

**FUNCTIONING OF THE FRENCH TEXT
IN THE ETHNOGRAPHIC SIBERIAN JOURNALS
OF V.A. DOLGORUKOV (END OF THE 19th –
BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURIES)**

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Abstract. This article is dedicated to the neglected phenomenon of the use of French in Russian-language regional history journals published by V.A. Dolgorukov in the Siberian city of Tomsk. Such issues as the annual *Putevoditel' po Sibiri i Aziatskoi Rossii* ("A Guide to Siberia and the Asian Part of Russia"), the monthly journals (*Dorozhnik po Sibiri i Aziatskoi Rossii* ("A Road Guide to Siberia and Asian Russia"), and *Sibirskii nabliudatel'* ("The Siberian Observer") are analyzed. They contained French texts, translations of Russian texts into French, and translations from French. The theme of the French sections is studied along with particularities of the translations. The principles of the usage of French in pre-revolutionary publications are analyzed.

Keywords: French; Russian-speaking issue; V.A. Dolgorukov; Tomsk; Siberia; Journal.

Introduction

The cultural phenomenon of Russian-French bilingualism that existed in the high society of pre-revolutionary Russia in the 19th and 20th centuries is a classic example of the existence in society of two almost equal languages as taught in textbooks and manuals for linguists [1]. Pre-revolutionary Russian nobles freely read and spoke French on a par with Russian, and literature in French was widespread in society. Nevertheless, Russian periodicals were published in Russian, and the inclusion in Russian-language magazines and newspapers of texts in foreign languages (French, Polish, English) was seldom: mostly advertisements for foreign goods and publications. The most famous bilingual periodical in Russia was the modernist journal *Zolotoe runo*, published by N. Riabushinskii: it included partly Russian texts, including poetry, translated into French for the foreign reader, with Russian art. One can cite the example of the journal *Russko-nemetskii vestnik*, published in Berlin in 1900 in Russian and German. There were also other bilingual journals, but they were the exception rather than the rule.

In pre-revolutionary Siberia, where journals and the journalism associated with it was developing very slowly and journals amounted to few, the appearance of bilingual Russian-French journals was all the more unusual. They were published in Tomsk by the former exile V.A. Dolgorukov.

The purpose of this paper is to determine the characteristics of the French text in bilingual Siberian journals with a local character. However, before analyzing bilingual journals, we must say a few words about the publisher, V.A. Dolgorukov. His biography was quite unusual for a Russian publisher of periodicals.

Vsevolod A. Dolgorukov (12th May 1850, St. Petersburg – 27th July 1912, Tomsk) came from a branch of the large Dolgorukov princely family, one of the oldest and most famous in pre-revolutionary Russia. V.A. Dolgorukov was educated in the Sea Cadet Corps [2], but was involved in criminal ventures and in 1870 was deprived by the court of “special rights” – his princely title. In 1877, already as a bourgeois Dolgorukov again appeared in court in connection with the criminal investigation “The case of the Club of the Knave of Hearts”. The “club” consisted of 48 people who were engaged in fraud, theft, robbery, etc. Dolgorukov was not among the leaders of this society, he said, according to the defence, but was involved in the criminal gang because of his kindness and weakness of character.

The court ruled that Dolgorukov should be deported to Siberia in 1889, but in 1893 he received a pardon and the right to return to the capital [3], But he did not return. Until the end of his life Dolgorukov lived in Tomsk, working as a chamber counsel in the Tomsk District Court, dying in this city in 1912 and was buried at the Voskresenskii Cemetery in Tomsk [4: 142].

Dolgorukov began writing when he was a cadet; the first issues in which he was mentioned date back to 1862. These were collections of literary works by students in the Sea Cadet Corps, guides to Novgorod, Moscow and its districts, art works of different genres [5: 74-75]. Up until his deportation to Siberia, his works were published in the capital’s journals and as separate books. In Tomsk, he continued to collaborate with publications: he worked in *Russkaia starina*, *Russkii kur'er*, *Moskovskii list*, *Pravda*, *Razylechenie*, *Budil'nik* and others. In 1890 Dolgorukov published in Tomsk his first collection of poems *Ne ot skuki* under the pseudonym “Vsevolod Sibirskii”.

In 1895, V.A. Dolgorukov received permission for the annual publication called *Putevoditel' po vsei Sibiri i Sredne-Aziatskim vladeniim Rossii* (*Guide à travers la Sibérie et les territoires Russes en Asie Centrale*) (1895-1899). A feature of this guide was the existence of a section in French, and it was not a translation of certain parts of the Russian-language magazine and did not have Russian-language equivalent articles in it. Information on different places in Siberia was published there of possible interest for travelers.

The appearance of the French section was not accidental. Dolgorukov spoke French perfectly, as he grew up and was educated in a noble family, and was thus bilingual, like many Russian capital families. There is evidence that the former prince was the Siberian correspondent for the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro* [6: 103]. It should be added that the daily *Le Figaro*, founded in 1826, still exists today. On its website (<http://www.lefigaro.fr/>) there are

digitized materials of issues from the 19th century, so it is likely that modern researchers will be able to find Dolgorukov's published correspondence.

Dolgorukov's work was highly appreciated at the international level. The newspaper *Sibirskii vestnik* wrote in 1898 in the section "Local Chronicle": "The creator of the *Guide à travers la Sibérie et les territoires Russes en Asie Centrale* V.A. Dolgorukov was recently notified that the jury of the international exhibition held in the past year in Bordeaux (France) awarded him a silver medal for his *Guide* with the French text (for its low cost and the interest of its publications), which he submitted to the exhibition" (*Sibirskii vestnik*. 1898. № 12, p. 2).

Positive responses on the *Putevoditel'* were published in the leading Russian journals and newspapers. S.A Vengerov in his work *Istochniki slovaria russkikh pisatelei* mentioned a whole list of newspapers and journals, as well as printed reviews of it [7: 287-288].

From the second year of publication, another language was added to the French text of the *Putevoditel'*: German; in 1905, the yearbook was published in Russian, French, German, English and Italian. These parts were published as a part of the supplement to the Russian *Putevoditel'*, and could be purchased separately for additional money.

The success of the *Putevoditel'* led Dolgorukov to the idea of founding a journal with the same regional and general reference direction. It was not a yearbook but a monthly entitled *Dorozhnik po Sibiri i Aziatskim vladeniiam Rossii* (*Itinéraire à Travers la Sibérie et la Russie d'Asie*), published from 1899. In it some of the materials were also published in French, it was "a guide with a variety of information of some interest for foreigners to become acquainted with Siberia and the Asian possessions of Russia" (*Dorozhnik*. 1899. № 1, p. 2). Issues of *Dorozhnik* were published with more than 200 pages. They were filled with a variety of background information on train schedules, rules for selling tickets as well as descriptions of the Siberian cities and countryside, articles about theater life in Siberia, on the lines of communication: sea, river, land, etc.

At the beginning of the 20th century. Dolgorukov reorganized *Dorozhnik* to a monthly format and changed its name to *Sibirskii nabliudatel'* (*L'Observateur Sibérien*) (1901-1905). The themes and genre of the "Siberian observer" grew significantly; materials were published about the legends and superstitions of Siberian natives, reports on the activities of societies, memoirs, essays, poems, historical, ethnographic and local history articles, theater reviews, bibliographic materials. The journal was of very limited interest among readers, as it was far from politics and public life, did not join in debates and the whole impression of the publication was "faceless". Nevertheless, the huge amount of advertising published in each issue of the "Siberian observer" is worthy of our attention (it occupies up to 50 pages), which shows the interest of advertisers in the magazine.

The composition of the authors of the journal was quite diverse. In the announcement of the publications about 20 people who collaborated with Dolgorukov were listed, including the noteworthy Tomsk poet G. Viatkin, the satirist Mikhail Popov, the lawyer R.L. Weisman, the journalist N.A. Gur'ev, and others.

In 1905 the "Siberian observer" transformed into a weekly magazine called *Sibirskie otgoloski* and the French text disappeared from its issues. The publishing history of V.A. Dolgorukov is quite interesting and notable, as are the circumstances of the appearance in a Russian regional journal of pieces written in French. These facts suggest that Dolgorukov intended the first three editions primarily for external audiences: for foreigners and citizens of the European part of Russia who were interested in Siberia or intended to travel beyond the Urals.

The main part

Let us turn to an analysis of the Russian and French parts of the journals *Dorozhnik po Sibiri i Aziatskoi Rossii* (hereinafter referred to as *Dorozhnik*) and *Sibirskii nabliudatel'*.

For example, take the issue of *Dorozhnik* in 1900, № 2. In the table of contents 12 materials and sections were listed: 1. Tobol'sk Province. N. Gur'ev; 2. The Urals region and postal roads. F.I Bukhonin; 3. Lake Teletskoe. P. Dmitriev; 4. By the rivers of Western Siberia. Mark Kvitki; 5. The Siberian taiga. Iu. Gorbatovskii; 6. Theatres in Siberia. V ***; 7. A description of transport routes; 8. A description of the locale. R.L. Weismann; 9. Train information; 10. Supplement. Dmitrieva-Mamonova; 11. Asie Centrale. I. Boukhara; 12. Announcements.

Of these sections there is only one in French, and it does not stand out from the general list. However, it does not have a Russian translation, the title is only in French; and there is no Russian analogy in the content of the issue. The same principle can be observed in all issues such as *Dorozhnik* and *Sibirskii nabliudatel'*

It should be added that there were also illustrations which were placed in the following issue of the journal. Russian names were given to the images and immediately translated into French. For example:

"Portraits, kinds and types (Vues et types):

1) A.A. Kravchenko, actor, entrepreneur in the Irkutsk Theatre (A.A. Krawtschenko, artiste, entrepreneur du théâtre d'Irkoutsik); 2) E.A. Dmitrieva-Mamonova, the founder of the Tomsk branch of the Imperial Russian Musical Society (E.A. Dmitrieva-Mamonova, fondatrice de la section de la Société impériale musicale russe de Tomsk); 3) city of Ural'sk, St. Michael Street. – the House of the Ataman. – Alexander Nevsky. Cathedral – Arc de Triomphe (Vue de la ville d'Ouralsk. – Vue Michailowskaia. –

Maison du chef des cosaques. – Cathédrale de St. Alexandre-Newsky) (and so on. There were 6 sections overall)” (*Dorozhnik*. 1900. № 2).

An advertisement for the *Putevoditel'* and *Dorozhnik* was published both in Russian and French, and then for *Sibirskii nabliudatel'*: these texts were identical.

The French sections of Dolgorukov’s journals are of particular interest in terms of content. Let us consider the following materials:

Asie Centrale. I. Boukhara (Central Asia. I. Bokhara) (*Dorozhnik*. 1900. № 2).

Tomsk (Fin. – Voir le Livre 4-e de l’année courante de l’Itinéraire) (Tomsk. Okonchanie. Sm. № 4) (*Dorozhnik*. 1900. № 6).

La province Transbaikalienne (Transbaikal province) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel'*. 1905. № 1).

Villes Sibériennes. Iakoutsk (Siberian towns. Yakutsk) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel'*. 1905. № 3, 4–5).

Les villes de la Mandghourie. La ville et le district de Bin-Chu (Towns of Manchuria. The town and district of Bin-chu) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel'*. 1905. № 11–12).

These French materials are different in terms of their size and content (from 3 to 7 pages in one issue), but there is one thing that unites them: it is the approach to the introduction of topics and common structural elements. Each publication begins with a detailed notation of the location on the map. Dolgorukov indicates the latitude and longitude of the village or area, defines the border with other districts, names the most important “geo-references”: mountain ranges, rivers, plains, etc. He writes as well about the climatic features of the area, and indicates the average temperatures and weather conditions in different seasons.

Dolgorukov then briefly mentions historical facts; he says just a few words about the founder of this or that city or village, and proceeds to the current state of affairs. He gives a brief sketch of how the city seems to the visitor. So, describing Iakutsk, Dolgorukov writes:

“L’aspect extérieur de la ville est assez satisfaisant: elle n’est pas grande, mais elle est disseminée en tous sens. On aperçoit surtout et avant tout les églises. Les maisons sont de la dernière simplicité, elles sont presque toutes en bois, a un étage, avec des fondements et des toits très élevés” (The appearance of the city is quite satisfactory; it is small, but spreads in all directions. First of all one can notice the church immediately. The houses are of the purest simplicity: they are almost all made of wood, one-story, with basements and high roofs) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel'*. 1905. № 3).

In his publication about Tomsk, Dolgorukov assessed the comfort of the city’s hotels, noting the presence of electric lighting in the city, but immediately warning visiting guests: there is terrible mud in spring and autumn in which

horses get stuck so that they cannot be pulled out without assistance (*Dorozhnik*. 1900. № 6).

One of the special features of the French “guide” sections is Dolgorukov’s attention to the peculiarities of local life, the local religion, and the specific activities of the indigenous population. So, describing the Manchurian town of Bin-Chu, Dolgorukov relates in detail the procedure for the collection of raw materials for the production of opium:

“Voici comment çela se pratique: Lorsque les têtes du pavot arrivent à leur plus grand accroissement et se remplissent de grains verts, le chinois s’arme d’un conteau préparé preisement dans ce but, et qui rappelle un peu la lancette de nos médecins, et fait le tour de tout le champ en faisant sur les têtes du pavot de sincision shorizontales peu préfondes” (It is done in the following way: as soon as poppy heads reach a maximum size and fill with green beans, a Chinaman arms himself with a knife specially prepared for this purpose, which slightly resembles the lancet of our doctors, and passes through the field, making shallow horizontal cuts on poppies’ heads) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel’*. 1905. № 11–12).

After describing the procedures for opium collection Dolgorukov proceeds to the story of the dens, observing that opium smokers are fully aware of the harm caused to them, but they cannot give up the habit.

In a publication dedicated to Transbaikal province, Dolgorukov dwells on the beliefs of the native population: the Tungus who profess shamanism:

“Ils confessent le chamanisme, religion idolatre <...> Créateur du monde, existe une quantité de divinités secondaires bonnes ou méchantes. On donne le nom de Tchaitan à la principale de ces dernières divinités. (They profess shamanism, it is an idolatrous religion <...>The supreme being exists as a number of secondary deities, good or bad. They are called ‘shaitans’, mainly because of these obedient deities) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel’*. 1905. № 1).

With reference to Tomsk, Dolgorukov focused his attention on the “mysterious elder” Fyodor Kuz’mich, who, according to popular legend, was in fact the Russian Emperor Alexander II who did not die, but was hiding in Siberia and ended his days in Tomsk, concealing his identity until the end (*Dorozhnik*. 1900. № 6).

Often Dolgorukov found it necessary to explain a particular part of terms to the French reader. So, speaking of the schools, he wrote: “une école de sciences positives qu’on nomme en Russie l’école réelle” (a school of positive sciences, which is called a real school in Russia) (*Sibirskii nabliudatel’*. 1905. № 3).

We should also note that Dolgorukov’s French is generally quite simple; it is not overloaded with terms, phraseological units are practically not used in it as well as figural expressions and other means of expression. There is nothing that could complicate a reader’s perception of the text. The

author's main purpose is to generate interest by reporting facts, to enlarge the reader's scope, to provide the visitor with such information that would help him to orient himself in an unfamiliar city. Nevertheless the translator notes the high level of Dolgorukov's French: he operates freely with different forms and tenses of French verbs, builds phrases correctly, and has a rich vocabulary.

Analysis of Dolgorukov's editions allows us to reveal one more form of the author's work with the French text: they are poetic texts' translations into Russian. Dolgorukov did not provide the French originals, he printed only his translations. For example, a poem by V. Sibirskii (V.A. Dolgorukov's pseudonym), entitled "From the French" was discovered in *Sibirskii nabliudatel'*, No. 1 for 1906.

Methods

The work on this article consisted of several stages. First of all, it is a frontal analysis of the originals of V.A. Dolgorukov's pre-revolutionary publications (they are stored in the Research Library of National Research Tomsk State University). At the second stage a translation was done of the French sections into Russian with the help of A.I. Kurtukova. At the third stage it was necessary to study the relation between the Russian-language and French-language sections of the journals, to identify structural and substantive features of the French-language components, and determine the quality of the French sections. Finally, the final stage constituted an appreciation of the resulting material and the facts uncovered, and hypotheses about the purpose of Dolgorukov's use of the French text, how important it was for his publications and the potential readership. All this allows us to identify the main method of our work as an integrated study of pre-revolutionary periodicals in conjunction with the methods of linguistic analysis.

Results

The French text functioned in Dolgorukov's editions in three basic forms.

1) There was a Russian text and its translation into French: they are the names of the illustrations in the journal, advertisements for publications of Dolgorukov's *Putevoditel' po Sibiri i Aziatskoi Rossii*, *Dorozhnik po Sibiri i Aziatskoi Rossii*, and *Sibirskii nabliudatel'*.

2) Some materials in the journals were published in French without Russian analogies: they were regional history articles about different areas and villages of Siberia and Central Asia;

3) One could come across translations of French artistic texts, without the French originals.

The introduction of a French-language text in a periodical responded to the special educational tasks of the publisher, who was willing to acquaint foreign readers with little-known Russian and Asian regions, primarily Siberia.

Conclusion and suggestions

The completed research allows us to say that it was truly important for the publisher to maintain a bilingual journal, since he focused not only on the local audience, but also tried to expand his readership among Russian and foreign readers.

The French sections in Dolgorukov's publications were not mentioned in the list of contents, but in reality they appeared at the end of each journal with individual covers so that they could be easily removed from the journal and rebound as a separate publication. The reader who did not speak a foreign language could easily get by without the information given in the French section: they were of special interest to a traveler, but not to a local resident. On the other hand, the French texts could be used by local intellectuals, for example, as material for teaching children the French language.

The introduction of the French text happened at several levels, and that allows us to speak about the interaction of such aspects of Russian and French units as complementary and an extension of the information space. From the point of view of content the French sections had a local ("guide") character, were devoted to a description of the features of little-known areas of Siberia and the Asian part of Russia, they drew the attention of potential travelers to the specifics of life, beliefs, and local activities. These texts were characterized by the absence of any judgmental tone, the neutral tone of presentation, the desire for objectivity. In terms of genre, one can talk about the use of a single genre of a local history article in which there is no place for dialogue, reportage descriptions, etc. Statistical data and elements of sketches were widely used.

It is known that Dolgorukov's journals did not bring him special dividends: they were published with a circulation of no more than 1,000 copies, but they were in demand with a particular audience. For example, in the announcement of subscription rates in the *Putevoditel'* in 1901, it was emphasized that the English part of the yearbook was already completely sold out, so one could order only parts in Russian, French, German and Italian in the edition (*Sibirskii nabliudatel'*. 1901. № 10).

As a suggestion, it is possible to identify the prospects for further research of Russian bilingual journals and compare them with Dolgorukov's publications. This would allow us to determine the degree of originality of Dolgorukov's journals, their orientation towards already existing models of

bilingual editions, and to explore options for the introduction of foreign languages in Russian-language journals.

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