

# N.M.Karamzin's Messenger of Europe

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*(Vestnik Evropy), 1802–3*

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In the summer of 1790 the 23 year-old Nikolay Karamzin returned to Russia after an extensive trip through Germany, Switzerland, France and England. Eager to make his name as a writer and to pass on the fruits of his European education, Karamzin resolved to publish the Moscow Journal (*Moskovskiy zhurnal*, 1791-2) which became the broad-sheet of Russian sentimentalism and initiated what was to be known as the "Karamzin period of Russian literature". In his memoirs Filipp Vigel saw the journal as the rallying-point for "all noble-minded youths and all truly sensitive women»"[1], and Piotr Vyazemsky considered that "Karamzin in the Moscow Journal destroyed the Gothic towers of a decaying literature and on its ruins laid the foundations of a new European publication, which awaited for its ultimate completion skilled, industrious hands"[2].

Karamzin's versatility and talent were revealed from the first number of the Moscow Journal. As a journalist he showed his ability to produce a journal comparable in presentation and content with the European models he so admired. He introduced as a basic feature informed criticism of Russian and foreign books and plays and published carefully chosen and written translations from Western originals on a wide range of subjects. He mustered contributions from the leading poets of the day and provided in his own *Letters of a Russian Traveller* (*Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*) and in sentimental stories such as *Poor Liza* (*Bednaya Liza*) and *Nathalie, the Boyar's Daughter* (*Natal'ya, boyarskaya doch'*) examples of accomplished Russian prose writing, which caught the imagination of the reading public and ensured the success of sentimentalism as a literary vogue in Russia. Not least, the Moscow Journal heralded a stylistic revolution: without the carefully wrought embroidery of what became known as the "new style" (*novyy slog*) the emotional finesse and nuance on which sentimentalism relied could not have been realized. The implications of sentimentalism as something more than a literary style are equally evident in the journal: the spirit of Karamzin's work is independent, enlightened and humane.

Although Karamzin's activity as a writer extends over a period of more than forty years (from the publication of his first translation in 1783 until his death in 1826,

when he was working on the twelfth volume of his monumental history of Russia) his major literary output is concentrated in a period of thirteen years. It is a period bounded by two important journals, the *Moscow Journal* and the *Messenger of Europe*. In the 1790's Karamzin's desire to encourage the development of Russian literature and to bring Russia into line culturally with the West, inspired his stream of publications. He strove to provide examples of entertaining and accomplished writing and to fashion a literary language able to compete with French or English in its range and richness.

Nevertheless, in this period his work and philosophy of life were affected by political, non-literary events in Europe and Russia. Repressive measures under Catherine and Paul threatened not only his friends but his own very existence as a writer. After the unrelieved gloom of Paul's reign it is not surprising that Karamzin shared in the wave of optimism which swept through Russia on Alexander's accession. Vigel described how "everyone felt a kind of moral expansion, looks became kinder, the walk bolder, the breathing freer"[3]; Nikolay Grech sought to characterize the change by specific reference to Karamzin's own sentiments:

"It is impossible to describe the astonishment, joy and, enthusiasm, aroused by what was in fact an unfortunate and loathsome event (Paul's murder). Russia breathed freely. Nobody thought of pretending any more. Karamzin remarked justly in his memoir on the state of Russia: "Who was more unfortunate than Paul! Tears at his death were shed only within his family". Not only in words but in writing, in print, particularly in poems, people expressed their joyful feelings of release from his tyranny. Karamzin, in his ode on Alexander's accession, said: "Hearts are ready to breathe in You: / Our spirit is revived by hope. / Thus does the appearance of sweet spring / Bring with it oblivion / Of all the dark horrors of winter"[4].

Yet this did not, and could not, signal a complete return by Karamzin to the beliefs and enthusiasms of his youth. He continued to speak as a Philalet, advocating a philosophy of moderation and caution[5]. Karamzin's experiences and new interests in the decade between the *Moscow Journal* and the *Messenger of Europe* modified his approach to journalism: in the earlier journal he had been pre-eminently a man of letters; to this role he now added those of an historian and a political publicist. His erstwhile propaganda for Russian enlightenment took on a new nationalistic colouring. The *Messenger of Europe* is the focal point of Karamzin's thought and work at the beginning of Alexander's reign; it is the culmination of his years of work for Russian literature and his swan song before his entry into "the temple of History"[6]. Although his reputation and influence were considerable throughout Alexander's reign, it was not until the publication of the first eight volumes of his *History of the Russian State* (*Istoriya gosudarstva rossiyskogo*) in 1818 that Karamzin again occupied the literary limelight.

Karamzin was both the editor and chief contributor of the *Messenger of Europe*; he left his stamp on every aspect of its contents and presentation as indelibly as he had done on his earlier journal. Karamzin himself was perhaps not fully aware to what degree he assumed his new role as public tribune; in the foreword to the first issue (as well as in an article at the end of 1802) he emphasized his concern for lit-

erature and enlightenment and expressed the hope that the political section “for the sake of Europe will not be very rich and interesting”[7]. The journal is divided into two parts: “Literature and Miscellany” and “Politics”, but politics dominate the journal not only in the form of European news but also as open discussion of Russia’s internal reforms. “Literature and Miscellany” brings to a close Karamzin’s work as a poet, translator, story writer and reformer of the Russian literary language, whereas “Politics” concentrates his earlier scattered ideas and remarks on historical, political and social questions into a comprehensive system and points to the future development of his career.

## I.

In certain respects the literary section of the *Messenger of Europe* continues the traditions of the *Moscow Journal*. Of the original five features Karamzin planned for his earlier journal, three – Russian works in verse and prose, translations, and interesting anecdotes–remained; a fourth-critical reviews of Russian books – was continued with severe limitations in its scope and, consequently, in its interest, and the fifth – drama criticism – was completely rejected.

There is little that was new or interesting in the literary works Karamzin chose to translate. He turned once more to Mme de Genlis, whose religiosity, cloying moralizing and attacks on “false” philosophers pervaded a series of stories appearing from part II of the journal. Characteristic of the prevailing tastes of the day was the translation of a tale by August Lafontaine[8], who rivaled Genlis, Marmontel and Kotzebue in popularity with the Russian reading public. English, French and German journals provided Karamzin with a wealth of Eastern allegories, moral fables and news snippets of a literary nature.

Despite the orientation on foreign literature, which Karamzin had himself indicated in an editorial at the end of 1802[9], original contributions from Karamzin and his friends provided the main literary interest in the journal. Ivan Dmitriyev, now living in retirement in Moscow and collaborating closely with Karamzin, regularly contributed poems; there were also poems by Gavriil Derzhavin, Michael Kheraskov and Yury Neledinsky-Meletsky, but the one poem of particular note was Vasily Zhukovsky’s version of Gray’s *Elegy*[10]. Karamzin’s own verse in the *Messenger of Europe*, which included the *Hymn to Fools* (*Gimm gluptsam*), *Melancholy* (*Melankholiya*) and *To Virtue* (*K dobrodeteli*), formed a distinctive and important coda to his work as a poet, but it is his prose rather than his verse which marks the final stage of his role as a literary innovator. *A Knight of Our Time* (*Rytsar’ nashego vremeni*), *Martha* (*Marfa-posadnitsa*), *My Confession* (*Moya ispoved’*) and *The Man of Feeling and the Cold-Blooded Man* (*Chuvstvitel’nyy i kholodnyy*) reveal his search for new themes and narrative techniques[11].

Karamzin's unwillingness to continue his drama and book reviews was rooted in his changed attitude towards literary criticism. In the opening 'Letter to the Editor,' which he wrote himself, Karamzin formulated his new position:

But does criticism really teach one how to write? Do not models and examples act more strongly? And have not talents everywhere preceded learned and stern judgement? *La critique est aisee, et l'art est difficile!* Write who ever is able to write well: that is the best criticism of bad books![12]

At the end of 1802 he was insisting:

As far as the criticism of new Russian books is concerned, we do not consider it a true requirement of our literature (not to mention the unpleasantness of dealing with the easily injured vanity of people). It is more useful for an author to be judged than to judge. Good criticism is the luxury of literature; it is born of great riches, and as yet we are not Croesuses. It is better to add to the general estate than to be concerned with its evaluation[13].

Karamzin was now in direct opposition to the standpoint he had adopted in the *Moscow Journal* in the dispute between Vasily Podshivalov and Fyodor Tumansky over the value of criticism[14]. He had learnt from bitter experience how resentful such writers as Tumansky and Nikolai Nikolev were of criticism: he knew also that his critical reviews had been considered an impertinence by the *Moscow* freemasons and parodied by Ivan Krylov and Alexander Klushin in their *Spectator* (*Zritel'*)[15]. Clear evidence of his volte-face was the exclusion of the exchanges between Tumansky and Podshivalov from the second edition of the *Moscow Journal*, which was published at this time (1802–3). But Karamzin's change of heart came equally from his new patriotic fervour and his conviction that young Russian authors were to be encouraged rather than condemned: "We are not aristocrats in literature: we do not look at names but at works, and we are sincerely glad to help the emergence of young authors"[16].

The change in emphasis in Karamzin's attitude did not bring an absolute renunciation of criticism: although, as the Soviet critic Georgy Makogonenko has demonstrated[17], Karamzin tended to substitute for the review articles of a more generic nature. He stated: "...we make no promise that sometimes we will not discuss old and new Russian books, it is merely that we do not accept a definite obligation to be critics"[18]. The criticism in the *Messenger of Europe*, unlike that in the *Moscow Journal*, is indeed occasional and unsystematic, but nonetheless of considerable extent and importance. Karamzin exercised restraint when reviewing Russian works, but was outspoken with foreign literature.

Karamzin reviewed recent foreign, predominantly French, works, which were not yet available in *Moscow*, such as Jean-Jaques Barthelemy's *Voyage en Italie*, Mme de Stael's *Delphine* and Chateaubriand's *Genie du Christianisme*. [19] Karamzin's attack on Chateaubriand's work is heavily ironical – and both the technique and tone are reminiscent of his review of Nikolev's *Spoilt Darling* (*Baloven'*), in the *Moscow Journal*:

“We cannot imagine anything more foolish than this nonsense. Such is the way the new French authors write. I assure readers that my new translation is as faithful as any in the world”[20].

Foreign works in Russian translation were also reviewed. Karamzin was particularly enthusiastic about Nikolayi Strakhov’s translation of Barthelemy’s *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis*, which he considered one of the most outstanding works of the 18th Century[21], and he praised the “zealous patriotism” of A. Storkh, whose historical survey of Russian trade was being translated from German[22]. The third such review – of a translation of Etienne Francois de Lantier’s *Voyages d’Antenor* (*Antenorovy puteshestviya po Gretsii i Azii*, Moscow 1802), is particularly interesting for its similarity to Karamzin’s reviews of translated works in the *Moscow Journal*; it is even introduced under the heading “Criticism” and reveals his old techniques at every turn. An examination of the book’s contents is followed by close attention to the quality of the translation. Nevertheless, aware that a review of this nature contradicted his new position, Karamzin was at pains to minimize the effect of his criticism:

“But isn’t such criticism carping? We are not to blame if we find here no very important mistakes; and thus discovering from our unsuccessful attempt at criticism that the translator has taken measures to ensure against criticism, we close the Russian *Antenor*”[23].

These reviews apart, the main criticism in the *Messenger* is contained in two major articles, one by Dmitriyev and the other by Karamzin. Dmitriyev’s *On Russian Comedies* (*O russkikh komediyakh*) is the only dramatic criticism in the journal: it advances a concept of genteel comedy in opposition to coarse naturalism and attacks the vogue for vulgar farce and comedy[24]. Karamzin’s article is devoted to the life and work of Ippolit Bogdanovich, whose death in 1802 occasioned a flood of inept epitaphs in the *Messenger*[25]. *On Bogdanovich and his Works* (*O Bogdanoviche i yego sochineniyakh*) is a notable milestone in the history of Russian literary criticism. Karamzin attempted to trace Bogdanovich’s development as an author, to analyse his main work *Dushen’ka*, and to compare it with La Fontaine’s *Les Amours de Psyche et de Cupidon*, which was its model. Uniting an exposition of certain systematic theories on the nature and obligations of art, a wide knowledge of his subject, and an ability to write in a lucid and engaging style, Karamzin was obviously at the same time serving his basic thesis in the *Messenger* – applaud, rather than condemn, things Russian – and thereby modifying his true assessment of Bogdanovich’s worth. As late as 1800 Gavriil Kamenev heard Karamzin criticising Bogdanovich’s work, particularly certain lines from his translation of Voltaire’s poem on the Lisbon earthquake[26], although by 1803 he could write: “Bogdanovich translated [the poem] so successfully that many lines match the beauty and strength of the French.[27]” In addition, Karamzin tended to recreate Bogdanovich in his own sentimentalist image and basic facts from Bogdanovich’s biography serve as a starting point for an exposition of Karamzin’s views on the joys of artistic creation, on the requirements for a peaceful life, or even on the undesirability of stern criticism[28]. On the other hand, Karamzin’s comparison of the relative values of prose and verse on the basis of concrete exam-

ples and his assessment of Bogdanovich's contribution to Russian literature are objective and valuable.

## II.

Karamzin's desire to review Russian literature more indulgently than he had done in the 1790s and to relate its development to post-Petrine Russia's advance towards enlightenment was already evident in the "Pantheon of Russian Authors" (Panteon rossiyskikh avtorov, 1801-2) which, although conceived in Paul's reign, is pre-eminently in the spirit of Alexander's. Karamzin in fact reviewed his "Pantheon" in the Messenger and printed in full his notes on Prokopovich, Trediakovsky and Lomonosov. These are prefaced by his attempt at a periodization of 18th Century Russian literature:

Feofan and Kantemir comprise this first epoch: this is followed by Lomonosov and Sumarokov; the third must be termed the reign of Catherine the Great, already rich in the number of authors; and we are still awaiting the fourth[29].

Karamzin was engaged not only in formulating an apology for earlier Russian literature but in directing Russia's immediate literary development. The fourth period was to be the reign of Alexander, which he had described in his programme for the Messenger as a time when the sciences and arts by their rapid progress promise even greater successes; when talents, in free peace and ease, can devote themselves to all subjects which are useful and dear to the soul; when in the present intellectual climate, literature should have a greater influence than ever before on morality and happiness[30].

Despite the fact that there was still a lack of talent and taste in Russian authors, he believed that "in Russia literature can be even more useful than in other lands: feeling is newer and fresher in us; the beautiful therefore acts more strongly on the heart and bears greater fruit"[31].

Karamzin had clearly rejected his view of literature as private consolation for the poet and his friends, to which he had been driven by adverse conditions in Russia and Europe. His path to a utilitarian and patriotic view of art was both logical and predictable. The disillusionment he had suffered from events in France bolstered his patriotic feeling and suggested the important role that Russia might play in European affairs. The task of literature was therefore not only to consolidate Russia's eminence in the eyes of Europe but also to inspire pride in Russians:

"It is nearer and dearer for Russian talent to praise what is Russian in this happy time, when the Monarch and Providence itself call us to true glory. Russians must be taught to respect what is their own; they must be shown how it can become the subject for an artist's inspiration and for the strong effects of art on the heart. Not

only the historian and the poet, but also the painter and the sculptor are organs of patriotism”[32].

Pursuing this aim in another essay, *On Love of One’s Country and National Pride* (*O lvubvi k otechestvu I narodnoy gordosti*), he exaggerated the importance of certain (unspecified) works of Russian literature:

“The successes of our literature [...] show the great ability of Russians. Have we not long known what style in verse and prose is? – and we can in certain respects already compare ourselves with foreigners. Already in the 16th Century in France Montaigne was philosophising and writing – is it any wonder that in general they write better than we do? On the other hand, isn’t it a wonder that some of our works can be placed alongside the best of theirs and for us in truth, dear compatriots, to feel the value of our own”[33].

He follows this with an eulogy of the Russian language:

“Our language is expressive not only for lofty rhetoric, for loud, colourful poetry but also for tender simplicity, for the sounds of the heart and sensibility. It is richer in harmony than French and more able to render tones in the outpouring of the soul; it offers more analogous words, i.e. in accord with the action being expressed – an advantage enjoyed only by root languages. Our misfortune is that we all wish to speak French and do not think of perfecting our own language: is it surprising that we are thus unable to express in it certain subtleties in conversation?”[34]”

Karamzin reiterated these views in an important essay directly concerned with the problems of Russian literature and language. *Why Are There Few Writers of Talent in Russia?* (*Ot chego v Rossii malo avtorskikh talantov?*) In his analysis of literary backwardness in Russia, Karamzin sought the causes “not in the climate, but in the circumstances of Russian civic life”[35]. He demanded application and study from the aspiring writer and an ability to understand and use language. In contrast to the previous essay, Karamzin was now concerned with realities rather than possibilities. Thus the comparative immaturity of the Russian language was acknowledged as well as the lack of inspiring models in most literary genres. He saw the normal solution to the problem of the development of a language in the spoken word, but stressed that society women, the usual source for attractive language, spoke only French. He did not consider, however, going beyond polite society to the Russian-speaking classes, for this would be to bypass the gentry whose enlightenment and advancement were his political concerns. Consequently his solution was intellectual and artificial. It relied on the example of fully developed European languages and the potentialities within the Russian language that a man of talent or genius might reveal:

“What is there left for an author to do? Invent and devise expressions, sense the best choice of words, give to the old a certain new sense, present them in a new combination, but so skillfully as to deceive readers and conceal from them the unusualness of the expression”[36].

These were the principles Karamzin followed consistently, founded on his view that “the French write as they speak, and Russians still have to speak on many subjects in the way a talented man will write”[37].

Karamzin’s concern with national needs and virtues in matters of language and literature did not necessarily bring him into conflict with the basic tenets of his earlier cosmopolitanism. The Messenger reveals his tendency to point out the failings and inadequacies of other literatures, particularly of contemporary English literature[38], but Karamzin was far from renouncing his love of great writers and thinkers, essential to his understanding of enlightenment. His theoretical admiration for the true cosmopolitan mind is upheld in a translation he made of Herder’s *Gesprach uber eine unsichtbar-sichtbare Gesellschaft* (1793) (*Razgovor o nevidimom obshchestve*). The desired society, unlike Freemasonry, was one “which is not secret, not hidden from the light, but working openly, not with ceremonies and symbols, but with lucid words and deeds, not confined to two or three nations, but everywhere where there is true enlightenment”[39]. Above national prejudices and petty strife, the society would draw its inspiration from the world of books and a love of humanity.

“In conversation with Homer, Plato, Xenophon, Tacitus, Bacon, Fenelon, I do not think of what state they belonged to, what class they were from, and what temples they prayed in”[40].

Retaining his love of such ideals, Karamzin stressed the nobility of patriotism. Truly great writers, for instance, are shown to be great patriots; Klopstock “attempted to shame his pitiful fellow citizens and ceaselessly praised love for one’s country in a land where for several decades the nation had respected only what was foreign”[41]. Karamzin was sensitive to the negative connotations of the word “cosmopolitan” and contrasted sham cosmopolitan with the inspiring example of Peter the Great:

“He was a Russian in his soul and a patriot; and those gentlemen anglomaniacs or gallomaniacs wish to call themselves cosmopolitans. Only we ordinary people cannot soar with our minds above base patriotism; we stand on the earth. Russian earth; we look at the world not through the spectacles of systematic philosophers but with our own natural eyesight”[42].

Peter was central to Karamzin’s concept of Russian enlightenment; his reforms marked the beginning of Russia’s accelerated advance towards equality with the West and his example, according to Karamzin’s thesis, inspired Catherine and Alexander. Reviewing a poem by Andre Chenier on enlightenment, Karamzin pointedly added the footnote: “And Peter the Great?” to Chenier’s tribute to Frederick the Great as the supreme national enlightener[43]. At the same time Karamzin’s interest in pre-Petrine Russia increased and he attempted to show how deep went the roots of Russian culture and history. As yet he chose to see no conflict between Peter’s revolutionary methods and Russian traditions, for Russian history provided a further boost to Russian national pride and self-awareness:

I do not trust that love for country which despises its chronicles or is not interested in them: we must know the present; we should be informed about the past[44].

### III.

Karamzin's interest in history was becoming his major preoccupation; already in 1801, he saw clearly his future career as an historian, as his first ode to Alexander shows. During his editorship of the *Messenger* he took the opportunity to share the fruits of his study with his readers, hereby serving both his personal interests and the wider aims of the journal.

Nathalie, the Boyar's Daughter, *The Bird of Paradise*, (*Rayskaya ptichka*, 1791), the opening pages of *Poor Liza*, as well as the unfinished poem *Il'ya Muromets* (1794), showed Karamzin's willingness to use (or abuse) Russian history and legend; but *Martha* was his first true historical tale. In December 1802, the month before he published *Martha*, he gave what might be regarded as the theoretical as well as the patriotic justification for such attempts. His essay *On the Incidents and Characters in Russian History, Which May Provide Subjects for the Arts* (*O sluchayakh i kharakterakh v rossiyskoy istorii, kotoryye mogut byt' predmetom khudozhestv*) is primarily concerned with possible subjects for painting, but Karamzin's suggestions were directed at all creative artists. Closely linked with this article and with the fictional re-creation of *Martha* is another essay by Karamzin, entitled *Information on Martha the Burgomistress from the Life of St Zosima* (*Izvestiye o Marfe Posadnitse, vzyatoye iz zhitiya Zosimy*, June 1803). Apart from the new information it gives on *Martha's* character, the essay is a call to "a skilled pen" to "represent for us a gallery of Russian women, famed in history or deserving of this honour"[45]. His list of such women essentially continues the earlier one containing suggestions for suitable subjects for painting. Karamzin was possibly prompted once more by foreign example; *Mme de Genlis*, in an article translated by Karamzin, had written: "Most of all I would like to represent with my brush the most famous women in history, their main traits and virtues, their lives"[46].

As a result of his historical studies Karamzin came to acknowledge the importance of preserving folk songs and proverbs. He said with approval of Bogdanovich that "he published Russian proverbs in which were preserved the valuable remains of our forefathers' thought, their true conceptions about good and their wise rules for life"[47]. Karamzin himself printed a Yakut folk song which "depicts with simplicity and life the attachment of these good-natured people to animals, which are indeed worthy of man's gratitude"[48]. Karamzin saw the need to collect all manner of historical anecdotes and legends; indeed, this was a patriotic duty:

"How good it would be to collect all Russian legends which are related either to history or old customs! I would praise the Russian who would undertake to travel round some of the regions of our fatherland with such an intention..."[49]

He regretted that the oral accounts of old people who remembered Peter the Great, Anne and Elizabeth had not been copied down and religiously preserved[50]. He himself recorded an alleged meeting with an old couple, who had been married more than eighty years; his old peasant is made to utter a string of proverbs and near-proverbs – obviously indicative of antique wisdom – in a typically stylized sentimental manner:

“Ya khotel znat’ lyubyat li oni drug druga?” – “Kak ne lyubit’! muzh da zhena bol’she, chem brat da sestra”. “Boites’ li vy smerti?” – “Chego boyat’sya? My, slava Bogu, pozhili. Smert’ ne beda”. “Tebe ne zhal’ budet starushki?” – “Chego zhalet’! Komu nibud’ nadobno umeret’ prezhdde.” – “A yesli ona perezhivyot tebya?” – “Nu chto zhe? v svete ne bez dobrykh lyudey; dadut yey ugolok”[51].

Karamzin was anxious not only to preserve information about the past but also to have recorded in print all the glorious deeds of the present for the edification of posterity:

“We are to blame for having as yet no collection of true anecdotes about Russian national virtue which would disarm all misanthropes.

I would not include in such a collection anything fictional or untrue – nor anything exaggerated: truth by itself is attractive”[52].

There was a tendency to find Russian equivalents for anything the West could offer and English example in all things pro bono patriae seemed to present a particular challenge to Russian patriotism. The third article in the opening number of the Messenger told of an English scheme to erect a monument to the country’s past glories and victories[53], and a footnote to a later translation recorded the dedication of a monument in Westminster Abbey by a “grateful King and Country» to a fallen soldier[54]. Karamzin formulated the need for such information about Russia to be recorded in the first story of Russian “Good Deeds” (blagodeyaniye) to be printed in the Messenger:

“Acts of philanthropy are an adornment of their age and country. Whenever and wherever men act virtuously, every sensitive heart rejoices; but the nearer the philanthropist is to us the greater our pleasure. If a Russian touches me with his magnanimity, then I rejoice as a man and still more as a son of Russia. A patriot who loves virtue in all lands worships it in his own country; it is the greatest service to the state, and its example is not only consoling but useful in civil relations, since it has a salutary influence on general morals”[55].

He ended by inviting “all patriots, all friends of mankind, to send him information about events that are consoling for the feeling heart”[56]. Soon stories of unsung Russian virtues were being printed in increasing numbers in the Messenger. The honesty of the Russian peasant was extolled together with the generosity of the gentry[57].

If Karamzin collected proverbs, folk-songs, anecdotes of the past and present out of a belief in their patriotic and historical value, he also contributed historical arti-

cles which were the fruit of careful research and documentation. He brought to his essays a high degree of literary art, attempting to make Russian history living and real for his readers. In a sense, he was the first outstanding populist of Russian history. He gave examples of earlier Russian history, such as of a recent Moscow earthquake[58], informed his readers of the historical associations of places and buildings in and around Moscow[59], explained the origin and function of the Secret Chancellery[60], and analysed the causes of the Moscow revolt of 1648[61]. Karamzin was seemingly intent on shaming his fellow Russians for their ignorance of Russia's past and at the same time preparing the way for his future career as an historian. His historical essays refer to the rudimentary state of Russian historiography, the limitations of the chronicles and the prejudices of foreign travellers[62]; he corrected mistakes made by his immediate predecessors Vassily Tatishchev and Michael Shcherbatov[63], attacked foreigners like P.-C. Levesque for writing ill-informed works on the history of Russia[64], and regretted that the Professor of Russian History in the Russian Academy had been a foreigner[65]. He believed that "because we have no respectable history, the great and wondrous deeds of our forefathers are little known to us; but there is sufficient for an eloquent pen"[66]: Karamzin saw, and rightly, that pen as his[67]. His comments on the tasks facing the historian anticipate features of his yet unwritten history: on the one hand, there is his strong interest in character and on the other, the yardstick of virtue and morality. He translated the views of other historians on the writing of history and in the early volumes of his own work he was obviously aware of Antoine Thomas' belief that "an historian should not describe in detail those events which cannot be described dramatically; i.e. divided into statement, development and conclusion. Otherwise such descriptions will be tedious and can only interest contemporaries, who have sympathy for them because of their involvement"[68]. Making a distinction between historians and chroniclers, Karamzin declared that "our chroniclers are not Tacituses: they did not judge tsars; they related not all their deeds, only the most brilliant – military successes, evidence of religious devotion, etc." [69]: it was precisely because he detected elements of both types of writer in him that Pushkin was to term Karamzin "our first historian and last chronicler"[70].

#### IV.

Combining the moral and emotional aspects of enlightenment and patriotism with a specific interest in social and political institutions was Karamzin's concern for Russian advances in education. He regarded education as an internal, patriotic matter and was heavily sarcastic of foreign attempts to criticize or influence Russian methods. In 'An Aberration' (Strannost') he ridiculed a Frenchman's scheme to set up a school near Paris, where among other subjects young Russians would be taught their native language; Karamzin insisted on the need for Russians to be brought up and educated in Russia:

We know that everyone should grow up in his homeland and early on become accustomed to its climate, habits, character of its people, way of life and govern-

ment; we know that in Russia alone it is possible to become a good Russian – and for our national happiness neither the French nor the English are necessary to us[71].

In My Confession he criticized the sort of gentry education that could lead to contempt for one's country[72]. He was therefore very ready to praise all measures to improve educational facilities within Russia. Karamzin had praised Catherine for her national schools, the importance of which he emphasized again in his "Historical Panegyric to Catherine II" (Istoricheskoye pokhval'noye slovo Yekaterine II, 1802)[73], and when Alexander introduced a number of educational reforms Karamzin heralded them with a series of essays in the Messenger[74].

In his role as an enlightened patriot Karamzin agitated for the replacing of foreign tutors by Russians for "there will never be perfect moral education until we have good Russian teachers, who alone are able to instill the feelings and principles of a good Russian into a young heart"[75]. His fervour for the cause of enlightenment made him condemn ignorance as "antipatriotic, even a sign of opposition to the Tsar" for "It hinders every enactment of the ruler's benevolent intentions at every step, stops it, removes the strength from great and wise laws, encourages abuses, injustices and in a word, does not allow the state to enjoy its general internal prosperity which alone deserves to be the aim of a truly great, that is to say virtuous, monarch[76].

Although Karamzin saw enlightenment as a progressive force, destroying prejudice, ignorance and reaction, he believed that it would lead not to revolution but to a strengthening of the social status quo; his views recall strongly the prevalent masonic attitude towards enlightenment as manifest in "Children's Reading for the Heart and Mind" (Detskoye chteniye dlya serdtsa i razuma, 1785–9), where encouragement of learning went hand-in-hand with a defence of the class system.

Karamzin in the Messenger assumed the role of apologist of the Russian gentry – a role which allowed him to criticize, indulgently, existing abuses within that class in the name of its ideal function and character. He believed that

"The gentry is the soul and noble image of the whole nation. I love to imagine the Russian gentry not only with a sword in its hands, not only with the scales of Themis, but also with the laurels of Apollo as well as with the symbols of the goddess of agriculture"[77].

Although he recognize that a learned member of the gentry was a rarity in any country and that teachers would have to be found from among the lower classes[78], he was soon proudly publishing details about the first "gentleman-professor" in Russia – Grigory Glinka of Derpt University[79]. Such events gave force to his thesis that "excellent knowledge is necessary to affirm the illustrious rights of the gentry"[80].

Turning to the central critical question of the relationship between master and serf, Karamzin saw enlightenment leading to a decrease in arbitrary power:

“Those loathsome tyrants, comfortingly for the good heart few in number, who forget that, for a true member of the gentry to be a good master is to be the father of one’s subjects, could no longer act in darkness”[81].

He expanded this view in what is perhaps the most optimistic and idyllic essay he wrote for the Messenger – “Pleasing Prospects, Hopes and Desires of the Present Time” (Priyatnyye vidy, nadezhdy I zhelaniya nyneshego vremeni):

“Enlightenment destroys the abuse of a master’s power, which even according to our existing laws is not tyrannical and unlimited. A member of the Russian gentry gives necessary land to his peasants; he is their protector in civil affairs and their helper in accidental or natural disasters: these are his duties! For this he demands from them half the working days in a week: this is his right!”[82]

Given just masters and such an understanding of his position, the peasant was to be content with his lot and serve his country as his station in life allowed. Enlightenment, Karamzin argued, allowed the peasant to see the justice of his position; educated European peasants who “bless their modest lot in civil society, consider themselves not its victims but beneficiaries like other classes, all of which must work, if in different ways, for their own and their country’s benefit”[83].

In his defence of the Russian social system Karamzin was consciously reacting against what he considered were ill-informed attacks and criticism from foreigners[84]; his most open defence of serfdom, “The Letter of a Country Dweller” (Pis’mo sel’skogo zhitelya) rejects foreign travellers’ explanation of the laziness of the Russian peasant as a consequence of the evils of slavery. Karamzin saw the serf as “lazy by nature, habit and ignorance of the advantages of industry”[85]. In addition, they had an incorrigible weakness for drinking, the bete noire to which Karamzin pointed in any discussion of emancipation without enlightenment[86]. Karamzin was heavily critical of the study-bound scholar’s pipe-dreams, the systematic philosopher’s theories, which ignored realities[87]; faithful to his gospel of the middle way, Karamzin saw change coming gradually, unhurriedly:

“Time moves forward the reason of nations, but quietly and slowly; woe to the lawgiver who flies ahead! The wise man goes step by step, looking around him. God sees whether I love mankind and the Russian people; whether I am prejudiced, whether I worship the loathsome idol of self-interest – but for the true prosperity of our peasants I wish only that they have good masters and the means to enlightenment, which alone will make possible all that is good”[88].

Karamzin was firmly opposed to immediate emancipation. He was unable to envisage freeing the peasants without land – and this he considered at that time impracticable; equally he believed that without some degree of education and awareness of the many problems facing them, the peasants would abuse their liberty with idleness and drink. His caution was apt to be interpreted as reactionary by a generation of eager young reformers, his defence of serfdom as a preference for slavery over freedom[89].

## V.

Karamzin's defence of gentry supremacy and serfdom was one aspect of a comprehensive statement on the type of government and society he envisaged for Russia. It was based on certain beliefs fundamental even to his early writings, but modified by his experiences, both public and private, during the reigns of Catherine and Paul. Karamzin's writings in the first years of Alexander's reign reveal him to be a consummate political publicist.

He greeted Alexander's accession as he had Paul's – with an ode. Encouraged by the gift of a signet ring from the Tsar, he wrote a further ode for Alexander's coronation and by the end of 1801 he had completed for publication his Historical Panegyric to Catherine II. These three works outline Karamzin's demands on the young tsar and anticipate the main arguments of the *Messenger of Europe*. The burden of his odes is the need for a code of civil laws that would ensure the freedom of the individual and define the responsibilities of the citizen[90]. There is no suggestion that the law was above the monarch, for he was supreme and answerable only to God; nevertheless, fear of history's judgement was an incentive for a monarch to be virtuous:

To tyrants my scroll is frightening;

To good monarchs it is kind[91].

Karamzin's panegyric to Catherine was an attempt to veil his demands on the new reign under praise for certain aspects of Catherine's; Karamzin was prompted to this stratagem by promises contained in Alexander's first manifesto:

“Accepting the throne, We accept the responsibility of governing the nation entrusted to Us by God according to the laws and heart of Our most august grandmother, the Empress Catherine the Great”[92].

Karamzin's allegedly historical survey of Catherine's achievements is a fantasy of what might have been; he elected to forget the reasons for his limited praise during her reign and portray Catherine in an ideal light. She became an indispensable part of his scheme of Russian development, which linked her name with those of Peter the Great and Alexander. For his new tasks of civic oratory Karamzin used all the devices and pathos of his sentimental style, as a contemporary satirist clearly recognized[93].

Following a short introduction, in which he drew attention to the “immortal pages” of Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois*, a work of immense importance for both Catherine's and his own political concepts[94], Karamzin reviewed Catherine's achievements under the three heads of victories, law-giving and institutions. The result, however, is essentially an outline of Karamzin's own political and social views, to be illustrated not only from the pages of the *Messenger* but from such later writings as the *Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia* (*Zapiski o drevney i novoy Rossii*, 1811), the *Opinion of a Russian Citizen* (*Mneniye russkogo grazhdanina*, 1819) and *Thoughts on True Freedom* (*Mysli ob istinnoy svobode*, 1826).

Karamzin justified Catherine's wars as necessary for Russia's security, attacked "impudent and malicious Poland"[95], and when praising Catherine's wise choice of military leaders carefully omitted to mention Potyomkin – possibly a survival of the old masonic antipathy toward him[96]. The third section, where Karamzin extolled such institutions as the Academy of Arts, the National Schools, the Orphans' Home and even the wise censorship[97], was the Russian response to the social institutions which Karamzin considered to be one of England's glories[98]. It is, however, the discussion of Catherine the lawgiver that is the most revealing source of Karamzin's views on systems of government and the relationship of the individual and the state. Karamzin portrayed Catherine as favouring comprehensive laws and opposed to all arbitrary power:

"Since She knew that personal security is the first blessing of a man and that without it our life is an eternal torturing worry amidst all the other forms of happiness and enjoyment. This mild spirit in government, proof of Her love and respect for mankind, was to be the main characteristic of Her decrees"[99].

Karamzin dwelt at length on Catherine's arguments in favour of autocracy contained in her *Nakaz* and attempted to illustrate their justice by examples: he pointed to the sorry failure of contemporary France to rule itself and its need of a "Corsican soldier" to save itself from utter collapse[100]. Simultaneously with his support for autocracy Karamzin reaffirmed his love of the great Republicans of history. Although he had himself rejected the possibility of realizing the ideal republic in the modern world[101], he admired the republican virtues. Nevertheless, the demands on the individual in a republic were too high; and loss of civic virtue brought the downfall of a republic:

"Either people have to be angels or every complex form of government based on the action of different wills becomes eternal dissension and the people become the unhappy instrument of a few ambitious men, who sacrifice their country for their own personal benefit"[102].

The idea of autocracy as the time-hallowed and only fitting form of government for Russia was propounded by Karamzin throughout the *Messenger*. Whenever possible, Karamzin praised Alexander as the wise autocrat and connected Russia's imminent glory with his personal rule and example[103]. He was particularly anxious that false courtiers or advisers should not blind Alexander to his true obligations to his country or attempt to impinge upon his power. In his first ode Karamzin spoke of these "sly flatterers"[104]; in his essay on the Moscow revolt of 1648 he painted the picture of a good tsar, a 'little father' to his people but prevented from helping them by the machinations of his favourites[105]. As distinct from their position, Karamzin's was that of a loyal well-intentioned patriot, one of the "unhypocritical friends of good / Able to speak the truth"[106]. The picture emerges of a Russia ruled by a wise autocrat, beneath whom the gentry, the ever-increasing bourgeoisie and the peasantry performed their duties loyally and virtuously, respecting the contribution of every member of society to the general prosperity and content with their position: for the rejected western models of republics and constitutional monarchies Karamzin substituted his own autocratic Arcadia.

## VI.

Behind Karamzin's persuasive and insistent arguments in favour of what Pushkin was to call the "necessity of autocracy / And the charms of the knout"[107] stood a fear of upheaval, of tyranny by one man or many, or more specifically, the spectre of the French Revolution which had haunted and influenced his thought for more than a decade:

"The Revolution has elucidated ideas: we have seen that the civil order is holy even in its most local or chance defects, that authority is not tyranny for nations but protection from tyranny, that when it shatters the beneficent aegis, people become the victim of terrible disasters which are incomparably more evil than all the usual abuses of authority, that even Turkish rule is better than anarchy, which is always the consequence of state conflict, that all the bold theories of the mind, which from the study wishes to prescribe new laws for the moral and political world, must remain in books, together with other more or less curious products of wit, that the institutions of antiquity have a magical force, which cannot be replaced by any force of intellect, that only time and the good will of a legal government should correct the imperfections in civil societies, and that with this trust in the action of time and the wisdom of the authorities, we private citizens must live peacefully, obey willingly and perform all possible good around us"[108].

He admitted that all the outstanding minds of the day had desired «great changes and novelties in the constitution of societies», but they had learnt that «revolution was the abuse of freedom"[109]. To provide an example of a great European mind, seduced by the French Revolution and eventually rejecting it, Karamzin chose to translate an article on Klopstock by Archenholz. Not only is the central passage an apology for Karamzin's own attitude to the Revolution, but the article as a whole echoes many of Karamzin's ideas on both patriotism and literary works: Klopstock, like all true philanthropists and all people of unusual intelligence, who are not egoists but friends of the general good, was a friend of the French Revolution, when it seemed a beneficial change in human destiny in France. Together with others he hoped that a strong and enlightened nation could be its own wise lawgiver: at that time much appeared captivating, especially from afar. Above all, his humane heart was enraptured by the famous decree of the National Assembly that France would forever reject wars of aggression – a decree made in the dawn of this great event but soon mocked and forgotten by the new rulers of France. But this passionate love for the new freedom of the French gradually died as a result of subsequent events and finally disappeared completely during the terrors of the Convention[110].

Karamzin's desire to exorcise the French influence is apparent from the very first number of the Messenger. In addition to a translation entitled A History of the French Revolution, Selected from Latin Authors (*Istoriya frantsuzskoy revolyutsii, izbrannaya iz latinskikh pisateley*), in which the horrors and excesses of each stage of the Revolution were illustrated by quotations from Tacitus, Sallust and others[111], the piece Alcibiades to Pericles (*Al'tsibiad k Periklu*) was full of obvious allusions to the pseudo-wisdom of the revolutionary leaders[112]. A third article Ladies' Wigs (*Zhenskiye pariki*) linked the fashion for wigs with the "unfortunate

victims” of the Revolution; Karamzin in an original essay *On the Light Dress of Fashionable Beauties* (O lyogkoy odezhde modnykh krasavits XIX veka), published three months later in April 1802, attacked Russian women for imitating the shameless French women, “who danced contredanses on the graves of their parents, husbands and lovers!”[113]

Karamzin sighed for the civilization of pre-revolutionary days; he was anxious to record all that suggested the return of gentle morals and amiability. Translated articles such as *On Habit* (O privychke) and *On Politeness and Bon Ton* (Ob uchivosty i khoroshem tone)[114], together with remarks about the “bad taste of the nouveaux riches” and the wish to see “social subtleties” reintroduced[115], recall Karamzin’s aphorism from 1793 that “politeness, affability, is the flower of society”[116] and stress his constant desire to encourage such qualities among the Russian gentry.

## VII.

Articles about French personalities and life in Paris, as well as more general works from French sources, fill a considerable part of the “Literature and Miscellany” section of the *Messenger*. Not unexpectedly, the political fortunes of France occupy a prominent place in the journal’s “Politics” section. It is this section which truly justifies the journal’s title by informing the Russian public of the internal affairs of European countries.

It was not, however, merely a process of translating interesting articles from the foreign press; Karamzin was involved in European events but was equally intent on using foreign material to comment on Russia’s internal problems. To this aim Karamzin often re-edited or freely translated foreign originals. So that external authority seemingly supported opinions he had expressed elsewhere or felt unable to voice openly. This technique has been convincingly demonstrated by Yury Lotman with reference to translated articles on widely differing topics[117], but Lotman’s article apart, little attention has been paid to Karamzin’s political translations and especially his original political surveys.

Karamzin began his political commentaries with a detailed survey of a decade of upheaval in Europe, in which he stressed the desire of all countries for prolonged peace and stable government. His attention was directed above all to France, and particularly to Napoleon. It is Napoleon who dominated the *Messenger* both as a personality and as the key to European peace. In this opening essay Karamzin characterized him as a “new Caesar, a new Clovis”[118] and observed that:

“the dangerous and foolish Jacobin principles, which brought the rest of Europe to arms against the Republic, have disappeared in their own homeland, and France, despite the name and a few republican forms of government, is now in fact nothing other than a true monarchy”[119].

It was, among other things, the realisation of Napoleon's autocratic designs that led to a change in Paul's attitude to France; Alexander, although carefully wooed by the English government, was also well disposed towards Napoleon. Karamzin was therefore reflecting the official line, and indeed Karamzin's attitudes to Napoleon reflect the numerous changes in Russian opinion towards him in the years 1800–12. Nevertheless, Napoleon's restitution of the monarchy in all but name seemed to support Karamzin's thesis of the one, and one only, historically justified form of government for a country. Every issue of the Messenger contained references to Napoleon and during the two years of Karamzin's editorship over thirty articles dealt directly with him and his actions. Napoleon met Karamzin's demands on a Great Man, such as he had set out in his Historical Panegyric to Catherine II:

“They decide the fate of mankind, determine its path; with inexplicable force they draw millions of people to some aim designed by Providence; they create and destroy kingdoms; they form epochs, of which all others are but the consequence; in a sense, they form a chain in the immensity of centuries, stretching their hands one to another, and their life is the history of peoples”[120].

Napoleon possessed what Montaigne had called “un peu de folie”[121], without which nothing great was achieved in life, for “fundamental rationalism was never a merit in heroes of ambition”[122]. Although Karamzin saw Napoleon as a great general and leader of men, he also detected certain human weaknesses in him which denied him the accolade of great and virtuous:

“By killing the monster of the Revolution, he had earned the eternal gratitude of France and even of Europe. In this respect we shall always thank him willingly as a great doctor, who has cured heads of a dangerous giddiness. We shall regret that he has not the legislative wisdom of Solon and the pure virtue of Licurgus, who having formed Sparta, banished himself forever from his homeland! That is an heroic action before which all the Lodis and Marengos of the world disappear! After two thousand seven hundred years it still fires the mind and a good youth reading the life of Licurgus weeps in rapture.

... Evidently it is far easier to be a skilful general and a cunning politician than to be a great, that is to say, heroically virtuous man”[123].

Despite the blemishes, Karamzin was ready to acclaim Napoleon, especially when he re-established the authority of the church or helped the advancement of enlightenment[124].

Karamzin followed closely French legislative decrees as well as France's sponsoring of the constitution mania which affected in particular Switzerland and Italy. In 1802 he expressed the wish that independence be restored to the Swiss for “republican freedom and independence belong to Switzerland as much as her granite and snow-covered mountains: man does not destroy the works of nature”[125]. Therefore, when the Landammann Alois Reding organized a secessionist movement among the small Swiss cantons, Karamzin was enraged by this rejection of history:

“It is a pity that such cruel and ambitious men influence the fate of that good but simple people, who lived for so many centuries in happy union with the large cantons, and who now, following the promptings of one malicious egoist, demand partition”[126].

The strife that followed in Switzerland caused him to reiterate his view that without national virtue a Republic was doomed:

“That is why a monarchy is far more happy and reliable; it does not put excessive demands on its citizens and can raise itself from a degree of morality at which republics would fall”[127].

Karamzin’s hostility towards Reding continued from issue to issue[128], but in March 1803 he translated a German article, in which Reding was praised as a selfless and dedicated patriot[129]. This is essentially an illustration of Karamzin’s desire to present an objective picture of European events, although his own point of view was clearly stated in his “News and Comments” (*Izvestiya I zamechaniya*) column. Karamzin also made use of German material for “external” criticism of both France and Germany. Certain German journalists were strongly pro-English and delighted in revealing the “hypocrisies” of French policy[130]; Karamzin himself found satisfaction in playing off the French press against its English counterpart, pointing out their readiness to abuse and libel their opponents[131].

Karamzin’s interest in English affairs is the counterbalance to his absorption with Napoleon; he himself made the revealing opposition that “in the one we are curious to know about national affairs and in the other, the actions of Consul Bonaparte”[132]. His interest was primarily in English patriotism, in social institutions rather than political forms[133]. He tended to point out that the much vaunted English political system, especially Parliament and democratic elections, were not so ideal or worthy of imitation. In an amusing account of an English election Karamzin quoted Rousseau’s remark that this was the only time Englishmen enjoyed true freedom, but warned that “these elections may be called merely a ceremony: the ministers control them unseen, in agreement with the best people in each district”[134].

Karamzin’s political commentary in the *Messenger* coincided with a brief period of peace in Europe. The first number announced the imminent meeting at Amiens, but the last issues were filled with apprehension lest hostilities resumed. As Napoleon prepared to invade England, Karamzin was led to wonder whether victory for France or England would be the better outcome for Europe; admiration for Napoleon conflicted with his love of England:

“England abuses its dominance at sea, but who would wish the French to conquer this most fortunate country in the world, where wise laws reign and the citizens prosper”[135].

Yet it is important to note that the prospects of a new European conflict did not plunge Karamzin into despair and anguish – as the events of the Terror and the Revolutionary Wars had done. The reason behind his comparative equanimity was

his patriotic faith in Russia and his new independence of Europe. His confidence was founded not only on Russia's internal strength and identity, given to it by the accession of Alexander, but also on its European mission and influence:

It can despise the usual tricks of diplomacy and, elected by Fate, can, it seems, be a true intermediary between nations[136].

He proudly recorded that Russia's intervention, into German affairs made it "an object of universal respect, universal trust", that the Corfu islanders had welcomed Russian help and that even England acknowledged Russia's might[137].

## VIII.

The Messenger of Europe offered the Russian public a rich variety of reading matter, but it was a journal dominated by the personality and interests of one man, given unity both by his style and by the persistence of certain themes and ideas. Compared with the Moscow Journal, the Messenger is pre-eminently a political rather than a literary journal; Karamzin's desire for cultural enlightenment is linked with his propaganda for a particular social and political system, within which his ideals could be realized. The journal was the messenger of European affairs to the degree that European experience could demonstrate, negatively or positively, a course for Russian development; it is essentially the testament of a man who had learnt and taken much from Western culture but who now felt the tide to be turning and wished to encourage Russians to an awareness of their greatness and potential.

Karamzin had himself lived happily under the influence of Western literature and thought since his schooldays and had freely acknowledged in his story Liodor (1792) that Russians were still apprentices of the West in all things, even in literature[138]. Now he felt assured of his standing as a writer in Russia and abroad; he was the one contemporary Russian author widely known in the West and in the period 1797–1803 translations of the Letters, stories and articles appeared in Danish, English, French, German, Greek and Polish[139]. Karamzin drew attention to English, French and German versions of his work in the pages of the Messenger[140], and it was from the Messenger that Johannes-Gottfried Richter, already the translator of the Letters translated articles and stories for publication in his *Russische Miszellen* (1803–4)[141].

The Messenger of Europe occupies a distinguished place in the history of Russian journalism as the first of the *tolstyye zhurnaly* and its importance was immediately recognized by Karamzin's contemporaries. It was initially published in 600 copies, but was so successful that the first number was republished and the monthly printing doubled to 1200 copies. Of the tributes to Karamzin's achievement perhaps the most impressive, because it was unexpected, came from an opponent, the Shishkovite and Decembrist Wilhelm Kyukhel'beker, who read in exile the works

Karamzin had written in the 19th Century. Although he was fundamentally opposed to Karamzin's views[142], he felt obliged to acknowledge the merits of the Messenger:

“It must be admitted that for its time this journal is extremely good; and even today it would not occupy the last place among our publications for the attractiveness of its articles, and almost the first place for its language”[143].

A month later, in June 1832, he admitted:

“They have brought me two volumes of Karamzin's Messenger and two of his successors'. What a difference! One must be just to Karamzin that as a journalist he was a master of his craft”[144].

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\* FORUM FOR MODERN LANGUAGE STUDIES, Vol. V.№ 1. January 1969

1. F.F. Vigel', Zapiski, 2 vols., Moscow, 1928, I, p. 131.
2. Arzamas i arzamasskiye protokoly, Leningrad, 1933, p. 240.
3. Op. cit., p. 125.
4. N.I. Grech, Zapiski o moyey zhizni, Moscow-Leningrad, 1930, p. 190.
5. In the second volume of his literary almanac Aglaya (1795) Karamzin published an exchange of letters between Melodor and Philalet, illustrating the philosophical crisis he underwent as a result of the Reign of Terror in France. Melodor represented Karamzin the disillusioned idealist and Philalet the worldly-wise guarded optimist. The debate was continued in the Dialogue on Happiness (Razgovor o shchastii, 1797).
6. Sochineniya Karamzina, 3 vols., St Petersburg, 1848, I, p.210. (Note: Whenever possible, subsequent references are made to this edition, which includes Karamzin's major articles from the Messenger of Europe: Karamzin, followed by volume and page.)
7. Vestnik Evropy, I, 1802, January, № 1, p. 8.
8. Ibid., VIII, 1803, April, № 7, pp. 173–92.
9. Ibid., VI, 1802, December, № 23, p. 227.
10. Ibid., № 24, pp. 319-25.
11. An analysis of Karamzin's prose fiction in the journal lies outside the scope of the present article. Its importance, however, has been recognized in a number of recent studies, e.g. V.I. Fyodorov, “Istoricheskaya povest N.M. Karamzina “Marfa Posadnitsa” (Uchonyye zapiski Moskovskogo gorodskogo ped. instituta, LXII, № 6, Moscow, 1957, pp. 109-20); Yu.M. Lotman, «Puti razvitiya russkoy prozy 1800–1810-kh godov» (Uchonyye zapiski Tartuskogo gos. universiteta, vypusk 104, Tartu, 1961, pp. 3–57); Istoriya russkogo romana, I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962, pp. 71–83; F.Z. Kanunova, “K evolyutsii sentimentalizma N.M. Karamzina (“Marfa Posadnitsa”)” (Uchonyye zapiski Tomskogo gos. universiteta, № 50, 1965, pp. 3–13); F.Z. Kanunova, “Evolyutsiya sentimentalizma Karamzina (“Moya ispoved”)” (Rol' i znachenije literatury XVIII veka v istorii russkoy kul'tury. XVIII vek, sbornik 7, Moscow-Leningrad, 1966, pp. 286–290).
12. Vestnik Evropy, I, 1802, January, № 1, p. 7.
13. Ibid., VI, December, № 23, pp. 228–9. (Karamzin's new views on criticism were embraced by

- Zhukovsky, who began editing the Messenger in 1808: "Criticism and luxury are the daughters of wealth; but we are not yet Croesuses in literature!": *ibid.*, 1808, January, № 1, p. 9.)
14. *Moskovskiy zhurnal*, V, 1792, February, pp. 277-90.
  15. Ya.L. Barskov, *Perepiska moskovskikh masonov XVIII-go veka, 1780–1792*, Petrograd, 1915, p. 90; *Zritel'*, II St Petersburg, 1792, June, pp. 158-9.
  16. *Vestnik Evropy*, VI, p. 228.
  17. G.P. Makogonenko, "Literaturnaya positsiya Karamzina v XIX veke" (*Russkaya literatura*, Leningrad, 1962, № 1, p. 90).
  18. *Vestnik Evropy*, VI, p. 229.
  19. *Ibid.*, III, 1802, May, № 10, pp. 103-19; VII, 1803, January, № 2, pp. 136-40; III, 1802, June, № 11, pp. 242-4.
  20. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
  21. *Ibid.*, X, 1803, July, № 13, pp. 57-8. (Cf. A. G. Cross, "N.M. Karamzin and Barthelemy's Voyage du jeune Anacharsis" in *Modern Language Review*, LXI, 1966, July, № 3, pp. 467-72.)
  22. *Ibid.*, V, 1802, September, № 17, p. 56.
  23. *Ibid.*, III, 1802, May, № 10, p. 146.
  24. *Ibid.*, II, 1802, April, № 7, pp. 232-236. (Cf. Karamzin's remarks to Dmitriyev on Klushin's Laughter and Grief (*Smekh i gore*) in 1793: *Pis'ma N.M. Karamzina k I. I. Dmitriyevu*, St.Petersburg, 1866, pp. 36-7.)
  25. The response was so great that Dmitriyev wrote 'An Epitaph on Epitaphs' (*Epitafiya Epitafiyam, sochinyonnaya odnim iz avtorov epitafiy*): *Vestnik Evropy*, IX, 1803, May, № 9, p. 46. The standard may be judged from the fact that Karamzin was obliged to make two grammatical corrections in an epitaph of two lines! : *ibid.*, VIII, 1803, March, № 6, p. 140.
  26. N. Vtorov, "Gavrila Petrovich Kamenev" (*Vchera i segodnya*, I, St Petersburg, 1845, p. 50).
  27. *Karamzin*, I, p. 610.
  28. *Ibid.*, pp. 615, 643-4, 647. (Cf. Karamzin's conversation with Wieland in the Letters when all three topics were discussed: *ibid.*, II, p. 149.)
  29. *Vestnik Evropy*, V, 1802, October, № 20, p. 285. (In his notes on Kantemir in the "Pantheon" Karamzin had divided the 18th Century into four periods.)
  30. *Ibid.*, I, 1802, January, № 1, pp. 3-4.
  31. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
  32. *Karamzin*, III, pp. 551-2.
  33. *Ibid.*, p. 473.
  34. *Ibid.*, pp. 474-5.
  35. *Ibid.*, p. 527.
  36. *Ibid.*, p. 528.
  37. *Ibid.*, p. 529. The idea of "writing as one speaks" was taken up by adherents of Karamzin, such as Batyushkov, but had been expressed as early as 1778 by Fyodor Karin, a follower of Sumarokov: V.I. Saitov, "Fyodor Grigor'yevich Karin. Odin iz maloizvestnykh pisateley vtoroy poloviny XVIII veka" (*Fyodor Grigor'yevich Karin. One of less known writers of the second half of 18th Century*) (*Bibliograf*, St. Petersburg, 1893, № 1, p. 16).
  38. *Vestnik Evropy*, II, 1802, March, № 5, p. 56. (Cf. *Karamzin*, II, p. 749.)

39. Ibid., VI, 1802, November, № 22, p. 124.
40. Ibid., p. 126.
41. Ibid., IX, 1803, June, № 11, p. 172.
42. Ibid., pp. 167–8. (Cf. Karamzin, III, p. 609.)
43. Ibid., I, 1802, January, № 1, p. 44.
44. Karamzin, III, p. 552.
45. Ibid., I, p. 384.
46. Vestnik Evropy, IX, 1803, June, № 11, p. 201.
47. Karamzin, I, p. 641.
48. Vestnik Evropy, VI, 1802, November, № 22, p. 133 (A detailed analysis of Karamzin's changing attitude to folk literature is given by N.N. Trubitsyn, *O narodnoy poezii v obshchestvennom i literaturnom obikhode pervoy treti XIX veka*, St.Petersburg, 1912, pp. 328–32.)
49. Ibid., X, 1803, July, № 13, pp. 60-1.
50. Karamzin, I, pp. 424-5.
51. Ibid., p. 470. "I wanted to know if they love each other?" – "Of course we do love! Husband and wife are more than brother and sister". "Are you afraid of Death?" – "Why be afraid? We, thank God, have lived. Death is no Misfortune". "Will you not pity the old woman?" – "Why pity?! Someone has to die first". – "What if she outlives you?" – "And so what? There are kind people in the world; they will give her a place".
52. Vestnik Evropy, III, 1802, May, № 10, p. 140.
53. Ibid., I, 1802, January, № 1, pp. 17-9.
54. Ibid., p. 48.
55. Ibid., II, 1802, March, № 5, p. 52.
56. Ibid., p. 55.
57. Ibid., VIII, 1803, March, № 5, pp. 39-42; April, № 7, pp.227-9; № 8, pp. 298-301; IX, May, № 10, pp. 124–6; June, № 11, p. 235; № 12, pp. 291–4; XII, November, Nos. 23–4, pp.268–75.
58. 'On the Moscow Earthquake of 1802' (O moskovskom zemletryaseni 1802 goda): Karamzin, III, pp. 581–4.
59. "A Journey around Moscow" (Puteshestviye vokrug Moskvy): Karamzin, I, pp. 448–57; "Historical Reminiscences and Observations on the Way to the Holy Trinity Monastery" (Istoricheskiye vospominaniya i zamechaniya na puti k Troitse): ibid., pp. 458–501.
60. "On the Secret Chancellery" (O taynoy kantselarii): ibid., pp. 419–26.
61. "On the Moscow Revolt in the Reign of Aleksey Mikhaylovich" (O moskovskom myatezhe v tsarstvovaniye Alekseya Mikhaylovicha): ibid.m pp. 398–418.
62. Ibid., pp. 420–1, 487.
63. Ibid., pp. 422–3, 485.
64. Ibid., p. 419.
65. Ibid. (Karamzin was referring to A.L. Schlozer [1735–1809].)
66. Ibid., p. 479.
67. Karamzin had himself in mind at the end of his essay on Martha: "a gallery of famous women

could be a highly attractive work if an author of talent and taste would present these characters with the lively colours of love for the fair sex and the homeland. Is it necessary to say who should be entrusted with such a work in our time?": *ibid.*, p. 387.

68. *Vestnik Evropy*, II, 1802, March, № 6, p. 134.

69. Karamzin, I, p. 424.

70. A.S. Pushkin, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy*, XI, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, p. 120.

71. Karamzin, III, p. 607. (Cf. Karamzin's letter to Alexander Turgenev on the same subject in September 1816: *ibid.*, p. 740.)

72. *ibid.*, pp. 505–7.

73. *Ibid.*, I, p. 361.

74. "On the New Schools for the Nobility, Established in Russia" (*O novykh blagorodnykh uchilishchakh, zavodimykh v Rossii*): *Vestnik Evropy*, II, 1802, April, № 8, pp. 358–66; "On the New Organization of National Enlightenment in Russia" (*O novom obrazovanii narodnogo prosveshcheniya v Rossii*): Karamzin, III, pp. 348–359; "On a Reliable Method of Acquiring Sufficient Teachers in Russia" (*O vernom sposobe imet' v Rossii dovol'no uchiteley*): Karamzin, III, pp. 340–347; "On the Public Teaching of the Sciences at Moscow University" (*O publichnom prepodavanii nauk v Moskovskom universitete*): *ibid.*, III, pp. 611–7.

75. *Vestnik Evropy*, II, 1802, April, № 8, p. 363.

76. Karamzin, III, p. 349.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 597.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 343–4.

79. *Vestnik Evropy*, IX, 1803, June, № 11, pp. 197–9. (Karamzin later printed part of Glinka's first work, "The Temple of Svetovid" (*Khram Svetovida*), a laboured investigation into the gods of Slavic mythology: *ibid.*, X, August, № 15, pp.173–86.)

80. Karamzin, III, p. 616.

81. *Ibid.*, I, p. 339.

82. *Ibid.*, III, p. 591. (Cf. *ibid.*, p. 580.)

83. *Ibid.*, p. 351.

84. *Ibid.*, pp. 573–4, 350.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 573..

86. *Ibid.*, p. 570; I, p. 406.

87. In his Historical Panegyric to Catherine II Karamzin revealed clearly the distinction he made between philosophical theorizing and political expediency: "... even good in a philosophical sense may be harmful in politics, as soon as it is out of step with the civil state of a nation. A sad truth, but demonstrated by experience!": *ibid.*, I, p. 370.

88. *Ibid.*, III, p. 575.

89. Cf. Pushkin's account of a conversation he had with Karamzin on this subject and Karamzin's violent rejection of the accusation: A.S. Pushkin, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy*, XII, 1949, p. 306.

90. In a later essay Karamzin said «a full methodical collection of civil laws, clearly and wisely written» was Russia's most pressing need: Karamzin, III, p. 592.

91. *Ibid.*, I, p. 209.

92. A.M. Skabichevsky, *Ocherki istorii russkoy tsenzury (1700–1863)*, St Petersburg, 1892, p. 86.

93. "Odin s ulybkoyu umil'noy / Zhelal dela tvoi vospet' / I slov pustya potok obil'nyy / Mnil slavu Tomasa imeť. / K romanam, k pastoral'nu slogu / Imeya strast' – skroil eklogu / I slovo milaya vkleil / Tvoi i lavry i trofei / I khramy vse, I mavzoley / Slezoyu nezhnoy okropil.": Russkaya starina, XCII, St.Petersburg, 1897, November, p. 306.
94. Karamzin, I, p. 280.
95. Karamzin, I, p. 289. (Karamzin's antipathy towards Poland also informs his Opinion of a Russian Citizen.)
96. G.V. Vernadsky, Russkoye masonstvo v tsarstvovaniye Yekateriny II, Petrograd, 1917, pp. 236–8.
97. He stressed the need for censorship because reason might stray from truth; he had been quick to forget the excesses of censors under Catherine and Paul.
98. Karamzin, II, p. 723.
99. Ibid., I, pp. 303–4.
100. Ibid., p. 312.
101. Nevertheless, true to the theories of Montesquieu and Rousseau on the suitability of a republic for a small country, Karamzin defended Switzerland's system: *ibid.*, I, pp. 313, 320.
102. Ibid., I, pp. 312–3.
103. Ibid., III, pp. 345, 349, 357.
104. Ibid., I, p. 202.
105. Ibid., pp. 402–3. (Cf. Karamzin's translation of an article giving a similar view of Louis XVI)
106. Ibid., p. 203. (Cf. his epigraph to the Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia: "There is no flattery on my tongue".)
107. This epigram on Karamzin's History is not included in the Academy edition of Pushkin's work, but Pushkin's authorship of it is well argued by B. V. Tomashevsky, Pushkin. Issledovaniya I materialy, I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1956, pp. 208–15.
108. Karamzin, III, pp. 585–6. (Cf. *ibid.*, II, pp. 462–3.)
109. Ibid., pp. 586, 587.
110. Vestnik Evropy, IX, 1803, June, № 11, pp. 175–6.
111. Ibid., I, 1802, January, № 1, pp. 20–37.
112. Ibid., pp. 9–16.
113. Karamzin, III, p. 522.
114. Vestnik Evropy, VII, 1803, January, № 2, pp. 85–91; XI, 1803, May, № 9, pp. 24–30.
115. Ibid., I, 1802, January, № 1, p. 33.
116. Karamzin, III, p. 387.
117. Yu. M. Lotman, "Evol'yutsiya mirovozzreniya Karamzina (1789–1803)", Uchonyye zapiski Tartuskogo gos. universiteta, vypusk 51, Tartu, 1957, pp. 150–5.
118. Karamzin, I, p. 527.
119. Ibid., p. 530. (Karamzin also translated a speech by Baron Nekker favouring monarchy over a republic: Vestnik Evropy, V, 1802, October, № 20, pp. 301–19.)
120. Ibid., I, pp. 276–7. (Cf. "Not the French people but Providence placed this astonishing man at such a degree of greatness": Vestnik Evropy, III, 1802, June, № 11, p. 270.)

121. Quoted by Karamzin in his *Man of Feeling and the Cold-Blooded Man*: *ibid.*, III, p. 620.
122. Karamzin was here referring to Napoleon's plans to invade England: *Vestnik Evropy*, X, 1803, August, № 15, p. 230.
123. Karamzin, I, p. 552.
124. *Vestnik Evropy*, III, 1802, May, № 9, pp. 77–94; II, April, № 7, pp. 276–7.
125. Karamzin, I, p. 536.
126. *Vestnik Evropy*, V, 1802, September, № 18, p. 157.
127. *Ibid.*, October, № 20, pp. 319–20.
128. *Ibid.*, VI, 1802, November, № 21, p. 74; № 22, p. 156; December, № 24, pp. 330–1.
129. *Ibid.*, VIII, 1803, March, № 6, pp. 146–54.
130. Particularly Archenholz, whom Karamzin called in the Letters “this well-known anglo-maniac”: Karamzin, II, p. 691.
131. *Vestnik Evropy*, II, 1802, April, № 8, p. 386; IV, August, № 15, p. 247; VI, November, № 22, p. 165.
132. *Ibid.*, IV, 1802, August, № 16, p. 329.
133. See A. G. Cross, “Karamzin and England” (*Slavonic and East European Review*, XLIII, 1964, № 100, December, pp. 101–6).
134. *Vestnik Evropy*, IV, 1802, July, № 13, p. 73.
135. *Ibid.*, XI, 1803, September, № 18, p. 160. 136 Karamzin, III, p. 590.
137. *Vestnik Evropy*, V, 1802, October, № 19, p. 232; X, 1803, August, № 15, pp. 213–5, 232.
138. *Moskovskiy zhurnal*, V, 1792, Mach, p. 315.
139. S. Ponomaryov, *Materialy dlya bibliografii literatury o N.M. Karamzine*, St Petersburg, 1883, pp. 46–51.
140. *Vestnik Evropy*, VII, 1803, February, № 3, p. 229; X, August, № 15, pp. 195–8; XI, October, № 20, p. 291; XII, November, Nos. 21–2, p. 50.
141. V.I. Kuleshov, “Iz istorii russko-nemetskikh literatur-nykh svyazey” (*Vestnik Evropy N.M. Karamzina i Russische Miszellen I.G. Rikh-tera*)” (*Slavyanskaya filologiya*, V, Moscow, 1963, pp. 436–51).
142. “It is impossible to agree with all Karamzin's historical, literary and philosophical opinions”: V. K. Kyukhel'beker, *Dnevnik*, Leningrad, 1929, p. 88.
143. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–1.
144. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–5. (Karamzin's immediate successors on the Messenger were Pankratii Sumarokov, Michael Kachenovsky and Vassily Zhukovsky).