

surely the finest examples of this genre in Russian literature. The plays of Pastor Gregori and his associates belong to the history of Russian theater but not to Russian literature (they were written in German by Germans). Simeon of Polotsk is an historically important figure, but as a writer he is almost totally devoid of originality and poetic talent. Dmitrii, however, is a writer whose verbal flair again and again triumphs over the awkwardness of the unformed literary idiom of his epoch. He is furthermore both a true poet and, within his chosen convention of the mystery-and-miracle play genre, an effective dramatist. The soliloquy of Jacob in his *Uspenskaia drama* and the shepherd interlude in the *Rozhdestvenskaia drama* belong to the finest literary achievements of their age. Because of his canonization, his work has not been reprinted in Soviet times, but he is a significant link in the history of Russian drama, and it is good to have him restored to it.

The wholly admirable scholarly apparatus of the two volumes draws on everything of importance that has been published in the field in prerevolutionary Russia, the Soviet Union, and the West. The bibliographies and the wide-ranging references are almost encyclopedic in their scope. All in all, this collection should serve as the basic text for anyone teaching or planning to teach courses on the history of Russian theater or a survey of Russian drama.

SIMON KARLINSKY

*University of California, Berkeley*

DEUTSCHE DICHTER IN RUSSLAND IM 19. JAHRHUNDERT: N. V. GERBEL'S "DEUTSCHE DICHTER IN BIOGRAPHIEN UND PROBEN" ALS ZENTRUM DER KENNTNIS UND VERBREITUNG DEUTSCHER DICHTUNG. By *Annelore Engel-Braunschmidt*. Forum Slavicum, no. 36. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1973. 362 pp. DM 78, paper.

This recently published dissertation concerns itself with the degree to which German poets were known in nineteenth-century Russia as a result of N. V. Gerbel's (Härbel) Russian anthology of many German and some Austrian poets (*Nemetskie poetry v biografiakh i obraztsakh*), which appeared in St. Petersburg in 1877. That impressive 690-page compilation, arranged in lexicon form, included excerpts from selections of German verse and a few dramas which reflect the nature of German poetry from its beginnings until 1877. It should be noted, however, that Gerbel made no effort to evaluate the selections chosen for his anthology.

Annelore Engel-Braunschmidt carefully examines the biographical sketches and examples of poetry found in *Nemetskie poetry*, and discusses the various errors she encountered in comparing the Russian versions with the original German ones. For example, some of the biographies contain printing errors. But a more serious oversight is Gerbel's failure to give credit to Heinrich Kurz, whose four-volume literary history he used for many of the vitae in *Nemetskie poetry*. Although Kurz is mentioned in the preface, his literary history is not listed as the source for most of Gerbel's profiles. On the other hand, Gerbel always credited Johann Scherr as his source of information for the biographies he wrote for *Nemetskie poetry*.

Engel-Braunschmidt also draws attention to the vague or faulty translations of the original texts. She demonstrates how several of the translators commissioned by the editor altered the original versions and failed to grasp subtleties in meaning. To be sure, she praises some of the translations.

The author's scholarly treatment of *Nemetskie poetry* leads one to these conclusions: although by today's standards the anthology is lacking in some respects

(several major poets were omitted and others deserve more space than they get), Gerbel's compilation was influential not only in Russia but also in Bulgaria and Serbia, where knowledge of German literature had not been widespread. Such contemporary works as the *Kratkaia literaturnaia entsiklopediia* and *Istoriia nemetskoi literatury* of the Academy of Sciences still take Gerbel's *Nemetskie poetry* into account.

This monograph is highly recommended to scholars of German-Russian comparative literature, who will especially appreciate the exhaustive research evidenced in its footnotes and bibliography.

ROBERT K. SCHULZ

*University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

SELECTED LETTERS OF EVGENIJ BARATYNSKIJ. Edited by G. R. Barratt. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1973. 131 pp. 44 Dglds.

English translations of any but the most prominent Russian writers are in meager supply, and Professor Barratt's version of seventy-four letters by Evgenii Baratynsky is greatly to be welcomed on that score alone. This is a book, the editor tells us, both for those with specialized interests in the period dealt with (1814–44) and for those more generally interested in the poetry and literature of nineteenth-century Russia. The value of Baratynsky's correspondence as background reading for the age of Pushkin is considerable, since he was acquainted with many of the leading literary figures of his time, and in his letters to them the proportion of serious literary discussion to more mundane gossip is higher than one is entitled to expect.

Baratynsky was one of the least partisan observers of the world of letters in the period during which Russian literature finally acquired its national identity by transcending rather than resolving rival claims to cultural parentage, and some of his more sage observations provide a fascinating commentary on this process. He hints in January 1825 at the desirability of a "special, national romanticism." In December he finds the French romantics "pitiful" in their lack of an "elegant popular speech" such as Russian can provide. But in 1832 he voices, apropos of Pushkin's *Tsar' Saltan*, some canny reservations about the use of folk material in sophisticated poetry. In 1826 he comments wryly to Pushkin on the intrusion of German metaphysics into the Russian literary scene ("Muscovite youth is possessed by transcendental philosophy"), but by 1832 he can archly suggest to I. V. Kireevsky that the Russians adopted only as much of the new metaphysic as they needed to prove to themselves something they already felt—an interpretation of the Schellingian influence that is confirmed, but laboriously, by modern scholarship.

The notes with which Professor Barratt has equipped the letters are for the most part too technical for the "simply curious" reader at whom they are aimed, without satisfying the specialist, who will not be content with anything less than the standard Russian editions. They are sometimes unhelpfully pedantic, as when, having pointed out that Baratynsky's French was often misspelled, Barratt devotes a footnote to a trivial orthographic error that does not even generate ambiguity. Nor is it helpful to the layman to use the specialist's transliteration system, which will often give the uninitiated a totally false impression of Russian pronunciation, or to solemnly record in a footnote, without explaining its significance, the use in the Russian text of a diminutive whose pejorative force could easily have been