

"social" conversations—clever, interesting, and aimless. A very American reaction to it might be, "There is no bottom line."

Nevertheless, inconclusive stimulation is better than vastly misleading conclusions. And there is something to be said for an awareness of complexity and a feel for the Russian scene, even if it is at times debatable in argument and frustrating in its frequent equivocation.

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N. F. FEDOROV (1828–1903): A STUDY IN RUSSIAN EUPSYCHIAN AND UTOPIAN THOUGHT. By *Stephen Lukashovich*. Newark and London: University of Delaware Press and Associated University Presses, 1977. ii, 316 pp. \$18.50.

To present Fedorov's thought, Stephen Lukashovich employs a "structural method" that consists of three successive steps: "the recognition that every ideology is essentially a psychological argument of its creator . . . the discovery and structuration of this psychological argument and the organization of the remainder of the ideology around the structure of this psychological argument" (p. 43). Inducing the structure from Fedorov's writings, Lukashovich divides his study into three parts, entitled "The Rise of Man," "The Fall of Man," and "The Redemption of Man." The author organizes Fedorov's psychological argument (actually a psychobiological argument, because it treats man's assumption of a vertical posture and his development of prehensile hands) into three interconnected "strands" (perception, analysis, action) of the development of man's humanity, consisting of twelve "stations" each, and into eight "developmental columns." Lukashovich demonstrates the culmination of this development in a twelfth or final "station": the resurrection of the dead fathers and the attainment of a universal utopia of immortality and happiness. This comprises two-thirds of the book. The remainder is devoted to presenting the "twelve capitalist interferences" (with man's attainment of immortality) and Fedorov's solutions to the "twelve paschal [resurrectional] problems."

Fedorov was a complex and daring thinker whose ideas and asceticism were admired by Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Solov'ev, Gorky, and Mayakovsky. A Promethean who believed in controlling nature for man's benefit and in the "self-creation" of man, he desired to transform the "will to procreation" into the "will to resurrection" and "our mortal irrational world into an immortal rational cosmos" by the "patrifaction" (father-creation, conquest, and colonization) of the entire universe. Preaching that all humanity should be organized for this "common task," Fedorov opposed capitalism, materialistic socialism, and all tendencies (that is, any approach which divides the world into rich and poor, city and countryside, learned and ignorant) that separate people from each other. He advocated the "gathering in" of the world's peoples by the autocrat of Russia, their conversion to Russian Orthodoxy (by force if necessary), psychogenetics (using genetics to create new psychological types), colonies in space, and a Central Learned Commission (similar to St. Simon's *savants*) to supervise all human activity, all art and science, until man achieved perfection. He also espoused encircling the globe with electric rings in order to solve the energy problem, control the weather, and thus ensure the food supply (p. 194); cosmic agriculture, that is, farming the cosmic dust, which, he believed, contained the scattered particles of man's dead ancestors—in order to reclaim and resurrect man's forefathers (pp. 197–99); and exchanging Siberian cold air for Indian hot air in order to give both nations temperate climates, to end India's miseries, and to precipitate a crisis in the British Empire that would end with England recognizing the "moral superiority of the Tsar" and

placing the British Empire in his hands (p. 270)! Fedorov's vision of colonies in space, control of the weather, and genetic engineering may yet be realized, and some of his social criticism—including his discussion of the limitations of materialistic socialism—is still relevant; but Lukashovich's claim that Fedorov created a psychological theory that was "more complete, richer, more convincing, and therefore superior to that of Freud" (p. 14), a "critique of capitalism that was undoubtedly more penetrating than that of Marx" (p. 15), and an ideology "more robust" than Hegel's (p. 14) strikes this reviewer as somewhat extravagant.

Although Lukashovich's study contains much interesting material, it has some serious defects. The "structural method"—with its "strands," "stations," "developmental columns," and "avatars of self-creation and Eupsychia"—serves to confuse rather than to clarify and results in convoluted prose that is extremely difficult to read. Preoccupied with demonstrating the unity of Fedorov's thought in terms of the complex structure he has imposed on it, Lukashovich fails to criticize Fedorov's ideology and to explore the many ambiguities and inconsistencies within it; moreover, he minimizes its less attractive aspects. Fedorov was an implicit totalitarian (which Lukashovich recognizes), an advocate of an idealized autocracy, who scorned civil liberties as the "freedom to be divisive" and condemned constitutions as "capitalist inspired immaturity." He was also an anti-Semite, who detested Arabs and Phoenicians as well as Jews, and a misogynist, who blamed "feminine caprice" for luring sons away from fathers and for competition, violence, and war. (Indeed, the role of daughters [NB: not mothers] in Fedorov's resurrected world is quite vague.) Finally, in attempting to account for Fedorov's psychological argument, Lukashovich raises the issue of whether Fedorov's views were the rationalizations of a "failed artist" (pp. 293–303), but he ignores the more obvious issue of Fedorov's illegitimacy. Fedorov was only four years old when his father, Prince Pavel Gagarin, died, and he and his mother were forced to leave the patrimonial estate. This expulsion from Eden at a tender age might account for Fedorov's conception of bliss as the "self-centered happiness . . . of the pre-sexual child" (p. 299), for his references to "the plight of the orphaned children on the earth" (p. 116), for his obsession with resurrecting the dead fathers, for his misogyny (We do not even know his mother's name. Was he ashamed of her and/or did he blame her for his own suffering?), and even for his masochistic asceticism. Despite the paucity of material on Fedorov's personal life, the issue should be raised.

These defects notwithstanding, because it is the first book in English on this important, yet little-known thinker, Lukashovich's study is a contribution to Russian intellectual history.

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THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF RUSSIAN "SAMIZDAT"—AN ANTHOLOGY. Edited by *Michael Meerson-Aksenov* and *Boris Shragin*. Translated by *Nickolas Lupinin*. Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Co., 1977. 624 pp. \$29.50.

The editors of this useful collection of *samizdat* works in English translation were themselves Soviet dissidents. In 1959, at the age of fifteen, Michael Meerson-Aksenov had already joined the group of free-thinking youths who organized unofficial art exhibits and public poetry readings in Moscow. In 1966, he converted to Christianity and became a member of the Russian Orthodox church. From that time on, until he emigrated to the West in 1972, he was actively engaged in the publication and dissemination of forbidden literature, particularly religious and philosophical writings of native Russian thinkers as well as translations of Western theological works. Boris