Translation as sentimental education: Zhukovskij's *Sel'skoe kladbishche*

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Abstract. Vasilij Zhukovskij's *Sel'skoe kladbische*, a translation of Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, occupies a special place in Russian literary history. First published in 1802, it was so widely imitated by later Russian poets that it came to be regarded as a "landmark of Russian literature", not only at a boundary between two cultures (English and Russian) but also at a boundary within Russian culture itself — the transition from Neoclassical to Romantic aesthetics. Zhukovskij's translation of Gray can be read as the end result of a long process of personal education in the sign system of Sentimentalism, in both its European and its Russian variants, which then reproduced itself in an impersonal way within his culture as a whole. Zhukovskij did not merely reinscribe Gray's poem into Russian. Rather, he used it to deploy the developing Russian Sentimentalist (Karamzinist) style within a wide range of lyric registers, thereby providing models for other Russian lyric poets. In this sense, his work exemplifies Juri Lotman's dictum that "the elementary act of thinking is translation" — it made it possible for Russian poets to think within an entirely new, though by no means foreign system of signs.

In December 1802, a translation of Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* entitled simply *Sel'skoe kladbishche* [Village Graveyard] was published in the Moscow journal *Vestnik Evropy*. It was the first complete translation of the English original into Russian verse, though not its first appearance in Russian culture. The *Elegy* had been popular throughout Europe for half a century — its famous conclusion, called the *Epitaph*, was especially admired — and at least six Russian translations of various kinds had already been made (Levin 1970: 274–275). This one, however, was different. It brought

its creator, a nineteen-year-old graduate of the Moscow University Nobleman's Pension named Vasilij Andreevich Zhukovskij, almost overnight fame. Only one year after *Sel'skoe kladbishche* appeared in print, Nikolai Karamzin — the editor of the *Vestnik Evropy* and the leading figure in Russian literature at the time — was habitually alluding to its verses "as if to a passage by Lomonosov or Derzhavin known to everyone" (quoted in Etkind 1973: 57–58).

The young translator went on to make a brilliant career, first as Karamzin's successor at the *Vestnik Evropy*, then as a celebrated literary figure in St. Petersburg salons, and eventually as a pedagogue to the imperial family, becoming tutor to the future Tsar Liberator Alexander II. Zhukovskij's career as a translator, but also as an original poet, editor, theorist, and pedagogue — and even as an informal literary impresario, mentor to figures like Pushkin and Gogol — made him the key figure in the Russian assimilation of European Romanticism. This in turn assured a special place for *Sel'skoe kladbishche* in the narrative of Russian literary history. Nearly a century after the translation was published, the symbolist Vladimir Solov'ev in a footnote to one of his poems called it "the origin of truly human [istinno-chelovecheskoj] poetry in Russia" (Solov'ev 1974: 118). The scholar V. N. Toporov in 1981 named it a cultural "event" and went on to outline four reasons for why it should be placed among the primary sources of the Russian lyric (Toporov 1981: 207–208).

The chicken-and-egg problem of *Sel'skoe kladbishche* and Russian Romanticism has been a feature of critical thinking on the translation at least since Belinskij in the 1840s. All modern scholars agree that *Sel'skoe kladbishche* cannot be considered a "Romantic" work by a strict definition of the term, for the simple historical reason that the theory of Romanticism — including simply the word "Romantic" — became current in Russia only two decades later. Toporov, for example, rather brusquely dismisses the question of Zhukovskij's Romanticism in the poem, "both from a synchronic and from a diachronic point of view" (Toporov 1981: 211). Yet such was the influence of *Sel'skoe kladbishche* both on its original audience and on the self-styled Russian Romantics of the 1820s that in retrospect it came to be seen not only as the origin of Zhukovskij's career but of an entirely new literary period. "Despite all efforts at greater precision," Toporov concedes, "it would hardly be possible to find in Russian poetry a

work that put down such a clear boundary between itself and that which preceded it" (Toporov 1981: 241).

As a translator, then, the young Zhukovskij was something more than a cultural mediator. He was an artist who through the medium of translation actively renewed his own culture and enlarged its dialogic capacity not only with other cultures but also with itself. Translators work at the boundaries between languages, cultures, and societies. But in doing so, they also shape the boundaries *within* their own languages, cultures, and societies, boundaries between discourses, idioms, and historical eras. As Peeter Torop notes:

> One of the missions of the translator is to increase the receptivity and dialogic capability of a culture, and through these also the internal variety of that culture. As mediators between languages, translators are important creators of new metalanguages. (Torop 2008: this volume)

The way in which *Sel'skoe kladbishche* simultaneously invites reflection on both the translator as an artistic personality and the translation as an impersonal artefact makes it especially interesting from the semiotic point of view. On the one hand, Zhukovskij himself habitually called it "my first printed poem", although this was not in fact the case. Clearly his selection of the *Elegy* and his treatment of the text had great personal significance for his development as an artist (Zhukovskij 1999: 437). On the other hand, *Sel'skoe kladbishche* — endlessly imitated by later Russian poets — achieved its status as a "*pamiatnik russkoj literatury*" (landmark of Russian literature) at the boundary between Neoclassical and Romantic aesthetics in a way that was quite beyond its creator's personal intentions or control. The text of the translation thus not only stands at a nexus between two cultures (English and Russian) and at a nexus within a single culture (Russian Neoclassicism and Romanticism) but also identifies the personal development of its creator with the impersonal development of his culture as a whole. The German word *Bildung* is perhaps more expressive here than the English word *development*, combining as it does the concepts of "development" with those of "education" and "formation". Zhukovskij's translation of Gray can be read as a kind of "*Bildungsgedicht*", the end result of a long process of personal education, which then reproduced itself in an impersonal way within Russian-speaking culture as a whole. In this sense, it virtually

exemplifies Juri Lotman's dictum that "the elementary act of thinking is translation" (Lotman 2000: 143).

Gray's *Elegy* and Sentimentalism

Zhukovskij's choice of Gray's *Elegy* to translate can be placed within the semiotic context of European Sentimentalism as a generalized phenomenon. Never as clearly defined nor as comprehensively theorized as the subsequent Romantic movement, the Sentimentalist trend began in the first half of the 18th century among fashionable English novelists, poets, and moral philosophers — Richardson, Fielding, Young, Thomson, Warton, and Sterne, to name a few — who treated certain themes with a distinctive new style and tone. The fashion was later taken up on the Continent at different times and in different ways that reflected the local traditions. The Irishman Laurence Sterne gave the movement its name with his *Sentimental Journey* in 1768, although his own take on the movement was already decidedly tongue-in-cheek.

The Sentimental heart was inclined to excrescences of feeling and to easy tears bordering on self-indulgence. The Sentimental writer revelled in mortality and lost love, in the wildness of nature, in the contrast of nocturnal and twilight scenes to the blazing sun of the Enlightenment. The success of Edward Young's *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1742–1745) gave rise to a popular school of "graveyard poets", such as Thomas Parnell or Robert Blair, who braided stylized landscapes and sepulchral imagery into a loosely-constructed philosophical meditation. Their muse was pensive Melancholy, the cloistered inhabitant of shadows and ruins, hailed by a singer "whose strenuous tongue", as the young poet Keats would sarcastically put it, "can burst joy's grape against his palate fine".

The popularity of the elegy as a poetic genre, while indebted above all to the "graveyard poets", grew out of the overall Sentimentalist trend. In antiquity, the term "elegy" was originally applied to a verse form and only later used to designate a poetic occasion: the *elegeia* or lament. In the Neoclassical tradition, the well-developed pastoral elegy lent the genre a series of conventional motifs: a procession of mourners, an invocation to the gods, symbols of fertility and rebirth,

and so on. In the vernacular tradition, however, the term "elegy", while it continued to mean a lament occasioned by death or love, came to be more and more loosely applied to any poem with a reflective-meditative content and a particular kind of consoling warmth. The vernacular elegy attained artistic unity not through an arrangement of compulsory motifs but rather through the construction and main-tenance of an intimate, heartfelt tone.

The English poet Thomas Gray (1716–1771) was a Cambridge scholar, well-versed in both the Classical and the vernacular traditions. His *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, first published in 1751, could trace its pedigree to Milton's *Lycidas*, the great model for the pastoral elegy in English. But neither Milton nor the ancient poets would have dreamed of composing an elegy for the common man. Gray's innovation lay in the fact that he married the "high" genre of the Neoclassical elegy to a deeply populist sensibility, conferring its dignity on ordinary people and by extension on a growing audience of middle-class readers. His experiment was one of those rare poems that have immediate success both in educated circles and among the general public. A tradition exists that in 1759 the ill-fated British General Wolfe read it to his troops before the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. The *Elegy* quickly ran through eleven editions, creating variant texts that bedevil scholars to this day (Weinfield 1991: 1–10).

Despite its immense popularity and influence, the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* never received unanimous acclaim from English critics. Its only obvious formal merit was its so-called "elegiac stanza" — an iambic pentameter line (the workhorse line of English poetry) set in quatrains rhyming ABAB. Gray's elegiac stanza is self-contained, balanced, and symmetrical, with each stanza expressing a single complete thought. Every line within the stanza corresponds to a grammatical period. The lines are sparingly en-jambed and only rarely even catalectic or hypermetric. Their imagery is "paratactic", one image displacing the other in a formal and rather monotonous procession. The most famous stanza provides a good illustration for the whole:

> The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave.
> (Gray 1966, ll. 33–36)

In fact, the poem is an exemplary mid-18th century work with an abundance of conventional rhetorical devices — the personification of abstractions, for example — and with little feeling for the natural flow of English speech. No less an authority on the subject than William Wordsworth, in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, singled out Gray as a poet for whom metrical composition and everyday speech were irreconcilable (Wordsworth 1969: 162–163). The Anglophone critical consensus on the poem was perhaps first articulated in the late-19th century by Matthew Arnold, who argued that "Gray, a born poet, fell upon an age of prose" (Arnold 1961: 328). Arnold admired Gray's work but believed that it owed its success to extra-poetic factors. The modernist critic I. A. Richards expanded on this point when he called the elegy "perhaps the best example in English of a good poem built upon a solid foundation of stock responses" (Richards 1929: 253).

The consensus of the English critics points to why the *Elegy* had enormous success in translation. It creates its most original effects through a translatable "message" that is not strongly tied to an untranslatable "music". The concepts are unironic and easily paraphrased, the images unambiguous and clear. Yet the work on the whole is distinctly "poetic", not solely because it plays on stock responses, but because it covers an extraordinary range of lyric registers. Scholars are divided on which edition of Gray was translated by Zhukovskij (cf. Toporov 1981: 295–7 and Zhukovskij 2000: 50–59). However, the version that appears in the Oxford Complete Poems (Gray 1966: 37–43) is sufficient to make the point: in thirty-two stanzas, generally grouped into sets of three or four, the content ranges from landscape painting (ll. 1–16) to an imaginative flight of fancy (ll. 17–28); from gentle entreaty (ll. 29–40) through a wistful meditation (ll. 41–56) to a political diatribe so highly-charged that it anticipates the Shelleyean sonnet (ll. 57–72); from introspective psychological analysis (ll. 73–92) to Neoclassical pastoral tableau (ll. 93–116), concluding in the related but different genre of the *Epitaph* (ll. 117–128). Each set of stanzas sounds a new lyric register, while the poem as a whole buoyantly maintains its elegiac tone, the imagery supporting the train of thought, and vice versa. Shakespearean actors claim that they love to play Hamlet because the role gives them so many opportunities to act. The same might be said of translators and the *Elegy*, since the work contains so many of the expressive possibilities available to the lyric poem.

Zhukovskij and the Karamzinist style

Since Zhukovskij was still a teenager when he translated Gray, his high level of hermeneutic sophistication, first in the selection and then in the treatment of the text, must be attributed at least in part to the influence of others — and above all to Karamzin. The great nineteenth century scholar A. N. Veselovskij once called Karamzin "the organizer of our literary sentimentalism" (Veselovskij 1999: 46). Emerging from Moscow pietist and Masonic circles around the time Zhukovskij was born, Karamzin was influenced through the 1780s by figures like the *Sturm and Drang* poet Jakob Lenz who were challenging the French-dominated Neoclassical Enlightenment. He immersed himself in what would later be known as "pre-Romantic" literature — Rousseau and his epigones, the graveyard poets, the German *Kraftgenies* and *schöne Seelen* — and toward the end of the decade embarked on a one-year tour of Western Europe, where he made excellent use of his time, meeting with figures like the philosopher Herder. He returned to a post as editor of the *Moskovskij zhurnal*, where in the early 1790s he published the first of his *Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*, travel letters in the tradition identified with Sterne. Around the same time, he published a series of original tales, the best-known of which, a Werther imitation called *Bednaya Liza*, confirmed his reputation as the leader of a new direction in Russian literature.

Since the question of Karamzin's "Sentimentalism" involves many of the same literary-historical problems as the question of Zhukovskij's "Romanticism", we will have to make do with the inadequate remark that Karamzin was largely indifferent to the philosophical pressures that opposed Sentimentalism to the Enlightenment in the West. Karamzin's "Sentimentalism" took the form of a literary-stylistic revolution: he encouraged a new generation of writers to develop a refined "salon style" that would allow them "to write as they speak" and "to speak as they write". The second injunction was as important as the first, since Karamzin conceived of the spoken language not only as the point of departure, but also as the object of reform. The new style need not even be particularly "sentimental" in the heartfelt sense, but only the source for new expressions of sentiment, new turns-of-phrase, new imagery and themes. Not coincidentally, Karamzin was the most important translator of his generation, working from almost all the major modern European languages.

Among his most important accomplishments in the 1790s was the *Panteon inostrannoj slovesnosti*, a library of translated literature, the very existence of which had world-historical implications for the development of Russian high culture. The school that sprang up around Karamzin aspired to an ideal language and an ideal life approved by Sentimental taste and feeling. A swarm of Karamzinist imitators began to publish in popular household journals like *Priyatnoe i poleznoe preprovozhdenie vremeni* [*The Pleasant and Useful Passing of Time*], which were soon overflowing with Youngian conceits and Ossianic imagery.

Zhukovskij met Karamzin while still a student at the Moscow University Noblemen's Pension. The university preparatory classes at the Pension, founded in the 1770s by the poet Mikhail Heraskov, a prominent Mason, were an unusual blend of autocratic conservatism and Western-influenced religious ideals. The boys learned respect for tradition through the study of Lomonosov and Derzhavin — masters of the Neoclassical *pohval'naya oda*, or civic-laudatory ode — yet they also read the pietist reflections of the German pastor Christoph Christian Sturm, whose *Betrachtungen über die Werke Gottes im Reiche der Natur* had been translated in part by Karamzin. Zhukovskij enrolled at the Pension in January 1797 and soon had success both in academic and in social pursuits. His instructor in philology, Mikhail Nikitich Bakkarevich, taught him verse composition in the style of the *pohval'naya oda* but also encouraged him to explore the Karamzinist innovations, at first not so much in formal verse as in various types of lyrical prose: meditations, landscapes, or psychological descriptions (Petrunina 1987: 48). Zhukovskij's best friends, the brothers Andrei and Aleksander Turgenev, were the eldest sons of Ivan Petrovich Turgenev, at one time rector of Moscow University. The Turgenev brothers were so *schwärmerisch* about the German *Sturm und Drang* that they were known at the Pension as *zapisnye nemtsy*, or "inveterate Germans". Their home was a meeting place for prominent intellectuals, above all the Masonic thinkers who brought a pre-Romantic influence into Russian culture.

By the autumn of 1797, the teenage Zhukovskij had published his first two works in *Priyatnoe i poleznoe preprovozhdenie vremeni*: the poem *Maiskoe utro* and the Youngian prose fragment *Mysli pri grobnitse*, both inspired by the sudden death that spring of his half-sister (and foster mother). Despite its hopeful title, *Maiskoe utro*

already expressed the trademark melancholy of Zhukovskij's early style. Glutting his sorrow on a May morning — like Keats on a morning rose — the sorrowful young poet yearned for another, better world beyond the grave:

Жизнь, мой друг, бездна	Life, my friend, is an abyss
Слез и страданий ...	Of tears and suffering …
Счастлив стократ	Happy a hundred-fold
Тот, кто, достигнув	Is he who, having reached
Мирного брега,	The peaceful shore,
Вечным спит сном.	Sleeps an eternal sleep.[1]
	(quoted in Petrunina 1987: 48)

The accompanying prose fragment is perhaps most remarkable for its highly-developed rhetorical style, unusual in a novice writer: Zhukovskij's philology instructor Bakkarevich doubtless understood that prose allowed for greater freedom of expression than verse. Several critics have remarked on the rhetorical facility of the passage, its effectiveness in conveying the onset of night:

Уж ночь раскинула покров свой, и сребристая луна явилась в тихом своем велелепии. Морфей помавает маковою ветвию, и сон с целебною чашею ниспускается на землю. Все тихо, все молчит в пространной области творения; не слышно работы кузнечика, и трели соловья не раздаются уже по роще. Спит ратай, спит вол, верный товарищ трудов его, спит вся натура. (quoted in Petrunina 1987: 48–49)

Already the night has extended its cover, and the silver moon has appeared in its silent majesty. Morpheus nods with his poppy wand, and sleep from his healing chalice pours down upon the earth. All is quiet, all keeps silent in the spacious realm of creation; inaudible the work of the grasshopper, and the trills of the nightingale no longer resound within the grove. The plowman sleeps, the bullock sleeps, faithful companion of his labours, all of nature sleeps.

The parallel structure of the first two sentences sets up a syntactic pattern that is retarded and hushed in the third sentence by the double repetition of falling silence (*vse tiho*, *vse molchit*). The repetition in the final sentence (*spit ... spit ... spit*), with its inverted poetic attributive (*vernyj tovarishch trudov ego*), is characteristic of Zhukovskij's early rhetorical style as exemplified in the *Elegy*.

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[1]   Here and in the following the translations from Russian are mine.

The boy developed quickly under the influence of Bakkarevich, absorbing in equal measures both the Russian Neoclassical tradition and the new Karamzinist trend. His work on the *pohval'naya oda* resulted in a bold "declamatory" style appropriate to public reading. In December 1797, for example, he read a commencement ode of his own composition in which he lauded the autocracy of Paul I.

О Павел! О монарх любезный!	*O Pavel!* O beloved monarch!
Под сильною твоей рукой	Beneath your mighty hand,
Мы не страшимся бурь, ненастья:	We fear not storm, nor foul weather:
Спокойны и блаженны мы.	Blessed and calm are we.
	(Zhukovskij 1999: I, 23)

The oratorical culture of the Pension encouraged this overstated attack, with powerful rhythms and a heavy use of apostrophe and descriptive epithets (*lyubeznyj, sil'noyu*, etc.). Meanwhile, the young poet continued to publish in *Priyatnoe i poleznoe preprovozhdenie vremeni*. The commencement address he delivered at the age of fifteen in December 1798 already contained a fully-developed system of sentimentalist clichés, imported wholesale into Russian with the disdain for reality characteristic of the Karamzinist epigones:

Посмотрите на сего доброго, честного поселянина, окруженного много-численным семейством. Как он доволен! Желания его умеренны, и счастие обитает в его хижине. С пришествием дня выходит он на делание свое, и с бодростью, с удовольствием, принимается за работу. Когда же силы его начнут слабеть и востребуют подкрепления, он возвращается домой; жена и дети встречают его, и с нежностью приемлют в объятия. Умеренный обед, приправленный дружеством и любовию, утоляет его голод; после краткого отдохновения, снова принимается он за работу, и перестает трудиться тогда, когда солнце перестает освещать землю. Ночь наступает, — сон его тих и корот, и совесть, молчащая в душе его, засыпает с ним вместе. Так приходит его день, так пройдет и жизнь его. Время рукою своею убелит власы его и покроет чело морщинами. Смерть, сия предвестница его блаженства, тихими шагами приблизится к нему, и он с улыбкою непорочности бросится в ее объятия. (quoted in Etkind 1973: 66)

Behold this good, honest villager, surrounded by his numerous family. How happy he is! His desires are moderate, and fortune dwells in his hut. With the arrival of day he goes out to his affairs, and with cheerfulness and satisfaction applies himself to his work. When his powers begin to wane and demand fortification, he returns home. His wife and children greet him and receive

him with tenderness in their embrace. A moderate lunch prepared with friendship and love alleviates his hunger; after a short rest he applies himself anew to his work, and he ceases to labour when the sun ceases to shine upon the earth. Night falls — his sleep is quiet and brief, and his conscience, keeping quiet in his soul, drops off to sleep along with him. As his day passes, so passes his life. The hands of time whiten his hair and cover his brow with wrinkles. Death, the herald of his bliss, approaches him with quiet steps, and with a smile of chastity he casts himself into her embrace.

The Russian peasant, rarely a virtuous figure even in the best of lights, devotes himself in this stylistic system to cheerful labour and temperate joys in the bosom of his loving family. The young Zhukovskij made no attempt to reflect the realities either of the Russian colloquial language or of Russian life, but fully in the spirit of the Karamzinist epigones directed both language and life toward a sentimentalized and thus presumably a "Europeanized" ideal. Even death is described as the "herald of bliss", an image from the Youngian churchyard. As Veselovskij put it, Russian reality has become "folk life seen from the window of the manor house" (Veselovskij 1999: 49).

Zhukovskij's talent as a translator developed concurrently with his rhetorical gifts. He practiced translation in both directions, honing his skills in exercises assigned for the purpose of linguistic training, initially in French and later in English and German. A letter Zhukovskij and a classmate posted to the Neoclassical poet Derzhavin on New Years Day 1799 documents a particularly successful translation from Russian into French:

> Kind sir! Your works, it may be, do just as much honour to Russia as the victories of [Catherine's Field Marshal] Rumyantsev. Reading with admiration "Felicity," "Monument to a Hero," "The Waterfall," and such, we so often turn to thoughts of their immortal creator and say: "*He is a Russian, he is our contemporary*". Captivated by the rare, inimitable beauties of your ode "God", we have made bold to translate it into French, and we present our translation to your judgment. Forgive us, kind sir, if the rude brush of copyists deformed [*obezobrazila*] the superb painting of a great master. In order to retain all the power, all the sublimity of the original, it is necessary to have your great spirit, it is necessary to have your ardent pen. (Zhukovskij 1985: 204)

The letter is remarkable on three counts. The first is Zhukovskij's recognition of the importance of literature to Russia's sense of national identity, not only through his comparison of Derzhavin to a

military field-marshal covered in glory, but more tellingly through his expression of delight at Derzhavin's greatness, specifically as a contemporary Russian. The second is Zhukovskij's recognition of the *fact* of linguistic deformation: he sees translation in Neoclassical terms as the rude copying of an ideal work. But the third point follows closely upon this: he invokes the translator's spiritual affinity with the original author ("it is necessary to have your great spirit") and thereby anticipates the Romantic aesthetics of genius. He was already constructing a self-styled, quasi-Romantic interpretive philosophy on an essentially Neoclassical foundation.

The high point of Zhukovskij's career at the Pension came shortly after these pieces were written, when the headmaster made him chairman of the "Society of Pupils". At weekly Wednesday meetings, the boys discussed their favourite works, read and critiqued their own compositions, compared translations, and put together an anthology entitled *Utrennaya zarya*, or *The Dawn*. Although Andrei Turgenev was already a student at the university, the members included several other figures who would influence Zhukovskij's personal life and literary career: Aleksander Turgenev, A. F. Merzlyakov, the brothers Andrei and Petr Kaisarov, and Aleksander Voeikov, who would later marry Zhukovskij's niece. The little circle attracted the attention of Karamzin, among others, who occasionally dropped in on its meetings.

Zhukovskij and the *Elegy*

Zhukovskij graduated from the Pension in 1800 and after an unhappy stint at the Main Salt Bureau began to earn his living as a translator for Moscow booksellers. He composed his first unpublished attempt at Gray's *Elegy* in 1801 and his second, successful attempt in May-September 1802. Both were strongly influenced by Andrei Turgenev, whose original *Elegiya*, almost certainly written in friendly competition, was published by Karamzin in the *Vestnik Evropy* in July 1802. From a strictly hermeneutic point of view, both Zhukovskij and Turgenev understood that the genre of the vernacular elegy remained undeveloped in Russian lyric poetry in comparison with the *pohval'naya oda.* But where Turgenev attempted an "original" work, Zhukovskij took the more cautious approach of translating a well-

established model of the genre. His genius consisted in selecting the model with just the right combination of features: strong enough semantically to exemplify the genre, but weak enough poetically to shed its verbal texture without also losing its most powerful effects, exactly the consensus that was later reached by the English critical tradition. The critic S. S. Averintsev notes that the mature Zhukovskij habitually looked for this combination of strength and weakness in an original: a work which "having a sufficiency of meaning in itself, did not attain perfection and as it were awaited the translator in order finally to realize it" (Averintsev 1996: 138–139). In this sense, Zhukovskij was not so much interested in transmitting Gray's *Elegy* to a Russian audience as he was in using it to deploy Karamzinist techniques through the widest possible range of lyric registers — in this way perfecting his "sentimental education".

The opening stanza in Gray, for example, sounds the first of its lyric registers: landscape painting or *paysage*. The dimly-illuminated pastoral setting is a trademark of the Sentimentalist style that Zhukovskij had already carefully studied in prose. The young poet chose a verse form close to but not identical with the English "elegiac stanza". He used iambic quatrains rhyming ABAB, but he replaced the pentameter with a hexameter line strongly articulated into two equal hemistichs, a line better suited to the natural rhythms of the Russian language. Moreover, he gave the lines alternating feminine and masculine endings, a technique rare (because quite difficult) in English but common in Russian. The respective opening stanzas are below. The italics are mine.

> The Curfew tolls the knell of *parting* day,
> The *lowing* herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
> The plowman homeward plods his *weary* way,
> And leaves the world to darkness and to me.
> <div align="right">(Gray 1966, ll. 1–4)</div>

> Уже бледнеет день // скрываясь за горою;
> *Шумящие* стада // толпятся над рекой;
> *Усталый* селянин // *медительной* стопою
> Идет, задумавшись, // в шалаш *спокойный* свой.
> <div align="right">(Zhukovskij 2000, ll. 1–4)</div>

Gray's mid-18th century discursive style is relatively unadorned. Of the nine nouns in his opening stanza, only three are provided with epithets,

and only one — through the idiom "weary way" — with a simple adjective. Each line corresponds to a grammatical period. Zhukovskij by contrast provides four of his seven nouns with adjectives, interpolates an image in place of "weary way", and enjambs the final sentence. In contrast to the spare discursive style of the original, he deploys both the powerful "declamatory" rhythms of the *pohval'naya oda* and the facile descriptive resources of the Karamzinist style. His interpolation in the third line — *medlitel'noj stopoyu* ("*stopa*" in Russian can mean "metrical foot") — not only replaces a wooden cliché but brilliantly announces the slowing of the verse in imitation of the villager's slow homeward tread. This rhythmic effect occurs in the final line, with forward movement suggested by the enjambed verb placed in the first iamb (*idet*), retardation by the inserted past participle (*zadumavshis'*), and dead halt by the rhetorical inversion of adjectives and noun (*shalash spokoinyj svoj*).   Zhukovskij maintains the present tense because it supports the intimate elegiac tone, but he throws out the striking final image, with its lyrical "me". As Toporov among others has shown, the elision results in a self-consistent pattern of deformation: Zhukovskij transfers the semantic force of the poem from a largely irrelevant narrator to the villager himself (Toporov 1981: 229ff; Etkind 1973: 58–64).

The traces of Zhukovskij's oratorical and philological training in this opening stanza and throughout the poem exemplify the overall transition within Russian literature from Neoclassical to Sentimentalist and by extension to Romantic poetics. A thorough analysis is beyond the scope of this essay and in any case has been made many times. Commentators delight in gathering examples of the conventional adjective-noun combinations that Zhukovskij deployed from the Karamzinist lexicon (for example, Etkind 1973: 60). A harvest of the first four stanzas provides: *tumannyj* sumrak (l.5), *mertvyj* son (l.6), *unylyj* zvon (l.8), *dikaya* sova (l.9), *drevnij* svod (l.9), *polunochnyj* prihod (l.11), *bezmolvnoe* vladychestvo (l.12), and grob *uedinennyj* (l.15). Favourite epithets of the Karamzinist school appear throughout the poem in various combinations and grammatical constructions: *mertvyj* and *chuvstvitelnij*, of course (four and three times), but also *spokoinyj*, *nezhnij*, *unylyj*, *tomnij*, and *tihij* (twice each). Some of these expressions figure into the following stanzas, which demonstrate how Zhukovskij both deformed his original and remained remarkably faithful to its imagery and tone:

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the ecchoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.
(Gray 1966, ll. 13–20)

Под кровом черных сосн и вязов наклоненных,
Которые окрест, развесившись стоят,
Здесь праоцы села, в гробах уединенных,
Навеки затворясь, сном непробудным спят.

Денницы тихий глас, дня юного дыханье,
Ни крики петуха, ни звучный гул рогов,
Ни ранней ласточки на кровле щебетанье –
Ничто не вызовет почивших из гробов.
(Zhukovskij 2000, ll. 13–20)

The second stanza here contains an exemplary concatenation of stylistic features. The first three words (*Dennitsy tihij glas*) can almost be taken to illustrate the epochal transition as a whole: a favourite Karamzinist epithet, *tihij*, is inserted as a modifier into the highly-poeticized noun-cluster *dennitsy glas*. Zhukovskij's style is a mixture of Sentimental and Neoclassical diction (in this case an emotive adjective framed by two faintly archaic nouns) as a technique for insinuating intimacy while at the same time elevating tone. The repetition that follows — in the inverted poetic attributive *dnya yunogo dyhan'e* — recalls the style that Zhukovskij mastered in his Youngian prose fragments. The same can be said of the parallel structure in the next three lines (*ni ... ni ... ni ... nichto*). The final line of the stanza compresses the semantic thread "rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep" = "them" into the substantive adjective *pochivshij* (lit. "those who have fallen asleep"). Elsewhere Zhukovskij deploys the opposite technique, expanding Gray's laconic injunction to "Ye Proud," for example, into the famous periphrasis: *A vy, napersniki fortuni osleplenny* (l. 37). All of these rhetorical techniques are not only characteristic of Zhukovskij's interpretive facility but exemplify the overall Karamzinist style.

Conclusion

By the mid-1810s, a critique of the Karamzinist sign system led by the philologist Aleksander Shishkov — a critique that included many forceful attacks on Zhukovskij himself — would begin to shape the Russian literary language toward a new synthesis. It was in this period that we can properly begin to speak of a Russian Romantic Movement. The French translation theorist Antoine Berman once called the Romantic period the "fascinating origin" of modern literary consciousness (Berman 1992: 1). If *Sel'skoe kladbishche* stands today at the "fascinating origin" of modern Russian poetry, however, it does so not by virtue of a "Romanticism" that it imported wholesale from abroad, but rather by virtue of a "Romanticism" that distilled organically within Russian culture out of its dialogue with other cultures. Zhukovskij's accomplishment in *Sel'skoe klabishche* was not merely to reinscribe Gray's elegy into the sign system of the Russian language. It was to deploy the Karamzinist idiom within the widest possible range of lyric registers as a model for other Russian poets working in the style. In this sense, it exemplifies Lotman's dictum that "the elementary act of thinking is translation" — the translation made it possible for Russian poets to think in an entirely new idiom. Consider this remarkably successful stanza:

> Взошла заря — но он с зарею не являлся,
> Ни к иве, ни на холм, ни в лес не приходил;
> Опять заря взошла — нигде он не встречался;
> Мой взор его искал — искал — не находил.
> (Zhukovskij 2000, ll. 121–4)

Stripped of unnatural poeticism, strikingly modern, it already anticipates the fully- naturalized Russian verse of the Pushkin era. It was in this way that Zhukovskij's "sentimental education" became identified not only with Karamzin and his school at the turn of the 19th century but with an overall and ongoing project of cultural *Bildung*. The nineteen-year-old translator of the *Elegy* thus not only fulfilled the Karamzinist imperative for Russian poets "to write as they speak" and "to speak as they write" but provided a sophisticated model for new languages of description, languages later imitated and assimilated by generations of Russian poets.

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Перевод как воспитание чувств:
Сельское кладбище Жуковского

Сельское кладбище Жуковского, перевод *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* Томаса Грея, занимает особое место в русской литературной истории. Впервые перевод был опубликован в 1802 году и

вызвал такую волну подражаний у более поздних русских поэтов, что его стали считать «верстовым столбом русской литературы», который обозначил не только границу между двумя культурами (русской и английской), но и границу в самой русской литературе, — переход от классицистской эстетики к романтической. Перевод Жуковского можно читать как конечный итог процесса его личного штудирования знаковой системы сентиментализма (как европейского так и русского), который позднее воссоздался (уже «имперсонально») в его родной культуре заново. Жуковский не просто переложил произведение Грея на русский язык, он пользовался переводом как рабочим средством, развивая русский сентименталистский (карамзинский) стиль на более широкой шкале лирического регистра, создавая таким образом пример для всех русских поэтов. В этом смысле перевод Жуковского является прекрасной иллюстрацией знаменитого высказывания Юрия Лотмана «перевод является элементарным актом мышления» — его перевод позволил русским поэтам думать в совершенно новой, но все же не в чужой знаковой системе.

Tõlge kui tundekasvatus: Žukovski *Sel'skoe Kladbištše*

Vassili Žukovski *Sel'skoe Kladbištše*, tõlge Thomas Gray teosest *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, asub vene kirjandusajaloos erilisel kohal. Teose esmatrükk avaldati 1802. aastal ning leidis hilisemate vene poeetide seas nii laialdast jäljendamist, et seda hakati pidama "üheks vene kirjanduse verstapostiks", mis ei tähistanud mitte ainult kahe kultuuri (vene ja inglise) vahelist piiri, vaid ka piiri vene kultuuris endas — üleminekut neoklassitsistlikult esteetikalt romantilisele. Žukovski Gray-tõlget võib lugeda kui ühe üksikisiku sentimentalismi märgisüsteemi (nii euroopa kui vene) tudeerimise protsessi lõppsaadust, mis siis hiljem ennast tema kodukultuuris tervikuna taaslõi. Žukovski ei pannud Gray luuleteost lihsalt vene keelde ümber. Ta kasutas tõlget kui töövahendit, rakendamaks vene sentimentalistlikku (karamzinistlikku) stiili kõige laiemal võimalikul lüüriliste registrite skaalal, luues nii eeskuju kõigile vene poeetidele. Selles mõttes on Žukovski tõlge heaks illustratsiooniks Juri Lotmani kuulsale lausele "tõlge on elementaarseim mõtlemise akt" — ta tõlge võimaldas vene poeetidel mõelda täiesti uues, ent ometi mitte võõras märgisüsteemis.