

(biography and literary history) approach, and makes a fairly good case for the limitations of rigid adherence to one methodology in studying literature. Unfortunately in his own study Gerhardt fails to distinguish between the diverse nature and objectives of such approaches. As a result, biographical and historical citations from the authors' letters and critical remarks concerning certain texts are juxtaposed in such a way that it occasionally becomes difficult to see exactly what the writer is trying to establish. At times it would seem that Gerhardt tries misguidedly to employ biographical material to prove a point about his interpretation of a text, yet at other times he attempts to use citations from the two authors' works apparently to enlarge their spiritual biographies.

In the postscript to the 1941 edition of his book Gerhardt emphasizes that the focus of his work is on Gogol rather than Dostoevsky, and would seem to identify himself as a student of Gogol in a world of Dostoevsky scholars. If this is the case, it may in part explain why the author takes such an aggressive stand toward Tynianov's claim that Dostoevsky parodied Gogol (in particular his *Perepiska*) in the work *Selo Stepanchikovo*. His effusive efforts to refute Tynianov's arguments are marred, I think, by a fundamental misunderstanding of Tynianov's definition of parody. Although Tynianov emphasized in his article that parody in no way implies the presence of hostile polemics (satire?), Gerhardt consistently sees the two concepts as inseparable. He attempts therefore to establish on the basis of biographical and textual material that Dostoevsky did not harbor or express any disrespectful thoughts or feelings toward Gogol, and that after his return from exile he was neither in a position nor of a mind to launch such a "personal" attack. Gerhardt is so strongly moved by what he believes is Tynianov's implication of the political and personal vilification of Gogol through parody that he feels called upon to justify *Perepiska* even though the feverish political debates of the Belinsky era are long past.

What this would seem to show is that Gerhardt misunderstands Tynianov's view of the literary nature of parody. By wrongly classifying Tynianov's opinions with those of Belinsky and other radical critics of the nineteenth century, Gerhardt demonstrates his own inability to think in terms that are not polemical. He thereby fails to consider the complicated problems raised by Tynianov's definition of parody as the creative (nonpolemical) reworking of prior material into a literary work.

Despite the presumptuousness of the book's broad title, Gerhardt's work does provide some useful and basic biographical and textual information concerning the literary activity of the two authors.

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NIKOLAI STRAKHOV. By *Linda Gerstein*. Russian Research Center Studies, 65. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971. xi, 233 pp. \$8.50.

Dostoevsky once described Nikolai Strakhov (1828–96) as "the only real critic of our times." Moreover, it is as a critic, book reviewer, and correspondent with Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and others that Strakhov is best known to students of Russian literature. But Professor Gerstein takes a broader approach here, leaning more toward Tolstoy's opinion that Strakhov was destined for "pure philosophical activity." Actually, his intellectual range was so wide that the Russian term *myslitel'* might well be used. To describe his ideological bent Mrs. Gerstein uses the word

“conservative.” On balance this judgment is certainly borne out, though some such qualifier as “enlightened” or “moderate” should be added. The influence of Western conservatives—for example, Carlyle and Schopenhauer—is pointed out, but so is that of Renan and Bernard. (For a discussion of this movement see Richard Pipes’s article in the March 1971 *Slavic Review*.) Many of Strakhov’s essays were published in a three-volume work, *Bor’ba s zapadom v nashei literature* (1882–95). Despite this title, however, Mrs. Gerstein convincingly shows that the simple term “Slavophile” is an inadequate label for the author. She elucidates Strakhov’s ideas, interweaving them with the details of his life, and her book might best be called an intellectual biography.

After his early education at a seminary in Kostroma the young *raznochinets* arrived in St. Petersburg during the mid-forties, and majored in mathematics at the university and the Pedagogical Institute. While teaching at a local gymnasium, however, Strakhov undertook graduate work in biology. In this respect his education was similar to that of Danilevsky and Leontiev, and is significant for the subsequent discussion of Darwinism. Interest in literature also dated from this period, and after failing to secure an academic post by the late 1850s, Strakhov turned full-time to journalism. He joined Grigoriev and the Dostoevsky brothers on *Vremia* and *Epokha*. The complex, interrelating influences of these men on each other in the development of their “organic” doctrine of *pochvennichestvo* provide some of the most illuminating portions of Mrs. Gerstein’s book. Polemics were waged against Katkov on the Right, and Chernyshevsky and Company on the Left. Their sarcasm mounted, and some amusing excerpts from parodies are translated here.

After the demise of these two journals Strakhov barely supported himself by writing, editing, and translating, until in 1873 he managed to secure a position as a librarian and then another with the Ministry of Education (on a committee to choose scientific textbooks). It was during this period that Strakhov produced his long, sympathetic analysis of *War and Peace* as well as a defense of *Russia and Europe*. Indeed his close friendship with both Tolstoy and Danilevsky became more important as time went on. Polemics arose over Darwinism and spiritualism; in both areas Strakhov attempted to delimit the proper sphere of science. Essays on these subjects were published in the volume *Mir kak tseloe* (1872; revised, expanded edition, 1892) wherein the stress on an integral, “organic” view of nature harks back to *pochvennichestvo*.

In Mrs. Gerstein’s monograph Strakhov emerges as a modest (almost monkish), apolitical scholar-critic surrounded by books—with almost no family, but several good friends. Like Tolstoy he had a highly personal religious sense and angrily rejected the mediation of priests at the end of his life. But by then he had earned public honors (election to the Academy of Sciences in 1889) and even followers (e.g., Rozanov) among the intelligentsia. Publishing activity continued right up to the end. *Filosofskie ocherki*, for example, appeared in 1895.

A thorough list of primary and secondary sources is provided in the bibliography. Errors are few—for example, Strakhov’s name is misspelled (p. 19), Mikhail Dostoevsky is said to be still alive in 1869 (p. 56), and Darwinism as the title of Danilevsky’s book should be italicized (p. 160), as indeed it is below on the same page. In sum, Professor Gerstein has done well in her study of this unjustly neglected thinker.

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