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Editor of series: *Nedeljko Bogdanović*, e-mail: [nedbog@filfak.ni.ac.yu](mailto:nedbog@filfak.ni.ac.yu)  
Address: Univerzitetski trg 2, 18000 Niš, YU, Tel: +381 18 547-095, Fax: +381 18 547-950  
<http://ni.ac.yu/Facta>

*Invited paper*

**WITH KOVALEVSKAYA AND PUSHKIN  
AT THE END OF THE ROAD, OR TWO CENTURIES AFTER**

**Katica (Stevanović) Hedrih**

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Niš, Yugoslavia  
E-mail: [katica@masfak.masfak.ni.ac.yu](mailto:katica@masfak.masfak.ni.ac.yu)

*Greece, Ioannina, August 28, 1998*

Olympic Airways. We are flying above the Pamvotis Lake. Wind is strong. This morning I was in Moscow, now on the way from Athens to Ioannina. The last section of a long and successful business trip. Belgrade - Moscow - Novosibirsk - Beijing - Shanghai - Moscow - Veliki Luki - Moscow - Athens - Ioannina. What has remained is Thessaloniki and, finally, return to Niš. Our pilot is experienced, we have already reached the Ioannina Airport. We are safe, on the ground.

The colleagues from the Organizing Committee of the Fifth Greek Congress on Mechanics welcomed us. Then followed the formal reception, organized by Rector Massalas in the milieu of these exotic and hospitable mountains close to the Greek-Albanian border.

Yugoslavia is represented by the academician Zloković, a scientist and architect, the son of the reputed architect Zloković, then the colleagues from Podgorica Bulatović, Vukoslavčević, Dečan. There is also Professor Beskos from Patras... A memory saved in a photo taken at the stone staircase landing in front of the Monastery of St. Paraskeve, with the three of us - academician Zloković, professor Beskos and me...

*Greece, Ioannina, August 30, 1998*

A walk alongside the quay of the Pamvotis Lake. Evening. The daylight is still strong, however. Waves are glittering from the tangential reflection of almost horizontal sunbeams. The Sun has sunk into the mountains. The sky is pink. The redness of the Sun still prevails over the nocturnal blue skies. I am calm and satisfied. Tomorrow I shall be flying back to Belgrade. I am returning to Niš after the journey of three weeks.

My last assignment on the journey is successfully accomplished. I gave the invited lecture "Derivatives of Mass Moment Vectors" at the Fifth Greek Congress on

Mechanics. This is my third Lecture. The first was given at the International Conference on Nonlinear Mechanics in Shanghai, and the second at the International Symposium on Classical and Celestial Mechanics, held in the Congress Center of the Youth Camp "Solnechny" in Sapuhlinki, Veliki Luki, Russia. It used to be a Komsomol camp, located in the very heart of the mountain with old trees and lakes in the District of Pskov.

The whole trip was planned after the invitations of the organizers of the mentioned scientific meetings, and everything perfectly fitted into the itinerary. The plans were strictly scientific. I started off with my left ankle injured and badly swollen, but I followed the call of science and my wish to present my knowledge and learn what my colleagues have achieved in the field of mechanics, both nonlinear and classical. I was looking forward to meeting the leading scientists in mechanics and to exchanging ideas with them. And, I met the academicians Chien Wei Zang and Valentin Rumyantsev, professors Minagawa, Beskos, Kozlov, Katsikadelis, Witenburg, Madeline Pascal, Troger... Academician Kounadis had already left Ioannina for the IUTAM Assembly Meeting...

Now, after a long travel from the far east and far north, in beautiful Ioannina, relaxed and satisfied with the successfully given lectures, I am composing my impressions... and thinking about Sofia Kovalevskaya and Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin... The outstanding persons from the period before two centuries, Sofia Kovalevskaya, Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin, or Vinogradov... They had not been included in my plan, yet the thoughts of them emerged... And my intellect and my soul are overwhelmed with happiness... unplanned... However, I have met these distinguished persons... They are now with me in my mind...

Russia... This District of Pskov is brimming with memories of magnificent people. The two regions, Pushkino-Gorskaya and Veliko-Luckaya...

In 1975, my friend and colleague Tatiana Feshenko from Kiev, the mathematician and lover of the history of science and art, gave me the book "*Vospominaniya i Povesti*" by Sofia Vassilevna Kovalevskaya as a birthday present. I read it from cover to cover then.

I have heard about Sofia for the first time as a student, from my professor of mechanics Dr. Danilo Rašković. Way back in 1964, he was explaining the third solution of the problem of rotation of rigid body about a fixed point, which made Sofia Kovalevskaya immortal in the world of mechanics. My professor talked about Sofia and her scientific contributions in mechanics and mathematics with extreme sympathy. I recall him mentioning another scientist with the same name, Sophie Germain, a Frenchwoman who was awarded a prize by the French Academy of Science for her findings on vibrating plates.

At that time I was entering the world of mechanics and engineering and gradually comprehending the allure of research. Inspired by the work of Sofia Kovalevskaya, I wrote my first scientific paper "Jerk-Acceleration of the Second Order of a Body Rotating about a Fixed Point" in consultation with Professor Rašković. Much later, I learned that Sofia Kovalevskaya had received the 1888 award of the French Academy of Science for her solution of the classical problem of the rotation of a rigid body about a fixed point. Thus she joined Leonhard Euler and Lagrange, who had already been included into the history of mechanics by their solutions to the problem. The Swedish Academy of Science rewarded her for a similar piece of work, as well. Ever since, Sofia's portrait in a white frame stands in my study, together with Isaac Newton, Leonhard Euler and Joseph Louis de Lagrange. My study also contains the portraits of our distinguished

scientists in the field of mechanics: Milutin Milanković, Ljubomir Klerić, Jakov Hlitičijev, Anton Bilimović... Its walls have recently been enriched with the pictures of my professors Danilo P. Rašković and academician Tatomir P. Andjelić.

I have also found out that Sofija wrote brilliant texts of significant literary value. Moreover, I have discovered that she was a supporter of the revolutionary struggle and ideas of the utopian socialism, and that in 1871 she moved with her husband to Paris, then under siege, where she was helping wounded Communards. Later, she took part in rescuing the Commune Victor Jacklard from prison.

The excursion to three complexes connected with Aleksandr Sergejevich Pushkin. Petrovskoe, the estate-museum, with the family house of Pushkin's great-grandfather Ibrahim Petrovitch Gannibal. Gannibal was a brigadier general and army engineer. A former page at the court grew into an important and well-known person of the Russian Empire due to his education at the universities of Paris, as well as his participation in Parisian cultural and voguish events.

Pushkin wrote about that in his novel "Blackamoor of Peter the Great" (A. S. Pushkin: "Sobranie sočinjenij v šesti tomah", Vol. 5, published by Pravda, Moscow, 1969, p. 7): "The appearance of Ibrahim, his figure, education and natural intelligence aroused general interest in Paris. All the ladies wanted to see and introduce in their homes *"le Negre du czar"*... many a time the regent invited him for... supper..." This is preceded by the verses:

"Tempus fortuné, marqué par la licence,  
Où la folie, agitant son grelot,  
D'un pied léger parcourt toote la France,  
Où nul mortel ne daigne être dévot,  
Où l'on fait tout excepté pénitence".

Furthermore, he says about the blackamoor of Peter the Great: "*Любовь не приходила ему на ум, - а уже видеть графиню каждый день было за него необходимо. Он повсюду искал ее встречи, и встреча с нею казалась ему каждый раз неожиданной милостью неба. Графиня, прежде чем он сам, угадала его чувства. Что ни говори, а любовь без надежд и требований трогает сердце женское вернее всех расчетов обольщения. В присутствии Ибрагима графиня следовала за всеми его движениями, вслушивала во все его речи; без него она задумывалась и впадала в обикновенную свою рассеянность...*"

Ibrahim Petrovitch wrote a textbook on mathematics, which he had intended to dedicate to Peter the Great. However, after the Czar's death, he dedicated the book to Czarina Catherine the Great.

The complex of Trigorskoe, including the house of the Osipov family. Pushkin spent a lot of time in this house during the period of exile. Aleksandra Praskovna Osipova, the mother of his friend Wolf, had a very rich library and placed it at Pushkin's disposal...

Svyatye Gory Monastery shelters the grave of Pushkin. I was impressed by the fact that numerous visitors put flowers on his grave with great respect. During my visit, the preparations were going on throughout Russia for the celebration of Pushkin's 200th Anniversary. The central celebration was to be held on May 26, 1999, in Moscow.

In 1812, Pushkin wrote the text titled "Recollections in Czarskoe Selo", which caused him problems within the Lyceum in Czarskoe Selo.

We left the former Komsomol Camp "Solnechny", where the International

Symposium on Classical and Celestial Mechanics had been held, and through an old forest started for the Pushkin Hills Provincial Park, Pushkino-Gorskaya District... Petrovskoe, Arapovo, Kovrino... memories of those places... in the District of Pskov...

Reminiscences of Kiev '71... and long talks with my colleagues Tanya and Valentina... They are mathematicians, both daughters of academicians-mathematicians... and both connoisseurs of art and literature... These talks provoked in me a need to enrich my knowledge and learn more about the Association for Traveling Art Exhibitions "Peredvizniki", Taras Shevchenko, Lessa of Ukraine, Ivan Frank, Ostrovsky... and particularly Pushkin... Moreover, I understood what Pushkin means, and to what extent, to Russians and Ukrainians...

It seemed that every bigger town in Russia had a Pushkin's Park with a monument to the magnificent poet... Somehow, I united all these parks into one symbol of Pushkin's birch. Whenever I mention Pushkin's Park, I associate it with white-gray-golden birch trees. This connection of a park, birch trees and Pushkin made me love birches. Niš, as I have realized later, also has a park, smallest in the world, but with gorgeous birch trees. The park between the Nišava River and the "Park" Hotel. Ever after, Pushkin was in my mind while walking through it. Its birches reminded me of the Pushkin's Park in Russia. I respect this park in Niš not only for the birches, but also for the monument to the patriots from the antifascist struggle...

Ivan Ivanovich Shishkin (June 25, 1832 - March 20, 1898), the student of the St. Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts and the member of the "Peredvizniki" Association, painted a beautiful picture with birches, titled "Stream in a Birch Forest" (1883), although he mainly painted pine forests. I am also delighted by his picture "Morning in the Pine Forest", presenting three bear cubs playing (1889). Yet, his painting of birches has always reminded me of the Pushkin's Park. Shishkin was regarded "a poet of the nature" by his contemporaries.

That excursion included also a visit to the house of Sofia Kovalevskaya, where she had lived in 1858, as a child of eight. I could not see the house from the inside, as the building was under reconstruction, but I was happy enough for the possibility of seeing the monument and the exterior of the house, placed on a small grassy hill, and feeling the grass surrounding the house under my feet. Zoya Kozlova accompanied me, and there were also professors Golubyev, Krasil'nikov, Thai, Peter Hadarn, Hans Troger, Madeline Pascal... Being that the inscriptions were in Russian, I was translating them to Professor Troger and answering some of his questions, recalling at the same time the days spent in Kiev and Tanya's books in which I had found Sofia's recollections. I was showing off to a certain extent, as I knew much more about Sofia and her life than all the other visitors.

She wrote "Recollections of Childhood", from which I would single out "Nihilism to Aniuta" and "Acquaintance with Dostoyevsky", as well as "Stories", which include "The Nihilism" and "Nihilist". She was a serious and respected literary critic and writer of her time. She also wrote "The Memories of George Elliot". With her friend, Anna Charlotte Leffler, she co-wrote the play titled "The Struggle for Happiness" in the form of two parallel plays: "How it Was" and "How it Could Have Been". Sofia gave the general concept to the play and formed the main four characters, while the text of the play was actually written by her friend. In fact, the play explains her point of view, as one of the characters, a heroine named Alice, strikingly reflects the personality of Sofia herself, according to critics. The struggle of Karl, Alice's lover, an electrical engineer who is striving to electrify factory machines and realize his technical inventions, and Alice's

endeavors to achieve a new ideal of social life are in the focus of the play.

I am trying to compose my thoughts. I have visited the Pushkin Hills... seen the three complex museums: Petrovskoe, in which there are the house and estate with parks that belonged to the ancestors of Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin. There is the house of Pushkin's great-grandfather, Ibrahim Petrovitch Gannibal, who was of Arabic origin and who came as a child to the Moscow Imperial Court from the court of the Turkish Sultan. Although he had been sold as a slave, he managed later to acquire high military and technical education and to earn reputation and solid property. The house bears witness to the way of living of that man and his descendants. Several centuries old trees of the beautiful park resemble wilderness, but the park lanes reflect former order and engineer's precision.

The house itself represents a real treasury of arts, starting from its architecture to the furniture, rare objects, contemporary engineering devices and instruments, rich library and paintings... It should be added that the custodian of this complex museum is a well-known artist and that his own paintings are exhibited in one wing of the house... The flora of the estate, the lakes and effervescent springs have been preserved in their authentic forms since Pushkin's childhood.

I tasted the mineral water from the same spring where Pushkin had quenched his own thirst, while I was thinking about "Russlan and Ludmilla"...

During "The Kiev Days" (1971), together with Valentina Filchakova, the Ukrainian mathematician and daughter of the famous mathematician academician Pavel Filchakov, and the physicist Rudik Polyakov, her husband, I watched "Russlan and Ludmilla" in the splendid old Kiev Opera House. As a good connoisseur of art, Valentina was very fond of Pushkin's works, and she named her first-born son after Russlan.

Verses are echoing in my mind (A. S. Pushkin: "Sobranie sočinenij v šesti tomah", Vol. 2, vip. "Pravda", Moscow, 1969, *Russlan and Ludmilla, First Song and Second Song*, p. 367 and p. 385).

".....  
*Ах, если мученик любви,  
 Страдает страстью безнадежно  
 Хоть грустно жить, дрзья мои,  
 Однако жить еще возможно,  
 Но после долгих, долгих лет,  
 Обнять влюбленную подругу,  
 Желаний, слез, тоски предмет,  
 И вдруг минутную супругу,  
 Навек утратить ...о друзья,  
 Конечно, лучше б умер я!"*

.....  
*"Но вот Людмила внов одна,  
 Не зная, что начать, она  
 К окну решетчату подходит,  
 И вор ее печаль нобродит  
 В пространстве пасмурной далу.  
 Бце мертво, Снежные равнины.  
 Стоят угрюмых гор вершины,*

*В однообразной белизне  
И дремлют в вечной тишине;*

..... "

The Petrovskoe complex with its parks and lakes filled me with the feeling of harmony between the beautiful nature and architectonic forms. There, I got the impression of beauty, but I also had a feeling that good fortune had brought me to the ground once treaded by the ingenious poet of restless spirit, who outlived his time and all the bullies that had once persecuted him, and who still radiates the same inspiring glow as before two centuries. His harassers are now mentioned only in connection with him... They have become anonymous... Only their evil deeds have been remembered, just their attempts to violate the poet's brilliant mind...

I felt the same like once on the Tomb of Christ, where I had found myself by pure chance, unintentionally, after the World Congress on Mechanics ICTAM in Haifa (1992), while walking through Jerusalem, accompanied by my colleague professors Hetnarski (US), Vujičić and Cvetičanin (Yugoslavia) and Ossinsky (Poland). Likewise, I experienced the accidental meeting with Pushkin as a gift after having successfully presented my scientific report.

Trigorskoe - the home of the Osipovs and Wolf, where Pushkin met with young people, where he was using the library to enlarge his literary knowledge. Aleksandra Praskovna Osipova particularly favored him there, as witnessed by their correspondence. The preserved letters show their relationship that was not only of a supporting and parental nature, but included sympathy and friendship of two educated and extremely talented persons.

In this, as well as in the previous house, I recorded in the guest book my amazement by the home warmth and disposition preserved throughout two centuries, all the way to these days... I was delighted to have been given the chance to touch the ground and feel the spirit of that place and of Pushkin's times, which are still keeping and emitting the messages and codes of talented Pushkin's mind, work and thought. It was so wonderful to sit on a bench in the park and look to the forest, in spite of the drizzling rain... Like in Shishkin's paintings.

Finally, we visited the Svyatye Gory Monastery, in the yard of which Pushkin and all his ancestors had been buried. The grave of Pushkin is covered with flowers. Admirers of Pushkin's works are tireless in expressing their love for the poet even now, after two centuries...

Standing there, I could not have helped hearing the verses from the Epilogue (A. S. Pushkin: "Sobranie sočinenij v šesti tomah", Vol. 2, vip. "Pravda", Moscow, 1969, *Ruslan and Ludmilla, Epilogue*, p. 434):

*"Так, мира житель равнодушный,  
На лоне праздной тишины,  
Я славил лирою послушной  
Преданя темной старины.  
Я пел - и забивал абыды  
Слепого счастья и врагов,  
Измены ветреной Дориды  
И сплетни шумные глупцов.  
На крыльях вымысла носимый,*

*Ум улетал за край земной,  
 И между тем грозы незримой  
 Сбирались туча надо мной!...  
 Япогобал... Святой хранитель  
 Превоначальных, бурных дней,  
 О дружба, нежный утешитель,  
 Болезненной души моей!  
 Ты умолила непогоду;  
 Ты сердцу возвратила мир;  
 Ты сохранила мне свободу,  
 Кипящей мадости кумир!*  
 .....  
*Но огань поэзии погас.*  
 .....  
*И скрылась от меня навек  
 Богиня тихих песнопений..."*

I am happy that I had the opportunity to see all that and to feel the spirit that pervades the course of time and transmits messages of creativity... There, in the District of Pskov, I united my feelings of having acquainted with Sofia Kovalevskaya, a splendid person, ingenious scientist and creative writer, and with the extraordinary poetic soul of Aleksandr Sergeyeovich Pushkin... The two brilliant minds have outlived their times and reached ours. They shall be living ever after through their achievements in science and poetry... I am happy that I met again with Sofia and Pushkin, spontaneously and by pure chance, in a similar manner like with Christ in Jerusalem.

I have brought back one detail to my mind. When Sofia was six years old, she lived in the District of Vitebsk. Her sister Anya, later married Jacklard, corresponded with Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky. Anya and Dostoyevsky must certainly have influenced Sofia to develop the talent of a novelist and playwright, alongside with her talents for mathematics and mechanics... Sofia was particularly inspired by the ideas of the Polish revolutionary S. M. Serakowsky that she heard about from a friend of Chernishevsky... She could have listened to that story over and over again, and every time she would say: "His outstanding heroism was constantly growing in my eyes".

A marriage of convenience was the way to leave the house of her parents, continue her education at the university level and become an active participant in social trends of her epoch. Vladimir O. Kovalevsky became her "liberator" and introduced her to a new wave of progressive ideas. She also bequeathed to us some verses of a humorous character.

(S. V. Kovalevskaya, Vospominania, Povesti, "Nauka", Moscow 1974, p. 310)

**" Шуточное послание В.О. Ковалевскому**

*Мой друг! Вот целых две недели ежечасно  
 Тебя я жду и мучаюсь, - но все напрасно!  
 Зову, пишу фольянты, злюсь, но мне в ответ  
 Ни самого тебя, ни писем твоих нет.*

*Наскучило мне ждать и злобствовать часами,  
И вот решилась я попробовать стихами  
Тебя, злодей, усостыдить и устыдить,  
И чувства верности супружеской внушить.*

*Как видишь бес мой или муза из когтей  
Не хочет выпустить совсем души моей.  
Забыв поваренную книгу, интегралы,  
Магистерство и Коркина дифференциалы,  
Я рифмоплетствую, бешусь и каждый час  
Душою уношусь раз десять на Парнас.  
..... "*

(S. V. Kovalevskaya, Vospominania, Povesti, "Nauka", Moscow 1974, p. 319)

### ***Жалоба мужа***

*Уже давно мне надоело  
Слышать жалобы и стоны,  
Как судьба печальна женицин,  
Как неправы к ним законы!  
Нет, поверьт, что страдальцы  
Не они - а мы, мужчины!  
Сколько в жизни мы семейной  
Терпим горя кручины,  
Как тяжка нам наша доля -  
Это каждый муж вам скажет.*

*.....  
Вижу сам, что обращаться,  
Надо с нею осторожно".*

And some more verses. On friendship

(S. V. Kovalevskaya, Vospominania, Povesti, "Nauka", Moscow 1974, Хамелеон p. 315)

*Хамелеона ты знаешь с детских лет.  
Кода он сидит одинокий в своем углу,  
Он кажется таким невзрачным, некрасивым,  
Серым. Но при хорошем освещении он  
может быть и красивым.  
У него нет собственной красоты, он только  
отражает все, что видит вокруг себя  
хорошее и прекрасное...  
Он может переливаться золотым,  
зеленым, синим. Каковы его друзья,  
таким же будет и он.*

*.....  
Если имеешь друга как ты,  
Приходится платить за ту честь..."*

Her essay "Three Days Within a Rural University in Sweden" is very interesting, especially the text about M. E. Saltikov (Tshedrin). By its contents, the article on the great Russian satirist Schedrin is both an obituary and a serious literary critique accompanied with the analysis of his works. It was written in French and first published in Sweden. The translation into Russian appeared later. She wrote: "Every investigator of such a short historical period (two centuries) cannot help being stunned by the contrast among the epochs of severe poverty and abundant productivity. The years closely before or after 1825 were the most fertile years for the development of ingenious writers. Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Nekrasov, Goncharov, Saltikov (Tshedrin) and Ms. Krestovskaya - they were all the age-mates, born within the period of some five-six years, and all born in the same century... People in Russia have already got accustomed to unite their names, so the presentation of one of them always induces the presentation of the entire pleiade".

The question remained to hang in the air: do we always meet brilliant creative spirits on a starry cosmic path? And whom shall I come upon at the next scientific congress...

Standing near Pushkin's grave, just like it happened once at the Tomb of Christ, I was thinking of all my wishes that I wanted to come true.

*Niš, June 15, 1999*

One year later... Starting off for my new scientific journey to St. Petersburg, to the International Symposium "Nonlinear Sciences at the Border of Milleniums", and to Copenhagen to the International Conference "Nonlinear Oscillations" ENOC. Only a week ago, NATO bombs were falling on my lovely country. Destruction... Cluster bombs over my town and people... Aggression... Blockades... Both of information and scientific communications... And this continues... Art, music, literature, culture... all of that has risen up in the defense of freedom and human dignity... I regarded this new scientific journey as my own contribution to the breakthrough against the blockades in science... I have accepted the invitation of scientists from these two countries...

The Commune of Paris. Jacklard, Aniuta, Sofia Kovalevskaya, Aleksandr Sergejevich Pushkin... The spirit of rebellion among poets, artists, scientists... Rebellion against the blockades of intellect, spirit against destruction... The spirit for freedom... In a word, culture can prolong time, it liberates the spirit... The intellectual wealth represents the greatest strength of those who create it, not of those who buy or usurp it in a technocratic manner, by means of money, aggression, extortion, intimidation...

Victor Hugo at the beginning and in the end, with his "*Les Miserables*", and with a remarkable message: "*There is no army in the world, no power stronger than the idea and culture that come in the right time and stand up for the freedom of spirit and dignity of civilization...*" In some of his articles, he used to defend my birthplace, the beautiful, pleasant region of the town of Aleksinac... having thereby transmitted his message to the governments of Europe that "even governments have no right whatsoever to kill nations..."



S. V. Kovalevska

*Niš, May 9, 2000*

An accidental encounter in the street with Professor Nedeljko Bogdanović, editor of the Series *Linguistics and Literature* of our University Journal. We are discussing the preparation of a new volume of the Series to be dedicated to the 200th Anniversary of *Aleksandr Sergejevich Pushkin*. I mention my visit to the Pushkin's Woods. Professor Nedeljko suggests that I prepare my memories in Pushkin's honor. He proposes the title, as well. And, encouraged by the idea, I am selecting excerpts from my diary... Of course, Sofia Kovalevskaya has to accompany great Pushkin. The prominent intellectual creators are together on the starry road of science, art, culture...

This year marks the 150th anniversary from the birth of intellectually glorious Sofia Vassilevna Kovalevskaya. She was born on January 15th 1850, and died on November 10th 1891 in Stockholm. She was the first woman corresponding member of the Petersburg Academy of Science. She pursued her studies in Heidelberg and Berlin, where she studied under one of the most renowned mathematicians Karl Weierstrass. She was granted a doctorate from the University of Gottingen, and in 1884 she was appointed to a professorship at the University of Stockholm. She, as a scientist, writer and revolutionary, sets an example of a true fighter for women's rights, a model to be followed.

Russlan and Ludmilla, Recollections in Czarskoe Selo, The Captain's Daughter, Eugene Onegin, The Queen of Spades, Boris Godunov, Blackamoor of Peter the Great, Verses... six volumes on my desk... and sets of LP records... this is also Pushkin's message for the present and the time to come...



A. S. Puškin

Glorious Tchaikovsky composed the opera "The Queen of Spades" using the motives from Pushkin's works.

I am listening to the voice of Feodor Ivanovich Chaliapin from "The Art of Chaliapin" set of records... the unique voice, an artistic phenomenon in music. By the language of music, he revived Puskin's verses in the songs: "Bacchic Song" to the music of Glazunov; "Nightingale" - music by Tchaikovsky, text by Pushkin; "The Prophet" - music by Rimsky-Korsakov, text by Pushkin; "Farlaf's Rondo" - music by M. Glinka - from the opera "Russlan and Ludmilla"; "The Captive" - music by A. Rubinstein, text by Pushkin... Music critics noted: "It is well known that Chaliapin has the skill to color syllables, either by 'shortening' or by 'extending' them, without disturbing Slavic forms or musical structures. Hardly any of Russian artists could comprehend a verse like Chaliapin. When he sings Pushkin's "Prophet" on somewhat cold music of Rimsky-Korsakov, listeners get moved and deeply touched by his penetration into the biblical essence of Pushkin's words, as well as by his understanding of the solemnity and vividness of Pushkin's verse..."

Maxim Gorky wrote to Chaliapin that he was the first in Russian artistic music, like Tolstoy was the first in the art of letters, having also said: "Chaliapin represents a separate epoch in Russian art, and so does Pushkin, as well".