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BUT NOBLE: TRANSLATING
AUGUST VON KOZEBUE'S
POVERTY AND NOBLENESSE OF
MIND AS A WAY OF SOCIAL
SELF-PRESENTATION**

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**ALEXEI MALINOVSKII, POOR BUT NOBLE: TRANSLATING
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MIND* AS A WAY OF SOCIAL SELF-PRESENTATION**

This paper discusses the problem of the adaptation of a new cultural model by the educated members of the Russian “middle class” in the late 18th century when new social skills and new kinds of the perception of social reality were transmitted to the public through the emotionally very intensive theatre performances. Examining the translation of the drama *Poverty and Nobleness of Mind* by August von Kotzebue and taking into account that the drama was staged at the private theatre of Alexandr Vorontsov, Malinovskii's patron, in 1799, I suggest that he had some apprehensions about his own noble status which he obtained in a specific way. He seems to face the choice: to act on his feelings as sentimental dramas instructed him and marry a poor but noble girl in 1790s, or wait until Vorontsov's niece became a wealthy heiress what actually happened in a decade.

JEL Classification: Z

Key words: Russia, 18th century, Aleksei Malinovskii, August von Kotzebue, theatre, translation, ennoblement, sentimentalism, marriage strategies.

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This paper is a part of a broader study that focuses on Alexei Fedorovich Malinovskii (1762–1840) – an civil servant, an archivist, and, as he is usually represented, a historian. The background for this study is the complex patronage-client network that he was a part of. While the biographical sources on Malinovskii are poor, his involvement in translating theatrical plays also helps us to understand his self-representation as a nobleman. As Kirill Ospovat reminds us in his recent monograph, theatre (most notably, the plays by Aleksander Petrovich Sumarokov) served as a convenient metaphor for all kinds of political representation. Ospovat points out that the plays performed in the 1750s–1770s reflected cultural developments shared across early modern Europe, but at the same time illuminated the political context of the “absolute” monarchy, its symbolic outlines, and historical practices.² Following up on this line of argument, I propose that as the theatre was becoming increasingly accessible in the 18th – early 19th centuries to different strata of Russian society, it served as the institutional locus for a new brand of public sociability, allowed to articulate social ideas, and provided models of social behavior.³

During the last decade or so, discussion of theatre in historical scholarship has been connected most visibly with the “emotional turn” in the humanities, including history and cultural history. From this point of view, theater had a unique ability to present a socially approved repertoire of emotional matrices in the most visible form. Originally coined at the court and at the court theatre, the emotional repertoire and the new social skills that were transmitted to the public through to the performances were disseminated widely across the cultural sphere of the absolutist state.⁴ The most extreme point of view states that without such emotional matrices (or “emotional public patterns”), one could not even experience any feeling, let alone understand them.⁵

According to Andrei Zorin, the new models of feeling were “imported” at the end of the 18th century and appropriated by a very thin layer of Russian educated aristocrats connected to the freemasonic circle. The Russian elite was learning to think and to feel by using the language of sentimentalism, and theatre was for them a way to comprehend this new culture.⁶ The growing intensity of emotional expression of 1770s – 1780s with its hyperbolic sentimentalism is

² Kirill Ospovat, *Terror and Pity. Aleksandr Sumarokov and the Theatre of Power in Elizabethan Russia* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016), xi

³ Elise K. Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas in Russian Enlightenment Theater* (De Kalb: Northern Illn Univ. Press, 2003), 4.

⁴ As Clifford Girtz asserts, here according to: Andrei Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia: Is istorii russkoi emotional'noi kul'tury kontsa XVIII – nachala XIX veka* (Moscow: NLO, 2016), 26.

⁵ Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia*, 20.

⁶ Andrei Zorin, “Leaving Your Family in 1797: Two Identities of Mikhail Murav'ev,” in: Mark D. Steinberg and Valeria Sobol (Eds.) *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 44-61, esp. 45 and 53; Andrei Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia: Is istorii russkoi emotional'noi kul'tury kontsa XVIII – nachala XIX veka* (Moscow, 2016), 98.

puzzling for some scholars in the field.⁷ Sentiments were being offered as a new foundation for social bonds and social identities threatened by commercial expansion and consumerism.⁸

By studying a number of unique personal documents (diaries and correspondence) Zorin traces the mechanisms of introspection (*samonabliudenie*) and appropriation of new cultural models but refrains from any sociological conclusions. This paper, based on a newly discovered biographical materials related to Malinovskii, suggest that the new emotional model could be adopted also by the educated members of the socially inferior strata. While Malinovskii did not leave behind any autobiographical texts, it is still possible to reconstruct the cultural dimension of his identity. First, the documents related to his service are very helpful in this regard. Second, one can follow the same path as Zorin and make an attempt to comprehend if theatrical plays Malinovskii has been translating were related to his social and life experience. If the aristocrat Andrei Turgenev was interpreting his love experiences through “personal involvement” (Zorin) working on a translation of Friedrich Schiller’s *Intrigue and Love*,⁹ could also a civil servant and a priest’s son such as Malinovskii interpret his social experience and grasp the social mechanics implied in a theatrical piece? I propose to approach the late 18th century drama as a universal mechanism that contributed to creating bonds that helped to transcend the restrictions imposed by social hierarchical and to unite all members of educated society in a (imagined) community.

The son of a parish priest, Malinovskii made a fantastic carrier. His success was due to the assistance he received from aristocratic supporters and to his father’s and his own involvement in freemasonic activities in the 1780s.¹⁰ He became the Head of the Moscow Archive of the College of Foreign Affairs (since 1814) and the chief overseer of Count Sheremetev’s Almshouse (since 1806); besides, he was a senator, a member of the Russian Academy (*Rossiiskaia Akademiia*), a member of several Russian orders. In 1779, after leaving the gymnasium at the Moscow University he embarked on a carrier at the Moscow Archive of the College of Foreign Affairs. Since the late 1770s he was engaged in translating of French literature and especially theatrical plays, the activity that was especially encouraged by freemasons who at that period had strong influence at the Moscow University and different societies around it. Till the early 1790s, he translated only from French (including also Italian or Spain dramas available in Russia in French translations). Beginning in the 1790s, he started translating also German dramas and became a staff translator of the Moscow Public theatre directed by Michael Maddox. There is some evidence that even before that, as a very young man,

⁷ William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001), 161.

⁸ Here according to: Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 162.

⁹ Zorin, *Poiavlenie geroia*, 149.

¹⁰ Andrei I. Serkov, *Russkoe masonstvo. 1731–2000: Entsiklopedicheskii slovar’* (Moscow, 2000), 515.

Alexei Malinovskii had been involved in the theatrical world of Kuskovo, the Moscow estate of the Sheremetevs, Malinovskii's patrons.¹¹ There he could observe the impact that theatrical illusion exerted on the audience and even on Empress Catherine II who attended a performance in Kuskovo in 1787.¹² The performances (usually *opéra-comiques*) touched upon such themes as love, personal freedom, and obligation to family and society. The world created on the Sheremetevs' scene was the world of changing identities, and protagonists underwent social transformations. Thus Sheremetev "transformed" Praskov'ia Kuznetsova, his serf actress he was in love with, into a noblewoman on the stage, for he could not marry her in reality.¹³ Malinovskii could have learned the cultural mechanics of theatre and acquired the idea that there was a world of alternative opportunities where he could master his own destiny.

The official documents of the Moscow Archive provide evidence that Malinovskii was eager to change his social status and to become a nobleman. It was not impossible for a non-noble: as soon as one achieved the 8th rank in the state service, one became a hereditary nobleman. However, early in 1793 the Senate rejected a submission by the College of Foreign Affairs on Malinovskii's behalf, for no "excellence" has been found in his service record.¹⁴ Now there remained only one opportunity for Malinovskii to get further promotion: to provide a proof that he was a nobleman. In this case his promotion would no longer depend on his "faultless" service. Again with the help of his aristocratic patrons, he found a Polish *szlachta* family of Malinowskiis residing in the Western provinces of the Empire recently annexed from Rzeczpospolita. It was considered a common practice at the time for Polish nobles sell certificates confirming one's noble status, and if enough money was paid anyone could acquire Polish nobility.¹⁵ Members of this family and the marshal of the nobility of the Mogilev region signed a certificate that the Moscow Malinowskiis also belonged to their kin.¹⁶ Finally, in September 1794, Malinovskii obtained the desired 8th rank (of collegiate assessor). In the same year, he recorded his new social status on the rolls of the Archive's staff: instead of a "priest's son" he was now "from the nobility" (*iz dvorian*). There he was listed as the owner of 27 male serfs acquired by him at the end of 1793.¹⁷ The speed he started buying serfs barely obtained the legal opportunity testified how he was longing for it. Later on he acquired more populated

¹¹ *Dramatic Dictionary* (Moscow, 1787). That Malinovskii was probably the author of this anonymously published dictionary is indicated by the fact that it also listed some performances staged only at Sheremetev's theatre and not announced for the public (p. 101–102). See: T.M. El'nitskaya, "Sostavitel' Dramaticheskogo slovarya 1787 g.," in *Pamyatniki kul'tury. Novyye otkrytiya. Pis'mennost'. Iskusstvo Areologiya. 1976* (Moscow, 1977), 45–52.

¹² Douglas Smith, *The Pearl: A True Tale of Forbidden Love in Catherine the Great's Russia* (New Haven and London, 2008), 80f.

¹³ This interpretation of the performances in Sheremetev's theatre was suggested by Douglas Smith in his "Teatral'naia zhizn' grafa Nikolaia Sheremeteva," in *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 92 (2008), 189.

¹⁴ Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi archive drevnikh aktov (further RGADA) f. 180, op. 1, d. 69, l. 44.

¹⁵ See on Praskov'ia's case: Smith, *The Pearl*, 213.

¹⁶ RGADA, f. 180, op. 1, d. 70, l. 231ob., 232ob.

¹⁷ RGADA, f. 180, op. 1, d. 70, l. 241.

estates. By 1820, he owed 719 male serfs in three central regions of Russia.¹⁸ By 1798, when the *Poverty and Nobleness of Mind* (1795) translated by Malinovskii was staged for the first time, he was 36 years old, a hereditary nobleman, and the owner of 90 male serfs,¹⁹ but he was not married.

Romantic love as a reason of marriage was an ideal of Russian playwrights, but it was not the decisive reasons, for social obligations, property, or status took precedence when time came to make matrimonial decisions. On stage love was presented as one's natural right that extended to all social groups, including peasants.²⁰ Happiness should had to be reconciled with social order. Nevertheless, playwrights rarely extended this principle to marriage between nobles and non-nobles.²¹ Malinovskii, according to the mythology he created around his family, did not *receive* the noble status, but proved that he *had always been* a nobleman and simply got back the lost certificate. Hence, Malinovskii could claim a right to marry a noblewoman. On the other hand, he obtained his noble status in a way which inevitably made him to reflect on the "quality" of his nobility. Since the theme of unreasonable aspirations for noble status was common for the comedies published or performed in the 1770s and 1780s, he must have thought about his personal qualities, and whether these corresponded to those of a "natural" nobleman. This does not exclude the possibility, of course, that he himself believed in his "restored" nobility, or that his patron Count Sheremetev believed that his beloved Praskov'ia Kovaleva originated from Polish *szlachta* – Malinovskii was among those who assisted in providing her with a forged pedigree.

Public theatre of Catherinian reign rejected the alleged aspirations of certain merchants to maintain a noble lifestyle and cultivate prestigious personal relationships. Playwrights presented (and mocked) their supposed inability to understand the noble way of life.²² Indeed, members of all social groups can be happy if they live according to their status and do not try to transcend it. This approach corresponded to Catherine II's vision of society which was based on a "constitutional" structure: it was important not just to prevent social mobility, but to make sure that in each case the mobility served the common good and preserved the legal order.²³ For example, in Osip Cherniavskii's comedy *In the Company of Merchants* (1780), this idea was expressed by the merchant Ankudin Prostiakov just the way Catherine II did it in her *Instruction* (1767): "...a noble person is not one who possesses a noble rank, but one who has a noble spirit

¹⁸ Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii archiv f. 1349, op. 4, d. 133 (part 1).

¹⁹ Nataliia Yu. Bolotina, "Nadlezhit ... vedat' vse ustavy gosudarstvennyya i vazhnost' ikh": Dokumenty RGADA po istorii gosudarstvennoy sluzhby Rossii. XVIII v.," *Istoricheskiiy arhiv* 2 (1999), 212.

²⁰ Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas*, 56.

²¹ Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas*, 96.

²² Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas*, 97.

²³ Wirtschafter, *The Play of Ideas*, 98.

and lives virtuously.”²⁴ And it was one thing for nobles of unequal status to be united in marriage, but quite another for commoners to marry their social betters.²⁵

To be sure, in the 18th century theatre marriage was often presented as a means of social mobility for women, but this path was excluded for males. According to Bourdieu, marriage strategies contribute to passing on to the next generation the full measure of power and privilege inherited from the previous generation.²⁶ Malinovskii, who did not inherit anything, but acquired his status and property on his own, should have followed this pattern: status and property inevitably forced him to internalize the logic of their reproduction. The few historians who mentioned his marriage got confused about its exact date and circumstances and regarded it as a simple love-match between a civil servant acquainted to Princess Ekaterina Dashkova and her ward Anna Petrovna Islen’eva (1770–1847).²⁷ The latter was a daughter of Elizaveta Petrovna Islen’eva (née Khrushcheva, 1747–1811), the cousin of Count Alexander Vorontsov and Dashkova (née Countess Vorontsova). The information that we have regarding Anna Islen’eva’s life is very limited. As best we can tell, a fire on her mother’s estate deprived Anna a dowry in 1792, so she became a *bespridannitsa*. To send Anna to live with Dashkova as a “companion” could be regarded by the Vorontsovs as a good solution in terms of providing assistance for their cousin. She appeared at Dashkova’s house as a young woman, and not as a child who needed to be educated, as some historians asserted. By that time Anna was already about 30, i.e. past the usual marriage age. Malinovskii, about 40 at that time and still unmarried, was in 1790s deeply embedded in the patronage network of the Vorontsovs and of the College of Foreign Affairs. In 1802, Count Alexander Vorontsov was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. Thus, he became also the highest patron of the College’s Archive. Besides, in the 1790s Malinovskii began to contribute to *Rossiiskii Featr*, a magazine edited by Princess Dashkova, as a translator of theatrical plays. Hence, he could have imagined that Anna Islen’eva, a poor niece of the Vorontsovs, could be an attractive match for him.

In 1798 Malinovskii translated *Poverty and Nobleness of Mind* (*Armut und Edelsinn*, 1795), a theatrical play by August von Kotzebue (1761–1819), a popular German playwright who lived in Russia for long periods, and the translation was staged for the first time at the

²⁴ «Надо помнить, что не тот благороден, кто чин благородный имеет; но тот кто имеет дух благородной и живет добродетельно»; Compare to the article 361 of *Instruction to Legislative Commission*: Как между людьми одни были добродетельнее других, а при том и заслугами отличались, то принято издревле отличить добродетельнейших и более других служащих людей, дав им сие нарицание в чести [...].

²⁵ Wirschafter, *The Play of Ideas*, 96.

²⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, “Marriage strategies as Strategies of Social Reproduction,” in: R. Forster, O. Ranum (Eds.) *Family and Society: Selections from the Annales Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (Baltimore, 1976), 140f.

²⁷ The date of their marriage is cited incorrectly as 1812 in: Gaira A. Veselaia, S.S. Dmitriev, “Zapiski kniagini Dashkovoï i pis'ma sester Vil'mot iz Rossii”, in: Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, *Zapiski kniagini Dashkovoï i pis'ma sester Vil'mot iz Rossii* (Moscow, 1987), 28; and in: Svetlana Romanovna Dolgova, “Aleksii Fedorovich Malinovskii”, in: Aleksii Fedorovich Malinovskii, *Obozrenie Moskvy* (Moscow, 1992), 209; as well as in: Ekaterina N. Firsova, “Dusheprikazchiki E.R. Dashkovoy. Nasledstvo i nasledniki,” in *E. R. Dashkova i Ekaterina Velikaya: kul'turnoe nasledie i sovremennost'* (M., 2014), 196.

Moscow Public Theatre. The next year, it was staged at the private theatre of Count Alexander Vorontsov on his estate of Andreevskoe, where his sister Princess Dashkova also stayed. One can also suppose that Anna Islen'eva was staying there with Dashkova too. Importantly, that only three German theatrical pieces – two pieces by Kotzebue and one by Christian Heinrich Spiess (*Das Ehrenwort*) – were staged at the Vorontsovs' theatre: they were all translated by Malinovskii.²⁸ Probably, it was due to Dashkova's protection: she could have recommended Malinovskii also as a theatrical translator and expert.

The performance made a great impact on Dashkova, as Malinovskii wrote many years later: she immediately wrote a sequel to this play (alas, it did not survive). Probably, it had to do with her own family's dramatic circumstances.²⁹ Malinovskii's awareness about it makes it natural to suppose that he himself could have also attended the performance. Dashkova's reaction reveals that the play by Kotzebue had certain meaning that were comprehensible for contemporaries irrespective of their social status. This runs contrary to claim of some 19th-century critics that the emotionally charged plays by Kotzebue were written for the inexperienced middle-class audience and had no artistic value (*kotzebiatina*, as Prince Gorchakov called it³⁰). Another evidence of Kotzebue's ability to talk as a playwright to a very broad audience is the fact cited by Andrei Zorin: the aristocrat Andrei Turgenev appreciated the plays by Kotzebue and had been translating them into Russian and considered publishing them in an almanac edited by him together with Aleksandr Merzlyakov and Vasilii Zhukovsky. Turgenev even imagined himself to be a protagonist of his plays.³¹

In exploring the central idea of the play I am interested in finding out if Malinovskii as the translator of the play was “personally involved” with its problematics, for this play by Kotzebue dealt with the problem of feelings as a legitimizing factor of a socially unequal marriage. As he has been translating this play, Malinovskii could have imagined a possibility of a marriage with the aristocratic Islen'eva, just like Andrei Turgenev modeled his emotional experience after “high” literature – Schiller's drama *Intrigue and Love* which he had been translating.

One can imagine, that Malinovskii had been considering this marriage opportunity even earlier and the performance at Vorontsov's theatre could have strengthened his standing among the Vorontsovs. Translating this play and presenting it to his patron, Malinovskii asserted

²⁸ N.A. Elizarova, *Teatry Sheremetevsykh* (Moscow, 1944), 481–488.

²⁹ [Alexei F. Malinovskii] “Svedeniia dlia zhizneopisaniia kniagini Ekateriny Romanovny Dashkovoi,” in: RGADA f. 188, op. 1, d. 363, l. 6; Frank Gepfert, “O dramaturgii E.R. Dashkovoi,” in *Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova: Issledovaniya i materialy* (St. Petersburg, 1996), 147, 150.

³⁰ Gerhard Giesemann, *Kotzebue in Russland* (Frankfurt/M., 1971), 88; Alexander A. Shakhovskoi, „Letopis' russkogo teatra,” in *Repertuar russkogo teatra* (St. Petersburg, 1840), 12.

³¹ Zorin, *Poivavlenie geroia* 173f., 176.

himself as a real nobleman and presented his claims for being eligible to marry an aristocratic woman such as Islen'eva, just like the noble but poor protagonist of Kotzebue's drama *Baron Cederström*. The latter was certain that wealth was incompatible with "nobleness". Nevertheless, at the end of the play he agreed to marry Louisa, a girl who turned out to be not a poor (step)daughter of the housekeeper, but that of a rich merchant Henry Plum. Malinovskii did marry Islen'eva, but only a decade later – that is, as soon as this *bespridannitsa* became Dashkova's heiress (1810).

Kotzebue himself was not a German nobleman: he was ennobled in Russia as a reward for the treatise *Über den Adel (On Nobility)* which he wrote in 1792.³² This was not a secret for the contemporaries: an anonymous Russian writer felt obliged to note, for example, that "Adel die deutsche Probe nicht hält" ('his nobleness was not of German origin').³³ In Russia, one's rank was both a guarantee of social success of an individual and of his or her human merits at the same time; hence, the bureaucratic hierarchy coincided with the scale of moral and ethical assessments of the individual.³⁴ Naturally, Kotzebue's personal reflections on the problem of noble honor and qualities of a "real nobleman" could be also detected in his *Poverty and Nobleness of Mind*. Cederström, an extremely poor Sweden officer nobleman banished from his country, disagrees with the merchant Peter Plum, his landlord, regarding the problem of *chest'* – noble honor:

"[Noble honor is] a good thing, but not much sought after. A medal for a cabinet; in commerce and dealings, not worth much," uttered Plum, and Cederström replied: "It certainly is only of worth to those who understand it" (I, 2, p.7)³⁵

Thus he asserted that individuals were separated into two categories: noblemen differed from those who could not even understand the point of discussion as honor had no material expression. Nevertheless, honor was not only something undefinable, but had some visible manifestations too. "See his noble modesty," proclaimed Louisa in order to clear Cederström as he was being accused of stealing Mr. Plum's valuable snuff-box, "his open look, in which goodness and a noble soul are deeply engraved; those cheeks on which is marked hidden sorrow, that forehead on which truth and honesty fits", (I, 12, 44f.). But again Mr. Plum did not understand this point: "What is his cheeks and his forehead to me? My box I will have." He

³² August von Kotzebue, *O dvorianstve, ego proiskhozhdenii, rasprostraneni i neodnakovom vvedenii mezhd u vsemi pochti narodami zemnogo shara* (Moscow, 1804).

³³ August v. Kotzebue's *literarisches und politisches Wirken* (Tobolsk, 1819), 15f.

³⁴ Elena N. Marasimova, *Psikhologiya elity rossiiskogo dvorianstva poslednei treti XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1999), 81.

³⁵ Here and elsewhere English text is cited according to the following edition: August von Kotzebue, *Poverty and Nobleness of Mind: A Play in Three Acts* (London, 1799); German text is cited according to: August von Kotzebue, *Armut und Edelsinn: Ein Lustspiel in drei Aufzügen* (Leipzig, 1795); Russian quotations are provided, when necessary, according to: August von Kotzebue, *Bednost' i blagorodstvo dushi. Komediia v trekh deistviakh* (Orel, 1817).

assessed people only according to their wealth and hence considered his noble tenant to be a vagabond (I,12, p. 44).

His brother Henry Plum, however, did not consider poverty “to be a crime” and insisted that Cederström was a man of *sense and feeling* (German: “Sie sind ein Mann von Kopf und Herz” (S. 60); this phrase is excluded from Russian translation). He made an attempt to provide Cederström with money but in vain: the officer seemed to be extremely offended by this fact: any assistance robbed him of his last treasure – *self-pride* (in Russian translation: *nadezhda na sebia*, German: den *Stolz* [proud] auf mich selbst (S. 60) (II,1, p. 48, 49). Consequently, he rejected Peter Plum’s suggestion to sail to Africa to engage in slave trade: “I should consider myself one of the meanest of mortals, if I thought your offers were more than a joke” (II, 2, p. 53). Plum dismissively called his way of thinking “boyish enthusiasts” (II, 2, p. 54), originally “die jugendliche Schwärmerey” (S. 67, literally “*iuosheskie grezy*”). Significantly, it was translated into Russian as “*novomodnye sentimental’nye bredni*” (p. 76), thus pointing to the assumed source of these ideas, i.e. new ways of thinking and experiencing the world where the individuals’ actions are directed by feelings.

In the same way, Louisa, who eventually turned out to be the lost daughter of Henry Plum and who fell in love with Cederström, insisted that “One maybe poor, but yet possess a rich heart” (II, 4, p. 56). If his heart possessed love, honor and truth, she would marry him, and if she loved someone, she was ready to starve with him – the declaration which made Cederström happy (II, 4, p. 57). But as soon as they promised their love to each other, Louisa confessed that she was not a poor person’s daughter: her father was a wealthy man, though she did not know his name (II, 4, p. 61). This confession turned Cederström’s world upside down, for “the rich Louisa is forever lost for the poor Cederström.” He did not agree that love made them *equal* as Louisa insisted (II, 4, p. 62). (German: “Macht uns nicht die Liebe *gleich*?” was not translated into Russian properly: instead, in the Russian version Louisa replied simply: “*Kakie bredni!*” The translator was probably striving to avoid using the word *equal* which could have had direct connotations with *égalité*).

Kotzebue represented Cederström’s view of honor as archaic: he did not believe that feelings surpassed any calculation and adhered the *ancien régime*’s model: “Love is my friend – Honor is my tyrant!”. Honor forbid a husband to revel in luxury at the expense his wife’s fortune of (II, 4, p. 62). Though ready “to divide his name with her,” he was not ready to accept her fortune. Ridiculing his logic, that of the *ancien régime* society, Josephina, Peter Plum’s daughter and a friend of Louisa, came to the conclusion that Louisa likewise cannot love him, as she was a “bourgeois” (“Bürgerliche”), whereas Cederström was a baron. Josephina, who herself was faced

with the prospects of a marriage of convenience, derided Cederström with his archaic “laws of honor.” Finally, Josephina gave him a little over a year until Louisa becomes 18 years old to come to the decision to marry her. In the Russian translation, this remark was omitted and replaced by another words by Josephinas: “If you will not marry her only because she is rich...”. Moreover, Josephina represents his views not only as old-fashioned, but as barbaric. She threatens him with a punishment based on a cultural gradient: “[If you will not marry her] ... you are no Swede but a Laplander; and we will harness a couple of rein-deer, and send you home again” (II, 5, p. 96). Louisa explained to Josephina that because of his “noble spirit” (German: *Edelmuth*, Russ.: *blagorodnyi obraz myslei*), Cederström would not marry her. But Josephina considered it to be nonsense: “His tenderness is *sentiment* (German: *Gefühl*), and his noble spirit [is] principle (German: *Grundsatz*),” and she was certain that a principle cannot ever overcome sentiment. The Russian translation for *sentiment* was even more persuasive: tenderness (*Zärtlichkeit*) was translated as an *inborn feeling* (*vrozhdennoe chuvstvo*; III, 8, p. 104; Russian translation: p. 140).

Though it is impossible now to trace the origin of Russian translation of such terms as “inborn feeling,” “Gefühl” and “sentiment” definitely refer to the concept of “natural sentiment,” that according to Reddy reflected the centrality of natural sentiment to virtue among the educated elite in France in the 1780s. This was a matter of broad consensus that stretched all the way from the authors of the highest intellectual patronized by the courts down to the scribbles of popular melodrama, including painters, composers, and pamphleteers.³⁶ According to sentimentalist protagonists, pity, benevolence, love, and gratitude were one and the same natural sentiment, the root of morality and the foundation of all social bonds.³⁷ At the end of Kotzebue’s play this consensus was enacted on stage: poor but noble Cederström agreed to marry non-noble, but wealthy Louise, while Josefina married her rich fiancée, who, though being hand-picked by her father, still managed arouse her sympathy because he wanted to get married only by mutual inclination. And finally, Henry Plum, Louisa’s father, admonished Cederström to find a position and get back into service. Now Cederström dared to follow the wish of his heart (Russian: *dat’ voliu chuvstvam*; German: *der Stimme meines Herzens folgen*) (III, 14, p. 125). His announced return to the service should have restored the lost harmony.

There is no evidence that Malinovskii could know that by the time the play was ready to be performed at Vorontsov’s estate, Anna Islen’eva had actually gotten a dowry. After her return from a short, but dramatic exile to Cherepovets *uezd* in early 1797, Dashkova granted her a sum

³⁶ Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 161.

³⁷ Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 164.

of 20,000 rubles, including 17,000 rubles paid out immediately, and another 3,000 to be paid alter on.³⁸ The sisters Catherine and Martha Wilmot who lived at Dashkova's in 1803–08 and kept a close eye on everything happening at her house did not mention Malinovskii in their diary even once.³⁹ Still, Dashkova's correspondence with Malinovskii demonstrate that she was eagerly expecting their meetings and conversations which took place during the princess' stays in Moscow.⁴⁰ It can be assumed that they met and conversed during receptions at other houses, for example, that of Osterman, a retired vice-chancellor of the Empire, whom they both frequented in Moscow.⁴¹ It seems that Malinovskii might have gotten an opportunity to marry Islen'eva in the late 1790s – early 1800s. Nevertheless, they got married only in 1810, when Islen'eva was already 40 – a highly unusual age for a woman to get married for the first time at the era. And Malinovskii himself was almost 50 at the time, also highly unusual age for a first marriage. It must surely be significant that their marriage took place approximately half a year after Dashkova's death. Hence, we might suspect that either Dashkova has been somehow preventing their marriage for about a decade, or that Malinovskii did not want to marry a woman without a dowry. Indeed, it was only after Dashkova's death Anna inherited the Dashkovs' family estate of Murikovo with 318 male serfs in the Volokolamsk *uezd* valued at 52,000 rubles.⁴²

As for Malinovskii, he faced a dilemma: he could either act on his feelings (even on purposefully cultivated ones) and marry a poor but noble girl, or wait until Islen'eva became a wealthy heiress. In Kotzebue's play, feelings (*sentiment* in English version, which is an emotional expression of feeling, such as love, sympathy etc., and does not have an equivalent in German or Russian) turned to be stronger and more important than honor which was ridiculed as an old-fashioned convention, or an empty set of rules. Adhering to the old principles, Cederström came close to losing out. At the end of the day, he had to abandon his archaic notions for the sake of his feeling which also brought him fortune. Louisa became a wealthy bride, and a poor nobleman obtained both love and wealth. There was no need any more to be “noble” in the full sense; nobleman's honor became rather an obstacle. Now feelings were asserted to be the main tool of happiness and success.

³⁸ Vorontsov-Dashkov, *Ekaterina Dashkova*, 255; Firsova, “Dusheprikazchiki E.R. Dashkovoi,” 189, 196.

³⁹ The sisters Wilmots' journals and letters from Russia are the key source about Dashkova's everyday life in 1800s: *Zapiski kniagini Dashkovoi i pis'ma sester Vil'mot iz Rossii*, 266f., 268f.; the original edition: Edith Londonderry (Ed.), *The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot* (Hyde, 1934).

⁴⁰ RGADA f. 188, op. 1, d. 363, l. 19: “I look forward to coming to Moscow as soon as the [winter] road is settled, and I hope to enjoy your pleasant conversation there”, wrote Dashkova in one of her undated letters to Malinovskii.

⁴¹ Catherine Wilmot's letters in *Zapiski kniagini Dashkovoi i pis'ma sester Vil'mot iz Rossii*, 239, 247, 302f. Stepan Petrovich Zhikharev, *Zapiski sovremennika* (Moscow, 2004), 54f.

⁴² Alexander Vorontsov-Dashkov, *Ekaterina Dashkova: Zhizn' vo vlasti i v opale* (Moscow, 2010), 255; Firsova, “Dusheprikazchiki E.R. Dashkovoi, 189.

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