
Translation and propaganda in the mid-eighteenth century: French versions of Sumarokov's tragedy *Sinav and Truvor*

Introduction

Presenting Russia to Europe in the age of Elizabeth

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries western and central Europeans, by and large, perceived Muscovy as an oriental despotism, but in the reign of Peter the Great Russia's image in the world beyond its borders began to improve. A further marked improvement in western perceptions of Russia would occur in the reign of Catherine II (the Great), who was adept at self-promotion and at winning over the French *philosophes*.¹ Even before Catherine came to the throne, though, a Russian empress, Elizabeth, had taken a major step in the attempt to present Russia to a western public as a power to be respected: in 1757 her court had asked Voltaire (1698-1774) to write a history of Peter's reign. The work that Voltaire produced, his *History of the Russian Empire under Peter the Great*, did indeed help to burnish Russia's image in Europe.² However, Voltaire was dealing in this work with Russia's past; it was important to improve the image of contemporary Russia too, as many Europeans, following a well-established tradition, still considered the country a 'rude and barbarous kingdom' and a society of 'infinite brutality'.³

Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Peter, had acceded to the Russian throne as a result of a *coup d'état* in which the Preobrazhensky Guards Regiment, which Peter had founded, played an important role. Foreign diplomats were also involved in these events. The French ambassador to Russia, Jacques-Joachim de la Chétardie (1705-59), supported Elizabeth. However, Aleksei Bestuzhev-Riumin (1693-1768), the Russian Chancellor, intrigued against him, opposing French influence at the Russian court and preferring to foster good relations with England. La Chétardie was duly expelled from Russia in 1744 and soon afterwards, in 1748, diplomatic relations between Russia and France were broken off, hindering the flow of people between the two countries. When at the end of the 1740s Ivan Shuvalov (1727-97) replaced Aleksei Razumovsky (1709-71) as the Empress's favourite, the state of Franco-Russian relations was therefore poor. Some members of the Russian elite who were already francophone and attached to French culture were keen to restore good political relations with France, not least in order to improve the reputation of St Petersburg and to have it recognised as the seat of one of Europe's enlightened courts.

It is against this political background that we should view cultural developments in mid-eighteenth-century Russia. If a monarch was to be seen by European elites as enlightened,

then he or she needed to enable the arts and sciences to flourish. Russia was already known in Europe for its Academy of Sciences (founded by Peter in 1724 and formally opened after his death in 1725). The Academy's members, who were mainly of foreign origin, had established good relations with other European Academies. Its accomplishments were promoted through European journals such as *The Germanic Library* (*Bibliothèque germanique*) and *The New Germanic Library* (*Nouvelle bibliothèque germanique*), edited by Samuel Formey (1711-97), who was the Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences in Berlin, and the *Parisian Journal of Learned Men* (*Journal des sçavants*).⁴ Russian art and literature, on the other hand, were barely known to the European public.⁵ In fact Russia could not yet offer much at all to Europe in terms of belles-lettres. Nevertheless there were two distinguished men of letters in the reign of Elizabeth who could be presented to a western readership, namely Mikhail Lomonosov (1711-65) and Aleksandr Sumarokov (1717-77).⁶

Literature and in particular the theatre, as a public form of art, were useful means of improving the image of Russia in Europe. However, the only way to demonstrate the excellence of Russian literature and theatre to Enlightenment Europe was through translation, since the Russian language was not known to foreigners other than a few former émigrés who had spent some time in the Russian Empire. Translation therefore had an important place both in the cultural strategy of the Russian court and the personal strategies of Russian writers of this time, some of whose literary works were published in the first instance in a foreign language and only afterwards in their original Russian version. These works included the satires of Antiokh Kantemir (1708 or 1709-44), which were first published in French in 1749 (probably in The Hague) and again in 1750 (in Paris)⁷ and then in German (in 1752) but not until 1762 in Russian.⁸ Similarly Sumarokov's tragedy *Semira* (*Семира*) was first published in German translation, in 1762, and did not appear in Russian until six years later.⁹ Several of Sumarokov's numerous other works were also translated during his life-time, mostly into French but in some cases into German.¹⁰ (Sumarokov himself was keenly interested in the spread of his work outside Russia.) It is this phenomenon – the translation of Russian literary work as a means of reaching a foreign public – that we explore in this sub-section of our corpus of documents. We shall illustrate the phenomenon by considering translations of another work by Sumarokov, his early tragedy *Sinav and Truvor* (*Синав и Трувор*).

[Aleksandr Dolgorukii's translation of Sumarokov's play 'Sinav and Truvor'](#)

Sumarokov's *Sinav and Truvor* was performed for the first time in St Petersburg in July 1750. The following year it was published in the original Russian version¹¹ and in a French prose translation done by Prince Aleksandr Dolgorukii, about whom not much is known.¹² We reproduce an excerpt from this first translation in our corpus of texts, together with an excerpt from another translation, which we shall discuss in the following section of this introductory essay. Two points are worth bearing in mind when we consider Dolgorukii's translation. First, it is an indication of the importance of translation as a means of reaching an international audience that Sumarokov or his patrons seem already to have been planning to produce a translation before the play was actually published in Russian. Second, it was Dolgorukii's prose version that was used by Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-66), one of the most prominent German writers and critics of the time and leader of the German classical school, when he wrote a review of Sumarokov's play, to which we shall turn shortly.¹³

As the following short excerpt from Dolgorukii's translation of the beginning of the play shows, this French version is very close to Sumarokov's original:

Гостомысл	Gostomisle
1 Пришло желанное, Ильмена, мною время,	1 Le jour que j'avois tant désiré, Ilmène, est enfin venu,
2 Соединить тобой мое с цесарским племя.	2 d'unir par vous ma Famille à celle de l'Empereur.
3 Весь град сего часа нетерпеливо ждет,	3 Toute la ville attend avec impatience cette heure
4 В который кровь моя в порфире процветет.	4 où la Pourpre doit donner un nouvel éclat à mon sang ;
5 Уж к браку олтари цветами украшенны,	5 déjà les autels sont ornés de fleurs pour la Pompe nuptiale,
6 И брачныя свечи в светильники вонзены.	6 et les flambeaux de l'himen sont prêts à s'allumer ;
7 Готовься, дщерь моя, готовься внити в храм. ¹⁴	7 préparés, vous ma Fille, préparés vous, à aller au Temple.

While adhering closely to the Russian original Dolgorukii manages to produce a French version that is elegant and sounds authentic. Credit is of course due in large measure to the translator himself, whose achievement shows that already in the middle of the reign of Elizabeth there were some Russians who had an excellent command of French and a fine sense of style. However, the fact that Sumarokov was emulating French models must have helped Dolgorukii to render his work successfully in French. While it would be an exaggeration to say that Sumarokov's work is a mere imitation of French neo-classical tragedies,¹⁵ it is nevertheless undeniable that he followed the conventions of those tragedies. (We shall discuss this point in the last section of this essay.) The translator's task was therefore much easier in this instance than it was, for example, in the case of Lomonosov's panegyric to Peter the Great, which posed numerous difficulties for its translator, Baron de Tschudy.¹⁶

There may be two reasons why Sumarokov's work was first translated into French rather than German.¹⁷ For one thing – and this is the more obvious reason – French was an international language. French literature had such a high reputation across Europe that a work written in some language other than French would certainly be accorded higher status if it was translated into French than if it was translated into German. At the same time, the choice of French rather than German as the target language would have been quite acceptable to Gottsched and the *Society for Free Arts in Leipzig* (*Gesellschaft der freien Künste zu Leipzig*), of which Gottsched was the president and with which Sumarokov had contact.¹⁸ The circle was not affected by the rising Gallophobia and indeed looked towards the French neo-classical tradition for its aesthetic inspiration and for models for its literary forms.

In his review of *Sinav and Truvor*, Gottsched praised Sumarokov precisely because in his play he had followed neo-classical literary models and rules and he held up Sumarokov's work as an example for German writers to follow. He also stressed that Dolgorukii's prose version of *Sinav and Truvor* was of course only a translation (thus implying that the original was certainly much better, especially when one took into account the fact that it was

written in verse) and pointed out that the translation itself had been done by a Russian, thus emphasising the talent of the translator, for whom French was not his mother tongue. That a work of such high quality had been written in such a difficult genre as tragedy and translated so gracefully by a representative of the Russian nation was a fact worth noting, Gottsched exclaimed, thereby mocking the French theory of the effect of climate on culture, according to which northern peoples were less inclined than southern peoples to develop the arts.¹⁹ Sumarokov himself would later mock this theory, which discouraged those who were 'born in a cold climate' from 'playing on a lyre' (i.e. writing poetry).²⁰

In 1755 Dolgorukii's translation of Sumarokov's play attracted the attention of the editors of the well-known Parisian *Foreign Journal* (*Journal Etranger*).²¹ It was the review of Sumarokov's play published in this journal rather than the one written by Gottsched (although both were favourable) that appeared in 1758, in Russian translation, in the St Petersburg journal *Monthly Essays* (*Ежемесячные сочинения*), thus confirming for Russian readers Sumarokov's international celebrity.²² The *Foreign Journal* already enjoyed a good reputation as it was linked at its inception with the names of Friedrich Melchior Grimm (1723-1807), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) and the abbé Antoine-François Prévost (1697-1763), the French historian and novelist who was the journal's main editor at the time when the review of Sumarokov's play was published in it.²³

In praising Sumarokov's work, the *Foreign Journal* used the traditional discourse of Enlightenment France on Russia. *Sinav and Truvor*, the reviewer wrote, demonstrated all the progress that had been made in Russia in the arts since the reign of Peter the Great, who had introduced them there. Within this traditional scheme Sumarokov's play was interpreted as a protest against the despotism which Enlightenment thinkers deplored:

On ne peut que sçavoir gré à l'Auteur d'avoir saisi cette occasion, pour déclamer contre l'injustice & la cruauté ; vices odieux, trop souvent reprochés aux Gouvernemens despotiques ; vices dont la nation s'est vue plus d'une fois la victime, mais dont les Peuples n'étoient pas autrefois plus exempts que les Princes & leurs Ministres : s'ils ont terni quelquefois le caractere du Réformateur de la Russie, il faut avouer que souvent il en trouva l'excuse dans le génie de la Nation. Ainsi M.Soumarokoff ne peut trop s'élever contre des défauts si long-tems communs aux Souverains & aux Sujets. Prêcher à la Russie la justice & l'unanimité, c'est seconder l'exemple auguste, qu'elle reçoit aujourd'hui de la Princesse qui la gouverne.²⁴

[One can only be grateful to the author for having taken the opportunity to declaim against injustice and cruelty; odious vices, which can too often be held against despotic governments; vices of which the nation has found itself the victim on more than one occasion but of which Peoples were in former times no more exempt than Princes and their Ministers: if these vices have sometimes tarnished the character of Russia's Reformer [i.e. Peter the Great], then it must be acknowledged that he often found an excuse for them in the genius of the Nation. Mr Sumarokov therefore cannot take exception too strongly to the flaws which have for so long been common to Sovereigns and Subjects. To preach justice and unanimity to Russia is to back up the august example that it receives today from the Princess who governs it.]

The reviewer's final remark seems in harmony with official Russian rhetoric,²⁵ emphasising the role of Peter's daughter – the current Empress Elizabeth – in protecting the arts. What precedes it, on the other hand, makes us doubt whether this review could have been approved by the Russian court, because the image of Peter the Great and the Russian nation that we see in it, while it was conventional in France at that time, cannot have reflected Elizabeth's opinion. Moreover, while generally well received by the reviewer, *Sinav and Truvor* was also criticised throughout the review for its various flaws.²⁶

Lespine de Morembert and his ambitions

Judging by a manuscript preserved in the French National Library,²⁷ a second translation of *Sinav and Truvor* into French – this time a verse translation – was made in 1751, the same year in which Dolgorukii's translation was published. (We reproduce an extract from this second translation too in our corpus.) It may have been this version of Sumarokov's play that was performed, in French, by the court troupe in St Petersburg on 6 September 1754.²⁸

The man who produced this second translation, Antoine-Nicolas Lespine de Morembert (he was born in 1708; the date of his death is not known), was one of a number of French émigrés who offered their services to the Francophile Ivan Shuvalov when he became Elizabeth's favourite. (Others were Jean Desessart (the dates of his life are not known), who wrote a Russophile literary work which he dedicated to Shuvalov,²⁹ Baron Théodore-Henri de Tschudy (1724-69), Shuvalov's secretary, and Charles-Louis Philippe chevalier de Mainvilliers (1714-76 or 1777), an adventurer who wrote, in French, the first epic poem on Peter the Great.³⁰) Morembert arrived in Russia in November 1742 with the French troupe known as the Comédie-Française. The troupe had been recruited in Germany: French theatre was very popular at many European courts and French actors could be found at this time right across Europe. The Comédie-Française was directed in Russia by Charles de Sérigny (dates unknown), who himself became quite close to Shuvalov. Morembert played in many French plays staged by this troupe, taking the part of characters created by Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, 1622-73).³¹ However, he seems not to have been highly esteemed by the Russian court.³² Although he was closely connected to the theatrical world (his wife also came from an actor's family), he therefore became dissatisfied with his lot and sought opportunities to acquire literary fame, following the example of an old friend, Charles-Simon Favart (1710-92), a successful French dramatist and director of the Opéra-Comique.³³ He started to write literary works (an ode dedicated to the Empress Elizabeth, a tragedy *Lycurgus* (*Licurgue*) and so forth), but his literary dreams were no closer to being fulfilled than his theatrical ambitions. Abandoning the stage, in 1759 he became a teacher in the Page Corps (Пажеский корпус) in St Petersburg, a prestigious school for boys who would go on to serve as pages at the Russian court.

From the point of view of the French government, Morembert was a valuable source of information about the Russian court. A report written by him is preserved in the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in which he describes various events at the Russian court in the period from 1741 to 1756.³⁴ A French emissary to Russia, Mackensie Douglas, while he was in St Petersburg in 1757, proposed to his superiors that they reward Morembert on account of his ability to 'shed much light and provide reliable information on Russia's affairs' (« donner de grandes lumières et des connaissances sûres sur les affaires de Russie »).³⁵

As it turned out, Morembert pinned too many hopes on the favour of Shuvalov and was ultimately disappointed in him. In 1751, though, when he undertook his translation of *Sinav*

and Truvor, he was still seeking opportunities to please Shuvalov. The manuscript of *Sinav and Truvor* that is housed in the French National Library (in contrast to the manuscript housed in the Russian National Library) contains a dedication to Shuvalov, in which Morembert emphasised that he had received support and assistance from Elizabeth's favourite. Morembert writes: 'To whom, if not to Your Excellency, could I offer a work which, as it were, has been produced under your eyes and the difficulties of which you have helped me with by means of the fine command that you have both of your language and of our own' (« A qui pourrois je offrir un travail qui pour ainsy dire s'est fait sous vos yeux, et auquel vous m'avez aidé dans ses difficultez par la delicatesse que vous possedés et de votre langue et de la nôtre meme, si ce n'est a V.E.? »)³⁶ Morembert also made flattering comments about the nascent Russian theatre. Lamenting the fact that the Russian language was not known in the European literary world, he remarked in the same dedication:

le theatre Russien est encore dans son enfance pour ne pas dire au berceau mais aussy pour rendre justice a la verité s'il va du pas dont il commence il est a croire qu'il atteindra tous les autres en peu de tems. L'on trouve parmi la jeunesse Russienne le gout, l'Emulation, et le genie Dramatique.³⁷

[the Russian theatre is still in its infancy, not to say its cradle, but also, to do justice to the truth, if it continues at the pace at which it has started then it is to be believed that it will catch up with all the others in no time at all. One finds taste, Competition and Dramatic genius among the Russian youth.]

It is worth noting that in flattering his Russian patron this mid-eighteenth-century French actor and translator provides us with an early example of a *topos*, the *topos* of catching up with – and eventually overtaking – western nations, which would become deeply rooted in Russian literary and political discourse. The *topos* would be clearly articulated, for example, in the seminal example of travel writing, *The Letters of a Russian Traveller*, written by Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826) in the 1790s during and after his travels in 1789-90 in German states, Switzerland, France and England.³⁸

Morembert's translation of 'Sinav and Truvor'

On the whole, Morembert translates Sumarokov's play accurately, as Dolgorukii had done. However, he may move some of the thoughts expressed by Sumarokov's characters from one place to another and express himself at greater length than Sumarokov, as we see if we compare Morembert's translation of the passage from the first scene of the play that we cited when examining Dolgorukii's translation with the equivalent passage in Sumarokov's Russian original.

Гостомысл	Gostomisle
1 Пришло желанное, Ильмена, мною время,	1 Cet instant où mon cœur a longtemps aspiré,
2 Соединить тобой мое с цесарским племя.	2 Cet instant qu'en secret j'avois tant désiré
3 Весь град сего часа нетерпеливо ждет,	3 Cet instant est venu d'unir par vous ma fille;
4 В который кровь моя в порфире	4 Au sang de l'Empereur celui de ma famille.
	5 La pourpre qui distingue Ilmene un si haut

процветет.	rang
5 Уж к браку олтари цветами украшенны,	6 Donne un nouvel éclat à l'éclat de mon sang.
6 И брачныя свечи в светильники вонзены.	7 Quand Novogorod l'attend avec impatience
7 Готовься, дочь моя, готовься внити в храм. ³⁹	8 Pouvés vous temoigner autant d'indifference
	9 De vos tristes regards que dois je presumer?
	10 Les flambeaux de l'hymen viennent de s'allumer
	11 Les autels sont parés; la pompe nuptiale
	12 Brille déjà des fleurs qu'à nos yeux elle etale
	13 Pre pares vous ma fille au temple on vous attend ⁴⁰

On the one hand, there is nothing in Sumarokov's text that Morembert omits. It is possible to find in his translation an equivalent for every line of Sumarokov's text, even if material does not always appear in quite the same place in the original and the translation. Thus line 1 in Sumarokov's original is rendered by lines 1-2 of Morembert's translation, line 2 by 3-4, 3 by 7, 4 by 5-6, 5 by 11-12, 6 by 10 and 7 by 13. On the other hand, Morembert's translation of these seven lines of Sumarokov's text is verbose, being nearly twice as long as the original. Two lines in the translation (8-9) do not correspond to any material in the speech made by Sumarokov's character the boyar Gostomysl, although they do anticipate the reply that his daughter Ilmena makes, which immediately follows this passage. Morembert is inclined to embellish Sumarokov's text with additions of his own or to use stylistic devices in order to point up something that he thinks Sumarokov wishes to emphasise. His first line in the passage cited provides a good example. In the Russian text Sumarokov simply states: 'The time that I have wished for has come, Ilmena' («Пришло желанное, Ильмена, мною время»). Morembert's French version is much more elaborate: 'The moment to which my heart has long aspired, / The moment which secretly I have so desired' (« Cet instant où mon cœur a longtemps aspiré, / Cet instant qu'en secret j'avois tant desire »). Morembert probably aimed by his embellishment to add emotional intensity to the scene, but the result proves rather banal, although it does not substantially change Sumarokov's meaning.

Morembert faithfully adheres in his translation of *Sinav and Truvor* to the French poetic model and dramatic conventions which Sumarokov had followed in his tragedy and knowledge of which, we suggested earlier, might have helped translators to produce a faithful likeness of the original. For example, Morembert does not stray from the Alexandrine, the standard verse form of French neo-classical tragedy, with its line of twelve (or, in Russian, also thirteen syllables), its caesura after the sixth syllable, its prohibition of *enjambement* and its aabb rhyme scheme with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes.⁴¹ Consider again the first four lines of the passages quoted above, in which we find all the above features (the caesura is marked in our translations by /):

Пришло желанное, / Ильмена, мною
время, [13 syllables, feminine rhyme, a]

Cet instant où mon cœur / a longtemps
aspiré, [12 syllables, masculine rhyme, a]

Соединить тобой / мое с цесарским
племя. [13 syllables, feminine rhyme, a]
Весь град сего часа / нетерпеливо
ждет, [12 syllables, masculine rhyme, b]
В который кровь моя / в порфире
процветет. [12 syllables, masculine rhyme,
b]

Cet instant qu'en secret / j'avois tant
desiré [12 syllables, masculine rhyme, a]
Cet instant est venu / d'unir par vous ma
fille; [12 syllables, feminine rhyme, b]
Au sang de l'Empereur / celui de ma
famille. [12 syllables, feminine rhyme, b]

Morembert's faithfulness to the form of Sumarokov's original is important, because Sumarokov's status in the European literary arena was bound to depend to some extent on his translator's success in demonstrating that the playwright had emulated the greatly respected French tragedians Pierre Corneille (1606-84) and Jean Racine (1639-99) and that he had observed the conventions they had established. These conventions included the so-called three unities, of action, place and time, as well as verse form. That is to say, a tragedy should have only one plot, with no sub-plots, it should be set in its entirety in the same place and its action should unfold in the course of a single day. Sumarokov also heeded the neo-classical requirement that a tragedy have verisimilitude (*vraisemblance*) and that it observe propriety or decorum (*bienséance*). A play adhering to these rules, when it was performed in French by French actors at the Russian court theatre, could confirm the impression that there was a common European cultural space extending from Paris to St Petersburg. Sumarokov's *Sinav and Truvor* related to the history of Russia, to be sure: it referred to Russian historical events and the action took place in the city of Novgorod at the dawn of Russian history, in the ninth century. And yet, in form it resembled plays in the French neo-classical repertoire. The point was made by the author of the review published in the *Foreign Journal*, who mentions some similarity, for example, between the story of the last moments of Truvor as they are related by the page in Act V of Sumarokov's play and the story told by Thérémène, also in Act V, in Racine's *Phèdre*.⁴² Thus the foreign aristocrats and the accredited diplomats resident in St Petersburg who attended the Russian court theatre might be disposed to accept that Russian culture belonged to a European tradition.

The question remains whether Sumarokov had become aware of the existence of Morembert's translation by the time Morembert finished it. Since Morembert dedicated his translation to Shuvalov, who besides being Lomonosov's patron was also very close to Sumarokov, it seems likely that Sumarokov would have learned from Shuvalov that a verse translation was being made of his play. We can only conjecture why Morembert's translation was not published and sent to France or Germany, but it may be that neither Sumarokov nor Shuvalov was sure that the translation would enhance Sumarokov's reputation. After all, the circulation of a verse translation which fell short of the standards associated with Corneille and Racine might militate against the favourable reception of the play in the West. Morembert's version may have been considered insufficiently accurate and some of its stylistic embellishments may have seemed trite. A capable prose translation, on the other hand, might leave readers to assume that the Russian verse original, which the western public was in no position to judge, had greater merit than the translation. It is possible, then, that if the first, prose translation of *Sinav and Truvor* had already been published by the time Morembert completed his verse translation, Morembert's translation would have seemed redundant, or even potentially damaging if there was some doubt whether it would present indigenous Russian theatre to a western public in the best possible light. It is also possible, of course, that Shuvalov felt that remarks made by

Morembert in his foreword about Russian drama in general (it was in its infancy, Morembert said) and about Sumarokov's work in particular (some of Sumarokov's lines had been borrowed from French authors, Morembert noted) were simply too unflattering.

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By the late 1750s, Russia was attracting fresh interest in France, with which she was allied in the Seven Years War (1756-63). Voltaire was partly responsible for this new interest (the first volume of his *History of the Russian Empire under Peter the Great* appeared in 1759), but he was not alone in bringing Russia to the attention of a French readership. In 1760, for example, Elie-Catherine Fréron (1719-76) published the first substantial critical article in French about Russian literature in his journal *The Literary Year (Année littéraire)*.⁴³

Russian and French translators also played an important part in the project of presenting the Russian nation to a western public. This exercise in what we might now call cultural propaganda had begun long before the political alliance between the two nations was concluded and it was not limited to literary translation. The Russian College (i.e. ministry) of Foreign Affairs (Коллегия иностранных дел) regularly used works by Jean Rousset de Missy (1686-1762), a French Huguenot journalist, historian and writer who lived in Holland and who from 1737 was an honorary member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, for the purpose of placing in the public domain documents which showed the Russian point of view in a favourable light.⁴⁴ Rousset de Missy's work was published by Pierre Gosse (c. 1676-1755), a Dutch publisher of Huguenot origin who was an agent of the Academy of Sciences and who, together with his son, issued books intended to improve Russia's image in Europe.⁴⁵ It was the younger Gosse who in 1749 published, in French translation, the first edition of Kantemir's *Satires* to which we have referred above.⁴⁶ This publication was not commissioned by the Russian court, for Kantemir was too critical of religion and of vices that could be associated with the court. Certain Russian aristocrats may nonetheless have assisted in its preparation.⁴⁷ The satires were then noticed and favourably reviewed for a European public, in 1750, in the French journal *Reports on the History of the Sciences and Fine Arts*.⁴⁸ In the same year Kantemir's biography and the French translation of one of his satires were published in the journal *The Bee of Parnassus*, edited by the above-mentioned Formey, who was also of Huguenot origin and had close links with the Russian Academy of Sciences.⁴⁹

The translations of Sumarokov's tragedy that we have introduced in this essay, then, should be seen not in isolation but as examples of a whole series of initiatives aimed at improvement of the western perception of this imperial power that was emerging on the European stage. By translating Russian plays such as *Sinav and Truvor*, either for dissemination abroad in printed form or for performance at the Russian court, whose theatre was frequented by foreign aristocrats and diplomats as well as Russian courtiers, translators were demonstrating that a native Russian literature was coming into being. Moreover, the plays produced by Russian dramatists, it could be inferred, deserved to be staged alongside those produced by the great French dramatists such as Corneille, Molière and Racine. It was also to Russia's credit that her cultural progress had been so rapid. The responses to *Sinav and Truvor* which quickly appeared in the French and German press (possibly at the instigation of Russians) not only noted the literary merits of Sumarokov's play but also stressed precisely this point. 'Who would have thought at the time of Peter the Great', Gottsched reflected, 'that his Russians, whom the tsar had only just begun to turn

into men, would be capable, within a short time, twenty-five years after his death, of accomplishing one of the most difficult pieces of human wit, namely a tragedy?'⁵⁰ Thus Russia was entering the European consciousness by virtue of its literature as well as its military victories, and in this process the French language was proving an indispensable medium.⁵¹

The conduct of literary propaganda through translation into French was not the labour of a single year but a long-term enterprise, of which we have examined here only one early stage. The enterprise would soon be taken further by Catherine the Great. In her well-known polemics with Jean-Baptiste Chappe d'Auteroche (1722-69) about the progress of Russian culture, for example, she would underscore, among other things, the merits of Russian literature of which Chappe was unaware.⁵² Indeed, the importance of literature in the war of cultural influences increased considerably during Catherine's reign, when animosity towards Russia grew in France as a result of the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-74 and the first partition of Poland, in 1772.⁵³ In this sort of climate, ensuring that western readers were acquainted with the major works of Russian literature through translation would become a crucial task in the conduct of Russian relations with the West.

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¹ See Albert Lortholary, *Le Mirage russe en France au XVIIIe siècle* [*The Russian Mirage in Eighteenth-Century France*] (Paris: Editions contemporaines, Boivin, 1951). Lortholary presents the *philosophes* as people who allowed themselves to be misled by Catherine's propaganda because they had an interest in using the Russian case in their discussions with their opponents and in their campaign against the French monarchy. For a critique of Lortholary's work, see Larry Wolff and Serguei Karp (eds), *Le Mirage russe au XVIIIe siècle* [*The Russian Mirage in the Eighteenth Century*] (Ferney: Centre international d'étude du XVIIIe siècle, 2001) and particularly the chapter in this book by Georges Dulac, « Diderot et le "mirage russe": quelques préliminaires à l'étude de son travail politique de Pétersbourg » ['Diderot and the "Russian mirage": some preliminaries to the study of his political work in St Petersburg'] (pp. 149-92).

² Voltaire, *Anecdotes sur le czar Pierre le Grand; Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand* [*Anecdotes on Peter the Great; The History of the Russian Empire under Peter the Great*], critical edition with an introduction and notes by Michel Mervaud and Christiane Mervaud, with the collaboration of Andrew Brown and Ulla Kólvig, 2 vols (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1999), i.e. vols XLVI and XLVII of the complete works of Voltaire.

³ See *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom: Russia in the Accounts of the Sixteenth-Century English Voyagers*, ed. Lloyd E. Berry and Robert O. Crummey (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); Michel Mervaud and Jean-Claude Roberti, *Une infinie brutalité. L'image de la Russie dans la France des XVIe et XVIIe siècles* [*An Infinite Brutality. The Image of Russia in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France*] (Paris: IMSECO-Institut d'études slaves, 1991).

⁴ P. Berkov, «Изучение русской литературы во Франции. Библиографические материалы» ['The study of Russian literature in France. Bibliographical material'], in *Литературное Наследство* [*Literary Heritage*] (Moscow: Akademiia nauk), vols XXXIII-XXXIV (1939), p. 722; electronic version available on the website of the Russian Institute of World Literature at <http://www.imli.ru/> (accessed on 05.02.2013).

⁵ Russian literature of the Petrine age was, however, discussed in an article of 1727 by Mich. Schend van der Bech in *Acta physico-medica Academiae Caesareae Naturae Curiosorum* [*Physico-Medical Proceedings of the Royal Academy of the Curiosities of Nature*], 1727, vol. 1, pp. 131-49. This article was later reproduced in other journals: see Berkov, «Изучение русской литературы во Франции», p. 722.

⁶ Recent groundwork, on which we have drawn in this introductory essay, has been done on translations of Sumarokov's play *Sinav and Truvor* by Alexei Evstratov, who 'rediscovered' a manuscript of a translation of the play in the French National Library. His article on this subject is an important secondary source for us here: see Alexei Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French: Sumarokov's *Sinav and Truvor* and its translations', *Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia Newsletter*, vol. 37 (2009), pp. 24-34. Evstratov provides useful biographical

information on Sumarokov's translators and on the reception of their work. Following earlier Russian scholars such as Grigorii Gukovsky, he also notes the importance of translations of works of Russian literature in the 'cultural project' of the eighteenth-century Russian monarchy. In the present essay we are of course primarily interested in the uses to which knowledge of French among the eighteenth-century Russian elite could be put and the ways in which translation from Russian into French illustrates the functions of the French language in Russia. We are also grateful to Vladimir Somov for his help in the preparation of this introduction.

⁷ For further details see n. 46 below. On Kantemir, see French in Russian diplomacy: Antiokh Kantemir's address to King George II and his diplomatic and other correspondence: introduction in this corpus.

⁸ The fact that Kantemir's satires were first published abroad may also be explained, though, by the difficulty that he had in finding a publisher inside Russia who would accept such controversial material: Berkov, «Изучение русской литературы во Франции», p. 760.

⁹ As noted by Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 24.

¹⁰ After the translation of *Sinav and Truvor* in 1751 the following translations of Sumarokov's writings into French or German were published in Russia: *Céphale et Procris: Opéra russe* [*Cephalus and Procris: A Russian Opera* / *Цефал и Прокрис, Опера*] (St Petersburg: imprimé dans l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1755), translated by Henninger; *Description du feu d'artifice tiré le soir du Nouvel an 1760* [*A Description of the Fireworks let off on New Year's Eve in 1760* / *Описание огненного представления в первый вечер нового года, 1760*] (St Petersburg: imprimé dans l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1760), with text in French and German; *Alceste. Opéra* [*Alceste. An Opera* / *Альцеста. Опера*] (St Petersburg: imprimé dans l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1764), translated by Henninger; *Ode auf das Namensfeste Seiner Kaiserlichen Hoheit Paul Petrowitsch Thronfolgers aller Reussen, den 29. Junius des Jahres 1771 verfertigt von dem wirklichen Stathsraths und Ritter, Herrn Alexander Sumarokow; aus dem Russischen übersetzt von einem Verehrer der Sumarokowischen Muse* ['Ode to His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Pavel Petrovich on the occasion of his nameday on 29 June 1771', etc. / «Ода государю цесаревичу Павлу Петровичу в день его тезоименитства июня 29 числа 1771 года»] (Moscow: gedruckt in der Kaiserlichen Universitäts-Buchdruckerey, [1771]); *Der Erste und wichtigste Aufstand der Strelizen in Moskau im Jahr 1682 im Maymonate. Aus dem Russischen des wirklichen Etats-Raths und Ritters Hr. Alexand. Sumarokows übersetzt von Ai.* [*The First and Most Important Mutiny of the Strel'tsy [i.e. the Palace Guard] in Moscow in 1682 in the Month of May [...]* / *Первый и главный стрелецкий бунт, бывший в Москве 1682 года, в месяце мае [...]*] (Riga: bey Johann Fridrich Hartknoch, 1772 [printed in Leipzig: Gedruckt bey Bernhard Christian Breitkopf und Sohn]), translated by Ch. G. Arndt; *Semire tragédie. Traduit du russe* [*The Tragedy Semira. Translated from the Russian*] (Moscow: V Universitetskoi tipografii, Rüdiger and Claudi, 1776). Some translations of Sumarokov's work were also published outside Russia in the eighteenth century, e.g. [Sumarokow; Osterwald], *Schauspiele* [*Plays*] (Breslau: publisher unknown, 1762), which contains Sumarokov's *Semira. Ein Trauer-Spiel aus dem Russischen des Hn. Sumarokow. Ins teutsche übersetzt durch v. Osterwald* [*Semira. A Tragedy from the Russian of Mr Sumarokov. Translated into German by v. Osterwald*].

¹¹ *Синав и Трувор. Трагедия Александра Сумарокова* [*Sinav and Truvor. A Tragedy by Aleksandr Sumarokov*] (St Petersburg: Imperatorskaia akademiia nauk, 1751).

¹² *Sinave et Trouvore, tragédie russe en vers, faite par monsieur Soumarokoff et traduite par mr. le prince Alexandre Dolgorouky* [*Sinav and Truvor, A Russian Tragedy in Verse, written by Mr Sumarokov and translated by Prince Aleksandr Dolgorukii*] (St Petersburg: imprimé dans l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1751). This translator was probably Prince Aleksandr Sergeevich Dolgorukii, the son of Sergei Petrovich and Irina Petrovna Dolgorukii: see Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', pp. 25-28, on Dolgorukii and his translation. This translation was mentioned by Jacob Stählin in a note that he wrote on Russian literature: see *Материалы для истории русской литературы* [*Documents for the History of Russian Literature*], ed. P. A. Efremov (St Petersburg: Тип. I. I. Glazunova, 1867), p. 163.

¹³ The review was published in 1753 in Gottsched's journal *Das Neueste aus der anmuthigen Gelehrsamkeit* [*What is New in Graceful Learning*] (pp. 684-91). This journal was well-known in Europe. Gottsched published several articles about Russian literature, for example about the French edition of Kantemir's *Satires* (1751, pp. 259-66) and then about the German edition of them (1752, pp. 503-19): see Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.» ['Russian literature in an eighteenth-century German journal'], in *XVIII век: Сборник 3* [*The Eighteenth Century: Volume 3*] (Moscow and Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo AN SSSR, 1958), p. 384.

¹⁴ For an English translation of Sumarokov's Russian see n. 39 below.

¹⁵ Gukovsky noted the features which distinguish Sumarokov's tragedies from those of Corneille, Racine and Voltaire, such as a simpler plot, the absence of a confidant or confidante in many of his plays, the importance of soliloquies in Sumarokov's tragedies, and so forth: see Gukovskii, «О сумароковской трагедии» ['On

Sumarokov's tragedy'], in G. A. Gukovskii, *Ранние работы по истории русской поэзии XVIII века* [Early Works on the History of Eighteenth-Century Russian Poetry] (Moscow: lazyki russkoi kul'tury, 2001), pp. 214-28.

¹⁶ *Panégirique de Pierre le Grand prononcé dans la Séance publique de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, le 26. Avril 1755. Par Mr. Lomonosow. Conseiller et Professeur de cette Académie ; et traduit sur l'Original Russein Par Mr. le Baron de Tschoudy* [Panegyric to Peter the Great delivered at a Public Session of the Imperial Academy of Sciences on April 26 1755. By Mr Lomonosov, Councillor and Professor of this Academy; and translated from the Russian original by Baron de Tschudy] (Imprimé à St. Pétersbourg: [Tipografia Akademii nauk, date unknown]).

¹⁷ All the same, translators did produce German versions of *Sinav and Truvor*. Christian Gottlieb Köllner made a translation which was published in 1755 in *Sammlung einiger ausgesuchten Stücke der Gesellschaft der freyen Künste zu Leipzig* [Collection of Selected Pieces of the Society of Free Arts in Leipzig], pp. 81-148: see Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.», p. 390. This German translation was entitled *Sinav und Truvor ein russisches Trauerspiel aus der französischen Uebersetzung verdeutscht von N.N.Köllnern aus Weitzenfels* [*Sinav and Truvor, a Russian tragedy translated into German from a French translation by N.N. Kölner (sic) of Weissenfels*], *Sammlung [...]*. This is a verse translation which has evidently been made from Dolgorukii's prose translation. It appears that another translation was made by Christian Dietrich Osterwald (1729-94), a future teacher of the heir to the Russian throne, Catherine's son Paul, and that Sumarokov's play was staged many times in German theatres: see the obituary to Sumarokov, «Сокращенная повесть о жизни и писаниях [...] А. П. Сумарокова» [An abridged tale of the life and writings [...] of A. P. Sumarokov'], in *Санкт-петербургский вестник* [The St Petersburg Herald], 1, 1778, p. 44, cited in Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.», p. 390. This translation by Osterwald, who is better known for his other translations of Sumarokov's works, was not published and does not seem to have survived.

¹⁸ On Gottsched's circle and its relations with Russia, see Ulf Lehmann, *Der Gottschedkreis und Russland. Deutsch-russische Literaturbeziehungen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* [The Gottsched Circle in Russia. German-Russian Literary Relations in the Age of Enlightenment] (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966). We are grateful to Kirill Ospovat for this information.

¹⁹ Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.», p. 387. The qualities and richness of the Russian language had already been discussed in the review of the German edition of Kantemir's *Satires* published in Gottsched's journal and cited in n. 13 above: *ibid.*, pp. 385-86.

²⁰ In his poem of 1774 «Стихи дюку Браганцы» [Verses to the Duke of Braganza]: see Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.», p. 387.

²¹ *Journal Etranger*, 1755 (April), pp. 114-56. The translation of *Sinav and Truvor* quoted in this journal, while close to Dolgorukii's translation, is not identical to it. Compare the lines that are taken from Dolgorukii's translation earlier in this section of our introduction with the following lines of the text quoted in the *Journal Etranger*: 'Le jour que j'avois tant désiré, Ilmene, est enfin venu; jour heureux, qui par vous doit unir ma famille à celle de nos Maîtres. Toute la ville attend avec impatience ce moment, où la pourpre va donner à mon sang un nouvel éclat. Déjà les Autels sont ornés de fleurs, les flambeaux de l'hymen s'allument. Préparez-vous ma fille, préparez-vous à me suivre au Temple' (*Journal Etranger*, 1755 (April), pp. 115-16). In some other places the differences between the two versions are even greater. It therefore seems possible that the author of this review had at his disposal a revised version of a published translation, possibly sent from St Petersburg.

²² *Ежемесячные сочинения*, 1758, vol. II, pp. 507 ff. This translation was not very accurate; the translator altered some of the expressions in the original, in particular expressions relating to Peter the Great. See Gukovskii, «Русская литература в немецком журнале XVIII в.», pp. 383-88.

²³ See *Dictionnaire des journaux 1600-1789* [Dictionary of Journals 1600-1789], ed. Jean Sgard (Paris: Universitas, 1991), Article 732 (by M. R. de Labriolle). See also M. R. de Labriolle, « Le Journal étranger dans l'histoire du cosmopolitisme littéraire » [The Journal étranger in the history of literary cosmopolitanism], in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation), vol. LVI, 1967, pp. 783-96.

²⁴ *Journal Etranger*, 1755 (April), p. 130.

²⁵ As noted by Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 27.

²⁶ *Journal Etranger*, 1755 (April), p. 156.

²⁷ i.e., « Sinave et Trouvore, Tragedie Russe en cinq actes, par M. de Soumarokoff, traduite par M.L'Espine de Morembert », in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BNF), Collection Rondel, M.RE 249. This manuscript has been used by Evstratov: see 'Russian drama in French', p. 28. Another slightly different manuscript version of the same translation is housed in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg,

Manuscript Section, Hermitage Collection, French Manuscripts (Эрмитажное собрание, французские рукописи), no. 61.

²⁸ Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 31.

²⁹ V. S. Rzhetskii [Rjéoutski], V. A. Somov, «Шевалье Дезессар, московский гувернер и писатель (из французских контактов И. И. Шувалова)» ['The Chevalier Desessart, a tutor and writer in Moscow (on the French acquaintances of Ivan Shuvalov)'], in *Философский век. Просвещенная личность в российской истории [...]. Материалы Международной конференции. Санкт-Петербург, 23-26 июня 1997 г.* [The Age of Philosophy. The Enlightened Personality in Russian History [...]. Proceedings of an International Conference. St Petersburg, 23-26 June 1997] (St Petersburg: St Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 1997), pp. 220-40; available online at <http://ideashistory.org.ru/pdfs/a02.pdf> (accessed on 05.02.2013).

³⁰ *La Pétréade, ou Pierre le Créateur* [The Petreid, or Peter the Creator], par Mr. G.-S. chevalier de Mainvilliers (Amsterdam: J. H. Schneider, 1762; republished 1763).

³¹ On Lespine de Morembert, see the biographical article by Rjéoutski (with the collaboration of A. Evstratov) in *Les Français en Russie au siècle des Lumières* [The French in Russia in the Age of Enlightenment], ed. A. Mézin and V. Rjéoutski (Ferney: CIEDS, 2011), vol. II, pp. 526-28.

³² Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 29.

³³ Morembert wrote a number of letters to Favart, from which we gain an insight into his life. Some of these letters are published in Charles-Simon Favart, *Mémoires et correspondance littéraires, dramatiques et anecdotiques* [Literary, Dramatic and Anecdotal Memoirs and Correspondence], ed. A. P. C. Favart, vol. III (Paris: Leopold Collin, 1808). On this correspondence and some other unpublished letters written by Morembert to Favart, see Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', pp. 31-32.

³⁴ Archives des Affaires étrangères (Archives of Foreign Affairs), Paris, MD Russie, vol. I, fols 192-93 v.

³⁵ Ibid., vol. II, fol. 173. 'Mackensie' [i.e. Mackenzie] was a Scottish nobleman who was serving France.

³⁶ BNF, Collection Rondel, M.RE 249, fol. 3 v.; quoted from Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 32.

³⁷ BNF, Collection Rondel, M.RE 249, fol. 2; quoted from Evstratov, 'Russian drama in French', p. 33.

³⁸ *Письма русского путешественника*, in N. M. Karamzin, *Сочинения в двух томах* [Works in Two Volumes] (Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1984), vol. I, pp. 253-54.

³⁹ i.e. (from Sumarokov's Russian): 'The time that I have wished for has come, Ilmena, / To conjoin through you my family with the king's. / The whole city [of Novgorod] impatiently awaits the moment, / When my blood shall thrive in the royal family. / The altars are already adorned with flowers for the wedding, / The marriage candles have been placed in the candlesticks. / Prepare yourself, my daughter, prepare to enter the temple'.

⁴⁰ i.e. (from Morembert's translation): 'The moment to which my heart has long aspired, / The moment which secretly I have so desired / The moment has come through you my daughter to unite / The blood of my family to the Emperor's. / The royal purple which accords, Ilmena, such high rank / Lends new splendour to [the splendour of] my blood. / When Novgorod awaits impatiently, / Can you show such indifference / Through your sad gaze as I must presume? / The marriage candles have just been lit / The altars have been adorned; the nuptial pomp / Already gleams with flowers laid out before our eyes / Prepare yourself my daughter for the temple where you are awaited'.

⁴¹ Caesura: a pause within the line; enjambement: the continuation of a syntactic unit beyond the end of a line; masculine rhyme: rhyme on a masculine ending (a word ending without a final mute e in French, or a word ending in a stressed syllable in Russian); feminine rhyme: rhyme on a feminine ending (a word ending in a mute e in French or in an unstressed syllable in Russian).

⁴² *Journal Etranger*, 1755 (April), p. 144. At the end of the review the reviewer reminded readers that Sumarokov was much indebted to Racine and Shakespeare and again compared the play to various French models: *ibid.*, pp. 153-55.

⁴³ *Année littéraire*, 1760, no. 5, pp. 194-203. The article was written by Count Andrei Shuvalov (1742-89).

⁴⁴ Jean Rousset de Missy, *Recueil historique d'actes, négociations, mémoires et traités depuis la paix d'Utrecht jusqu'au second congrès de Cambray inclusivement* [Historical Collection of Official Documents, Negotiations, Reports and Treaties since the Peace of Utrecht up to the Second Congress of Cambray inclusive], 21 vols (The Hague: Chez H. Scheurleer, 1728-55): see N. A. Kopanov, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира» ['On the first editions of A. Kantemir's satires'], in A. M. Panchenko (ed.), *XVIII век. Сборник 15. Русская литература XVIII века в ее связях с искусством и наукой* [The Eighteenth Century. Volume 15. Eighteenth-Century Russian Literature in Its Contacts with Art and Science] (Leningrad: Nauka, Leningradskoe otделение, 1986), p. 10.

⁴⁵ e.g. *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de nos jours, ou Recueil de pièces sur les affaires du tems. Tome 1. Première partie. Pièces pour et contre la détention du Marquis de Monti et des trois bataillons françois par les*

russiens. [Reports serving as a History of Our Day, or a Collection of Pieces on the Affairs of the Time. Volume I. First Part. Pieces for and against the Detention of the Marquis de Monti and the Three French Battalions by the Russians.] (A Amsterdam, chez François Changuion, 1735; the place of publication and the name of the publisher are false). The purpose of this pamphlet was to put forward the Russian point of view in the conflict with France during the War of the Polish Succession in 1733-35, especially with regard to the question of French prisoners held by Russia: see Kopanev, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира», p. 10.

⁴⁶ *Satyres de Monsieur le Prince Cantemir. Avec l'histoire de sa vie* [Satires of Prince Cantemir. With the History of His Life] (London [according to the cover]: Chez Jean Nourse, 1749). Kopanev assumes that both the place and the name of the publisher are false: see Kopanev, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира», passim. The second edition (Paris, 1750) is independent from the first but the text is for the most part the same.

⁴⁷ At any rate, the translation of the satires from Russian into an Italian version, which served as a basis for further translations of them into other languages, was done by Princes Aleksandr Dolgorukii (possibly the same person who translated Sumarokov's play) and Vladimir Dolgorukii (1717-1803, no doubt Aleksandr's brother). See Kopanev, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира», p. 150.

⁴⁸ *Mémoires pour l'histoire des sciences et des beaux arts [...]* 1750 (April), pp. 928-32. This review was published in Russian translation by F. Ia. Priima, «Антиох Кантемир и его французские литературные связи» ['Antiokh Kantemir and his French literary contacts'], in *Русская литература. Труды отдела новой русской литературы* [Russian Literature. Transactions of the Department of Modern Russian Literature] (Moscow and Leningrad: Nauka, 1957), p. 43. The reference is in Kopanev, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира», p. 151.

⁴⁹ *Abeille du Parnasse*, 1750 (May), pp. 145-52. See Kopanev, «О первых изданиях сатир А.Кантемира», p. 151.

⁵⁰ Quoted in Lehmann, *Der Gottschedkreis und Russland*, pp. 58-59.

⁵¹ It was probably thanks to translations of the sort we have examined in this essay that Sumarokov was known to the cultivated western public (and in this respect he was exceptional), albeit only to a small part of that public. The *encyclopédiste* Denis Diderot (1713-84), when he left Russia in 1774 after his visit to Catherine's court, brought several Russian editions of Sumarokov's works back to France. We are grateful to Georges Dulac for drawing our attention to this fact. On Diderot's 'Russian' library and the works by Sumarokov that he acquired, see A. Basanoff, «Bibliothèque russe de Diderot» ['Diderot's Russian library'], *Bulletin d'informations de l'ABF* [The ABF Newsletter], no. 29, 1959, pp. 71-75, and M. P. Alekseev, *Русская культура и романский мир* [Russian Culture and the Romance World] (Leningrad: Nauka, 1985), pp. 353, 355, 360-62.

⁵² Abbé Jean Chappe d'Auteroche, *Voyage en Sibérie, fait par ordre du Roi en 1761 [...]* [Journey to Siberia made on the Orders of the King in 1761 [...]], 2 vols (Paris: Debure père, 1768); [Catherine II et al.], *Antidote, ou, Examen du mauvais livre superbement imprimé intitulé : Voyage en Sibérie fait par ordre de roi en 1761 par M. l'abbé Chappe d'Auterauche* [An Antidote, or an Examination of the Bad but superbly printed Book entitled A Journey to Siberia made on the Orders of the King in 1761 by the abbé Chappe d'Auteroche] (St Petersburg: no name of publisher, 1770); idem, *Antidote, ou Examen du mauvais livre superbement imprimé intitulé Voyage en Sibérie, fait par ordre du Roi en 1761 [...]*, 2 vols (A Amsterdam: chez Marc-Michel Rey, 1772).

⁵³ See, e.g., Marcus C. Levitt, 'An antidote to nervous juice: Catherine the Great's debate with Chappe d'Auteroche over Russian culture', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 32, no. 1, 1998, pp. 49-63, here pp. 57-58. On the question of the political and ideological role of Russian literature at this time, see A. L. Zorin, *Кормя двуглавого орла... Литература и государственная идеология в России в последней трети XVIII — первой трети XIX века* [Feeding the Two-Headed Eagle... Literature and State Ideology in Russia in the Last Third of the Eighteenth and the First Third of the Nineteenth Century] (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2001).