

of their inability to relate to the world or to others. Thus, he says, their alienation is largely symbolic rather than concrete. To this extent, at least, Hübner offers food for thought. This distinction between the two sets of plays is worth further investigation.

In his summary Hübner also briefly comments on Chekhov's more subtle methods of characterization in the later plays, the techniques of contrasting dialogues, two-plane staging, the subtext, the mood, and so forth—all of which found their refinement in *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. The book is equipped with a lengthy and useful bibliography. The excellence of the editing and proof-reading betrays, as does the substance of the book itself, a Germanic passion for thoroughness.

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CULTURE IN EXILE: RUSSIAN EMIGRÉS IN GERMANY, 1881–1941.

By Robert C. Williams. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972. xx, 404 pp. \$14.50.

In his preface Professor Williams says that his original intention was to write “a political and intellectual history of the Russian colony in the 1920's,” but that “what finally resulted was a more comprehensive study of Russians in Germany from the 1880's through the 1930's.” He gives two reasons for this change of plans. He thinks that the original plan would have meant losing sight of “the traditional framework of Russian-German relations and of Russians in Germany, particularly the pre-1914 emigration which was to be so crucial for the later diaspora.” He sees this as the main defect of Hans-Erich Volkmann's book *Die russische Emigration in Deutschland, 1919–1929* (see my review of it in the *Slavic Review*, March 1971). His second reason is that “a look at the life of Berlin Russians in the 1920's quickly reveals the importance, as intermediaries between Russians and German society, of two non-Russian ethnic groups—Russian Jews and Russian Germans—whose arrival in Germany antedated the war and whose influence in Germany was, tragically, extended into the Third Reich.”

Both in its chronological scope and in the breadth of its treatment of the post-World War I Russian emigration in Germany Williams's book leaves Dr. Volkmann's somewhat skimpy and lopsided study well behind. It is divided into nine chapters: “The Imperial Heritage” (pp. 1–53), “The Time of Troubles: 1914–1921” (pp. 54–110), “Community of Despair: Emigré Institutions” (pp. 111–58), “Politics of Adjustment” (pp. 159–98), “Politics of Frustration” (pp. 199–243), “The Way Out to the East” (pp. 242–81), “Shock of Permanence: 1923–1933” (pp. 282–330), “The Third Kingdom” (pp. 331–63), and “The Legacy” (pp. 364–72). There are also thirty-two pages of biographical notes and glossary (unfortunately not free from mistakes and misprints), a bibliography, and an index.

Chapters 3–7 cover what must be regarded as the main period of the post-revolutionary Russian émigré activities in Germany—from 1921 to Hitler's advent to power in 1933. The author uses in his narrative a wealth of unpublished archival material. This material is of great variety, but also no doubt of uneven value and trustworthiness. It is by no means confined to what is to be found in the official German sources on which Dr. Volkmann's study was, for the most part, based. Despite some factual errors, omissions, and questionable statements, Williams's

account of émigré cultural activities and political discussions in the 1920s is much more satisfactory than Volkmann's. I venture, however, to think that had he stuck to his original plan, with perhaps a short postscript on the Hitler period, he might have produced a better and a more unified book. His presentation of the complex pattern of Russophilia and Russophobia in the German image of Russia is interesting, but he seems to exaggerate the role of the German Russians in shaping that image in the only period to which the title of his book can be legitimately applied—from 1919 (or 1921) through 1932. This makes him describe Fedor Stepun as “a Balt” and bracket him together with such men as Karl Nötzel, Hermann Keyserling, Arthur Luther, Alexander Eliasberg, and Elias Hurwicz. Stepun's family may have been of Baltic origin (I confess that this was news to me), but he was born and grew up near Moscow, in typical Russian surroundings, and despite his student years in Heidelberg and though he was quite at home in German language and thought, he remained essentially a Russian. His novel (which Williams does not mention), his memoirs, and most of his literary essays were written in Russian. In the 1920s he was part and parcel of Russian émigré literature, and that outside Germany. As he himself told Heinrich Stammer, who wrote a very good “in memoriam” article about Stepun for the New York *Novyi Zhurnal* (March 1966), when the Nazis deprived him in 1937 of his chair in Dresden (another important fact not mentioned by Williams), they did so because of his “*incorrigible Russianness, Yidophilia, and a tendency toward religious obscurantism*” (*neispravimoi russkosti, zhidofil'stva i sklonnosti k religioznomu mrakobesiiu*).

Williams's short chapter on the Hitler period, based on little-known archival materials, is interesting in itself. But it also seems to me to be a foreign body in the book: it is an unsavory and unedifying story of political intrigues and has little to do with Russian *culture*. It would be better to treat it as a separate subject, perhaps in connection with the manifestations of Russian pro-Hitlerism (there is no point in concealing its existence) in other countries.

There is in this chapter one point about which I feel like addressing a question to the author. Is Professor Williams sure that N. N. Alekseev, whom he mentions as one of the signatories of the letters in support of the authenticity of the ill-famed *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which the Russian-Swiss Nazi Boris Tödtli received from various Russians, was “the former ‘Eurasian,’” as he says on page 340? For those who are familiar with the views of Alekseev both at the height of Eurasianism and in the post-World War II period (when he was accused by many people of having adopted a pro-Soviet stand) it is difficult to believe that he could have written such a letter. Could this not be his namesake whose name and patronymic were identical with his and who was in the 1920s and 1930s a very minor journalist, a contributor to the Paris *Vozrozhdenie*? This matter would be worth clarifying.

Many readers of Williams's book will be surprised to see Vladimir Nabokov characterized as “the leading chronicler of émigré life.” And, incidentally, on page 84 Vladimir Nabokov, Sr., is confused with his brother Konstantin, a career diplomat. It was the latter who became Russian chargé d'affaires (not ambassador) in London in 1917, upon the retirement of Count A. Benckendorff. Baron Alexander Meyendorff, who was appointed by the Provisional Government in Benckendorff's place, never took up his duties.

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