

# Acknowledgements

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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.

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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?*

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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*.

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