

## Literary culture as a dialog of contradictions and reconciler (basing on review of poetics of Russian literature of XVIII – beginning of XIX century)

Aleksej Nikolaevich Pashkurov and Anatolij Ilich Razzhivin

Kazan Federal University, Kremlyovskaya street, 18, 423600, Kazan, Russia

**Abstract.** Authors propose to view literary culture in the context of transition period of historical and cultural development. We understand literary culture as a focus of dialectic contradictions that promote evolution of culture, history and society. Russian literary culture of the period from late XVII till beginning XIX century is the subject of research. As we have found out the role of literary culture as reconciler in transition periods is promoted by ideology; in the situation of Russia of analyzed period it is dynamic balance of the ideas of Duty and Virtue.

[Pashkurov A.N., Razzhivin A.I. **Literary culture as a dialog of contradictions and reconciler (basing on review of poetics of Russian literature of XVIII – beginning of XIX century).** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(8s):120-124] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 25

**Keywords:** literary culture, Russian literature, XVIII century, transition periods, ideas of Duty and Virtue.

### Introduction

Literary culture is relatively new term for study of literature and related humanitarian sciences [1, 2, 3, 4]. At the same time the phenomenon that is defined by the term “literary culture” is one of the most dynamic phenomena that accurately define the whole complex of processes going on in global culture and history. Potential of literary culture is being manifested most vividly in so called “transition periods” that are characterized by rapid change of moral and aesthetic principles and often by a certain crisis of perception of history and the state of world by people.

System of phenomena and processes in literary culture allows speaking about two interconnected sides of this phenomenon. On one hand transition periods are characterized by liability of different contrasts and conflicts. But on the other hand the supreme purpose of literary culture is offering this of that way of reconciliation, revealing or elimination of these contradictions.

Russian literature of XVIII that was the beginning of the New Age in Russia is very indicative. Scientists belonging to a number of other national cultures relied on the studies of this period. This fact is also significant to our mind. Russian literary culture of XVIII century may be and should be considered as one of typical pages in the book of global history and culture. Results and conclusions of its system analysis may be easily applied to the study of literary culture dynamic in other periods of civilization evolution. That was the end of XVII – beginning of XIX centuries when two global models of cultural and historical development – West and East “coincided” and interacted producing new property. At the same time inside the history of Russia XVIII was a sort of interesting threshold of modern globalization processes when waves of

reforms and changes called into question inviolability of former sets of ideas that had been locked in national boundaries. That immediately arose the dilemma necessary for any culture in such a situation: either to shield it totally or to try to start a dialog with new patterns.

The **main methods of our research** are system, comparative and typological, historical and functional with combination of synchronous and diachronic methods.

### Literary culture as a dialog of contradictions: that main dimension of Western Slavonic studies with regard to Russian literature of XVIII – beginning of XIX centuries

The processes of a dialog of contradictions in literary culture have been going on simultaneously and relatively stormy for rather a long period. That is why Western Slavonic studies have been constantly noting continuation of changes that had started at the turn of XVII – beginning of XVIII century in Russia analyzing literary culture of the next “transition period” from the end of XVIII to beginning of XIX centuries. Peculiar “religious eclecticism”, “search of spiritual truth in the sources of all ages and peoples” [5] and general “epistemological crisis” of world outlook character with transfer from classical enlightener thought to new knowledge [6] are distinguished as leading, basic indicators of literary culture by these scientists.

Most scientists have come to conclusion that transitional character of literary culture is dialectic contrast of different principles. Let us consider this idea in more details and arrange modern scientific landscape according to this view.

Conceptions that presuppose analysis of transitional character of Russian literature of XVIII century via the balance of the “center” and

“circumference” form the first semantic group. Western civilization is considered as the center. Circumference that is developing Russia starts dialog with it via adaptation of novelty. (Scientific works that cover extremely wide range of phenomena in going on – from rethinking of Rousseau followers ideas to the questions of discussion with Western horticultural philosophy [7, 8] are indicative regarding this point of view.)

Second scientific school is represented by researches that analyze the general situation of “the crisis of epoch” (some typical examples we have given in the review earlier).

The third thread of modern scientific study is the study of psychological and world view dimensions related with phenomenology of author work. The hypothesis of the balance of truth and fiction in philology and its moral principles [9] is indicative regarding analysis of dynamic contradictions that appear in literary culture.

The fourth thread of conceptions that are interesting in this review comprise ideas of the patterns of transitivity via the dialog of genre models inside the literary process itself (scientists pays equal attention to poetry and prose, for example, writing odes [10] in Russia as well as genesis of Russian Romance philology [11]).

In considering genre dialog it is necessary to analyze the problem of interaction of culture types via the ways of cultural import. It is also manifestation of transitivity and its contradictions in literary culture (there may be interesting the works covering music and theatrical problems [12, 13] and mythologization and poetic of dreams on transitions between folklore and church traditions [14]).

And finally speaking about the dialectics of contradictions that push literary culture in the situation of transition period Western scientists touch the key problem of change of philosophic and literary ideologems [15, 16, 17].

What were the main dialectic contradictions that literature was to solve?

### **Literary culture: key dialectic contradictions (of the base of system view of the history of Russian literature of XVIII century)**

Dialectic contradiction “sense – feeling” was the central contradiction in different styles, directions and phenomena of Russian literature of XVIII century. Unsteady balance of these two principles was typical for the first third of the century that was the period of baroque and pre-classicism like in treatise by F. Prokopovich “De arte poetica”. On one hand he stated leading role of the freedom of fantasy and on the other hand he made ready for the priority

of future classicism: the idea of following the “sense of rules” [18].

M. Lomonosov's theory of Lyrical Ecstasy was the successor of these conceptions. “Intellect is capable of ruling world and feelings but has sense only in dialog with them”, that is the formula of Russian classicism. Sense now is being thought of as a principle greater or equal to Feeling. Indicative is a formula give in “Oda to Seizure of Khotin” by Lomonosov “Sudden ecstasy captured the sense...”. Starting from the time of ceremonial secular speeches of F. Prokopovich and first satire by A. Kantemir the role of Enlightenment is growing in dialectics of the opposition “Sense – Feeling”. For example, N. Novikov liked the concept of “education of intellect and training of heart” directly with ideas of progress. It is already an axiom for educational realism of second half of XVIII century, especially in the context of ideas of research and transformation of typical character in experimental circumstances [19].

When keeping the sign “greater or equal” between Sense and Feeling normative sentimentalism art changes its vector. Feeling becomes the leader, the reference point. Like in the case of European literary culture, one may speak about something as great as “psychological revolution” but with typical national colour [20, 21]. Normative features are preserved in sentimental poetics thanks to another pole – the Sense.

Pre-romanticism coexists with sentimentalism in parallel dimension. Both directions are liked with sensationalism philosophy in the system “human personality – human feeling” [22, 23]. These ideas make possible development of the other views on the balance of rational and emotional in art, literature and world cognition.

Sentimental system is based on the idea of “sensitiveness”. It is the base of both world cognition and its transformation via arts. “Sensitiveness” in the dialog with European literary movement is understood as “induced by external world move of a soul to compassion” [24]. New idea of the Nature and phenomenon of Virtue in inner life of a man for writers sentimentalists are connected with this [25].

Idea of “personality reflection” (or “holy melancholy” in philosophic lyrics of N. Karamzine) became the focal point of pre-romanticism. It is intermediate member between “sensitiveness” of sentimentalism and “psychologism” of romanticism [26]. Ideas of the Dream and Genius receive leading roles. Symbolic image of a Dream conditions optimistic pathos of pre-romanticism (“world as a miracle”) that differs from romanticism. Coming off to philosophic and aesthetical ideas of “unboundedness” of the world [27] takes shape due to praising personality as Genius.

Both sentimentalism and pre-romanticism are related with new ideas of historical process and leading role of its spiritual and moral component. Thoughts about national history as a source of “fascinating despondency” and center point of “sensitiveness virtue” [28] are frequent in journal essays of 1770 – 1800s. Writers related with sensationalism and pre-romanticism are those who acted as beginners of this trend. These writers were M. Kheraskov (“Rossiada”), M. Muraviov (“Talks in the Reign of Dead”), N. Karamzin (“Sensitiveness Stories”, “The History of Russian State”). It was also the period of great importance of newly discovered Ancient Russian hagiographic tradition.

Sentimentalism and pre-romanticism in Russian philological studies are joined by a number of related transitional phenomena. Expressive example is so called “melancholic school” in Russian philosophic lyrics of the turn of XVIII century.

As a result new more complicated layer appeared in pre-romanticism that is the idea of so called irrational, over-rational principle (it would have been finalized in works of aestheticians of romanticism P. Georgievski, L. Yakob and others). Works of N. L'vov, M. Muraviov, G. Derdjavin are the epicenter of the processes. Revealing of contradictions became possible due to harmonization trends in literary culture. In this context the unique phenomenon of Euro-Asian movement has great importance [29, 30, 31, 32, 33].

On one hand diversity, motley and contrasts of different trends and ideas in the situation of Russian philosophic studies of XVIII century (contradicting correlations of religious and secular principles, dynamics of rational and emotional on Russian classicism and others) push literature to crisis. But on the other hand the role of civilization core of culture is rapidly growing. What had existed as shadow base of processes has been gradually getting out on foreground and push historical and literary process in the levels of new quality.

Turning to the problems of developing and maturing of harmonizing force in Russian literary culture of XVIII century it is necessary to analyze the problem of new philological studies impact on non-literature context. First of all it means working out unified national idea and even more – complex ideological system that has centralizing effect. Dialog of ideas of Duty and Virtue is dominating in this process for a Russian in XVIII century. The union of these ideas-ideals leads to development of new stand in life that is the special supreme (Utopian) Optimism.

### **Literary culture as reconciler. Ideological system and unified national idea**

Duty and Virtue define the connection and interaction of external, state and ideological and internal psychological dimensions in literary culture of Russia of the New time.

In writing eulogy odes of M. Lomonosov or high tragedies of A. Sumarokov considered Duty as mainly philosophic and political conception. It is one of key manifestations of Ideals, of the Absolute. The other ideas were typical for didactic and psychological lyrics of M. Kheraskov, in prose of maturing Russian sentimentalism, in the study of pre-romantics about the Genius that redevelops the world. Another standard is obvious for all phenomena of literary culture. It is the standard of Virtue that was praised in ode by M. Kheraskov of the same name (“To the Virtue”). The Duty is oriented on the harmony of the universe and the Virtue is redemption of disharmony via spiritual suffering like in famous “Poor Liza” by N. Karamzin who was a sort of leader of literature in 1780-1810s. As Liza said. “Maybe we would have forgotten the soul of ours if not for tears that shed sometimes from our eyes”.

That is dialectic contradiction that explains intensive creative development of philological studies of Russia of the New Time. The more far ideologems of Duty and Virtue are from each other the closer they are internally and essentially.

The idea of Virtue as internal ethic core of transformation of the world of the principles of Harmony had been freely developed by M. Lomonosov. That is why he wrote in his eulogy to Elisabeth Petrovna the Empress (ode of 1747) indicative words “Her soul is more quiet than zephyr, and her glance is more beautiful than paradise...”.

The philosophy of Duty is inseparable with this. Variation typical for late Enlightenment may be found in the tragedy of XVIII century by Ya. Knyazhinin “Vadim Novgorodski”. Daughter of Novgorod head explains her love to foreign savior of her native town by the fact that Duty and Virtue in a person are united, “I love not Duke in Rurik, but Ruruk himself...”. The following interesting patterns are revealing with growing impact of the ideas of Enlightenment:

1. Duty may take both external and social image and internal or personal.

2. Internal Duty is being perceived gradually as the more effective way to reach real understanding of social duty.

3. The union of external and internal in philosophy of Duty causes both the progress of society and the progress of a personality. Evolution and succession chain – from writing classical Russian

odes to conceptions of Enlightenment journalism and dramatic composition of the middle of XVIII century and to openings of Russian Enlightenment realism – is obvious.

Masonry that is the second important study after Enlightenment transfer ideologem of Duty to external-internal dimension: following Duty before “the Architect of the Universe”, the God purges the soul of devoted mason and restore the world in the harmony of spiritual progress.

Virtue as integral ideology comes in Russian literary culture of XVIII century to the following conclusions:

1. Internal perfection of a person is impossible without following ideal social norm (from moral and political principles of ancient Russian philological studies in well-known slogan of F. Prokopovich “To gave the soul for the sake of people...” to known theory of “social man” in the works of A. Radischev for example I the “Dairy of one week”).

2. Internal perfection of a personality is the foundation of his(her) successful carrier in society and high civicism. “You are free, you are happy – its’ only me who is suffering...” that is the understanding of the Virtue that the hero of Ya. Kyazhinin drama Rurik had come to.

3. Virtue is the most direct and effective way to self-knowledge. Appeal of M. Lomonosov in one of his late odes of 1750s, “Research everything and always, That is great and excellent...” is logical in this context.

4. Virtue in its supreme manifestation is Harmony and finding of the Truth and the God. In relation with the idea of the synthesis of arts alike worldview may be see in pre-romanticism ode by N. L'vov “Music or Semotomy” where art even “Gives the relief for the souls of miserables in Gratifying warm tear...”.

So we can see the following:

a) Duty and Virtue are constantly interlacing and interpenetrate in world view that creates Russian philological study of XVIII century.

b) Union of ideas of Duty and Virtue is characteristic and typical practically for all periods of historical and literary process of 1700 – 1800s. Later V. Zhukovski would stipulate it metaphorically, “Poetry is virtue...”.

Final phase of the philosophy of Optimism is declaring of crucial role of personality that united the Duty and Virtue in transformation of a people, state and the whole world. That is why N. Karamzin made the following conclusion in “The knight of Our Time” “That is nobleman who stands for many all alone...”.

### Conclusions and perspectives

1. Different layers of culture are often relatively slow in processes of ongoing changes. That is why in manuals of the beginning of XVIII century (“Recommendations to write different complements”, “The honest mirror of youth”) traditions of ancient Russian works of such type are preserved (“Domostroi” first of all). In the same way classicism has been defining official image of Russian architecture almost for all the century.

2. Processes ongoing in different subsystems of culture specific dialectical “ring” in comparison of the beginning and the end of XVIII century.

For first years and the first decade of the century baroque conception of “temple synthesis of arts” (philological study, rhetoric, (hook) music, temple architecture, painting and icon-painting) was actual.

The following is typical for the end of XVIII – the beginning of XIX century:

a) insertion of data of the other arts in a work (“Music or Semotomy” by N. L'vov),

b) mastering of different arts as a complex by authors of encyclopaedic knowledge (in case of N. L'vov - G. Derzhavin circle these are painting, theater, music with using of knowledge from botanic, mineralogy and geology, beekeeping, etc.).

3. While in the middle of XVIII century syncretism, integrity of literature and the other arts were possible (that reflected baroque idea of world cognition via chaos and diversity of contrasts) from the second half of the process (not later than 1760s) synthesisism had the leading position. It is intentional combining of different arts in one system with full understanding and acknowledgment of their independent character. Poetics of pre-romanticism became the guiding line for writers.

### Corresponding Author:

Dr. Pashkurov, Kazan Federal University, Kremlyovskaya strit, 18, 423600, Kasan, Russia.

### References

1. Nikolaev, S.I., 1996. Literary culture of The Peter the Great Period. Saint-Petersburg, pp: 151.
2. Lazarchuk, R.M., 2000. Literary culture of the last third of XVIII century (The Dialog of the Capital and the Province). Saint-Petersburg, pp: 55.
3. Sazonova, L.I., 2006. Russian literary culture. Early New Time. Moscow, pp: 904.
4. Alekseeva, N.Yu., 2005. Russian ode. Development of ode poetry in XVII – XVIII centuries. Saint-Petersburg, pp: 369.
5. Fagginato, R., 2002. Religious eclecticism in Russia at the turn of XVIII century. Study

- Group on eighteenth-century Russia. Newsletter, 30: 49 – 67.
6. Dehne, M., 2010. The epochal change in the Russian poetry in 1800: transitions from klassischAufklärerishen to modern knowledge in the poetics of Derzhavin, Karamzin and Batjuskov, pp: 251.
  7. Barran, T., 2002. Russians read Rousseau 1762 – 1825. Evanston, Northwestern UP, pp: 235.
  8. Schönle, A., 2007. The Ruler in the Garden. Politics and Landscape Design in Imperial Russia. Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien: Peter Lang. Russian Transformations: Literature, Thoughts, Culture. Volume 1. University of Oxford, pp: 396.
  9. Dehne, M., 2002. The legitimacy of lying in Karamzin's "Ilya Muromec". The world of the Slavs, bd.XXVII: 107 – 130.
  10. Egeberg, E., 1985. "The heart number" - the ode between Classicism and Romanticism. Scando-Slavica, bd.31, pp: 41 – 54.
  11. Baudin, R., 2002. Training and poetics of Russian novel in the eighteenth-century: the novel system for years... Paris, pp: 315.
  12. Klein, J., 1984. Trumpet, shawm, fiddle and lyre. Poetological symbols in Russian classicism. Journal of Slavic Philology, 44, pp: 1 – 19.
  13. Alewyn, R., 1985. The great theater of the world. The epoch of court festivals. Munich, pp: 320.
  14. Ford, J., 1998. Coleridge on Dreaming: Romanticism, Dreams and the Medical Imaginations. Cambridge University Press, pp: 204.
  15. Bobric, M.A., 1993. From rationalism to the time of sensationalism. Russian Linguistics, 17: 37 – 55.
  16. Lehmann-Carli G., M. Schippan, B. Scholz and S. Brohm, 2001. Russian reconnaissance reception in the context of official educational concepts (1700-1825). Berlin: Berlin Verlag Arno Spitz GmbH, pp: 679.
  17. Klein, J., 2005. The ways of cultural import. Works on Russia literature of XVIII century. Moscow, pp: 577.
  18. Smolina, K.A., 2001. Russian tragedy. XVIII century. Evolutoin of genre. Moscow, pp: 208.
  19. Boreev, Yu.B., 2001. Enlightenment realism. The theory of literature. Vol. 4: Literary process. Moscow, pp: 205 – 211.
  20. Kotschetkova, N.D. and G. Lehmann-Carli, 2005. Aspects of Pietism reception at the Moscow Freemasons (1780). Funktionäle contexts and typological analogies. Interdisciplinary researches pietism, 17/2, pp: 717 – 726.
  21. Klein J., S. Dixon and M. Fraanje, 2001. Reflections on Russia in the Eighteenth Century. Cologne; Weimar; Vienna. pp: 7 – 18.
  22. Neuhäuser, R., 1973. Periodization and classification of sentimental and preromantic trends in Russian literature between 1750 and 1815. Canadian contributions to the seventh international Congress of Slavists. The Hague, Paris, pp: 11 – 39.
  23. Zapadov, V.A., 1995. Literature directions on Russian literature of XVIII century. Saint-Petersburg, pp: 79.
  24. Kotchetkova, N.D., 1994. Literature of Russian sentimentalism. Saint-Petersburg, pp: 282.
  25. Pashkurov, A.N., 2010. Late Russian sentimentalism: the dialog of idyllic and elegiac. Kazan, pp: 127.
  26. Barrat, G.B., 1973. The melancholy and the wild ... Studies in Eighteen centure. Cleveland; London, vol. 3, pp: 125 – 135.
  27. Fedoseeva, T.V., 2006. Theoretical and methodological base for the literature of Russia pre-romanticism. Moscow, pp: 158.
  28. Petrov, A.V., 2006. Maturing of artistic historicism in Russian literature of XVIII century. Magnitogorsk, pp: 288.
  29. Orlova, I.B., 1998. Euro-Asian civilization. Moscow, pp: 275.
  30. Erasov, B.S., 2002. Civilizations. Universal and original. Moscow, pp: 524.
  31. Nigmatullina, Yu.G., 1997. Types of cultures and civilizations in hisotrical development of Tatar and Russian literatures. Kazan, pp: 212.
  32. Razzhivin, A.I., 2001. "Magic of red fantasy". Aesthetics of Russian preromantic poem. Kirov, pp: 96.
  33. Buranok, O.M., 2013. The works of Feofan Prokopovich and Russian and foreign literary relations of the first half of XVIII century, PhD thesis, Samara, pp: 524.

5/15/2014