

it." All "reading" involves a complex interaction between text and reader, in which the text is a functioning item in a cultural whole and the reader's judgments are, in fact, conditioned by "complex political and economic ideology."

The volume provides an excellent critical bibliography, which includes a section on relevant journals, and culminates in a very helpful reading guide to the student seeking a basic introduction to structuralism.

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HAMLET AND DON QUIXOTE: TURGENEV'S AMBIVALENT VISION.

By *Eva Kagan-Kans*. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 288. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1975. iv, 161 pp. Paper.

All is not what it seems in this book, despite the title, which leads one to expect an analysis of Turgenev's use of oppositions. Kagan-Kans's thesis is that "one essential feature of Turgenev's work has been overlooked. He is a philosophical writer, and it is necessary to read him in this way to understand his art" (p. 7). Unfortunately, she never explains what reading Turgenev "in this way" means.

Although Kagan-Kans characterizes Turgenev's attitudes toward German Romantic philosophers such as Schelling and Schopenhauer, many of these passages are general enough to sound like old lecture notes, and some of them contain internal contradictions. The penultimate paragraph in the book, for example, begins: "We could point out some affinities between Turgenev and the existentialists," and ends: "Thus, it is impossible to fit Turgenev's belief in the value of faith or love into an existentialist framework of *engagement*" (p. 142). Nor, I believe, does Turgenev have any significant affinities with logical positivism; but why is it necessary to say so?

Actually, Kagan-Kans has very little to say about Turgenev and philosophy; moreover, she does not even *propose* to relate his work to social history. She takes no interest at all in the structure of individual works, and very little interest in symbolism. What, then, is left?

A good deal, as a matter of fact; and this book is an excellent, innovative (though difficult to use) synchronic study of some major themes and patterns of characterization in Turgenev. Using her exhaustive knowledge of Turgenev's *oeuvre*, Kagan-Kans makes some very astute remarks about its overall structure, and sets up some convincing character typologies. She is generally good on women in Turgenev, with occasional lapses into strident dogmatism, such as her statement that "there is only one action in Turgenev's novels and stories: predatory love and passionate virgins in contrast to the man who is unable to live up to their demands" (p. 51). Her last two chapters—"Fate and Fantasy" and "Dream and Reality"—strike me as especially successful, although in writing the latter chapter, Kagan-Kans could have profited from Marina Ledkovsky's book on Turgenev's later works, *From Romanticism to Symbolism*.

If one disregards the author's stated thesis, Kagan-Kans's *Hamlet and Don Quixote* offers a great many stimulating analyses and conclusions, which will surely prove helpful to other scholars, some of whom might even want to relate Turgenev to philosophy.

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