

THE CULTURAL COMPONENT OF DIPLOMATIC RECEPTIONS IN THE USSR (1941–1945)

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Summary

An important component of the foreign policy activity of state, public and political figures is participation in official government receptions that have informative and communicative functions.

The repertoire policy of concert programs of diplomatic receptions built in such a way not only to inform about state priorities in the field of culture, but also to create a special socio-cultural environment conducive to constructive communication.

The researcher analyzed the content of concert programs of government receptions, which organized during the visits to the Soviet Union by W. Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, I.B. Tito.

The researcher describes a festive reception at the Reception House of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on Spiridonovka in Moscow on November 7, 1943, which organized in honor of the anniversary of the October Revolution, with the participation of the diplomatic corps, political and military elite, literary and art workers. Studying the Soviet diplomatic protocol during this period expands our knowledge not only in the field of the history of diplomatic relations, but also allows us to judge the peculiarities of the development of Soviet culture, its dependence on the tastes of the leaders and party ideology.

The materials of the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation (Fund 057 – "Protocol Department") used as sources.

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1. Introduction

The novelty of the research lies in an integrated approach to the study programs of diplomatic receptions during the war period. Their cultural component has not been scientifically analyzed until recently.

The relevance of the study is determined both by the insufficient study of the Soviet diplomatic protocol during this period, and by the fact that knowledge of the laws of the functioning of the latter expands our knowledge not only of international relations, but also of the peculiarities of the development of Soviet culture, its dependence on the tastes of leaders and party ideology. Taking into account the absence of a special study on this issue in Russian historiography, author set the goal to study the cultural component of government techniques with the participation of the diplomatic corps in Moscow in the period 1941-1945.

2. Diplomatic reception in Moscow on November 7, 1943

The main state holiday of the USSR is the anniversary of the October Revolution, celebrated not only in peacetime, but also during the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945.

The celebrations consisted of several parts. The first was a ceremonial meeting on November 6 at the Bolshoi Theater, to which foreign diplomats were invited. The second part is a military parade on Red Square on November 7. The third is a festive demonstration of workers in front of Lenin's mausoleum, on the guest bleachers of which the Soviet elite and foreign diplomats were accommodated.

The holiday ended with big reception by V.M. Molotov on the evening on November 7, at the reception house of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) on 17 Spiridonovka Street.

Stalin was not present at diplomatic receptions at Spiridonovka.

With the beginning of the war, the order of the holiday on November 6 and 7 has changed. The ceremonial meeting took place at the Mayakovskaya metro station. In the early morning on November 7, a military parade took place on Red Square. Participants of it went to the front. There was no reception, the enemy was on the outskirts of Moscow.

In 1942, a ceremonial meeting dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the revolution held in the Kremlin, the parade did not take place.

The great victories of the Soviet army at Stalingrad and in the Battle of Kursk contributed much to the strengthening of cooperation between the USSR, Great Britain and the United States within the framework of the anti-Hitler coalition.

From 19 to 30 October 1943, at the second allied conference of foreign ministers, V. Molotov, K. Hell and A. Eden discussed issues of waging war against Germany and problems of the post-war world order.

As for the program of celebrations dedicated to the 26th October anniversary, in November 1943, Stalin made a report at a ceremonial meeting of the Moscow Council of Working People's Deputies. Neither a military parade nor a demonstration on Red Square held. On November 7 at 20:30, Molotov gave a big reception for diplomatic representatives of foreign states.

After the outbreak of the war, due to the evacuation of the Diplomatic Corps to Kuibyshev, receptions were not held on Spiridonovka. They resumed after the return of diplomats from Kuibyshev to Moscow. On August 31, 1943, Molotov received them at Spiridonovka.

If the number of those invited to diplomatic receptions in the Kremlin ranged from 30 to 70 people (on October 1, 1941, 100 people were invited), over 500 people present at the festive banquet on November 7, 1943 (*Nevezhin, 2019: 19*).

The reception on November 7 attended members of the government, military commanders, the diplomatic corps and workers of literature and art: writers – A. Tolstoy, I. Ehrenburg; theater and cinema artists – I. Moskvina, N. Khmelev; artists – P. Konchalovsky; composers and music performers – D. Shostakovich, D. Oistrakh, V. Sofronitsky, I. Kozlovsky.

«Soviet diplomats,» Ehrenburg recalled, «were dressed in uniforms that had just been invented. The military attachés of the various embassies sparkled with gold. The generals' breasts were exhausted from the orders» (*Nevezhin, 2019: 19*).

The correspondent of the Sunday Times newspaper and the BBC radio company in the USSR (1941-1946) A. Werth (1901-1968), who was born and lived in Russia until 1917, noted that «dozens of stars from literary, scientific and theatrical spheres». According to A. Harriman, there were «a large number of Soviet wives whom the diplomatic corps had never seen» (*Nevezhin, 2019: 20*). At the reception, a large concert held with the participation of leading Moscow artists.

The apotheosis of the reception was luxurious banquet. «The table was full of all kinds of food and drinks. The diplomats were chewing on both cheeks. The owners gave them [alcohol] generously. Some quickly got drunk».

For his part, A. Werth stated that reception was gorgeous and they drank too much there (*Nevezhin, 2019: 21*).

The reception took place at the end of the Moscow conference of the Big Three. Tensions remained in relations between the allies by the end of 1943, which caused largely by the Katyn tragedy, which led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Polish government, which was in exile in London. Difficulties in relations were also caused by the problem of opening a second front in Europe by the allies.

3. Government concerts during the war period

One of the main events in Moscow's diplomatic life in October 1944 was the visit to the capital of the USSR by British Prime Minister W. Churchill and foreign minister Eden.

There were members of the Soviet government headed by A.Ya. Vyshinsky, and W. Churchill, E. Eden, W. Harriman with his daughter, A. Kerr, A. Brook, generals Ismay, Burroughs, Dean, Bierce In the central box at a concert at the Bolshoi Theater on October 14, 1944 (*Program, 1944: 24*).

The concert program, which was on October 14, 1944 consisted of two parts. In the first was the first act from the ballet "Giselle" by Adam with the participation of the Honored Artist of the RSFSR, laureate of the Stalin Prize O.V. Lepeshinskaya, Honored Artist of the RSFSR S. M. Messerer and Honored Artist of the RSFSR, laureate of the Stalin Prize A.M. Messerer.

In the second part performed opera vocalists, People's Artist of the USSR, laureate of the Stalin Prize M.D. Mikhailov, Honored Artist of the RSFSR, laureate of the Stalin Prize N.D. Shpiller, Honored Artist of the RSFSR M.P. Maksakova.

The concert ended with numbers, which have prepared by the Red Banner Song and Dance Ensemble of the USSR (artistic director and conductor was People's Artist of the USSR, laureate of the Stalin Prize A.V. Aleksandrov): cantata about Stalin, Russian folk songs, Ukrainian folk song, Russian dance, march from the opera by Gounod «Faust», «Dark Night» by I. Bogoslovsky, dance of the Don Cossacks.

In his memoirs, W. Churchill will write: "a grandiose performance took place at the Bolshoi Theater On October 14. The first was a ballet, then an opera and, at the end of the program, magnificent dances and singing of the Red Army choir. I.V. Stalin and me (W. Churchill. – Auth.) were in the royal box. Audience gave us an enthusiastic ovation" (*Churchill 1955: 228*). After the performance, conversation between the allies continued.

The work of the Protocol Department was highly appreciated by the British side. Fomin gave a letter from British Foreign Secretary on October 18, 1944. In those letter British delegation expressed gratitude «for the excellent work of the protocol department during it's visit <...>. We are deeply grateful for your <...> help for all the time, we take with us the unforgettable impression that Russian kindness and hospitality made on us. We are especially grateful for arranging a performance for us at the opera and ballet theater» (*Program, 1944: 50*). On October 20, 1944 Churchill wrote to Stalin: «<...> The memorable meeting in Moscow showed that when we meet for a personal and frank conversation there are no issues that could not be settled between us. The Russians, with their well-known hospitality, have outdone themselves in this time. <...> I am deeply grateful to you and everyone who took care of us. I Hope to see you soon again» (*Churchill 1955: 235*).

1944 year passed under the offensive of the Red Army, which fought on the territory of European countries. On June 6, 1944, the landing of British and US troops in Normandy began. Part of the French patriots headed by Charles de Gaulle landed with them. V.M. Molotov

approved «a plan for visit the chairman of the Provisional Government of the French Republic de Gaulle on November 25, 1944» (*Plan, 1944: 28*).

Representative of the Provisional Government R. Garro wished program, which should include visit to the Bolshoi Theater, the ballet Giselle and the opera Iolanta. All of his wishes were tool into account. The program finally formed. In the central box with Charles de Gaulle were V.M. Molotov and M.M. Litvinov. French and Soviet flags hung over the box. The anthems of France and the USSR sounded before the performance. Concert of the Red Banner Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble were at the Bolshoi Theater (hymns performed before the start, the box decorated with flags) (*Plan, 1944: 37*).

There were performed «Cantata about Stalin» (music by Aleksandrov), «The death of Varyag» (folk song), a poem about Ukraine (music by Aleksandrov), «Along Mostovoy Street» (folk song), «Smuglyanka» (music by Novikov), «Steppe and the steppe all around» (folk song), «On the sunny Polyanochka» (music by Solovyov-Sedoy), «Red Army Dance» (music by Aleksandrov and Kulikov, staged by Virsky, who is Honored Artist of the Ukrainian SSR) at the concert of the Red Banner Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble of the USSR in the Central House of the Red Army.

The second part began with a march from Gounod's opera «Faust», then sounded «Dreams» by Schumann, «Glorious Sea» (folk song), «Bandura» (Ukrainian song), «Vasya-Vasilek» (Novikov's music), waltz «In the front-line forest» (Music by Blanter), «Dark Night» (music by N. Bogoslovsky). Concert ended with dance of the Don Cossacks (*Plan, 1944: 69*).

The organization of government receptions is an important component in the activities of the Protocol Department. It was necessary not only prepare the lists of invitees, but also approve menu. There were guests at Stalin's breakfast in honor of de Gaulle on December 3, 1944. There were I.V. Stalin, V.M. Molotov, A.I. Mikoyan from the Soviet side, and de Gaulle, Bidault, General Jouin, Garrot and others were from the French (*Plan, 1944: 48*).

There were not only members of the government whom invited to the Molotov reception in honor of General de Gaulle. Also, the diplomatic corps and representatives of the Soviet creative intelligentsia. In this way, Molotov's reception was different from Stalin's breakfast.

The list contains the names of academicians, drama actors, the Bolshoi Theater, cinema, writers, artists, sculptors.

Academicians Alabyan, Bruevich, drama actors Moskvina, Kachalov, Khmelev, Elanskaya, Tsarev, Tarasova, Babanova were awarded to visit Spiridonovskaya Street at 17. The Bolshoi Theater was represented by Kozlovsky, Mikhailov, Barsova, Ulanova, Lepeshinskaya, Melik-Pashaev (Messerer's name has been deleted), writers N. Tikhonov, I.G. Ehrenburg, S. Ya. Marshak, A.N. Tolstoy (K. Simonov, L. Leonov have been written with a help of pencil); artists and sculptors – A.M. Gerasimov, S.D. Merkulov, Kupriyanov, Krylov; film actors – L. Ladygina, N. Kryuchkov, I. Pyriev (G. Alexandrov, L. Orlova, M. Zharov, L. Tselikovskaya have been deleted from the list) (*Plan, 1944: 53-54*).

An invitation to a reception is a confirmation of a high social status (it should be noted, that scientists, artists, writers, sculptors, directors and actors were invited without wives and husbands unlike members of the government).

The President of the Czechoslovak Republic E. Benes again visited the USSR in March 1945. The protocol department began preparations for the visit at the end of February. The delegation consisted of 27 people. There were members of the Benes family (wife, niece), Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Justice, Minister of Social Security, members of the State Council, etc.

The main point of visit is a special program for the president's wife. It included visits to medical, school and preschool institutions (hospital, kindergarten, school, maternity hospital, etc.).

On March 27, Benes's wife visit to ballet school in the Bolshoi Theater aroused feeling of delight among the guests. At the concert of the schoolchildren, the president's wife especially singled out the senior student Lida Dementyeva. She said that that this girl had a great future (*Visits, 1945: 76*).

Members of the Soviet government, heads of foreign embassies and missions, heads of departments of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and their deputies were invited with their wives to all official events.

The best artistic forces of the country, the choirs of Pyatnitsky and Sveshnikov, G. Ulanov, M. Maksakova, I. Kozlovsky, D. Mikhailov and others performed at a concert on March 21 in the Red Banner Hall of the Central House of Arts.

On March 24, Benesh's wife visited the Moscow Art Theater (the scene, which is called «Russian People»). The next day presidential couple expressed a desire to see the performance «The Pickwick Club» at the Moscow Art Theater (branch) (*Visits, 1945: 74*).

The «female» component of visit was also reflected in the fact that officials and their wives were invited to Stalin's dinner on March 28 (8 pm).

Dress code was full dress with orders for men, evening dress (long dress) for women (*Visits, 1945: 119*).

On April 1945, marshal I.B. Tito was in Moscow. The protocol department of NKID developed a plan to meet, stay and see the Yugoslav leader.

The day after arrival, Tito visited V.M. Molotov then I.V. Stalin. In the evening, guests were present at the Bolshoi Theater. V.M. Molotov, A. Ya. Vyshinsky and others were in the central box on the Soviet side. Diplomatic corps was invited to the theater. The central box decorated with flags (*Visits, 1945: 119*).

Before the start of the performance, the national anthems of Yugoslavia and the USSR are play. On the second day V.M. Molotov arranges a breakfast in honor of Tito at the NKID mansion at A. Tolstoy Street, 17.

Concert was in the CDKA on April 12, 1945. Before the start of the concert, the Yugoslav and Soviet hymns sounded (one verse each). The first part included «Cantata about Stalin» (music by A. Aleksandrov), «Poem about Ukraine» (music by A. Aleksandrov), «Sea Song» (music by A. Aleksandrov), «Twilight of the night fell to the ground» (Serbian song, which arranged by A. Alexandrov), «Along St. Petersburg» (it arranged by A. Aleksandrov), «Steppe and steppe all around» (it arranged by A. Alexandrov), «In the forest near the front» (music by M. Blanter), «Red Army Dance».

The second part included the chorus from the opera «Boris Godunov» (music by M. Musorgsky), «Dreams» (music by Schumann), Ukrainian songs (music by Davidovsky), «Smuglyanka» (music by A. Novikov), «Song of Eremka» from the opera «The Power of the Enemy» (music by A. Serov), an English soldier's song, an American soldier's song, the Don Cossack dance (*Visits, 1945: 170*).

There were members of the Yugoslav delegation headed by I. B. Tito, members of the Soviet government with their wives (V. Molotov, A. Mikoyan, A. Vyshinsky, etc.) at the concert, in the front rows of the stalls.

Soviet scientists, writers, artists (invited with their spouses) were in the hall: academician A.A. Grekov with his wife, academician V.A. Obruchev with wife, academician T.D. Lysenko with wife, K.M. Simonov, S.M. Marshak, V.I. Lebedev-Kumach, I. G. Orenburg,

S.V. Mikhalkov, I.M. Moskvina, N.P. Khmelev, I. M. Sadovsky, A. A. Yablochkina, A. Ya. Tairov, N.P. Okhlopov, K.A. Zavadsky and others (*Visits, 1945: 156-159*).

Molochkov accompanied Tito not only in Moscow, but also during his trip to Ukraine.

On April 18, 1945, a telephone message was sent from Kiev to Vyshinsky. In this letter Molochkov informs that the delegation arrived to Kiev on 17 of April. Inspection of the city and evening's lunch at Khrushchev's dacha were accompanied by Khrushchev. Moreover, marshal Tito visited to the Council of People's Commissars the next day. The plan of the visit included attendance to an architectural exhibition, theater. The April of 19 (the day of departure) it was planned to show to the guests the collective farm.

The telephone message contains a phrase that was not only emphasized in Moscow, but also commented: «In this day and age (at the time of sending the document – Auth.) guests are in the buffet for a snack». The document reads in pencil: «To Molochkov: can we do without such «details»» (*Visits, 1945: 177*).

Next visit to the USSR by the government delegation of Yugoslavia headed by the chairman of the council of ministers, minister of national defense marshal Josip Broz Tito was in May 1946.

The program of visit included official receptions; also, guests were invited to visit:

- May 28 – Maly Theater, performance «Pygmalion»;
- May 29 – Mikoyan Meat Processing Plant, Lenin Komsomol Theater – performance «Cyrano de Bergerac»;
- June 2 – football match at the Dynamo stadium, Bolshoi Theater.

The list for the reception on the occasion of Marshal Tito's arrival on May 30, 1946 (from 18:00 to 20:00) with his wives consisted of several parts. First, members of the government, such V.M. Molotov, A.I. Mikoyan, A.A. Zhdanov, A.N. Kosygin, A. Ya. Vyshinsky and others; then the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (members of the collegium, heads of departments and administrations, minister's assistants, deputy minister and employees of the secretariats, the Protocol Department), the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), anti-fascist committees, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, TASS, the Moscow Soviet (*Visits, 1946: 8-10*).

There were a lot of famous people, who was attended to the reception. The first one were Soviet scientists (S.I. Vavilov, N.G. Bruevich and others), also journalists (editors of newspapers «Pravda», «Izvestia», «Krasnaya Zvezda», «Trud», «Novoe Vremya», «Red Fleet»), writers (V. Gorbato, G. Mdivani, V. Ivanov), artists (V. V. Barsova, O. V. Lepeshinskaya, S. V. Obraztsov, I. A. Moiseev, etc.), composers (D.D. Shostakovich, T.N. Khrennikov, V.I. Muradeli, S.S. Prokofiev, A.I. Khachaturyan, etc.), artists (I.E. Grabar, K.F. Yuon, A.A. Plastov, A.A. Deineka and others). The last but not least were Soviet military leaders (Marshal G.K. Zhukov, Admiral of the Fleet N.G. Kuznetsov and others), members of Swedish and Icelandic trade delegations, heads of diplomatic missions, which were accredit in Moscow (41 are in total), and technical intelligentsia (directors of factories named after Ordzhonikadze «Dynamo», named after Molotov, ZIS, autogenous plant, etc.) (*Visits, 1946: 12-18*).

4. Conclusions

The repertoire policy of concert programs of diplomatic receptions was built in such a way to not only inform about state priorities in the field of culture, but also to create a special, according to the organizers, socio-cultural environment, that promoted constructive communication.

According to the plans of the organizers, performances at receptions by prominent Soviet artists demonstrated successes of the Soviet regime in the development of culture and, in particular, art.

Special repertoire eclecticism means the presence in one program, for instance, the first act from the ballet «Giselle», a march from Gounod's opera «Faust», a cantata about Stalin and the dance of the Don Cossacks. According to the organizers' intention. It testified about multi-lateral development of Soviet art.

Soviet musical doctrine based on tastes of the leaders and, first of all, Stalin. Based on the works presented, for him folk choreography is equivalent to classical ballet choreography, and folk singing is equivalent to classical opera vocals.

Each of these musical genres is beautiful in its own way, but their presence in one concert looked very original.

A special place in programs was given to the songs of Soviet composers, which written during the period of war and performed by the Red Banner Ensemble of the Red Army Song and Dance of the USSR. Their mere presence on the stage gave the concert an extraordinary solemnity and confirmed those fact that the Diplomatic Ceremony is one of the means of promoting the power of the state.

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