

DENIS FONVIZIN

"THE BOLD MASTER OF SATIRE"

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B. A., University of Calgary, 1968

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
SLAVONIC STUDIES

We accept this thesis as conforming to the
required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
April, 1970

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Date April 30, 1970

ABSTRACT

Heretofore in the western world there has been no intensive literary study of the noted Russian author of the eighteenth century, Denis Ivanovich Fonvizin. Many western scholars assert that Fonvizin's works are valuable only as historical documents and that they possess little literary merit. Nevertheless, a close acquaintance with Fonvizin's works and a careful scrutiny of the information about them, help to put his works in a proper perspective. To perform this task I have consulted many Soviet and pre-revolutionary sources and shall report their findings along with mine.

The method of approach has been to analyze the works and the available critical literature. Chapter One is devoted to a general study of the author and his career. Chapters Two and Three deal with Fonvizin's most important literary legacies Brigadir and Nedorosl' respectively, and provide analyses of sources, structure, characterization, style, language, humour and influences. I have commented in particular on the characters as manifestations of their class in Russian society of the time and attempted to provide an insight into the plays' social meaning and use of humorous devices. The Epilogue consists of a brief summary in an attempt at formulating a conclusion about Fonvizin's place in the literary history of Russia.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I should like to express my sincere appreciation to my adviser Dr. Z. Folejewski, to Dr. M. Futrell and Professor F. Beardow for their interest and assistance in the preparation of this study.

INTRODUCTION

Eighteenth-Century Russian literature was studded with dramatists: Sumarokov, Kolichev, Plavil'shchikov, Catherine the Great, Krylov, Lomonosov, Matinsky, Lukin, Ablesimov, Kapnist, Knyazhnin and Fonvizin are prominent. Many of the works of these writers were not original; principally they imitated the classics of Seventeenth-Century France: Corneille, Racine and Molière. Russian theatre attempted to follow the principles formulated by these greats. The classical tradition of the unities of time, place and action were introduced into the Russian drama. Moreover, the classics believed in the idea that the play reflect society, that it present things the way they are.¹ According to them, drama should present a tableau of good and evil characters representative of society in a conflict of ideas.² Finally, the play should be a complete work of art providing a unified theme.

However, unlike Jean Racine who turned to antiquity (e.g. Phèdre, Britannicus, Andromaque), or Pierre Corneille, also concerned with ancient themes (e.g. Polyeucte, Horace), many Russian dramatists set their plays in an eighteenth-century milieu with "Russians" as the main characters. But often they retained the themes of the classics which resulted at times in drama that seemed artificial to the Russian audience. Mostly the plays were mere adaptations of the French and consequently did not at all fit the Russian milieu. In the main the fledgling Russian dramatists followed classical rhyme and rhythm, and since these forms were inappropriate to the linguistic patterns

of the Russian language, the plays were frequently stilted and artificial.

Because Russian satire flourished in the 1700's, it was natural that it extend to drama. Once again, satirical drama was at first highly imitative of the French models, Molière in particular. However, unlike Racine or Corneille, he set his plays in contemporary times. He ridiculed human foibles such as miserliness (L'Avare), hypocrisy (Le Médecin malgré lui, Dom Juan), or falsity (Les Femmes Savantes, Le Misanthrope). Molière advocated correcting evils through their vivid portrayal in a vibrant array of characters. Although Molière's themes were more à propos to the Russian scene, his settings and personages were not. Once again, the direct imitation by the Russians resulted in artificiality ~~since~~ they did little to modify characters, style or setting to make them more in line with Russian society. The Russian dramatists also attempted to employ the ideas of Denis Diderot who had suggested that strong characters and a believable plot were essential.³

But creativity in eighteenth-century Russian dramatic satire arrived in a man who moulded his play around the classical principles but used a distinctive Russian milieu, characterization and above all vibrant Russian dialogue. His creations had great impact on Russian society. His name was Denis Ivanovich Fonvizin.

CHAPTER I

D. I. FONVIZIN - - LIFE AND WORKS

- "Не забудь Фон-Визина писать Фонвизин.¹ Что он за нехристь ? он русский, из перерусских русский."

Denis Fonvizin was born on the third of April 1745 (according to the old style calendar) in Moscow.² His father Ivan was of an old noble family descended from a Livonian knight taken prisoner in the sixteenth century. During the early part of the 1600's his descendants had made an honourable name for themselves on the battle-field fighting loyally for Russia. Ivan Andreyevich Fonvizin, though only a minor official in the service of the tsar, was quite an extraordinary man: unlike most of the contemporary government officials he was exceedingly honest in the execution of his duties. "He (Denis' father) had an innate horror of lies; if someone were to lie in front of him, he would blush in shame for the liar."³ There is no doubt that this astute honesty of Denis' father played a large role in the formation of the young man's own sincere character.⁴

When Denis began school he proved to be a remarkable student. It was reported that at the age of only eight years, he knew more than most boys at twelve.⁵ However, his teachers at the Moscow Gymnasium were no paragons of pedantry: his mathematics teacher was an alcoholic and his Latin teacher often derelict in his duties. Fonvizin gives us a humorous anecdote in his memoirs concerning the conduct of this much esteemed Latin pedagogue:

"On the eve of the examination our Latin teacher came in after an absence of several months, wearing a kaftan with five large brass buttons and a waistcoat with four. A little surprised at his strange costume, I asked him why he was dressed so strangely. 'My buttons may seem ridiculous to you,' he said, 'but they will prove your salvation and save my reputation; for the buttons of the kaftan represent the five declensions and those on the waistcoat the four conjugations.' 'So', he continued, striking the table with his hand, 'listen to what I have to say. When they ask you what declension any noun is, notice which of my coat buttons I touch. If, for example, it is the second from the top, answer boldly the second declension. And if they bother you about verbs, look sharp at my waistcoat and you will make no mistakes!' This was the type of examination we had!"⁶.

Perhaps even more illuminating was the geography examination that the young Fonvizin passed in rather unorthodox fashion. The examiner asked the class into which sea flowed the Volga. After many wrong answers had been proffered from various pupils it became Denis' turn to reply. He answered very candidly "He знаю." His outspoken confession of ignorance pleased the examiners so much that young Denis was awarded the gold medal.⁷.

At the tender age of thirteen Fonvizin was elected to study at the university in St. Petersburg. He was impressed with the quality of scholarship there⁸. and studied hard for the next two years. The young man had great success particularly in the Russian and German languages, for in 1760 the director of the university named him one of the best pupils in St. Petersburg. It was there that Denis made the acquaintance of the great Mikhail Lomonosov and saw his first theatrical performance. His first experience at seeing a live performance of a play on stage had a tremendous effect on the boy:

"It is impossible to describe the effect that the performance had on me. The play was rather stupid I thought but I regarded it as a work of the highest form of art, and the actors - great people to know I thought, and it would be of my great well-being to become acquainted with them. I nearly went mad with joy when I learned that some of the actors visited my uncle's house where I was to live."⁹.

Here Fonvizin also became friendly with Volkov, Dmitryevsky, Shumsky and other noted actors of the time; he himself became an actor of no small notoriety. So the die was cast: his intense interest in the theatre would never wane.

Fonvizin returned to Moscow and resumed intensive study; this time he avidly pursued French. He knew that French was the language of the greatest contemporary dramatists of Europe and also the tongue of literature and advanced philosophy. The young scholar also continued to study German and in 1761 he won the gold medal for excellence in the advanced class.¹⁰.

Because of these talents he easily acquired a position as translator for the "College of Foreign Affairs" in Moscow. Shortly thereafter came Fonvizin's first published work: a translation of a number of fables by the Dane Ludvig Holberg. The next year there followed translations from both French and Latin of Ovid's Metamorphoses, Voltaire's Alzire ou les Américains, and La Vertu Héroïque ou la vie de Seth, roi d'Egypte by Terrasson. The latter was very reminiscent of Fénelon's Télémaque and was the only one of these three to be published in the eighteenth century.¹¹.

These works brought Fonvizin an excellent reputation and he had the good fortune to be able to obtain a position in the Foreign Service as secretary to a cabinet minister I.P. Yelagin.

This new position was actually an extension of his previous job. Because Yelagin was also a theatre manager he was of course very much involved with Russian drama of that time. In fact it was his translation of Holberg's play upon which Fonvizin was to later base his own play Brigadir. At this time there also appeared Torg Semi Muz (The Haggles of the Seven Muses), another Russian translation from Latin. Some scholars have stated that it was at this time that Fonvizin wrote the first draft of Nedorosl'. We shall examine this problem in depth in Chapter Three when we discuss the actual sources of the play.

In 1764 Fonvizin finished his psychological comedy in verse Korion. It was actually a Russian adaptation of Sydney by Gresset.¹² Fonvizin's method was not to translate directly but rather to omit parts or add sections and above all to place the play in a Russian milieu with which his Russian audience could identify. The play is not particularly admirable yet shows one very interesting trait. The hero, a young socialite Korion, is in appearance almost a forerunner of the "lish-nii chelovek" so famous in the nineteenth century. Korion has betrayed his true love Zinoviya and feeling pangs of conscience, he decides to leave the bustling haute société and travel to his dacha in the country. There he becomes more disappointed in life and increasingly bitter over losing his loved one and finally decides to kill himself. He takes poison but suddenly meets Zinoviya again. He discovers that she loves him as before but now it is too late: Korion must die. Everything

ends happily however, because Korion's servant Andrei, wishing to save his master, has substituted water for the poison. Except for this melodramatic ending there are traces of Fonvizin's dramatic genius, but the play is generally too imitative and the characters are not really Russian.¹³ Nevertheless, it does not deserve the scathing judgment that Dr. A. Coleman gives: "Korion and early play of Fonvizin dating from 1764 shows this same imitative tendency. Although the title does not acknowledge the plagiarism, the whole piece is nothing more than free translation from the Sidnei of Gresset, a Frenchman of a slightly earlier generation."¹⁴ The reason for the unfairness of Dr. Coleman's statement is that it was generally accepted at the time that the play was a free adaptation and not an original play.¹⁵ Moreover it was general practice in this period to imitate foreign classics, a statement reinforced if we examine the works of Sumarokov, Knyazhnin and other dramatists who relied heavily on foreign authors. The main importance of Korion was this Russian milieu and the changes in principle that Fonvizin made: "Fonvizin transformed this (comédie larmoyante) into a comedy of manners by the ingenious addition of 'bytovoj' traits of Russian life; these included the use of Slavonic names, a Russian serf-valet called Andrej, references to 'merry-making' in Moscow', the sound of Moscow church-bells and satirical references to 'preferment' in the government service."¹⁶

At approximately the same time appeared some other remarkable though immature works of satire such as Poslaniye R s

k slugam moim (Message to my Servants), Poslaniye k Yamshchikovu (Message to Yamshchikov) and K umu moemu (To my Mind).

They are all written in verse but Fonvizin finished only the first. The first poem is addressed to his servants Shumilov, Van'ka and Petrushka. Fonvizin attacks church education and blind faith in religion. The author's keen sense of wit and pungent satire were evident even in this work written before he was twenty:

"Трясешь, Шумилов, ты седой своей главою,
- Не знаю, - говоришь - не знаю я того,
Мы созданы на свет и кем и для чего." 17.

Moreover, in the unfinished K umu moyemu which greatly echoes Kantemir's work of similar title, Fonvizin further demonstrated his innate sense of satire:

"Во Франции тариф известен нам каков:
Чтоб быть французскими из русских дураков..." 18.

Perhaps the best of his early original works was the fable Lisitsa-Koznodei (The Fox-Preacher). It marks the first step in Fonvizin's political satires: this witty yet malicious short poem exposed the grovelling praise that was given to monarchs by those around them. Lisitsa-Koznodei is a remarkably bold poem and aptly shows Fonvizin's great courage, for he wrote it immediately after the death of the Empress Elizabeth though it was not published until 1787. With humour and tongue-in-cheek Fonvizin pokes fun at the endless panegyrics to Russian despots. This time, however, it is the fox who is eulogizing after the death of the "tsar-lion":

"О лесть подлейшая, - шепнул Собаке Крот.-
Я знал Льва коротко: он был пресуший скот,
И зол, и бестолков, и силой вышней власти,
Он только насыщал свои тирански страсти."19.

During the next two years Fonvizin worked on two more translations: Bitaubé's Iosif (Joseph) and de Lasse's Torguyushcheye dvoryanstvo (The Trading Nobility). Both these translations are more mature and better developed than his earlier ones.²⁰ In addition it was also at this time that he wrote Sokrashcheniye o vol'nosti frantsuzskogo dvoryanstva i o pol'ze tret'ego china - (Brief about the Freedom of the French Aristocracy and about the Use of the Third Estate.) This document can be explained by the title and basically is meant to inform the Russian public about the political system in France.

It was at this time that Fonvizin met Sumarokov, Kheraskov and other leading men of eighteenth-century Russian belles-lettres. Then in the early months of 1769 appeared his first true masterpiece Brigadir. This play was very successful and marked a crest in Fonvizin's literary career. Because it is of such great importance Brigadir will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

Towards the end of 1769 Fonvizin gradually lost interest in his position with Yelagin and was drawn to the liberal nobility which was grouped around N. I. Panin. Fonvizin continued to serve the Foreign Office but was now under Panin's guidance. Fonvizin soon distinguished himself here and secured the post of secretary of the "Collegia".²¹ He also published a translation of Arnaut's Sidné et Silli, a typical domestic tale in the

English style. Serving in the "Collegia" Denis "desired to serve not the whims of a despot but the Russian state, as he understood its interests to be."²² Panin's liberal group influenced Fonvizin and all of Russia very much as it gained more power in the 1770's: it organized itself almost as a fused political movement. Actually this aristocratic liberalism asserted itself striving towards "reaction" particularly in the wake of the Pugachev Rebellion. In 1771 Fonvizin finished his document Slovo na vyzdorovleniye ego imperatorskogo vysochestva gosudarya tsesarevicha i velikogo knyazya Pavla Petrovicha v 1771 gode (Notes on the Recovery of His Imperial Majesty Heir to the State and Great Prince Paul Petrovich in the Year 1771). This work expressed in elegaic terms the wish for the heir to regain his health and concluded with an impassioned plea for all loyal Russians to come to the assistance of Mother Russia.

Fonvizin himself protested against the enslavement of the serfs as well as the lawlessness generally implanted in the autocracy of the police system. Meanwhile he sharply sensed the utter displacement of class order and consciousness that had already broken out over Europe.²³ But in Russia the peasants, though in rebellion, were still entirely held back by the conservative nobility. Thus it was that Fonvizin wrote an important rebellious document toward 1774 that was not published however until 1863. This was the explosive Rassuzhdeniye o gosudarstve voobshche, otnositel'no chisla voisk, potrebnogo dlya zashchity onogo, i kasatel'no oborony vsekh predelov

(Testament about the State in general, relating to the Number of Troops Necessary for the Defense of the above, and concerning the Limits of all Boundaries).²⁴. Luckily for the author Catherine did not pay too much attention to it and it slipped by unnoticed. Potemkin did manage to dismiss Count Panin with disfavour from his post for his complicity with Yemelian Pugachev.

Another political document which appeared at this time but was not published until much later was the Rassuzhdeniye o Nepremennykh gosudarstvennykh zakonakh (Testament about Indispensible State Statutes).²⁵. This document asserted certain fundamental rights for the control of arbitrary power by the monarch. This project for fundamental laws was conceived by Fonvizin and the Panin brothers. But Fonvizin wrote it, and performed the task at his eloquent best.²⁶. According to Fonvizin and Panin one of the greatest calamities of the Russian state was favouritism by the monarchs. They hated the tsar's cronies who robbed and cheated the people by embezzlement and open chicanery under full view of the tsar. Indeed, Fonvizin saw Potemkin - Catherine's "right hand man" (in more ways than one) - as the vile usurper and evil plunderer of "Mother Russia":

"Тут, кто может, повелевает, но никто ничем не управляет, ибо править должны были законы, кои выше себя ничего не терпят. Тут подданные поработаны государю, а государь обыкновенно своему нелестному любимцу. Я назвал его недостойным потому, что название любимца не приписывается никогда достойному мужу, оказавшему отечеству истинные заслуги, а принадлежит обыкновенно человеку, достигшему высших степеней по удачной своей хитрости нравиться государю."²⁷.

This attack was so scathing that it was not published until 1861 in London in the Istorichesky Sbornik.

In August of 1777 began a new stage in Denis Fonvizin's life. He made the first of his three long trips abroad²⁸. travelling throughout Europe for a year but spending much time in France in particular. Fonvizin had married a rich widow three years before and since neither of them enjoyed good health, the journeys were made to assist their bodily functions. During his sojourn in France from 1777-1778 Fonvizin wrote letters profusely, mainly to his sister and Count Panin. Although "Fonvizin was received everywhere, by foreigners and Russians alike, with honours and attention not usually given to a private traveller,"²⁹. he came to have a very negative attitude towards France and Frenchmen in general even towards the greats like Voltaire, Rousseau and d'Alembert.

"I have already seen Voltaire three times. D'Alembert, of all French learned men, has surprised me the most. I imagined a serious, venerable appearance, but found the worst shape and the meanest physiognomy...

Yesterday there was a meeting at the Academy of Sciences. Voltaire was present; I sat quite near him and did not take my eyes off the relic. I have been promised to be shown Rousseau and as soon as I see him then I can say that I have seen all the sages of this century...

...Generally speaking, the good here you can find if you go out and look for it, while the bad hits you in the eyes. Living in Paris for almost half a year now, I have become familiar enough with it to know that I certainly would not return again of my own free will...

Today we are going to St. Cloud. Many people are going to be there. Tomorrow morning will be a learned one at my place; I am spending it with D'Alembert. Well, these are the pleasures I have here: learned yappers, plays, and promenades. But even these have come to bore me. Both of us are anxious to put an end to our wanderings. We will indeed be happy when we reach home again. Farewell!"³⁰.

France made a very painful impression on Fonvizin. The old feudal regime was disintegrating before one's eyes and it greatly distressed him:

"Он видел явственно приближение крушения старого режима, он видел торжество Вольтера - грандиозную демонстрацию, устроенную великую врагу деспотизма и фанатизма французским народом, но он не был охвачен пафосом грядущих повед буржуазии, он брюзжал, его раздражало то, что было в стране началом обновления, тем более, что он не мог горевать и о прошлом, во Франции он увидел остатки той же тирании которую он ненавидел в России."³¹.

Fonvizin has been accused of being prejudiced and "jaundiced" in his criticisms of France,³² but for a liberal minded Russian these accusations are rather unfounded. Fonvizin did not wish to appear like so many of his contemporaries who were quick to praise all things Gallic and overlook the faults of everything French; instead he desired to place things in a proper perspective by pointing out that in any country there are as many bad qualities as good ones.

"The main task which Fonvizin seems to have set himself in his appraisal of French society was to distinguish the myth from reality: to discover not only whether the French reputation in the world had any basis in fact, but also whether the image French society had of itself, as expressed in its laws, institutions, and literature, corresponded to reality. The conclusion was foregone, but it is important for the study of Russian attitudes towards Europe to discover where a Russian of the eighteenth century found this correspondence lacking and in what terms his criticism was formulated. The choice of a target as well as the language employed should furnish a clue to the claims that would be made directly or by implication for Russian reality by way of contrast with European pretensions."³³.

Our author realized and accepted the formal structure of the French legal system but he was quick to point out that because of corruption in the execution of the laws, that there was little safeguard for the liberté of the individual as he

very aptly demonstrated in this letter dated January 15, 1778 (O.S.):

"...for example - I began by saying that as far as I could see this first right of man is piously preserved in France. To this they would reply enthusiastically that le Français est né libre, that this right constitutes their true happiness, that they would sooner die than tolerate the slightest infringement of it. After listening to this, I would bring the conversation around to the injustices I had noticed and would insensitively disclose to them my opinion that it would be desirable if liberty were more than an empty word among them. I trust you will believe, my dear sir, that these very same people who before had enthused over their liberty immediately answered me: 'O monsieur, vous avez raison! Le Français est écrasé, le Français est esclave'. Having declared this, they would then fall into the most frightful rage of indignation and if they were not quieted they would be happy to reprove the government and abase their own positions for days on end."³⁴.

Fonvizin reiterates this theme that in France everything was merely external appearance; there was no vestige of good faith left in France.³⁵ Our author wished to show that Russia had a good civilization also and that the situation there was as good as anywhere in the world.³⁶

It was shortly thereafter that Fonvizin presented his translation of Antoine Tome's work of elevated oratorical style. This was called Slovo pokhval'noye Marku Avreliyu (Message Praising Marcus Aurelius). After returning from France in 1778 Fonvizin's literary activity grew in strength. He took up his pen and completed his finest work Nedorosl' in 1782. Once again because of this work's importance and influence, an entire chapter - Chapter Three - is devoted to an analytical study of the play. In the intermediary period between 1778 and 1782 appeared Fonvizin's translation into Russian of an important philosophical esquisse: Ta - Gio ili Velikaya Nauka Zaklyucha-

yushchaya v sebe Vysokuyu Kitaiskuyu Filosofiyu (Ta Gio or the Great Science Containing High Chinese Philosophy).³⁷ It was published anonymously in the St. Petersburg Vestnik of May 1779. The first publication of this work had been a Latin translation from the Chinese done by Z. Baiyer in his book Museum Sinicum of 1730. Pierre M. Cibot in turn translated the work into French from the Chinese. Fonvizin used this version for his translation into Russian, so it must be noted that Fonvizin's work is not a direct translation. The esquisse tells about the ideal monarch and his duty towards his subjects. Moreover, Fonvizin attempts to acquaint the Russian reader with some political facts of early China which parallel very closely the situation in Russia of that time. He destroys the idea of the divine origin of kings and emperors by demonstrating that monarchs are similar to all people with their own shortcomings and fears: "Пример царской семьи еще действительнее открывает любовь к добродетели и ту склонность ко благу, с которою все люди на свете рождаются. Если дружелюбие и снисхождение всех сердца в монаршем доме соединяет, то подражание оные возрастит, умножит и во всех семьях навсегда распространит! Но если неправосудие и злодейство туда вступят, тогда погибнет все, тогда искра сия произведет пожар и совершит всеобщую гибель." ³⁸

Needless to say, this translation caused quite a stir in Russia. But Fonvizin had just begun. The beloved Count Panin died in 1783 but Fonvizin continued the struggle for his own ideals against tyranny. Although the death of Panin coupled with the vicious censorship of Nedorosl' was very burdensome to Fonvizin, instead of submitting to grief he pressed on even harder. The year 1783 was one of the most prolific in his life. During

this year in the journal Sobesednik Lyubitelei Rossiiskogo Slova (Interlocutor of Lovers of the Russian Word), appeared no less than five of his journalistic articles in various numbers of the magazine. The issue of May 20, 1783 carried a portion of a literary-linguistic article Opyt Rossiiskogo Soslownika³⁹. (An Experiment in Russian Word Classification). It appears to be a dictionary giving a semantic analysis of synonyms and nuances of meaning but it is actually a satirical article or a "parody in miniature". Fonvizin gives several examples of his biting personal commentary on the nobility:

"Кто не любит истины, тот часто обманут бывает. Проманивать есть больших бояр искусство... Сумасброд весьма опасен, когда в силе... Глупцы смешны в знати... В низком состоянии можно иметь благороднейшую душу, равно как и весьма большой барин может быть весьма подлый человек..."⁴⁰.

In the third issue of Sobesednik appeared Fonvizin's famous list of questions Neskol'ko voprosov mogushchikh vozbudit' v umnykh i chestnykh lyudakh osoblivoye vnimaniye (Some Questions which can Arouse Special Attention in Intelligent and Honest People). Fonvizin submitted anonymously these bold questions of a distinct political tinge and they immediately offended the Empress. Catherine proceeded to answer these queries in her own gazette Byli i Nebylitsy. This literary polemic was very much akin to the later and much more lengthy journalistic discussions between the Empress and N. I. Novikov.⁴¹ At any rate Fonvizin reached his point immediately; straightaway he asked "Отчего многих добрых людей видим в отставке?" - an obvious reference to the dismissal of Count Panin - to which Catherine replied "Многие добрые люди вышли из службы, веро-

ЯТНО , ДЛЯ ТОГО , ЧТО НАШЛИ ВЫГОДУ БЫТЬ В ОТСАВКЕ."42.

Fonvizin again made reference to the parasitical system of court and official favourites that he detested so much when he asked "Отчего в прежние времена шуты , шпыни и балагуры чинов не имели , а ныне имеют и весьма большие ?" Thunderstruck Catherine could only manage a weak "Предки наши не все грамоте умели " 43. It seems almost ridiculous that Catherine would dare to answer in print these searing questions so critical of her regime, yet she herself felt that she could take some of the sting out of the satire by placing her answers right beside the questions.44. Fonvizin later replied in a statement addressed to the editor of Byli i Nebylitsy stating that he asked the questions in order to call attention to various injustices in the regime, that he desired universal justice in the Russian state and that the answers were contrived and obviously unsatisfactory.45. Catherine did not reply to this article, however, and the literary polemics between Fonvizin and the Empress had ended.

However, Fonvizin continued his journalistic exploits by publishing more articles in the Sobesednik. In the fourth issue appeared more of the Rossiiskogo Soslovnika along with the Chelobitnaya Rossiiskoi Minerve ot Rossiiskikh Pisatelei (Petition to the Russian Minerva from Russian Writers), a document to Catherine complaining about the exploitation by the self-indulgent nobility. The petition marks a protest against the course of action of the privileged classes and a desire for literary men to escape the influence of this nobility.46.

It was at approximately this time that Fonvizin wrote his Vseobshchaya Pridvornaya Grammatika (The Universal Courtiers' Grammar). The author incorporated this work into his unfinished journal Drug chestnykh lyudei ili Starodum (Starodum, or the Friend of Honest People) which was only published posthumously in the edition of 1830 by P. Beketov.⁴⁷ The journal itself was written during the last nine years of Fonvizin's life and contains many interesting and important articles. They are in the form of letters which the author of Nedorosl' addresses to various characters of the play. He writes to them as living persons and makes his own comments about the contemporary social and political situation.⁴⁸ The most remarkable of the contents of the journal is the aforementioned Courtiers' Grammar. Although never published during Fonvizin's lifetime, handwritten copies were very much circulated because of the great demand for this very amusing work.⁴⁹

Let us examine certain excerpts from this Courtiers' Grammar. In form it consists of a number of questions that Fonvizin answers in a sardonic vein. For example "Question: 'What is Courtiers' Grammar'? Answer: 'Courtiers' Grammar is the Art or Science, of flattering cunningly, with tongue and pen.' Q.: 'What is meant by "flattering cunningly"?' A.: 'It means uttering and writing such untruth as may prove pleasing to those of high station and, at the same time, of benefit to the flatterer.' Q.: 'What is Courtly Untruth'? A.: 'It is the expression of a soul inglorious before the soul vainglorious. It

consists of shameless praises heaped upon a Great Man for those services which he never performed and those virtues which he never had."⁵⁰ Fonvizin maintains this cutting attitude throughout the Courtiers' Grammar. He criticizes the aristocracy for their toadyism, flattery, untruths, deception and greed. The author finishes by humourously pointing out that the verb most frequently conjugated at court is "to be in debt". It is only conjugated in the present and the future but never in the past since courtiers are never out of debt.⁵¹

Two other journalistic works by Fonvizin appeared in the Sobesednik in 1783. They were Povestovaniye mnimogo glukhogo i nemogo (Narrative of an Imaginary Deaf and Dumb Man) and Poucheniye, govorennoye v dukhov den' Iyereyem Vasiliyem v sele P*** (Sermon Given on Whit Monday by Iyerei Vasilii in the Village of P***). The former is a satirical article that was first devised by Fonvizin in August 1778 as we can see from a letter to Panin from that time.⁵² The influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Confessions on this work was enormous. Fonvizin also desired to "lay bare his soul" without any pretension. In fact he follows the structure and basic ideas of the French philosophe in this particular work almost to the last detail. The author believes that he has found a true insight into the internal nature of man. He presents the notes of the imaginary deaf and dumb man giving the impressions that that man would have of Moscow in 1762. In general this work is a witty parody of Russian moeurs as well as of general human foibles.⁵³

A perfect example of this is Fonvizin's comment:

"...ибо Оплеушин был такой мастер топить печи, что те, для которых он топил, довели его своею протекциею наконец и до штаб-офицерского чина..."⁵⁴.

where he attacks the nobility's manner of obtaining a career.

The author again criticizes favouritism by the monarch with

Быв в службе в большом чину, имел он самую мелкую душу, кроме себя, никому добра не сделал, скопив богатство, решился заблаговременно убраться в отставку, ласкаясь доживать свою старость в Москве..."⁵⁵.

By contrast there is very little political satire in the Poucheniye but the satire is rather social: "сатира на духовенство, такое же грубое, бескультурное, как и сельское дворянство, которому оно служит."⁵⁶.

On November 11, 1783 Fonvizin wrote his last journalistic article of the year which was not published, however, until after his death. This article was entitled Nachertaniye dlya sostavleniya Tolkovogo slovarya slavyanorossiiskogo yazyka, sochinenoye otryadom (Outline for the Composition of the Tolkovoi Dictionary of the Slavic-Russian Language). This is an important guide for eighteenth century Russian language and demonstrates the development of the method of expression and principles of style in the Russian language.⁵⁷

Fonvizin presented in 1784 the complete biography of Count Panin, entitled Zhizn' Grafa Panina (The Life of Count Panin). This work was in fact written in French and published in St. Petersburg, London and Paris but the Russian text was not

released until February of 1786 in the journal of F. Tumansky entitled Zerkalo Sveta.⁵⁸ The work is quite remarkable in its accuracy concerning Panin's life and works, yet paradoxically enough there are certain episodes and characteristics which are overly exaggerated and highly idealized. The theme is the struggle of Count Panin against the vices and corruption of a self-centred nobility and an egocentric monarch.

A year later Denis Fonvizin's health began to fail badly. In 1785 he was stricken with paralysis which greatly hampered his speech and writing capacities. Indeed, it became so very difficult for Fonvizin to conduct his activities, that most of his works written in the last seven years of his life remained unfinished, and most of these had to be dictated from his bedside.⁵⁹ Because of his failing health Fonvizin and his wife took two more long trips abroad spending most of their time of the 1784-1785 trip in Italy and the last trip of 1787 in Southern Europe, particularly Austria and Italy. The couple returned from Italy in August 1785 with Fonvizin gravely ill. He was forced to stay in bed most of the time yet he continued to work. In 1785 there appeared an anonymous translation of Zimmerman's last chapter entitled in Russian Rassuzhdeniye o Natsional'nom Lyubochestii (Discourse on Nationalist Ambitions). Considering his ill health Fonvizin admirably translated this work into Russian.⁶⁰ The author's attitude towards translating political documents was distinctive; he wished the reader to gain an insight into the original not only through the translation of the

original words but also by closely following the style. This Rassuzhdeniye is actually a very powerful emotional document: the author conveys an account of a moral code for both a patriot and an ordinary citizen; of man as an active struggler against despotic control with the inner notion of dying for the freedom of his creative energy.⁶¹

A year before his last trip abroad Fonvizin published in a journal a quite remarkable story entitled Kallisfen (Callisthenes) in which he envisioned his own fate. The story, very condensed, has few lyrical qualities but it contains a great deal of caustic irony and fitting examples of epigrammatic formulae. Fonvizin includes scenes of aristocratic toadyism, cruelty and bribery. However the author shows these events without underscoring them; he points them out unable to hide his anger and indignation. The story itself concerns the sage Kallisfen who attempts to teach Alexander the Great how to rule with equanimity. But the emperor falls totally under the influence of evil noblemen and does not heed Kallisfen's wise advice, becoming a veritable tyrant. When Kallisfen calls the emperor a monster, Alexander has him tortured and imprisoned, whereupon he dies.⁶² The subtle parallels of Fonvizin's own relationship with the monarch are skilfully weaved throughout the tale with the result that Kallisfen is one of Fonvizin's most powerful works. In his own way Fonvizin developed the satirical devices originated by Voltaire in Candide yet modified them for use in the Russian sphere in his exotic tale.⁶³

It is easy to gain an appreciation for Fonvizin's powerful matter-of-fact style by examining the concluding paragraphs of Kallisfen:

"По кончине самого Аристотеля найдено в бумагах его следующее письмо Каллисфеново, писанное за несколько часов пред его смертью. Здесь предлагается оно с отметкою его друга.

Письмо Каллисфена:

- Умираю в темнице, благодарю богов, что способили меня пострадавать за истину. Александр слушал моих советов два дни, в которые спас я жизнь. Дариева рода и избавил жителей целой области от конечного истребления. Прости.-

Отметка рукою Аристотеля

- При государе, которого склонности не вовсе развращены, вот что честный человек в два дни сделать может.-"64.

The last five years of Fonvizin's life were very difficult for him. He was desperately ill; it was painful for him just to go on living. Nevertheless, Fonvizin continued to write, but was unable to finish most of his last works. He continued to write his autobiography Chistoserdechnoye priznaniye v delakh moyikh i pomyshleniyakh (A Sincere Confession about my Affairs and Thoughts), (excerpts from which we have already examined) but succeeded in commenting only on youthful recollections. As for dramaturgy Fonvizin worked on three more plays: Dobryy Nastavnik (A Good Preceptor) part of which had been published in 1784; another unnamed comedy of which only the first scene is extant, and Vybor Gubernera (The Choice of a Tutor), the most complete of the three. Another play entitled Gofmeister (The Hofmeister) has been subsequently lost. A portion of the first play Dobryy Nastavnik entitled Razgovor u Knyagini Khaldinoi

(Princess Khaldina's Conversation), actually the second scene of the play, was included in Fonvizin's journal Drug Chestnykh Lyudei under the title Pis'mo ot Staroduma dated at Moscow February of 1788.⁶⁵ The pathetic tutor-coachman Vral'man makes a reappearance here from Nedorosl'. It was this scene that Fonvizin sent to Derzhavin as a truly "new comedy" on the eve of Fonvizin's death.⁶⁶ The author's hero is a French teacher who appears in Russia from somewhere in America and wins the confidence of Sorvantsov's Aunt. She takes him in as a French teacher and a lover. Here the excerpt finishes abruptly. It is unfortunate that the play was unfinished for as Pushkin stated "...замечательна не только как литературная редкость, но и как любопытное изображение нравов и мнений, господствовавших у нас лет сорок тому назад..."⁶⁷.

Fonvizin's Vybor Gubernera is very nearly complete but cannot be compared with Brigadir or Nedorosl' since it is not a finished product. Because of this the play is rather flaccid and shows little of the polished dialogue of Fonvizin's two greatest works. The heroes of the extract the Russian tutor Nel'stetsov, and Seum the French pedagogue, converse at length about the French revolution. The author speaks through the mouthpiece of Nel'stetsov to the disadvantage of the Frenchman. He talks in detail about liquidation of government heads, reactionaries and the elimination of class favouritism.

"Фонвизин в комедии - Выбор Губернера - излагает свое понимание неравенства. Подданные должны жертвовать своими интересами но не для пользы таких же, как и они, людей, а для блага целого отечества. Нельстецов так формулирует фонвизинскую

мысль: - Необходимо надобно, чтоб одна часть подданных для блага целого государства чем-нибудь жертвовала.-"⁶⁸.

Fonvizin continued to translate until his death but only remnants of a few translations of Tacitus (which Catherine forbade him to do) Gessner and others remain. In the course of his last two years he fell into a deep religious mysticism which can be attributed to his grave illness since it is so out-of-character for him. But even in his last works there remain signs of Fonvizin's skill for parody and satire.⁶⁹.

Denis Fonvizin died on December 1, 1792. He was only forty seven years old. Fonvizin was not an overly prolific writer yet many of his works were very influential. But Fonvizin's main importance lies in his two masterpieces Brigadir and Nedorosl'.

CHAPTER II

BRIGADIR

- "Его проза чиста, приятна и текуща так, как и его стихи. Он сочинил комедию Бригадир и Бригадирша, в которой острые слова и замысловатые шутки расцитаны на каждой странице"¹.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Fonvizin first translated Holberg's fables in the early 1760's. An adaptation of a fable entitled Jean de France or Hans Frandsen had appeared in 1765.² This adaptation was the satirical comedy by Ivan Yelagin entitled Jean de Mole, ili Russki Parizhanin which unfortunately has now been lost. It was described in the Dramaticheskii Slovar' of 1787 as a "comedy castigating the foolishness of parents who send their children abroad to acquire a foreign education, although the children often return to Russia despising their own language."³ This was the important social question of the day: what were the results of foreign education?

During this era France was regarded as the world's centre of enlightenment so it proved to be the centre of education for young Russian nobles. Until the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1789, education of Russian aristocracy in France was the rule. But the results were quite often ridiculous: young gentry returned home unable to read or write Russian properly and in fact came to despise the whole Russian language and culture. These young nobles returned from "La Belle France" as dandified, powdered fops frequenting the salons of Russian haute société, spewing forth lavish praise for all things Gallic. Naturally inside they were still Russian but their appearance,

conduct, and in particular their ludicrous Franco-Russian jargon, that is, their "Gallomania" seemed absolutely ridiculous to Russian Russophiles.⁴ Aleksandr Sumarokov ridiculed this Gallomania in two plays of 1750 Chudovishchi (The Monsters) and Ssora u Muzha (A Husband's Quarrel). Thereafter, "Gallomania" was firmly established as a favourite target in comedy, and attacks upon its manifestations formed part of Lukin's campaign for greater national awareness in the theatre."⁵

Denis Fonvizin entered this campaign under the banner of his first original play Brigadir. As much as Fonvizin had relied on Yelagin's play, he did not imitate directly:

"...Fonvizin, like Shakespeare retained the right to take certain borrowings and proved the fact that the comedy Jean de France which had already appeared in the Russian theatre in an adaptation by I. P. Yelagin under the title The French-Russian, (sic) never made anyone think of accusing Fonvizin of plagiarism after having tasted of the penetration into the spirit of Russian life. Never up to then had been made the transposition of a foreign work (in ethnographic and psychological terms) into a Russian one with such art that it did not force one to think of the literary models; such was the case with Fonvizin's Brigadir."⁶

When exactly did Fonvizin write Brigadir? A problem arises in answering this question: the original manuscript was circulated from hand to hand and though the play was staged in the early 1780's it was not published until 1790 in the thirty-third number of Rossiiski Featr. Some scholars have placed the writing of Brigadir at 1766.⁷ Others maintain that it was not written until 1769.⁸ This particular question was dealt with in an article by Vsevolodski-Gerngross "Kogda byl napisan Brigadir?" The author asserts that the time of writing can be linked to the time that it was read to Catherine by the statement which

appeared in the Kamerfur'erski Zhurnal and by Fonvizin's statements in his own autobiography.⁹ Fonvizin gives us the day June 29 but neglects to mention the year.¹⁰ Moreover Fonvizin mentions here that he brought both Iosif and Brigadir with him, another fact (since we know precisely the date of Iosif because it was published in a journal) which has led Vsevolodski-Gerngross to believe that the date of 1766 is correct. However, as such scholars as P. N. Berkov and G. Makogonenko (as recently as 1969) have carefully pointed out, the events which followed and preceded the reading to the Empress must be carefully correlated with the somewhat jumbled recollections of Fonvizin himself.¹¹ After a long and complex weighing of the logical evidence based principally on known facts from contemporary journals, it is generally accepted today that Brigadir was written during the winter of 1768-1769.

As I mentioned above Fonvizin relied heavily on the Danish play by Holberg - or rather he relied on Yelagin's Russian adaptation. Arthur P. Coleman seems to feel that Fonvizin's Brigadir was virtually copied from the Danish play. He quotes Veselovsky to maintain his hypothesis but it shows that his theory holds water only to superficial details:

"In the piece of Holberg appear in exactly the same manner two old men who have decided among themselves to marry off their children; the daughter of one of them is horrified at the prospect of marrying a giddy fellow who has been to Paris... We admit that with Fonvizin there are many leanings away from the prototype, many original and clever remarks and especially a remarkable closeness to actual Russian life (in the stories of the brigadier and his wife about military life and of the councillor's wife about judicial service). The Russian play is much more bold, but for this reason falls all the more sharply into caricaturization."¹²

There is no question that there are affinities with Holberg's works, but we must carefully scrutinize the aspects of characterization, structure, language and humour in Brigadir. They are very important to Fonvizin's work: he took a general idea, plot and character types but put them in a live Russian milieu, speaking the living Russian of the day, but above all imbued the central theme with a typical Russian attitude.¹³ Nevertheless, we must be careful not to go to the other extreme and bless Fonvizin's play as being totally original as many contemporary Soviet critics have done.¹⁴

If Fonvizin owes a great deal to Holberg for subject matter, then his form is distinctly patterned after Molière. Chernishevsky emphatically points out:

"Вещь общеизвестная что форма комедий Фонвизина - мольеровская, целиком перенесенная им в его Недоросля и Бригадир, я старался объяснить происхождение этой формы, такой противухудожественной и противуестественной. Но оригинально ли содержание комедий у Фонвизина? Обыкновенно отвечают, что совершенно оригинально. Я сильно сомневаюсь в этом но пока должен ограничиться одними сомнениями, потому что не могу доказать заимствований в содержании, не имея под руками собрания французских комедий мольеровской школы. А не сомневаться в оригинальности всего в комедиях Фонвизина нельзя, потому что князь Вяземский доказал, что у Фонвизина многие лица и многие мысли, кажется родившиеся из самой глубины души Фонвизина, заняты из французских книг... Что, кажется, принадлежит личности Фонвизина больше его писем к Панину из Франции? А князь Вяземский опять-таки говорит, что все порядочные остроты и анекдоты там выписаны из Дюкло... Поневоле станешь сомневаться и в оригинальности остального. Скажут: "Советник - список с Тартюфа или одного из его потомков, это правда, но остальные комические лица у Фонвизина чисто русские и нравы чисто русские". "¹⁵

Although this statement seems valid, it is also true that many of Molière's plays were in turn translations or adaptations

of Italian or Spanish works - Don Juan ou le Festin de Pierre, for example, owes a great deal to Tirso de Molina. In fact who could argue that any play owes little to the exploits of Shakespeare, Molière or Racine? Fonvizin did borrow from Aristophanes, Molière, the Italian commedia dell'arte and early farcical comedies but once again he adapted, modified and revamped the distinctive features of various genres weaving them into a distinctly Russian fabric by using Russian dialogue as his thread and Russian characters and milieu as his loom.¹⁶ We shall examine shortly those distinctive features of Brigadir.

What can we say about the stage productions of the play? Firstly we must state that Fonvizin's play had had a wide circulation among the salons. The popularity of Brigadir reached Catherine's ear and she summoned Fonvizin to read it to her. He did so in 1769 and Catherine enjoyed it immensely, little realizing the bitter struggle that she and the author would have later. In 1772 there followed a reading of the play at court.¹⁷ Brigadir caused much uneasiness among the nobility but was nevertheless very popular. In fact its popularity was so great that the public clamoured for a stage presentation. The first production of Brigadir on stage did not come until eight years later in 1780 at the St. Petersburg theatre. It was immediately very popular. Many of the nobility were watching themselves being ridiculed. (This situation was analogous to Molière's Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme where the foppish hero attends a play and laughs at a character not realizing that he is laughing at himself.) But it must

be remembered that the dandified nobility who are ridiculed in Fonvizin's Brigadir were considered to be ludicrous by the Russo-philic Russian aristocracy. The success of Brigadir can be attributed to this and to the fact that Russian theatre audiences had grown up:

"On peut donc penser qu'au moment où a été jouée la première comédie de F., les esprits étaient acquis à la nouvelle tendance, le public était préparé, et, ce qui était peut-être le plus important dans les conditions historiques et sociales de l'époque, ... L'éclatant succès du Brigadier prouve que la pièce ne venait pas trop tôt..."¹⁸.

The structure of the play is the next item to be considered. D. D. Blagoi asserts that Brigadir is poorly constructed and anticlimactic. He insists that the play could be finished at the end of Act III when Dobrolyubov discloses that he has won his suit.¹⁹ This is not possible because the Councillor has already pledged Sof'ya to Ivan; moreover he does not wish his daughter to marry whom she wants. Fonvizin strictly followed the classical unities of time, place and action. The entire play takes place within the space of a single day. At the beginning it is early afternoon and the characters are drinking tea. Between the Second and Third Acts they break for supper. Act Three ends with another "tea-break" and the Fourth Act is almost entirely concerned with the evening card game. The final act concludes the evening with the departure of the Brigadier and his family.

Fonvizin followed the idea of unity of place very closely. In fact the entire play is performed in just one place, the salon

of the Councillor's house. It is obvious that this is one of the play's faults, for many of the love scenes seem artificial in their lack of discreteness. Surely it would have been better for the author to place some of these impassioned confessions of love in some other location of the house instead of the large salon. Moreover, this repetition of the same scene becomes monotonous and puts the author at an extreme disadvantage. Instead of shifting from room to room he must force the personages to come and leave for a reason which he has to devise. Very often this is ingeniously done but sometimes they appear for no reason at all. For example in Act One the servant announces the arrival of Dobrolyubov. Dobrolyubov's arrival gives a premise for all the dramatis personae except Ivan and the Sovietnitsa to take a stroll through the garden. The promenade gives them ample opportunity to confess their love in a very funny scene. This exit seems reasonable. But the entrance of Sofya and Dobrolyubov at first glance does not seem logical since they have arrived to keep Ivan and the Councillor's wife company. However the actual reason for their arriving together is that it gives them an opportunity after Ivan and the Sovietnitsa have left to be alone and confess their love for one another. Throughout the play the characters enter to see what is going on, what the commotion is, to find someone, to discuss a legal procedure, to cry on someone's shoulder, to play cards or some such purpose. They leave the stage because they are insulted, or chased or frustrated; or because someone looks ill. Their exits occur to join someone, to have tea or to eat dinner. Thus throughout the play Fonvizin attempts to let the

audience know why the characters have left or have entered. They never exit or enter without a purpose, although at times these purposes seem too artificially created by the author. Fonvizin has followed the unity of place perhaps a bit too closely to the point of forcing stilted action.

The classical tradition of unity of action is the third trait closely followed by Fonvizin. In fact there is little animated action in the play but a great deal of lively conversation, depending upon the direction of the play. However, this action is united into the form of the various love-intrigues. There is no extraneous action; everything is tied up with the four love-intrigues: the affairs are between Ivan and the Sovietnitsa, the Brigadier and the Sovietnitsa, the Sovietnik and the Brigadirsha, and Dobrolyubov and Sofya. We could perhaps add a fifth intrigue between Sofya and Ivan; the betrothal that has brought all the characters together, but this motif although essential to the beginning of the plot, is of little importance to the development of the main action. The affairs are built up with the use of cumulative comic scenes in order to conclude with the final hilarious dénouement scene. There is no external action which is not involved with these comic contrasts; thus the unity of action is closely followed.

It is now pertinent to examine and analyze the characters of Brigadir. We find in Brigadir a gallery of characters typical of the era of Catherine's Russia so the play is important as a document for the history of society.²⁰ We see two Gallomaniacs, typical results of the Francified late eighteenth-century Russian

society. There is a blustering Brigadier - General preoccupied with the military rank system. A typical Councillor of State, a former judge who knew all about bribes, is also included. Fonvizin paints the portrait of a typical avaricious old lady and two very reserved young lovers. All these people were very typical of the era in which the author lived.

One basic fault of Fonvizin's characterization is that the personages do not develop to show various facets of their personalities. In the first act of Brigadir they appear as single minded schematic personages dominated by one characteristic that is contained in the internal structure of the individual role.²¹ This is Fonvizin's idea: to show the spectator how many people were obsessed by a central motif in Russian society. The seven characters (excluding the servant who makes a brief appearance) are able to be grouped into diametrically opposed categories. Because three love affairs are included only for comic effect whereas the fourth is genuine, it means that the couples can actually be contrasted on a schematic plane which is serious or comic as the case may be.²² The two groups of parents form one side: they represent the staid older generation which has lost its sense and has dizzily fallen in love.²³ Opposed to them are the stuffy young lovers Sof'ya and Dobrolyubov - who do not act much like young lovers. The central character of the play is of course Ivanushka, around whom the central plot, action and theme of Brigadir revolves.

Ivan is the embodiment of the typical foppish young noble of the era, who having been educated in France, has returned to Russia francofied and anti-Russian. Ivan has no tolerance at all:

"He is completely of the opinion, then prevalent among certain strata of society, that only 'intercourse with the French and a journey to Paris can civilize at least some Russians,' and that 'Russia could be called civilized only when Petersburg becomes Paris; when the Russian tongue is spoken in foreign lands as much as French, or when our peasants understand French.'"24.

The young man is the epitome of the Gallophile who is bored and disdainful: his very first word on stage which typifies this attitude is "Hélas!", spoken with a disgusted yawn. Ivan reiterates his dislike for Russia by his words "My body was born in Russia, that's true, but my soul belonged to the crown of France."25. Ivan has frankly stated that he considers Sof'ya a rather crude and boorish individual because she is unable to speak French. "I confess that I myself would like to have a wife with whom I could speak no other language except French. Our life would be a great deal happier."26. The young noble appears not as a villainous individual but rather ridiculously excentric: he is overcome by an obsession for anything French. Ivan has been frank with Sof'ya and has not attempted to deceive her: he is man enough not to play with the feelings of a woman by deceiving her. There is no attempt to take advantage of the simple nature of a naive girl.

Humour surrounds Ivan at almost every turn. His conversations with his parents involve many examples of double-entendres and misunderstandings between the Russian and French. Above all there is humour surrounding Ivanushka in his dealings with the Councillor's wife. The intrigue of their love affair is so typically précieux and exaggerated that it would be as funny for a Russian audience observing Brigadir as a French group of specta-

The affair with the Sovietnitsa is a genuine précieux love affair, or rather love game. It is a typical salon game of love that is very much like many of the similar affairs of the era.

"Естественно, что Иван, сын Бригадира, и Советница влюблены друг в друга ; между ними так много общего, что, встретившись один среди людей вовсе на них непохожих , не могущих им нисколько сочувствовать, людей, на которых они смотрят как на полу-животных , они необходимо должны были очарованы друг другом. Кроме того , вся их жизнь , по Фонвизину , состоит в стремлении быть французскими , а Французы тогда только и дела делали , что волочились , и романы французские с начала до конца были набиты одним волокитством, - нельзя же было им отстать от своих образцов , оба они только и думали о волокитстве" ²⁹.

Ivan is grossly disrespectful towards his parents. This again is a result of his exaggerated love for foreign nonsense. He says "I'm indifferent to everything that concerns my father and mother."³⁰ Ivan is not a villainous character but rather a personage dominated by only one quality: his Gallomania. Fonvizin shows us no other facet of his character except those dominated by this. What was the author's reason for this? He wished to show the results of mistaken education. This is of prime importance. He slyly includes his idea what could have happened if Ivan had been properly educated in Russia: "If malheur-
eusement, I had fallen into the hands of a Russian who loved his country, perhaps I wouldn't be the way I am."³¹.

The derision directed toward the Brigadier is much different from that of his son. "The Brigadier himself, a man who is proud of having reached his rank through sweat and blood, is a coarse, blustering, illiterate trooper. His knowledge of literature is limited to the articles of war, and he cannot imagine

tors watching Les Précieuses Ridicules. Compare these two exaggerated funny scenes from the two plays that are very similar.

Counc. Wife. "Very well. The king of clubs and the queen of hearts.

Ivan. (spreading the cards). The king is madly in love with the queen.

Counc. Wife. Ah what do I hear! I am in ecstasy, I am beside myself with joy.

Ivan. (looking at her tenderly) And the queen is not indifferent to him.

Counc. Wife. Ah my dear! Not indifferent. Say instead, in love to distractions.

Ivan. I would give my own life, I would give thousands of lives to learn who this queen of hearts is. You're blushing, you're turning pale. Of course, it's ...

Counc. Wife. Oh! How unbearable it is to confess one's passion!

Ivan. (hastily). So it's you ...

Counc. Wife. (pretending that the last word costs her dearly). I, I myself.

Ivan. (sighing). And who is this happiest king of clubs who was able to pierce the heart of the queen of hearts?

Counc. Wife. You want me to tell you everything at once.

Ivan. (getting up). Yes madame, yes. I want you to, and if I am not that happiest king of clubs then my flame for you has been poorly rewarded.

Counc. Wife. What! You are burning for me?

Ivan. (going down on his knees). You are the queen of hearts!

Counc. Wife. (raising him). You are the king of clubs!

Ivan. (in ecstasy). O happiness! O bonheur!"²⁷.

Mascarille

"Oh! oh! je n'y prenais pas garde:

Tandis que, sans songer à mal je vous regarde,

Votre oeil en tapinois me dérobe mon coeur.

Au voleur! Au voleur! Au voleur! Au voleur!

Cathos.- Ah! mon Dieu! voilà qui est poussé dans le dernier galant.

Mascarille.- Tout ce que je fais a l'air cavalier; cela ne sent point le pédant.

Magdelon.- Il en est éloigné de plus de deux mille lieues.

Mascarille.- Avez-vous remarqué ce commencement? Oh! oh! Voilà qui est extraordinaire: oh! oh! Comme un homme qui s'avise tout d'un coup: oh! oh! La surprise: oh! oh!

Magdelon.- Oui je trouve ce oh! oh! admirable.

Mascarille.- Il semble que cela ne soit rien.

Cathos.- Ah! mon Dieu! que dites-vous? Ce sont de ces sortes de choses qui ne se peuvent payer.

Magdelon.- Sans doute; et j'aimerais mieux avoir fait ce oh! oh! qu'un poème épique..."²⁸.

that God should be ignorant of the table of ranks."³². The Brigadier believes wholeheartedly in central authority and its hierarchy. For him distinction in rank and position is of prime importance. He heartily retorts to his wife's declaration that for God all officers are in the same rank: "Ah wife! I am telling you, don't mix in. Or I'll make sure there really won't be anything on your head to count. If you knew God better, you wouldn't talk such nonsense. How can you imagine that God, who knows all, doesn't know our Table of Ranks? Shameful thing."³³. The old Brigadier appears as a very negative character: he is a crass, ignorant bully. He beats his wife, is abusive to his son and shows very little social decorum. Note his boorishness in response to Ivan's French talk here:

Ivan. "Mon père! Don't get excited.

Brigadier. What? Don't get excited?

Ivan Mon père, I say, don't get excited?

Brigadier. Damn it, it's the first part of it I don't understand!"³⁴

Brigadier. "... But even if you were a stranger to me, at least you shouldn't forget that I am an army brigadier.

Ivan. Je m'en moque.

Brigadier. What's this 'monmok'?"³⁵.

The most ridiculous aspect of the bully-brigadier is his affair with the Sovietnitsa. We may well ask what this woman has since as a Gallophile she embodies the same qualities that he despises so much in his son. Nevertheless, she is young and beautiful. At any rate the Brigadier is very attracted to her but his efforts in wooing are ludicrous. He tries to regale the lady not with gentle romantic innuendos but rather talks like a trooper: "... Even in his shameless lovemaking with the councillor's wife, the brigadier cannot forget his high rank and great exploits. Hav-

ing interrupted the recital of the splendors of Paris by driving off his son, he proceeds to entertain the lady with tales of how he 'knocked the stuffing out of the Turks'."36. The Brigadier is ridiculed by Fonvizin because he has left his pat way of life and has ventured forth into an area where he does not belong. Once again education is the keynote; if he too had been properly educated perhaps he would be different. At any rate after the production of Brigadir the rank itself became rather laughable. It is true however that this character is also very close to becoming a mere caricature by the end of the play:

"Характер Бригадира , кажется мне , выдержан верно в продолжение всей пьесы . Только не совсем натурально , будто он мог отдать сына во французский пансион по просьбе жены , никогда не мог он послушаться ее в этом а отдал его , увлеченный примером других и совершенно против своей воли , по его собственному понятию , следовало бы пораньше записать его в полк ,37. не жена , а пример других заставил его сделать иначе . "

Count Panin insisted that all Russians of the era could vividly see the Brigadier's wife; she was very typical, so typical in fact that almost everyone had an aunt or grandmother like her.38. Her two important characteristics are stupidity and mis-eyliness: " Бригадирша, например , постоянно, о чем бы ни за- шел разговор, выказывает свою глупость и скопидомство..."39.

Her avarice is developed to the point of being an obsession; she is constantly concerned with cost or losing something. The Brigadirsha keeps accounts of every last penny: "And it's also not bad to run through my household books. That way cheats won't get the best of you. Where you have to give four kopecks and

change, then you won't give five kopecks."⁴⁰ She does not believe grammar is as important as money: "Of course, grammar isn't necessary. Before you start studying it, you've still to buy it. So you pay around eight grivny (a grivna was a 10-kopeck piece) but whether you learn it or not - God knows."⁴¹ When she suspects that Ivan has lost something of value, the Brigadirsha is almost beside herself, but when she discovers it may only be his mind, she relaxes.

Brig. Wife. "What's the noise here? What are you so angry about, dear? Have you caused us some loss, Ivanushka? Have you lost anything?"

Brigadier. A great deal. No small loss.

Brig. Wife. (out of breath). What a calamity! What did he lose?

Brigadier. He lost his mind, if he had one.

Brig. Wife. (relaxing). Phoo, what a misfortune! Thank God, I almost fainted I was so scared. I thought: What if he really lost something?"⁴²

In other places in the play she demonstrates her greed for buried treasure and counting money. Her greed, however, is only excelled by her crass stupidity. It begins in Act Two, Scene Three where the Councillor is making overtures to her and she misunderstands the figurative usage of "copulation."

Councillor. "Your sins have as much to do with me as salvation. I want your sins and mine to be the very same and I want nothing to destroy the copulation of our souls and bodies.

Brig. Wife. But what is this copulation, sir? I understand the Church language as much as I do French. God sheds His grace on whom He wants. To one He makes known French and German, and all the reading and writing. But I a sinner, get along badly even in Russian."⁴³

This scene reveals more qualities of the Brigadier's wife. Her lack of perception and basic unromantic nature is very evident for she has no idea that the old seducer is propositioning her. She professes to believe in the sanctity of God's grace but these

hypocritical words do not ring true because of her intense avarice. Of course, ridiculously enough, at the end of the scene after she has interrupted the old seducer time and time again, the Brigadirsha insists she will do anything for him except lend him money. Her stupidity is emphasized at other times when she misunderstands, but most of all during the card game when she hears matadores and thinks there is a new game called madadury. This is an untranslatable pun on dury and duraki. At any rate a Russian audience could readily see her excessive stupidity at this point. Thus we can summarize the Brigadirsha's character by saying she is avaricious, stupid, hypocritical, unromantic and imperceptive.

The play takes place at the home of minor gentry of St. Petersburg, the Councillor and his wife. Like the Brigadier, he is not an admirable figure at all. He is covetous of the seemingly (to him) sedate, goodwilled "Mother Russia" figure of the Brigadier's wife. It is obvious that he is rather sick of the behavior of his flighty wife and wants a woman who is more "down to earth".⁴⁴ He admires her intelligence (sic!): "In her I find something extraordinarily intelligent that others are unable to perceive"⁴⁵; and her faithfulness:

Councillor. "She is humble, like an angel; industrious, like a bee; lovely, like a bird of paradise (sighs); and faithful, like a turtledove.

Brigadier. Or intelligent, like a cow; lovely, like I don't know who...like an owl.

Councillor. How dare you compare your wife to a nightbird?

Brigadier. It seems to me that it's possible to liken a daytime fool to a nightbird.

Councillor. (sighing). Still she stays faithful to you in all ways."⁴⁶

It is difficult for us the spectators to understand why he falls for the Brigadirsha. The only reason could be that she does personify a change from his own wife: she is truly more "down-to-earth" and dependable. He is also very greedy. (Perhaps this is one reason he can identify with the Brigadirsha.) When Sof'ya states that her future husband will not respect him he retorts by saying that Ivan's good quality is his "pretty good property." Moreover, he changes his opinion when he discovers how much Dobrolyubov is worth:

Dobrol. "Yes ma'am. My situation has improved greatly. I've got two thousand souls now:

Councillor. Two thousand souls! Oh, my God, great heavens! And with all your other virtues! Ah, how worthy you now are of esteem.

Counc. Wife. By the way, weren't you really ever in Paris?

Dobrol. No, ma'am.

Counc. Wife. A pity. This one thing can darken all your other merits.

Councillor. Nevertheless, if a person has two thousand souls it seems to me that they can more than make up for all his vices. Two thousand souls even without a landowner's virtues is always two thousand souls, but virtues without them - devil with such virtues..."47.

Fonvizin's evocation of the Councillor is also very typical of the time. He shows us a former judge who had no qualms about bribe-taking. This of course was very prevalent in the law-courts of the time. At Scene Six of Act Three the Councillor mentions that it was impossible to prohibit bribes and he would receive a favourable resolution if he were friendly to the proper people. He demonstrates a rather strange attitude that all who are accused are guilty in the eyes of the court. The councillor does not believe in absolving the innocent; according to him everyone is guilty:

Councillor. "...That's how it used to be in the old days.

Sof'ya. Thank God it's not that way now.

Councillor. All the worse. Now the guilty has to answer for himself, so how can you skin anyone else? Why are rules established if only the guilty party is guilty? It used to be that -

Sof'ya. But, Father, why should an innocent person be guilty?

Councillor. Because all people are sinners. I myself was a judge. It used to be that the guilty paid for his guilt and the innocent for his innocence. In my time everyone was satisfied that way: the judge, the plaintiff, and the defendant!"⁴⁸.

The councillor wants to stand by the old ways; in the first scene of Act II he is adamant that Sof'ya should marry Ivan, not because he is such a good prospect, but rather because Ivan is the fiancé that he has chosen, and young people should obey the wishes of their parents.

In the final resolution scene we find the Councillor acting like a typical husband: when his advances at the Brigadier's wife are discovered he quivers in his boots; when, however, he finds out that the Brigadier was pursuing his wife, he is insulted and ejects them all from his house. The last didactic speeches of the Councillor reveal his desire to repent for his foolishness and thus a metamorphosis in his character. The reference to "Gehenna" concerns Orthodox Church dogma: Gehenna was supposedly that area of hell where Satan and his devilish crew expose the souls of sinners to all kinds of tortures. The Sovietnitsa's reference to Tartarus is from early Greek mythology: it is the deep chasm where Zeus kept the overthrown Titans. The two analogies merely mean that the two persons wish to allow "Divine Punishment" to come. In conclusion we can say that the Councillor is dishonest, biased, greedy and covetous yet is an important embodiment of a dishonest legal figure of the era that the author wished to

satirize.

Actually we have already examined in part the character of the Sovietnitsa when we discussed Ivan. She is not a negative character. She is neither scheming nor avaricious but rather comical because she is so overcome by her Gallomania: the Councilor's wife submits to all the demands that being a member of the haute société précieuse entails.⁴⁹ She insists that romantic love stories should replace the learning of grammar. Throughout the love intrigue with Ivan she plays the game: she is the woman to be pursued in Gallic frivolity; he is the "hunter of her heart". In the scene where the Brigadier is making his clumsy proposition in military jargon she does not understand the terminology (yet unlike the Brigadirsha, she does comprehend the motives) but she is polite and gracious enough to excuse herself without causing a rude scene. As we have already seen from her comments about grammar she is not a shining light intellectually. She does not speak much French throughout the play which suggests to us that even as a Gallophile her command of French is not too strong. Moreover, her knowledge of geography leaves a little to be desired and the author wastes no opportunity in ridiculing it: "See my dear, I was never there but still I have a very good idea of what France is like. Isn't it true that mostly Frenchmen live in France?"⁵⁰ The Sovietnitsa is rather disdainful of her ignorant, greedy husband and when she has the occasion to chastise him she makes the best of it calling him a "Traitor! Barbarian! Tyrant!" But in summary she is the ultimate Gallophile: flighty, précieuse and not at all uncharming.

What can we say about Dobrolyubov and Sof'ya? They represent the opposition movement in the play: common sense and good judgment. They are merely type characters and are in effect predecessors of the similar characters in Nedorosl'. Their one-faceted character dominated by logic and reason is the poorest aspect of the play. Sof'ya and Dobrolyubov are very unconvincing because we see them only as representatives of the "new Russian" that Fonvizin wished to show us - well educated (in a Russian vein) and refined. Yet these two would have to be robot-like dullards indeed to spew forth the pedantry that they do when they are alone. (This is the way two young lovers would act when they are alone?) The two parts of the play that demonstrate this are Act One Scene Five and the first scene of Act Four. Here are some excerpts from these scenes to show their artificiality and stilted tone:

Dobrol. "They've left us alone. What does it mean?

Sof'ya. It means that my fiancé isn't very jealous of me."⁵¹

Dobrol. "I have great hopes for the fulfillment of our wishes.

Sof'ya. I still don't dare count on it. I can speak frankly with you. If it's true that my father is betraying my step-mother, then the change in your situation can't alter his intentions.

Dobrol. Nevertheless, I saw with what feeling he received the news of the settlement of my case in my favour. I, too, can't hide my thoughts from you..."⁵²

We can admire Fonvizin's intention in making two characters concerned with a good Slavonic education, yet his portrayal in Brigadir of Dobrolyubov and Sof'ya is too extreme: they are too refined and not human enough. To conclude we must reiterate that these two represent reason as opposed to the frivolity that overcomes most of the characters.

" Деление действующих лиц на два лагеря в комедии

обозначено ясно . Добролюбов и Софья - люди той же социальной среды , что и обличаемые персонажи , но иных убеждений , иной морали. Это не традиционные положительные герои классической комедии . Добролюбов и Софья - робкая и еще художественно несовершенная попытка изобразить новых людей появившихся в России..."⁵³.

We can conclude the character analysis of our study by summarizing the representation of each character as facets of eighteenth-century Russian society. The Brigadier and his wife represent the worst elements of Russian urban gentry; the Councillor and his spouse are embodiments of the worst of rural nobility. The two old men themselves are symbolic: "Ces deux séducteurs séniles représentent la vieille Russie; tous deux haissant le ton et les goûts de la jeune génération, gémissent sur les errements nouveaux."⁵⁴ Ivan and the Sovietnitsa are of course Gallomaniacs, the ridiculous result of poor foreign education. The two moralizers Sof'ya and Dobrolyubov represent the new enlightened Russia.

No analysis of Brigadir would be complete without an examination of the author's style and technique. Because Brigadir is a comedy, we should first scrutinize the humorous devices that the author used. Of course each character (even Sof'ya and Dobrolyubov to a certain degree) is a joke in himself: each possesses his own exaggeration and thus appears ridiculous and humorous in his own special way. The whole central idea of the old seducers and mismatched couples is humour of situation in itself. However laughs are concentrated on more specific means. Fonvizin uses aside speeches coupled with double-entendre for comic effect in

these three extracts:

Ivan. "Madame, you speak the truth. Oh! Vous avez raison. Besides romances, I've read nothing, and that's why I am as you see me.

Sof'ya. (aside). And that's why you're a fool.

Ivan. Mademoiselle, you wish to say something?

Sof'ya. Only what I think about you.

Ivan. And what would that be? Je vous prie, don't flatter me!"⁵⁵.

Councillor. (aside). "A treasure, not a woman! What honeyed lips she has! Just listen to her talk and you're a slave of sin; it's impossible not to become tempted.

Brigadier. What is it you're saying neighbour? (Aside). The mistress here and my old woman certainly don't make a pair."⁵⁶.

Brigadier. "...I called you a fool and you think I'm flattering you. What an ass!

Ivan. What an ass! (aside). Il ne me flatte pas..."⁵⁷.

The author achieved humour through misunderstanding. We have already seen examples⁵⁸. where the stodgy old Brigadier misunderstands the French expressions of his son time and time again. Notice the comic effect of this scene where Ivan and his mother talk past one another:

Brig. Wife. "God grant that you should live the way we have!

Ivan. Dieu m'en préserve.

Brig. Wife. God's grace and my blessings be with you.

Ivan. Très obligé.

Brig. Wife. Either I've become deaf or you have.

Ivan. Ni l'un ni l'autre."⁵⁹.

The technique of incomprehension for humour's sake is also used during the card game as we have already seen when the Brigadier's Wife does not understand the name of the game. The epitome of this type of humour occurs with the two proposal scenes between the Brigadier and the Sovietnitsa, and the Councillor and the Brigadier's Wife. The hilarious picture of two frustrated, stumbling old codgers clumsily attempting to make passionate love to the flabbergasted women, neither understanding what the other says, creates an effect that is totally farcical. It is very true

that humour through exaggeration is also a basic part of the play. Not only is this important in the above scenes, particularly the latter, but exaggeration is the very core of the Gallophilic love scenes between Ivan and the Councillor's Wife. A Russian audience of the eighteenth century would roar with laughter at the affected, foppish gestures in their ridiculous exaggeration.

Moreover, Fonvizin demonstrates a skilful use of the "one-basic" joke, the pun and the not-so-subtle stab. Ivanushka gives us one example of the latter as he discusses his parental relations: "My father, on the contrary, never did any praying, except for retreat. They say that until his marriage he didn't believe there was a devil. However, after marrying my mother he soon believed in the existence of an evil spirit."⁶⁰ A much more subtle joke is made in Act II Scene 6 when Ivanushka discusses a learned book ridiculously entitled Les Sottises du Temps. The author's skill in "one-liners" is evident in these examples:

"You're quite right, dear; I share your sentiments. I see that you have powder on your head, but for the life of me I can't see if there's anything in the head."⁶¹

Councillor. "Why, she's so smart you could publish everything she says.

Brigadier. Why not publish it?! I've heard that in the books they print today they lie no more intelligently than my wife."⁶²

"Do you know that I, I whom you see before you now - that I lived here at the pension of a French coachman before my departure for Paris."⁶³

We should also mention some jokes already quoted: the Soviet-nitsa's question about Frenchmen (note 50.) and the Brigadirsha's puns on duraki and dury in Scene Four of Act Four. Untranslatable

puns also occur earlier during the card game:

Сын. "Passe.

И все пасуют.

Советница. Они и они.

Бригадирша. Что за околесица - они и они ? Кто
это они ?"64.

Here the Brigadier's Wife mistakes oni - the term "to pass" in quadrille (the game they are playing) with oni the Russian pronoun meaning "they". A private joke for the audience is achieved during the bantering between the Brigadier and the Councillor whom we know is in love with the Brigadier's Wife:

Brigadier. "Whom? No, my friend, I say the animal hasn't been born yet who'd think of looking for anything in my wife.

Councillor. But what are you calling him names for?

Brigadier. Am I really calling anyone names when I say that a person would have to be a first-class skinflint to be tempted by my wife.

Councillor. You're not calling names, are you? (Emotionally) Why should the person be a fool who's attracted to Akulina Timofeevna?"65.

Another humorous interchange occurs (see note 63.) when we discover during a conversation between Ivan and the Sovietnitsa, that Ivan became interested in learning French from a coachman.

Fonvizin's excellent use of dialogue intensified the dramatic impact of the play. Other playwrights of the era such as Knyazhnin (in Khvastun) and Lukin (in The Toy Shop Vendor) used an interchange between a character and a narrator to expose the former's vices. Fonvizin however, employs revealing dialogues between two "negative" characters to show the ignorance, stupidity, folly or dishonesty of the other. The conversations between Ivan and the Sovietnitsa point out their Gallomania. The courting scene between the Sovietnik and the Brigadier's Wife show his

preoccupation with law-terms and her ignorance and lack of perception. The Brigadier's courting scene demonstrates his obsession with the military. Finally, the arguments between the Brigadier and his wife show his arrogant bullyragging and her rattled hebetude.

Language is the other aspect of dialogue that is important. Here Fonvizin is a true master. It has been said that Brigadir was the first play on the Russian stage that contained natural language.⁶⁶ Fonvizin's language is indeed natural. The author used many conversational devices to give the dialogue a more colloquial sound. Not so much the words, but the way they are uttered lend a much more "breezy" tone to the play. For example, many characters address one another in terms of endearment. Specifically, this means the use of diminutives (particularly in ushka) such as "matushka", "batyushka", "svatyushka", "Ivanushka", "Sof'yushka", "zyatyushka" and "sosedushka", which adds to the colloquial atmosphere of the play. This point is further exemplified by the frequent use of the Christian name and patronymic that is so common in Russian speech. Moreover, the author employs colloquial emphatic particles such as "to", "zhe", (zh), and "ka" to form a more lively and unrefined type of speech. The result is that Fonvizin's atmosphere is much more conversational; this is because the characters do not speak a stilted type of Russian. Finally, the card game in Scene Four of Act Four adds to the resonance of conversation through the usage of Russian terms during the card game instead of utilizing the French terms. For example they use words like "oni i oni", "khryushki" and "zhludei".

Of greater importance is the internal nature of the language of each specific character. Each individual has his own vocabulary and style of speech which reflects his personality. Ivanushka and the Councillor's Wife are of course preoccupied with Gallophilia; therefore they lavishly use French expressions. In fact their speech is not only replete with outright French words but these two also use French words adapted to the Russian system of inflection. For instance, the Sovietnitsa takes the French word capable, makes it into a Russian short adjective kapabel'na and uses it instead of sposobna.⁶⁷ Here are some further examples taken from the text: verbs - "diskyurirovat'" (from se discuter), "menanzhirovat'" (from ménager), "ekzistiruyet" (from exister); nouns - "bil'yedu" (from billet-doux), "rezoneman" (from raison), "dessimyulatsii" (from dissimulation), "sentimenty" (from sentiments); and adjectives - "indiferan" (from indifférent), "komplezan" (from complaisant) and "komodneye" (from commode). Phrases like "totalement 'nel'zya'" are totalement ridiculous. For a Russian audience the result of all this affected jargon is very funny. These words sound ridiculous and stilted to the Russian ear; almost like pidgin Russian with a foppish tinge. The author's purpose is clear. The ridiculous Francofied speech of these Gallophiles reflects their mad preoccupation with French. Thus can they be satirized for their ludicrous eccentricity.

The language of the Brigadier also reveals his character. He uses military terms and allusions to battles. His speech is generally coarse and not too correct. His favourite term in

addressing his wife is not "milaya" or even "dorogaya" but rather just "zhena!" Because he is so preoccupied with military rank and position his speech contains a liberal sprinkling of such terms as "chiny", "ranga", "voyenny", "brigadir". In fact he himself says: " Я и сам, матушка , не говорю того , чтоб забавно было спорить о такой материи, которая не принадлежит ни до экз-ерциции, ни до баталий, и ничего такого что бы..."⁶⁸ He often uses words like "baba" or "edakoi osel" demonstrating his coarseness. But the most ridiculous jargon is during the courtship scene. Fonvizin's mastery of the language shines as he shows us the blustering trooper, ludicrously attempting to be romantic, using words like "arkibuzirovali", "pokhodakh", "aktsii", "basur-manskoi krovi", "armii pul'", "yader", "kartechei", "voyennoplen-nym", "fortetsiyu" and "general".

The councillor's language reveals his eccentricities as well. He speaks in legal terms. Because of his training and experience in the law-courts, the Sovietnik's everyday conversation is sprinkled with complicated court expressions. He counsels Ivan to "Паче всего изволь читать уложение и указы"⁶⁹. He also makes a subtle veiled reference to "extracts" - " Сколько у нас исправных секретарей , которые экстракты сочиняют без грамматики , любодорого смотреть . " ⁷⁰. In the eighteenth century these "extracts" were citations from the records of a legal case which the judge used as a basis for his decision. Throughout the play, even in the courtship scene with the doltish Brigadirsha , the Councillor uses terms like "ukazy", "chelobitniki", "tolkovat'",

and "sovokupleniye". All these examples show his punctilious and codified personality.

As we have already said the Brigadier's Wife is obsessed with money. Throughout the play she uses many expressions concerning money, accounting and bookkeeping. She employs turns of phrase such as "raskhodnyye tetradi", "pyati kopeyek...chetyre kopeyek s denezhkoi", "i delo den'gi za den'gi schitayu", "altyn za tridsat'", "Yesli tol'ko...ne deneg", "v desyati kopeikakh... chto grivnoyu v den'". These instances demonstrate the main aspect of her character: avarice for money.

The language that Fonvizin employs for Sof'ya and Dobrolyubov is revealing not through its vocabulary so much as by its long-winded and heavy construction. The pedantry of their complex and bookish language acts as a mirror to show their internal precisianist nature.

Thus language is a very important feature in Brigadir. The construction and vocabulary of each character's language reveals his basic personality: it acts as a magnifying glass for us the spectators to examine the internal nature of each character.

What is the importance of Brigadir in Russian literature? It has been overshadowed by Fonvizin's other great play Nedorosl', but Brigadir still has many merits worthwhile for study. Brigadir is very well constructed, lively and humorous in a rather sophisticated way. The dialogue is vibrant and expressive. According to certain sources Brigadir was an early manifestation of "dramatic realism".⁷¹ Its chief limitation is thematic because Brigadir is no longer timely. Paradoxically enough, this leads

us to studying the play as an historical document. Brigadir reflects beautifully the attitudes and customs of the era, and tells us much about what life was like then. Fonvizin showed evils peculiar to a Russian society yet managed to mock common human faults like ignorance, greed and corruption. Generally though his characters are Russian, with Russian faults as results of Russian mistakes. The author criticized mainly Gallomania. But he also satirized bribery, malpractices, marriage, greed, and most important of all lack of education. This is the keynote of Fonvizin's pensée: if these people had been properly educated in a Russian milieu, learning about life through a Russian spectrum, then he never would have had to write Brigadir.

CHAPTER III

NEDOROSL'

- "Называли бессмертную комедию Недоросль Фонвизина и основательно - ее живая, горячая пора продолжалась около полувека : это громадно для произведения слова. Но теперь нет ни одного намека в Недоросле на живую жизнь , и комедия, отслужив свою службу, обратилась в исторический памятник"

In his greatest work Nedorosl', Fonvizin sharpens many of the barbs of his previous works to criticize some of the evils of Russian society. The play's scope is much wider than anything he had attempted before since it was concerned with many of the basic principles of Russian life and the treatment of the serfs by the aristocracy in particular. Witness to the power and force of Nedorosl' is the fact that it is the only Russian play written before 1800 that is still being performed. It is important not only as a social satire but also as an excellent play.

Before we attempt to analyze the play we must mention the so-called "early version" of Nedorosl' and recount the play's early history. In 1933 in Literaturnoye Nasledstvo G. Korovin published a variant of a play entitled Nedorosl' claiming in his commentary that this dramatic work was a first version written by Fonvizin in the early 1760's.² Characterization seems to be quite similar to our Nedorosl': there are two contrasting young men Ivanushka, Milovid, the former an example of an ignoramus much like Mitrofan, the latter well educated; there are ignorant parents Mr. and Mrs. Mikheich - Aksen and Ulita - not dissimilar from the Prostakovs in Nedorosl'. The author has included only one raisonneur - Dobromyslov (not Dobrolyubov, as D. Welsh has it in his article

"Satirical Themes in 18th Century Russian Comedies")³. This "early version", consisting of only three acts and taking up eighteen pages, is a much shorter play than Nedorosl'. But is this an early version of Fonvizin's play? In 1954 K. V. Pigarev asserted in his study of Denis Fonvizin that the play was written not by D. I. Fonvizin but by the person whose handwriting appears in the first pages, and that it was written after 1782 in imitation of Fonvizin's Nedorosl'.⁴ However two years later V. Vsevolodsky - Gerngross disagreed, insisting that the play was written by Denis Fonvizin before 1782.⁵ The main problem is that seven different handwritings were used, yet none is that of D. I. Fonvizin. In 1966 A. P. Mogilyansky reexamined the whole question. In an attempt to settle the dispute, experts in calligraphy examined the manuscripts.⁶ The question has yet to be indisputably resolved, but Mogilyansky maintains that this so-called "early version" was written not by Fonvizin but possibly by his brother:

"Признав свое поражение, он оставил пьесу незаконченной. Сохранена рукопись была, по-видимому, Павлом Фонвизиним по связи ее с появившимся позднее Недорослем его драма Дениса (знавшего, нужно думать, об этом литературном замысле) в качестве примечательного курьеза.

Таким образом, для определения автора анонимного Недоросля необходимо изучение окружения Павла Фонвизина."

The first stage production of Nedorosl' did not take place until September 24, 1782 although the play had been completed in the previous year. The author had difficulty in securing permission for this first presentation:

"Before this play could be produced in Moscow, the local censor

required the omission of a number of 'dangerous lines'. No sooner had Nedorosl' been performed at the 'Public Russian Theatre' in Moscow, than Catherine took the precaution of placing the theatre under State control. Nedorosl' was not produced at Court until five years later, and although this was a shortened version, it nevertheless brought upon itself the indignation of courtiers. They were no doubt vexed by Starodum's moralizing on the duties of enlightened monarchs and gentry, implying they themselves were failing to carry them out as Russian gentry should. Fonvizin's own complete edition of his works was prohibited in 1788, as was a posthumous edition planned in 1792."⁸.

It was after the first stage production that Potemkin supposedly said to Fonvizin "Die Denis, or write plays no more."⁹. In fact Fonvizin did not complete any plays after this. The circumstances behind the first stage presentation were similar to those of Brigadir. Shortly after its composition, Fonvizin's friends enthusiastically implored him to read his play in public. He did in fact read a few excerpts one evening but the court audience obliged him to read the play in its entirety. In their enthusiasm they persuaded the great actor Dmitrevsky to read it for them once again.¹⁰. Although the Empress's displeasure forced Nedorosl''s withdrawal after its first stage presentation, it had been received with many accolades, according to the Dramaticheskii Slovar':

"Сия комедия, наполненная замысловатыми изображениями и множеством действующих лиц, где каждый в своем характере изречениями различается, заслужила внимание от публики. Для сего и приятна с отменным удовольствием от всех..."¹¹.

Evidence of the play's popular appeal is the fact that after nearly two centuries it is still being performed.

Despite a remarkable technique of alternation Fonvizin's play is fundamentally classical in structure. The play consists of 40 scenes divided into the traditional five acts. The first act em-

bodies an exposition of character and setting. We see the provincial gentry exemplified by the cruel and ignorant Prostakovs. Moreover, the author at once introduces us to the calamitous situation of the Russian serf.¹² At the end of the first act he complicates the intrigue with the revelation of Sof'ya's new wealth. The second act is also expository introducing the "good" hero Milon and the ridiculous tutors. Didactic elements appear in Act Three with Starodum and his lengthy monologues. Humour is maintained with the third tutor Vral'man whose antics at the conclusion of this act are hilarious. Act Four contains more of Starodum's moralizing, the betrothal of Sof'ya to Milon and the amusing examination of Mitrofan. It concludes with Mrs. Prostakova's decision to kidnap Sof'ya for Mitrofan. The final act provides the moral for the audience: "Behold the just reward for wickedness!"¹³

As in Brigadir Fonvizin has constructed his play according to the classical unities of time, place and action. The action takes place within the space of two days. There are two temporal links between acts: Pravdin's remark at the beginning of Act III that he saw Starodum coming as he left the table and Starodum's assertion at the conclusion of Act IV that they will leave at seven the following morning. All the action takes place at or near the Prostakov house. However Fonvizin's adherence to these unities has led to some glaring improbabilities. The juxtaposition of Milon (Sof'ya's lover of some months before), Starodum (Sof'ya's benefactor) and Pravdin (the state agent) seems contrived. Pravdin's announcement that the government will expropriate all the Prostakovs' possessions seems as factitious as any Olympian deus

ex machina of the Classical drama.

Is there suspense? In almost any play it is important to maintain suspense and hold the audience until the end. The central intrigue of Nedorosl' is, who will marry Sof'ya: Milon, Mitrofan or Skotinin. However, Pravdin tells Milon at the beginning of the second act that he will not allow any more mischief by the Prostakov family.¹⁴ Since marriage to Skotinin or Mitrofan would be a travesty of justice, Pravdin would not permit it. So the audience realizes that the outcome will be felicitous. Fonvizin nevertheless attempted to maintain suspense by the implication at the end of Act IV that Prostakova will kidnap the girl, thus retaining a certain amount of suspense in the final act. To be fair, suspense was not essential for the 18th century audience (witness the classical drama whose climax often came midway through the play rendering the last portion virtually *dénouement*). Fonvizin evidently did not regard suspense as essential, otherwise he would not have included the long tirades by the raisonneur.

As previously mentioned, Fonvizin employed a striking technique of alternation in Nedorosl'. Instead of concentrating on complex action, the author constructed the play on a series of separate scenes, which individually mean a great deal but in accumulation mean much more. For example, the entire first act consists of many concrete details of action to provide understanding of the coarse nature of the Prostakov family. However, the first scene of Act Two makes a contrast to the previous accumulation of vice and corruption. Here Pravdin and Milon converse at length about virtue and love. This is the first example of vice and virtue

alternating throughout the play, so that the audience can see and compare and form conclusions about them. This technique of alternation reappears at the conclusion of the second act (contrasting with the first scenes of that act) in the slothful, grasping ignorance of the Prostakov family, and opens the third with the virtuous Starodum and Pravdin. Alternated with these early scenes of "good" are the remaining scenes of Act III where Fonvizin demonstrates the ignorance and stupidity of the tutors. The author returns to the virtuous characters of the play for the first six scenes of Act IV, then shifts back to the dullards for the last three to reiterate their vices. The first two scenes of Act V embody "Virtue" (the didactic speeches of Starodum) whereupon the author shifts once again. This time he alternates vice and virtue within a scene to promulgate the concluding moral:

"Dès qu'un personnage 'négatif' entre sur la scène, le comique est relancé et l'on rit, jusqu'au moment où Starodum reprend la parole. Cette rupture dans le rythme a-t-elle été voulue ? C'est très probable, puisque Fonvizine a confié ce rôle au meilleur acteur de l'époque, Dmitrevskij, qui partageait ses convictions 'civilisatrices', c'est donc que ce personnage était à ses yeux essentiel."¹⁵

To a modern audience, the long monologues by Starodum seem unnatural and boring. Moreover, they weaken the suspense and humorous impact of the play. Nevertheless, in Fonvizin's day they were considered important because the author's purpose was not just to satirize but also to teach.¹⁶ It was therefore in earnest that he included these didactic tirades hoping he could correct the ills which he lampooned.

One unifying element in Nedorosl's structure is its construction around a family. The author leads us at once into the

heart of the Prostakov-Skotinin household. In fact the Prostakov house forms the play's framework:

"Пьеса сразу, с самого начала вводит зрителя в быт семьи - сценой примеривания нового кафтана. Затем на сцене урок Митрофана, за сценой - семейный обед с семейным скандалом, и опять - характерное различие в подаче разнокачественного материала: Милон, Правдин, Стародум отвлеченно ораторствуют на отвлеченной сцене, Простаковы, учителя, слуги живут повседневной жизнью в реальной бытовой среде. Это - люди, а не абстрактные существа, хотя в построении их ролей еще много от классического метода, люди, связанные с породившей их средой."

This technique of structuring the play around the evil family and bringing in outsiders who perform "good", serves to make the play more compact since the intrigues unfold in this setting without any extraneous action.

To conclude our study of the structure of Nedorosl' we must mention that Fonvizin proved to be more skilful in dramatic construction than most of his contemporaries. Its architecture certainly has faults yet Fonvizin managed to delay delineation of the plot until scene 5 of Act II. He also employed ingenious devices such as the "search" entrance of Prostakova in Act II scene 5 and the "flight" exit of Vral'man at the end of Act III to make his plot more credible.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Nedorosl' is the characterization. The characters may be schematically arranged into three separate groups: the protagonists (Starodum, Pravdin, Milon and Sof'ya); the antagonists (Prostakov, Prostakova, Skotinin and Mitrofan) and the minor figures (Yeremeyevna, Vral'man, Kuteikin, Tsyfirkin, Trishka and the servants). It is true that only the

second and third groups seem something like real people. The protagonists appear only as static moralizers. Yet Fonvizin more than made up for this defect by masterfully presenting his negative characters who represent various faults in eighteenth-century Russian manners. Each has his own dominant trait which renders him unforgettable.¹⁸ In fact, the author's negative characters were so remarkable that they became proverbial in the Russian language. The author achieved this high quality by imbuing his characters with the spark of life after carefully examining life itself.

"It has been said that when Fonvizin was writing the scene between Skotinin, Mitrofan and Yeremeyevna he took a stroll in order to think it over carefully, and happened to come across a scuffle between two peasant women. He stopped 'to watch nature', and when he wrote the scene upon his return home he used the word 'grapple', which he had just overheard."

We shall now scrutinize each character separately.

The play is dominated by the powerful figure of the household head Mrs. Prostakova. She is probably the most famous personage of the play. Prostakova is a development of Akulina Timofeyevna of Brigadir but much more of a caricature than her predecessor. Whereas the Brigadirsha was restricted to greed, stinginess and ignorance, Prostakova is all those and more. Her personality is of the same material as her predecessor but woven much more intricately. She fascinates because she is so utterly repulsive. Above all she is greedy and stingy at the same time. Prostakova is the talk of the entire district for being able to extract every ounce of work out of her peasants (and out of Trishka the tailor, too) yet she regrets she cannot squeeze more out of them. Here is her

attitude toward money: "If you find money, don't share it with anybody. Take it all yourself, Mitrofanushka!"²⁰. Like the Brigadier's wife she considers learning on a purely financial basis, striving to extract full value from the three teachers:

"Don't work so hard over a trifle, my dear! I shall not give him a kopek more; no reason why I should. It's not much of a science. It's only tormenting you; and the whole business, I see, is just rubbish. If you have no money, why count it? If you have money, we can add it up well enough without Pafnutyich's help."²¹.

Her greed comes to the fore when it is announced that Sof'ya has inherited 10,000 roubles; immediately she decides that Sof'ya would be the ideal match for Mitrofan.

Prostakova also echoes the Brigadier's Wife in her hypocritical religious attitude. Every so often she feigns some kind of religious piety by a "God may be merciful" or "the Lord has willed", or by pretending to cross herself. These expressions of religious devotion are solely for other people, particularly Starodum and Pravdin. There is no doubt that she is merely trying to create an illusion for others, but her true character is always revealed.

Prostakova is ignorant simply because she has no desire for education. Fonvizin tells us of her ignorance with the list of Dramatis Personae when we see she is named Prostakov (formed from prostak - a simpleton). Moreover, Prostakova is vain in her ignorance: she revels in the fact that she cannot read - a useless waste of time and money, she feels. Twice she mangles technical words which would not be difficult with even rudimentary education. Prostakova shows her swaggering ignorance in having hired three tutors of very questionable qualifications.

Mrs. Prostakova is the epitome of the domineering wife. She constantly browbeats her poor husband by action and word so that he is reduced to a cringing jackal.²² This tyrant has no respect at all for her husband. To her he is insignificant except as a convenient scapegoat. Besides being stingy, greedy, hypocritical, ignorant and domineering, Mrs. Prostakova is extremely cruel. Fonvizin portrayed her as the worst representative of a tyrannical nobility that barbarously exploited the peasantry. Mrs. Prostakova's cruelty extends to everyone around her. At the very beginning of the play we see her viciously insulting the poor tailor Trishka with a torrent of invective. She then gives abrupt orders to everyone and assails her husband when he meekly gives his opinion. Later on she argues with Sof'ya that it is impossible that Starodum did not die. Later she actually is involved in a brawl with her brother. She admits that she violently runs the household: "...between swearing and flogging I have no rest at all..."²³. When the female despot discovers that she cannot force Sof'ya's marriage to Mitrofan she even attempts kidnapping to achieve her goal. After her attempt fails Prostakova abuses her servants, threatening them all with death. Yet even after Starodum has forgiven her she does not have sufficient presence of mind to realize she should forgive. All she can think of is punishing those who failed her. It is in this scene that Fonvizin develops his main idea of scorning the vicious nobility:

Mrs. Prostakov: "You have forgiven! Ah beloved sir! Well! Now I'll teach those rascally servants of mine! Now I'll take them one by one. I'll find out who let her get away. No, you rogues; no you thieves! I'll not forgive this disgrace upon my life!

Pravdin: But what do you want to punish your servants for?

Mrs. Prostakov: Oh, dear sir, what a question! Am I not the mistress of my own people?

Pravdin: And you think you have a right to flog them whenever you take the notion?

Skotinin: Isn't a nobleman at liberty to beat his servant when he feels like it?

Pravdin: When he feels like it? What a desire! You are frank, Skotinin. (to Mrs. Prostakov.) No, Madam, nobody is at liberty to tyrannize.

Mrs. Prostakov: Not at liberty! A nobleman can't even flog his servants whenever he likes? What about the privileges given by the Nobility Law?

Starodum: You are clever at interpreting the ukases.

Mrs. Prostakov: You are joking, sir; but I'll give it to them right now, every single one of them. (tries to go.)²⁴.

However, even with all these evil traits Mrs. Prostakova is not all black. Like a believable villain who has to have some good in him to be credible and not lapse into a "type", Prostakova possesses one admirable trait: devotion to her son. Although she is extremely stingy and greedy she gladly makes sacrifices for Mitrofan: "We don't stint ourselves on Mitrofan's education. We hire three teachers for him."²⁵ There is a further example when Prostakova chastises Yeremeyevna for not allowing him to have a sixth roll; when he becomes a little ill she thinks of sending for a doctor.²⁶ Her motherly devotion has become an obsession. Prostakova's complete attachment to her son has made her lose all sense of proportion.²⁷ Twice during the play she is almost beside herself with despair as she thinks Mitrofan has been injured. After her brother has assaulted the young boy, Mrs. Prostakov physically assails Skotinin. Certainly she attempts the abortive kidnapping plot at the end of the play in a desperate effort to secure for her son what she feels is his. Everything she has done, she has done out of devotion to him. This is what renders her

portrayal so powerful: even with her cruelty, crudeness, greed and ignorance she is still devoted:

"Тоже относится и к Недорослю в частности к роле Простаковой . Она собирает в себе ряд гнуснейших черт, она изберг, и все же Фонвизин наделяет ее материнским чувством, делающим ее человеком. В заключительной сцене Простакова, отвергнутая превращается в трагедию порока. И не случайно Фонвизин заставляет в этот момент своих идеальных героев помочь Простаковой , упавшей в обморок . "28.

This leads us to the tragic element in her. Prostakova has been too devoted, and when she is spurned by Mitrofan at the end, the result is tragic, so she contains elements of both comedy and tragedy. Thus she embodies a Tartuffian combination of the two.²⁹. Prostakova is one of the most remarkable figures of the eighteenth century Russian stage:

"Вот перед нами Простакова - несомненно отрицательная фигура , при этом данная типологически , выявляющая множество отрицательных черт своего класса. Она невежественна, корыстолюбива , жестока , цинична , ... Ее материнская любовь тоже приобретает безобразные формы , но все-таки это не себя любивое чувство , это остаток подлинного человеческого достоинства , хотя и искаженного до последней степени."30.

If as is often said opposites attract, then Prostakova's husband is an ideal match for her. He is the epitome of the downtrodden sycophantic male. However the author allows him a few clever lines. Although he is generally insignificant, rendered by a good actor, his laconic phrases could be highly effective.³¹ For example such words as "When you are around I have eyes for nothing else."³² could be uttered with sugared irony amidst the torrent of abuse by Prostakova. Moreover, during the discussion by the

Prostakovs and Skotinin of the family passion for pigs, Mr. Prostakov says pithily: "There must be some family trait there too, that's what I think."³³ He seems to be quite a kindly man and treats Sof'ya well. Prostakov like his wife appears to be very ignorant but perhaps not so ignorant as the others, for it is implied that he can read a little.³⁴ Naturally by his role he is a timid creature and demonstrates his fear not only before his wife but also at the possibility of confronting some soldiers who have arrived in the village. We find a further example of Mr. Prostakov's ironic comments as he mordantly observes: "I love him as a father should, just the same. He's such a bright youngster--such a jolly fellow! I'm often quite beside myself with joy, and I can hardly believe that he's really my own son."³⁵ It is true that Prostakova's husband abhors her cruelty but realizes he can do very little about it - as shown in Act III scene 5. Later on during the examination of Mitrofan by Starodum and Pravdin, Prostakov shows his own lack of education by gullibly believing all the nonsense that his son spews forth. He demonstrates his first sign of anger in the concluding scene of the play only after his wife has been punished by the authorities. Violently waving his hands he shouts at his wife "Who's to blame for this, mother!"³⁶ The henpecked husband of the female tyrant is portrayed as a meek creature of no significance, yet nonetheless permitted a few incisive comments on the character of his wife. Prostakov is not portrayed unsympathetically for we can well understand how almost any man could become spineless married to a shrew like Mrs. Prostakov.

Mitrofan, Mr. and Mrs. Prostakov's son, is the nedorosl'³⁷. of the play. His name's significance is a little more subtle than some of the others since it comes from Greek. Roughly translated it could mean "mama's boy".³⁸ This sixteen-year old is the perfect example of an ignorant parasite. The play revolves around him since its principal intrigue is to have him marry Sof'ya. Mitrofan only wants to marry Sof'ya so that he will not have to study. This slothfulness is his main feature. The young man's ignorance is a result of his laziness, his refusal to study. During his arithmetic examination he cannot even add one and one without difficulty. When Tsyfirkin tries to teach Mitrofan some arithmetic, the boy insists that he have a review lesson, so that he will not have to attempt anything new. He is only too happy to stop the lesson once his mother suggests he might get brain damage from learning too much. The nadir of his ignorance is demonstrated during the hilarious scene of his examination by Starodum and Pravdin:

Pravdin: (taking the book). "I see. This is the Grammar. Well, what do you know about it?"

Mitrofan: A lot. A noun, and an adjective.

Pravdin: A door, for instance: is it a noun or an adjective?

Mitrofan: A door: Which door?

Pravdin: Which door? This one.

Mitrofan: That? It's an adjective.

Pravdin: Why so?

Mitrofan: Because it is added to something else, to its place. While, over there, the pantry door is still a noun, for it's not been hung for six weeks.

Starodum: Then for the same reason you will say that the word fool is an adjective, because it is applied to a stupid man.

Mitrofan: Of course.

Mrs. Prostakov: Hey, how is it, my dear sir?

Mr. Prostakov: Well, what do you think of him, sir?

Pravdin: It couldn't be better. He's strong on grammar."³⁹.

When Pravdin asks him about geography he is so poorly schooled that he does not even know what the term geography means. His

ignorance however, should not be taken for stupidity. Mitrofan does show a small spark of cunning when he threatens Yeremeyevna with tattling to his mother if she forces him to study.⁴⁰ He mistreats his servants and is cheeky to his elders, yet is clever enough to feign some respect for the latter by addressing Starodum and Pravdin with servility. The young man is totally ungrateful at the end of the play when he turns his back on his mother who had done everything out of devotion to him. Mitrofan to some extent is a development of Ivanushka in Brigadir, although he has none of the latter's charm or knowledge. Whereas Ivan is the ridiculous result of foreign teaching, Mitrofan embodies the absurd consequence of neglectful teaching and parental indulgence:

" Такой превращенный недоросль и есть фонвизинский Митрофан , очень устойчивый и живучий тип в русском обществе , переживший самое законодательство о недорослях умевший 'взвести' не только деточек , по предсказанию его матери госпожи Простаковой , но и внучек , 'времен новейших Митрофанов' как выразился Пушкин."⁴¹

Taras Skotinin, Prostakova's unforgettable brother, is the last of the first group. His character is exemplified by his name - derived from skot (beast). Skotinin epitomizes the backward country squire: crude, brash, rough, ignorant and extremely stupid. The first time he brutishly enters the scene, Skotinin boasts about how well he can give a thrashing. He bullishly tries to coerce Mitrofan into giving up Sof'ya, first by verbal assault then by fisticuffs. Skotinin is even involved in a brawl with his sister. At the conclusion of the play Skotinin demonstrates his porcine brutishness by insisting that a noble has the right to beat

his serfs whenever he wants. Skotinin's only interest in life is pigs. His reason for wanting to marry Sof'ya is to use her money to buy all the pigs in the area. His passion for swine is so intense that he would provide better accommodation for his pigs than for his wife! Skotinin boasts that he has better communication with hogs than he does with people:

Starodum: "You are luckier than I. People touch my emotions.
 Skotinin: And pigs - mine."⁴².

Skotinin's intelligence is limited to that of his piggish peers; he lacks the acumen to think on anything but a low level:

Skotinin: "I just happened to be passing by when I heard somebody call me and then I answered. Such is my habit: if anybody calls 'Skotinin!', I always say, 'Here I am sir!' Why, my dear fellows, this is truly so! I myself have served in the Guards - and retired as a corporal. At roll call, when they used to shout 'Taras Skotinin' then I always answered at the top of my voice, 'Here sir!'"

Pravdin: We have not called you now, and you may go wherever it was you were headed for.

Skotinin: I wasn't going anywhere in particular. I was just strolling along and thinking. It's a habit I have. Once I get something into my head, no one can drive it out with a hammer."⁴³.

Like the other members of the Prostakov group, Skotinin is extremely ignorant. But he shows that he has an awareness of his vulnerability on account of this ignorance.

"Even if her movable property has been carried away, I won't go to law for that. I'm not fond of lawsuits; I'm afraid of 'em. No matter how much my neighbours have insulted me, no matter how much damage they have done me, I have never had any litigations with the law. I simply squeeze my peasants to cover the loss and that's the end of it."⁴⁴.

Noteworthy too is Skotinin's insistence (during an argument with Starodum in Act IV scene 7) that his ancestors were created before Adam on the Sixth Day. According to Genesis, cattle were created

on this day. Mr. "Beastly's" absurd gullibility is shown in the scene of comparison with Milon, the refined intelligent young man, when Skotinin actually believes that the other is the one who appears ridiculous. His rattlebrained insipience is shown in his hilarious tale about his uncle:

Skotinin: "That all learning is nonsense was proved beyond dispute by our late uncle Vavila Faleleyevich. Nobody ever heard from him about learning and he didn't care to know about it either, yet what a head he had!

Pravdin: What was he like?

Skotinin: This is what happened to him. Once when he was riding horseback and was very drunk, he ran into a stone gate. He was a sturdy fellow, the gate was too low, and he forgot to stoop. My how he knocked his brow against the lintel! My uncle's body was thrown over backwards, and yet his brave steed brought him all the way lying flat on his back from the gate to the doorstep. I'd like to know if there's a learned head on this earth that wouldn't have been split by such a whack. But uncle, peace be with him, when he sobered up, just asked if the gate wasn't broken."⁴⁵

Turning to the group of positive characters, we should first discuss the play's principal moralizer Starodum. His name is derived from "star-" (old) and "dum" (thought). Starodum is the raisonneur of the play from whose mouth come the long moralizing speeches in which Fonvizin presents a set of ideas about life. In the eighteenth century this play was primarily didactic and so Starodum was the central character. In later years it was common to condense these long monologues because they slow the tempo of the play. Starodum is a devotee of the old ways, the old beliefs. He speaks at length about the state and the individual, constantly implying that the "old ways" were much better than the new. The length of his speeches is such that, depending upon the version consulted, (an edition of 1830 included much more of this moralizing than Fonvizin had originally incorporated), 15 - 20% of the play's

dialogue is devoted to Starodum's moralizing after he appears on stage.⁴⁶ The old uncle is refined, polite and educated in a simple way. Immediately he suggests that he speaks without ceremony and proceeds to praise the old, essentially Russian upbringing:

"Many ridicule them. I know it. So be it. My father brought me up according to the manners of his time, and I have not thought it necessary to train myself anew. He served under Peter the Great. Then a man was addressed as 'thou' and not as 'you'. The contagion was unknown then by which an individual thinks of himself in the plural number. And yet, nowadays, several men are often not worth even one. My father at the court of Peter the Great - "⁴⁷.

Starodum insists that even though he has not had much formal education he conducts himself by relying on his heart and soul to act as a human being. Throughout the rest of the play he says much about ambition, egotism, riches, respect, flattery, reason, happiness, duty, marriage, love, and the tsar and nobility. All of these can however be reduced to one specific idea. Starodum feels that Russia should return to the "good old days" where people ruled themselves and were guided by the tsar through "heart, soul and common sense". He obviously implies that there has been a decline during Catherine's reign. Despite all his Russophil notions, Starodum appears only as a masklike mouth uttering simple ideas on complex matters.⁴⁸ Starodum has very little humour and only occasionally do we glimpse his personality as in the scene where he attempts to shun the advances of the Prostakov family. Otherwise Starodum weakens the play through his static presence and tedious moralizing.⁴⁹ However under proper direction much of this superfluity could be eliminated and the presentation strengthened.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, we must remember that in Fonvizin's day these long

speeches were considered very important to the central idea of the play.

Pravdin is the deus ex machina of Nedorosl'. At the beginning he appears as the house guest of the Prostakovs. Unknown to them (though the audience does know) he has arrived to inspect reported cruelty in the Prostakov household. Pravdin's name comes from pravda (truth) yet he does not utter any long speeches like Starodum. He is a refined government official carefully annotating the atrocities committed by the Prostakov family. When his package arrives and he announces at the end of the play that all the possessions of the Prostakovs have been expropriated by the state, the artificiality is obvious. Pravdin's (i.e. the state's) interference on behalf of the serf represents what Fonvizin wanted the state to do: intercede against the cruel nobility. It must be noted that Pravdin is not really a character but rather a device, a deus ex machina⁵¹, that is, an interference by external forces in the outcome of the play. Moreover, Pravdin serves as an interlocutor for Starodum during the latter's moralizing. This is proved by the fact that in the scenes with Starodum, Pravdin says only a few words or poses a question to give Starodum the occasion to talk at great length. These two are essentially idealists:

"Резонерство Стародума и Правдина выводится из их идеальности. Реализм Фонвизина, по мысли исследователя - органичен: он оказывался способным запечатлеть правду характеров лишь отрицательных персонажей. Именно отрицательные явления действительности он умел понять в реалистическом плане,"⁵².

Like Dobrolyubov and Sof'ya in Brigadir we can place together

Milon and Sof'ya of Nedorosl'. They are static uninteresting lovers who do not act much like lovers. Milon is the brave young patriot contrasted with Skotinin and Mitrofan, his two rivals. Although he is courageous, as exemplified in his discourse on valour, manliness and patriotism,⁵³ he still requires the intercession of Pravdin and Starodum to win his lady love. If he is so brave, then surely he could easily vanquish his two addlebrained rivals.⁵⁴ Sof'ya embodies the honest intelligent young girl. She has very little depth to her character and does little except look pretty and take the advice of her uncle. Both she and Milon act also as devices for Starodum to divulge his ideas. They are static examples of the so-called "enlightened nobility".

"Софья и Милон, в лице которых изображена добродетель во всей ее красоте, кажутся бледными тенями какого-то иного мира. Благородные действия правительственного чиновника Правдина имеют отнюдь не реальный а идеальный характер, что было совершенно ясно Фонвизину и его современникам."⁵⁵

Fonvizin's great talent for delineation of character is demonstrated by the third group of characters. This includes Yeremeyevna the nanny, and the three tutors. The former is one positive character who does not moralize. She is mainly revealed through her actions. The poor woman has suffered greatly at the hands of the Prostakov family, yet she is loyal. Yeremeyevna receives blows and abuse from Prostakova as well as threats from Mitrofan but defends the young pup very bravely from Skotinin: "I'll die on the spot before I'll give up my child! Come on mister! Just you try! I'll scratch your eyes out!"⁵⁶. All the unfortunate servant receives for her efforts is "five roubles a year and five slaps a

day". Because she is portrayed as a person with complexities, Yermeyevna is more human than most of the others.

"Еремеевна не только тип, представитель той категории крепостных, которые превратились в холопов, это и живая индивидуальность. В ее судьбе - судьбе типичной для русской деревни дворовой женщины - вместе с тем отражена и индивидуальная горькая жизнь несчастной, забитой мамки, у которой еще теплится где-то, в глубоких тайниках души, человеческое достоинство."⁵⁷

Moreover, it was reported that at the first production of Nedorosl' with the great actor Shumsky in the role of Yermeyevna, the character created was unforgettable.⁵⁸ Although she has few lines, she has depth to her character.

The final characters important for our study are the three tutors of Mitrofan, superb parodies. Following tradition Fonvizin has given clues to profession or character in their names. Mr. Kuteikin, the seminarist and Mitrofan's teacher of religious studies who constantly mouths Old Church Slavonic expressions about piety and righteousness, possesses a name which suggests that perhaps he is not so pious as he would like us to believe. His surname is derived from the verb "kutit'" which means to carouse or go on a spree. Mr. Tsyfirkin, a former sergeant who attempts to teach Mitrofan arithmetic, has a cognomen from "tsifra" - figure or number. The most remarkable example is the half-Russian half-German appellation of the German "tutor" Vral'man. The first syllable is from "vral'", a colloquial word roughly corresponding to the English "liar" or "fibber". The last syllable is of course the German suffix "man" which when added to the first gives the same hilarious results as the English equivalent "Fibberman".

The three tutors are very remarkable characters. Kuteikin's first appearance on stage is with a prayer book, spouting ecclesiastical jargon. He tells about his background in the local seminary but Fonvizin makes him commit a subtle faux pas as he relates his own personal history to Pravdin. The ecclesiastic insists he is a true scholar for he went as far as rhetoric in school i.e. no farther than the bottom class! Kuteikin suggests that the lord willed that he go no farther for he "hath become afraid of the abyss of wisdom and requesteth his dismissal."⁵⁹ Pravdin questions him on a particular proverb whereupon we discover that Kuteikin is not much of a scholar.

Kuteikin: "Nonsense, Yeremeyevna. There is no sin in smoking tobacco.

Pravdin (aside.): Kuteikin, too, is showing off.

Kuteikin: Many holy books permit it. In the Psalter it is printed 'And herb for the service of man'.

Pravdin: And where else?

Kuteikin: And in the other Psalter the same thing is printed. Our father, the priest, has a tiny book of about one-eighth of an inch - and in that one it's the same thing.

Pravdin: (to Mrs. Prostakov.) I don't want to disturb your son's studies; please excuse me."⁶⁰

Later Kuteikin shows he is definitely not an abstainer from alcohol as he suggests that he and Yeremeyevna drown their sorrows in a glass. The seminarist complains much and does not have the proverbial 'grace', for he tells Tsyfirkin that he would love to "smite" Mitrofan's neck. Although his qualifications are slight, Kuteikin is genuinely sorry that he cannot teach Mitrofan anything. We can speculate on the ecclesiastic's true opinion of Mitrofan as he has the boy read Psalm 22 verse 6 beginning "I am a worm." Kuteikin is greedy, for at the conclusion of the play he

tries to squeeze extra funds out of the Prostakovs: "No, my dear sir, my bill is not exceedingly short. They owe me for half a year's tuition, for the shoes which I have worn out in these three years, for my rent, and then again I often made trips here for nothing, and -"⁶¹. Shortly thereafter Kuteikin is ashamed of his greediness, but runs off only when forced into personal confrontation with Mrs. Prostakova. The arithmetic teacher Tsyfirkin is also poorly educated; he does accounting and teaching only because he understands a little arithmetic. He does admit at the outset that he has had little success in teaching Mitrofan. He too complains about conditions but is more distressed at Mitrofan's inability to learn: "I can't help thinking: The Lord has given me a pupil, a nobleman's son. I have been struggling with him three years; he can't even count up to three."⁶². Like the religious teacher Tsyfirkin is angry at Vral'man's interruptions and would dearly love to give the German his just deserts. Yet during the arithmetic lesson when the young upstart is rude and disrespectful, Tsyfirkin shows amazing patience. Of the three tutors the arithmetic teacher is the most sympathetically portrayed. He is contrasted with the greedy Kuteikin at the end of the play:

Pravdin: "And for the tuition?

Cipherkin: Nothing.

Starodum: Why nothing?

Cipherkin: I won't charge anything. He didn't learn anything from me.

Starodum: Just the same - you must be paid.

Cipherkin: No reason for it. I served my tsar for over twenty years. I took money for that service; but for doing nothing I have never received pay, and I won't take any now."⁶³.

His honesty is rewarded by money from Milon, Pravdin and Starodum.

Here Fonvizin brings out an obvious lesson of good will for all to see.

Most heavily caricaturized is the former coachman Vral'man. Although he does not make an appearance on stage until the last scene of Act III, he is mentioned three times before this. In this way Fonvizin builds great interest in him and prepares the audience for his ludicrous entrance. We learn much about Vral'man from Mrs. Prostakova

"French and all the sciences, he takes with Adam Adamych Vral'man, a German. That fellow gets three hundred rubles a year. We allow him to eat at the same table with us, and the peasant women wash his linen. If he has to travel anywhere, he gets his horses; at the table he always has a glass of wine, and at night a tallow candle, and besides that, Fomka ties his wigs for nothing. To tell the truth, we are satisfied with him, brother, for he doesn't drive our child."⁶⁴.

Vral'man is the perfect tutor in Prostakova's opinion: he does not teach. In fact if he had received a teaching certificate it was through bribery or error. Fonvizin beautifully satirizes the foreign tutor: he receives 300 roubles plus "fringe benefits" for interrupting the lessons of the other tutors. Vral'man knows nothing and teaches nothing, yet he is paid much more than the other two Russian teachers who at least attempt to teach. The German is a very farcical character. His hilarious entrance, as he rushes in to stop the lessons that have fear that they will break Mitrofan's head, is one of the examples of farce in Nedorosl'. Vral'man's clumsy Russian and exaggerated actions probably greatly amused the audience of the 1780's. Notice this ridiculous slip he makes:

Mrs. Prostakov: "No wonder you know the great world, Adam Adamych. I guess in St. Petersburg alone you must have seen a lot.
Vral'man: Enough, my dear modder, enough. I was always font of seeing ze people. On holidays, ze carriages full of noplemen

used to come to Ekaterinhoff. Always I look at zem. Sometimes I voot nefer get off ze coach box...

Mrs. Prostakov: What coach box?

Vral'man: (aside.) Ay, ay, ay, ay! Vat am I saying? (aloud.) You know, modder, it is easier to see ven one is standing higher, and I used to sit in my frient's carriage and vatch ze great society from ze coach box."⁶⁵.

Vral'man represents support by a foreigner of Prostakova's ideas - what does a Russian nobleman need with arithmetic, history and grammar? In the character of Vral'man, Fonvizin again demonstrates his disdain for the foreign tutor. Vral'man tells Starodum, his former master, that he searched for a job in Moscow for three months before he took his post as tutor to Mitrofan. This suggests that being a tutor in the Prostakov family is a low rung on the social ladder.

Fonvizin's three groups of characters are effectively distinguished from each other. Although his "positive" characters are conventional and static, and constitute the major weakness of the play, the author created memorable figures as embodiments of the evils of Russian society that he wished to satirize. In Fonvizin's day the didactic monologues had the function of advocating changes to correct those evils. A revealing anecdote of Fonvizin's characterization is that many of his "evil" characters were so well portrayed that certain people were rumoured to be their models.⁶⁶.

To complete our analysis of Fonvizin's Nedorosl' we must discuss the author's style and technique. Certain critics have stated that Fonvizin was not an artist.⁶⁷ This assertion does not stand, upon examination of the author's skilful language and techniques of humour. Each character's language reflects his own personality. Therefore each has his own vocabulary and linguistic

patterns. Prostakova is personified by her colloquial, often ungrammatical Russian, typical of the provincial gentry:

"Речь Простаковой выделяется прежде всего своей грубостью. Фонвизин подчеркивает грубый, 'скотский' характер Простаковой многочисленными ее ругательствами. Но вот что характерно: все эти ругательства обращены на крепостных."⁶⁸

Very often Nedorosl''s rural gentry speak in proverbs, folk sayings or facetious jibes.⁶⁹ As a member of this group Prostakova also employs base, colloquial jargon: she often uses vocabulary pertaining to animals or beasts such as "suka", "sobach'ya", "sköt", "skotskii", "telyonok", "bestiya", "kharyu" and "ryla". These emphasize her paradoxical preoccupation with beasts: Prostakova uses this vocabulary to infer approving or disapproving meanings interchangeably. Mrs. Prostakova also uses ordinary colloquialisms : adjectives - "pervoyet" for "pervyi"; adverbs - "dobrom", "pota ploshe"; verbs - "tak podi", "branivalis'" (a repetitive verb generally colloquial); and colloquial particles such as "tka" - "smotri-tka"-(to add emotional warmth) and "de" - "kak-de" (a particle which can indicate reported speech). Prostakova uses many emotional words in her speech. This serves to demonstrate her character as well as rendering her more vivid to the spectator.⁷⁰ Prostakova shows her ignorance through her mispronunciation of two simple technical words: e.g. "arikhmetika" and "yeorgafia". But vocabulary is not the only remarkable linguistic device that Fonvizin has used. Colloquial intonation is also very important:

"Недоросль насыщен разговорными интонациями. Как пример исключительного интонационного разнообразия приведем такую реп-

лику Простаковой: 'Не трудись попустому, друг мой, гроша не прибавлю: да и за что. Наука не такая, лишь тебе вижу мучение, а все вижу пустота. Денег нет - что считать? Деньги есть - сочтем и без Пафнутича хорошохонька.' Здесь Фонвизин достигает полного впечатления непринужденной медленной беседы слегка во время разговора каким-то другим делом (Простакова вяжет кошелек.) Не менее ярко Фонвизин передает гнев, восхищение, растерянность и другие чувства, охватывающие его героев. Почти 7⁸ каждой реплике - обращение к определенному лицу."

By the technique of low vocabulary and coarse intonation to expose the true nature of the female tyrant, the spectator is able to identify with her yet at the same time be well aware of Fonvizin's satire.⁷² Prostakova demonstrates moreover, her hypocritical nature by using a more refined type of speech to Pravdin and Starodum.

The remaining members of the Prostakov family use similar types of lingo. Both Mitrofan and his father speak in rather breezy colloquial terms but not so base as those of Mrs. Prostakova. Skotinin, however, has a coarser speech than the others. His recipe for speech consists of words like "zachali" and "indo" mixed with "potylitsa" (colloquial for "zatylok") liberally sprinkled with his favourite emotive word "svin'i" boiled in a broth of brutish intonation. Thus the author exposes the base qualities of the Prostakov family by their crude language.

On the other hand the second group forms a striking contrast in language to the first. Pravdin, the government official, uses a refined Russian with bureaucratic terminology. His sentences are short and simple, and his speeches are unembellished. His vocabulary includes words like "namest nichestvo", "opredelyon chlenom", "Uchrezhdenni", all evoking the bureaucrat. Pravdin's language

shows that he is not a raisonneur like Starodum but rather a government manifestation of justice. In contrast to the simple yet refined dialogue of Pravdin, Starodum's speech is pedantic and complex. His unrestrained bookish philosophizing revolves around modifications or synonyms of three main words: "dusha", "serdtse" and "razum".

"Общее употребление одинаковых слов положительными героями подтверждает как раз ту особенность языка комедии, которая создает две языковых системы. В том контексте, в котором употреблены здесь слова 'сердце', 'душа', 'разум', и они являются признаком высоково-
книжной речи, которой говорили в комедии положительные герои." ⁷³

Starodum constantly employs bookish words like "blagonraviye", "prosveshcheniye", "prezreniye", "ponosheniye" and such archaic (even in Fonvizin's time) expressions as "chestneye byt'" "bez viny oboide-nu...", "skaredu" and "oboitit'sya". Moreover, Starodum demonstrates his belief in the "good old days" by sprinkling his conversation with "po togdashnemu" to imply a recent social decline. The young cavalier Milon has none of this pedantic moralizing yet also uses rather stilted bookish expressions like "predstavlyus'" or such a belletristic outburst as : " А? любезная Софья. На что ты шуточ-
кою меня терзаешь ? Ты знаешь, как легко страстный человек ого-
рчается и малейшим подозрением." ⁷⁴ Sof'ya's speech also tends to be bookish yet simple. Her vocabulary is refined; her sentences are not complex.

The terms of address of each group are revealing. The cultured positive characters use the formalized terms "sudarynya", "sudar'" or "gospodin", or bookish expressions "lyubeznaya" or "drug moi serdeshnyi", while employing most often the formal pro-

noun "vy". The coarse provincial gentry, however, utilize "ty" most often (Mitrofan uses it for almost everyone, showing his lack of respect) and employ provincialized modes of address, much less refined expressions such as "batyushka", "moi otets" or "otets rodnoi". A final example is Mrs. Prostakova's change of terminology in addressing Sof'ya. At the beginning of Act I scene 6 as she talks to Sof'ya on an ordinary level, she addresses her simply as "matushka". When Prostakova becomes indignant about the possible survival of Starodum she changes to a sarcastic "sudarynya" then to a derisive "matushka". However when she discovers that Sof'ya is an heiress it changes to "Sof'yushka", then to "dusha moya" and finally to "mat' ty moya rodnaya". All these forms of address show various changes in attitude by the speaker and show her hypocritical nature.

To complete the list of stylistic features in Nedorosl' we must examine the language of the third group of characters. Yere-meyevna is a very simple human being, and therefore uses colloquial language with many diminutives. She has none of the coarse animal-like vocabulary of the Prostakov family's speech. Her colloquialisms are limited to ordinary words such as "nemnozhenko", "te" (for "tebya") and "tabachishchem". Kuteikin, the ecclesiastic, uses a constant flow of Church Slavonic and archaic words, e.g. "mnogaya leta", "s chady i domochadtsy" and "da Bogu izvolivshu". The former soldier Tsyfirkin employs military terminology and soldiers' lingo like "vashe blagorodiye", "po soldatski" and colloquialisms typical of the common soldier. Vral'man's portrayal is strengthened by his thick German accent. He pronounces voiced consonants

as unvoiced and his unstressed 'o' as 'a', which results in a very funny German accent.. The former coachman pronounces the sibilants 'zh' as 'z' and 'sh' as 's'; his plosives 'd' and 'b' become 't' and 'p' and his 'v' becomes 'f'. Moreover, he uses a rather colloquial language and the overall result is very hilarious to the Russian ear.

In conclusion, language acts as a magnifying glass to gain insight into character.

"По замыслу Фонвизина, речь представителей разных групп русского общества настолько различна, эти персонажи не в состоянии понять друг друга. Следовательно, динамика речевого движения в диалогическом потоке скована. Внутренние связи, соотношения и контрасты образов персонажей, образующие 'подводное течение' реалистической драмы, здесь отсутствуют." ⁷⁵.

Language is another aspect of Nedorosl' that makes it a remarkable play. Painstaking details of speech strengthen the effect to demonstrate each manifestation of personality.

Fonvizin employed many devices to secure and maintain humour in Nedorosl'. The most obvious is embodied in the characters. The Prostakov family with its ignorant despot, porcine dullard, timorous mouse and doltish hobbledehoy are all intrinsically funny. Humour abounds in the personages of the bedraggled nanny Yeremeyevna and the three purblind pedagogues. It is achieved through farcical exaggeration of personality traits. Skotinin's intense preoccupation with pigs is a perfect example of this technique: "I'm fond of hogs, sister. Why, down our way, there are such thumping big pigs that every single one of them, if it stood up on its hind legs, would be a head taller than any of us." ⁷⁶.

Exaggerated gestures maintain humour also. The gross scene of Prostakova's ranting about Starodum's possible survival and the brawl between Skotinin and his sister help to create farce. Further examples of this technique are the hilarious tale of Skotinin about his uncle, the examination of Mitrofan and the ridiculous exaggeration when the brutish Prostakovs greet the refined Starodum:

Стародум..."Это к кому я попался ?

Скотинин. Это я, сестрин брат.

Стародум. (увидя еще двух, с нетерпением.) А это кто еще?

Простакон. (обнимая.) Я женин муж.) вместе.

Митрофан. (доя руку.) А я матушкин сын.

Fonvizin achieved humour in Nedorosl' also by ironical errors and double - entendres. When Sof'ya relates how Skotinin withheld her from reading Starodum's letter, Milon, incensed, shouts "Skotinin!" The "pig-headed" idiot who was strolling by thinks he hears someone calling him and yells "Here I am!" The double - entendre is realized much better in Russian than in translation since Milon's shout occurs at the end of his sentence. Here is another scene of ironic error to achieve humour:

Mrs. Prostakov: "In bed! Oh, the trollop! In bed! Just like a lady!

Yeremeyevna: She has a high fever, mistress; she's raving, she talks nonsense.

Mrs. Prostakov: Raving! Oh! the hussy! Just like a lady too!"⁷⁸.

More irony for laughter follows the comments by the coarse characters in these two scenes:

Mrs. Prostakov: "...Let him be as he is; the Lord will punish any man who does me wrong, poor me!

Starodum: I noticed that, madam, just as soon as you appeared at the door.

Pravdin: And I have been witnessing her sweet temper for three days."⁷⁹.

Skotinin: "... I tell you without boasting: such men as I am are very rare. (Walks away).⁸⁰
 Starodum: That's very likely."

Humour is again created in an ironical statement by Skotinin who does not realize the impact of his words.

Skotinin: "Bah! What's this fellow meddling here for? (Whispering to Starodum). Hey, is he trying to beat me off?
 Starodum: (Whispering to Skotinin). It seems so to me.
 Skotinin: (in the same tone). But how? The deuce take him!
 Starodum: (in the same tone). It's too bad.
 Skotinin: (aloud, pointing to Milon). Which of us two looks ridiculous? Ha, ha, ha, ha!
 Starodum: (laughs). I see who is ridiculous."⁸¹

Fonvizin was a master of the pun and subtle jibe as well as the one-line self-contained joke. We have already mentioned the common trait of puns in names. A further example of this occurs as Prostakova relates her lineage. She mentions her mother's maiden name: "Priplodinykh" - a pun on "priplod" (progeny) appropriate since she bore eighteen children. Another humorous pun is made on the words "krepkii" (strong), "uchyonyi" (learned) and "krepkolobyi" (thick-skulled) after Skotinin has related his ridiculous tale about his uncle's thick skull:

Милон. "Вы господин Скотинин, сами признаете себя неученым человеком, однако я думаю, в этом случае и ваш лоб был бы не крепче ученого.
 Стародум. (Милону) Об заклад не бейся. Я думаю, что Скотинины все родом крепколобы." ⁸²

Puns occur during Mitrofan's examination when he confuses "prilagatel'noye" (adjective) with "prilagat'" (to apply).

The last device to examine is Fonvizin's simultaneous speeches: when two characters talk at the same time. The simultaneous speeches are all short, say the same or similar things and are uttered at times of high emotion or surprise. The first example

occurs when the Prostakovs discover Sof'ya is an heiress. These jumbled speeches create comic confusion. There are fourteen instances of this technique, twelve of which are included in the last three acts. This proves that Fonvizin was attempting to maintain his comic effect through the slow third and fourth acts in order to offset the static moralizing. Thus, to obtain humour Fonvizin used not only characterization but also techniques of exaggeration, jokes, puns and simultaneous speeches.

Although the plot is far too contrived to be an actual series of events, the characters and milieu are fittingly taken from eighteenth-century real life because examples of the ignorant dullards and static moralizers did exist in Fonvizin's society. The actions and speeches of the personages, moreover, were typical of the people of this era. Nedorosl' is an outstanding portrait of Russian society of the 1700's.

"С вопросом о рождении в творчестве Фонвизина реалистического мировоззрения и метода связан вопрос о фонвизинском языке. И здесь Фонвизин преодолевает классические каноны жанровой классификации и литературной условности речи."⁸³

To conclude our study of Fonvizin's Nedorosl' we should summarize its theme and importance. Two main ideas are proffered: the need for a good Slavonic education and the revelation of the nobility's barbarous atrocities against the peasantry. Fonvizin believed that proper education was the elixir to cure the evils of Russian society. The keynote was improvement through Slavonic enlightenment. He did not suggest the abolition of serfdom in the play but rather a more humane manner of treating the serfs.⁸⁴

Most important of all, Nedorosl' is a device which we in the twentieth century can use to understand a certain segment of eighteenth century Russian society portrayed through the eyes of the playwright.

"Эта комедия - бесподобное зеркало. Фонвизину в ней как то удалось стать прямо перед русской действительностью, взглянуть на нее просто, непосредственно, в упор, глазами, не вооруженными никаким стелком, взглядом, не преломленным никакими точками зрения, и воспроизвести ее с безотчетностью художественного понимания... Это произошло оттого, что на этот раз поэтический взгляд автора сквозь то, что казалось, проник до того, что действительно происходило, простая, печальная правда жизни." ⁸⁵

There are political implications in the play, mainly revolving around Starodum's formulae for humanity and how the tsar should rule. These again originate in Fonvizin's tenet of enlightenment. There were of course universal themes that applied to any society - stupid egoism, avarice, cruelty, bestiality and supreme ignorance. So successful was the portrait of society in Nedorosl' that it inspired a spate of imitations such as Sgovor Kuteikina (1789) by Plavil'shchikov, Obrashchyonnyi mizantrop ili Lebedyanskaya Yarmonka (1794) by Kop'yev, Mitrofanushka v otstavke (1800) by Gorodchaninov, and others (possibly also the so-called "early version" as we have seen before). In this play Denis Fonvizin gave a simple presentation of ignorant provincial gentry and their abuses resulting from lack of proper education. He presented excellent characterization, set a concrete milieu and employed a vibrant style. Nedorosl' is a fine document to gain a "slice of life" from Russian provincial society almost two hundred years ago.

EPILOGUE

- " Волшебный край ? там в стары годы
 Сатиры смелый властелин,
 Блистал Фонвизин, друг свободы,..."¹.

The chronology of D.I. Fonvizin's life and the analyses of Brigadir and Nedorosl' have attempted to prove that Fonvizin was a writer of no small merit. It is obvious that Fonvizin does not have the universal appeal of the most famous men of Russian letters. But any scholar who desires to gain insight into Russian society and thought of the latter 1700's cannot neglect Fonvizin.

Brigadir and Nedorosl' bear witness to the remarkable talent of their author. In construction his two plays are fundamentally classical. Their plots seem contrived yet Fonvizin employed many ingenious devices to render his intrigues more credible. Possessing a keen sense of pungent satire, Fonvizin was a master of characterization. In Brigadir his negative characters are well portrayed and ridiculous in their exaggeration. However, the personages of Nedorosl' are developed beyond exaggeration: they are the epitomes of their respective dominant traits. Yet in Nedorosl' the reasoning characters are on stage much more and their monologues slow the tempo. Fonvizin possessed great skill of expression; his usage of the Russian language is among the most lively of his day. The best examples of his talent in Brigadir are the Francofied foppish words of the Gallophiles, the Councillor's repetition of legal terminology and the military jargon of the Brigadier. In Nedorosl' the crass colloquial speech of the Prostakovs, contrasted with the refined language of the educated people, is remarkable.

Moreover, the separate lingos of the three tutors (in particular the hilarious German accent of Vral'man) are more fine features. Most striking is that the expertise of the author in language has rendered each personage's speech a startling revelation of his nature. Fonvizin's manipulation of humorous devices resulted in hilarity. The ridiculous courtship scenes, double-entendres and miscomprehensions are the highlights of Brigadir. Nedorosl's scenes of brutish ignorance and crass stupidity are among the most amusing on the Russian stage.

Fonvizin's works are valuable on both thematic and artistic levels. He had the courage to speak out against political and social, tyranny. Fonvizin constantly advocated liberal ideas for enlightenment through education. His works were important testaments of a growing national awareness and pride in Russia, yet his themes were applicable not only to Russians but frequently to mankind in general.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. E. Jourdain, An Introduction to the French Classical Drama, p. 146.
2. F. deLabriolle, "La Dramaturgie de Fonvizin. ", p.77.
3. G. Makogonenko, Ot Fonvizina do Pushkina, p. 364.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. From a letter to L.S.Pushkin in A.S.Pushkin, Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii, (1937), X, p. 108.
2. Most of my biographical information is taken from Lyubov Kulakova, D.I.Fonvizin, (1966). A detailed account of Fonvizin's less known works is contained in G.P.Makogonenko D.I.Fonvizin, (1961).
3. R.Pletnev, Entretiens sur la Littérature Russe, (1964), p. 117.
4. For a complete portrait of Ivan Fonvizin through Denis' eyes see D.I.Fonvizin, Izbrannyye Sochineniya i Pis'ma, (1947), 190-192. I shall henceforth refer to this collection as D.I.Fonvizin Izbr. Soch.
5. L.Kulakova, D.I.Fonvizin, 8-9.
6. D.I.Fonvizin, Izbr. Soch., 195. I have revised a translation from C.E.Turner, Studies in Russian Literature, p. 63. I have used it because I feel it provides an excellent insight into Fonvizin's pensée. To demonstrate stylistic devices I have quoted the original where a propos; otherwise I have given quotes from the translation for the reader's convenience.
7. Ibid., 195-196.
8. Ibid., p.196.
9. Ibid., p. 200.
10. L.Kulakova, Op. cit., p. 16.
11. Akademiya Nauk, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury, IV, p. 153.
12. D.I.Fonvizin, Sobraniye Sochinenii v dvukh tomakh, (1959) , I, p. 3. Henceforth I shall refer to this collection as D.I. Fonvizin, Sob. Soch.
13. B.N.Aseyev, Russkii Dramaticheskii Teatr XVII-XVIII Vekov, (1958) 233-234.
14. A.Coleman, Humour in the Russian Comedy, (1966), p. 20.
15. D.J.Welsh, Russian Comedy 1765-1823, (1966), p. 15.
16. Ibid., p. 103.
17. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., I, p. 209.
18. Ibid., I, p. 217.
19. Ibid., I, 207-208.

20. Akademiya Nauk, Op. cit., p. 155.
21. Ibid., p. 159.
22. G.A.Gukovsky, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury XVIII-ogo Veka, (1939), p. 327.
23. Akademiya Nauk, Op. cit., p. 160.
24. This document, unavailable in any modern collections of D.I. Fonvizin's works, is fully discussed in G.P.Makogonenko, D.I.Fonvizin (1961), 166-170. Makogonenko gives also an excellent account of the impression that it made on Fonvizin's contemporaries. See also F. deLabriolle, "Le Prosveščenie et les Lumières en France", (1966), 88.
25. It is remarkable to note that in the collection of 1947 edited by N.L.Brótsky the document is called Rassuzhdeniye o istrebivsheisya v Rossii sovsem vsyakoi formy gosudartsvennogo pravleniya, formally thought to be the title but disproved by P.N.Berkov in Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 679-682.
26. See G.Gukovsky, Op. cit., 331 and Akademiya Nauk, Op. cit., p. 182. Gukovsky calls it one of the most shining examples of eighteenth-century Russian publicism.
27. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 255-256. For Fonvizin at his eloquent best see also pages 258-259.
28. Actually Fonvizin had made a short trip to the German states in 1762-1763 but it was not until 1777 that he made an extended trip.
29. Hans Rogger, "The Russian National Character" (1957), p. 21.
30. H. Segel, The Literature of Eighteenth-Century Russia, (1967),
31. G.Gukovsky, Op. cit., 328-329.
32. See Turner, Op. cit., p. 64 and Rogger, Op. cit., p. 21.
33. H.Rogger, Op. cit., p. 22.
34. H.Segel, Op. cit., p. 336.
35. D.I.Fonvizin, Sochineniya, (1893), 298-299.
36. B.V.Varneke, The Russian Theatre, (1951), p. 26.
37. For a complete history of this work see P.N.Berkov's commentary in Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 674-679.
38. Ibid., II, p. 237.

39. The rest of this work was published later the same year.
See G.Makogonenko, Op. cit., p. 294.
40. D.I.Fonvizin, Izbr. Soch., 119-122.
41. See G.Makogonenko, Istoriya Russkoi Zhurnalistiki (1962).
42. D.I.Fonvizin, Izbr. Soch., p. 132.
43. Ibid., p. 134.
44. G.Makogonenko, D.I.Fonvizin, (1961), p. 299.
45. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 276-278.
46. Akademiya Nauk, Op. cit., p. 186.
47. Akademiya Nauk, Russkiye Dramaturgiye, (1959), p. 282.
48. G.Gukovsky, Ocherki po istorii russkoi literatury XVIII-ogo veka, p. 187.
49. G.Gukovsky, Istoriya russkoi literatury XVIII-ogo veka (1939),
50. B.Guerney, The Portable Russian Reader, (1947), 22-27.
51. Ibid., p. 27.
52. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 478-479.
53. See J.J.Rousseau, Confessions, (1960).
54. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, p. 13.
55. Ibid., p. 20.
56. G. Makogonenko, D.I.Fonvizin, (1961), p. 296.
57. Ibid., p. 316.
58. Ibid., p. 309.
59. L.Kulakova, Op. cit., 156-160.
60. G.Makogonenko, D.I.Fonvizin (1961), p. 317.
61. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, 308-311.
62. Ibid., p. 38.
63. Akademiya Nauk, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury, IV, 188-189.
64. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob. Soch., II, p. 39.

65. Ibid., II, p. 617.
66. V. Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, Russkii Teatr Vtoroi Poloviny XVIII veka, (1960), p. 260.
67. A.S. Pushkin, Op. Cit., 96.
68. Akademiya Nauk, Russkiye Dramaturgiye, (1959), p. 287.
69. Akademiya Nauk, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury, IV, p. 190.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. Nikolai Novikov "Opyt istoricheskogo slovarya o rossiiskikh pisatelyakh", 1772. from P.E.Shames, Fonvizin v Russkoi Kritike, (1958), p. 71.
2. See A. Stender-Petersen, Geschichte der Russischen Literatur, (1957), p. 409, for a description of the affinities of Fonvizin's with Holberg's work.
3. D.J.Welsh, Russian Comedy 1765-1823, (1966), p. 45.
4. See Bertha Malnick's review article of P.N.Berkov's Russkaya Komediya i Komicheskaya Opera in the Slavonic and East European Review, No. 31 (1953), p. 574.
5. D.J.Welsh, Op.cit., p. 49.
6. Ettore Lo Gatto, Storia del Teatro Russo, (1945), p. 117.
7. G.Gukovsky, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury XVIII veka, (1939), p. 326. See also N.Brodsky in Fonvizin, Izbr.Soch., p. 289.
8. G.Makogonenko, Ot Fonvizina do Pushkina, (1969), p. 227.
9. V.Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, "Kogda byl napisan Brigadir?", p. 460.
10. See Fonvizin, Izbr.Soch., p. 203.
11. See G.Makogonenko, D.I.Fonvizin, (1961), 134-140.
12. Quoted in A.Coleman, Humour in the Russian Comedy, (1966), p. 21.
13. B.V.Varneke, History of the Russian Theatre, (1951), p. 142.
14. Many Soviet critics tend to overlook foreign influences. In particular see B.N.Aseyev, Op.cit., p. 234.
15. N.G.Chernishevsky, Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii, (1949), II, 794.
16. Ibid., II, 803.
17. B.Aseyev, Op.cit., p. 241.
18. F. deLabriolle, "L'opéra-comique russe et le drame en France", (1965), 408-409.
19. D.D.Blagoi, Russkaya Literatura XVIII veka, (1955), p.285, p.288.
20. N.Evreinoff, Histoire du Théâtre Russe, (1947), p. 193.

21. G.Gukovsky, Ocherki po Istorii Russkoi Literature, (1958),
22. Ibid., p. 185.
23. The Sovietnitsa cannot be included since she is playing the Gallic love-game.
24. B.Varneke, History of the Russian Theatre, (1951), p.142.
25. D.I.Fonvizin, The Brigadier as translated in Segel, The Literature of Eighteenth-Century Russia, II, p. 344.
26. Ibid., p. 323.
27. Ibid., 331-332.
28. Molière, Les Précieuses Ridicules, (1962), p. 58.
29. N.Chernishevsky, Op.cit., p. 801.
30. H. Segel, Op.cit., p. 329.
32. H. Rogger, "The Russian National Character", (1957), p. 19.
31. Ibid., p. 368.
33. H. Segel, Op.cit., p. 325.
34. Ibid., p. 327.
35. Ibid., p. 345.
36. A. Coleman, Op.cit., p. 78.
37. N.Chernishevsky, Op.cit., p. 799.
38. N.Evreinoff, Op.cit., p. 192. See also R.Pletnev, Op.cit., p. 85 and B.Varneke, Op.cit., p.141.
39. V.I.Glukhov, "Prosvetitel'skii Realizm...", (1967), p. 93.
40. H. Segel, Op.cit., p. 324. For a further interpretation see N.Chernishevsky, Op.cit., p. 801.
41. Ibid., p. 328.
42. Ibid., p. 346.
43. Ibid., p. 339.
44. L. Barag, "O Realisticheskikh Tendentsiakh...", (1966), p.155.
45. H.Segel, Op.cit., p. 337.

46. Ibid., p. 361.
47. Ibid., p. 352.
48. Ibid., p. 335.
49. F.deLabriolle, "L'opéra-comique russe et le drame en France", (1965), p. 73.
50. Segel, Op.cit., 349.
51. Ibid., p. 333.
52. Ibid., p. 353.
53. G.Makogonenko, Ot Fonvizina do Pushkina, (1969), p. 231.
54. J. Patouille, Le théâtre russe et les Comédies de Moeurs, (1912) p. 56.
55. H.Segel, Op.cit., p. 324.
56. Ibid., p. 326.
57. Ibid., p. 344.
58. See notes #34. and #35.
59. Ibid., p. 366.
60. Ibid., p. 330.
61. Ibid., p. 330.
62. Ibid., p. 363.
63. Ibid., p. 368.
64. Fonvizin, Sob.Soch., I, 86-87.
65. H.Segel, Op.cit., p. 363.
66. D.Welsh, Op.cit., p104.
67. D.I.Fonvizin, Sob.Soch., I, p50.
68. Ibid., p. 51.
69. Ibid., p. 49.
70. Ibid., p. 52.
71. See Barag, "O Realisticheskikh Tendentsiakh" (1966), p. 152.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. I.A.Goncharov, Sobraniye Sochinenii, (1952), VIII, p. 8.
2. G.Korovin, "Rannyaya Komediya D.I.Fonvizina - pervaya redaktsiya Nedoroslyya", (1933), 243-263.
3. D.Welsh, "Satirical Themes in 18-th Century Russian Comedies", (1965), p. 411.
4. K.Pigarev, Tvorchestvo Fonvizina, (1954), 313-334.
5. A.P.Mogilyansky, "K voprosu o tak nazyvayemom 'Rannem' 'Nedorosle'", (1966), p. 417.
6. For a complete list of the various types of handwriting and the conclusions of Vsevolodsky-Gerngross see his book Russkii teatr vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka, (1960), 366-375.
7. A.Mogilyansky, Op.cit., p. 421.
8. D.J.Welsh, Russian Comedy 1765-1823, (1966), p. 29. Recently G.Makogonenko in his book of 1969 has agreed with Welsh's dates.
9. Ettore LoGatto, Storia del Teatro Russo, I, p. 129.
10. N.Evreinoff, Histoire du Théâtre Russe, p. 197.
11. Akademiya Nauk, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury, (1947), IV, p. 177.
12. G.Makogonenko, Ot Fonvizina do Pushkina, (1969), p. 339.
13. D.I.Fonvizin The Minor translated in G.R.Noyes, Masterpieces of the Russian Drama, (1961).
14. Ibid., p. 37.
15. F. deLabriolle, "La Dramaturgie de Fonvizine", (1967), p. 77.
16. Ibid., p. 77.
17. G.Gukovsky, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury i Obshchestvennoi Mysli, p. 189.
18. R. Pletnev, Op.cit., p. 129.
19. B. Varneke, Op.cit., p. 144.
20. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 59.
21. Ibid., p. 59.

22. Ibid., p. 30.
23. Ibid., p. 42.
24. Ibid., p. 79.
25. Ibid., p. 34.
26. Ibid., p. 31.
27. G.Makogonenko, Ot Fonvizina do Pushkina, (1969), p. 361.
28. G.Gukovsky, Op.cit., p. 190.
29. D.Welsh, The Russian Comedy 1765-1823, (1966), p. 74.
30. Klassiki Russkoi Dramy, (1952), p. 44.
31. See in particular the portrayal of the henpecked husband in the Richard Lester film "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum".
32. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 30.
33. Ibid., p. 33.
34. Ibid., p. 34.
35. Ibid., p. 31.
36. Ibid., p. 80.
37. Originally a nedorosl' was a young man up to fifteen years of age preparing for state service. He then became a novik and had to serve in the military. By a law of 1736 the period of nedorosl' was extended to twenty years of age.
38. Ettore LoGatto, Op.cit., p. 128.
39. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 72.
40. Ibid., p. 40.
41. V.Klyuchevsky, Ocherki i Rechi, (1896), p. 293.
42. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 71.
43. Ibid., p. 39.
44. Ibid., p. 32.
45. Ibid., 73-74.

46. V.Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, Op.cit., p. 210.
47. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 47. It is to be noted that Starodum is not quite correct here since the pronoun "vy" was often used in common formal address.
48. H.Rogger, Op.cit., 20-21.
49. Judging from Fonvizin's memoirs the suggestion that Starodum is an incarnation of Ivan Fonvizin seems reasonable.
50. G.Makogonenko, Op.cit., p. 346.
51. A.Stender-Petersen, Op.cit., p. 415.
52. G.Makogonenko, Op.cit., p. 348. See also G.Gukovsky, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury XVIII veka, (1939), 345-346.
53. Ibid., 357.
54. V.Vsevolodsky-Gerngross, Op.cit., p. 216.
55. L.Barag, "Komediya Fonvizina Nedorosl'", p. 104.
56. Noyes, Op.cit., p. 41.
57. G.Makogonenko, Op.cit., p. 360.
58. B.Varneke, Op.cit., p. 145.
59. G.Noyes, Op.cit., p. 44.
60. Ibid., p. 44.
61. Ibid., p. 82.
62. Ibid., p. 57.
63. Ibid., p. 82. Note that Noyes has CIPHERkin instead of Tsyfirkin.
64. Ibid., p. 34.
65. Ibid., p. 66.
66. B.Varneke, Op.cit., p. 143.
67. A.Stender-Petersen, Op. cit., p. 409.
68. Ye.Perel'mutter, "Yazyk i Stil' Komedii Fonvizina Nedorosl'", (1949), p. 21.
69. A.Ilyushin, "O Yazyke Komedii D.I.Fonvizina Nedorosl'", (1967), p. 12.

70. L.Barag, Op.cit., p. 109.
71. Ibid., p. 107.
72. Klassiki Russkoi Dramy, (1952), p. 45.
73. Ye.Perel'mutter, Op.cit., p. 21.
74. Fonvizin, Sob.Soch., I, 119. See also LoGatto, Op.cit., p. 128.
75. Vinogradov, O Yazyke Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, (1959), p. 471.
76. Noyes, Op.cit., p. 33.
77. Fonvizin, Sob.Soch., I, p. 137.
78. Noyes, Op.cit., p. 53.
79. Ibid., p. 54.
80. Ibid., p. 55.
81. Ibid., p. 70.
82. Fonvizin., Sob.Soch., I, 164.
83. G.Gukovsky, Istoriya Russkoi Literatury i Obshchestvennoi Mysli, p. 191.
84. D.Welsh, "Satirical Themes in 18-th Century Russian Comedies", p. 411.
85. V.Klyuchevsky, Op.cit., p. 282.

FOOTNOTE TO EPILOGUE

1. A.S. Pushkin, Evgenii Onegin, (1968), p. 57.

APPENDIX A -- CHRONOLOGY

- 1745 Denis Ivanovich Fonvizin born in Moscow April 3/14.
- 1753-1758 early school life; wins gold medals.
- 1759-1761 studies at St. Petersburg University; wins gold medals.
- 1761-1769 translator for "Collegia for Foreign Affairs".
- 1761-1762 translates Holberg's fables, Ovid, Voltaire, Terrasson; Torg Semi Muz.
- 1762-1763 travels in German states.
- 1763-1764 presents Korion, Lisitsa-Koznodei, Poslaniye k slugam moyim, K umu moyemu, Poslaniye K Yamshchikovu.
- 1765-1766 translates Iosif, Torguyushcheye dvoryanstvo and Sokra-sheniye o vol'nosti.
- 1769-1782 serves under Count Panin.
- 1769 Brigadir; translates Sidnei i Silli
- 1771 Slovo na vyzdorovleniye...
- 1774 marries; works on Rassuzhdeniye o gosudarstve voobshche...
- 1776-1778 works on Rassuzhdeniye o nepremennykh zakonakh
- 1777-1778 trip to France
- 1777 Slovo pokhval'noye Marku Abreliyu
- 1779 Ta - Gio...
- 1782 Nedorosl'
- 1782-1792 retires; spends life travelling and writing
- 1783 Povestovaniye mnimogo..., Poucheniye govorennoye v dukhov den'..., Chelohitnaya rossiiskoi Minerve..., Neskol'ko voprosov..., Opyt rossiiskogo Soslovnika, Nachertaniye dlya Sostavleniya
- 1783-1788 Drug chestnykh lyudei (... Pridvornaya Grammatika 1783).
- 1784 Zhizn' Grafa Panina; excerpt of Dobry Nastavnik.
- 1784-1785 trip abroad to Italy

1785 falls ill with paralysis

1785 Rassuzhdeniye o natsional'nom lyubochesti

1786 Kallisfan

1787 trip to Southern Europe

1789-1792 Chistoserdechnoye priznaniye... (not finished)

1790-1792 Vybor Gubernera (not finished)

1792 dies December 1/12

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