REFINING RUSSIA

Advice Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin

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Advice literature (etiquette manuals, guides to hygiene and house management, and treatises on upbringing) enjoyed massive popularity in Russia between the late eighteenth and the late twentieth centuries. It reflected changing attitudes to appropriate behaviour in private and public, to the acquisition of possessions, and not least to national identity (for many Russians, reading how-to books was seen as a way of 'learning how to be a Westerner').