

replaced *Rossiiia* but was not the same paper, continued to be published until early 1934. *Segodnia* (Riga) went on appearing through the 1930s. The post-World War II *Grani* is not Munich-based: it was and is published in Frankfurt am Main. There is no justification whatever for listing *Vestnik Evropy*, the famous prerevolutionary periodical, among émigré journals.

One may also mention the following howlers. “Krest’ianskaia Rossiia” (in Prague) was not a *religious* association. Could Field have confused the words *krest’ianskii* and *khristsianskii*? This mistake reminded me of how the same Field, in translating Tertz-Siniavsky’s “Mysli vrasplokh,” took the name of Plotinus (Plotin in Russian) for the word *plotnik* and rendered it as “Carpenter”! And to say that the Russian émigré press “belatedly” accepted the change from the Gregorian calendar *between 1923 and 1924* is pure nonsense: no Russian publications in the West ever used the Gregorian calendar alone; the use of *two* “styles” is something quite different.

Field speaks with pride of the “preciseness” of his work, even granted its incompleteness. But from a bibliography one expects a higher standard of preciseness and reliability. One particular entry in Field’s book aroused this reviewer’s curiosity and prompted him to undertake some detective work on his own. The result was that he found some faulty cross referencing on Field’s part and also discovered some information which Field did not impart to his readers.

One lesson to be learned from this bibliography is to discover once again that so much of Russian émigré periodical literature has not been preserved even in the best libraries in the West. Some of Nabokov’s early writings, as Field rightly points out, may have been irretrievably lost through this unpardonable and deliberate neglect of Russian émigré literature.

GLEB STRUVE

*University of California, Berkeley (Emeritus)*

ZA KRASOTU VREMEN GRIADUSHCHIKH: POEZIIA VASILIIA FEDOROVA. By *I. Denisova*. Moscow: “Moskovskii rabochii,” 1971. 136 pp. 30 kopeks, paper.

This commentary on the work of a rather limited Gorky Prize winner (1968) is intended for an educated general audience and seeks to demonstrate that his poetry speaks the truth that makes men free (e.g., *istina, krasota, narodnost’, dolg, stremlenie, bor’ba, podvig*). Although Denisova displays some ingenuity in interpreting from an ideological perspective Fedorov’s intensely private love lyrics, which often depict the loneliness, sorrow, bitterness, and despair occasioned by lost or unrequited love, her implacable Marxian optimism causes her to overlook at times extensive evidence of Fedorov’s undeluded awareness of human moral weaknesses. In remarking on her book’s title (p. 5), which derives from the last four lines of *Venus Sold* (1956), she simply omits the dissonant fourth line: “Za krasotu / Liudei zhivushchikh, / Za krasotu vremen griadushchikh / My zaplatili krasotoi.” Yet this combination of lyrical faith and tough pessimism defines the unstable center of Fedorov’s poetry: the personal and historical struggles are good, true, beautiful—and endless, because evil is indestructible. *Beethoven* (1961) elaborates allegorically Fedorov’s Marxian conception of the artist’s vocation. Beauty and goodness being inseparable, the great composer wars with Evil by attempting to harmonize nature’s discordant sounds—and he finally succeeds, establishing

thereby a utopia. But this new order is alien to the earth, and nature overwhelms the artist by isolating him through universal, deadly silence. Then, "at the cross-roads of life," Beethoven again encounters Evil, mocked this time by its "soundless laughter." Denisova applauds the utopia and ignores these other matters (pp. 35–37). The most extreme of such distortions concerns Fedorov's longest and best-known work, *Seventh Heaven* (1959–67), an epic in eight chapters with preface and epilogue. The fifth chapter, "Memory of the Age," recounts the protagonist's bitter experiences during the purges, when his brother was illegally liquidated as a Japanese spy, when "enemies and every sort of swindling" threatened the revolution, and cowardice was rampant. (An old friend tells the hero, "The brother of an enemy of the people is potentially . . . also an enemy.") Denisova simply skips this chapter and renumbers those remaining (pp. 63–70).

With the exception of a brief bibliography of Fedorov's collections through 1968, Denisova's study is devoid of the scholarly documentation that would clarify such things as her vague rejoinders to unidentified critics of Fedorov's "pochvennichestvo" (p. 100). Her emphasis is almost exclusively thematic, with no serious discussion of the formal aspects of Fedorov's verse other than an endorsement (p. 122) of Fedorov's own "exhaustive" and "precise" solutions (in *Pravda*, June 28, 1967) of the "most complex theoretical questions" (for example, "Poetry is a synthesis of the spiritual life of the people").

KENNETH N. BROSTROM

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

THE NEW SCRIABIN: ENIGMA AND ANSWERS. By *Faubion Bowers*.  
New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973. xiv, 210 pp. \$8.95.

The author of this book, Faubion Bowers, published in 1969 a two-volume set on Scriabin that included numerous translations from Scriabin's correspondence, which had been published in the Soviet Union in 1965. In the relative scarcity of Western writings on Scriabin, Mr. Bowers may be viewed as an enthusiast who is apparently trying to fill the gap by producing what on the surface seem to be scholarly studies about this significant Russian composer. If the first two volumes were quite diffuse and left much to be desired with regard to the accuracy of the translations from Russian, this new volume presumably wraps up more succinctly the present state of knowledge about Scriabin. The author seeks also to present a "new" Scriabin, although it is rather hard to fathom what might be "new" in a period of four years since the publication of Bowers's earlier work. A thorough examination of the book reveals that after completing the preceding work, he became acquainted with more recent publications by Soviet scholars, some of which *did* appear after the publication of his book in 1969, and summarizes these studies as if they contained some unheard-of novelties.

To start with, this is *not* a scholarly volume. In saying this the reviewer is disturbed by the total lack of references and footnotes which would support the author's statements. This is not a subject so well known that no references are required. There is also the matter of the author's flip attitude. Sometimes his style is more suited to weekly magazines of a popular nature, yet elsewhere he uses recondite terms and expressions which would send most readers to the dictionary (for example, "joss house atmosphere," p. 114; "the brightly painted chords with their honeyed harmonies, caroming modulations, and exfoliations of resonance,"