

interest in Dostoevsky. Since that time every work devoted to Eastern and Russian spirituality as a rule has contained a section on *starchestvo*. The book under review is one of the first monographs published in the West devoted to the specific image of one of the *startsy*: the justly renowned Amvrosy of Optina Monastery (1812–91). The author avoids repeating general, sufficiently known descriptions of *starchestvo*, and, after a brief biographical introduction and an outline of Eastern spiritual tradition, introduces the reader to the inner world of Amvrosy, portraying his personal attitudes and his methods of spiritual guidance. The material used—derived from Amvrosy’s letters and conversations—is skillfully arranged. Amvrosy’s deliberately simple and clear language is well rendered in English translation. The literature on *starchestvo* and on Amvrosy himself is amply used, with the exception of a few references to him in belles-lettres which are not taken into account by the author. All this makes the book very valuable for those who are interested in nineteenth-century Russian monasticism and even in questions of spiritual life and pastoral guidance.

The subtitle of the book gives the impression that the work contains elements that would be of interest in the study of nineteenth-century Russian literature as well. However, Amvrosy’s acquaintance with prominent figures of Russian nineteenth-century culture, such as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Leontiev, and Rozanov, and his influence on them are portrayed very schematically. No effort is made to analyze this influence or even to describe Amvrosy’s relations with them in detail. In the chapter devoted to the nun’s convent of Shamordino, founded and led by Amvrosy, the author does not even mention that Tolstoy’s favorite sister Maria was a nun there. To understand the role which she played in Tolstoy’s life, it is sufficient to familiarize oneself with their correspondence, or even to recall that it was to her that Tolstoy went on the eve of his death. Amvrosy’s influence on the personal development and literary work of Leontiev and Rozanov was also immense. Rozanov devoted a major section of his book *Okolo iserkovnykh sten* (St. Petersburg, 1906) to Amvrosy. Meanwhile the book under review merely mentions Leontiev in passing and Rozanov not at all. This narrows the scope of the book, but by no means deprives it of value.

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THE OTHER TURGENEV: FROM ROMANTICISM TO SYMBOLISM. By Marina Ledkovsky. Colloquium Slavicum, Beiträge zur Slavistik, no. 2. Würzburg: Jal-Verlag, 1973. 170 pp. DM 24, paper.

Like his friend Flaubert, Turgenev has suffered from the restrictive reputation of being a realist, which, coupled with his perceptive rendering of sociopolitical themes (which made *Fathers and Sons* seem so startlingly prophetic during the 1960s), has “attenuated critical interest in a very different direction of his literary work.” So says Marina Ledkovsky in *The Other Turgenev*. By the “very different direction,” she means Turgenev’s interest in the elusive and irrational elements of human consciousness and of the outer world.

The neglect of this “other Turgenev” has not been quite so complete as Ms. Ledkovsky suggests. Other writers have discussed his romanticism, his interest in the supernatural, his debt to men like Pascal and Schopenhauer; this her own bibliography shows. But no one has yet fitted the mosaic to show this darker of

Turgenev's faces completely, and Ms. Ledkovsky does it well and convincingly, beginning with a study of the romantic elements in his writing, linking these to the wide Russian interest in the "Gothic" (though surprisingly she misses Dostoevsky in a list of writers so interested), proceeding to a discussion of nonrealist themes in his better-known works, and leading to a discussion of his relatively little-read "mysterious tales," which link him to Gogol on one side and the Symbolists on the other.

It is, indeed, with a chapter on Turgenev as proto-Symbolist that *The Other Turgenev* ends. Links with the French Symbolists are hard to find, but Turgenev must have read Baudelaire, and Ms. Ledkovsky traces clear analogies between some of his writings and those of Verlaine, Maeterlinck, and Villiers de L'Isle-Adam. Also, she indicates the obvious lines of filiation between him and the Russian Symbolists.

*The Other Turgenev* is a timely book, reinforcing one's impression that the realism ascribed to Turgenev was in fact a great curiosity about all dimensions of life, intangible as well as tangible, mitigated by an enduring skepticism regarding the powers of reason.

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KOZ'MA PRUTKOV: THE ART OF PARODY. By *Barbara Heldt Monter*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 211. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. xiv, 143 pp. 32 Dglds.

The problems posed by the works of Kozma Prutkov are such as to daunt all but the most cunning and erudite of critics. It is bad enough that behind the Prutkovian mask should stand *four* different authors (Alexei Tolstoy and the Zhemchuzhnikov brothers) practicing a bewildering variety of genres (fables, lyrics, aphorisms, plays, and so forth) in a number of manners, ranging from the parodic to the outright nonsensical. There is the further difficulty that all parody (like criticism, of which it is a special branch) is, by definition, *parasitical*—it feeds on and directs our attention to another author or work. Ideally, then, he who seeks to know the "parasite" should know the "host" as well. But how many Slavists in the West have immersed themselves in the likes of Shcherbina, Benediktov, and the second-rate Russian imitators of Heine?

Equipped with a sharp eye, a crisp style, and an obvious appreciation of Kozma's genial (in both senses of the word) tomfoolery, Professor Monter advances bravely on her subject. Alas, her varied *aperçus* and formulations fail ultimately to pin him down. To claim, for instance, that Prutkov's "personality is inseparable from his works" is valid for the aphorisms—and for very little else. To argue that his creators had a "genuine affection" for the Prutkovian *persona* is to forget how unpleasant a creature he was: a "tyrannic" lover of all that was "oppressive, stale, and inhuman" in Nicholas's Russia—to quote Professor Monter herself. To give partial assent to Pypin's view (enthusiastically endorsed by Soviet critics) that Prutkov was the product of the claustrophobic climate of mid-century Russia is, momentarily at least, to forget that Prutkov was born from sheer youthful exuberance—an emotion which seldom if ever stems from claustrophobia. And so it goes. Repeatedly the agile author tries to catch the subject in her critical nets, and almost as often the protean poet escapes, growling as he retreats: "Nikto ne obnimet neob"iatnogo."