

of authors to mix or modify genres, so I have no particular objection to Professor Leighton's arrangement. I do wonder, however, if works such as "The Test" and "The Frigate 'Hope'" might not be more meaningfully classified as "society tales" rather than being assigned respectively to "Tales of Men and Passions" and "Sea Stories."

The personality which Leighton has reconstructed seems logical and accommodates the excesses of Bestuzhev's personal biography with his literary life, his ethnographic interests, and his critical stance. Some interesting hypotheses are provided which could shed light on Bestuzhev's overnight conversion from active revolutionary on the Senate Square on December 14, 1825, to penitent state's witness on December 15.

Leighton overemphasizes what he discerns as a difference in quality between Bestuzhev's early and late prose. Although Bestuzhev did broaden his scope after 1830 and was a pioneer in certain genres (for example, his society tales), he remained anchored, in my opinion, to early Romantic norms. This may be seen in the arbitrary psychology of characters, the domination of plot over characters, the extreme emphasis on metaphor (both conceptually and stylistically), and a tendency to "tell" rather than to "show"—although in the last instance he does go further than many of his contemporaries (Polevoi, Pogodin, Bulgarin) in using dramatic scenes as a means of delineating the (usually simplistic) personalities of his characters.

While Leighton's statement that *The Traitor* is the best of Bestuzhev's historical tales seems questionable, one must strongly demur when he informs us after establishing the work's derivative essence, that it is "perhaps the best single piece of prose writing in Russia prior to the 1830s. Surely Somov, Perovskii-Pogorelskii, or even Bulgarin might justifiably object, although they would probably all gracefully accede to Bestuzhev's being ranked among the best prose writers of the twenties.

Professor Leighton ranks Bestuzhev's poetry "somewhat below the high standard of his time, but at its peak it compares well with even some of the best." This seems a safe—and fair—statement, but I leave its confirmation to others more qualified than I in this area.

All in all, Professor Leighton has provided a good acquaintance with a significant author whom non-Russian students of Russian literature usually know only from footnotes and random references. In treatment and tone Professor Leighton's study provides a suitable emulative model for a larger series of monographs in English on Russian Romantic fictionists.

JOHN MERSEREAU, JR.
University of Michigan

DOSTOEVSKI'S IMAGE IN RUSSIA TODAY. By *Vladimir Seduro*. Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Company, 1975. xvi, 508 pp. Appendix, "Dostoevski in Russian Émigré Criticism." \$18.50.

This book is a continuation of Dr. Seduro's study, *Dostoyevski in Russian Literary Criticism: 1846-1956* (1957). It is supposed to deal with Soviet post-1956 studies of Dostoevsky, but much attention is devoted to works written before 1956, which have only recently become available. The selection of material was clearly deter-

mined by the author's priorities. Soviet critics—for example, A. S. Dolinin, L. Grossman, M. M. Bakhtin, and N. M. Chirkov, who have attempted to keep literary criticism and ideology separate, and who have, therefore, been victimized at one time or another by the Soviet government, are most prominently represented. On the other hand, while some of V. V. Ermilov's work is included, little attention is devoted to other representatives of the Soviet literary establishment who, although they have made a smaller contribution to Dostoevsky scholarship, are presently responsible for shaping the official image of Dostoevsky in Russia. This group includes, among others, M. Khrapchenko, B. Suchkov (who died recently), K. Lomunov, and B. Bursov.

The book provides a wealth of information and it will be of particular interest to the Western student of Dostoevsky who lacks facility in the Russian language. Many works by and about Dostoevsky have been recently translated into English, but there is still a variety of untranslated critical material on Dostoevsky, published both in the Soviet Union and in the West. Thus, the book will serve as a useful guide to the inquisitive student. The book is also supplemented by an appendix in which the author gives a brief description of the most important contributions to the study of Dostoevsky by Russian émigré scholars in the West.

The quest for the meaning of Dostoevsky's art and for the understanding of its creator is an endless one. The dialogues and discourses on the relative merits of his novels have frequently been marked by disagreement, particularly when the dialogue is between Soviet and Western scholars. Dr. Seduro's study, adhering to this tradition, reads as a continuous dialogue between the author and the representatives of Soviet *Dostoevskovedenie*. While it is the author's privilege to criticize official Soviet interpretations of Dostoevsky and to agree or disagree with Soviet critics, this continuous dialogue reveals his own biases and makes it difficult to follow the main thrust of his argument. Furthermore, Dr. Seduro's final conclusion, that "in the continuing duel with Soviet ideology, his [Dostoevsky's] Christian-humanistic world-view is also gradually winning a place for itself in Soviet culture . . ." (p. 382), is questionable and needs further substantiation.

Nevertheless, Dr. Seduro's new book is a serious contribution to Dostoevsky scholarship in the West which will introduce the reader to a variety of new interpretations and will stimulate his interest in the new, as yet untranslated, studies of Dostoevsky the man and the artist.

A number of minor typographical errors and several blank pages (in my copy, at least) mar this otherwise attractively produced volume. The book also lacks an index and a bibliography.

N. N. SHNEIDMAN
University of Toronto

TWENTIETH-CENTURY RUSSIAN LITERATURE. By *Harry T. Moore* and *Albert Parry*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974. xi, 194 pp. \$6.95.

There is a jocular Russian expression "*galopom po Evropam*"; I don't know what the English equivalent might be, but this book certainly points the need for it. The authors start with Chekhov and actually manage to include events as late as July 1974, while the drama, cinema, and émigrés also receive attention, and all this in 169 pages of text. Of course, at this pace something had to be sacrificed,