

# Acknowledgements

Many people and institutions have generously assisted me in the writing of this book, for which I am profoundly indebted to them.

First of all I would like to thank my teachers at Kantonsschule Oerlikon near Zurich, in particular history teacher Ursula Verhein, who first drew my attention to gender aspects in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and English teacher Verena Dedial-Lutz, whose feminist views and love of British culture were a great inspiration. I would also like to thank Professor emeritus Rolf Fieguth at the Department of Slavistics, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, who encouraged me to explore Russian Sentimentalist women's writing, both in written assignments and in my *Lizentiatsarbeit* (comparable to a Master's thesis), *Anna Buninas Übersetzung von Boileaus Art Poétique im Problemkontext weiblicher Autorenschaft zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Anna Bunina's Translation of Boileau's *Art of Poetry* in the Context of Female Authorship in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century).

A three-year Graduate Teaching Assistantship from the Department of Modern Languages, Russian Section, at the University of Exeter, UK, enabled me to explore the topic in depth and to complete my PhD thesis, *Women Writers of the 1800–1820s and the Response to Sentimentalist Literary Conventions of Nature, the Feminine and Writing: Mariia Pospelova, Mariia Bolotnikova, and Anna Nau-mova*. I am immensely grateful to my supervisors, Katharine Hodgson and Carol Adlam, for their continuous support, encouragement and invaluable advice, for their assistance in search of funding, and their generosity which allowed me to research this fascinating topic. Moreover, I am grateful to Wendy Rosslyn, without whose numerous comments as an external examiner of my thesis this book would not have seen the light of day.

The *Overseas Research Student Award Scheme* (Universities UK, England) provided generous additional financial assistance during those three years, as did contributions from two Swiss foundations, *Dr. Max Husmann Stiftung für Begabte* (Dr. Max Husmann Foundation for the Gifted), and *Stiftung für die Frau* (Women's Foundation). Finally, the *Postgraduate Research Fund of the School of Modern Languages* at the University of Exeter, and the *British Association of Slavonic and East European Studies* funded research visits to Russian archives and libraries that were of crucial importance for the gathering of material for my study.

Various parts of this book were presented at conferences and research meetings, which produced valuable feedback from scholars in my field. In 2000, during the

*Osteuropa-Tage* (Days of Eastern Europe) at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, I presented work on Anna Bunina. In 2001 I compared Anna Bunina and Mariia Pospelova at the *Junges Forum Slavistische Literaturwissenschaft* (Young Forum for Slavonic Literary Studies) in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. At the Postgraduate Research Seminar at the University of Exeter in October 2001, I focused on women and poetry in imperial Russia.

In 2002, I explored the question of Russian women poets and the craft of writing at the *Postgraduate Research Seminar*, Schools of Modern Languages, Universities of Bristol and Exeter, UK. Subsequently, I gave a public lecture on the topic of early-19<sup>th</sup>-century Russian women writers, presented a paper on Sentimentalism's potential for social criticism to the *Interdisciplinary Conference 'Beyond Anthropocentrism'*, and addressed the question of the feminine myth in Russian Sentimentalism in a presentation to the *Feminist Research Network*, all at the University of Exeter.

In 2003 I presented a paper on women's opportunities to become writers in the Sentimentalist era to the *Annual Meeting of the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia* at Hoddesdon, UK, and to Professor Dr Natal'ia Kochetkova's *Study Group of Russian Eighteenth-Century Literature* at Pushkin House in St Petersburg, Russia.

In 2005 I discussed the Russian reception of the French poet Mme Deshoulières' meditative idylls during a research meeting of the *Junges Forum Slavistische Literaturwissenschaft* (Young Forum for Slavonic Literary Studies) in Bern, Switzerland, and—in 2006—at the conference *Translators, Interpreters, Mediators: Women Writers 1700–1900* at Chawton House Library in Alton, UK, and at the conference *Crossing Borders: Transpositions and Translations in Russian Culture* in Cambridge, UK. Contrasting ideals of family structures in the work of Anna Labzina were at the centre of my presentation to the conference *Familiengeschichten: Familienstrukturen in biographischen Texten* (Family Stories: Family Structures in Biographical Texts) held in 2006 at the University of Bern, Switzerland.

In 2007 my presentation to the *XIIème Congrès International des Lumières* in Montpellier, France, focused on the research potential of texts by Russian Sentimentalist women writers which I had published online: *The Corinna Project*<sup>1</sup> ran from January 2002 to October 2003 at the Department of Russian at the University of Exeter in collaboration with what was then the University's Centre for Nineteenth Century European Literature. In 2008, at the conference *Going European?*

---

1 Russian Department, University of Exeter, England: The Corinna Project, accessed on 8 December 2014, [www.ex.ac.uk/russian/corinna](http://www.ex.ac.uk/russian/corinna).

*New Approaches to European Women's Writing* in Utrecht, The Netherlands, I presented a paper on research opportunities in transcultural influences in Russian women's writing. Finally, I presented a paper on conceptions of the muse in Anna Naumova's writings during a panel on 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian women at the National Convention of the *Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies* (formerly the *American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies*) in Philadelphia, USA.

I am as grateful to participants of the aforementioned conferences for their advice, comments and discussions, as to the editors and reviewers of *Aspasia* and other publishers of articles mentioned below, whose feedback contributed to improving various aspects of this book. Among them are Maria Bucur, Anthony Cross, Krassimira Daskalova, Francisca de Haan, Amanda Ewington, Diana Greene, Gitta Hammarberg, Catriona Kelly, Joachim Klein, Natal'ia Kochetkova, Marcus C. Levitt, Charlotte Rosenthal, Wendy Rosslyn, Roland Vroon, Andrei Zorin, and the late Mikhail Fainshtein and Lindsey Hughes, who are both much missed.

Some parts of this book were previously discussed in articles, the most significant among them being, 'Released from Her Fetters? Natural Equality in the Work of the Russian Sentimentalist Woman Writer, Mariia Bolotnikova,' in *Aspasia: International Yearbook of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern European Women's and Gender History: Women Writers and Intellectuals*, 2008. The anthology *Interdisziplinarität – Intermedialität – Intertextualität* (Interdisciplinarity, Intermediality, Intertextuality) includes my publication 'Parodie als Mittel der poetologischen Selbstbestimmung – Untersuchungen zu Bunina and Pospelova' (Parody as a Means to Poetological Self-Determination: Bunina and Pospelova). The *Newsletter of the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia* published my contribution, "'I Will Create Whatever I Want to': Naturalness as a Source of Mastery in the Works of Sentimentalist Women Poets.' These publications were instrumental in helping me clarify the thoughts and reflections presented here.

A great source of inspiration was the tireless enthusiasm for transcultural influences in European women's writing shown by Suzan van Dijk, with whom I had the welcome opportunity to co-author 'NEWW: New Approaches to European Women's Writing (before 1900)' for the 2008 edition of *Aspasia*.

Amanda Ewington most kindly permitted me to read the manuscript of her work on Russian women poets of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and gave generous permission to use her translation of the preface and of one poem by Pospelova included in my book. I am grateful to Robert Chandler for referring me to Emily Lygo, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for translating all the other poems under the most extraordinary circumstances.

Daniel Henseler, Carolin Heyder and Ute Stock shared their opinions on my research topic. Professor Hans Badertscher at the Department of Didactics at the University of Bern, Switzerland, generously provided financial support for me to participate in some of these conferences, and gave me leave from teaching for this purpose. I am grateful to John Murray for his emotional support when I was about to embark on an academic career in the UK, and to Katia Teriukova and her family for their hospitality in St Petersburg during my research visits.

My thanks are also due to numerous diligent library staff at the Universities of Exeter and Bern at Unitobler; at the Rare Books and Manuscript Sections of the Russian National Library, at the Institute for Russian Literature (Pushkin House) and the Scientific Library of St Petersburg State University, all in St Petersburg; and at Moscow's Russian State Library.

I am grateful to the Swiss National Science Foundation, the University of Zurich's Open Access Publishing Fund and the Gender Equality Commission at the University of Zurich for their financial support of this publication.

Finally, I would like to thank Margret Powell-Joss for her assistance in the editing process and Marlène Thibault for proofreading the manuscript.

While this book was being written, I enjoyed the invaluable emotional and material support of my parents, Hansueli and Milu Stohler, of my husband, Andres von Känel, and of my parents-in-law, Lisi and Edi von Känel, who demonstrated their appreciation of how much I value academic study by cooking meals for us and spending time with my three wonderful children, twins Benjamin and Raya and their younger brother Leon, allowing me to focus on my research.

This book is dedicated to my children, my husband and my family: You light up my life.