

eration. Fehér emphasizes that for Dostoevsky, also, revolution was an "answer to an alienated life," and it remained "love in action" in the author's world view, reaching its most realistic depiction in Dostoevsky's most "obscurantist" period. "Love in action" focuses on the figure of Christ and on the recognition of the impossibility of following him. According to Fehér, Dostoevsky's religious atheists express the antinomy of the bourgeois society in which the atheist and the religious fanatic are but two colliding extremes of the same instability and insecurity.

Based on Lukács's *Théorie des Romans*, a chapter—in itself a fine essay—is devoted to an analysis of the function of the novel in expressing a dynamically changing system of values. Fehér points out that Dostoevsky's "polyphonic novels," which represent the heroes as aspects of consciousness in relation to each other, re-create the illusion of totality in which the idea replaces nature and time and becomes the substance of the depicted world. Fehér finds the novelty of Dostoevsky's art primarily in this and in the way he allows polarized ideas to develop equally and to carry the same weight. Since his aim is to examine his heroes in the moment of crisis, Dostoevsky's concept of time has no need for the *durée réelle*—thus making him a major poet of the antinomies as well as of a new time concept. Fehér arrives at the following conclusion: The unresolvable tension between freedom and necessity, a hope for deliverance and the impossibility of achieving it—yet a dim promise pointing to the future—keep Dostoevsky's heroes in a permanent state of mobility. And that, in turn, makes Dostoevsky the foremost literary representative of the "crisis of the individual."

This review offers just a skeleton abstract and a very limited selection of ideas found in this exciting and well-written book, which contains a great number of new thoughts and evaluations, some of them modestly buried in a clause, others only vaguely alluded to. No review of this size could possibly do justice to the immense amount of work that has gone into this volume, which certainly deserves to be made available to the Western reading public in a good English translation.

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ISSLEDOVANIIA PO POETIKE I STILISTIKE. Edited by V. V. Vinogradov, V. G. Bazanov, and G. M. Fridlender. Akademiia nauk SSSR, Institut russkoi literatury (Pushkinskii Dom). Leningrad: "Nauka," 1972. 277 pp. 1.43-rubles.

This collection of nine articles displays a great diversity of approaches, and it represents poetics only in the broadest sense. Three articles reflect the revived Soviet interest in Dostoevsky, two are devoted to textual criticism, and three concern poetry. G. M. Fridlender's "official" introduction is without originality.

V. I. Eremina deals with repetition in folk songs. Her effort to explain repetition through the melody ignores pervasive repetition in all forms of folklore, with or without musical accompaniment. G. B. Ponomareva discusses Dostoevsky's "Zhitie velikogo greshnika" and considers that Dostoevsky's usage of elements from saints' lives influenced his later novels. She does not define a saint's life, nor does she note the differences between it and Dostoevsky's works. V. A. Tunimanov analyzes in detail the chronicler's role in *The Devils*, showing his various functions and his relationship to each character. Essentially Tunimanov is treating viewpoint, something which has attracted little attention among Soviet critics. V. E. Vetlovskaiia discusses rhetorical devices in *The Brothers Karamazov* and indicates how

they enhance or denigrate a reader's belief in a character. Employing black and white moralistic criteria seems too simplistic for explaining Dostoevsky's complex portrayal of human nature.

The unfinished piece by the late V. V. Vinogradov assigns several anonymous feuilletons to Dostoevsky. B. L. Bessonov's criticism about attribution of an unsigned letter to Shchedrin reveals how cautious one must be in ascribing authorship. I. P. Smirnov, in an article which represents one of the more successful expressions of present-day structuralist theory, applies Tomashevsky's concept of *motivirovka* to lyric verse. Although he offers insights into the early poetry of Akhmatova, Pasternak, and Mayakovsky, he overemphasizes theory and jargon. K. M. Butyrin makes an historical survey of studies about the symbol, chiefly in the works of Potebnia, A. N. Veselovsky, and Vinogradov; however, he by-passes the Symbolists.

The quality of the contributions varies greatly; those by Tunimanov and Smirnov are the most informative.

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ANTON CHEKHOV. By *Siegfried Melchinger*. Translated by *Edith Tarcov*. World Dramatists Series. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1972. v, 184 pp. \$6.50.

Professor Melchinger apparently intends his study as an introduction to Chekhov's dramatic work: one-third of the book deals with biography and background on the period, the remainder is devoted to brief essays on individual plays, including a section on stage productions in Europe and America. It contains many statements about Chekhov, his work, and his times which are either highly debatable or misleading. Thus, in speaking of the growth of cities in the 1870s the author notes that "there were only four cities in Russia [*sic*] that had more than 100,000 inhabitants: Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, and Odessa" (p. 16). In a paragraph devoted to revolutionary activity of the sixties and seventies he refers to the tsar's amusement (presumably Nicholas I in 1836!) over Gogol's *Government Inspector*.

A similar problem results from the absence of documentation in the book. Melchinger notes an incident in which, astonished by the complaints of a group of literati and journalists over the difficulty of finding material to write about, Chekhov exclaimed, "What, no material? Here is an ashtray—tomorrow you'll have a story about it!" (p. 18). Melchinger offers no details about the source of this remark. The only such incident with which I am familiar comes from Korolenko's reminiscences, which refer to the presence only of Chekhov's mother, brother, and sister.

Melchinger frequently states as facts opinions of highly debatable character. He seems to assume that Lydia Avilova accurately described Chekhov's love for her, though several recent biographers have raised serious doubts about the accuracy of her account. Speaking of the early nineties he says, "These were happy days" (p. 44). Compare Chekhov's remark to Suvorin in 1892: "I have aged not merely in body but in spirit. I have become somehow stupidly indifferent to everything in the world. . . ."

Melchinger's remarks on the plays, particularly *The Seagull*, are occasionally illuminating. However, his general discussion of Chekhov's concept of drama