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time frame on which Leighton focuses his study, it becomes obvious that writers who either participated in or sympathized with the Decembrist movement needed a secret code to relay messages of pre-revolt support and post-revolt reaffirmation of its idealism or confession of guilt. Freemasonry, with its already established system of arcane rites and symbolic codes was a ready source for the writers, who were either members with varying degrees of participation in Masonic lodges or non-members knowledgeable in or sympathetic to the ideals and rites of the society. Leighton also explains that recent studies demonstrate that the Russian romantics were more familiar with the esoteric tradition than earlier scholars believed.

Simply stated, Leighton's goal is to "attempt to discover the role of the esoteric tradition in Russian romantic literature." He does this first by discussing the Decembrist conspiracy and the aesthetics of literary Decembrism, mainly by concentrating on the "unusual puzzles" of Ryleev and Bestuzhev-Marlinsky as well as those used by Pushkin as a Decembrist sympathizer in creating "The Queen of Spades." Leighton also investigates how Zhukovsky transformed one specific esoteric symbol, the Masonic Star of Hope, into a web of rich metaphors in his own poetry and how other poets of the Golden Age developed such images further, retaining their basic meaning, but emphasizing those areas most consistent with their own interests. Leighton concludes his introduction by noting that his study is strictly limited to "Freemasonry, Decembrism, and writings of Russian romantic poets and writers whose thaumaturgical practices are closely related and can be traced along a single if also intricately meandering path."

In his first chapter, Leighton offers a concise overview of the Decembrist movement and discusses Decembrist literature, also known as civicism or civic romanticism because of the political ideals it espoused. He notes the confusion about who really is a Decembrist writer. He then discusses mainly those events of the Decembrist phenomenon that figured as the subjects (or subtexts) of literary works. Leighton next provides a brief history of Freemasonry in Russia and shows how it functioned as the primary source of the Russians' knowledge of thaumaturgy. After this he turns to discussion of individual writers.

The symbol "Star of Hope" appears only once in all of Zhukovsky's poetry; nevertheless, Leighton sees it as the basis for the poet's symbolic system. I must confess that on my first reading of this section, I was somewhat baffled to see how Leighton could turn one appearance of the "Star of Hope" into such an intricate system. Subsequent readings made his approach more clear: in his analysis he reveals the method he uses to decode the text, building on repetitions and image clusters that grow out of the poem in which the Star of Hope appears as the key to the code, specifically, that of "the Blossom." He provides a chart which summarizes the poet's "moral-aesthetic priorities" (Friendship, Providence, Inspiration, Memory) and the lexical groupings which make up each category. In the last sections of the chapter, he shows how other poets transformed the Star of Hope into their own symbols: friendship for Iazykov; inspiration for Pushkin; freedom for Raevsky; and cruel, personal fate for Polezhaev. After 14 December 1825, though, the Star of Hope became for Pushkin a symbol of the "painful loss of hope."

In the "fanatical idealist" Ryleev's *Voynarovsky*, a prediction of his own and Bestuzhev's fate—the poet's "desire for immortality and martyrdom"—motivates the verse narrative. For Ryleev, the Star of Hope symbolizes "fate and hopeless rebellion." In his tale, "The Frigate Hope," writing as Marlinsky, Bestuzhev confesses to his guilt over the role he played in the Decembrist Revolt (both before and after) and to remorse over his friend Ryleev's execution. The code he uses to express these feelings relies on allegory, numerology and calendarology. In "The Frigate Hope," which Leighton also analyzes as a message to Pushkin, the Star of Hope stands for tragic fate as well as loss of faith.

Leighton posits that Pushkin responded to Bestuzhev's message in "The Queen of Spades." In the first of the three chapters he devotes to the tale, he shows how Pushkin used the Cabalistic numbers 1, 3, 7 to organize both the style and structure of the work. He next

demonstrates how the author used "numerology and cartomancy to organize the tale's pattern of ironic hints, allusions and coincidences to identify sources of Pushkin's knowledge of cartomantic and other arcane skills." He ends with an analysis of Pushkin's use of the cabalistic semantic system known as gematria to show how the story parodies the Masonic legend of Hyram-Abif, the original architect and builder of the Temple in Jerusalem—the supposed source of Freemasonry.

In his conclusion Leighton analyzes both the pitfalls and the advantages of esoteric analysis of literature. He cautions that because of its pre-Cartesian bias, the esoteric approach may yield contradictory evidence, that can, however, be verified or eliminated as false or irrelevant. He also reviews the level of involvement of Russian writers in Freemasonry. He ends with ideas for further areas of study in Russian thought that might benefit from esoteric analysis. Though some of Leighton's controversial assumptions and methods will surely yield a lively, and possibly heated, debate, the book ultimately rests on solid ground: extensive research, meticulous attention to details, and Leighton's seasoned talents as a solid scholar and critic. Whether one agrees with Leighton or not, his analyses and conclusions are thought-provoking and challenging. This book provides fresh insights and new directions to the study of Russian Romanticism.

Christine A. Rydel, *Grand Valley State University*

Yuri Lotman, Victor Rozenzweig, ed. *La littérature russe d'expression française: Textes français d'écrivains russes XVIII–XIX siècle.* Ю. М. Лотман, В. Ю. Розензвейг, ред. *Русская литература на французском языке. Wiener slavistische almanach*, vol. 36. Vienna, 1994. 545 pp. (paper).

Iu. M. Lotman's long-held conviction that heterolingual dialogue among cultures is both important and necessary, an idea reflected in his 1988 article "Russkaia literatura na frantsuzskom iazyke" that introduces *La littérature russe d'expression française*, has found partial but compelling expression in this collection. Russian literature written in French is described and illustrated here with concrete examples, and while this may only be a marginal literary phenomenon, it significantly elucidates Russia's cultural situation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

La littérature russe d'expression française consists of two introductions (the second by V. Iu. Rozenzweig, entitled "Russko-frantsuzskoe literaturnoe dviuzhichie"), twelve "portraits" of Russian poets and prosaists, texts in French, and commentaries. The poetry represented here is primarily of an intimate, jocular, family type, mostly (in Lotman's words) "nonprofessional or dilettante." Although it may at times be categorized as juvenalia or imitation, it is of interest as belonging to the realm of "literary domesticity" (*literaturnaia domashnost'*—Iu. N. Tynianov's term), to be understood in context of what Lotman calls the texts' "extra-textual cultural connections."

According to Rozenzweig, V. K. Trediakovsky's sixteen poems in French aimed to accommodate the Russian reader "to the manners of the salon" (Lotman refers to this as his "social utopian" goal). Trediakovsky underscored the relevance of his poetry as an intercultural dialogue by giving his French poems Russian titles. The love lyrics of A. P. Bariatinsky, Pushkin, and Lermontov were in general "fruits of leisure," written mostly for a private audience on the model of French amatory verse. Several of these poems exist in both French and Russian variants, also suggesting the importance of intercultural dialogue. Significant examples of philosophical and civic poetry are represented in works by A. P. Shuvalov,

Baratynsky, and Tiutchev. The collection includes the complete French verse of Trediakovsky, Pushkin, Lermontov, and Tiutchev.

The collection as a whole, however, contains mostly prose. Choosing works of prose is considerably harder than poetry because of their greater number and volume; Rozenzveig, who made the selection, in general has done an extremely able job. The French prose works by Russian authors represented here offer an unmatched generic, intellectual, and stylistic diversity; in refinement and precision of language they at times equal their Gallic "masters." Many of the genres represented are connected with travel (e.g., letters, reminiscences, epistles, memoirs). Rozenzveig presents the texts so as to convey a sense of the intellectual complexities of their epoch. A good example is his juxtaposition of the diametrically opposed evaluations of Catherine II's 1762 coup given in E. R. Dashkova's *Mon histoire* and in S. R. Vorontsov's *Notes autobiographiques*.

The choice of letters is of special interest. To cull the most important examples out of the voluminous treasurehouse of Russian letters in French is no easy task. Rozenzveig aimed to display the range of emotions and ideas they offer, as in Karamzin's letters to E. A. Kolyvanova, Pushkin's to Karolina Soban'skaia and N. N. Raevsky, or Chaadaev's to M. F. Orlov. Several letters, taken up with one particularly strong emotion or idea, illuminate their writers from new, at times unexpected angles (e.g., the letters of Radishchev to A. R. Vorontsov and M. F. Orlov to Joseph de Maistre). Letters in French testify like no other genre to their authors' remarkable command of the language, and demonstrate all the stylistic nuances, elegance, and expressiveness of French epistolary discourse.

For Russian prose writers, French was also the language of philosophy, history and politics, and was the best vehicle for expressing Enlightenment concerns about freedom and civic life. Critical analysis, patriotic anguish, and civic pathos shine through V. K. Kiukhel'beker's *Conférence sur la littérature russe*, M. S. Lunin's *Lettre de Sibérie, Aperçu sur la Société occulte de Russie dans l'intervalle des années 1816 et 1816*, and A. I. Herzen's *Du développement des idées révolutionnaires en Russie*.

The introductions, "portraits" and commentaries serve to bind the collection together. The introductions, particularly the first, describe a broad spectrum of issues connected with the unique phenomenon of bilingual culture in Russia—including its social and aesthetic functions, intercultural dialogue, and the dynamics of convergence. The writers' French tastes are briefly described, and in some cases their addressees are identified (for example, that Herzen wrote in French primarily for a European audience, while Dashkova, Lunin and Chaadaev wrote for their compatriots). The "portraits" give abbreviated but lively vignettes of the authors and illuminate their French interests and connections. The notes date the works, and explicate not only names and other realia, but also many details which characterize the given epoch, the cultural situation, and at times, the writer's personality.

It would be difficult to find major fault with this anthology, although one can point out several minor shortcomings. The choice of texts in works of this kind are necessarily somewhat subjective, but one might have desired the inclusion of such writers as K. N. Batiushkov and P. A. Viazemsky (Dashkova's *Mon histoire* might have easily been abridged to make room for Batiushkov's letter to his sisters of June 17, 1807, concerning his being wounded, for example, or for Viazemsky's letter to E. L. Musin-Pushkin on Pushkin's duel and death). The introductions, portraits, and commentaries contain irritating repetitions, at times even word for word (e.g., 37 and 261, on "women's writing"). The sources for letters are not always given clearly and uniformly (e.g., those of Bariatinsky, A. I. Murav'ev-Apostol, and Lermontov). One might also quibble with Lotman's categorical assertion that the question of the *Slovo o poluku Igoreve's* authenticity has been decided forever and is no longer a scholarly issue (259).

On the whole, however, the collection is a significant success. Many of the texts it includes were never before published, or only in rare and hard to find editions. Placing these texts together in one book makes it possible to consider them as a whole, which sheds a quali-

tatively new light on them. The collection will interest not only specialist comparativists, but also bilingual readers and devotees of Russian literature wherever they live.

Larissa Volpert, Tartu
(translated by Marcus C. Levitt)

Susan Layton. *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*. Cambridge Studies in Russian Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 354 pp., \$59.95 (cloth).

I first met Susan Layton almost fifteen years ago, when she was studying the Caucasian mountaineers and I, the Cossacks. Some of our work intersected, for it is Cossacks who face Chechens across the Terek River in Tolstoy's *The Cossacks*, not to mention in the war of imperial expansion that serves as backdrop to Olenin's search for truth and happiness. They are both "border" peoples—by an accident of fate camped on opposite sides of the political and geographic divide—who, because of the liminal nature of their "space," could be both "self" and "other" to the Russians who envisioned them. Both Layton and I were interested less in who these border people actually "were" than in how, and why, the Russian audience "constructed" them. I therefore have read her articles with great fascination, and am now especially pleased to review her complete book. Fifteen years is not too long to wait for such a thorough and informative study of the "poetics of space" (51).

Russian Literature and Empire analyzes the role of the Caucasus in the Russian imagination from several related standpoints: psychological, political, and aesthetic. Although writers in the 1820s may have seemed innocently interested in the Caucasus as an exotic land for romantic ruminations—and Layton's analysis of Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" as travelogue is excellent in this context—it is impossible now not to recognize that the "imaginative travel" they undertook was never purely innocent. A verbal picture of the Caucasus as a sublime space largely empty of actual peoples, rich in natural resources and close to the heavens, justified for many Russian readers a seemingly bloodless conquest of this attractive new territory. The imperialist push southward, however, was far from bloodless, and the land was far from empty. Much of early literature on the Caucasus, when it turns at all to the Muslim tribespeople who inhabited the space, makes of them savages to be civilized by the Europeanized Russian Orthodox troops. This, too, of the Georgians, who had been Christian much longer than the Russians, as well as when evidence of "uncivilized" behavior of the Russian troops became abundantly clear. Art could not escape politics.

Neither can art escape art, and Layton shows the strong influence of Western European sentimental and romantic literature on Russian writers, to the extent that the Caucasus in their poems resemble much more the Alps than the mountain home of Chechens or Circassians. Later writers could then not escape the earlier romantic constructors of the Caucasus: Pushkin, Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, and Lermontov. As much as Tolstoy tried, he, too, was forced either to repeat or reject the picture painted by his literary fathers. (Layton does claim that, long after *The Cossacks*, Tolstoy was finally able to "la[y] all three big ghosts to rest" [251]. *Hadjji Murat*, however, suggests that the earth over their graves still rises from time to time.)

As for psychology, Layton evokes Freud on a number of occasions. She speaks of a "double-barreled anxiety" in Russian males about "orientals" outmanning them in war and love" (135), and of the expansion of "Asia" to encompass the id" (174). Layton's chapters on "Feminizing the Caucasus" and "Georgia as an Oriental Woman" in particular demonstrate the psychological need of Russian writers and readers to construct the Caucasian space and its inhabitants in a particular way.