

# Aleksandra Xvostova, Nikolaj Karamzin and the Gendering of *Toska*

Sara Dickinson (University of Genoa)

## 1. Introduction

At the height of sentimentalism in 1796, Aleksandra Xvostova published a small book entitled *Otryvki* (*Fragments*) that contained two short sketches, *Kamin* (*The Fireplace*) and *Ručeeek* (*The Rivulet*), both of which might be described as elaborations on the theme of *toska*. She combined this sentiment with various gloomy relatives to weave an emotional fabric of those “doleful humors” that were especially prized by the sentimentalists, an emphasis that undoubtedly contributed to the book’s acclaim<sup>1</sup>. While Xvostova’s text is likely to strike today’s readers as peculiarly heavy-handed – in part because we have become unaccustomed to the sentimentalist era’s expressivity and in part because it is *so* very thickly laden with suffering and dismay – her work enjoyed considerable popularity in its day. Before its inclusion in *Otryvki*, *Kamin* had already been published in a journal and circulated in manuscript; according to one contemporary (Runič 1896: 309), it was a “delightful trifle” that could be found “on all of the tables in both salon and office and that everyone read with pleasure”<sup>2</sup>. *Kamin*’s first editor lauded the text’s “spirit of Ossianic grief (*gor-est*’)” together with the “tenderness and profundity of melancholic feelings” that the authoress renders so “correctly” and with “inexpressible pleasantness” (Podšivalov 1795: 68), while such established literary figures as Mixail Xerskov and Nikolaj Karamzin were said to have been “pleasantly surprised” by

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on a new regard for emotions and, particularly, for ‘*čuvstvitel’nost*’, or ‘sensibility’, sentimentalism tended toward melancholic themes from its very origins. In the words of ‘Ju. Podol’skij’ (Jurij Ajxenal’d), “since sentimentalist writers listened keenly, as it were, to the beating of the human heart, they were particularly prone to apprehend among the other feelings that made up the content of inner life a range of doleful (*skorbnyx*) humors – sorrow (*pečal’*), sadness (*grust’*), disappointment, *toska*. That is why the complexion of many sentimentalist works is *melanxolija*. It was with her sweet streams that feeling (*čuvstvitel’nye*) souls were fed” (Podol’skij 1925: 764 ff.). In 1794, the *Dictionary of the Russian Academy* explicitly defined “*čuvstvitel’nost*” as “the quality of a person who is moved by the unhappiness of another” (cf. Page 1985: 395). As M.A. Arzumanova notes sentimentalism had detractors from the 1770s on (Arzumanova 1964: 197); the journalist N. Straxov lampooned the fashion for emotional excess in 1791 by offering an infallible technique for would-be authors: “take 175 alas’s, 200 ah’s, 4 poods of sighs, 7 buckets of tears, from 20 to 30 daggers and several bottles of poison that the novel’s heroes can guzzle” (quoted *Ivi.*: 200).

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all of the translations in this article are my own.

it (Makarov 1830: 20). For memoirist Filipp Vigel' (2000: 119), *Kamin* and *Ručeeek* were “two flowers, two forget-me-nots”, an evaluation corroborated by readers: the volume *Otryvki* was printed in an unusually large number of copies for the era (2400) and was republished several times over the course of the next 50 years (Makarov 1830: 20; Zirin 1994: 291-292).

This article, which began as an attempt to understand what *toska* meant for Xvostova and what literary and historical reasons led her to emphasize it. It is hardly surprising that *toska* became especially prominent in an era when emotivity, particularly that tending towards the gloomy, was highly valued. Less obvious is the association between *toska* and femininity that gradually unfolded in eighteenth-century Russian letters to reach a peak in sentimentalist literary debates, in part through Xvostova's own efforts. To begin with, the nature and quality of Xvostova's *toska* was unusual even in the sentimentalist era. While Xvostova's renown was undoubtedly enhanced by her gender and by the notoriety of her elite social position<sup>3</sup>, her sheer emotional expressivity also intrigued readers as an audacious affective gesture. As will become apparent, Xvostova's literary *toska* was distinct from the model of Karamzin and the other male writers who set the era's tone – a divergence that may be understood not simply as a particular stage in the evolution of either sentimentalism or literary *toska*, but also as a stage in the relationship between the expression of despondent feelings and more general issues of gender circulating at the time, especially the feminization of Russian literature that occurred in the sentimentalist era. This article will contextualize Xvostova's *toska* in a larger literary debate involving gender and the ‘ownership’ of personal emotions that occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, wherein *toska*, a forceful sentiment closely identified with the experience of women, played a significant role.

After a brief characterization of Xvostova's anguish-ridden text (part two), we outline the evolution of *toska* in eighteenth-century Russian letters (part three) as it became an increasingly feminine emotion. Linked first with female literary personages and with a disquieting absence or lack of the masculine, *toska* was tied in the later sentimentalist era to actual women, women writers, and women's writing. Part four explores in greater depth the gender issues at stake in late eighteenth-century Russian literature, particularly the problem of feminization, a literary fashion in which the male literary establishment adopted ‘feminine speech’ as a new model towards which the evolving literary language could be directed<sup>4</sup>. Particular attention will be paid to the views expressed in Karamzin's *Poslanie k ženščinam* (*Epistle to Women*, 1795) with regard to gender, emotion, and artistic expression (cf. Karamzin 1966). Part

<sup>3</sup> Besides being the niece of poet Mixail Xeraskov, Xvostova was related to the powerful Trubetskoj clan and through her husband had links “with all of the Counts Šeremet'ev” (Vigel' 2000: 119).

<sup>4</sup> On feminization, see, for example, Hammarberg 1994, 2001, 2002; Vowles 1994, 2002; Rosslyn 1996, 1997; Heyder, Rosenholm 2003.

five situates Xvostova's reiterative *toska* in a tradition of eighteenth-century women's writing by considering the precedent of Ekaterina Urusova. The gendered quality of *toska* and Xvostova's own literary daring are further attested in a comparison between her work and the female discussions of elegiac sentiment that followed in her wake (part six). The terms on which *toskovanje* subsequently fell into decline as it ceded ground to *melanxolija* – however briefly and for some writers, but not all – will be taken up in part five as well. Ultimately, the connection between *toska* and women's writing both enhanced Xvostova's popularity and guaranteed her later obsolescence, since it was deeply intertwined with sentimentalist anxieties about the relationship of femininity to the male self.

## 2. *Toska in Xvostova and in Karamzin*

Though described by her first editor as a bearer of “melancholic feelings”, Xvostova in *Otryvki* largely avoids the term *melanxolija* per se, preferring more traditional lexemes such as *toska*, *pečal'* (sorrow), *gorest'* (grief), and the verbal forms *toskovat'* (to suffer *toska*) and *toskujuščij* (suffering *toska*)<sup>5</sup>. The contemplation and expression of these feelings – achieved via a first-person female perspective – constitute the basic theme of both texts, which convey an elegiac mood through a series of affecting scenes that are both vague and very emotional, reiterating ideas of sadness, anguish, and longing. In *Kamin*, the narrator waxes despondent because she is misunderstood by society and alienated from it. “*Radosti! – Gde oni?*”, she exclaims:

Печали! – Печали тут – тут, со мною, глубоко в сердце, и вместе с кровью текут в жилах моих [...]. Горести! вечность, неизмеримость, степь дикая и необозримая, где бедный странник не находит ни сени для отдохновения, ни капли воды для утоления несносной тоски своей! (Xvostova 1796: 11)<sup>6</sup>.

In *Ručeeek*, earthly existence remains similarly bleak as the narrator mourns the death of her father. Fate and despair push her to a state near death, which she is ready to embrace as welcome solace, only to draw her back again:

Судьба неумолимая, судьба не насытившаяся еще слезами моими, оттолкнула меня от края желанной мною пропасти; [...] – велела жить, – велела еще

<sup>5</sup> The word ‘*melanxolija*’ appears but once in *Otryvki* near the conclusion of *Ručeeek* (Xvostova 1796: 47): “*Pečal' zamečila menja pri roždenii, i melanxolija sebe prisvoila*” (“Sorrow marked me at birth and melancholy took me as her own”).

<sup>6</sup> “Joys! Where are they? [...] Sorrows! Sorrows are here with me, deep in my heart, and flow with the blood in my veins [...]. Sadness! An eternity, an immeasurable expanse, a wild and endless steppe, where the poor wanderer finds neither shade in which to repose, nor a drop of water to slake his intolerable *toska!*”.

тосковать, чувствовать, и бросила опять в печальной мир сей, сердечными слезами моими окропленный (*Ivi*: 37-38)<sup>7</sup>.

Given that Xvostova wrote in Karamzin's heyday and in a clearly sentimentalist vein, a comparison of her texts to his was inevitable and some of Xvostova's contemporaries even suggested that he had heavily edited her work<sup>8</sup>. *Otryvki* distinguishes itself from Karamzin's writing of the same period, however, in both the quantity and quality of its *toska*. Quantitatively, words built on the root *tosk-* comprise roughly one out of every 300 words in *Otryvki*, far more than what we find in Karamzin's work from the late 1780s through the mid 1790s, i.e. those years in which he would have been able to influence her text<sup>9</sup>. Indeed, Karamzin was generally wary of unrestrained sentiment and despite a clear interest in "comprehending the nature of emotions, the subtle shadings of feeling" (Kočetkova 2013: 214) and his well-known melancholic leanings<sup>10</sup>, he produced very few texts in which the word *toska* or the root *tosk-* appears more than once or twice. The densest or most often repeated occurrence of *tosk-* in Karamzin's oeuvre is in the stylized historical tale *Natal'ja, bojarskaja doč'* (*Natal'ja, the Boyar's Daughter*) from 1792, where it appears in not one word out of every 300, as in Xvostova, but in only one word out of 1344 (cf. Karamzin 1964)<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, Karamzin's *toska* is far from solemn, but corresponds to the gener-

<sup>7</sup> "Implacable fate, yet unsated by my tears, pushed me back from the edge of the precipice I desired [...], ordered that I live, that I continue pining and feeling, and threw me again into this sorrowful world, watered by my heartfelt tears".

<sup>8</sup> D. P. Runič (1896: 309), for example, characterizes *Kamin* as "imitative of Karamzin's style", while Vigel' (2000: 119) notes – and refutes – widespread claims that Karamzin assisted Xvostova in the composition of *Otryvki*.

<sup>9</sup> My calculations for Xvostova are based on the online texts of *Kamin* and *Ručeeek* provided by the Corinna Project at the University of Exeter (cf. Xvostova 1796), while statistics regarding the incidence of *tosk-/toska* in the work of Karamzin and the other writers discussed here have generally been culled from the academic editions of eighteenth-century literature available online at the Russian Virtual Library (cf. *Russkaja virtual'naja biblioteka*, <<http://www.rvb.ru/18vek/>>). Since the intriguing data available on the site of the National Corpus of the Russian Language (*Nacional'nyj korpus russkogo jazyka*, <[ruscorpora.ru](http://ruscorpora.ru/)>) conflict with the word counts that I have been able to ascertain myself, I have not used them in this article. That said, the site does helpfully corroborate several of the general points that I make here, such as the increasing use of *toska* over the course of the eighteenth century, and the sudden appearance and short-lived popularity of *melanxolija* at century's end.

<sup>10</sup> Dmitrij Blagoj (1931), for example, avers that "the 'imprint of melancholy' [...] comprises the most characteristic feature of all of Karamzin's writing".

<sup>11</sup> It is true that the proportion of *toska* in Karamzin's shorter works, where the term appears but once in the midst of only two or three hundred words, statistically surpasses that found in Xvostova, but this article focuses on examples of *toska*'s emphatic repetition. As noted, the highest incidence of repeated *toska* in Karamzin appears in *Natal'ja*, where the root *tosk-* occurs nine times. The second highest, which is found in Part Four of *Letters of a Russian Traveler* (1791-1801), marks a sharp decline: in the *Literaturnye pamiatniki* edition's 115 pages of fine print (Karamzin 1984: 273-388), the root appears only seven times.

ally humorous and ironic tone of his exaggeratedly sentimental tale. As Gitta Hammarberg points out, *Natal'ja* parodies both sentimentalist excess and sentimentalism in general, signaling the maturation of this literary current together with its imminent demise (Hammarberg 1991: 207). Indeed, Karamzin's levity underlines a conviction that such earnest effusiveness was quickly becoming passé. Sentimentalism's leading light, in other words, was already making gentle fun of *toska* in 1792 – before Xvostova had even begun to write her text.

We should also note that by steeping *toska* in irony and humor, Karamzin undermines its potential suitability for the expression of his own feelings or for those of the text's cultivated male narrator. For all of his interest in 'feminine' language, he uses the term *toska* in *Natal'ja* largely to characterize the distress of the female protagonist, which results when she is separated, alternately, from her father and from her lover<sup>12</sup>. Karamzin's distaste for emphatic or reiterative *toska* can be corroborated elsewhere. While his oeuvre clearly demonstrates that he had no objection to earnest expressions of elegiac sentiment, Karamzin preferred single instances of *toska* to the more repetitive use favored by Xvostova – at least when not jesting.

It has been suggested that Karamzin tended to shy away from strong emotions beginning in the early 1790s, when he abandoned an early infatuation with epic and tragedy for the lighter and more lyrical forms that subsequently became his forte (cf. Cross 1968: *passim*)<sup>13</sup>. We might also link his judicious use of *toska* to the fact that the pathos of unbridled anguish was inappropriate for Karamzin's cultural role in the 1790s. As a prominent trendsetter and literary spokesman for sentimentalism and feminization, he played a key role in promulgating the new fashion by which male writers adopted for their literary work a linguistic register associated with the salon, the boudoir, and, at least in theory, the linguistic praxis of women. Certainly, an accession of emotion was characteristic of both sentimentalism and feminization, but the emotions in question were ideally gentle and restrained. Proponents of feminization held that if men were to write as women spoke or ought to speak<sup>14</sup>, their feelings should be delicate and delicately expressed. What then are we to make of *toska*'s emphatic repetition in Xvostova? What is the precise 'flavor' of the literary *toska* that Karamzin uses only sparingly and she so assiduously underlines? A brief review of the eighteenth-century literary contexts in which *toska* was used – and sometimes forcefully reiterated – will help us to better understand both why Karamzin later turned away from *toska*, but also why Xvostova did not.

---

<sup>12</sup> *Toska* occurs six times in reference to Natal'ja's emotions, twice in connection with the distress of her father after she disappears, and once in her lover's explication of his own feelings; it does not appear in reference to the emotions of the narrator.

<sup>13</sup> On the decrease in Karamzin's tolerance for sentimentalist effusion during the 1790s, see also Arzumanova 1964.

<sup>14</sup> The journalist P.I. Makarov, admitting that Russian women's speech was inadequate to serve as a literary model, concluded that "therefore we must sometimes write as we ought to speak and not as we speak" (cf. Hammarberg 1994: 108).

### 3. *The Emergence and Gendering of Toska*

While the term *toska* is attested in Old Russian (Sreznevskij 1912: 1057; Lunt 1970: 76), it was not commonplace in literary texts prior to the middle of the eighteenth-century. The root appears only once in the *Sobranie stixotvorenij* (*Collected Poems*, 1956) of Antiox Kantemir, for example: he preferred to describe dejection in other terms, such as ‘*pečal*’ (sorrow), which occurs over forty times in this volume, ‘*skorb*’ (grief) – nine occurrences, ‘*gore*’ (woe) – five, or ‘*gorest*’ (grief) – five. His single use of ‘*tosk-*’ occurs in a facetious line containing the verb ‘*toskovat*’ (‘to pine’ or ‘to languish’) in a 1740 poem on the subject of writer’s block: “*Skučen vam, stixi moi, jaščik, / desjat’ celyx / gde vy let toskuete v teni / za ključami!*” (Kantemir 1956: 216)<sup>15</sup>.

Both quantitatively and qualitatively, Kantemir’s *toska* would seem but a distant cousin to Xvostova’s: while hers relates primarily to emotional suffering, his has distinct physical overtones. Humorously attributed to an inanimate subject, Kantemir’s *toska* is closer to physical comedy than to pathos or existential anguish. It is characterized by a desire for action that is rendered impossible by specific material constraints (the writing cannot leave the drawer), illuminating a notion of confinement or constraint found in the Old Russian version of this word<sup>16</sup> and retained, as we will see, even in the more abstract and moral *toskovanie* of later eighteenth-century texts, wherein impulses or urges that are almost physical are contrasted with concrete barriers that require their frustration.

Glimmers of *toska*’s future importance as a loftier literary sentiment begin to appear in the work of Kantemir’s contemporary Vasilij Trediakovskij, who employs it with the seriousness and force of subsequent sentimentalist writers. Known for his translation and adaptation of foreign literary models replete with bold ‘new’ emotions such as love (Reyfman 1990: 85, 87), Trediakovskij clearly links ‘*tosk-*’ which appears four times in his *Izbrannye proizvedenija* (*Selected Works*, 1963), with the context of classical and European *amour*<sup>17</sup>. We find the term in the titles of two love poems from 1730 (1963: 91) – “*Toska ljubovnicyna v razlučenii s ljubovnikom*” and “*Toska ljubovnikova v razlučenii s ljubovnicem*” (“The Anguish of a Lover Parting from His Lover”, “The Anguish of a Lover

<sup>15</sup> “Dull for you, my poems, is the drawer where you’ve been languishing for an entire ten years, in darkness, behind lock and key”.

<sup>16</sup> Sreznevskij (1912: 1057) indicates that Old Russian instantiations of *toska* (*tūska*) include both physical and moral shadings, ranging from ‘constraint’ or ‘oppression’ (*tesnenie, pritesnenie*), to ‘woe, sorrow’ (*gore, pečal*), to ‘agitation’ or ‘anxiety’ (*volnenie, bespokojstvo*). While he defines the related verb *tūsknuti* as ‘to be dispirited’ (*byt’ udručennym*) (*Ibidem*), it can also be used reflexively (*tūs[k]nutisja*) to signify ‘to hurry’, ‘to strive’, or ‘be ready for’ (Lunt 1970: 76), concepts suggesting a physical sense of urgency.

<sup>17</sup> My calculation of *toska*’s occurrence in Trediakovskij is based on the severely abridged 1963 edition; examining the full texts of longer works such as *Ezda v ostrov Ljubvi* (*Voyage to the Isle of Love*) or *Tilemaxida* might produce quite different results.

Parting from Her Lover”) – a pair of verses otherwise written in French and addressing, respectively, the distress of the male partner and of his beloved on the occasion of their ineluctable separation. The fact that the woman’s name is Phyllis (Phillis) and that the man is setting off by ship allows us to identify the described event as the tragic parting of Phyllis and Demophon<sup>18</sup>. Trediakovskij’s verses thus both illustrate a process of cultural adaptation (from classical literature via French) that bore much fruit in eighteenth-century letters and proposes one of the specific settings in which subsequent literary *toska* was most often to be invoked in Russia, namely in classically inspired scenes of adieu between exalted and eminent lovers. Indeed, the *toska*-enriched farewell of Phyllis and Demophon was itself later taken up by Trediakovskij’s rival Lomonosov.

In his *Novyj i kratkij sposob k složeniju Rossijskix stixov* (*A New and Brief Method for Composing Russian Verse*, 1735), Trediakovskij initiated the enduring connection between *toska* and the elegy. After explaining in what this genre consists, he offers an example of elegiac hexameter in several lines of his own making. Based on Ovid’s classical precedent, Trediakovskij’s first-person lament describes the sentiments of a bereft male lover, who, having learned of his dear one’s death, suffers the torments of “intolerable [*nesnosnaja*] *toska*” (Trediakovskij 1963: 400). The fifth lexeme in a woeful series – after “*beznadeždie, mjatež, gorest’ i pečali*”<sup>19</sup> – *toska* adds pleonastic emphasis.

Trediakovskij’s oeuvre also provides an instance of comic *toskovanje* in the unfinished comedy *Evnux* (*The Eunuch*, 1752), the ‘transposition’ of a Latin comedy by Terence. The notion of *toska* is absent in the original text and thus forms part of the emotional adornment that Trediakovskij himself adds to the drama. He uses it to characterize the feeling suffered by a male personage, Phaedria (Fedrij), when his courtesan girlfriend unexpectedly refuses to allow him into her home. As a result, Phaedria both “yearns for her” (“*po nej toskuja*”), a sentiment laced with physical desire, and wonders how to best get revenge (*Ivi*: 164). While the addition of unsatisfied and unrequited desire increases the emotional complexity of Trediakovsky’s *toska* with respect to Kantemir’s, Phaedria’s anguish again derives from a vigorous clash between inner desires and external constraints, the courtesan’s closed door recalling the recalcitrant wood of Kantemir’s desk. Phaedria himself is not “the eunuch” referenced in the play’s title, but his difficulties with the courtesan do hint at an emasculation of sorts in the unresolvable conflict between his yearnings and his actual possibilities. *Toska* is the lover’s emotional response to the ‘impotence’ forced upon him by thresholds that he cannot cross.

Mixail Lomonosov took *toska* still more seriously, multiplying its appearances, increasing its density, and raising it to the status of a literary concept thoroughly permeated with the classical spirit. In Lomonosov’s work we begin to see re-

<sup>18</sup> While ‘Phyllis’ is also a hallmark of the idyll, serving in Virgil’s *Eclogues*, for example, “always as a stereotypical love-interest name” (Jones 2013: 99), it suggests the beloved of Demophon when coupled with a male lover’s departure by sea.

<sup>19</sup> “Hopelessness, perturbation, grief and sorrows”.

peated or reiterative *toska*: seventeen of the nineteen occurrences of ‘*tosk-*’ found in his *Izbrannye proizvedenija* (*Selected Works*, 1986), are distributed among only three works: six instances appear in each of two tragedies, *Tamira i Selim* (*Tamira and Selim*, 1750) and *Demofon* (*Demophon*, 1750-1751) and five in the unfinished epic *Petr Velikij* (*Peter the Great*, 1760)<sup>20</sup>. Clearly, he used emphatic *toska* to signal an elevated literary style.

Lomonosovian *toska* is also more feminine. While three of the four instances of *toska* found in Trediakovskij’s *Izbrannye proizvedenija* had belonged to men, all six occurrences of the root in Lomonosov’s *Tamira i Selim* describe the actual or potential sentiments of Tamira herself, now suffering separation from her beloved, now the moral torment provoked by the fact that he is the political and military enemy of her own father. In *Demofon*, *toska* similarly characterizes a sentiment experienced largely by women and directly or indirectly provoked by their love for men with whom they are geographically, politically (and thus ontologically and tragically) incompatible. Male characters in the play do not explicitly experience *toska*, but are occasionally threatened with it as a form of revenge by the women whom they have betrayed. As repayment for the tribulations that Demophon and his friend Polymestor have caused to Phyllis and Ilione, they will be forced to suffer the emotion that has heretofore been the women’s own lot: “*No ty [...] sam počuvstvuješ ’tosku*” (“Now you, too, are going to feel some *toska*”), declares Phyllis to Demophon, while her girlfriend declares to Polymestor, who had thought her dead, that she has been saved solely “*čtob tebja toskoj terzat*” (“to tear you apart with *toska*”) (Lomonosov 1986: 405, 410). In point of fact, *toska* in Lomonosov often ‘rends’ or ‘rips’ its subject, suffusing the lexeme with a sense of distinctly physical agony that, in this context, again suggests emasculation.

The dramas of Aleksandr Sumarokov followed Lomonosov’s lead in associating reiterative *toska* with the genre of tragedy and with feminine sentiment: in *Xorev* (1750), set in ancient Kyiv, all five occurrences of the sentiment describe the feelings of women (Sumarokov 1957: 321-364), while in *Semira* (1751), ten or eleven of thirteen references to *toska* are experienced by the eponymous heroine and only two or three by her lover (*Ivi*: 366-423). In both tragedies, *toska* accompanies the compulsory separation of enamoured couples required by a combination of political discord and foreignness. In the third and much later *Dimitrij Samozvanec* (1771), the root appears only twice, but assumes familiar contours: it is used once in reference to the feelings of the heroine, Ksenija,

<sup>20</sup> *Tosk-* in *Petr Velikij* refers mostly to an ‘epic’ sentiment suffered by the Russian people. The remaining two occurrences found in Lomonosov’s *Izbrannye proizvedenija* appear in an elaboration of Psalm 34, written between 1743 and 1751, wherein a first-person voice laments the ill-use of his fellows (*Nanosjat mne vraždu i zlobu, / Čtob tem mne za dobro vozdat’ / I bednyj dux moj i utrobu / Dosadoj i toskoj terzat’* [They inflict upon me enmity and malice / To thus repay me for my kindness / And rend my poor spirit and vitals / with vexation and *toska*]), and in the speech of an inconsolable Dido – another classical farewell – in lines translated from the *Aeneid* in 1747 (Lomonosov 1986: 189, 442).

forced to leave both her father and her beloved, and once in Dimitrij's threat of what his rival Parmen will be made to suffer in Hell, namely spiritual hardships and physical injuries that again hint at bodily laceration: "*Za derzost' budeš' tam ty mučit'sja voveki,*" Dimitrij declares, "*Gde žažda, glad, toska i ognennye reki, / Gde skorb' duševnaja i neiscel'nyx ran*" (Ivi: 463, 429)<sup>21</sup>.

Arguably, a sort of 'emasculatation' is the women's general fate in these texts as well since the *toska* attributed to them inevitably results from the female personages' separation from their menfolk, i.e. when they lose or are otherwise cut off from the defining virility of fathers and lovers. Thus, men's writing casts women as suffering *toska* precisely because they yearn to be reunited with what emerges as an essential – and paradoxically masculine – component of the ostensibly feminine self.

A coexisting version of a *toska* that was more lyrical and 'male' emerges in Sumarokov's verses from the late 1750s and 1760s. Though often contextualized in genres such as the elegy or song and garnished with pastoral elements, the *toska* in these verses is nonetheless ostensibly suffered by the male poet himself, rather than by a heartsick woman or an Arcadian shepherd (although instances of these also occur)<sup>22</sup>. Rendering what are presumably his *own* sentiments in the register of his own voice, the poet pines and languishes when a love interest refuses to reciprocate his feelings, for example (because she is absent, dead, or simply indifferent), or at the hands of a cruel society that has alienated and ostracized him – a favorite theme for Xvostova as well. As Sumarokov puts it in *Protivu zlodeev* (*Against Villains*, 1759)<sup>23</sup>:

Во всей жизни минуту я каждую  
Утесняюсь, гонимый, и стражду,  
Многократно я алчу и жажду.  
Иль на свет я рожден для того,  
Чтоб гоним был, не зная для чего,  
И не трогал мой стон никого?  
Мной тоска день и ночь обладает.

(Sumarokov 1957: 82)<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> "For your impudence you will suffer eternal torment there / With thirst, hunger, *toska*, and fiery rivers, / With grief of the soul and wounds unhealed".

<sup>22</sup> Sumarokov wrote various lyrics from a woman's point of view, such as the elegiac *Gde ni guljaju, ni xožu...* (*Wherever I wander, wherever I walk...*, 1765; cf. Sumarokov 1959: 269-270) or the heroide *Osnel'da k Zavloxu* (*From Osnel'da to Zavlox*, 1769; Ivi: 165-167), a further elaboration of the character Osnel'da from his tragedy *Xorev*.

<sup>23</sup> Readers and critics have sometimes credited *Protivu zlodeev* to Sumarokov's daughter, the poet Ekaterina Knjaznina (cf. Ewington 2014: 34-35n), an evaluation perhaps encouraged by the verse's pointed expression of *toska*.

<sup>24</sup> "In all my life I am every minute / Oppressed, persecuted, I suffer, / Oft do I hunger and thirst. / Or was I born onto this earth / To be persecuted without knowing why / Or whether anyone has been touched by my lamentations? / *Toska* takes possession of me day and night".

At times Sumarokov's lyrical *toska* is even stripped of its object or cause, and thus, while it continues to "rip" and to "wrench" the poet, we are not always exactly sure why. In the 1768 sonnet "*Na oščajanie*" (*On Despair*), for example, *toska* has no precise object and thus verges on the purely existential. Despite its emotional vagueness, however, such *toska* remains physically specific, preserving the legacy of the classically styled contexts articulated by Lomonosov in proposing additional scenarios of carnage: "*Žestokaja toska, oščajanija doč!* [...] / *Terzaj menja, toska, i rvi moi ty členy*" (*Ivi*: 171-172)<sup>25</sup>.

Sumarokov's lyrical *toska* represents a new evolution of this emotion in the Russian context that more obviously points toward its later manifestations in the sentimentalist era. At the same time, Sumarokov is not the direct predecessor of Xvostova, since his *toska*, however personalized, is neither feminine nor emphatically repeated. For examples from mid century of reiterative *toska*, we must look to Sumarokov's junior colleague Denis Fonvizin. Notwithstanding his later infamous excoriations of Francophilia, Fonvizin in the 1760s was happily reveling in French-inspired literary anguish. His appreciation of this sentiment's compelling pathos is evident in *Korion* (1764), for example, the 'reworking' of a comedy by Jean-Baptiste-Louis Gresset, in which *toska* makes eighteen explicit appearances. Thirteen of these have no equivalent in the original French text, but represent embellishments that Fonvizin himself chose to add, evidently following the lead of Lomonosov and Sumarokov in equating this lexeme with literariness. As in Sumarokov's lyrical verses, *toska* here primarily afflicts the male protagonist and contains an aura of physical suffering and dismemberment, evident in the declaration made by Korion in the throes of suicide: "*Terzajus', mučus', rvus' ljutejšeju toskoju...*" (Fonvizin 1959, I: 41)<sup>26</sup>. At the same time, Fonvizin's *toska* has little direct connection with Sumarokov's lyricism or with that later found in Karamzin: the first-person anguish which he relishes is not his own. Indeed, Fonvizin left the emphatic repetition of *toska* behind in the 1760s and the fact that he had overused it before Karamzin had even been born likely contributed to its later lack of appeal. Elsewhere, as we have seen, reiterative *toska* occurs primarily in the context of tragic drama, where it is largely a feminine emotion. The sentiment continues to be associated with the female gender – and with its ostensibly masculine core – in the later work of writers such as Majkov, Xeraskov, Knjažnin, Krylov, and Kapnist. When expounded lyrically, as in Sumarokov, to represent the first-person sentiments of the poet himself, the lexeme *toska* is used much more sparingly. Indeed, I have been un-

<sup>25</sup> "Cruel anguish, daughter of despair! [...] / Tear me apart, anguish, and rend my limbs".

<sup>26</sup> "I am torn, tormented, rent by the most cruel anguish...". Interestingly, there is another more physiological sense of the word *toska* that refers to bodily suffering or the pain associated with illness. It appears as such in Fonvizin's later travel writing (cf. Fonvizin 1959, II: 570), for example, and in Sumarokov's fable "*Volk i žuravl*" (*The Wolf and the Crane*; 1957: 245): "*Volk el – ne znaju, čto, – I kost'ju podavilsja, / Metalsja on toski, i čut' on ne vzdurilsja*" ("A wolf was eating I don't know what and choked on the bone, / he writhed in *toska* and almost lost his mind").

able to find any subsequent male writers from the eighteenth-century literary canon<sup>27</sup> who repeat *toska* with anything close to Xvostovian tenacity, i.e. no other texts by established male authors who use *toska* more than once or twice in a single literary work – before Karamzin.

#### 4. *Feminization and Toska: Karamzin's Poslanie k ženščinam*

The term *feminizacija* ('feminization') was apparently coined by Viktor Vinogradov (1935: 216) to describe Puškin's rejection of it<sup>28</sup>. More recently, scholars have probed the contradictions and paradoxes inherent in this eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century "literary cult of the woman" (*Ibidem*), beginning with the fact that it involved a notion of the feminine that was idealized and even invented on the part of the male literary community in order to serve as an appropriate role model in what was an "ultimately male enterprise" (Hammarberg 2001: 219). Women's widely touted cultural influence was little more than theoretical, in other words, since feminization "did not authorize women to step outside socially prescribed feminine roles" (Engel 2004: 19). For women themselves, this new cultural trend embodied at best a continuation of the status quo, and arguably even a 'backlash' from an earlier period in which women such as Catherine II and Ekaterina Daskova, however exceptional, had been prominent and powerful cultural figures (Vowles 1994: 40). In the era of feminization, women were sentenced to "the cultural periphery" and often denied the right "to participate in the cultural production of signifying practices as a subject" (Heyder, Rosenholm 2003: 53-54). Their role in the literary process, if any, "was thought to be as inspiring Muses, appreciative audiences, exemplars of refined speech, or as discriminating arbiters of good taste in literary matters", while men "continued to monopolize literary production, their repertoire now expanded to incorporate a feminine, emotional component" (Rossllyn 2000: 408).

Karamzin obliquely addressed the link between femininity and *toska* in his 1795 *Poslanie k ženščinam* (*Epistle to Women*), a verse that stands as an appropriately paradoxical statement of his position vis-à-vis feminization, gender, and sentiment<sup>29</sup>. Karamzin perceived *toska* not simply as a 'feminine' sentiment that male authors might sport as a fashionable salon badge or apply to the feelings of their female personages: it was also suggestive of women themselves and of the threat to masculinity that women, and especially women's writing, could

<sup>27</sup> By 'canon' I intend the authors available in the eighteenth-century collection of the *Russian Virtual Library*.

<sup>28</sup> As Puškin himself put it in a personal letter, "*ja pišu dlja sebja, a pečataju dlja deneg, a ničut' dlja ulybki prekrasnogo pola*" ("I write for myself and publish for money – not in the least for the smiles of the fair sex"; cf. Vinogradov 1935: 217).

<sup>29</sup> On *Poslanie k ženščinam*, see also Heyder, Rosenholm 2003: 56; on Karamzin's ambivalent approach to "women" as both addressees and models of language, see also Hammarberg 1994 and Vowles 1994; on feminization, see note 5.

represent. His poem demonstrates how such ontological ‘translation’ or slippage between textual and actual women could occur and how it could be used to distance women further from the male literary establishment.

Thinly veiled as ‘the Poet’, Karamzin asserts his devotion to the “gentle sex” (“*o nežnyj pol!*”) and explains that he chose to become a writer in order to “please” women and to earn their praise (Karamzin 1966: 178). His goal, the apex of literary achievement, is to be recognized by them for his wide range of expressive talents as well as his artistic and psychological finesse – in terms that he preemptively indicates:

[В]место острой шпаги,  
 Взял в руки лист бумаги,  
 Чернильницу с пером,  
 Чтоб быть писателем, творцом,  
 Для вас, красавицы, приятным.  
 Чтоб слогом чистым, сердцу внятным,  
 Оттенки вам изображать  
 Страстей счастливых и несчастных,  
 То кротких, то ужасных;  
 Чтоб вы могли сказать:  
 ‘Он, право, мил и верно переводит  
 Всё темное в сердцах на ясный нам язык;  
 Слова для тонких чувств находит!’ (Ivi: 170)<sup>30</sup>.

Karamzin’s verse charges women with being a mainstay of emotional support for male literary activity, but also specifies that artistic creation is an exclusively masculine endeavor. Women feel, but men alone are responsible for the public voicing of sentiment. The Poet presents himself as the rightful spokesman for female emotion in part through the appropriation of *toska* itself, a gesture that illustrates in microcosm both the feminization of the poet and the marginalization of the poetess that Karamzin’s verse more generally performs<sup>31</sup>. The

<sup>30</sup> “Instead of a sharp sword, / I took in hand a sheet of paper, / An ink pot with pen, / To become a writer, a creator, / Who would for you, my beauties, be pleasing. / That I might in a pure style intelligible to the heart / Depict for you the shadings / Of passions happy and unhappy, / Now gentle, now fearsome, / That you might be able to say: / ‘He is really quite a dear and faithfully translates / All that is obscure in the heart into a language clear to us; / He finds the words for delicate feelings!’”

<sup>31</sup> There are also two instances of non-feminine *toska* in Karamzin’s *Poslanie*, both of which link the sentiment of anguish with psychical and physical degeneration, and thus arguably with degrees of emasculation (Karamzin 1966: 172, 176). The first appears in didactic lines about an allegorical type who represents paranoia: “*I sej bezumnyj čelovek / S toskuju na časax provodit ves ’svoj vek*” (“And this irrational man / spends his entire life standing anguished guard”); the second is a comment on the rightfulness of women ministering to the afflicted: “*S kakoju krotost’ ju ix golos uveščает / Boljaščix ne roptat’ na boga, no terpet’! / Kolena prekloniv, odna u neba prosit / Im zdravija ili... spokojnogo konca; / Drugaja pitie celebnoe raznosit / I laskuju živit toskujuščix serdca*” (“With what gentleness their voices exhort / the ailing to not grumble at God, but en-

relevant lines open with the Poet declaring his “love” for spending time with female friends and recounting the pleasurable activities that he enjoys in their company, but close in a very different key as these ostensibly shared pastimes are divided into distinctly gendered realms:

Но всё, но всё еще люблю  
 В апреле рвать фиалки с вами,  
 В жар летний отдыхать в тени над ручейками,  
 В печальном октябре грустить и тосковать,  
 Зимой перед огнем романы сочинять,  
 Вас тешить и стращать! (*Ivi*: 178)<sup>32</sup>.

The poet and his female companion(s) are together in April, and, in the absence of indications to the contrary, it would seem that they also sit beside streams together in summer and commune in October anguish. Their conjoint activity does not extend beyond the autumn, however, since ‘she’ does not participate in the winter writing of novels, but has already been relegated in that season to the role of enthralled reader. Indeed, even the penultimate stage of autumnal *toska*, though presumably shared, is also already gendered since “suffering sadness and *toska*” fuels literary creation only for the Poet. It is he, who turns feeling into art, while his friend, helpmeet and muse, experiences emotion, but does not produce texts, being limited to the reception and appreciation of his expression. *Poslanie* thus argues for the male interpretation and publication of female sentiment by both explicitly associating women with *toska* and preventing them from expressing it. Indeed, the feelings of his erstwhile playmate serve as raw material for his poetry. And at the conclusion of these quoted lines, the poet imposes upon her specific standards of comportment that redirect her gentle appreciation of nature and the seasons to a focus on his own verses.

What feelings exactly does the Poet’s female friend experience? “Sadness” and “*toska*”, as well as those emotions that are later provoked by the art that he wields to alternately “comfort and terrify” her. Sometimes his versifying demonstrates the able expression of fearsome sentiments (“passions happy and unhappy”, etc.), sometimes the revelation of still darker emotions (“all that is obscure in the heart”). Indeed, her “terror” would seem to derive in part from the Poet’s expression and externalization of the latter, i.e. the feelings found “*v serdcax*” (a phrase that can mean both ‘in the heart’ or ‘in our [women’s] hearts’), her own previously “obscure” and poorly understood emotions. It is these that the Poet threatens to unmask from one moment to the next as he swings unpredictably from succor to intimidation.

---

dure! On bended knee, one woman asks the heavens for their health... or peaceful end; / Another distributes healing nourishment / and with kindness animates the hearts of the anguishing”).

<sup>32</sup> “I still, I still love / To pluck violets with you in April, / To find in the heat of summer shady repose beside a brook, / In sorrowful October to suffer sadness and *toska*, / In winter before the fire to compose novels / That comfort and terrify you!”.

The qualms felt by the Poet's companion might also stem from his preemptive silencing of her. By summer, his April friend is only implicit presence since she herself has been "faithfully translated" – or suppressed – by his 'art'. It is quite conceivable that the fear Karamzin attributes to his female friend also reflects the "obscure" and unacknowledged sentiments of the Poet himself, the rhymed triad *toskovat'*-*sočinjat'*-*straščit'* suggesting various couplings and interconnections between 'anguish', 'writing', and 'terror'. Among these is perhaps the notion that if women were to write about their *own* fears and anguish, men would not be able to continue speaking for them; if men are to write 'as women', women's own expression needs to be quashed so that they can proceed unhindered.

In a sense, of course, the scenario described by Karamzin in *Poslanie* offers little that is new. The patriarchal configuration of eighteenth-century letters, like that of society at large, meant that male writers generally spoke for and sometimes as women. And the Poet's female friends share much with the constructions of femininity seen in the tragedies of Lomonosov or Sumarokov: Karamzin, too, construes masculinity as an integral part of feminine identity, its loss a threat to their health and happiness; his female personages are similarly constituted around a masculine core, serve as bastions of admiration for their men, and risk being reduced to vessels of anguish or terror in the eventuality of separation from them. But Karamzin's programmatic verse also takes particular care to explain and illustrate precisely how women could be marginalized, rather than empowered, stifled rather than encouraged. According to its explicitly gendered division of emotional labor, women are chosen to experience feelings and men to assign and express them.

Karamzin's *Poslanie* helps us to see how men's writing employed female personages, together with 'actual' women (presumably real, but idealized under the auspices of feminization), to assuage male fears of gender confusion or 'emasculatation'. Although women in the sentimental era were denied access to male-dominated forums of creative expression with renewed vigor, the ranks of women writers nonetheless continued to very gradually increase and it is not mere chance that feminization became increasingly fashionable as women writers became more visible. In fact, the "literary cult of the woman" proposed women as pledges – or hostages – for the stability of male writer's own masculine identity during his forays into the language of the salon and boudoir. "Much as sentimental writers were interested in their 'dear', 'sweet', and 'tender' women companions, they were also interested in their own male integrity" (Heyder, Rosenholm 2003: 54).

## 5. *Urusova and Reiterative Toska*

As we have seen, women had been cast in the role of tragic heroines and made to suffer *toska* by decades of masculine literary production long before they themselves entered the literary arena in substantial numbers. How did women writers negotiate the suggestion that they were to feel anguish rather than to write

about it? The conquest of the female lyric voice was no mean achievement, and Xvostova's *Otryvki* contrasts sharply with Karamzin's *Poslanie* in illustrating a woman's capacity to describe forceful first-person emotions as strongly as its author seems to have felt them. Her emphatic first-person assertions of anguish and other strong sentiments were an important step towards the literary affirmation of women writers. A precedent for such daring may be seen in the verses of Ekaterina Urusova, a poet from the previous – and first – generation of Russian women writers. A cousin and literary associate of Xvostova's uncle Mixail Xeraskov, Urusova was undoubtedly acquainted with Xvostova and may even have encouraged her literary endeavors, as did the general climate of the Xeraskov home (Zirin 1994: 284). Xeraskov's wife Elizaveta Vasil'evna was a published poet, and both Xeraskovs encouraged young writers and held cultural gatherings in their home. Moreover, Xeraskov had publicly encouraged Urusova's writing in a verse epistle that contains, in Ewington's words, "a refreshingly broad range of possibilities for her poetic gifts." (Ewington 2014: 61)<sup>33</sup>. Specifically,

Rather than limiting her to the tender pastoral genres – though he does include them – [Xeraskov] suggests that she could write epic verse like Homer, sing the glory of Russia like M.V. Lomonosov, enlighten her readers with didactic verse, and – unheard of for a woman – write for the stage as a tragedian [...] or a comedian (*Ibidem*)<sup>34</sup>.

With her cousin's blessing, Urusova broke from what were generally understood – both in her day and for years to come – as appropriately feminine genres. In 1777, she published *Iroidy* (*Heroides*), an unusually lengthy and serious production for a woman writer. Invented by Ovid and named after the Greek word for 'heroines', the *heroides* genre was widely imitated in eighteenth-century Europe; it generally consists of male poets adopting a first-person female voice to deliver impassioned monologues. The protagonists are thus constructed as pointedly feminine, but produced by male 'ventriloquism' and thus 'marginalized' by the obvious discrepancy between their concerns – which are inevitably linked to unhappy relations with men and despondently expressed – and those of the male author. Urusova, too, designs her *Heroides* as a series of lyrical speeches delivered largely by women bereaved in love. While she keeps these female personages at some remove from her own experience by assigning them specific names and personal histories, Urusova's gender nonetheless allows her to powerfully assume the mantle of female *toska* as if she were speaking in her own voice.

Urusova also deserves special note as Xvostova's predecessor for her liberal distribution of *toska*. She seasons *Heroides* with fifteen references to the

---

<sup>33</sup> I am particularly grateful to Amanda Ewington, who generously shared with me multiple ideas and archival notes, as well as her important collection of eighteenth-century women's poetry (Ewington 2014) before publication and in searchable electronic format.

<sup>34</sup> Xeraskov's poem prefaced one of Urusova's publications in 1773; on that verse and her response, see Ewington 2014: 60-61, 72-77.

sentiment, for example, only one of which refers to a masculine personage (Urusova 2014: 220). *Toska* appears twice in connection with the feelings of Zeida, betrayed by her husband, but remaining steadfast in her devotion to him (*Ivi*: 160); three times by Rogneda, cruelly misused by Prince Vladimir and grieving on both her own behalf and that of her son, who is Vladimir's would-be heir (*Ivi*: 192-204); and three times by Ofira in response to her lover's betrayal, as in her declaration that "*Toska, otčajan'e terzajut grud' moju*", or "*Snedaema toskoj ljuboviju gorju*" (*Ivi*: 222, 232)<sup>35</sup>. In the final monologue by Kljajada, who is separated from her lover by a tyrannical father aspiring to a more auspicious match, Urusova brings the cycle's classical note closer to the social and literary preoccupations of eighteenth-century Russia. Kljajada's dramatic speech also brings the cycle closer to a potentially more lyric timbre in its proclamation of female anguish. She uses her moment in the spotlight to speak three times of her own *toska* (*Ivi*: 266, 268, 270), before resolutely reaching out to a larger community. By soliciting the sympathy of other sufferers in her audience, she augments both the range and force of her affliction:

А вы! сраженные любовною тоскою.  
Стените обо мне! взрыдайте вы со мною!  
И чувства страстныя ко жалости склоня,  
Скорбящу, страждущу, представьте вы меня!  
В отчаянье, в тоске, и в плаче погруженну (*Ivi*: 270-271)<sup>36</sup>.

Written by a woman and expressing first-person feminine emotion, Urusova's *Heroides* claims female 'ownership' of feminine, first-person *toska* twenty-odd years before the publication of Xvostova's *Otryvki*. Urusova replaces the heroides genre's traditional imitation of female speech with an example of feminine empowerment, transforming women's suffering into self-affirmation and suffusing self-affirmation with epic power. Her verses demonstrate that women's writing could celebrate strong emotion, assume *toska* as a first-person sentiment, and reiterate it at will. Autobiographical or lyrical *toska* belonged to her cousin's niece however, Aleksandra Xvostova, whose writing implicitly – and provocatively – demonstrates that expressing one's very own 'personal' *toska* was not a male prerogative.

Xvostova's choice to so emphatically reiterate *toska* may be explained in part by cultural context. In the era of feminization, as male writers strove to write 'like women' by imitating in their texts the rhythms of women's salon speech, women who wished to enter the literary arena were asked to adopt a

<sup>35</sup> "Anguish and despair tear at my breast; Consumed by anguish, I burn with love". As indicated, I have used Ewington's translations for Urusova, Turčaninova, and Dolgorukova, although my emphasis on the occurrence of particular words has sometimes led me to alter them slightly and to leave *toska* untranslated.

<sup>36</sup> "And you! Those struck down by *toska* in love. / Lament me! Weep together with me! / And inclining your passionate feelings toward pity, / Think of me bereaved and suffering; / Mired in despair, in *toska*, and in tears".

similar approach, i.e. to model their writing on an idealized version of how they themselves ('women') supposedly spoke or communicated. To become serious writers, in other words, they were encouraged to redouble the tangible evidence of 'femininity' in their work. Indeed, as Ewington notes, Russian women's writing in this period exhibited "an emotional intimacy and specificity that surpassed the conventional 'tearful' literature of male Sentimentalist writers" (Ewington 2014: 15). Xvostova's *Otryvki* is a clear and even extreme example of how women's writing could stress emotionality to great acclaim. The right to articulate "sadness and *toska*" could be plucked from the hands of the male literary establishment like an April violet, Xvostova suggests, and these sentiments strewn throughout feminine texts unreservedly, a gesture that was capable of sowing "terror" – and despair – among some of her masculine contemporaries. Exceptional for her literary expressivity, Xvostova went beyond the demure and understated role that was sketched out for society women in the 1790s to offer women writers a model for the articulation of female *toska* as she simultaneously gave impetus to male writers' *melanxolija*.

## 6. Gender, *Toska* and *Melanxolija*

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were an era of great change in the shaping and definition of gender. As suggested, Catherine's reign had represented a relatively progressive era with respect to women's social roles (and gender identity in general) and women in the 1770s or 1780s had sometimes enjoyed more freedom of expression than was the case during the following reigns of Paul, Alexander, and Nicholas. The literary guidance for the fair sex contained in the Xeraskov's epistle to Urusova, for example, is far more empowering than that suggested by Karamzin's later "*Poslanie*". It has also been argued that Russian culture was dominated by a melancholic mood in this period, specifically from the late 1780s to the 1810s (cf. Vinickij 2011: 19)<sup>37</sup>. As we have seen, this temper or inclination was expressed through various lexemes and sometimes the choice between them was gendered. Even more dramatically than Xvostova's *toska*, the fashion for *melanxolija* reflected this gendered context.

The word *melanxolija* itself, translatable as either 'melancholy' or 'melancholia', was rare in eighteenth-century literary discourse prior to Karamzin. The term had initially differed from *toska* in referring to a condition considered to have pathological overtones and began to attract literary attention only at century's end. Karamzin himself preferred *melanxolija* to *toska* and took firm steps to establish its place in the pantheon of Russian literary sentiments. With-

---

<sup>37</sup> In Vinickij's words, "The authors of the Age of Melancholy did not simply write sad works about sad things [, but] comprehended their own sorrow, and sorrow in general, as an aesthetic, philosophical, and even mystical problem" (Vinickij 2011: 19). On the melancholic turn in Russian letters, see also Vinickij 1997, 2007.

in Karamzin's own oeuvre, the frequency of the root *melanxol-* overtook that of *tosk-* during the 1790s and specifically in *Pis'ma russkogo putešestvennika*, which contains seventeen instances of *tosk-* and 26 references to *melanxol-*. A closer look at the specific contexts in which Karamzin uses *toska* demonstrates that he continued to associate the sentiment with Greek tragedy and pining shepherds, as had Sumarokov and Fonvizin. Although Karamzin had used *toska* lyrically in earlier verses<sup>38</sup>, he does not do so in *Pis'ma* and, as we have seen, *Natal'ja, bojarskaja doč'* confirms that he grew to regard *toska* as less appropriate for the first-person voice of the elite male writer or his narratorial analogues. The lexeme *melanxolija*, with its sophisticated veneer of the cultural import, was more agreeable and it remained slightly ahead in Karamzin's oeuvre after 1800.

*Melanxolija* even served as the title of an important verse (1800-1802) in which Karamzin reworks several lines of an excerpt from Jacques Delille<sup>39</sup>. In this poem, he makes explicit a predilection for *melanxolija* by characterizing it as a subdued and pleasurable state into which the more strident sentiments of "grief ('*skorb*')" and "*toska*" are aestheticized and tempered:

О Меланхолия! нежнейший перелив  
От скорби и тоски к утехам наслажденья!  
Веселья нет еще, и нет уже мученья;  
Отчаянье прошло... (Karamzin 1966: 260)<sup>40</sup>.

Melancholy delights in "*mečtoj, odnoju mysl'ju – slovom!*" ("dreaming, thought alone, the word"; *Ivi*: 261), the third element in this list – "the word" or literary expression – being Karamzin's own notable addition to Delille's source text (cf. Kočetkova 2013: 216). With "the word", he emphasizes the aestheticization of experience offered by poetry, the "pleasurable enjoyment" that literature provides in the respite or distance from more agitated and boisterous feelings.

How closely do the views expressed in this elaboration of Delille illustrate Karamzin's own? The fashionable nature of its theme – *melanxolija* – and the recognition of Delille implicit in Karamzin's selection of this excerpt for publication (particularly on the background of his long-standing practice of introducing imported bits of European literature into Russian tradition) suggest that he

<sup>38</sup> An example of Karamzinian lyrical *toska* appears in the 1788 verse "*Vesen'njaja pesn' melanxolika*" (Karamzin 1966: 66-67).

<sup>39</sup> Karamzin's poem is the "imitation" of an excerpt from Delille's *L'imagination* that was published in 1800 (*Fragment [...] sur la Mélancholie*) in the Hamburg *Spektateur du Nord*. Although Delille's entire poem did not appear until 1808, he had begun working on *L'imagination* in the 1780s and the fragment selected by Karamzin had also appeared (with errors) in the 1800 *Mercure de France* (Kočetkova 2013: 211-212).

<sup>40</sup> "O, Melancholy! The most delicate modulation / From grief and *toska* to pleasurable enjoyment! / Happiness does not yet exist, and torment is no more; / Despair has passed...".

not only agreed with the poem's content, but wished to use Delille's authority to clarify his own views. In fact, *Melanxolija* returns to some of the ideas that Karamzin had touched upon in *Poslanie k ženščinam*, recounting again, for example, the passing of the seasons. In this later verse, personified *Melanxolija* herself emerges and flourishes precisely where women themselves had faded in *Poslanie*. *Melanxolija* prefers "solitude" to society, "gloomy nature" over summer's exuberance, "pale" and "declining" autumn. In the midst of winter revels, she remains aloof, her "merriment" is "falling into meditative silence and casting a tender glance at the past" ("*Veselie tvoe – zadumavšis', molčat' / I na prošedšee vzor nežnyj obraščat'*", Karamzin 1966: 261). In *Melanxolija*, women themselves no longer participate in or even spectate as the Poet 'modulates' *toska* into *melanxolija*. The sentiment of anguish that he had shared with his female companions in *Poslanie* is purged of their involvement and interference. *Melanxolija* herself has become the Poet's muse and women are excluded from their intimate communion.

In point of fact, women were largely excluded from the experience of *melanxolija* – or at least from its expression. Indeed, if *toska* tended to be perceived as a feminine sentiment, *melanxolija* was primarily a masculine emotion, and there were specific problems related to women's expression of it. Rarely found in women's texts, *melanxolija* occurs only once in Xvostova and only once again in Ewington's entire volume of eighteenth-century Russian women's poetry (2014), namely in the title of a 1798 poem by Anna Turčaninova, *Otvét na neodobrenie melanoxoličeskix čuvstvovanij v stixax* (*Response to a Rejection of Melancholy Feelings in Poetry*; Turčaninova 2014). Predating both Karamzin's *Melanxolija* and Delille's source text, Turčaninova's poem gives evidence of a broad social debate on the topic of women's expression of unhappiness and despair. Symptomatically, however, neither *melanxolija* itself nor *toska* appears in the actual verse. Explicitly framing her theme as the difficulty of representing personal (and especially despondent) emotions in verse, Turčaninova argues for the right to express these by doing just the opposite, i.e. by enumerating a list of inane cheerful topics about which she would rather not write:

Мне советуют унылых  
Мыслей не внушать перу –  
И от чувствий сердцу милых  
Душу удалять свою.

Петь, настроив звучну лиру,  
Резвость юных страстных дней,  
фимиам курить кумиру,  
С правдой прятаться своей.

В игры с Грацьями пускаться,  
Их забавам подражать,  
Голосом Сирен прельщаться,  
С Юнгом слез не проливать.

Нет! ... воздушный представляет  
 Замок мысль такая мне;  
 В ней мой дух не обретает  
 Пищи свойственной себе  
 (Ivi: 364-365)<sup>41</sup>.

Turčaninova's poem calls attention to the issue of women's silencing by illustrating that very problem. A paradoxical statement about what cannot be said, her verse indicates that women's struggle to author their own *toska* – a word that she does not use in her poem – continues.

A more forthright exposition of feminine despair – and one that emphatically uses the term *toska* – appears in a brief elegy on the death of her sister written by Elizaveta Dolgorukova in 1799. Eschewing *melanxolija*, the poet reiterates the more traditionally feminine *toska* five times: “*Postignula menja toska i učast' slezna*”, for example, “*Den' vsjakoju novoju toskoju menja razit'*”, “*Tak grud' moju toska užasnaja terzaet'*” (Dolgorukova 2014: 370-375)<sup>42</sup>. Dolgorukova's vigorous first-person voicing of women's anguish and her repetition in this context of the word *toska* follow the precedent set both by Urusova's verses and Xvostova's prose. Dolgorukova's lyrical component is less audacious than Xvostova's, however. Explicitly rather than implicitly autobiographical, it justifies its own emotivity by providing concrete motivation for it.

Another woman to take up emphatic *toska* was the poet Anna Volkova, who drew her inspiration directly from Xvostova. Writing after Karamzin's reworking of Delille, she nonetheless ignores any suggestion that admission to the literary elite would better be achieved through effusions of *melanxolija*. In 1807, Volkova published a poetic reelaboration of *Ručeev* which displays remarkable enthusiasm for *toska*: while 25% longer than Xvostova's text, her poem manages to maintain the high density of *tosk-* found therein, achieving one word in 233 as compared to Xvostova's one in 225. Within an existing tradition of women's writing, Volkova's sentiment deserves note as first-person expression, although the lyrical timbre is not her own. Indeed, by refashioning Xvostova's text and drawing attention to the voice and emotions of her predecessor, Volkova creates a verse that resembles a *heroïde* featuring Xvostova herself. In this way, Volkova's *Ručeev* not only corroborates the link in Russian letters between *toska* and femininity, but also celebrates both female literary tradition and women's entitlement to the experience and expression of sentiment.

<sup>41</sup> “They advise me to not incite my pen / To despondent thoughts – / And to distance my soul / From feelings dear to my heart. / To sing, tuning the sonorous lyre, / The frolics of passionate youthful days; / To burn incense before idols. / To hide away with my truth. / To join in the Graces' games, / To imitate their amusements, / To be enchanted by the Sirens' call, / To not shed tears with [Edward] Young. / No! ... I consider such thoughts / Mere castles in the air. / In them my soul cannot obtain / The nourishment that sustains it”.

<sup>42</sup> “*Toska* and a deplorable fate have befallen me”; “Each day strikes me with new *toska*”; “Thus, my breast is torn by terrible *toska*”.

In 1808, the debate over feminine melancholy took an unexpected turn when Vasilij Žukovskij published an essay on the subject in *Vestnik Evropy* (*The Herald of Europe*). Žukovskij was Karamzin's successor as editor of that journal, as well as a first generation romantic whose translated and original verse was thick with *toska*, *melanxolija*, and other forms of humoral dejection. The essay that he published under the title of *Melanxolija* was ostensibly written by "Karolina P.", however, an unknown and possibly fictitious woman<sup>43</sup>. Apparently French, since she writes of her adolescence in the Ancien Régime and her struggles during the Revolution and afterwards, Karolina may well have been invented by Žukovskij himself. Certainly, her essay allows him to participate in the exchange between Karamzin and Delille on the subject of melancholy<sup>44</sup>, an opportunity that he exploits with relish, showcasing his own views on the topic by undergirding Karolina's fourteen-page essay with an eight-page footnote (Karolina P. 1808: 164-171).

Whether or not Karolina's text was in fact a translation from French, it takes part in the Russian discussion of melancholy's merits, responding to Karamzin's reworking of Delille, in addition to the French source text<sup>45</sup>. In the context of this implicit debate on women's 'ownership' of despondent emotions, Žukovskij deserves note for his judgment that *melanxolija*, in vogue for several years among male writers, was now appropriate for feminine sentiment as well; he does so by chiding and correcting the matter-of-fact Karolina. She herself does not demand the right to claim melancholy as her own, but professes never to have experienced it, an affirmation echoed in the article's provocative subtitle, "*Sočinenie ženščiny, kotoraja nikogda ne byvala v melanxolii*" ("The Composition of a Woman Who Has Never Felt Melancholy"; *Ivi*: 161). Karolina's refutation of the commonly held notion that love and melancholy are inextricably linked (*Ivi*: 164), incites Žukovskij to claim that she properly understands neither: "that feeling which you took for love, seems to us nothing but a strong desire to please [...]," he notes reprovingly: "we consider [what you call] true love to be true co-

<sup>43</sup> "Karolina P." should not be confused with the writer Karolina Karlovna Pavlova, who was well known in the 1840s, but only one year old in 1808.

<sup>44</sup> On the evolution of Žukovskij's ideas on melancholy with respect to those of Karamzin and various other writers from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see, especially, Vinickij 1997. Žukovskij may also have contributed a translation of Madame de Genlis's tale *Melancholy and Imagination* to *Vestnik Evropy* in 1803 (*Ivi*: 150).

<sup>45</sup> To begin with, the comment "'*Melanxolija*', govorila odna umnaja ženščina, 'est' vyzdorovlenie goresti'" ("Melancholy", said one intelligent woman, 'is the curing of grief'), Karolina P. 1808: 172) recalls the characterization found in Karamzin (and absent in Delille) that melancholy is "*pervyj skorbi vrač*" ("the first doctor of grief"), although the attribution of this comment to an "intelligent woman" may suggest a third source, perhaps one shared by Karamzin and Karolina P. The verse quotation that follows, however – "*I materi svoej pečali vid imeet!*" ("And has the look of her mother, sorrow", *Ivi*: 173) – is taken from Karamzin's *Melanxolija*, and not from Delille (1837: 131) who had spoken instead of Melancholy's father ("*filie du malheur, elle a des traits de lui*").

quetry” (*Ivi*: 164, 166). *Melanxolija* is not limited to the purview of male emotion, he suggests, and sensitive women ought to be familiar with it.

Karolina does assert her right to feel powerful emotions, and recounts an eventful life that has included many of them, but not *melanxolija*. Nor does the Russian term *toska* – being neither topical, nor by 1808 needed to translate the French word *mélancholie* – appear in her text. Indeed, Karolina has little patience for melancholic inclinations, which she views as a pretentious charade. She admits to having once sought melancholy, but she survived a juvenile romance without encountering it, and thus left it behind as one of youth’s distractions when she moved on to face life more concretely. “The griefs (*goresti*) that we can call by name, those of whose impressions we are aware do not in the least comprise Melancholy” (*Ivi*: 163), Karolina avers:

I have never possessed either desire or sorrow (*pečal’*) without knowing exactly what I desired or why I felt sorrow; I never remember having been happy without knowing the source from which my happiness issued and my tears have always had a motive that was well known to me. Melancholy may be branded a luxury, an excess of sensibility, the poor usage made of that by those who don’t know what to use it for. As for me, I’ve always known to what I should apply my sensibility; I have been *busy* in all states of life, and often too unhappy to give in to melancholy (*Ivi*: 174; emphasis in original).

Neither *toska* nor *melanxolija*, Karolina’s essay suggests, is appropriate for feminine feeling, whether public or private. In rejecting these sentiments, she arguably refuses emphatic despair and thus the emotive ‘progress’ made by Urusova and Xvostova. Clearly, the terms of women’s participation in male-dominated literary discourse have shifted. While Xvostova’s groundbreaking display of emotion had channeled the force of powerful sentiment – presumably personally felt – into an act of writerly self-affirmation, the text of “Karolina P.” serves largely to demonstrate how femininity itself could actually lose touch with the emotional perceptiveness once so characteristic of the ‘gentle sex’. Admittedly, Karolina’s supposed shortcomings are not strictly literary: her ‘inability’ to grasp the true nature of either love or melancholy results from struggles that were existential rather than artistic in nature. Nonetheless, Žukovskij keeps her at a healthy – and reassuring – distance from writerly problems. What possible connection could a woman who does not even understand love or melancholy have with literature? Women may feel melancholy, but he does not indicate that they should take up the pen to share such feelings more widely. It is interesting to note that Žukovskij himself preferred *toskovanje* to *melanxolija* per se, despite Karamzin’s leanings, and later that same year – and in the same journal – published a verse entitled *K Nine (To Nina)* that reappropriates emphatic *toska* for the lyrical voice of the male poet.

A diminution over time in what the male literary establishment held as appropriate for women’s expressiveness might also be gauged by the editor’s introduction to Volkova’s *Ručeeek*. At the first publication of Xvostova’s *Kamin* in 1795, it will be recalled, her editor lauded that text for its “spirit of Os-

sianic grief” and “profundity of melancholic feeling” (Podšivalov 1795: 68), while Volkova in 1807 was credited merely with “knowing how to pour out in light and pleasant verse the tender feelings (*nežnye čuvstvovanija*) to which the female heart is always more attuned (*sposobnee*) than the male” (cf. Volkova 1807), despite having maintained her predecessor’s enthusiasm for reiterative *toska*. Gloom was an integral part of Volkova’s text as well, though her editor settles on “tenderness” as the dominant note, suggesting that only this quality had retained its appeal for women’s writing twelve years later.

It is tempting to think that the commentary by Xvostova’s editor might be related to what Karamzin’s Poet set as his own goal in “*Poslanie*” in 1796. Indeed, it seems quite plausible that the articulation of his poetic aims, which appeared a year after *Kamin* and in the same year that Xvostova published her *Otryvki*, responded, at least in general outline, to her work and to the cultural environment in which it was so well received. Differently put, Xvostova’s literary success may have influenced, again in broad terms, the rejection of women’s authorship found in “*Poslanie*” and the later purging of women’s *toska* or elegiac feeling in *Melanxolija*. *Poslanie* encourages women writers to disregard Xvostova’s model and become avid and attentive readers of men’s writing, the Poet’s account of silencing his female companion arguably attempting to wrest from Xvostova and other female authors the laurels bestowed upon them for “profundity of melancholic feeling”. Seen in this light, Xvostova’s *Kamin* appears as a rare instance of actual female expression providing a standard for the ‘feminized’ literary style that male writers sought, albeit a standard to be disavowed, challenged, negated, and retroactively erased.

Various scholars (cf. Arzumanova 1964: 210; Cross 1968: 48) have indicated that the general emotional tenor of Karamzin’s work changed notably over the course of the 1790s, a development that may have been sparked, at least in part, by women’s writing. Indeed, as this article illustrates, the lexical tools that Karamzin used to achieve an elegiac mood also underwent revision in that decade, his predilection for *melanxolija* perhaps encouraged precisely by this sentiment’s distinction from the *toska* – now too emphatic and feminine – proclaimed in Xvostova’s *Otryvki*. M.A. Arzumanova (1964: 208) has also credited Xvostova and, implicitly, her reiterative *toska* with influencing Karamzin’s writerly trajectory. In her view, Xvostova was one of several epigones whose admiration for Karamzin led her to enthusiastically emulate him, “not only fully copying, but also significantly reinforcing his weak sides and transforming them into templates [*štampy*]”. Her emotivity, Arzumanova suggests, was symptomatic of her desire to write like Karamzin, a widespread impulse that paradoxically led to emphatic sentiment’s general fall from grace. These imitators wrote so badly, in other words, that their efforts spurred Karamzin away from sentimentalism and from what he characterized as its “frequently feigned tearfulness” (*Ivi*: 207).

While justly highlighting Karamzin’s rejection of the extreme emotivity found in Xvostova, Arzumanova leaves unanswered questions of how exactly we might usefully define Karamzin’s ‘weak sides’ in the middle of the 1790s – or what these might have been to Xvostova. As subsequent women’s writing reminds

us, what Karamzin himself or established critics may have later judged as ‘weak’ was not necessarily regarded as such by other writers, many of them women, because they wrote from a different perspective and often for a different audience. While the fact that Xvostova overused Karamzinian stylemes helps to explain her emphatic quality in general, it does not illuminate her use of reiterative *toska* per se, which, as this article demonstrates, has no precedent in Karamzin. Moreover, describing Xvostova as a Karamzinian epigone obscures our appreciation of the artistic problems that she faced, how these are related to gender, and how they are connected to Urusova’s precedent as well as to Karamzin’s. Xvostova’s emotiveness was not simply a degenerate form of Karamzin’s, in other words, but also an expression that was marked as gendered and that attested to the significance of women’s writing and women’s ownership of emotion.

### 7. Coda: Toska in Winter

As we know, Karamzin turned away from literature in the first decade of the nineteenth century to issues of the Russian state and its history. History’s appeal may have lain partly in what he perceived as an opportunity to overcome the effeminate passivity of salon and boudoir and to inculcate Russia’s past – and perhaps his own – with a story of virile (self)-affirmation. And, as Dmitrij Blagoj (1931) has perceptively noted, Karamzin’s ventures in historiography illustrate a continued concern with problems posed by the passage of time, and with the sentiments of regret that contemplations of the past engendered. In both literary and historical texts, in other words, Karamzin ruminated elegiacally, revealing an “imprint of melancholy [...] conditioned not only by the transience of the present and anxieties about the future, but also by *toska* about the past” (*Ibidem*). His lyrics display a persistent “mood of decline” as well (*Ibidem*) and it is ultimately a quotation from *Melanxolija* – about the cycle of seasons – that illustrates for Blagoj the essence of Karamzin’s art:

‘приятнее всего’ ему ‘не шумная весны любезная веселость, не лета пышного роскошный блеск и зрелость, но осень бледная, когда, изнемогая и томною рукой венки своей обрывая, она кончины ждет’ (*Ibidem*)<sup>46</sup>.

This quotation unexpectedly allows us to link Karamzin’s historiography with the gendered imagery of seasonal waning shared by both *Poslanie k ženščinam* and *Melanxolija*. The narration of time’s passage in the latter resurrects the specter of female companions from the earlier verse, women who themselves seem personifications of the seasons as they succumb to autumnal *toskovanje* and the doom of imminent wintry death. In *Poslanie*, as we know, these women friends

<sup>46</sup> “‘most pleasant of all’ for him is ‘not the loud and amiable merriness of spring, nor the lush, luxuriant brilliance of summer’s ripeness, but pale autumn, when, failing, she tears off her wreath with a languid hand and awaits her end’”.

disappear, dissolving into the Poet's 'translation'; in *Melanxolija*, the new muse supplants them and their *toska*, while 'the word' (*slovo*) appertains exclusively to the poet. When read together with *Poslanie*, the later *Melanxolija* thus seems to record the death of the Poet's female friend or human muse that is carried out through his poetic assimilation of her. It also registers the pleasurable sense of regret with which he contemplates their shared and bygone past.

The elderly Urusova had meditated on winter death in quite similar terms. In a verse entitled *Vesna* (*Spring*) from 1796, she relies on the same well-worn trope of seasonal change to transform a fairly standard discussion of time's passage into a "confrontation not only with her own death, but [also] with being an old woman in a society that valued youth and beauty in women" (Vowles 1994: 49):

Где забавы, игры, смехи?  
Вы исчезли, утекли!  
Осень мрачная настала;  
Вслед за ней зима течет...  
Безвозвратно я увяла;  
Смерть меня у гроба ждет  
(Urusova 2014: 274-275)<sup>47</sup>.

The dismal atmosphere is strikingly similar to Xvostova's and, while some consolation appears in spring's renewal, the Poet nonetheless concludes on an ambiguous and disquieting note, dramatically announcing that she wishes to break off her speech altogether:

Но не будь, мой дух, отважен;  
Удержись!.. прерви свой глас! (*Ibidem*)<sup>48</sup>.

Her gesture is quite forceful and surprising. These lines, written in the same year that Xvostova published *Otryvki* and Karamzin *Poslanie*, simultaneously express melancholic feeling and seem to acknowledge Karamzin's suggestion that women's expression of feeling be quelled. Nonetheless, by 1796, Urusova had distinguished herself as both serious writer and advocate of women's authorship: she possessed not only an unusual "self-conscious awareness of [her own] womanhood" (Kahn 2013: 340), but also the conviction that she represented woman writers in general (Ewington 2014: 68). Indeed, as we have seen, the problem of how exactly to articulate melancholic sentiment was a pressing issue for women writers in general and Urusova's lines give voice to the problem of *toska*'s inexpressibility found later in Turčaninova and in Dolgorukova.

As noted, the fashion for *melanxolija* per se was relatively short-lived in Russian letters, though interest in the lexeme and sentiment of *toska* proved en-

<sup>47</sup> "Where are amusements, games, and laughter? / You have vanished... passed by! / Gloomy autumn has arrived. / Winter comes after it... / I have withered irrevocably; / Death awaits me by the grave".

<sup>48</sup> "But my spirit, be not bold! / Refrain!.. Cut short your voice!".

during. Urusova herself returned to the connection between *toska* and difficulties of authorship in a verse from 1796 on the topic of writing poetry:

В такой-то обитаю  
 Я скучной стороне;  
 Везде тоску встречаю,  
 И все постыло мне  
 (Urusova 2014: 288-291)<sup>49</sup>.

Urusova's characterizations of difficulties with expression did not prevent her from writing for two more decades, her work displaying "an increasing confidence in her own gifts tempered by a growing introversion and melancholy that reflects general literary trends" (*Ivi*: 60). *Xvostova*, too, continued to write, though without achieving the same popularity as she had with *Otryvki*. Like other women writers in the early nineteenth century, both continued to feel *toska*: a longing to liberate poems from the drawer, a yearning to close doors in the face of social duties and expectations, pining for an era (past? future?) in which they would be able to freely express their own ideas and sentiments. In which literary contexts *toska* was used, to what extent it preserved a link with the feminine, and where or how often it was reiterated remain topics for further study. We do know, however, that emphatic *toskovanie* was a feminine activity in eighteenth-century Russian letters and that the enthusiasm with which it was embraced by women writers (such as Aleksandra *Xvostova*) helped to encourage male writers (such as Nikolaj *Karamzin*) to select *melanxolija* for their own elegiac discourse.

## Резюме

Сара Дикинсон

*Александра Хвостова и Николай Карамзин – гендеровые аспекты тоски*

Главной целью настоящей работы является толкование понятия 'тоска' в русском литературном дискурсе восемнадцатого века и сентиментализма в частности. В художественных текстах исследуемой эпохи лексические ссылки на 'тоску' указывают на становление связи между этим чувством и представлением о женственности, кульминацию которой представляет краткое произведение Александры Хвостовой *Отрывки* (1796). Во многом благодаря преобладающим 'эмотивным мотивам', книга Хвостовой пользовалась популярностью среди своих современников, занимая значительное место в традиции женской словесности. Кроме того, столь же важное место *Отрывки* занимали и в литературных спорах о 'феминизации' литературы, касавшихся как сочинений таких писателей как Николая Карамзина и Василия Жуковского, так и современных писательниц. Последние же боролись за признание женского приоритета в переживании и выражении сильных эмоций.

<sup>49</sup> "I now reside / In such a dull place; / I encounter *toska* everywhere / And all has gone cold for me".