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Fyodor
TYUTCHEV

“Oh, my prophetic soul!..”



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EDITOR'S LETTER

“IT’S AN ANCIENT VOICE, IT’S A VOICE FROM ABOVE...”

...On a bench in a public garden near the sports palace in Boulogne-Billancourt near Paris, where I usually walked my poodle Artosha, sat an elderly man wearing glasses, covered with long lasting stubble. At his feet in worn-out sneakers, two gibbous chequered bags laid on the ground, apparently containing all his simple belongings. There was also a plastic flask with cheap red wine. It's clear: a homeless person, or in French a *clochard*.

I passed by this reluctant wanderer, but could not help stopping my gaze on the book that he carefully held: *War and Peace*. A tramp, wanderer, rocker – and suddenly with an immortal Tolstoy's novel! To be honest, in a modest pocket book version, but still – *War and Peace* was in the hands not of a noteworthy intellectual from the Boulevard Saint-Germain, but of a tramp beaten by life... I took a closer look – the publication was quite adequate, not adapted like *Anna Karenina* I once saw in Brazil. Temperamental Latin Americans shortened Leo Tolstoy's novel and renamed it *The Woman Who Loved Too Much*.

A homeless literature lover noticed my interest and smiled: “Do you like books?... Have you read this one?” – “Yes, at school. And I still re-read it...” – “Wow! I see you are a foreigner... And here in France people throw away books. I picked up Tolstoy in a trash heap.”

It was no good for me to disappoint my acquaintance, and I did not tell him that not so long ago in Moscow I saw the complete works of Fyodor

Dostoevsky lying abandoned near garbage cans. In general, I honestly liked this man. I don't know his name or who he was in his “previous life.” But the very appearance of a more than ordinary Frenchman reading Tolstoy in the street was worthy of respect, even admiration. I could say the same about today's Russian, German, British – if only they read the classics...

On the other hand, it's utter wildness, of course. This is me talking about my reaction. Just think: I was surprised by the very fact of a contemporary's interest in a classic novel! Or have I already, unnoticed by myself, become an anachronism? An artifact, like a pterodactyl claw in a zoological museum?..

One way or another, regardless of us sinners, great literature is still alive. As proof of this, this issue of *Russian Mind* is largely dedicated to great Russian writers and their work. Moreover, time itself tells us to do so. Because November marks the 205th anniversary of the birth of Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev, and December – the 220th anniversary of the birth of Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev. A selection of materials about him is the main topic of this issue. We will continue, as always, to publish works by contemporary Russian authors, too.

Russian literature used to pass the baton through the centuries, this tradition continues and can never be interrupted. “It's an ancient voice, it's a voice from above,” as Tyutchev wrote.

Kirill Privalov



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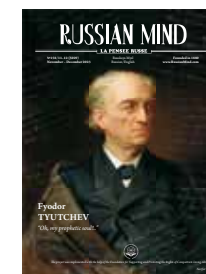
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Portrait of Fyodor Tyutchev
by S. F. Aleksandrovsky. 1876



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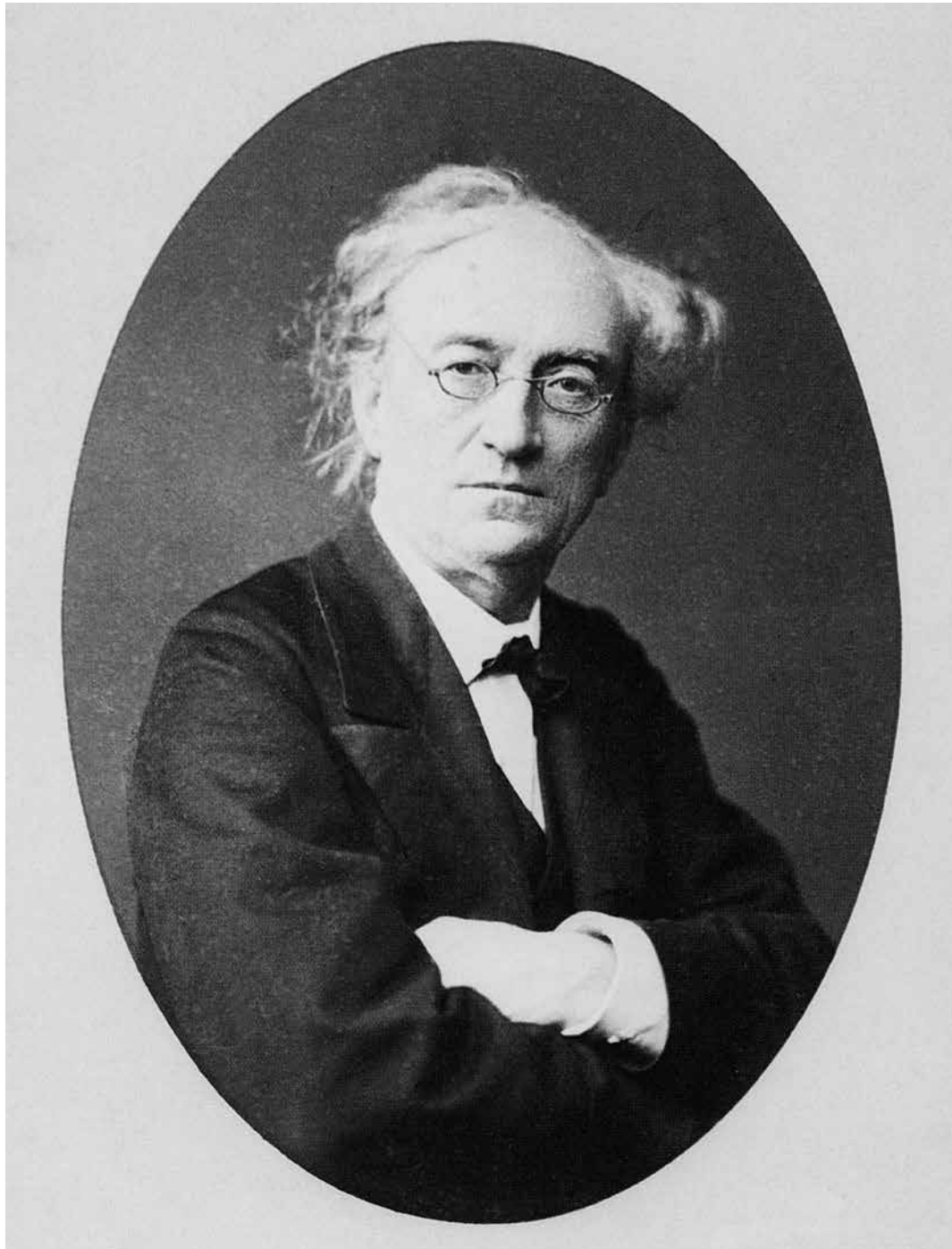
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OUR ALMOST EVERYTHING...

Fyodor Tyutchev, whose 220th birthday we celebrate on 5 December, is completely our contemporary

By KIRILL PRIVALOV



Portrait of Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev from the collection of the Muranovo estate museum

Even the wise Hipparchus of Nicaea, who lived on the island of Rhodes in the second century BC and was nicknamed “the father of ancient astronomy”, classified the stars according to their degree of brightness by rule of thumb, without having the slightest idea about a telescope. He called these categories “magnitudes”. The ancient Greek scientist identified six magnitudes in accordance with the brightness of the stars...

Russian literature, of course, includes fewer stars than in the vast sky. However, they also feature a number of magnitudes. Some geniuses like, say, Alexander Pushkin or Leo Tolstoy, shine through years and centuries with a powerful, bright light. Others flare up for only a few years – but sometimes even for a single moment – and fade, dissolve in

the noosphere, leaving only ethereal memories in minds of forgetful descendants. Fyodor Tyutchev is one of the celestial bodies that give us inexhaustible, steady and warm light. He is not only a polyhistor – as a poet, diplomat, philosopher, publicist, – but is also relevant at any time. Tyutchev, whose 220th birthday we celebrate on 5 December (new style), is completely our contemporary. And it speaks for itself.

For some, Fyodor Tyutchev is a tough, merciless publicist generously attaching characteristics to others, bluntly calling the West’s attitude towards Russia “ugly and savage” and allowing himself to roast Tsar Nicholas I. For others, he is a magnificent lyricist (authoritative literary critic Eduard Grigorievich Babaev, one of my university mentors and professors, called him “a poet of complex associations”). And for some, he is also the hero of real historical, adventurous love stories throughout Europe. Almost until the very end of his life which lasted seventy years granted to him by God, Tyutchev was absolutely amorous and was very popular with women: as soon as he started talking...

For me, Fyodor Ivanovich remained, first of all, a brilliant, sophisticated wit, the author of timeless epigrams written in Russian and French (like Pushkin, Tyutchev wrote goldenly in these two languages), a storehouse of exquisite *beaux mots* – so in the Parisian manner they called bold and aphoristic statements in Saint Petersburg world. It is no coincidence that his friend and colleague in two fields, literature and diplomacy, Prince Pyotr Vyazemsky described the poet: “Tyutchev is a pearlmouth.”

And my love for Tyutchev began almost fifty years ago by accident to the point of banality (however, this is exactly how love often arises, isn’t it?).

On a frosty day, I was walking to the metro station along Stoleshnikov Pereulok in Moscow from my then editorial office and, as it has become a tradition for me, I decided to look into the second-hand bookstore at No. 28. Yes, the same one that stood opposite the wine store being extremely popular among Muscovites during the Soviet era... There, on the shelves forever saturated with the smell of old paper, sometimes you could find something interesting, some rare incunabula at the wonderful book connoisseur Nikolai Nikolayevich Lebedev.

Aphorisms of F. I. Tyutchev:

- *It’s not given us to foretell how our words will echo through the ages.*
- *Nowhere do they live such a full, real life as in a dream.*
- *Love is a dream, and a dream is one moment.*
- *Poems never proved anything other than the greater or lesser talent of their writer.*
- *Speak not, lie hidden, and conceal the way you dream, the things you feel.*
- *How can a heart expression find? How should another know your mind? Will he discern what quickens you? A thought once uttered is untrue.*
- *Whatever life might have taught us, still the heart believes in wonders.*

Approaching the bookstore, I saw a real book market near the windows. Old books were laid out tight, like a tile cover, on boards mounted onto tripods directly in the snow. And reigning over them was a short bow backed old man in glasses held together with insulating tape, in a warm babushka tied crosswise on his chest and in a huge cap with earflaps flung down over his gray, never shaven chin. This was a legendary man. Second-hand book dealers called this veteran book archaeologist “Leo Cold” – and for good reason. He was the only one who sold books in Moscow in the open air, even in the most severe Epiphany frosts.

“Some guy is getting rid of a library that was stuck in the family inheritance,” Leo Cold explained to me as if I was his old contact.

“Look here, young man! I’ll give you Tyutchev for a ruble...”

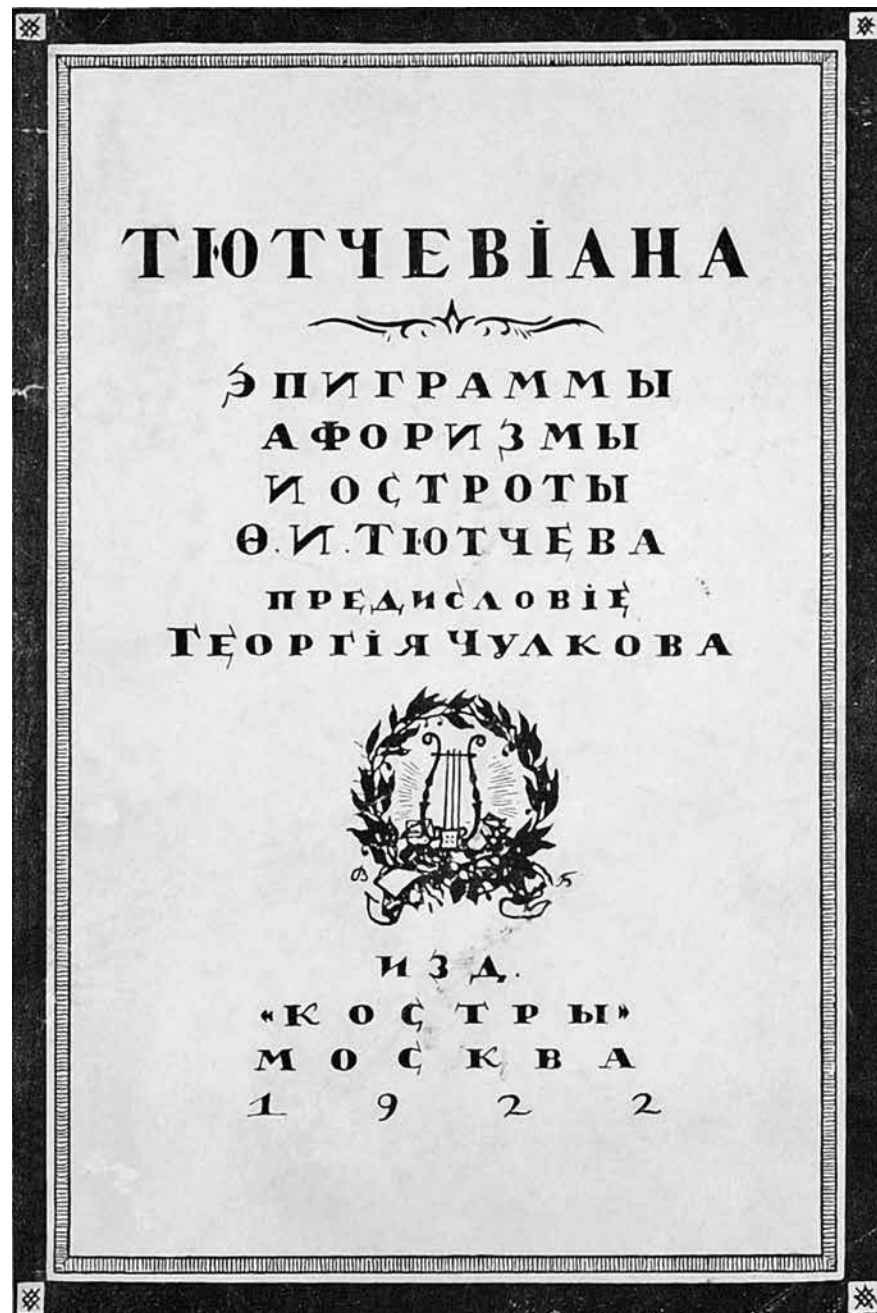
And he handed me, with freezing blue fingers peeking out from his striped mittens, a thin book, only sixty pages long, neatly bound in wallpaper and stitched with harsh threads.

I opened: *Tyutcheviana*. Epigrams, aphorisms and witticisms of F.I. Tyutchev. With old Russian letters: yat, fita and decimal i... With a foreword by Georgy Chulkov. Publishing house *Kostr*, Moscow, 1922.

I didn’t need to introduce Georgy Chulkov, one of the founders of

literary life in the Russian capitals of the Silver Age, an excellent literary critic of the beginning of the last century. We were told about him – as the creator of the “theory of Mystical Anarchism” and a writer who was part of the circle of symbolists (Blok, Severyanin, Balmont) – in lectures at the Faculty of Journalism of Moscow State University. Chulkov’s foreword alone made the book more than entertaining. And then there is *Tyutcheviana*, which opens with photocopies, almost daguerreotypes, of two epigrams by Fyodor Ivanovich, written in a round, confident, truly masculine handwriting. By the divine hand of Tyutchev!

Of course, I bought the *Tyutcheviana* that was frozen in Stoleshnikov (“A ruble is not money, a ruble is a piece of paper. Saving is a grave sin,” as Vladimir Vysotsky



sang) and, God knows, I didn't regret it even once. I want to share the pleasure of communicating with this book with the *Russian Mind* readers.

I'll start with the foreword: "Tyutchev's contemporaries felt in him a poet and an extraordinary person, but above all they were amazed and admired by his sharp mind. Leo Tolstoy once went to visit

Fet and met Tyutchev somewhere at a small station, talked with him and then could not forget that meeting, remembering that "deep, truly intelligent old man..."

When Tyutchev dies, Ivan Turgenev first of all recalls Tyutchev's mind in a letter to Fet from Bougival dated 21 August 1873: "Nice, smart, as smart as day, Fyodor Ivanovich! Sorry and farewell!.."

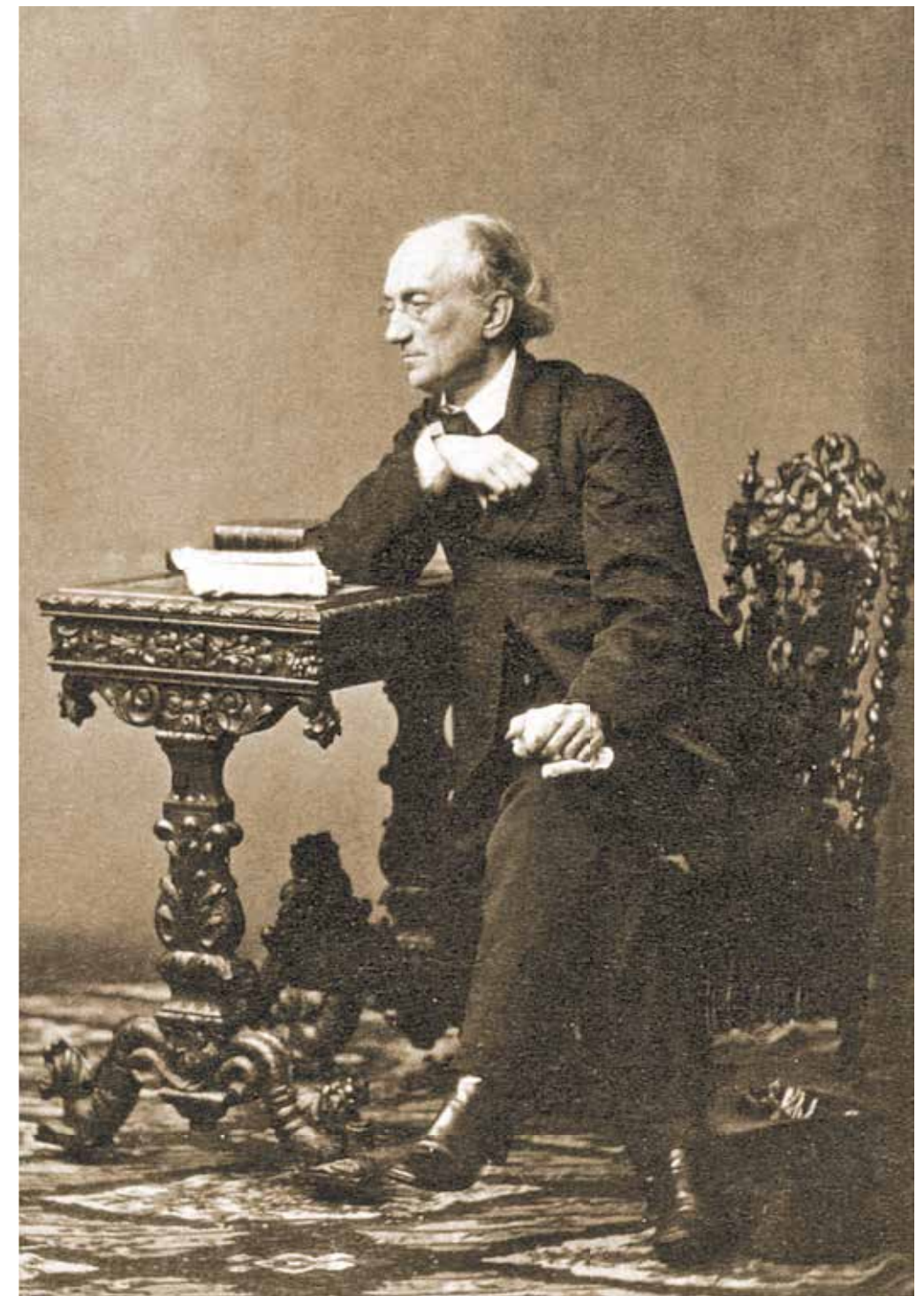
Ivan Kireyevsky (Russian religious philosopher, one of the theorists of Slavophilism. – K.P.) wrote about Tyutchev from Munich in the spring of 1830, when the poet was twenty-seven years old: "Such European people can be counted on one hand."

And here is what Count Vladimir Alexandrovich Sollogub, a prose writer, playwright, memoirist and at the same time, like Fyodor Ivanovich, an Actual Privy Councillor, said about Tyutchev in his memoirs: "He was sitting on the sofa in the living room. Surrounded by fascinated male and female listeners. I have had many occasions in my time to talk and listen to famous storytellers. However none of them made such a charming impression on me as Tyutchev. Witty, gentle, sharp, kind words, like pearls, carelessly rolled down from his lips... When he began to speak, tell, everyone instantly fell silent, and all that was heard in the whole room was Tyutchev's voice; I think that Tyutchev's main charm in this case was that his stories and comments, *coulaient de source*, as the French say (literally from French: "flowed directly from the source." – K.P.); they were not prepared in advance, learned, or invented..."

Prince Sergei Mikhailovitch Volkonsky, a cultural historian, called by Marina Tsvetaeva "the smartest, most charming, oldest, strangest and most brilliant person in the world", said that the appearance of Tyutchev in his parents' living room always caused "pleasant excitement" in society. Volkonsky was only eight years old when he first saw Tyutchev, but the slim figure of the poet was etched in his memory: Fyodor Ivanovich stood by the fireplace – in a casually tied tie, with thin, disheveled hair – and read poetry. He delighted his listeners, especially the fair sex, and understood it very well. And enjoyed the effect.

With this, in Saint Petersburg social salons, Tyutchev's witticisms were valued no less than his poems. The witticisms and aphorisms included in *Tyutcheviana* (what a good symbolic name, given the truly global scale of Tyutchev's work!) were selected by the poet's grandchildren Fyodor Ivanovich and Nikolai Ivanovich Tyutchev, as well as Tyutchev's granddaughter Ekaterina Ivanovna Pigareva. Everything was done mainly based on materials from the family archive plus some other printed sources. Most of the material has not been previously published. Of course, not all the fruits of Tyutchev's wit are of equal merit. But all of Fyodor Tyutchev's aphorisms, as Georgy Chulkov correctly writes, "are always original and subtle." And further: "...Among witty words and jokes we sometimes find such hints that suddenly take us beyond the boundaries of the salons of that time, and we see the face of a marvelous poet... This is all Tyutchev: wisdom lurks behind a smiling joke."

Throughout this issue of *Russian Mind*, which is largely dedicated to the different forms of the patriotic genius of Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev, we will refer more than once to *Tyutcheviana*. This amazing, kind book deserves to



Photograph of Fyodor Tyutchev by S. L. Levitsky. 1860–1861

be remembered and learned. After all, if, as the wonderful Russian writer Apollon Grigoryev said in 1859, "Pushkin is our everything," then Tyutchev, again in the words

of Grigoryev "the herald of the great truths and great secrets of life," is almost our everything.

And this Tyutchev's beauty is with us forever and everywhere.

A DIPLOMAT AND A VISIONARY WITH THE SOUL OF A POET

*Fyodor Tyutchev: "If we look at the course of events closely,
the struggle between the West and us has never stopped..."*

By VYACHESLAV KATAMIDZE



Munich in the 19th century

In the nineteenth century Russia produced a host of philosophers, writers, artists and composers who searched for ways to the future for their people and optimal solutions to political and economic issues, which, in their view, could ensure the prosperity of their huge country.

Among them there were romantics (e.g., some Decembrists), conspiracy

theorists (Narodovoltsy – members of the “People’s Will” revolutionary movement), and Freemasons. They saw and interpreted their tasks in different ways. Most of them were a group of people living in a realm of their fantasies and utopias, since it is impossible to overtake the passage of time.

But in the nineteenth century a special group of Russian thinkers were realists. These were people who had received a comprehensive education, knew foreign languages, traveled extensively or lived abroad for years, where they communicated with people who openly expressed their opinions, read local newspapers, followed the speeches of leading politicians closely and, based on acquired knowledge, could evaluate the events taking place in Europe and the activities of major Western politicians – sometimes better than the majority of Europeans.

True, for the most part people in Western Europe were better educated than millions of serfs and middle-class residents in the Russian Empire, but representatives of the Russian nobility had already been receiving a brilliant education since the eighteenth century.

The most outstanding thinkers in the nineteenth century were Russian diplomats; they came from nobility and sometimes possessed encyclopedic knowledge, which gave them incomparable advantages in their confrontation with political opponents. But this, alas, was not always the case. The problem here was in two principles that they were guided by. The first principle suggested that nothing should prevent the nobility from fulfilling their “Divinely appointed mission”, and, therefore, it was better to ally themselves with the nobles of other countries than with their own people. The second principle was based on the postulates that

their teachers had instilled in them: everything that was best and right came from “wise and enlightened Europe.”

We, people of the twenty-first century, remember the recent period of Russian history, when many sincerely believed that we must imitate the West in everything, that it was more intelligent, educated and moral. Meanwhile, postulates of this kind had been popular in a segment of the Russian society since the seventeenth century! And in the nineteenth century they became dominant in the elite.

Let’s take an average Russian diplomat in a Western European country in the 1840s. He was graduated from a lyceum [a privileged boarding school for noble children] and received an academic higher education. Perhaps he had lived abroad for some time before he received a university education and was affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or the Collegium of Foreign Affairs that existed until the 1830s simultaneously with the Ministry). He wrote poetry or prose and sometimes composed music. Most of his letters, whether official letters or love letters, were written in French. He was very attached to the country in which he carried out his mission as a diplomat, loved its nature and ancient castles and did not imagine what he would do in this “benighted Russia” if he were not a diplomat.

It was not only a generalized image of a Russian diplomat in Europe in the 1830s and the 1840s, but also its archetype. Like any archetype, it had its opposite, rare and unique in its own way. A classic example of such an opposite was Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev, a famous poet, philosopher and diplomat.

Tyutchev was born into a noble family, education and upbringing in which could have made him



Commemorative plaque to Fyodor Tyutchev, installed in 1999 in Munich (Germany) at Herzogspitalstrasse 12, where the Russian mission was situated in Tyutchev's time. 1999. Architect: A.K. Tikhonov

a Francophile or possibly someone indifferent to the interests of his people. The main language of communication in the Tyutchev family was French – none of them read Russian literature.

Everything changed when Tyutchev was ten years old when Semyon Egorovich Raich (Amfiteatrov) became his teacher. A priest's son, he graduated from a theological seminary, but was not ordained, entering Moscow University. He received a bachelor's degree at the Department of Law, and then a Master's degree in Language and Literature. He earned his living by teaching. It was not just teaching, but a real immersion of young men entrusted to him in literature and history, in which literary images coexisted with the great figures of

ancient and medieval history. It was based on his own encyclopedic knowledge: Raich, undoubtedly a talented man of letters, translated into Russian Virgil's Georgics and Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered.

His efforts to nurture comprehensively educated and, above all, highly literate young people bore fruit: besides Tyutchev among his students were Mikhail Lermontov, Eugenia Tur and other writers. As for Tyutchev, Raich taught him another lesson that was useful to him in his diplomatic work: to look at the world more broadly and see a panoramic picture of the development of mankind, especially the influence of religion on the masses.

After graduating from Moscow University and receiving his PhD,

in 1822 Tyutchev was sent to St Petersburg to work at the State Collegium of Foreign Affairs. His relative Count Ostermann-Tolstoy was going to Munich at that time to work in the Russian mission, and he had Tyutchev appointed as a supernumerary official of this mission.

Tyutchev's first wife was the beautiful Eleanor – the widow of a former employee of the mission, Alexander Peterson, and Count Botmer's daughter. Literary critics believe that most of Tyutchev's early poems were dedicated to her. A year after her death Tyutchev married Baroness Ernestine Dernberg, the diplomat Friedrich von Dernberg's widow, with whom he had had an affair when his first wife was still alive. Ernestine's father,

Baron Christian Hubert von Pfeffel, was also a diplomat – he headed the Bavarian mission and was ambassador to London and Paris.

Of course, Tyutchev's personal life was reflected in his creative work. A very emotional man who perceived reality vividly, he was carried away by everything that pleased his eye. He most probably did not realize that his ideological and philosophical concepts were separated from his daily life and his life choices. For example, in a number of his letters and articles Tyutchev wrote about the benefits of Orthodoxy in contrast with Lutheranism and Catholicism, emphasising that the Russian Orthodox Church was closer to people and, therefore, we should obey its precepts and observe its traditions. Moreover, Tyutchev called for the creation of an "Orthodox empire" as the antipode of the Papacy – in order to reduce the latter's influence on the fates of the world. At the same time, his personal life had nothing to do with the Church canons or the traditions of the Orthodox Church. There is no doubt that he repented. After the death of Elena Denisieva, the last woman he loved, he was very worried, realizing what a difficult situation he had put her in by living with her out of wedlock, thereby violating both secular and Church rules.

However, his ideological and philosophical ideas related to his patriotic aspirations and political position – even if they did not manifest themselves in his everyday life, but had a certain explosive nature explained by his emotions – deserve thorough consideration. Moreover, many ideas expressed by him, both in print and in letters, are in tune with the sentiments that are present in Russian society today and expressed by genuine Russian patriots.

Tyutchev was a realist. Having spent a total of twenty-two years abroad, he studied all aspects of Western European political and public life and became convinced that it was imbued with hypocrisy and controlled not even by monarchs, but by small groups of people who had created a huge shadow empire of super-rich and all-powerful noblemen of the highest ranks. They held in their hands the keys to control society, the Church and the economy of almost every Western European country and, more importantly, the destinies of many countries, because they decided matters of war and peace. He found confirmation of his observations by communicating in Bavaria and elsewhere in Europe with aristocrats and diplomats who had been initiated into the secrets of European monarchies and even palace intrigues. His Bavarian relatives – brothers and cousins of his aristocratic wives – also shared this information with him.

His knowledge and intuition told him that Europe was sinking deeper into crisis and would inevitably seek a way out in the aggravation of relations with Russia. At the same time, in his articles and letters (in particular, in a letter to Prince Pyotr Vyazemsky, who was his regular correspondent and confidant), he repeatedly noted the unique nature of public thought in Russia. Tyutchev wrote: "... in order to orient ourselves it would be enough for us to stay where we were ordained by fate to stay. But such is fatality, which has been suspended over our minds for several generations, that instead of preserving in our thought about Europe the pivotal point that naturally belongs to us we bound it, this thought, to the West's tail, as it were. I say we, but not Russia. For – and this must be firmly remembered – for sixty years minds

in Russia have continuously been moving in a direction which is exactly opposite to the one to which Russia was guided by its destiny. Our intellectual future (*notre avenir intellectuel*) – actually for us – was the West..."

He must have been a real visionary to predict the events of the 1990s in such a remarkable way!

As a realist who was well aware of the "pulse" of the European political system, he was one of the first to foresee the inevitable beginning of the European war, which would be unleashed in the 1850s by Britain and France against Russia with the complicity of Turkey and its colonies in Europe. In early 1854 he wrote to Prince P. Vyazemsky, to whom he constantly sent political assessments of current events, the following:

"You see, Prince, that I have not exaggerated the seriousness of yesterday's news. And now don't you think that I may be right in foreseeing a European war next spring?"

Even earlier, in February, he wrote to his wife: "We are in all likelihood on the verge of one of the most terrible blows that had ever shaken the world. Russia is facing something more formidable than 1812... Russia is again alone against a united hostile Europe."

The war broke out even earlier than he had expected and was bloodier than the Tsar and his entourage had foreseen.

It was neither a surprise for Tyutchev, nor a result of political intrigues. He stated: "Well, here we are in a fight with the whole of Europe, united against us by an alliance. However, 'alliance' is an incorrect word – the correct word is 'conspiracy.'" He meant first of all that Britain and France had been conspiring for quite a long time, that they, as he put it, "dragged Turkey into their intrigues", and then



The monument to Fyodor Tyutchev in Munich was unveiled on 11th December 2003 to commemorate the poet's 200th birth anniversary. Sculptor: Andrei Kovalchuk

threatened Austria with punishment if it refused to help them.

He always proceeded from his concept of a permanent threat to Russia coming from the West: "I admit rapprochements provided that they are casual and, agreeing to them, the truth and dogma should not be forgotten for a moment that there can be no alliance between Russia and the West whether for the sake of common interests or principles. Because there is not a single interest or aspiration in

the West that would not plot against Russia, especially against its future, and that would not try to harm it."

In the German press of the 1840s maxims were repeatedly heard expressing annoyance about the size and wealth of Russia. Curiously enough, 150 years later Madeleine Albright, who served as US Secretary of State at that time, revived Western European sentiments, saying: "It's unfair that Russia possesses such vast territories as Siberia...". Six

decades before her Hitler thought the same way.

Persistent Russophobia and the desire to destroy Russia and use its natural resources have always been at the heart of Western policies, and the current confrontation between Russia and NATO is another manifestation of these policies. Tyutchev had no doubt that such recurrent intensifications were inevitable: "If we look closely at the course of events, the struggle between the West and us has never

stopped. There has not even been a long pause – there have only been short breaks. Why conceal it from ourselves now? the struggle between the West and us is ready to flare up even more intensively than ever..."

Thanks to his position and political necessity Tyutchev, while working at the Munich mission, constantly got acquainted with Bavarian and other German periodicals. Even as a young man he had appreciated the power of the printed word in politics, realizing that the political orientation of newspaper articles often depended on the international political conjuncture, which was not created by Divine Providence, but by unscrupulous people. By the 1840s the conjuncture had developed in such a way that the Western powers were seriously interested in weakening Russia and for this purpose used what is now called "soft power". That is, the publication in the Russian press of articles in which the wisdom of the Royal Government's political steps was questioned, its policies towards European countries in particular. An auxiliary soft power was the wide export to Russia of Western European printed matter, including lampoons written by British, French and Austrian Russophobes.

In his articles Tyutchev warned Russian society that, while demonising Russia in every possible way Western countries were slowly but steadily forming a coalition of the UK, France, Austria and Turkey, planning to use any pretext for a war with Russia. He wrote: "It has become possible with the help of the refrain repeated to the current generation since its birth to turn the power, which the generation of 1813 greeted with noble delight, into a monster for most people of our time, and many mature minds have returned

to simple-minded childishness in order to enjoy looking at Russia as at some cannibal of the nineteenth century."

The fact that they were trying to hammer such an image of Russia into Russian people's heads, denying in every possible way the aggressive role of the Napoleonic invasion and convincing them that its main idea had been the liberation of the Russian peasantry from serfdom and the establishment of free trade relations characteristic of the new era, Tyutchev considered as one of the most serious problems.

He was also aware of the danger that the radical left-wing press, which called itself liberal, was writing, and that, taken together, such kind of propaganda, backed up by Western publications, could be corrupting for society, not least during a period of confrontation with Western Europe.

This is what Tyutchev wrote to one of the members of the State Council: "It is not possible for the Government not to be seriously concerned about a phenomenon that appeared a few years ago and is gaining such importance, the consequences of which no one could foresee. You understand, dear Prince, that I mean the establishment of Russian newspapers and magazines abroad without our Government's control. This fact is undoubtedly very serious and deserves the closest attention. It is useless to try to conceal the growing success of this literary propaganda. We know that now Russia is flooded with publications of this kind: they are sought after, they are being spread quickly and have already penetrated if not into the illiterate masses, then at least into fairly low social strata. It must be admitted that without resorting to oppressive tyrannical measures it is very hard to prevent the import and sale of these publications and

the export abroad of manuscripts intended for printing. Well, let's have the courage and give ourselves an account of the true meaning and importance of the fact under consideration; this is simply the abolition of censorship, but its abolition in favour of a harmful and hostile influence; and in order to be able to fight it let's try to understand what makes it strong and brings it success."

Tyutchev's persistent appeals to Government officials had their effect. His position and his views on the danger of propaganda hostile to Russia were appreciated, and it was decided to use his talent and political maturity in practice. The interest was first of all shown by the State Chancellor Alexander Gorchakov.

In early 1848 Tyutchev became a senior censor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; at the same time, he was promoted to Full State Councilor, a rank which gave the right to hereditary nobility. Tyutchev's duties included reviewing newspaper articles and notes on foreign policy issues, and leading the entire group of censors. It meant that not only did he define the main provisions the censors were guided by, but also worked out the working procedure of the censors in different areas of their activities. After ten years of work he was appointed Chairman of the Foreign Censorship Committee.

His activities allowed a significant reduction for quite a long time of the potential of Russian enemies' propaganda, among whom in the mid-nineteenth century there were many capable people who could have caused ideological and political harm to Russia.

It is impossible to overestimate Tyutchev's efforts in this sphere: he proved to be a true patriot and thinker, whose actions were in tune with the ideas of genuine Russian patriotism.

TYUTCHEV THROUGH THE EYES OF FELLOW WRITERS

What assessment of Fyodor Tyutchev's creative work was given by contemporary writers? After all, they are the strictest and most ardent critics of their counterparts' literary activity

Ivan Turgenev

“...Mr Tyutchev, who belongs to the previous generation, definitely stands higher than all his colleagues. It is easy to point out the individual qualities in which more gifted poets of our time surpass him: the enchanting yet somewhat monotonous elegance of Fet; the energetic, albeit often cold and harsh passionateness of Nekrasov; the correct yet sometimes cold ‘painting’ of Maikov; but Mr Tyutchev alone bears the imprint of the great era to which he belonged and which was so vividly and powerfully expressed in Pushkin; in him alone the talent’s harmony with itself is noticed, its harmony with the author’s life in word, though it is part of what in its full development is the distinctive characteristics of great talents. Mr Tyutchev did not have an extensive social circle – it’s true, but he was at home in it. His talent does not consist of incoherent scattered parts: it is self-contained and self-controlled; there are no other elements in it except for purely lyrical ones; but these elements are absolutely clear and have interwoven with the author’s personality; his poems do not breath of composition; they all seem to have been written for a particular occasion, as Goethe wanted - that is, they were not invented, but grew themselves like a fruit on a tree; and by this precious quality we recognise, among other things, Pushkin’s influence on them; in them we see the reflection of his time.



<...> “His talent by its nature is not addressed to the crowd and does not expect response and approval from it; in order to fully appreciate Mr Tyutchev the reader himself must be endowed with some subtlety of understanding and some flexibility of thought that have not remained idle for too long. A violet does not spread its scent twenty paces around: you need to get close to it to smell its fragrance. We do not predict Mr Tyutchev’s popularity; but we predict him the deep and warm sympathy of all those who value Russian poetry; and such poems as Send, O Lord, Thy Comfort, and others will spread all over Russia and outlive much in modern literature that now seems lasting and enjoys loud success.”

Leo Tolstoy

“Once Turgenev, Nekrasov... with difficulty persuaded me to read Tyutchev, but when I read him I just froze at the greatness of his creative talent.”

“Soon after meeting with you I met Tyutchev at the railway, and we talked for four hours. I listened more and spoke less. Do you know him? He is a man of genius, majestic and a child and an old man simultaneously. I do not know any living people, apart from you and him, with whom I would feel and think the same way.” (From a letter to Nikolai Strakhov)

Afanasyy Fet

“For a long time, I had been wanting to speak about a small book of poems by F. Tyutchev, which appeared in 1854 and made a sensation in the narrow circles of lovers of the elegant and, alas, despite its value, it is still little known among the vast majority of the reading public...”

“Two years ago, on a tranquil autumn night I was standing in a dark passage of the Colosseum and looking through one of the windows at the starry sky. The big stars were gazing into my eyes intently and radiantly, and as I peered into the fine blue, other stars appeared in front of me and looked at me as mysteriously and eloquently as the first ones. Behind them even the finest sparkles flickered in the depths of the sky and little by little emerged in turn. Limited by its dark thick walls, my eyes saw only

a tiny part of the sky, but I felt that it was boundless and that its beauty had no end.

“With similar feelings I open F. Tyutchev’s poems. Is it possible to contain so much beauty, depth and power – in a word, poetry – in such narrow bounds (I mean a small book)? If I wasn’t afraid to violate his rights, I would copy with a daguerreotype the entire sky of Mr Tyutchev with the larger and the smaller stars, i.e. I would copy all his poems. Each of them is a sun, i.e. an original and shining world, though there are spots on some; but thinking about the sun, you forget about spots.

“The poetic power, i.e. Mr Tyutchev’s insightfulness, is remarkable. Not only does he see an object from an original perspective, he also sees its finest fibres and shades. <...> It should be noted that not only every poem, but almost every verse of our poet breathes some mystery of nature, which it jealously hides from the eyes of the uninitiated. What a paradisiacal freshness his spring and south breathe! Like an all-powerful magician Mr Tyutchev penetrates into the innermost sphere of sleep; and how this subjective phenomenon is separated from a person and powerfully put forward for everybody to comprehend! Listen attentively to what the night wind sings to our poet – and you will be scared. But we can’t enumerate everything. Calling Mr Tyutchev a poet of thought, we pointed only to the main property of his nature, but it is so rich that its other aspects are no less brilliant. In addition to their depth, his creations are very subtle and graceful, the surest proof of power.”

Nikolai Nekrasov

“Mr F. T.’s poetry is one of a few brilliant phenomena of Russian poetry. Mr F. T. did not write many poems; but everything he composed

bears a stamp of a true and wonderful talent, often original, always graceful, full of thought and genuine feeling. We are certain that if Mr F. T. had written more poems, his talent would have secured him one of the most honourable places in Russian poetry.

“The main merit of Mr F. T.’s poems is in a lively, graceful and plastically correct depiction of nature. He loves it dearly and understands it perfectly; its most subtle and hardly perceptible features and shades are fathomable to him, and all this is perfectly reflected in his poems. Of course, the most complicated works in poetry are those in which there is obviously no content and no thought; it is a landscape in verse, a ‘painting’ indicated by two or three features. It is incredibly hard to catch exactly the features by which this ‘painting’ can arise and be finished automatically in the reader’s imagination. Mr F. T. is perfectly proficient in this art. <...>

“Each verse tugs at your heart-strings, as at some moments do erratic, sudden autumn wind gusts; it hurts to listen to them, but you will regret if you stop listening...”

Ivan Aksakov

“Undoubtedly, Tyutchev belonged to the so-called ‘Pushkin galaxy’ of poets. Not only because he was almost the same age as them, but especially because his poems bear the historical feature that distinguishes and defines the poetry of that era. He was born in 1803 – that is, in the same year as the poet Yazykov, a few months before Khomyakov, two years before Venevitinov, five years after Delvig, four years after Pushkin and three years after Boratynsky; in a word, in that remarkable time in Russia, which was so replete with poets. <...>

“Tyutchev’s poetry represents the nature of inner sincerity

and necessity, in which we see the historical feature of the previous age of poetry. That is why he should be ranked among the poets of the Pushkin period, though his poems appeared in the Russian press when we virtually could no longer hear the songs of Pushkin and our other poets, when the time of the domination of poetry over the minds had passed. Tyutchev outlived Pushkin and his entire period of poetry by decades but remained true to himself and his talent. He was among us like an expert in some old school of painting, which was still living and creating in his person, but allowing neither repetition nor imitation.

“He was a poet by vocation not by profession. He performed a sacrament as a poet, but without noticing it, without being aware of its sacramental nature, without reverence for himself and his ‘priesthood’. His mind and heart were obviously busy all the time: his mind was hovering in the realm of some abstract, philosophical or historical ideas, and his heart was looking for vivid feelings and experiences; but above all and in everything he was a poet, albeit he actually didn’t write very many poems. His poems were not the fruit of labour (even if inspired, but still labour, sometimes even painstaking for other poets). When he wrote them, he wrote involuntarily, satisfying an urgent and persistent need because he could not help but write them: or rather, he did not write them, but only wrote them down. They were not composed but created. They were born in his head, and he just ‘dropped’ them on paper, on the first scrap of paper he came across. If there was no one to pick up these scraps and hide them, they were often lost. It was such scraps that Prince I. Gagarin took the trouble to pick up when he decided to show Tyutchev’s poems to Pushkin; but it is very likely that much has been lost forever.”

UNRIVALED WIT

From F. I. Tyutchev's impromptu answers to questions in the book The Secretary Game



High society salon. Unknown artist. 1830s

The amusing book *The Secretary Game*, compiled and published in French in Paris, was popular in Saint Petersburg in 1855–1859.

So, imagine: in high society, a pretty young lady is asking one of the guests, the famous politician and wit F. I. Tyutchev. Something like a game of forfeits. The answer shall be given in only three seconds! And Fyodor Ivanovich, whom Prince Pyotr Vyazemsky called a “pearlmouth,” gives answers in French, skilfully playing with words.

Where do great ideas come from?

Vauvenargues (Luc de Clapiers Vauvenargues, French philosopher and moralist of the 18th century, author of aphorisms – *Ed.*) said

that they come from the heart, but it would be much more interesting to know in what place they disappear.

Why is it common to make a wish when you see a shooting star?

Just because if we had more time to make a wish, we would never have chosen one.

Why is the fortune blind?

It wouldn't be like this, if it was sitting in my place now.

Does the star see the one it guides on Earth?

Yes, if it deigns to look down.

If you were interrogated by the Inquisition, what would you confess to?

What I don't dare admit to you.

Who invented marriage?

The one who, fortunately for him, did not manage to obtain a patent for his invention.

Do you believe in omens?

Much more than the oracles.

Is it true that it is always more pleasant to make others wait than to wait yourself?

No, if you are talking about death.

UNDER THE SHADOW OF TYUTCHEV

Kaliningrad is going to perpetuate the memory of Russia's great son

By BORIS BARTFELD,
a writer

To wake up under the roof of a wing of the house on the Tyutchev family estate, to look through the window at the snow-covered park and remember that today is 5th December – Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev's birthday. But what year and what century is it? Tyutchev's poetry is timeless, and it seems that this magnificent house in the village of Ovstug [Tyutchev's birthplace in the Bryansk region] and the romantic park have always been there. Though we know that for most of the twentieth century this house did not exist, and the park was destroyed by the Germans during the occupation. But the thirty-year efforts of residents of the Bryansk region and enthusiasts, led by the village teacher Vladimir Gamolin, inspired by the love for their native land and Tyutchev's poetry, performed a miracle of revival in the 1980s.

I was lucky enough to see this estate not only in winter, but also on the border from spring to summer and at the very end of August. The name of the Russian poet is not only connected with the land of Bryansk, but also with Moscow, St Petersburg, Tsarskoye Selo and Munich. But what does the faraway Kaliningrad from which I am writing these lines have to do with it? of course, great poetry overcomes times, spaces and boundaries, but there is also the fact of the poet's personal presence in our city.

Let's look back on 1859. In May Tyutchev was entrusted with a courier expedition to Berlin and

went to Europe by steamer. There were Szczecin, Berlin, Munich and many German cities along with Paris and Geneva on his long journey. On completing the trip on 21st October (the old calendar), the poet returned to Berlin. On 24th October, having received a special assignment, he departed for Königsberg in order to visit the Russian consul in the Royal City. The day before his departure Tyutchev wrote to his wife from Berlin: “Tonight I will plunge – not into eternity, like those hanged in England, but into infinity, like travellers in Russia.”

Having received a special mail at the Königsberg Consulate for delivery to St Petersburg, the poet went to the Russian capital across the Empire's vast expanse. He arrived in St Petersburg on 2nd November and returned to work as Chairman of the Foreign Censorship Committee. And during that endless journey Fyodor Ivanovich wrote the incredibly sad and wistful poem, *On the Way Back from Königsberg*. Please read his short excerpt:

*My native landscape ...
Under a smoky canopy
Of a huge snow cloud
The expanse is showing blue –
with its sullen forest,
Shrouded in autumn haze ...
Everything is so bare – and
immeasurably empty
In the deathly-still monotony ...
In places there just appear through spots
Of dead waters covered with the first ice.*

The autograph of the poem from the poet's letter to his daughter Daria has survived. On 17th of January 1860, it was published for the first time in the *Nashe Vremya* (Our Time) newspaper. The autograph is accompanied by Tyutchev's postscript to his daughter: “My dear daughter, here are a few rhyming lines, which helped me distract myself from my boring, tiresome journey. I am sending them to you instead of a long letter... However, for the sake of justice I must tell you that at this very moment the sun is shining brightly. However, it isn't shining onto rose bushes or blooming orange trees, but onto ‘fresh’ icicles which have just ‘blossomed out.’”

Are this episode from his biography and the poem not enough to perpetuate the memory of the great poet, diplomat and thinker in Kaliningrad? Besides, the poet is part of the city's history. Our Kaliningrad Regional Museum of History and Arts cooperates closely with the Ovstug Museum-Reserve. With the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Kaliningrad representation of the Ministry, two museums held a brilliant exhibition, *Russian Poet-Diplomats of the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries*, dedicated to the 210th birth anniversary of Tyutchev.

Now, on the eve of the poet's 220th anniversary, it's high time to roll up our sleeves and perpetuate the memory of Russia's great son in a city he visited.

SAINTS OF LATE AUTUMN

An example of fulfilling the biblical commandments

By AUGUSTINE SOKOLOVSKI,
Doctor of Theology, priest

The memory of saints is celebrated daily in the Orthodox liturgical calendar. Very few are known to our contemporaries. The biography of each of them is a precious treasure of memory of those in whom the community of believers in Christ Jesus, called the Church, once saw an example of fulfilling the biblical commandments.

SAINT ORESTES of CAPPADOCIA

On November 10 (23), the Church celebrates the memory of the martyr Orestes the Physician. The saint was highly revered in Christian antiquity in the Orthodox East. They resorted to his prayers asking for healing. Pilgrims flocked in large numbers to the place of the martyr's suffering in Cappadocia. Nowadays Orestes the Physician is a forgotten saint.

Based on the place of his origin and suffering, the saint is also called Orestes of Tyana. It was a very famous ancient city in Southern Cappadocia. In the first centuries of Christianity, this place was a stronghold of paganism. The city was widely known as the place of life and work of Apollonius of Tyana (+98). This philosopher and legendary performer of miracles was contrasted



Saint Orestes of Cappadocia (Tyana)

by ancient pagan polemicists with Christ. Their arguments are echoed by some modern critics of religion.

Orestes practiced medicine according to his profession. The fact that the name of the medical profession subsequently became part of his name in the liturgical calendar, indicates that Orestes was a very talented doctor. "He was a God-given doctor," as our contemporaries would say. At the same time, Orestes was an evangelist, that is, a missionary

and preacher, testifying to Christ in word and deed.

During the Great Persecution of Diocletian, around 304, Orestes suffered for his faith. The reason was the accusation that Orestes' preaching converted too many people to Christianity. At the same time, St. George, who was also from Cappadocia, was martyred for his faith in Palestine.

It is interesting that in the Georgian Church, the commemoration of the martyrdom of St. George takes place on the day when all Orthodoxy honours the memory of St. Orestes. So amazing is the communion of saints!

In the words of one of the doxologies of the Early Church, "The Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church." At the turn of the second and third centuries, this idea was voiced by the ancient

teacher of the Carthaginian Church Tertullian (+220). Orestes the Physician and St. George, undoubtedly, were that "seed of the gospel", thanks to whose preaching and martyrdom, previously pagan Cappadocia – and many other lands – became Christian.

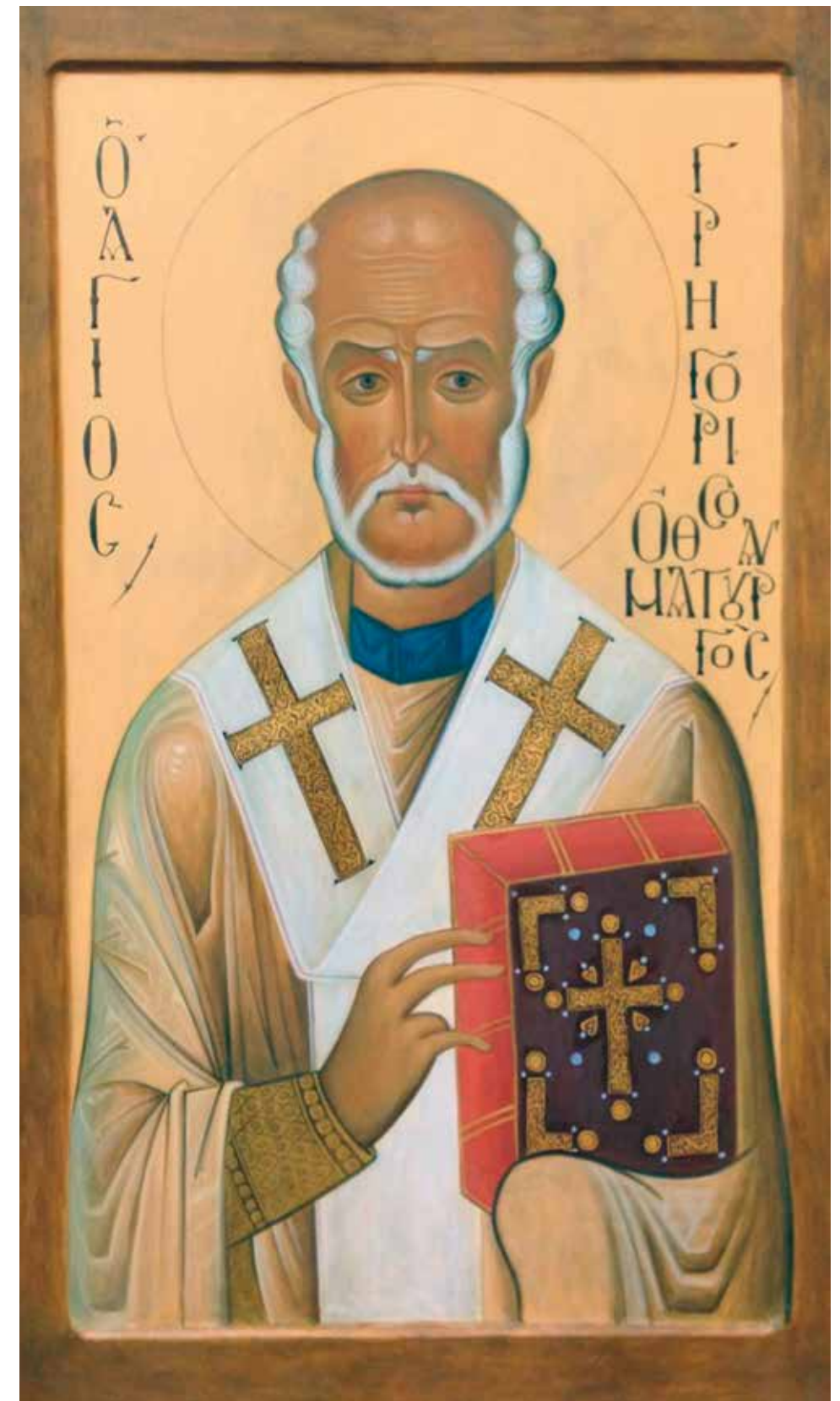
As a token of gratitude to the early Church, this great country gave the world many Fathers of the Church, ascetics, and evangelists, among whom were

the Great Cappadocians Basil of Caesarea (330–379), Gregory of Nazianzus (329–390), Gregory of Nyssa (335–394), and even St. Nino (+335), who was the Apostle of Georgia. Nowadays, when Cappadocia has become a tourist attraction, it is important not to forget about this very important page of its Christian past.

The example of Saint Orestes clearly shows the succession of saints. So, several decades later, when Christianity spread widely within Cappadocia, Emperor Valens, who was a staunch supporter of the Arianism heresy, demanded concessions in the Orthodox faith from St. Basil of Caesarea. According to the life of the saint, he threatened Basil with death, but this did not help. Basil, as befits a Christian bishop, was not afraid of anyone or anything. "The emperor did not dare to carry out his threats and left," says the biography of Basil.

However, not getting what he wanted, Valens insidiously divided Cappadocia into two parts. Thus, Tyana became the capital of Second Cappadocia, and the diocese of Basil was separated. The head of the now independent Tyana diocese was the heretical bishop Anthimus.

The shrine of the martyr Orestes fell into the hands of heretics. Saint Basil greatly regretted this in his works. Like all Orthodox Cappadocians, the saint perceived Orestes the Physician as his true father in the faith. After



Saint Gregory the Wonderworker. Byzantine icon of the second half of the 12th century



Saint Amphilochius of Iconium

all, Orestes preached and became a martyr for Christ in Cappadocia.

It is known that the only complete collection of the lives of the saints in Russian belongs to St. Demetrius of Rostov (1651–1709). The saint devoted more than two decades to writing this immortal work. One day, in a vision, Saint Orestes appeared to

Demetrius to tell him how to write correctly about the saint in his life.

SAINT GREGORY of NEOCAESARIA

Let us move from ancient Christian Cappadocia to the lands

of the ancient Pontic Kingdom. On the last day of autumn, the Churches following the Julian calendar honour the memory of St. Gregory the Wonderworker (213–270). The saint was the bishop of Neocaesarea. Nowadays it is a small city of Niksar in the central part of the Black Sea region

of the Asia Minor. In ancient times, Neocaesarea was a significant city, an important political and religious centre of those lands.

Saint Gregory was a hero of the faith, a role model for the great Fathers of the Church. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and Gregory of Nyssa, and others, considered Gregory as their spiritual father. Without them, the formation of the great Orthodox tradition of life and thought in the form, in which it has reached us, would have been unthinkable. Among the saints, Gregory was truly great.

The ancient Church did not look for miracles, however, Gregory, for the power of the signs he performed through the gift of grace, was called a miracle worker.

This is a rare addition to a name, even for saints. The grace to perform miracles, given to people in the Church, is mentioned by the Apostle Paul: “And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping” (1 Cor. 12:28). Due to the mysterious spiritual succession, Saint Nicholas of Myra was subsequently called the “Wonderworker” as well.

In addition to working miracles, Gregory became famous as a shepherd, missionary, evangelist, theologian, and philosopher, and even compiler of canons. They became part of the Orthodox Book of Rules. Their significance in the structure of the Orthodox Church is immutable to this day.

The father of Gregory the Theologian, Bishop of Nazianzus Gregory the Elder (276–374), was named in honour of the holy bishop. In the Orthodox liturgical calendar, he is also venerated as a saint. The brother of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, dedicated to him a Sermon.

This interesting text preserves a lot of information about

the life of the saint. St. Gregory the Wonderworker was born in 213 in Neocaesarea, into a pagan family, and was named Theodore, that is, “gift of the gods.” At the age of 14 he was orphaned. The saint’s teacher in faith was the famous Origen (185–253). He was baptised consciously when he was about twenty years old. The very name “Gregory” means “awake”, “vigilant”, “waiting for the Second Coming of Christ”. Like the name “Anastasia”, which means “resurrection”, Gregory is a typically Christian name. It is a “dogma name,” because it expresses one of the beliefs by which Christians of the first centuries lived.

He wandered a lot in search of wisdom and faith, then returned to his hometown, where he served as bishop from 238 until his righteous death around 270. When Gregory came to Neocaesarea, the city was completely pagan: there were only 17 Christians in it when he came. And there remained only 17 idolaters when he departed to the Lord. It turns out that Gregory’s greatest miracle was the preaching of the Gospel, the conversion to the life-giving Faith of Christ of a huge number of people by example and word.

Gregory was a confessor of the faith. He survived the severe persecution of Decius (249–251), when many Christians fell away from the faith. Gregory endured torture, did not renounce his faith, and remained alive. The early Church knew almost exclusively the holiness of martyrs. After all, almost all the Apostles were martyrs. It is important that it was Gregory of Neocaesarea who became the first saint bishop in history who was not a martyr. Moreover, it was his contemporaries to venerate him as the saint.

Obviously, the name “Wonderworker” in relation to Gregory in the mouths of his contemporaries was not just praise. For the Fathers of the Church,

it became a confession. For it testified that two centuries after the Ascension of the Lord Jesus, God visited His People again (cf. Luke 7:16). The God of the Bible is the source of signs and wonders. God is the one who takes you by surprise.

SAINT AMPHILOCHIUS of ICONIUM

After Cappadocia and the Pontic Kingdom, let us remember Lycaonia. This ancient region in the central Asia Minor, with its capital at Iconium, modern Turkish Konya, was enlightened by Christian preaching in apostolic times. Among the considerable number of the ancient saints of Lycaonia, the Church especially honours the memory of St. Amphilochius of Iconium (340–394). The saint was a righteous bishop and a great theologian, a hero of the faith in opposing the Arianism heresy.

Let us recall that Arianism is the name given to the doctrine asserting that the Son of God incarnated in Christ Jesus was created by God. The Church, based on the Bible, believed that the Son of God was uncreated, was divine, and equal to God. He has always been there. There is no “gap” between His existence and the existence of God Himself. Because, as Jesus Himself says in Scripture: “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). The Creed calls the Son of God “consubstantial” with the Father.

This understanding was given to the disciples of Christ, the Apostles and the Church Itself, on the Day of Pentecost, by the Holy Spirit. It was based on the vision and reading of the words and deeds of Christ in the light of the accomplished Paschal Mystery, the Resurrection of Jesus, and His Second Coming, which, as Scripture and the Creed testify, will soon inevitably occur (Rev. 22:20).



Basil the Great. Icon by Theophanes the Greek from the iconostasis of the Annunciation Cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin. Early 15th century

The Arians relied on those passages of Scripture where Christ, before His Resurrection, testified to the primacy of God and the Father. In theological language, this is called the pre-Easter reading of the Bible.

Arius was not the first to think this way, but he was the first to express this opinion loudly and unequivocally. It is important that in the understanding of the Ancient Church, this was precisely what made a person a heretic. “It is not heresy that makes one a heretic, but persistence in error,” wrote the great 17th-century theologian, Bishop Cornelius Jansenius (1585–1638).

It is noteworthy, that the heretics themselves did not consider themselves Arians. Many of them shared the beliefs of Arius, but they were ready to renounce him. He was an Alexandrian priest, that is, formally he could not lead a significant church party. While considering themselves as completely Orthodox, the heretics were divided into many factions.

Nevertheless, in the second half of the 4th century, Arians made up the overwhelming majority in the episcopate of the Universal Church in the East. It is important to understand, that at that time parallel church structures were not formally established, and in reality the Church was single. Therefore, it was very important which bishop, Orthodox or Arian, would occupy one or another see, and what teaching would be adopted at local and especially universal Councils of the episcopate.

This influenced the decision of Basil, who appointed Amphilochius as bishop, knowing about his true Orthodoxy and the impeccability of “a good reputation with outsiders” (1 Tim. 3:7).

Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, as well as Amphilochius, were from Cappadocia. Therefore, collectively they are called the great Cappadocians. Moreover, Amphilochius was

Gregory’s cousin. With him, as well as with Basil, in addition to the theological communion of the Orthodox faith, they were connected by genuine friendship. So, even most of the information about the biography of Amphilochius was preserved for us in their correspondence.

Before the accession of Theodosius the Great (+395) in 379, the children and successors of Emperor Constantine, as well as the metropolitan episcopate, stood on the side of Arianism. Probably, the rulers saw in the absolute monarchy of God the Father a prototype of their autocracy, and influential bishops considered it as the guarantee of a harmony of secular and spiritual authorities.

The doctrinal victory over Arianism was largely ensured by the works of Basil the Great. He was the Archbishop of Caesarea Cappadocia – the Church Metropolis, the influence and jurisdiction of which at that time, in fact, were equal to the prerogatives of a modern local Church.

However, Basil exhausted himself in episcopal labours and died in 379, having lived only 49 years. The work of his life, the Second Ecumenical Council of 381, took place without him.

Saint Amphilochius is an undoubted pillar of Orthodoxy, one of the Fathers of the Church, a prophetic personality. His memory should be prayerfully revered. Without the dogmatic and practical efforts of Amphilochius, the cause of Basil of Caesarea in the struggle for Orthodoxy and opposition to the Arianism heresy might not have triumphed.

INSPIRATION of the SAINTS

In our collective imagination, God appears to be quite old. This corresponds to the icon

of the so-called New Testament Trinity, where the Son of God Jesus Christ is symbolically blessed by God sitting on the royal throne as an old man. Moreover, it is in this icon that the “old age of God” is emphatically old. “I finally saw that thrones were set up; and the Ancient of Days sat down: His robe was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool; His throne is like a flame of fire, His wheels are like blazing fire” (Dan. 7:9), as it is written in the book of the prophet Daniel.

This generally accepted idea of the absolute old age of God is echoed by metaphysics. At the same time, it goes its own way. The God of Philosophy is inaccessible to man. He is invisible, incomprehensible. He is not limited by anything. These are the basic settings with which any seminarian begins the study of dogmatics.

At the same time, in the light of 21st century theology, it is obvious to us that all these extremely lofty definitions of God are one-sided. They act only in one direction. They only apply to us people. After all, we are limited and mortal. God, in Christ Jesus, makes Himself accessible and limited for our sake.

He, according to the words of one of the medieval theologians, took upon Himself all of ours and gave us all His. In the Eucharist we partake of this mystery.

“The length of our days is seventy years – or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for the quickly pass, and we fly away,” says the Psalms (Ps. 90:10).

Over the years, a person becomes wiser, their behaviour and morals become better. Suffering and illness ennoble and teach understanding. At a biblical level of understanding, these words are true. But at the everyday level, they turn out to be generally accepted stereotypes, which are refuted by reality itself.

Over the years, a person becomes embittered. Habits are cemented by experience. At old age, only family can truly love a person. In this sense, the secular prophet of our times, Steve Jobs, was right when, in his Stanford speech, he argued that the brevity of human life is, in fact, a blessing for others.

New Testament thinking allows us to agree with this, and, at the same time, to think further and deeper. We are used to seeing God as older than us. In popular piety, for centuries and even millennia, He was represented as an old man. This perception can be helpful, but it can also be harmful. Because it hides meanings from us.

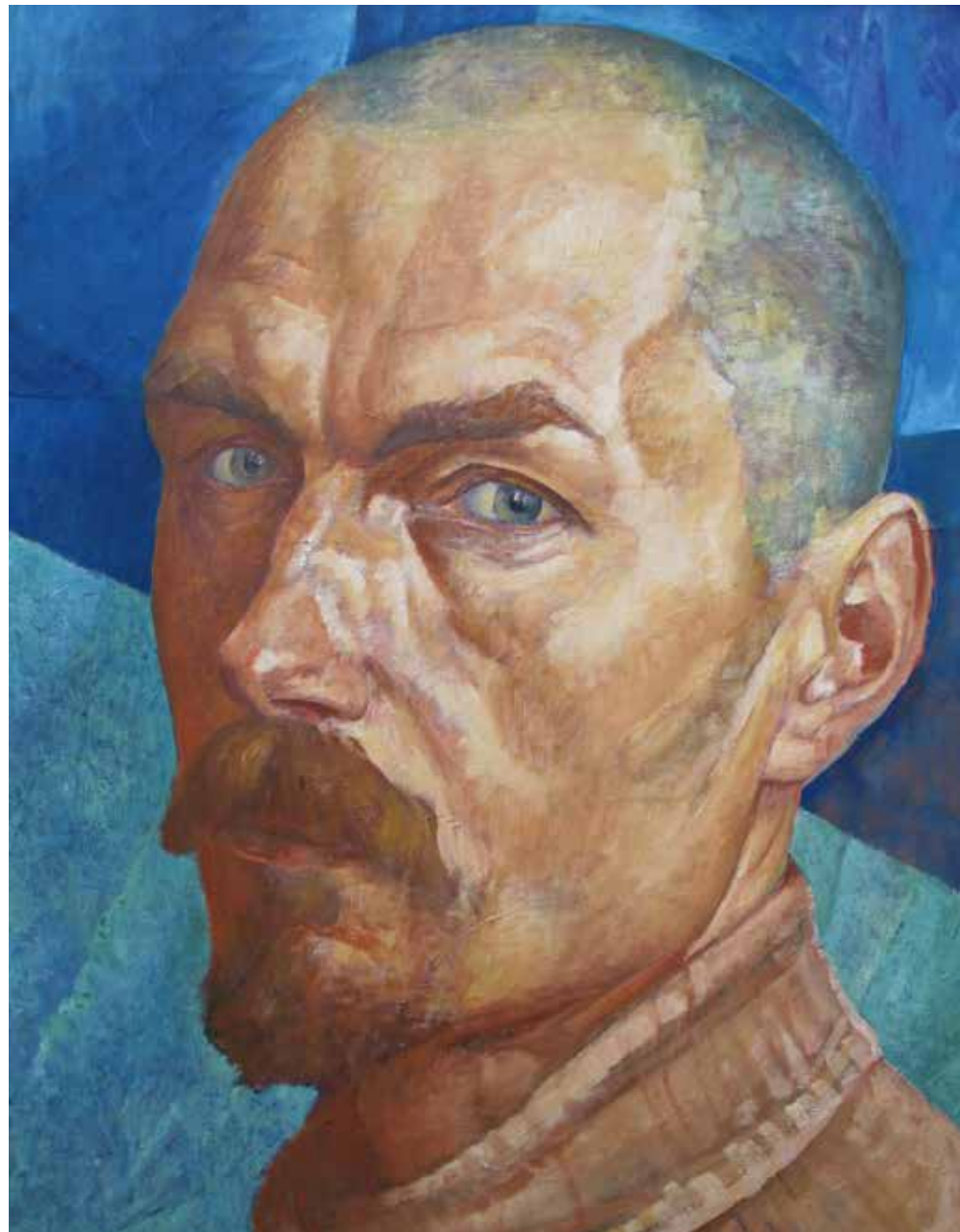
“Late did I love You, Beauty, so ancient and so young, late did I love You,” St. Augustine writes about God (354–430). This ancient thinker, who was a bishop of the North African Carthaginian Church, is credited by the history of philosophy with the invention of the very idea of time. Speaking about time and the temporality of man, Augustine turns to the thought of God and claims that among all living beings He is the youngest. God is young. He renews existence. He is younger than each of us and younger than everything in the world.

This paradoxical statement of theological thought reveals many meanings. It turns out that in true youth there is godlikeness. It is present in the desire to learn, in the idealism and romanticism of the perception of ordinary things. The willingness to selflessly change this world for the better was the inspiration of the saints. Faith manifested itself in them in the ability to constantly create themselves anew for the benefit of their neighbours. “Reverence for life,” as Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) once wrote. This godlike youth of God inspired the ancient saints whom the Church remembers in these autumnal times.

BATHING OF A RED HORSE AS A SYMBOL OF THE ERA

The 145th anniversary of the birth of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

By OKSANA KOPENKINA,
art analyst, founder of the Arts Diary & Pad website



Self-portrait by Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. 1918

We are all accustomed to looking at Petrov-Vodkin's *Bathing of a Red Horse* as a symbol of the 1917 revolution. Indeed, Petrov-Vodkin is one of the few pre-revolutionary artists, who was able to adapt himself to the new world. But is everything so clear? Because the painting was created five years before the revolution, in 1912...

Where did the idea for *Bathing of a Red Horse* come from? And how did it turn from a genre scene into a symbol of an entire era?

Petrov-Vodkin's work was very bold for the beginning of the 20th century, although it depicts a not so significant event: just boys bathing horses.

But the main horse has unexpectedly red colour. It is rich red. Behind are pink and white horses. Against their background, the red colour of the main horse appears even more clearly.

The image is almost flat. It has clear shapes. The black bit, black hoof and black eye make the horse even more stylized.



Bathing of a Red Horse. 1912

The water under the hooves is more like a thin fabric that bubbles and folds.

And we can also detect a double perspective. We look at the horse from the side. But we see the lake from above. That is why we do not see the sky, the horizon. The reservoir stands almost vertically in front of us.

All these painting techniques were unusual in Russia at the very beginning of the 20th century, given that at that time the works of Vrubel, Repin, Serov were very popular, and the rising star was Zinaida Serebryakova.

But where did Petrov-Vodkin get all these ideas for his painting? How did the artist's style develop?

The simplified colour scheme and minimalism in details were a direct influence of the works of Matisse. This is especially noticeable in the work *Boys at Play*, which was created almost at the same time as *Bathing of a Red Horse*.

Doesn't it remind you of anything? Of course, much in it has something in common with Matisse's *Dance*. At that time, this work had already been purchased by Russian collector

Sergei Shchukin. And Petrov-Vodkin saw it.

At the same time, scientists and artists began to take an active interest in icon painting. At the beginning of the 20th century, many ancient icons were restored, and the world realised what an important layer of world painting had been ignored until now.

Petrov-Vodkin was delighted with the iconography. It was on the icons that he saw red horses: if a horse was considered beautiful, then it was symbolically depicted as red.



Boys at Play. 1911

Petrov-Vodkin's signature tricolour – red, blue and yellow – belongs to icons as the predominant colours.

This is how, by mixing the features of modernism and icon painting, Petrov-Vodkin formed his own unique style which we see in *Bathing of a Red Horse*.

Of course, he did not create his recognisable colour scheme right away: a few years earlier, the master's colour solutions were different, the shades were more diverse.

To understand what is unique about this painting, it is important to compare it with other works of the artist. Formally, *Bathing*

of a Red Horse does not particularly stand out among Petrov-Vodkin's other works. He created other paintings in the same style as *Bathing of a Red Horse*: tricolour, simplified background. Like, for example, in the painting *Two Girls* created in 1913.

After the revolution, the artist's style remains the same. And even the horse appears again in *Fantasy* in 1925.

In Soviet times, laconism was preserved, but shadows and volume appeared again. Socialist realism ran the show, and any modernist things were banned. Therefore, for example, the background in the painting *Spring*

(1935) is no longer just a meadow painted over with clear green, but it is a cliff with a complex pattern on the stones. The country houses are also well depicted. But we still detect his signature tricolour.

When you look at a number of the works created by the artist over 30 years, you realise that *Bathing of a Red Horse* does not stand out as particularly unique. So how did the painting become the artist's most famous work and even a symbol of an entire era?

At first, Petrov-Vodkin began to paint *Bathing of a Red Horse* just as another picture based on an everyday subject. And really, is that unusual

that the boys, the groom's helpers, came to the lake to wash their horses? But then the artist began to consciously attach monumental features to the picture, realising that he was increasingly going beyond the scope of the everyday genre.

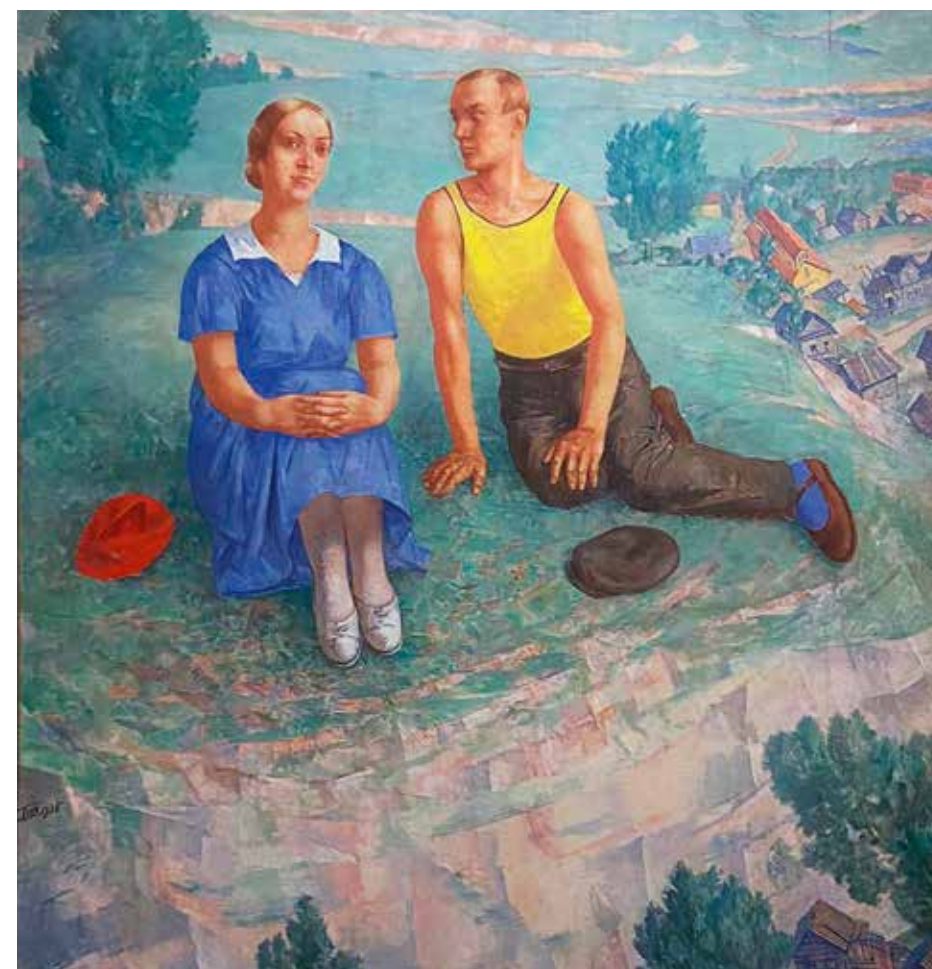
So, Petrov-Vodkin chose the colour red not by chance, his red is not just a peasant woman's skirt or a worker's cap. But a whole horse. Colour becomes not just dominant, but all-consuming. In addition, the horse is intentionally enlarged. It just doesn't fit in the painting. The horse's legs, tail and ears were not included in the frame. It is very close to us. It literally falls on us. Hence arises the feeling of anxiety and discomfort.

And to top it off – the detached, out-of-place calm look of the young rider. Not only is it difficult for us to believe that such a young boy can cope with such a colossus, he is also not particularly focused. As a rule, this does not lead to good. And we all know what the good intentions of the revolutionaries led to. When the "Red Horse" at some point got out of control and began to crush everyone, no longer understanding who was right and who was wrong.

All this together makes the painting symbolic and prophetic. Can Petrov-Vodkin be called a visionary? To some extent, yes. Brilliant artists are able to read the invisible layers of the Universe without realising it. He didn't realise it, considering that he painted the horse on the eve of the First World War. And not expecting that his entire country would soon be painted red. On the world map...



Two Girls. 1913



Spring. 1935

“MAYA PLISETSKAYA. ARENA OF LIFE”: PHOTO EXHIBITION IN PARIS



Photo: gctm.ru

Paris warmly welcomed the photo exhibition of the *Bakhrushin Museum* dedicated to the world ballet star Maya Plisetskaya, who delighted audiences around the world with her talent.

Since October 3, the exhibition in the halls of The Russian Orthodox

Spiritual and Cultural Centre has been visited by hundreds of Parisians and guests of the French capital.

Photo exhibition “Maya Plisetskaya. Arena of Life” will be open until December 3, 2023. The management of The Russian Orthodox Spiritual and Cultural Centre approached

the museum with the decision to extend the exhibition dedicated to the world ballet star.

The exhibition was organized with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Russkiy Mir Foundation.

Guests and residents of the French capital can see the portraits of the ballerina made by world-famous masters, photographs from filming, costume sketches for the famous “Carmen Suite,” posters, performances and concerts.

The organizers of the exhibition noted great interest in the video tour of the memorial apartment of Maya Plisetskaya in Moscow, which is presented as part of the exhibition. This new branch of the *Bakhrushin Museum* was opened in the summer of 2022 – the apartment was donated

to the museum by the ballerina’s husband, the great Russian composer Rodion Shchedrin. Parisians were attracted by the authentic furnishings of the apartment, personal belongings, and household appliances – everything that made up the ballerina’s home environment.



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