larger, engraved sapphire. The band of the tiara is encircled with a broad band of pearls, with enameled decorations interspersed. Enameled figures of the four Evangelists are set above the band in a rich framework, over which is set an emerald topped with a pearl. At the apex of the mitre is a cross of diamonds and pearls. Patriarch Nikon is interred in the New

Jerusalem monastery at Voskressensk, about ninety miles distant from Tver.

The crown that has been used at the ceremonies of the Coronation since 1762, is that executed for Catherine II by the Court Jeweler Pauzié, a Genevan by birth. Its form is Byzantine. On the brow-band are 26 large diamonds, which with many smaller ones go to form two palm branches dazzlingly brilliant. Rising from these ornaments, the arch of the crown bears a row of magnificent diamonds; capping the arch is an uncut spinel, which despite its rather pale hue was considered in 1725 to be worth the sum of 60,000 rubles. Surmounting this spinel is a cross formed of five large and fine diamonds. On either side of the arch of the crown there is a section rising from the circlet and bordered with 38 pearls of large size and splendid quality. Smaller pearls and precious stones num-



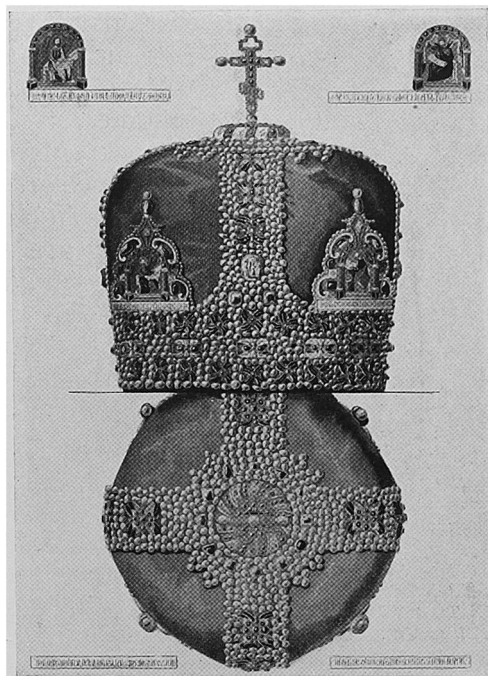
Courtesy Frank Bender

IMPERIAL. RUSSIAN SCEPTRES. IN THE ORUZHENAYA PALATA, KREMLIN, MOSCOW

bering about 2,500, go to complete and round out the artistic beauty of this historic crown, which rivals the coronation crown made fifty years earlier (1722) for Louis XV, although the precious stone adornment of the latter represented a greater pecuniary value, including as it did both the Régent and the Sancey diamonds, the finest among the French Crown Jewels. The Russian Orlov diamond is set in the Imperial sceptre for the coronation, and the orb has, besides 34 large diamonds, a bluish-green sapphire overtopped by a diamond cross composed of 13 fine stones. This Russian imperial crown has been valued at 1,100,000 rubles, or \$586,000 of our money.

The most valuable gem in the Winter Palace treasury was the famous Orlov diamond. At coronations it was placed at the tip of the imperial sceptre, but was afterwards removed, and when seen in August, 1891, by the writer, it was carefully enclosed in a solid box. The writer found the Orlov to be considerably "off color," that is, a faint, yellowish or tea-color tinge; several flaws were also observable. Its present weight is 193 $\frac{3}{4}$ carats of the old scale, or 199.73 metric carats. It is rose-cut in the old Indian style, so as to preserve as much as possible of the original weight. If, however, it were to be recut as a modern brilliant, the weight would certainly be reduced to 125 carats and perhaps even lower.

The history of this great diamond, like that of most of the historic diamonds, is somewhat obscure. The story that it was once one of the eyes of a great idol in a Hindu temple, perhaps an image



Courtesy Frank Bender
THE GEM-STUDED MITRE OF THE PATRIARCH NIKON, GIFT OF THE CZAR ALEXIS MICHAELOVICH AND THE CZARITZA MARIA ILINICHNA. IN THE TREASURY OF THE PATRIARCHS, MOSCOW

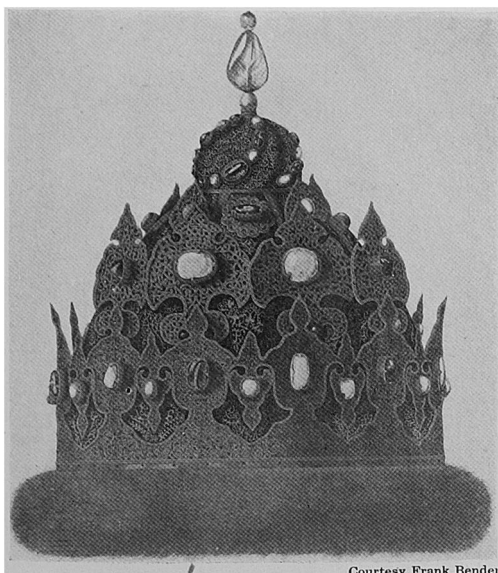
of Vishnu in the island temple of Srirangam, may well have some basis of truth. Certain it is that it was bought in Amsterdam by Count Grigori Orlov in 1775 from an Armenian merchant named Shaffrass, or from his representative, and then presented by the purchaser to his sovereign lady, Catherine II, as a testimonial of regard. The price Orlov paid for it has been differently stated by different sources, the two best being so widely apart that one states it to have been 1,400,000 florins (about \$560,000) while the other (Pallas)

puts it at 500,000 rubles, which would mean about \$375,000 according to the ruble-value of that period. It is usually added that the merchant also secured a patent of nobility—that would be some mere nominal title, of course.

Besides the great Orlov diamond, the Treasury of the Winter Palace contained another most valuable and interesting large diamond, that named "The Shah." This was given in 1829 or 1830, by Prince Khusrau, son of the Persian Crown Prince Abbas Mirza, who later reigned as Shah, to Czar Nicholas I, as a propitiatory offering for the murder of the Russian ambassador at Teheran. It bore and probably still bears, engraved upon it in fine Persian character, the names Akbar Shah, Nisim Shah, and Fath Ali Shah. This last named Persian monarch ascended the throne in 1797. Gustav Rose who saw this diamond when he was in St. Petersburg in 1830 shortly after it had been donated, stated that its weight was 86 carats (88.19 metric carats). Several of the faces were those of the original crystals, while a few had been

polished. The rumor that it has been cut in Russia and the inscriptions removed seems to have arisen from the fact that certain writers have given the weight as 95 carats, but as Rose stated it to be 86 carats when he saw it a few months after it had been brought to Russia, and describes the inscriptions as existing at that time, the higher weight is almost certainly an error.

The late Empress of Russia had a wonderful collection of black pearls, one unrivalled in the world. She had four strings of them with exceptionally large pendent-pearls, and also bracelets and earrings set with this rare type of pearl. Each of the earrings consisted of two large pearls, one suspended from the other. In addition, the Czaritsa possessed a coronet in the jewellery of which black pearls alternated with diamonds. A smaller jewel, but one of great value, was a ring as long as the first phalanx of the finger. It was set with a large and lustrous black pearl surrounded by a circle of smaller ones. Black pearls of fine quality have appealed to the taste of many devotees of the Queen Gem in former times and at present, but one might almost feel that a pronounced fancy for them, not for their contrasting effect when combined with white pearls, but without this alleviation of their sombre lustre, could be looked upon as



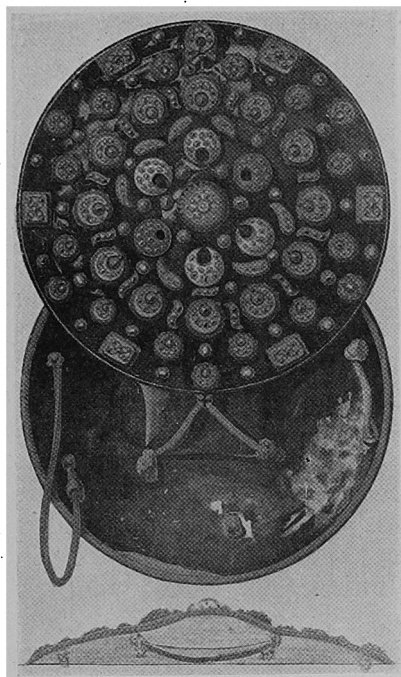
Courtesy Frank Bender

TIARA OF THE KINGDOM OF KAZAN. MADE IN THE YEAR 1553 BY ORDER OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE. IN THE ORUZHENAYA PALATA, KREMLIN, MOSCOW

indicating a certain tendency to sadness, the superstitious might say a foreboding of coming misfortune, on the part of the owner. However, the Russian Empress had so many other jewels set with splendid diamonds and wonderful colored stones that she could have easily satisfied a more cheerful mood. One that was especially prized by her was a tiara, the adornment of which was provided by rose-shaped ornaments, formed of a large central ruby with

surrounding diamonds; this was a gift from the Czar.

The imperial love of gems extended beyond the superb crown jewels. Gem material was lavishly employed in the decoration of certain especially sumptuous rooms in several of the Russian imperial palaces. For example at Zarskoe Selo, the Russian Versailles, one of the rooms occupied by Catherine II is entirely overlaid with agate, and the bed-chamber of Marie Alexandrovka, wife of Czar Alexander II, has its floor inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Even more impressive is the Amber Room, which is completely tiled with amber, while on the walls and the table are displayed numerous artistic objects carved out of this material, while another beautiful apartment, the wonderful "Lapis Lazuli Hall" was sumptuously adorned with this rich-hued blue stone, enhanced by the use of gold.



Courtesy Frank Bender

IMPERIAL RUSSIAN CORONATION SHIELD MADE OF LEATHER COVERED WITH RICH CRIMSON VEVLET AND JEWELS